

Investing in Youth Health and Development: at a time of social change



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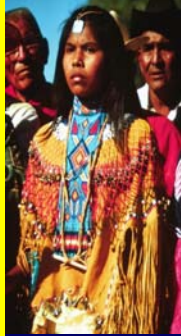
Adolescence: a stage of life that grew out of social change

- ◆ Created in 1904 by G. Stanley Hall
- ◆ The Industrial Revolution led to:
 - a higher value on education
 - rural to urban migration
 - shift from the farm to the factory
 - mandatory education led to age segregation and a *youth culture*

Social Change is the norm today in much of the world

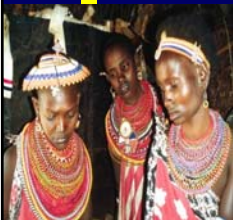
- ◆ Education
- ◆ Gender role changes
- ◆ A Global Economy
- ◆ Instantaneous communications with the world
- ◆ Civil War and ethnic conflicts
- ◆ Immigration and migration at a mass scale
- ◆ Democratization of political structures

We have learned much through research about *Adolescent Health and Development* over the past 20 years.



In 1990 we believed gender specific behaviors were predominantly the result of social learning...

...today we know that neuroendocrine and neurodevelopmental differences significantly impact variability in processing, learning and behavior.



In 1990 we had a *risk or deficit model* as the predominant framework for youth programs...

...today we have a *positive youth development* model that incorporates protective as well as risk factors.



In 1990 we had an invariant, stage-based conceptualization of adolescent development...

...today we have an ecological model that grounds development with in the contexts of a young person's life.

This new understanding brings with it a new perspective of youth that views them not as *the problem* but as *the possibility— the opportunity*.

Adolescence is an age of opportunity



- ◆ *Pubertal development* brings new capacities, a new body image and a new sense of self;
- ◆ *Cognitive development* brings with it the capacity to look at a problem from multiple perspectives and to explore competing options to its solution;

Adolescence is an age of opportunity



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- ◆ *Social development* brings with it a broader set of influences than just family: peers, teachers, religious leaders;
- ◆ *Moral development* brings with it idealism, social engagement, and volunteerism.



To tap the potential as well as to address the problems of youth, we need to view the adolescent nested in a wide set of social contexts and we need to understand how they influence both health and morbidity.

