

HM04

Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH) for adolescents and youth

Study Session Outline

The session will be following outlines:

01. Sexual and reproductive health for adolescent and youth

Duration

This study session requires around 1 hours of formal study time.

Overview:

This module will have one unit that will discuss about Sexual and reproductive health for adolescents and youth and its importance in crisis situation.

Learning Objectives

1. Learning and knowing how to proactively keep one's sexual and reproductive health

Learning Outcomes

By end of horizontal module, the learner will be able to:

- 1 Understand the concept of health and reproductive health
- 2 Define adolescents, youth, and young people
- 3 Learn about sexual and reproductive health (SRH) problems that young people might face
- 4 Understand what youth friendly YFS services
6. Discuss how young people can keep their SRH

Terminologies

| | |
|------|------------------------------------|
| STIs | Sexually transmitted infections |
| WHO | World health organization |
| YFS | Youth friendly services |
| MISP | Minimum essential service packages |

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Introduction about this module

Welcome to this horizontal module that will talk about sexual and reproductive health among adolescents and youth. Adolescents and youth are a huge part of the world and our country's population. This huge population is mostly found in developing countries where there are many health, economic and social problems. As adolescence is the period where most young people start sexual activity it is also a period of exposure to many health risks.

Youth friendly reproductive health services can improve young people's reproductive health and prevent and treat sexual and reproductive health problems among young people. This module will be an introduction and a highlight about sexual and reproductive health and its importance to young people. Definition and components of sexual and reproductive health, attributes of youth friendly services, sexual and reproductive health problems, ways to keep young peoples' sexual and reproductive health will be covered in this module.

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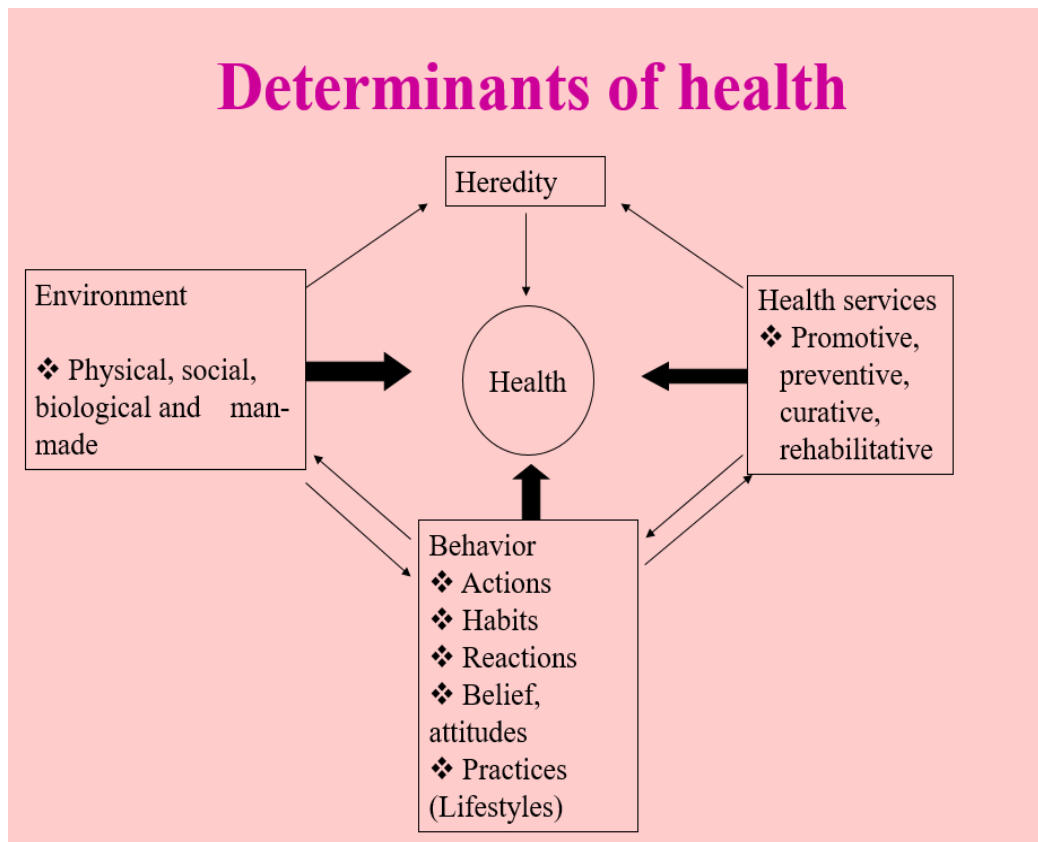
1. Definition of Health

“WHO definition: Health is a status of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, not just the absence of disease or impairment and the capability to engage in constructive social and economic activity” (WHO 2010).

