

# H.E.A.L.T.H.



...HOW TO ACCESS HEALTH CARE

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Created by the Adolescent Health Working Group

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Created by the Adolescent Health Working Group

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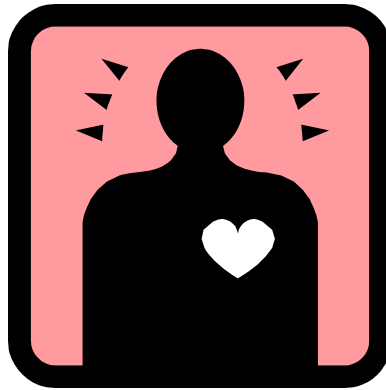
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# I. INTRODUCTION



## The Organization: The Adolescent Health Working Group

The Adolescent Health Working Group (AHWG) is a coalition of committed youth, adults, and representatives of public and private agencies and clinics whose mission is to significantly advance the health and well-being of San Francisco's youth. Established in 1996, the AHWG has embraced community organizing strategies as a means to improve the health status of youth in SF and recognizes that its mission can only be accomplished by utilizing the collective wisdom, resources and energy of individuals and public and private agencies who love and respect young people. The AHWG has provided community-centered leadership in bringing the health issues of adolescents to the attention of health policy decision-makers at both the local and state levels.

### Our Goals

- ⇒ To improve public awareness of youth's assets and health risks.
- ⇒ To catalyze support for barrier free access to health services and programs that match the needs of San Francisco's young people.
- ⇒ To influence, create and change procedures, policies and laws to ensure delivery of an age appropriate and culturally-competent continuum of integrated health services that emphasizes youth development, health promotion, prevention, harm reduction, psychosocial guidance, and family education and support.
- ⇒ To significantly enhance the quality and coordination of comprehensive youth health services.

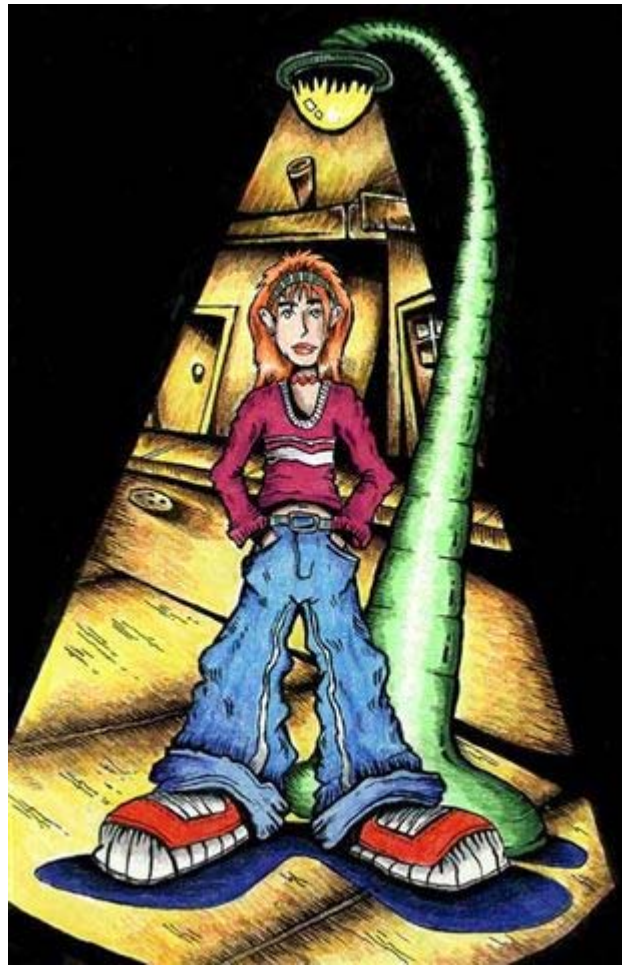
### Our Values and Beliefs

- ☑ Youth and their families and loved ones deserve our attention, support, guidance and care.
- ☑ Youth are unique and their specific needs, which are continuously changing, must be taken into account by health programs and services.
- ☑ With information and direction, youth are powerful and educated health consumers and they can make valuable contributions to the design, conduct and evaluation of health programs and services.
- ☑ Youth health rights and responsibilities must be preserved while ensuring parent education and guidance.
- ☑ Every effort should be undertaken to eliminate health disparities among San Francisco youth with regard to race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, immigration status, geographic location, and socioeconomic factors.
- ☑ Given appropriate information and input, providers and policy makers will make better decisions when crafting and implementing programs and services.
- ☑ The important task of addressing and improving youth health and well-being rests with families, community members and institutions, professionals that come into contact with or work on behalf of youth and health care providers, services/programs, and systems.



## Our Activities

- ☆ Conduct community, public policy, and scientific research and analysis.
- ☆ Disseminate information and knowledge.
- ☆ Convene groups and forums for information sharing, planning and strategizing, networking and socializing.
- ☆ Organize and provide public and provider education and training.
- ☆ Voice issues, concerns and positions on behalf of the coalition.
- ☆ Collaborate/partner with new and/or like-minded coalitions and groups.



