



Statement to the World Health Assembly 2014

## **Adolescent Medicine**

International Pediatric Association

April 2014

The current cohort of young people worldwide is the largest it has ever been. Young people 10 - 24 years of age represent one quarter of the world's population. Four out of five young people live in less developed countries.

Mortality among young people has decreased less than in other age groups, however, most deaths in this age range are preventable.

Long term concerns include that nearly two thirds of premature deaths and one third of the total disease burden in adults are associated with conditions or behaviors that began during adolescence.

Most programs for adolescents narrowly focus on sexual and reproductive health, including HIV/AIDS. Adolescents have specific characteristics, capabilities and needs that evolve throughout the second decade of life. There is excellent evidence that positive interventions during adolescence can avert negative outcomes in adulthood.

- IPA strongly recommends that each country strengthen the protective aspects of the environment for adolescents and invest in preventive adolescent-sensitive programs. Policies and services should address the specific needs of adolescents. Effective services must be friendly, confidential and accessible.

Increased attention is needed to address unhealthy lifestyles, mental health issues and violence.

- IPA strongly recommends strengthening the adolescent development & health content of undergraduate training for health professionals, as well as post-graduate training of health professionals to help develop supportive systems for adolescents.
- The IPA urges that the World Health Assembly members adopt a resolution for global significant efforts in advocacy, comprehensive inter sectoral programs and evidence informed policies to reach the most vulnerable groups, including adolescents with chronic conditions and disabilities, migrants, adolescents out of school or who are homeless.

The International Pediatric Association (IPA) is a non-governmental organization with a membership of 144 National Pediatric Societies from 139 countries, 10 Regional Pediatric Societies representing all areas of the world, and 13 International Pediatric Specialty Societies. The IPA works collaboratively with member societies to mobilize networks of pediatricians for advocacy and programs in child health, working whenever possible with UN agencies. IPA works in close partnership with the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) on global vaccine priorities, and with AAP and the Albert B Sabin Vaccine Institute (SVI) on the Measles and Rubella Initiative.

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