



voices for a healthy future

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The Public Health Institute generates and promotes research, leadership and partnerships to build capacity for strong public health policy, programs, systems and practices.

A Golden Opportunity— Investing in Adolescent Health

MARY A. PITTMAN

Adolescence is a time of incredible physical and emotional growth and vitality. For many parents, including myself, watching one's child journey through adolescence evokes both pride and anxiety.

Adolescent challenges and vulnerabilities take many forms around the world: the teenager living in poverty who is forced to leave school so that she can work to support her family; the young woman lacking access to appropriate health services who ends up with an unwanted pregnancy; the young man cyber-bullied over his sexual orientation who commits suicide.

Without adequate support, adolescents and young people are at risk for ill health, injury and premature death. This comes with enormous emotional, social and economic costs that can stunt the development of individuals, communities and nations.

The Public Health Institute (PHI) is committed to helping youth see themselves as endowed with a right to health in its broadest sense—physical, emotional and psychological well-being that is integrally connected to educational and economic opportunity. PHI programs work *with* young people and their allies to empower youth with the knowledge, skills and support they need to address the complex factors that impact health in their communities and societies.

Whether young people are in school or out, married or unmarried, rural or urban, gay or straight, living at home or on their own, PHI researchers and program directors recognize there is a direct link everywhere between adolescent health and the potential to lead productive lives. Despite their many cultural differences, 13-year-old girls in Oakland, CA, often have more in common with their Liberian and Guatemalan counterparts regarding their hopes and dreams than we expect.

The following articles showcase diverse projects that advance adolescent health in California and around the world. PHI understands that young people are more than

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future assets waiting to be developed or problems to be solved. I am confident you will be as inspired as I am by this work, which captures both the complexities of young adulthood and the promise that it foretells.

We must, as public health professionals and caring citizens, do everything in our power to ensure adolescents and young people experience a positive transition to a healthy and fulfilling adulthood. Timely engagement in their well-being is one of the smartest investments society can and must make.

Mary A. Pittman, DrPH, is president and chief executive officer of the Public Health Institute.

**Center for Research on
Adolescent Health
and Development**

NORM CONSTANTINE

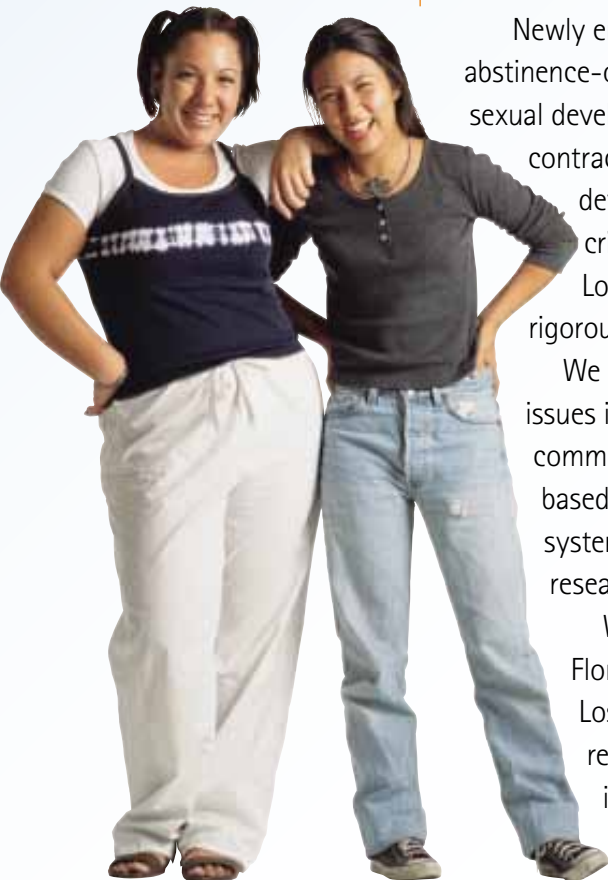
The Center for Research on Adolescent Health and Development, a project of the Public Health Institute, pursues an integrated program of research, training and advocacy in adolescent sexual health and rights, with two primary goals. First, we work to promote better sexuality education and communication for both youth and parents, with special attention to the sexual health needs of foster youth. Second—and providing a critical foundation for the first—we work to enhance our field's understanding and use of theory, evidence and rigorous scientific inquiry.

Newly emerging comprehensive sexuality education models go beyond the usual abstinence-only and abstinence-plus approaches to focus more broadly on healthy sexual development. These models not only provide education and access to contraception and protection, but also emphasize positive sexuality and youth development, relationship rights and responsibilities, gender equity, and critical thinking. Our five-year randomized trial of the Planned Parenthood-Los Angeles Sexuality Education Initiative provides an opportunity to rigorously test one such approach in a challenging urban environment.

