

Advancing a Public Health Approach to Improve Sexual Health in the United States: A Framework for National Efforts

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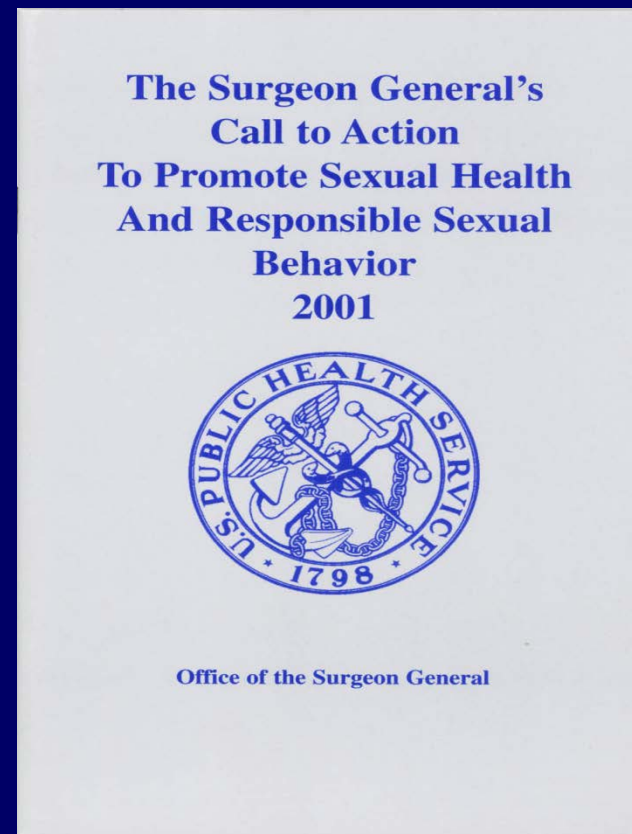


Overview

- Historical perspective
- Why is a focus on sexual health needed now?
- Advancing sexual health in the US: where are we?

July 2001: Surgeon General's Call to Action

- Focused on the need to promote sexual health and responsible sexual behavior across the lifespan
 - Essential component of overall individual health
 - Has major impact on overall health of communities
 - National dialogue at all levels critical in improving population health
- Primary goal to stimulate respectful, thoughtful, and mature discussion in our communities and in our home about sexuality.



June 2009: Community Guide Review of Education Interventions for Adolescents

- Meta-analyses of published studies on Abstinence Education (AE, n=23) and Comprehensive Risk Reduction (CRR, n = 62)

| • Findings | AE | CRR |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Sexual activity | -16%* | -12%* |
| Frequency of sex | -23% | -19%* |
| No. Partners | no D | -14%* |
| Unprotected sex | no D | -25%* |
| Use of protection (condoms, BC) | no D | +13% |
| STI | +8% | -31%* |
| Pregnancy | +12% | -11% |

