



THE SOCIAL CONTEXT FOR ADOLESCENT HEALTH

MCH Training Program at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health

The MCH Training Program at Johns Hopkins includes a strong focus on adolescent health. Faculty interests include family, peer, school, and community influences on adolescent health behaviors and outcomes, adolescent sexuality and reproductive health in the U.S. and internationally, and application of research in community-based programs. Much of this work occurs under the auspices of the Center for Adolescent Health.

Robert Blum is Chair of the Department of Population, Family and Reproductive Health. His research interests include adolescent sexuality, chronic illness, and international adolescent health care issues. Dr. Blum served as a Principal Investigator for the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health, the largest survey of American youth ever undertaken. In a recent issue of the *American Journal of Public Health*, Dr. Blum published study findings debunking the myths that race, income, and family structure can be major predictors of youth health risk behaviors. Dr. Blum serves as consultant to the Pan American Health Organization, the World Bank, and UNICEF.

Clea McNeely studies the social contexts of adolescent health, with particular emphasis on schools and families. She uses social network measures and methods to explore how the social structure of schools influences adolescent health risk behaviors and mental health. Dr. McNeely also is interested in how adult-youth relationships promote or harm the health of adolescents. Dr. McNeely carries out community-based participatory research and evaluation in East Baltimore focused on implementing and evaluating strategies to ensure the health of young people as they transition to adulthood.

Kristin Mmari conducts research on youth-friendly health services and risk and protective factors related to reproductive health outcomes among adolescents. She specializes in conducting qualitative research and evaluating health service programs aimed at improving the health and well being of adolescents. Dr. Mmari also has experience with adolescent health research and evaluation internationally, having provided technical assistance for WHO, UNAIDS, and UNICEF to develop HIV indicators and measures for global adolescent health surveillance projects.

Kathleen Roche is primarily interested in understanding adolescent health and development within the context of growing up in a high-risk, urban context. She has explored the intersection between parenting and neighborhoods as related to adolescent sexual behavior, delinquency, violence, and substance use. Dr. Roche conducts research focused on low-income, predominately racial and ethnic minority families, examining how adolescent behavior varies by parenting, out-of-school care, and youth engagement in independent roles. She currently is engaged in the Langley Park Project, a collaboration between researchers and students, community and local government leaders, and residents which aims to improve the environment and lives within this immigrant Latino community in Montgomery and Prince Georges counties, Maryland.

Freya Sonenstein is Director of the Center for Adolescent Health. Her primary research interests include sexual and reproductive health, with special emphases on adolescents and males. Currently, Dr. Sonenstein is conducting a review of research funded under the Title X Family Planning Service Delivery Improvement Program, an assessment of programs that involve males in preventing teen pregnancy, and an analysis of how young men establish stable romantic relationships. Dr. Sonenstein has designed and conducted several major studies related to men's fertility, and she directs the National Survey of Adolescent Males funded by the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development.