1.1 Dimensions of health

Health has a physical, mental, social and spiritual dimensions.

1.2 Determinants of health



Determinants of health (James Lind Institute, 2017)

2. What is sexual and reproductive health?

Reproductive health is defined as a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease, in all matters related to the reproductive system and its functions and processes. (ICPD 1994)

2.1 Defining adolescent and youth

Adolescence is the transition from childhood to adulthood and is marked by an abrupt physical, mental and social developmental changes. In this age secondary sexual characteristics start to show in both girls and boys and also sexual and reproductive maturity.

According to WHO (WHO, 2011)

- Very young adolescents: 10-14 years old
- Adolescents: 10-19 years old
- Youths: 15-24 years old
- Young people: 10-24 years old

2.3 Why sexual and reproductive health for adolescent and youth?

More than 1.5 billion people of the world's population are estimated to be young people (10-24). And majority of those (70%) live in developing countries where there are many social, economic and health challenges. (International perspectives 2009)

Young people's reproductive health depends on

- Socio cultural influences
- Social support structures (family, friends, communities)
- Access to health care services
- Education and employment opportunities

Adolescence is usually the period when young people initiate sexual activity.

Sexually active adolescents are exposed to

- Risks of unwanted pregnancy
- Complications of unsafe abortion
- Sexually transmitted infections including HIV/AIDS and others

The potential increase risk of exposure calls for the importance of reproductive health education for young people and also the need to have an accessible and available youth friendly reproductive health services. Youth friendly reproductive health services (YFS) are key to keeping young

peoples' sexual and reproductive health. Despite their significance YFS are usually non-functional, nonexistent in many developing countries. They are also misunderstood, unrecognized and underestimated by society, families, service providers and, program implementers.

2.4 Recognition of adolescents and youths right to access SRH services and information

- International conference on population development 1994 in Cairo
- Ethiopia's health sector development plan
- Health extension program
- Ethiopian adolescent and youth reproductive health strategy

2.5. Sexual and reproductive health challenges of adolescent and youth

2.5.1 Early marriage

Is any marriage of a child under the age of 18 years old which is common in developing countries.

Early marriage happens for many reasons

- Societal norms and pressures
- To ensure virginity
- Increase the number of children
- To get material benefits
- Cultural reasons

Consequences of early marriage

- Early pregnancies and childbirth
- Sexual violence
- Physical violence
- Poor health outcomes
- Girls becoming away from school

2.5.2 Early pregnancy and childbirth

Can have the following consequences

- Maternal illness and death

- Prolonged or obstructed labor
- Complication to new born

2.5.3 Unwanted pregnancy and unsafe abortion

Unwanted pregnancy is any pregnancy that happens without plan or desire of the woman. This may result in abortion which is unsafe. Unsafe abortion is any attempt to terminate pregnancy without having a health professional or proper health services,

Complications of unsafe abortion

- Tear in cervix
- Perforation of the uterus
- Fever and infection
- Septic shock
- severe bleeding
- Infertility and death

2.5.4 Sexually transmitted infections

Sexually transmitted infections (STIs) are infections of the reproductive tract that are mainly transmitted from one infected person to another during unprotected sex (WHO 2005).

Examples of STIs symptoms

- Vaginal discharge
- Genital ulcer
- Urethral discharge
- Genital itching
- Pain and bleeding during sex

Examples of STIs

- Chlamidia gonorrhea
- Hepatitis B virus
- HIV AIDS
- Herpes simplex virus

- Human papilloma virus (cervical cancer)
- Syphilis
- Trichomoniasis

Risk factors affecting STI transmission, including HIV

- Having low immunity
- Having multiple sexual partners
- Low awareness about protective measures (e.g. Using condom)
- Being a woman
- Poor information and access to SRH services

Sexually transmitted infections are easily preventable by having one partner, consistent use of condom and seeking early treatment if exposed to unprotected sex. Delayed treatment of STIs can cause complications.