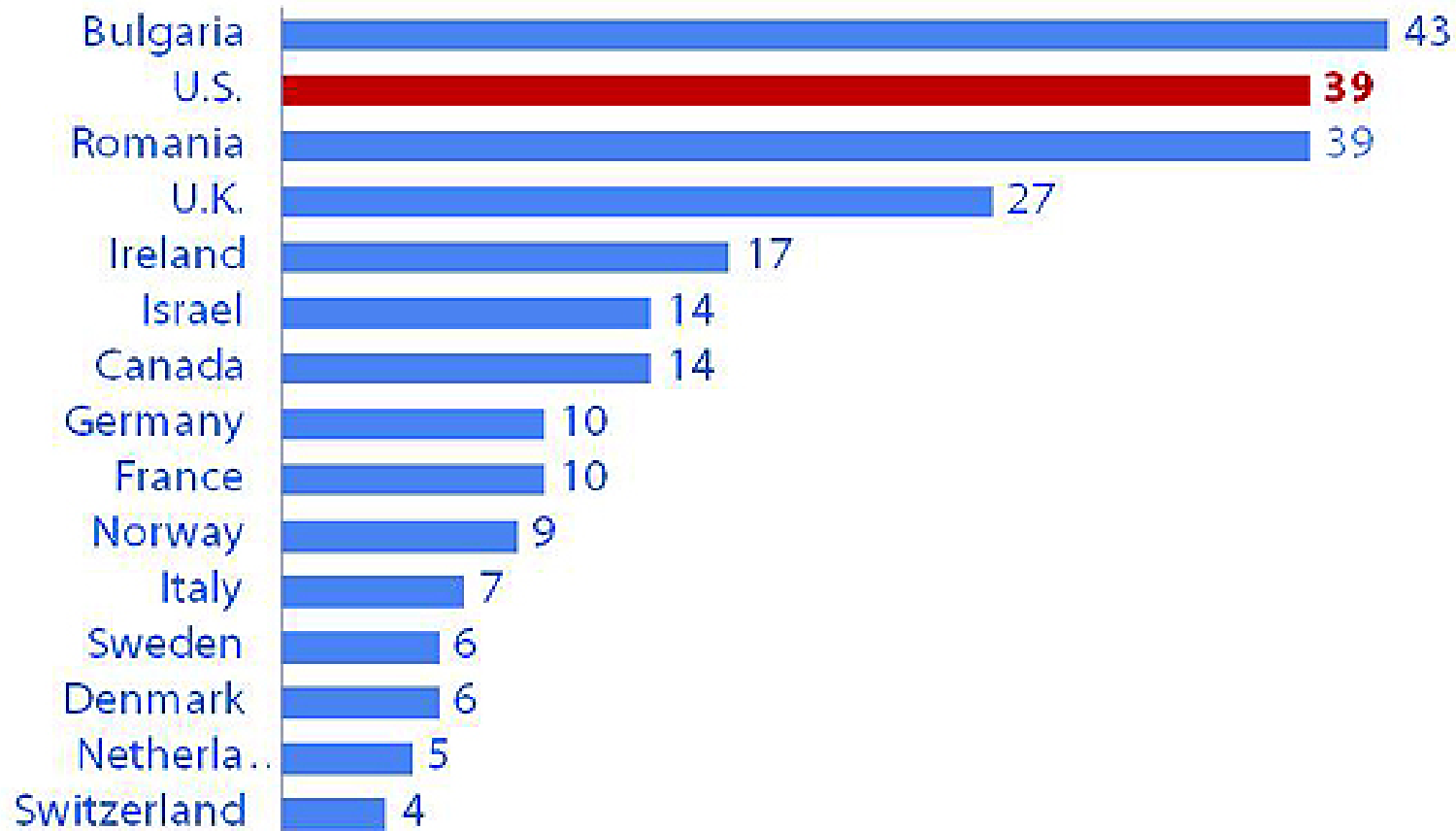
* P < 0.05



2011: Sexual Health—Why Now?

- High population burden of STD and HIV
 - 19 million STI each year—almost half among those 15 to 24 yo
 - One in four women aged 14-19 years is infected with at least one STD
 - Estimated 1.1 million Americans are living with HIV, with over 55,000 new infections per year
 - Cost of STDs, including HIV, estimated at \$15.9 billion per year
 - Major health disparities
 - African-Americans: 8 to 20 X higher rates
 - MSM: 40-50 X higher rates
- Ongoing problem with teen and unintended pregnancy
 - About 12% of sexually active teens did not use birth control the last time they had sex
 - One-half of all pregnancies in the U.S. are unintended