We also work to raise awareness and understanding of validity and integrity issues in the conduct and translation of adolescent health research, and of common misunderstandings about principles of scientific inquiry and evidence-based argumentation. This is approached through the development of systematic critiques together with training and educational materials for researchers and research consumers.

With support from The California Wellness Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Ford Foundation, and Planned Parenthood-Los Angeles, the center's scientists and associates work closely with our policy research interns and predoctoral research fellows, and our various partners in California and elsewhere.

Norm Constantine is the director of the Center for Research on Adolescent Health and Development.





AGALI & GOJOVEN Are Ensuring a Brighter Future for Adolescents Globally

DENISE RAQUEL DUNNING AND ESTHER TAHRIR

AGALI participants from Guatemala and Honduras discuss girls' needs during training.

The life of an Ethiopian child bride: married at age 10 to a much older man; forced to drop out of school; required to engage in sexual activity before she is emotionally or physically mature; and saddled with a high-risk pregnancy and complications from childbirth before she turns 14. This scenario plays itself out all too often, despite the fact that the legal age of marriage in Ethiopia is 18.

The Public Health Institute (PHI) is working to change this harsh reality and ensure that girls in Ethiopia and elsewhere have opportunities to flourish during adolescence and into adulthood. PHI supports leaders in Central America and sub-Saharan Africa to stand up for adolescent girls. PHI's **Adolescent Girls' Advocacy and Leadership Initiative**, or **AGALI**, equips leaders in Guatemala, Honduras, El Salvador, Mexico, Liberia, Malawi and Ethiopia with the skills and tools they need to advocate effectively for policies and programs to improve adolescent girls' health and welfare.

Among adolescents around the world, girls face unique obstacles that negatively affect their health and their communities. The world's 600 million adolescent girls have limited access to health care, education and employment opportunities. With support from the WestWind and United Nations Foundations, AGALI responds to these challenges by bringing together leaders of nonprofit organizations, policymakers, journalists and young women to learn how to advocate effectively for girls' issues. Following intensive training, these leaders apply their new knowledge to solving the problems girls face in their countries.

AGALI helps participants move from theory to practice by awarding seed grants and providing technical assistance to support their local advocacy projects. Such projects include strategies to focus attention on girls' reproductive health needs, increase the legal age of marriage and build the capacity of girls and young women to advocate for themselves. Through these important efforts, AGALI graduates are helping to make the world a better place to grow up a girl.

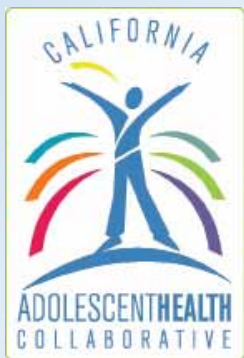
Taking a different approach to improving the health and welfare of adolescents is PHI's **Youth Leadership in Sexual and Reproductive Health Program (GOJoven)**. Through a one-year intensive leadership development program for youth between the ages of 18 and 30, GOJoven promotes and supports the development of young leaders from Belize, Guatemala, Honduras and southern Mexico to act as catalysts for social change. They work to improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health rights, services, policies, and programs in their communities and throughout the region. GOJoven trainings focus on enabling fellows to develop skills and knowledge by building on their diverse life experiences.

The GOJoven program emphasizes collaborative leadership by providing fellows with the opportunity to work in intercultural and multisectoral country teams. Fellows from each country jointly develop and implement action projects for adolescents in their communities. For example, teens have designed interactive workshops and CD-ROMS to train youth on the prevention of HIV and unintended pregnancy, advocated for local organizations to make emergency contraception available for youth, and implemented social marketing campaigns on local radio. Through these projects, the fellows apply and strengthen their leadership skills while creating positive changes for the health and welfare of over 10,000 younger adolescents. Supported by the Summit Foundation, GOJoven Fellows are joining a growing network of emerging and established leaders in the region who are transforming the lives of adolescents every day.

Denise Raquel Dunning is director of the AGALI Program and Esther Tahrir is director of the GoJoven Program.

California Adolescent Health Collaborative: Spearheading Investment in California's Future

SANDI GOLDSTEIN



California is home to one-eighth of the U.S. adolescent population. Improving the health and well-being of teenagers is a critical investment. Teens represent America's workforce, parents and leaders of tomorrow, and their future is shaped by the opportunities we create for them today.

The **California Adolescent Health Collaborative (CAHC)**, a project of the Public Health Institute, is a statewide public-private coalition that works to increase understanding and support of adolescent health and well-being. CAHC recognizes that adolescence is a critical time for prevention, intervention and life course exploration.

