

GLOBAL MEASUREMENT UPDATE

Progress in Adolescent Health Measurement and Future Plans

WHY ADOLESCENTS?

Adolescents (ages 10–19 years) represent over 16% of the global population. Adolescence is a critical period along the life course between childhood and adulthood with rapid and significant physical, emotional, cognitive, and social growth. Although often considered a healthy stage of life, there is significant death, illness, and injury in the adolescent years. Nearly one million adolescents die each year, mostly from preventable or treatable causes. Investment in adolescents improves their current health, enhances their health throughout their life course, contributes to the health of future generations, and is critical to sustainable development.

WHY IS ADOLESCENT HEALTH MEASUREMENT IMPORTANT?

Efforts in the past decade to advance adolescent health have led to appeals for better data and monitoring, such as the [Lancet Commission on Adolescent Health and Wellbeing](#) (Patton et al., 2016) and the first Global Accelerated Action for the Health of Adolescents—[AA-HA! Guidance](#). Strong and consistent measurement is important to design, build, and monitor adolescent health programs. National and subnational stakeholders benefit from strengthened adolescent health measures since better data can be used to determine priority programs and resource allocation and dispel myths and misconceptions around adolescent health and wellbeing. Global stakeholders also benefit from consistent and harmonized data to guide global actions toward improving adolescent health and tracking progress across the globe.



What is GAMA AG?

The [Global Action for Measurement of Adolescent Health Advisory Group \(GAMA AG\)](#) was established in 2018 to advise the World Health Organization (WHO), other United Nations agencies, and partners around adolescent health measurement reporting.

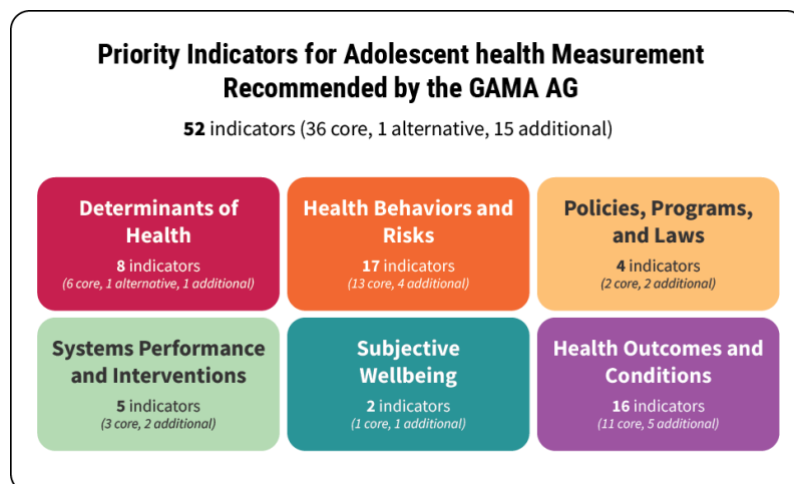
HOW TO IDENTIFY INDICATORS FOR ADOLESCENT HEALTH?

Through an inclusive, transparent, systematic, and consultative process, the GAMA AG is working toward proposing a set of priority indicators with guidance and tools for adolescent health measurement to focus data collection on the most important health issues for adolescents and harmonize measurement and reporting (Marsh et al., 2022). Some adolescent health measures are currently available through population-level surveys, such as the Demographic and Health Surveys, as well as by age disaggregation in many national health information systems. Research studies are another data source, with data varying by context. Continuous use of these data for decision-making and in research generates more demand for consistent information across contexts. Despite some data availability and use, adolescent health measures need to be more consistent and better defined across and within countries. As countries progress on the adolescent health agenda and collect more data, guidance on priority indicators will be essential.

WHAT TO MEASURE FOR ADOLESCENT HEALTH?

The draft adolescent health measurement framework proposed by GAMA AG includes six domains reflecting the multi-sectoral approach needed to address and monitor progress for adolescent health. A list of 52 [recommended priority indicators](#) was published as part of a phased process to inform monitoring of adolescent health (see Figure) (Marsh et al., 2022). Age disaggregation (10–14, 15–19 years) is also essential as integrated programs must adapt to the needs of different groups (Diaz et al., 2021).

Once finalized, **Ministries of Health and program implementers**, such as those working on MOMENTUM awards, will be encouraged to use the priority indicators recommended by the GAMA AG to make informed decisions. Likewise, **health program evaluators and researchers** can use these indicators in studies assessing intervention effectiveness and impact.



WHAT IS AHEAD IN ADOLESCENT MEASUREMENT?

A feasibility assessment of the draft priority indicators is currently underway, and a harmonization exercise is being conducted across initiatives and data collection instruments to compare the overlap of currently tracked indicators with the prioritized list. Through these activities, the priority indicators will be revised and further refined. The list of indicators will be finalized in 2024 and accompanied by different documents and resources to support their use.

References

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- 3 Patton, G. C., Sawyer, S. M., Santelli, J. S., Ross, D. A., Afifi, R., Allen, N. B., . . . Viner, R. M. (2016). Our future: a Lancet commission on adolescent health and wellbeing. *The Lancet*, 387(10036), 2423-2478. doi:10.1016/S0140-6736(16)00579-1

More Information

GAMA AG activities:
www.who.int/groups/the-global-action-for-measurement-of-adolescent-health/

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