

Adolescent and Young Adult Health

Ka Yan Ho

Department of Pediatrics, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hung Hom, Hong Kong

Injuries

Adolescents' unintentional injuries are the major cause of death and disability. Young drivers require safety instruction, and rules against driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs must be severely enforced across the board. Blood alcohol levels in young drivers should be lower than in adults. Graduated licences with a zero-tolerance policy for drunk driving are advised for new drivers. Drowning is also considered as one of the leading causes of death among children and to prevent these deaths, it is critical to teach children and teenagers to swim.

Violence

Interpersonal violence is the fourth leading cause of death in teenagers and young people around the world. Sexual violence affects a large number of young people: one in every eight young people reports being sexually abused.

Mental health

One of the primary causes of sickness and impairment among teenagers is depression. Half of all adult mental diseases start before the age of 14, however the majority of cases go undetected and untreated.

Adolescents' well-being and mental health are influenced by a variety of circumstances. Living in humanitarian and unstable situations might raise the risk of developing mental health disorders due to violence, poverty, stigma, marginalisation, and living in humanitarian and fragile circumstances. Failure to address teenage mental health issues has long-term effects, affecting both physical and mental health and restricting possibilities to live a fulfilling life.

Alcohol and drug use

In many countries, adolescent alcohol consumption is a big issue. It can lead to a loss of self-control and an increase in risky behaviours like unsafe sex or risky driving. It is a root cause of injuries like violence, and early mortality. It can also cause health issues later in life and shorten life expectancy.

Tobacco use

The vast majority of persons who use tobacco today started when they were teenagers. It is critical to prohibit the sale of

tobacco products to minors (under the age of 18), raise the price of tobacco goods through increased taxes, prohibit tobacco advertising, and provide smoke-free settings.

HIV/AIDS

Adolescents with HIV have poor access to antiretroviral therapy, treatment adherence, retention in care, and viral suppression. A key factor to these challenges is the paucity of adolescent-friendly resources, such as psychological therapy and support.

Early pregnancy and child birth

In underdeveloped countries, around 12 million girls aged 15–19 years and at least 777 000 girls under the age of 15 give birth each year. Complications from pregnancy and childbirth are the greatest cause of death for girls aged 15 to 19. Sexuality education about the cognitive, emotional, physical, and social components of sexuality is essential for adolescents. If a girl does become pregnant, she needs to have access to high-quality prenatal care. Adolescents who want to end their pregnancies should be able to get a safe abortion if the legislation allows it.

Deficiencies

Iron deficiency anaemia was the second largest cause of death and disability among teenagers. Deworming is recommended on a regular basis in locations where intestinal helminths such as hookworm are endemic to prevent micronutrient (particularly iron) deficits. Healthy eating habits are formed in adolescence and serve as a basis for excellent health in adulthood. Reduced marketing of foods heavy in saturated fats, trans-fatty acids, free sugars, or salt, as well as increased availability to healthful foods, are critical for everyone, but particularly for children and adolescents.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

Correspondence: Ka Yan Ho, Department of Pediatrics, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hung Hom, Hong Kong, Tel: +85227666417; E-Mail: kayeva.ho@polyu.edu.hk

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