



MidAtlantic AIDS Education and Training Center Adolescents - HIV Case Finding and Prevention



CDC recommends that everyone between the ages of 13 and 64 get tested for HIV at least once as part of routine health care.
For those with specific risk factors, CDC recommends getting tested at least once a year.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) youth 13 to 24 years of age accounted for 21% of all new HIV diagnoses in the United States and dependent areas in 2017.

ADOLESCENTS AND HIV RISK

The following are some factors that put adolescents at risk for HIV acquisition:

- **Lower rates of condom use** as condom use reduces the risk of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- **Higher rates of STIs** among youth which increases the risk of acquiring HIV and transmitting to others.
- **Use of alcohol and drugs** by adolescents can lead to risky behaviors, such as having sex without a condom.
- **Disenfranchised adolescents** (LGBTQ, homeless, etc) can be at increased risk for risky sexual behaviors, substance use and trauma.

ADOLESCENT DEVELOPMENTAL ISSUES IMPACTING RISK

- Strong influence of **peer and social pressure** to engage in sex and drug use.
- Experimentation and **risk taking** is common in adolescent development.
- Lack of **accurate information** about HIV, transmission, and treatment.
- Lack of information about the **harms and risk related to drug use**.
- Tendency to **focus on the present** rather than the future.
- Sense of **invulnerability** typical of adolescents.
- Co-occurring **depression, anxiety, and adjustment disorders** in adolescence.
- Issues and conflicts related to **independence**.

ADOLESCENTS AND HIV TESTING

- HIV testing with linkages to prevention, treatment is recommended for adolescents in all healthcare settings.
- Adolescents who engage in risky behavior or who identify as LGBTQ should have repeat HIV testing and provided risk reduction education.

MESSAGE TO THE ADOLESCENT: PROTECT YOURSELF. PROTECT YOUR PARTNER(S). GET HIV TESTED TO KNOW YOUR STATUS.

ADOLESCENT ENGAGEMENT

- A key issue is to **assure privacy** during the clinical encounter.
- Clinical assessment requires an approach that is direct but also engages the adolescent regarding **their own views and concerns**.
- Allow adolescent to verbalize their understanding of HIV, **clarify misconceptions**, and fill in gaps in knowledge. *"What have you heard about HIV and other sexually transmitted infections?"*
- Use language that is **understandable**. Avoid trying to appear "with it" or "cool."
- Ask direct, **open ended** questions: *"I don't know much about that, can you please tell me about it?"*
- **Short relationships** or serial monogamy are common so be sure to inquire about length of relationships.
- **Assess support** of parents and other adult influentials for behavioral change and/or needed intervention.
- Consider the adolescent's right to **confidentiality** based upon specific state statutes and laws.
- Be mindful of the **cultural context** of the adolescent's family, social network, neighborhood, and peer group.
- Assess their perception to HIV and related **stigma** which may serve as a barrier to change.
- Consider offering **suggestions** rather than directing specific actions.
- Consider that until **trust** is built change may be gradual so an initial refusal for testing should be followed up at the next encounter.

ADOLESCENT CLINICAL SCREENINGS CONSIDERATIONS

- Sexual Health History
- Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI)
- Substance Use Disorder
- Hepatitis C screening and counseling
- Wellbeing and psychosocial health

ADOLESCENT TREATMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- Referral to adolescent mental health services
- Linkage to substance use treatment and harm reduction services
- Referral to community support services
- Referral for family therapy
- Linkage to sex education

SAMPLE HEEADSSS SCREENING SCRIPT:

H: Home environment: Who lives with you? Where do you live? Can you talk to anyone at home about stress?

E: Education/Employment: Tell me about school. Are there adults at school you feel you could talk to about something important? Do you have education/employment plans and goals?

E: Eating: Does your weight or body shape cause you any stress? If so, tell me about it.

A: Activities: What do you do for fun? How do you spend time with friends? Family? (where, when?)

D: Drugs: Do any of your friends or family use tobacco? Alcohol? Other drugs? Do you use tobacco or vapes? Alcohol? Other drugs?

