

# 22nd

International Association  
for Adolescent Health  
(IAAH) European  
Regional Conference



**Joint Event:**

15th STATE OF THE  
ART Panhellenic  
Adolescent Health /  
Medicine Congress

## *Youth Development Challenges in the post-COVID-19 era*

[www.IAAH-Athens2022.gr](http://www.IAAH-Athens2022.gr)

## **Conclusions Summary**

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Adolescence is a unique stage of human development and an important time for laying the foundations of good health. As adolescents are not a homogenous group, they experience rapid physical, cognitive and psychosocial growth. This affects how they feel, think, make decisions, and interact with the world around them. During this phase adolescents establish patterns of behavior and they need role models, standards and opportunities to meaningfully participate in the design and delivery of interventions to improve and maintain their health. Expanding such opportunities is key to responding to adolescents' specific needs and rights.

Risky behaviors are a constant fear for all adolescents. Alcohol and substance abuse, unsafe sex, road traffic injuries, suicide, interpersonal violence and mental health issues are some of the leading causes of adolescent death. Other serious challenges are poor diet, low physical activity, sexual abuse, partner violence, pregnancy complications and unsafe abortions.

Safe and supportive environments, sexual education, mental health support, opportunities to develop life skills, health and transition services that are accessible, equitable, appropriate and effective are the main pillars for the call to action that needs to be released.

In the congress many crucial topics following all the above were discussed:

Transition services are a significant part in adolescents' life, especially to those dealing with chronic illnesses, yet there is much effort needed to establish and preserve them in the future. Also, many topics about COVID-19 pandemic and health crises in general were highlighted, so that we take into consideration that adolescents were disproportionately affected by the pandemic and many consequences of this period are yet to be known. On top of that, war images come from all over the world after a long and tough pandemic time. The wars influence children of every country worldwide and the most recent and harsh images come from Ukraine, witnessing the refugee waves and the economic crises due to war.

As young people, future pediatricians and healthcare providers in general, our ambitions and dreams are the same: we aspire to bring our creative and innovative contributions to this world. This meeting has strong participation from young individuals across Greece and we hope that our voices will reach the goal: to be listened to and help to shape all this strong initiatives, approach adolescents and strengthen their need for communication, initiatives and connectedness. Subsequently, promoting primary healthcare in adolescents should be of great concern, so that healthy adolescents growing up to healthy adults.