U.S. teen birth rate one of highest among industrialized countries



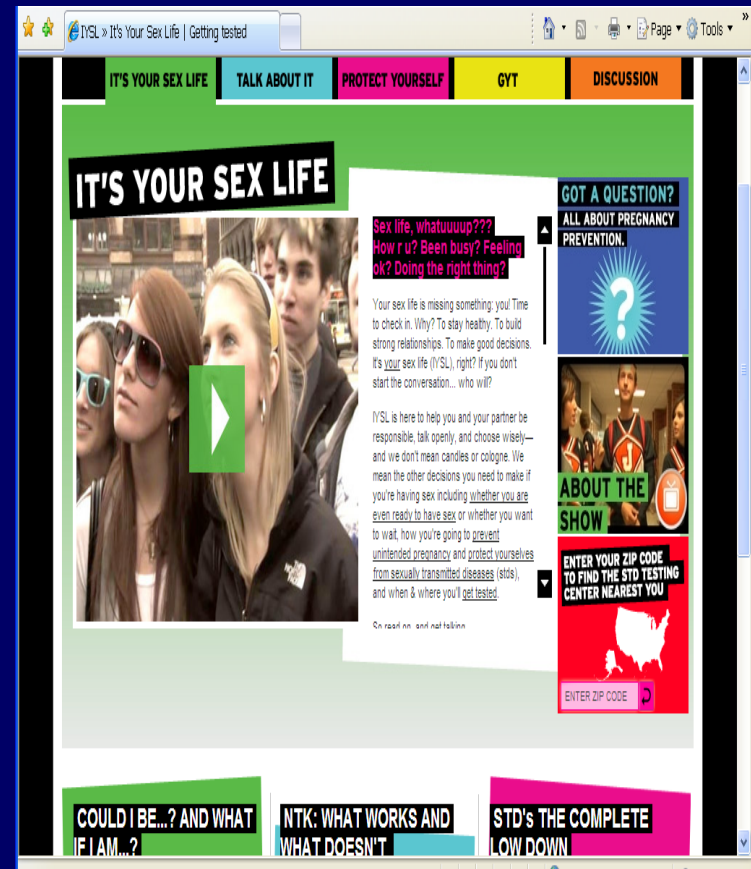
Teen birth rates internationally, per 1,000 girls aged 15-19 years, 2008 and 2009
SOURCE: UN Demographic Yearbook (all data for 2008, except US 2009 preliminary data).

Why Does the U.S. Need A Sexual Health Focus to Enhance Public Health Efforts?

- Focus shifts from a disease-focus to a **more positive health-based approach** characterized by understanding of complex factors that shape human sexual behavior
 - Reduces stigma
 - Relevant to those seeking health (ie, everyone)
- Helps enhance the **efficiency and effectiveness of prevention messaging** and services by **bundling** messages and services
 - Effectiveness (eg, platforms for “Childhood immunizations, “Heart health”, physical fitness, etc.)
- Enhances ability to **normalize conversations** regarding contributions of sexuality and sexual behavior to overall health

Sexual Health-based Approach in Action: It's Your Sex Life/Get Yourself Tested (GYT)

- GYT
 - Built on MTV/KFF platform of It's Your Sex Life (IYSL)
 - Partnership with KFF, MTV, Planned Parenthood
 - Stimulated by finding that 1 in 4 US teens with STI
- Goals
 - **Normalize** conversation around sexual health, safety, testing
 - Raise awareness of STD prevalence/prevention methods
 - **Normalize** routine STD testing
- Results
 - Increased STD/HIV testing 20-30%



Sexual Health--Why Now? Alignment with Priorities of Administration, HHS, and CDC

- **Administration**

- Initiative to prevent unintended teen pregnancies
- 2012 President's Budget request includes an increase to improve sexual health for MSM in support of National AIDS Strategy
- Enhanced support of prevention through healthcare in Affordable Care Act
- National Prevention Strategy—inclusion of SRH as targeted priority

- **HHS**

- Sexual health is one of 10 leading health indicators in Healthy People 2020
- IOM report on Clinical Preventive Services for Women: 8 recommendations relevant to SRH

