

# SECTION 2: COMMITMENT TO ADOLESCENT HEALTH



# FACILITATOR



## Description

Commitment to adolescent health engenders a formal process of recognizing youth as a program and policy priority as reflected by:

- Resources such as staff, programs, systems and finances dedicated to addressing adolescents and their health issues.
- Visible and accessible signs that adolescents are a priority within the agency (e.g. strategic plans and conceptual frameworks that guide actions, documents and other informational resources that highlight adolescent health issues).

**This section is divided into 3 Sections or Elements:**

- Dedicated resources
- Staff expertise
- Adolescent health focal points



## Element #1: Dedicated Resources

### GOAL:

**Assess the adequacy of programs (formal programs and coordination) and financial resources dedicated to adolescent health**

### Activity 1A:

#### Assess the adolescent health programs within the agency

Using the list of health issues and systems-related programs, develop a matrix of programs in the agency that address adolescent health:

- Name of program
- List initiatives that address adolescent health in the program
- List % of time initiatives and overall program are dedicated to adolescent health
- List funding sources
- Indicate if funding sources are: stable, not stable

### DISCUSSION:

- Do these programs address the critical health issues of adolescents in the state (right programs)?
- Enough?
- Gaps?
- What's strong?
- Challenges, weaknesses
- How stable is the funding? Innovation in funding?

### Activity 1B:

**Identify the broader coordination of adolescent health across the agency by assessing the State Adolescent Health Coordinator's role.**

- Complete and review the Coordinator's role against the *State Adolescent Health Coordinator Role Checklist*.

### DISCUSSION:

A strong State Adolescent Health Coordinator role that provides broad coordination and expertise is critical to a strong adolescent health system.

- Strengths of this position?
- Challenges of this position?
- Clarity about role?
- Enough?
- What else is needed?

### Activity 1C:

**Assess the level to which staff with adolescent health expertise are included in broader program and policy discussions that affect adolescents**

### DISCUSSION:

Continue the discussion

- Are the Adolescent Health Experts invited and included in broader initiatives that include or impact the adolescent population?
- Strengths?
- Challenges?
- Opportunities?

### RATING:

- Using the data gathered and discussion, rate the capacity.
- Develop consensus rate.



## Element #2: Staff Expertise

### GOAL:

**Identify the level and utilization of staff expertise to address adolescent health**

### Activity 2A:

#### Assess staff expertise

1. Review the Adolescent Health Expertise list and gain consensus on the knowledge/skills participants want to use to assess expertise. Revise list as needed.

1. *Adolescent development*
2. *Impact of adolescent development on health issues or Knowledge of health issues in relation to adolescent populations*
3. *Interconnection between adolescent-family-community-society on health and well-being*
4. *Adolescent-specific strategies to address health issues*
5. *How to work with youth*
6. *How to partner with youth*
7. *Youth development framework*
8. *Overlap and interplay of the Youth development framework and other frameworks (e.g. prevention, health promotion)*
9. *How to apply frameworks to address adolescent health issues (e.g. youth development, prevention, health promotion)*
10. *Other:*

2. Using the matrix of adolescent-focused programs and the Adolescent Health Expertise list, discuss and “rate” the collective staff expertise:

#### Scale:

- *Adolescent health experts*
  - *Adequate knowledge in adolescent health*
  - *Limited knowledge of adolescent health*
- Staff in programs that address adolescent health less than 50%
  - Staff in programs that address adolescent health 50% - 74%
  - Staff in programs that address adolescent health 75% or more
  - Other staff (e.g. data, communications)

#### DISCUSSION:

- Strengths?
- Weaknesses or challenges?
- Does staff have the expertise needed to adequately address adolescent health issues?
- Needs?

### Activity 2B:

**Assess support and opportunity for staff to develop and strengthen their adolescent health expertise**

#### DISCUSSION:

Continue above discussion

- What is the support and opportunity for staff to develop and strengthen adolescent health skills (e.g. funding to attend trainings, time allowed to attend trainings, informal opportunities provided)?
- What are the training needs?
- What are the opportunities?

#### RATING:

- Using the data gathered and discussion, rate the capacity.
- Develop consensus rate



## Element #3: Adolescent Health Focal Point

### GOAL:

Assess the visible “focal points” within the agency that indicate the agency’s commitment to adolescent health; this includes strategic plans, conceptual frameworks and written documents.