## Rationale Behind the H.E.A.L.T.H. Curriculum

This curriculum was created because previous outreach efforts with adolescents clearly pointed to a deficit in youth's awareness of key health concepts and youth's difficulty in obtaining services in the San Francisco health delivery system. Our experiences confirmed that youth lack basic knowledge of the importance of being in control of one's health and the ability to exercise principles of self-advocacy and prevention to promote longevity and happiness. The H.E.A.L.T.H. workshop teaches youth to be active and savvy consumers of the health care system by focusing on the following key components of the presentation: **H**-having knowledge, **E**-enrollment and **A**-access, **L**-laws to know, **T**-total **H**-health. Through the use of this acronym, the workshop provides the following:

- Information on health topics including health insurance coverage
- Examples of how to ask questions of a health provider
- Health promotion and prevention tips
- Provide basic steps teens can take to impact the quality of health care they receive
- A review of free and low-cost health insurance coverage options
- And much more ...

This curriculum seeks to be informative and fun while providing adolescents and young adults with important resources for improving their access to health care. The curriculum has been adapted to serve the needs of middle school, high school, and college-aged youth (18-24). The appendices referenced in this curriculum identify a wide spectrum of age-specific activities and materials. Additionally, there are suggestions on how to engage youth in various environments, from classrooms to after school settings, and there are also tips on how to work with groups of different sizes. The presentation typically ranges from 35-45 minutes depending on the time frame provided, participation of the audience, and the size of the group. To cover all of the concepts in the curriculum, it is ideal to spend 3-4 sessions with each class or group.

We hope that you will incorporate this curriculum into the work you do with youth. This curriculum can even be used to educate staff and health professionals about how to empower youth to be savvy consumers of their health. Most importantly, our wish is for this curriculum to be adapted, expanded, and to fully evolve to best serve the needs of youth in San Francisco.



## Guidelines for Curriculum

The curriculum provides learning objectives, background information and discussion questions for each letter in the H.E.A.L.T.H acronym. In addition, there are activities to facilitate the workshop in a fun, interactive, learning environment.

- ☐ When facilitating the H.E.A.L.T.H. workshop, always establish group agreements. That way everyone has agreed as a group on definitions of appropriate behavior during the presentation.

For example:

- Respect—one person talking at a time, everyone else listening
- Confidentiality and the right to pass
- Raise your hand when asking a question
- Step up, step back

- ☐ Begin the workshop with an icebreaker (For a list of ice breakers, look at *Appendix I*)

- ☐ When facilitating the various H.E.A.L.T.H. activities, keep in mind the following guidelines:
  - The activities were created to complement each section of the acronym, H.E.A.L.T.H. The activities are described in an easy to follow format, which includes supplies needed, directions, and activity instructions.
  - Please note that some of the activities are tailored specifically to middle school and/or high school audiences to facilitate and involve issues that are relevant to their age group.
  - Also provided below is a Tips & Suggestions section designed to provide innovative ways in which activities may be altered for different groups and settings.
  - We encourage you to change and adapt any aspect of the activities to facilitate the H.E.A.L.T.H. curriculum in a way that is relevant to the participants.

### ◆ Tips & Suggestions

#### 1. Working with different size groups:

(For 10 people or fewer...)

- ✦ Make sure to establish ground rules before starting workshop.
- ✦ Consider doing fewer activities.
- ✦ Ask for individual input and experiences.
- ✦ Have a more informal discussion about some of the topics/issues.
- ✦ Have participants work in pairs of two (instead of larger groups).

(For 10 people or more...)

- ✦ Use activities to help engage participants.
- ✦ Make sure to establish ground rules before starting the workshop.

- ✦ Encourage small group work and discussion.
- ✦ Involve the help of the classroom teacher or group coordinator for disciplinary measures.

2. *After-School Programs:*

- ✦ Emphasis should be on \*Fun.\*
- ✦ Remember that students come to programs desiring a different setting than what are offered in schools.
- ✦ Facilitate ice breakers, games, and activities—avoid lecture/classroom style.\*\*
- ✦ Be sure to include ground rules as the basis for interaction. Emphasize: respect, confidentiality, listening, and talking one at a time.
- ✦ Generally, shorter is better.
 

*\*\*We do not currently have a “game” version of this curriculum. You might consider using jeopardy, game/show type construct with prizes, points, etc. We encourage you to be creative in developing a version of the H.E.A.L.T.H workshop that suits the needs of your program.\*\**

3. *When time is an issue (Presentation time is limited or cut short):*

- ✦ Limit the number of activities.
- ✦ Prioritize: Skip ice breaker depending on how short time is; focus on: prevention, confidentiality, and minor consent.

4. *When working with Middle School age youth:*

- ✦ This age group seems particularly engaged by issues surrounding confidentiality, parental consent and notification, and what their rights are in a health care setting.
- ✦ Middle school students are usually very interested in the concept of justice and fairness—therefore, they seem livened up by the idea of standing up for their rights with regard to health and they get jazzed when thinking of the possibility of taking charge of their health.

5. *When working with High School age youth:*

- ✦ This age group usually finds issues of consent relevant to their lives, and has many questions about confidential services.

◆ **When adapting the activities for participants, keep in mind their:**

- ☆ Age
- ☆ Workshop setting
- ☆ Cultural backgrounds
- ☆ Language
- ☆ Health concerns
- ☆ Life priorities
- ☆ Concentration span

◆ **EVALUATIONS**

We encourage those that do utilize this workshop to evaluate the presenter's performance and the information provided. As information and health concerns change constantly it is important to receive feedback in order to further improve and re-develop the curriculum.

Sample evaluations are provided in *Appendix A*

**Have fun and be prepared and open for discussion!**