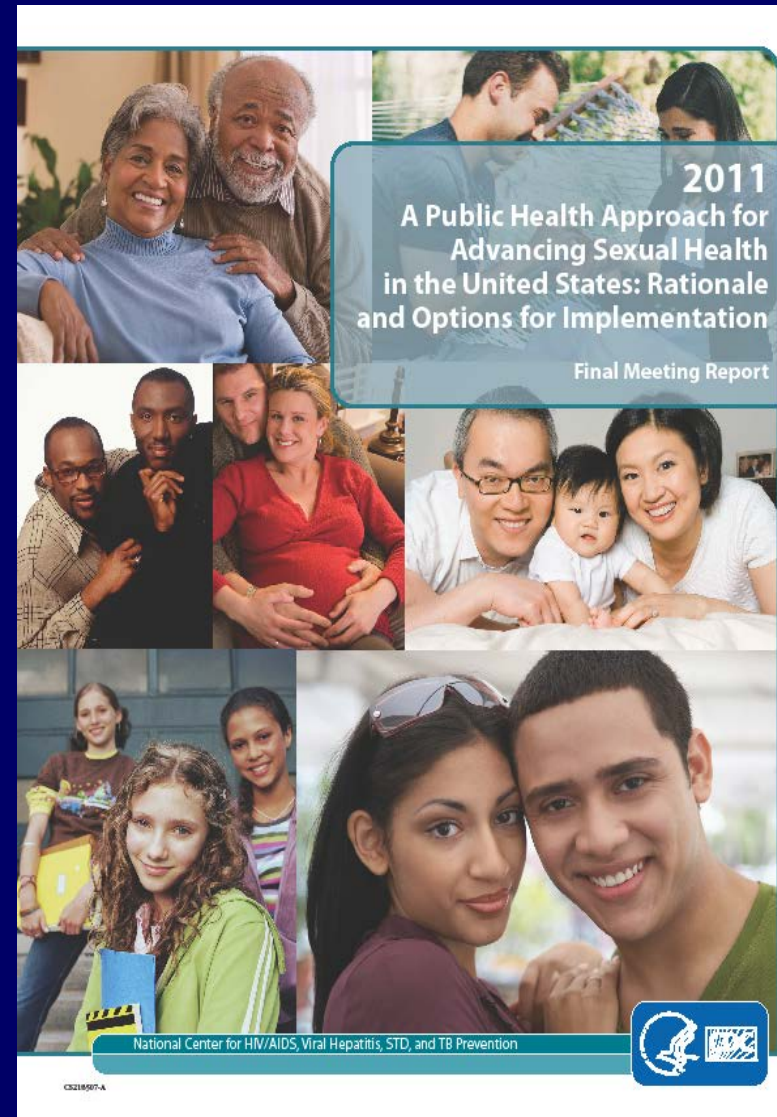
- **CDC**

- Teen pregnancy and HIV prevention two of six key “winnable battles” identified by CDC Director as agency priorities