### Activity 3A:

Assess level of strategic planning and implementation around adolescent health issues

1. Identify strategic plans that address adolescent health issues. Include strategic plans developed outside of the agency IF agency staff has actively worked on the initiative.
2. Write each plan on an index card.
3. Using the program matrix, attach each card to program that has primary responsibility for the plan.
4. For plans developed outside of the agency, attach them to a separate sheet.
  - Comprehensive adolescent health plan
  - Adolescent plans on specific health issues (e.g. youth suicide prevention plan)
  - Issue-specific plans that addresses or highlights adolescents
  - Population-based plans that addresses or highlights adolescents (e.g. MCH plan, child health plan, school health plan)
  - Agency-wide plan that addresses or highlights adolescents

### DISCUSSION:

- Are plans used to drive action?
- In plans that are broader than adolescents, are adolescents adequately addressed?
- Do plans take a broad approach to adolescents that recognize the inter-relatedness of health issues, risk and protective factors?
- Are plans guided by conceptual frameworks?
- Are plans updated?
- Are staff with adolescent health expertise involved in plans that address youth issues?

### Activity 3B:

Assess the overarching philosophy or conceptual framework that drive adolescent health efforts within the agency

### Definition:

A conceptual model or framework can be thought of as a theoretical map that sketches the relationship between different components and helps users find their way around. Just as a map lays out roads between cities and towns and guides travelers to their destination, a conceptual model defines pathways between key components and helps to clarify the processes that lead to the desired effect or outcome.

Conceptual frameworks are successful organizing tools when:

- They identify the key factors that will determine success or failure
- They identify components that can be operationally defined and measured through indicators
- They represent a shared perspective among stakeholders

*Horstman, et al. (2002). Monitoring and evaluation of sexual and reproductive health interventions: A manual for the EC/UNFPA initiative for reproductive health in Asia*

List the conceptual frameworks used within programs that address adolescent health issues

- Youth development
- Prevention
- Health promotion
- Lifespan
- Other

### DISCUSSION:

- Do you have an overarching adolescent health framework that is adopted across adolescent health programs?
- If not, would this be valuable?
- Do programs use conceptual frameworks to guide their adolescent health work?
- If yes, are these frameworks adequate for adolescent health?



## Element #3: Adolescent Health Focal Point (Continued)

### Activity 3C:

**Assess written statements about adolescent health that indicate or highlight the agency's commitment to adolescent health**

List all possible visible examples such as:

- Mission and/or vision statements about adolescent health
- Formal agreements
- State negotiated performance measures (Title V MCH Block Grant)
- Agency web pages that highlight adolescent health issues (e.g. MCH webpage, Adolescent health program webpage)
- Newsletters or publications that highlight adolescent health
- Program listservs

### DISCUSSION:

- Are there visible signs that show your agency's commitment to adolescent health?

### RATING:

- Using the data gathered and discussion, rate the capacity.
- Develop consensus rate

# FACILITATOR



## Overview of Capacity Area

### CONDUCT OVERALL ANALYSIS:

- Strengths
- Challenges
- Opportunities

### IDENTIFY TOP ISSUES:

- Brainstorm top issues – remind that these are the issues that need to be addressed
- Develop consensus on top 3-5 issues

**Identify the overall “score” or rating for the capacity area** (i.e. average the Element scores)

# PARTICIPANT



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**This section is divided into 3 Sections or Elements:**

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# PARTICIPANT



## Element #1: Dedicated Resources

**GOAL:**

Assess the adequacy of programs (formal programs and coordination) and financial resources dedicated to adolescent health

### Activity 1A:

Assess the adolescent health programs within the agency

**DISCUSSION:**

- Do these programs address the critical health issues of adolescents in the state (right programs)?
- Enough?
- Gaps?
- What's strong?
- Challenges, weaknesses
- How stable is the funding? Innovation in funding?

### Activity 1B:

Identify the broader coordination of adolescent health across the agency by assessing the State Adolescent Health Coordinator's role.

**DISCUSSION:**

A strong State Adolescent Health Coordinator role that provides broad coordination and expertise is critical to a strong adolescent health system.

- Strengths of this position?
- Challenges of this position?
- Clarity about role?
- Enough?
- What else is needed?

### Activity 1C:

Assess the level to which staff with adolescent health expertise are included in broader program and policy discussions that affect adolescents

**DISCUSSION:**

Continue the discussion

- Are the Adolescent Health Experts invited and included in broader initiatives that include or impact the adolescent population?
- Strengths?
- Challenges?
- Opportunities?

**RATING:**

- Develop consensus rating for the Element 1

# PARTICIPANT



## Element #2: Staff Expertise

**GOAL:**

**Identify the level and utilization of staff expertise to address adolescent health**

### Activity 2A:

**Assess staff expertise**

**DISCUSSION:**

- Strengths?
- Weaknesses or challenges?
- Does staff have the expertise needed to adequately address adolescent health issues?
- Needs?

