



Africa Regional Forum on Youth
Reproductive Health and HIV
June 6-9, 2006

***Reproductive Health/HIV
Services for Youth: Issues
and Challenges***

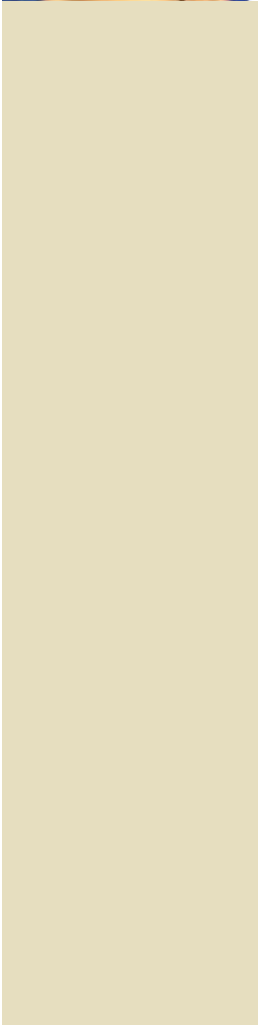
Ed Scholl, FHI/YouthNet



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

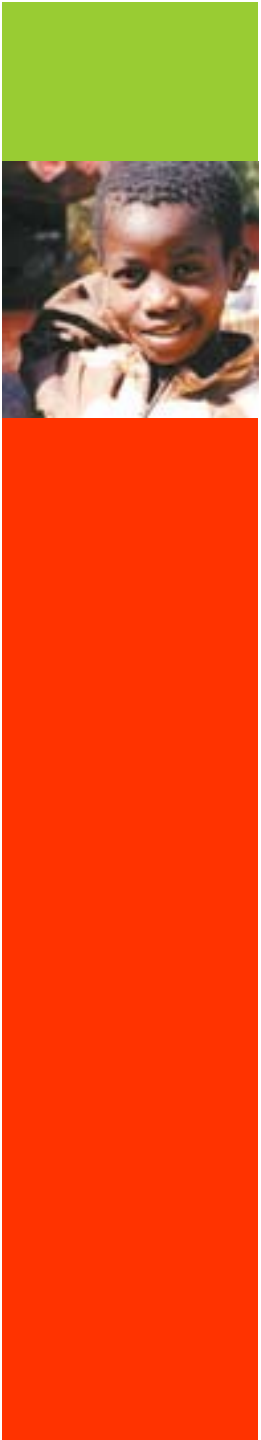
YouthNet



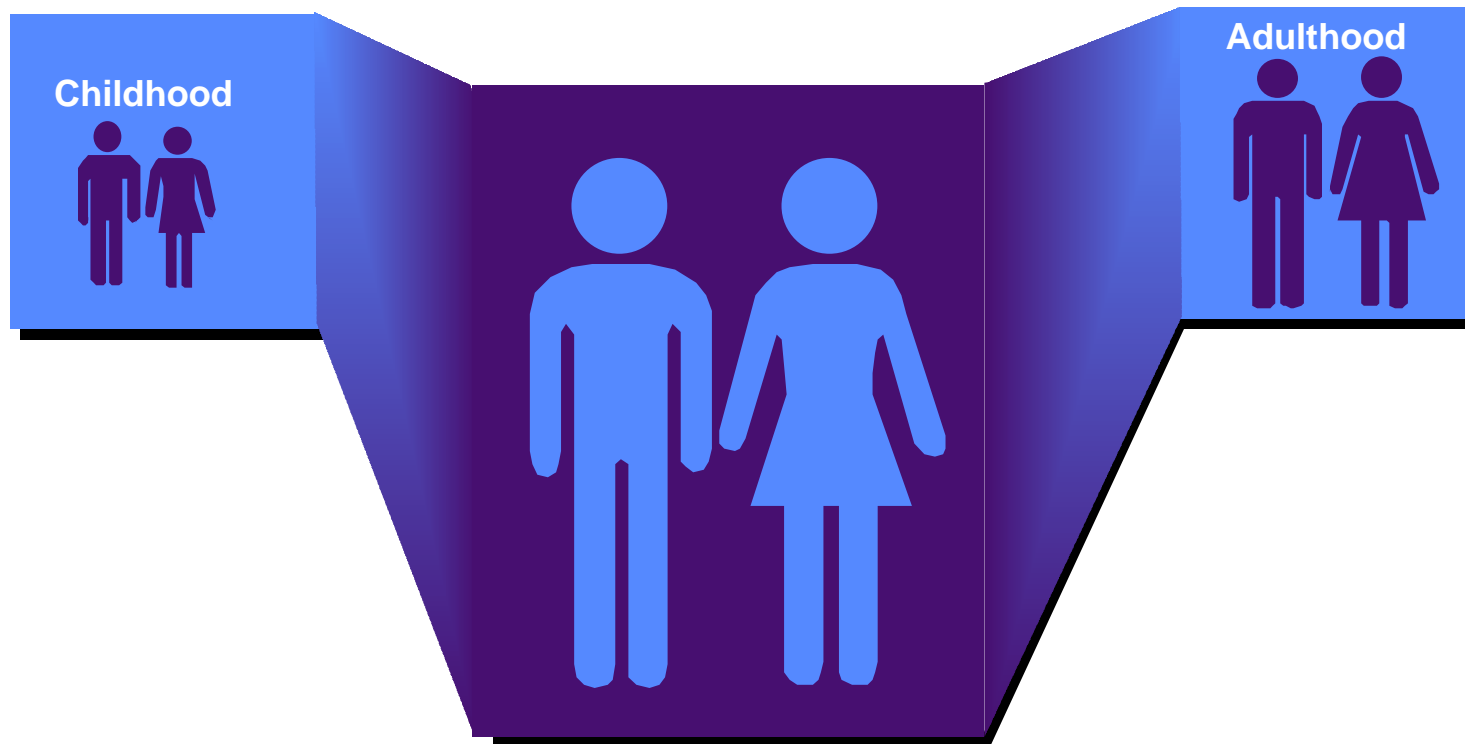


Services...the third leg





Defining “Youth”



**Terms used: adolescents, young people,
young adults, teenagers, youth**

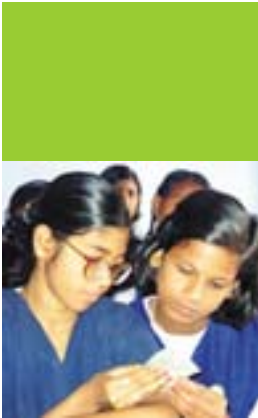
Age Range: 10-24

Youth are Diverse...



- Age
- Female/male
- Marital status
- Sexual activity
- School status
- Childbearing status
- Economic status
- Rural/urban residence
- Political/cultural values
- Ethnicity/religion





...Services Must Be Diverse

- Contraceptives (inc. ECPs)
- Testing and treatment of STIs
- Testing and treatment of HIV
- Pre- and post-natal care
- Obstetrical care
- Post-abortion care
- Harm reduction
- Counseling and services for sexual violence and abuse



Integration of RH/HIV Services

- Most young people at risk of both pregnancy and HIV
- Youth interventions already have many dual effects
- Integration can happen on many fronts (e.g. FP and CT, PMTCT, PAC, etc.)
- Adding FP to PMTCT programs cost effective in preventing HIV infections





Integration Challenges

- Limited time between providers/clients
- Provider training in multiple disciplines
- Infrastructure/equipment limitations
- Referral compliance
- Greater demand for diagnostic/curative services than preventive services

*New integration website:
www.fpandhiv.org*



Increasing Access to Quality Services ... *Service Delivery Access*

- Location-related barriers (distance, accessible by public transportation)
- Hours
- Drop-in
- Pricing
- Product placement in commercial establishments





...Medical Barriers

Unnecessary or unjustifiable policies, procedures or practices, based at least in part on a medical rationale, that result in an impediment to, or denial of, the service.

- Minimum age requirements
- Parental consent requirements
- Spousal consent requirements
- Unnecessary medical procedures
- Requiring non-menstruating women to return when menstruating in order to begin using hormonal methods or IUDs

...Social/Cultural Barriers

