

SCAA Launches New Webpage on Adolescent Health

On its main website, SCAA recently launched a [new webpage](#) dedicated to information on adolescent health. The page can be accessed from the Initiatives and Legislation drop down menu and contains links to resources and publications about adolescent health, with a focus on reproductive health issues. The new webpage connects SCAA's work on disconnected youth and youth within various child serving systems, to emphasize that good health, both in the early years and in adolescence, improves school enrollment and retention, enhances the ability to learn and makes students more productive.

Adolescents are often thought of as healthy but, while most make the transition to adulthood in good health, others do not. Some health problems affect adolescents immediately, such as chronic disease, mental health or other disabilities. The consequences of other problems or behaviors don't show up until adulthood. For example, tobacco use, infections from sexually transmitted disease, poor eating and lack of exercise can lead to illness or premature death later in life. Adolescent health also has an intergenerational component. When adolescents have babies, those children are at a higher risk for poor health outcomes and are likely to suffer from the same economic and social hardships as their young parents.

As SCAA focuses on the problems of disconnected youth and youth within various child-serving systems, the connection between health, academic achievement and economic self-sufficiency has become more apparent. Most people take it for granted that very young children must be healthy in order to take full advantage of school. The necessity of good health does not stop as children advance through the grades. Good health in adolescence improves school enrollment and retention, enhances the ability to learn and makes students more productive. Teens and young adults who are parents find school difficult and many do not finish, diminishing their chances for a well-paying job.

This webpage was created as a resource to bring adolescent health information to the many SCAA colleagues and partner organizations working with teens and young adults. We hope it increases the understanding of the relationship between good health and appropriate programs and services, to develop adolescents into productive, educated citizens of New York State.