S: Sexuality: Have you ever been in a romantic relationship? Tell me about those people.

S: Suicide and depression: Do you feel 'stressed' or anxious? Do you feel sad often or just sometimes? Are you 'bored' a lot? Do you have trouble getting to sleep? Have you thought about hurting yourself? If so, tell me about it. What about hurting others, have you thought about that?

S: Safety: Have you ever been seriously injured? How about anyone else you know? Is there violence of any kind in your home? In school? In your neighborhood? Tell me about it. Do you text, not wear seatbelts, or speed while driving?

SAMPLE SEXUAL HEALTH HISTORY TAKING SCRIPT:

- » Good morning, my name is _____ and I am a _____ (discipline). You can call me _____.
- » How would you like to be addressed?
- » Before we begin, are there any issues that are of concern for your health, so I make sure we talk about them?
- » The following are questions to assess your sexual health risks. I ask these questions to all of my patients. Is it OK to go ahead and ask you these questions?
 - Are you currently having sex?
 - When was the last time you had sex?
 - Do you have more than one sex partner? How many in the past week?
 - Do you have sex with women, men, or both?
 - What kinds of sex are you having? (genital, oral, anal, or all)
 - Do you use drugs or alcohol before or during sex? What kinds?
 - Do you and your partner(s) use condoms to prevent STIs? How often do you use condoms?
 - When was the last time you were tested for STIs?
 - Have you had an STI in the past? If so, when? How were you treated?
 - Is there anything else that you would like to talk with me about?
 - Are there any resources that you need that I can help you find?

MIDATLANTIC AIDS EDUCATION AND TRAINING CENTER

University of Pittsburgh, Graduate School of Public Health

Department of Infectious Diseases and Microbiology

www.maaetc.org

HRSA, HIV/AIDS Bureau, Office of Program Support

Grant No. U1OHA29295

Please refer to the most recent guidelines

Last Modified: September 18, 2020

References

CDC. A Guide to Taking a Sexual History. [online] Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment/sexualhistory.pdf> [Accessed 6 Jun 2020]

Klein, D.A., Goldenring, J.M., Adelman, W.P. (2014). The psychosocial interview for adolescents updated for a new century fueled by media. *Contemporary Pediatrics*, Jan 2014. Available at http://www.trapeze.org.au/sites/default/files/2014_01_Klein_Goldenring_HEEADSSS3.0_Contemporary%20Pediatrics.pdf [Accessed 2 Jul 2020]

Medley, A. M., Hrapcak, S., Golin, R. A., Dziuban, E. J., Watts, H., Siberry, G. K., . . . Behel, S. (2018). Strategies for identifying and linking HIV-infected infants, children, and adolescents to HIV treatment services in resource limited settings. *JAIDS*, 78 Suppl 2, 598-5106. doi:10.1097/QAI.0000000000001732

McKee, M. D., Rubin, S. E., Campos, G., & O'Sullivan, L. F. (2011). Challenges of providing confidential care to adolescents in urban

primary care: clinician perspectives. *Annals of family medicine*, 9(1), 37-43. <https://doi.org/10.1370/afm.1186>

US Preventive Services Task Force. Pre-exposure Prophylaxis for the Prevention of HIV Infection: US Preventive Services Task Force Recommendation Statement. *JAMA*. 2019;321(22):2203-2213. doi:10.1001/jama.2019.6390

CDC (2006). Revised Recommendations for HIV Testing of Adults, Adolescents and Pregnant Women in Health-Care Settings. [online] Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/rr5514a1.htm>. [Accessed 4 Jun 2020].

CDC (2017). Recommendations for HIV Screening of Gay, Bisexual, and Other Men Who Have Sex with Men, United States, 2017. [online] Available at <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/wr/mm6631a3.htm>. [Accessed 4 Jun 2020].

CDC (2017). Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance, United States, 2017. [online] Available at https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/ss/ss6708a1.htm?_cid=ss6708a1_w [Accessed 4 Jun 2020]