Improved access to sexual health information, education and services can prevent and mitigate STI spreads among young people.

3.0 What are youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services?

- Youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services is an evidence based approach to reducing barriers to service uptake by young people
- It tailors messages and services for different sub-age groups of young people
- Can take up different approaches
- Can be given at public or private health facilities
- Can be integrated at youth centers
- Can be provided through non facility based(mobile, pharmacy or community outreach)
- Can be given in schools, universities, training centers, internally displaced peoples' centers, young peoples' workplaces
- Ensures care, privacy, confidentiality, respect in service provision
- Involves youth and the community in its program design and implementation
- Services are affordable or for free, are given during convenient hours, locations are in easily accessible locations

3.1 Components of the youth friendly services

- Counseling and provision of accurate information on SRH, including puberty and sexuality
- HIV counseling and testing , provision of, referral for antiretroviral therapy
- Contraceptive counseling and provision of a full range of methods
- Sexual abuse and violence counseling ,treatment and referral
- STI counseling, testing and treatment
- Nutrition counseling
- Comprehensive abortion care services
- Pregnancy testing, antenatal care, delivery services, postnatal care and breastfeeding
- Functional referral linkage
- Other medical care

3.3 Adolescent and youth SRH services should be

Available: all SRH components should be available for young people.

Accessible: services should be in the right place at the right time.

Acceptable: services should be acceptable by young people. Health workers should not be unfriendly, unsympathetic or judgmental.

Appropriate: services must meet young people's specific needs. Services should be youth friendly.

Effective: Health providers need experience and experience skills to inform and counsel adolescents effectively.

The key service delivery components of AYSRH

Prevention services:

- Information and counseling: Adolescents should avoid or change behaviors that increase the risk of negative sexual and reproductive health services.

Risk reduction services

- Sexually active young people need access to condoms to protect themselves from against HIV infection, STIs and unintended pregnancy.

Diagnosis, treatment and care

- Treatment of STIs
- Testing for HIV with pre and post counseling
- Treating young people with HIV and AIDS with care, support and treatment with antiretroviral medications.

3.3 Protecting young peoples' sexual and reproductive health

3.3.1 How can adolescents and youth keep their Sexual and reproductive health?

- By getting information about sexual and reproductive health from their parents, teachers, peers, health providers, media, books, guidelines and health messages.
- By being responsible and proactive with their own health.
- Engaging in healthy behaviors like sports, reading books, getting involved in school clubs and youth centers.
- Avoiding excessive alcohol consumption, avoiding smoking cigarettes and other materials.
- Avoiding casual and unprotected/unplanned sex, avoiding multiple sexual partners.
- Being in faithful relationship
- Consistent and appropriate use of condoms and contraceptives
- If unprotected sex happens going to a health provider and consulting
- Recognizing symptoms of sexually transmitted infections and seeking health care as soon as possible
- Accessing their nearby youth friendly reproductive health services

3.3.2 How can family, school and society keep young people's sexual and reproductive health?

- By supporting young people to be expressive and free
- Understanding that adolescent are not children nor adults and that they have different physical, mental and social developments than children , that they have different needs
- Having a loving, understanding and supporting relationship with adolescents and youth
- By having open conversation about sexual health at home, at school and community

- By having a close parent teacher relationship
- Availing school health services with information about sex education, information about reproductive health and ways to keep young people's reproductive health

Summary

- Adolescence is a transition from childhood to adulthood and is marked by abrupt physical, mental and social changes.
- Adolescence is when sexual activity is usually started and they may be exposed to different health problems
- Unwanted pregnancy, STIs, unsafe abortion, early marriage and early childbirth are some of the SRH problems that can happen to young people.
- Young people's reproductive health maybe affected by social support structures, access to health services and, education and employment opportunities.
- Youth friendly sexual and reproductive health services are evidence based approaches that provide preventive and curative reproductive health services to young people.

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