

Helping Your Adolescent and Young Adult Patients

Get the Preventive Care and Services They Need





The Adolescent Health Consortium Project

Adolescent and young adult patients experience significant physical, emotional, and intellectual growth during that formative period of their lives. It is an ideal time for family physicians to educate and inform these patients about making healthy decisions, and to have these discussions in a confidential manner.

Despite strong evidence demonstrating the health benefits, many adolescents and young adults do not receive recommended preventive clinical services. In fact, fewer than half (48%) of individuals 10 to 17 years old receive an annual well visit dedicated to preventive care.¹

Recognizing the missed opportunities to improve the health of adolescents and young adults, the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) partnered with five other medical organizations to form the Adolescent Health Consortium Project. During the four-year period of the partnership, each organization designed and developed resources to help guide physicians and other health care providers in their care of adolescent and young adult patients.

The consortium participants focused on the following two goals:

- Increase youth and parent awareness of the importance of preventive and confidential care for youth.
- Increase the number of youth who receive preventive and confidential services, in part through the development and dissemination of resources and recommendations.

Family physicians have tremendous influence on the health of adolescents and young adults. This project encourages AAFP members to talk with parents about the importance of preventive health visits, and to have confidential one-on-one discussions with their adolescent and young adult patients about making healthy decisions.



Confidentiality

Aligning with the goals of the consortium project, the AAFP's policy for its members states that when caring for an adolescent or young adult patient, privacy should be respected and the patient should be offered an opportunity for examination and counseling separate from parents or guardians. However, the physician should make a reasonable effort to encourage the adolescent or young adult to involve parents or guardians in health care decisions. Use a well visit to discuss issues such as sexual health, as well as smoking, alcohol, and drug use.



AAFP Key Themes

As part of the consortium's efforts, the AAFP identified and focused its efforts on developing and selecting existing resources for our members in the following six key areas:

- Social and behavior health
- Immunizations
- Healthy habits
- Reproductive and sexual health
- Clinical care
- Patient and parent information



Clinical Preventive Service Recommendations

Many medical conditions that occur later in life can originate with the health decisions and behaviors that begin in adolescence and young adulthood. Clinical preventive services can help reduce the negative consequences of risky health behaviors and encourage healthy decisions.

Consistent with the consortium's goals, the AAFP designed the following table, which outlines preventive recommendations for adolescents and young adults for three age groups (11-13, 14-17, and 18-26). Use the table at right as a guidepost as you make recommendations for screening tests and immunizations, and have discussions with your adolescent and young adult patients.

Clinical Preventive Services Recommendations for Adolescents and Young Adults

Just Between Us: One-on-One Time with Your Patients

	Ages 11-13	Ages 14-17	Ages 18-26
Universal Screening and Counseling (Individuals at average risk)	Body Mass Index Depression Tobacco Use Skin Cancer Prevention (fair skin)	Body Mass Index Depression Tobacco Use Skin Cancer Prevention (fair skin) Intimate Partner Violence (females)	Body Mass Index Depression Tobacco Use Skin Cancer Prevention (fair skin) Intimate Partner Violence (females) Blood Pressure HIV Alcohol Misuse Cervical Cancer (ages ≥ 21, q 3 years)
	If sexually active: – Gonorrhea/Chlamydia (females) – Contraception – Prevention of sexually transmitted infections	If sexually active: – Gonorrhea/Chlamydia (females) – Contraception – Prevention of sexually transmitted infections	If sexually active: – Gonorrhea/Chlamydia (females) – Contraception
Selective Screening and Counseling (Individuals at increased risk)	HIV Syphilis Hepatitis B	HIV Syphilis Hepatitis B	HIV Syphilis Hepatitis B Cholesterol Prevention of sexually transmitted infections
Immunizations	Meningococcal Influenza (annual) Tdap HPV	Meningococcal Influenza (annual)	Influenza (annual) Td (q 10 years)
Discussion topics	Other substance use Physical activity Healthy eating Screen time School performance Dental hygiene General safety (e.g., seat belts, bike helmets)	Other substance use Physical activity Healthy eating Screen time School performance Dental hygiene General safety	Other substance use Physical activity Healthy eating Screen time Reproductive life plan Dental hygiene General safety

SOURCES: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention immunization schedules. cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html

AAFP Clinical Recommendations for Prevention Services. aafp.org/patient-care.html

*Recommendations apply to non-pregnant adolescents and young adults. *This work was supported by an unrestricted grant from the Merck Foundation.*

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Consortium Partners

The Adolescent Health Consortium Project consists of five partner organizations. The organizations agree on recommendations for preventive clinical care and endorse a common policy calling for the confidentiality of adolescent care. Each organization developed resources specific to their members' needs. The five consortium partners are the:

- American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)
- American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP)
- Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM)
- American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (The College)
- Columbia University

Resources

AAFP Adolescent and Young Adult Health
www.aafp.org/aya-health

AAFP Adolescent Health Member Interest Group (MIG)
www.aafp.org/mig-adolescent

American Family Physician Practice Guidelines – ACIP Releases 2017 Childhood Immunization Recommendations
www.aafp.org/childhood-immunization

FamilyDoctor.org – Immunization Schedules
<https://familydoctor.org/immunization-schedules/>

AAFP Clinical Preventive Service Recommendation – Immunizations
<https://www.aafp.org/patient-care/clinical-recommendations/all/immunizations.html>

American Family Physician Adolescent Health Screening and Counseling
www.aafp.org/adolescent-screening

AAFP Adolescent Immunization Office Champions Project
www.aafp.org/adolescent-office-champions

AAFP Policy – Adolescent Health Care, Confidentiality
www.aafp.org/adolescent-confidentiality

AAFP Policy – Adolescent Health Care, Role of the Family Physician
www.aafp.org/adolescent-physician-role

AAFP Position Paper – Adolescents, Protecting: Ensuring Access to Care and Reporting Sexual Activity and Abuse
www.aafp.org/adolescent-position-paper

References

1. Adams SH, Park MJ, Twietmeyer L, Brindis CD, Irwin CH. Association between adolescent preventive care and the role of the Affordable Care Act. [published ahead of print November 6, 2017]. *JAMA Pediatr*. <https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamapediatrics/fullarticle/2661148>. Accessed January 2, 2018.