- Gender norms
- Religion
- Cultural norms surrounding sex
- Open discussion of sexuality
- Judgmental providers
- Social pressure for early childbearing
- Laws/policies/political will



...Missed Opportunities



- Young women giving birth can be counseled about, and offered, post-partum contraception
- Young people who come for contraception can be offered HIV testing
- Young people who see a health care provider about an unrelated ailment can be asked if they know what they can do to protect themselves from HIV and pregnancy

If you are sexually active, what are you doing to prevent pregnancy and STIs?

...Taking Services to Where Youth Are



- Don't rely on health system only
- Provide services through sports clubs, young women's groups, faith communities
- Utilize the private sector (esp. retail outlets for contraceptives)
- Provide services in the workplace for older youth
- Provide services through peer educators
- Provide services, or referral for services, in schools



... Youth Friendly Services

- Train existing staff in health clinics to be more sensitive to concerns of youth
- Redesign health facilities to provide more privacy and/or separate hours for youth
- Establish a separate clinic or unit for youth within a hospital or larger facility
- Design separate facilities for youth or provide mobile clinics for youth



Characteristics of YFS

- Specially trained staff
- Respect for young people
- Privacy and confidentiality honored
- Adequate time for client/provider interaction
- Separate space and special times
- Convenient hours/location
- Comfortable surroundings
- Affordable fees
- Drop-in clients welcomed
- Wide range of services and referrals available
- Youth involved in design and continuing feedback

Final Thoughts



- For sexually active youth, there is a large gap between RH/HIV needs and use of services...demand creation is needed, especially for preventive services
- We need to learn more about what works and what doesn't through better research, evaluation and cost studies
- We need to integrate and scale up successful pilot projects in the public sector for greater coverage and sustainability
- We need to tap the commercial private sector more

Synergy between education, supportive environment, and services