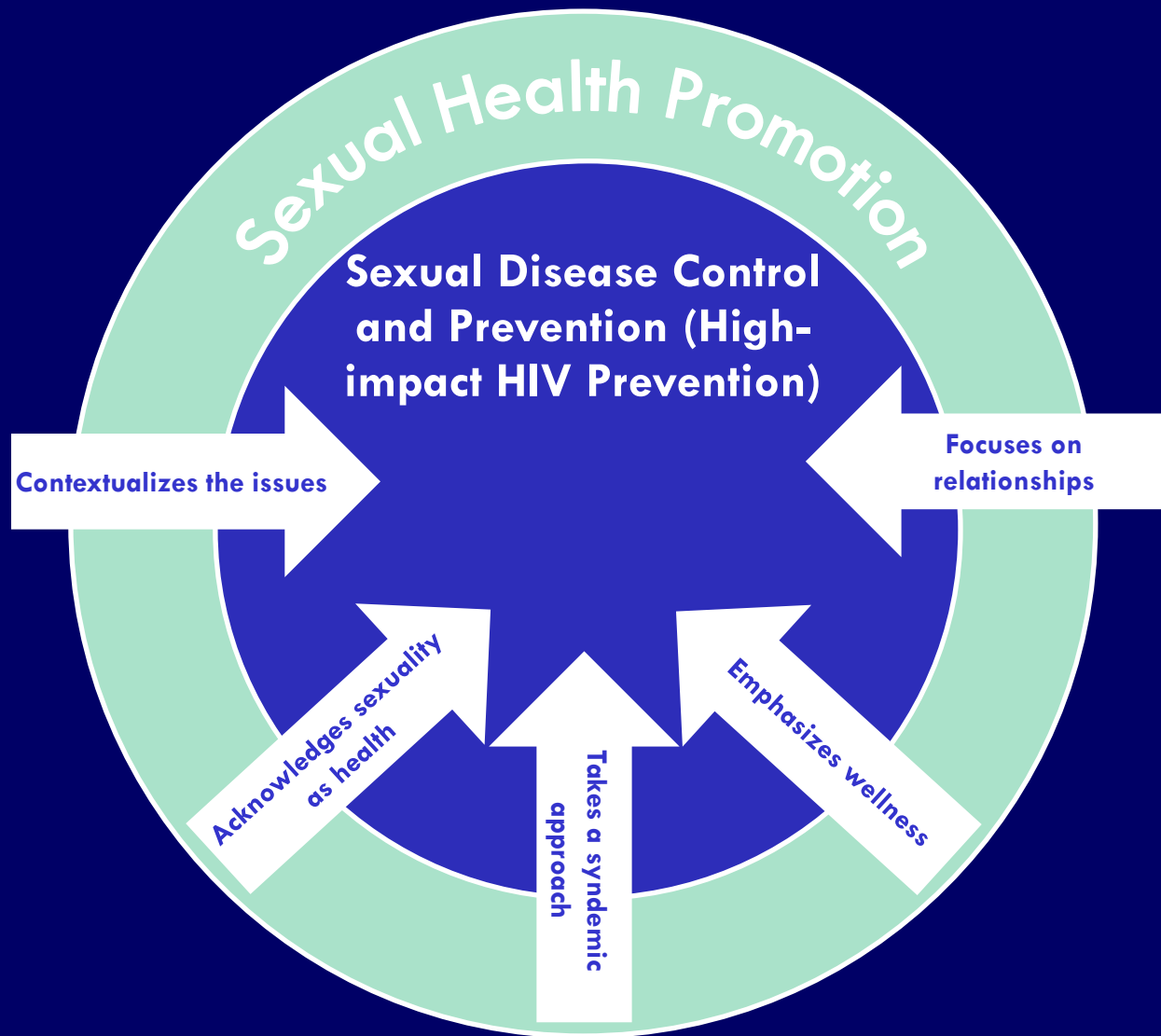


CDC Sexual Health Consultation April 2010

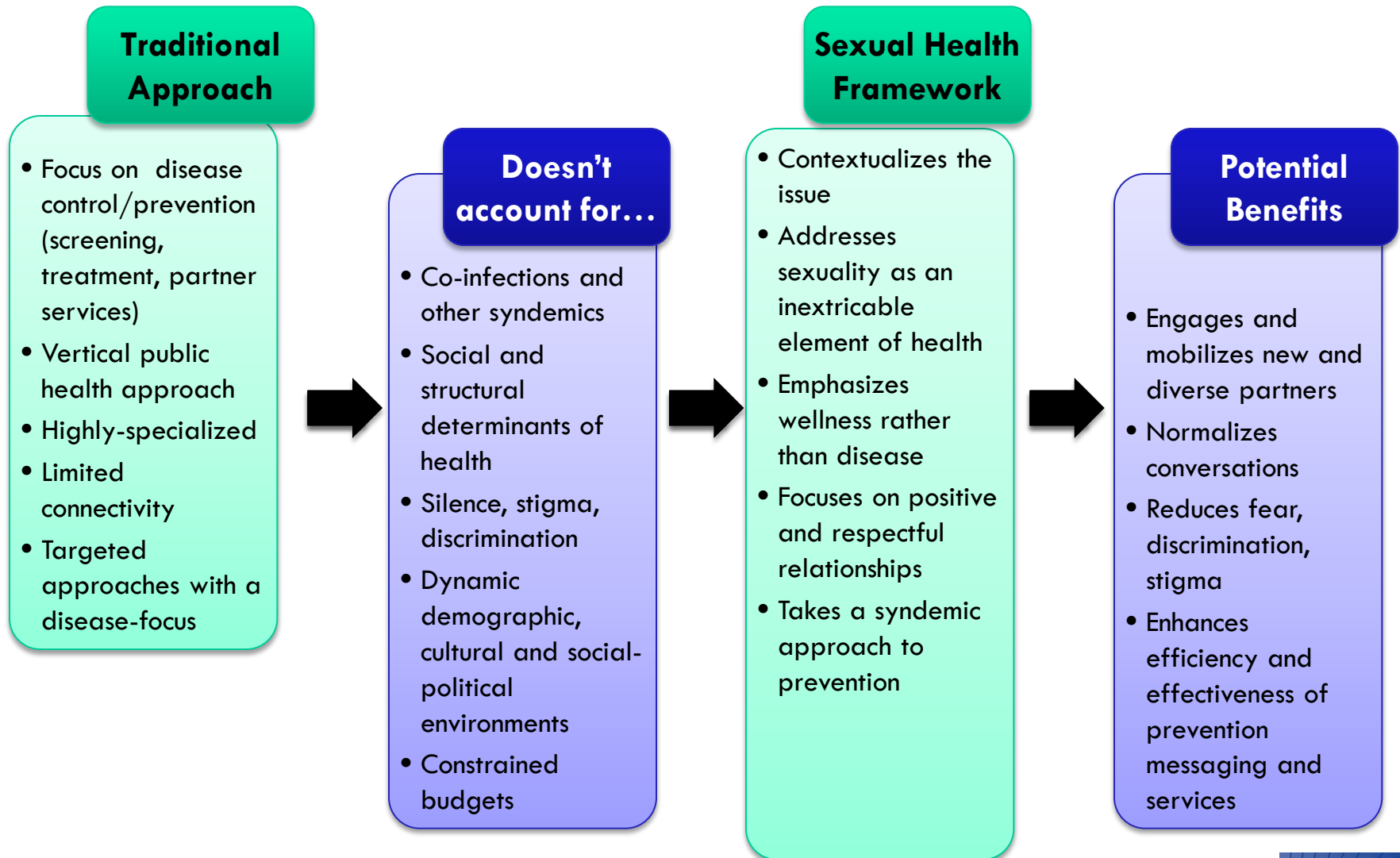
- Strong endorsement by attendees: SH framework is broad, contextual, positive, inclusive, empowering
- Opportunity to communicate, normalize and destigmatize SH, leverage partners, synergize (with other “health” approaches)
- Key recommendations
 - Develop a CDC definition of sexual health and a White Paper
 - Develop key objectives & national SH indicators
 - Communications research to find right metaphors, tone, message for greatest acceptance
 - Consider a national coalition of partners to include faith-based organizations
 - Work with programs and providers to determine how a SH framework can enhance their work