### Activity 2B:

**Assess support and opportunity for staff to develop and strengthen their adolescent health expertise**

**DISCUSSION:**

Continue above discussion

- What is the support and opportunity for staff to develop and strengthen adolescent health skills (e.g. funding to attend trainings, time allowed to attend trainings, informal opportunities provided)?
- What are the training needs?
- What are the opportunities?

**RATING:**

- Develop consensus rating for Element 2



## Element #3: Adolescent Health Focal Point

### GOAL:

Assess the visible “focal points” within the agency that indicate the agency’s commitment to adolescent health; this includes strategic plans, conceptual frameworks and written documents.

### Activity 3A:

Assess level of strategic planning and implementation around adolescent health issues

#### DISCUSSION:

- Are plans used to drive action?
- In plans that are broader than adolescents, are adolescents adequately addressed?
- Do plans take a broad approach to adolescents that recognize the inter-relatedness of health issues, risk and protective factors?
- Are plans guided by conceptual frameworks?
- Are plans updated?
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### Activity 3B:

Assess the overarching philosophy or conceptual framework that drive adolescent health efforts within the agency

#### Definition:

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- They identify the key factors that will determine success or failure
- They identify components that can be operationally defined and measured through indicators
- They represent a shared perspective among stakeholders

#### DISCUSSION:

- Do you have an overarching adolescent health framework that is adopted across adolescent health programs?
- If not, would this be valuable?
- Do programs use conceptual frameworks to guide their adolescent health work?
- If yes, are these frameworks adequate for adolescent health?

### Activity 3C:

Assess written statements about adolescent health that indicate or highlight the agency’s commitment to adolescent health

#### DISCUSSION:

- Are there visible signs that show your agency’s commitment to adolescent health?

#### RATING:

- Develop consensus rating for Element 3

# PARTICIPANT



## Overview of Capacity Area

### CONDUCT OVERALL ANALYSIS:

- Strengths
- Challenges
- Opportunities

### IDENTIFY TOP ISSUES:

- Brainstorm top issues and develop consensus on top 3-5 issues

**Identify the overall “score” or rating for the capacity area** (i.e. average the Element scores)



## Dedication to Adolescent Health

The State Adolescent Health Coordinator position is:

- Full time  
 Part time  
 No State Adolescent Health Coordinator

Percentage time the State Adolescent Health Coordinator works on:

- Coordinating adolescent health broadly \_\_\_\_\_ %
- Adolescent-specific programs \_\_\_\_\_ %
- Adolescent-inclusive programs (e.g. school health) \_\_\_\_\_ %
- Programs focused on populations other than adolescents (e.g. child health) \_\_\_\_\_ %

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100 %

## Scope of Responsibilities

The following is a list of broad activities that many State Adolescent Health Coordinators are engaged. Check all that apply.

### Manage Adolescent-Focused Program(s)

- Coordinate and/or manage programs that address adolescent health issues.  
 Manage staff who run adolescent-health programs.  
 Manage adolescent health-focused grants, contracts.  
 Provide technical assistance and training to programs funded to address adolescent health issues.

### Share Expertise on Adolescent Health

- Seek out adolescent health resources (e.g. publications, trainings, curricula, data) and distribute to others who address youth issues (e.g. newsletters, websites).  
 Provide adolescent health expertise to programs and initiatives that address adolescents as one population among many (e.g. school health, injury, health care access).

### Coordinate Adolescent-Focused Resources

- Provide a coordinating presence within an organization that helps “weave together” or link adolescent health efforts.

### Mobilize Partnerships

- Lead and manage partnerships with focused on adolescent health (e.g. informal partnerships with programs within and outside of the agency; cross agency task forces or workgroups; cross state agency collaboratives; public-private coalitions).  
 Build capacity of collaborative groups to work effectively on adolescent health issues.

### Ensure Strategic Approach to Adolescent Health

- Participate or lead efforts to strengthen adolescent health data (e.g. YRBSS; coordination of data; access to data).  
 Conduct the assessment and prioritization of adolescent health issues.  
 Coordinate or participate in strategic planning and implementation efforts focused on adolescents (e.g. broad adolescent health plans; issue-specific plans that include adolescents).

### Ensure Commitment to Adolescent Health

- Educate and “advocate” for adolescents and adolescent health (within the organization, outside of the organization) in order to strengthen commitment to youth issues.  
 Act as a focal point for adolescent health within the agency.  
 Contribute and provide leadership to adolescent health policy development.  
 Promote a holistic approach to adolescent health.

### Build Expertise to Address Adolescent Health

- Provide technical assistance and training to those who address youth health issues.  
 Facilitate the exchange the knowledge of adolescent health across the state.