

GUIDELINE:

Implementing effective actions for improving **ADOLESCENT NUTRITION**



World Health
Organization

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Publication history

This derivative guideline, *Guideline: implementing effective actions for improving adolescent nutrition* is a summary of existing World Health Organization (WHO) evidence-informed guidelines specifically addressing malnutrition in all its forms in adolescents. It complements the *WHO recommendations on adolescent health*, with emphasis on the implementation of nutrition-specific and nutrition-sensitive interventions targeting adolescents. Readers are invited to read in detail the included references as well as the evidence supporting the

recommendations in the individual guidelines cited throughout this publication. Additional supporting information and publications supporting country programme implementation in adolescents can be found in *Global accelerated action for the health of adolescents (AA-HA!): guidance to support country implementation*. This publication also presents sections on dissemination as well as on ethical and equity considerations, as summarized in the most recent reviews on these topics.

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GUIDELINE¹: IMPLEMENTING EFFECTIVE ACTIONS FOR IMPROVING ADOLESCENT NUTRITION

Executive summary

Background

Nutrition has a profound impact on the current and future health of adolescents (ages 10–19 years). A sustainable healthy diet and healthy eating practices during adolescence have the potential to limit any nutritional deficits and linear-growth faltering generated during the first decade of life, and may limit harmful behaviours contributing to the epidemic of noncommunicable diseases in adulthood. Investing in adolescent health brings triple dividends: better health for adolescents now, improved well-being and productivity in their future adult life and reduced health risks for their children. Assuring optimal nutrition among adolescents requires coordinated actions across multiple sectors.

*The global strategy for women's, children's and adolescents' health 2016–2030*² aims to achieve the highest attainable standard of health for all women, children and adolescents in every setting. It envisions a world in which they realize their rights to physical and mental health and well-being, have social and economic opportunities, and are able to participate fully in shaping prosperous and sustainable societies. The *Global accelerated action for the health of adolescents (AA-HA!): Guidance to support country implementation*³ called for a systematic approach to planning and implementing national programmes that address the specific needs of adolescents. Fortunately, evidence-informed actions exist to address malnutrition in all its forms, characterized by the coexistence of undernutrition along with overweight, obesity or risk factors for diet-related noncommunicable diseases in adolescence and adulthood.

Purpose

This publication is a derivative product summarizing the global, evidence-informed recommendations

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