Sexual Health Framework: Using health promotion to complement disease control and prevention



A Sexual Health Framework: Expanding the Focus of Traditional Disease Control and Prevention



CDC Definition of Sexual Health: A Public Health Perspective

- Sexual health is a state of wellbeing in relation to sexuality across the lifespan that involves physical, emotional, mental, social, **and spiritual** dimensions.
- Sexual health is an inextricable element of human health and is based on a positive, equitable, and respectful approach to sexuality, relationships, and reproduction, that is free of coercion, fear, discrimination, stigma, shame, and violence.
- It **includes the ability to understand the benefits, risks, and responsibilities of sexual behavior; the prevention of disease and other adverse outcomes; and the possibility of fulfilling** sexual relationships.
- **Sexual health is impacted by socioeconomic and cultural contexts—including policies, practices, and services—that support healthy outcomes for individuals and their communities.**



Developed by the Sexual Health Workgroup of the CDC-HRSA Advisory Committee. 2011



Key Objectives of CDC's Public Health Approach for Advancing Sexual Health in the U.S.

Objectives

- Increase **knowledge, communication**, and healthy/respectful **attitudes** regarding sexual health
- Increase use of high-quality, coordinated and integrated **educational, programmatic, and clinical services** that promote sexual health
- Increase healthy, responsible, and respectful sexual **behaviors** and **relationships**
- Decrease **adverse health outcomes**, including HIV/STDs, viral hepatitis, unintended pregnancies, and sexual violence

Indicators

- 3-4 (knowledge, communication, attitudes)
- 6-7 (1/division, 1 cross-cutting)
- 3-4 (behaviors and relationships)
- 6 (HIV, GC, adult/teen Hep B, teen/unintended pregnancy, lifetime sexual violence)

NCCHSTP Coordinated Communication Project: Draft Frameworks for Sexual Health

- *Working together/shared responsibility*
 - We all have responsibility to make healthy sexual choices
 - We all must work together to ensure that everyone has opportunity for SH
- *Fair chance/opportunity*
 - All should have a fair chance to make informed choices about SH and to be free from STD, violence, unwanted pregnancy
- *Navigating a journey*
 - Life is a series of choices, including sexual choices. Throughout life, all need information/skills to make healthy choices reflecting their own values/beliefs
- *Health promotion/wellness*
 - Today we know that being healthy is more than just “not being sick”. Being sexually healthy is more than avoiding diseases

Sexual Health in the U.S.:

Closing Reflections

- Sexual health framework has great potential for
 - Reducing stigma
 - Promote/normalize dialogue, engage public
 - Enhance efficiency and effectiveness of services
- Optimizing messaging essential for broadest possible support and impact
 - Must resonate with both highly affected populations as well as broad range of opinion leaders
- Implementation depends upon national and local context (eg, culture, media, faith communities, health care systems)

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