

Why invest in adolescent health measurement: policy brief

Key messages:

- The health of adolescents influences not only their current and future well-being, but also their educational outcomes, positive interaction with society and contribution to the economy.
- Adolescent health can be protected and improved by measuring the most important issues. These data can inform the prioritization of actions and allocation of resources.
- Almost all countries have existing data on adolescent health. Complementing and harmonizing these data with global indicators will enable countries to get a comprehensive picture of the health of their adolescents.
- Aligning country data with global indicators will also help countries to monitor progress in achieving adolescent health targets and reduce the burden of measurement and reporting efforts.

Executive summary:

Adolescence is a critical stage in life for physical, cognitive, and emotional development.

Comprehensive measurement of adolescent health can identify priorities for action, allocate resources efficiently, and benchmark progress towards a healthier present and a better future for the 1.3 billion adolescents, aged 10-19 years.

WHO in collaboration with UN Agencies has established a set of 47 indicators to focus adolescent health measurement on the most important issues and to maximize the use of existing data from population-based surveys and other sources.

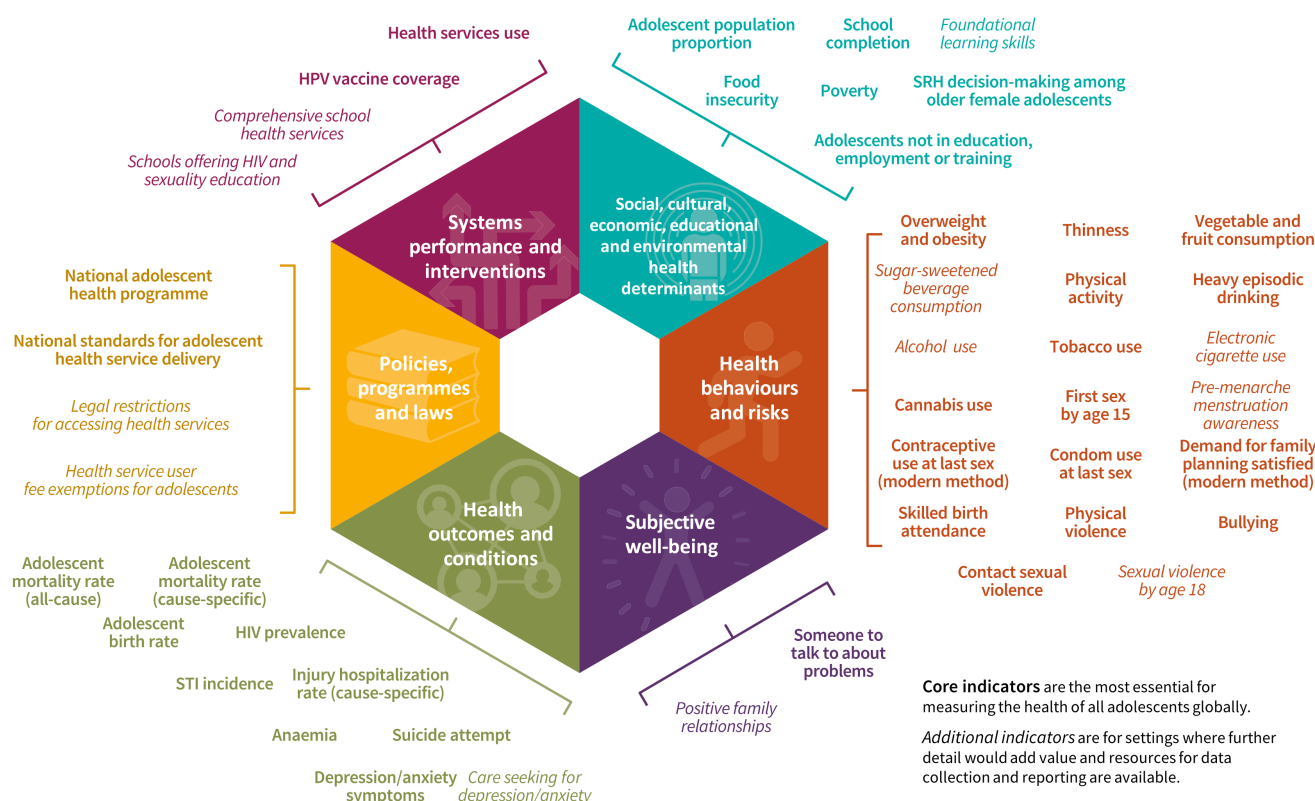
Why adolescent health indicators:

Almost all countries have existing data on adolescent health, but these data are often incomplete and not comparable over time and across countries. The lack of harmonization has resulted in high country burden of duplication of measurement and reporting.

To illustrate a comprehensive picture of adolescent health – and coordinate across and within national and international data collection groups – a set of 47 indicators have been selected.

The 47 indicators span across six domains:

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| (1) programmes, policies and laws, | (4) health behaviours and risks, |
| (2) systems performance and interventions, | (5) subjective well-being and |
| (3) social, cultural, economic, educational, and environmental health determinants, | (6) health outcomes and conditions. |



WHO is committed to supporting Member States in integrating the 47 indicators into their existing data collection systems and in using resulting information to set adolescent health priorities. The indicators are intended to guide policy and programming for adolescents, and to assist in identifying areas where more detailed health assessments and additional actions are needed.

An investment in adolescent health will yield benefits now and in the future by empowering young individuals to reach their full potential and contribute to building healthier and sustainable communities and societies.