The team at CAHC strives to ensure that all California adolescents have the support they need for healthy development and a smooth transition to adulthood. CAHC offers a multidisciplinary and multifactorial approach to providers, parents, youth, advocates, educators, policymakers and researchers working to improve services and health outcomes for teens. CAHC staff develops coordinated, strategic approaches to addressing adolescent health.

Sandi Goldstein is project director of the California Adolescent Health Collaborative.

- **Data Analysis, Translation and Dissemination** – CAHC uses health statistics to create accessible, engaging health information resources that can be used and understood by a broad audience. CAHC prepares adolescent health progress reports for the state and manages an Adolescent Health Data Set that measures 51 indicators with county-level information on each variable.
- **Convening** – CAHC brings together groups for networking and knowledge sharing on such issues as adolescent relationship abuse, minor consent and confidentiality and behavioral health. Biennially, CAHC hosts a statewide conference, the broadest and most comprehensive event in this field, reaching adolescent health care providers and advocates from across California.
- **Training, Technical Assistance and Education** – CAHC sponsors statewide and local trainings, provides technical assistance to local organizations dedicated to improving adolescent health and conducts policy advocacy.
- **Publications** – CAHC produces a variety of publications related to adolescent health, often in partnership with other organizations.

Locally and globally, PHI shares evidence, promotes prevention and builds community in a broad range of public health areas, including:

- Alcohol, Tobacco and Substance Abuse
- Chronic Diseases: Asthma, Cancer, Diabetes, Cardiovascular and Tuberculosis
- Climate Change and Public Health
- Communicable and Infectious Diseases, including HIV/AIDS
- Community Health
- Disability
- Environmental Health
- Family Planning and Reproductive Health
- Genetics
- Global Health
- Health Policy Research
- Healthy Aging
- Leadership Development
- Maternal & Child Health
- Media Advocacy
- Mental Health
- Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity Prevention
- Occupational Health
- Organizational Development
- Program Evaluation
- Social & Behavioral Science
- Technology in Health & Aging

PROFILES



Norm Constantine, a research psychologist and methodologist, directs PHI's Center for Research on Adolescent Health and Development. His research focuses on adolescent sexual

health and rights, sexuality education, parent-adolescent communication, and policy use and misuse of research evidence.

Constantine leads several research and policy studies, including a randomized trial of the Planned Parenthood–Los Angeles Sexuality Education Initiative, and a predoctoral fellowship program in adolescent sexual health research.

Constantine serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Adolescent Health* and board of trustees for Planned Parenthood Shasta-Pacific. He is also clinical professor at the University of California, Berkeley, School of Public Health.



Sandi Goldstein has focused much of her life's work on the health needs of youth. Today, she serves as project director of the California Adolescent Health Collaborative (CAHC), a statewide

coalition of public and private agencies that aims to increase understanding of and support for adolescent health.

Previously, Goldstein worked for Alameda County Health Care Services, where she co-founded the Alameda County Adolescent School-Based Health Center Coalition. Goldstein has over 25 years of experience in project development, management, training and coalition building in public and private sectors.

She holds a master's in public health from the University of California, Berkeley.



Denise Raquel Dunning directs PHI's Adolescent Girls' Advocacy & Leadership Initiative, a program that strengthens the capacity of Latin American and African leaders to advocate for girls.

Dunning has more than 15 years experience working in global health and leadership development. Dunning previously worked for the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, the Population Council, and the UNDP in Honduras, where she served as a Fulbright Scholar implementing hurricane relief efforts.

Dunning is completing her PhD in sociology at the University of California, Berkeley, has a master's in public affairs from the Woodrow Wilson School at Princeton University, and graduated summa cum laude from Duke University.



Esther Tahrir directs PHI's Youth Leadership in Sexual and Reproductive Health Program (GOJoven) and multiple small adolescent health projects that benefit Latin America. She

helped establish the Mesoamerican Health Initiative and the new PHI Global Health unit during her 10 years at PHI. She has more than 20 years experience working in public and reproductive health, supporting leadership development in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

Tahrir received her BA with honors in community studies at the University of California, Santa Cruz, and a master's in public health from UC Berkeley, where she was awarded the Henrik L. Blum Award for Distinguished Social Action.

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"We're changing the way people think about health..."

New Awards

- **PHI to provide sexual and reproductive health education to storm victims in Guatemala**

Principal Investigator:
Esther Tahir

Funded by: Summit Foundation

Following a devastating tropical storm that ripped through Guatemala in May of this year, PHI is working with local youth in affected areas to prevent the escalation of sexual violence against women that resulted from the natural disaster. The project will offer training workshops on sexual and reproductive health for approximately 900 youth living in the rural area of Solola, including the topics of family planning, emergency contraception and gender-based violence prevention and treatment. The project will also provide support groups for approximately 300 men and women to raise awareness about and provide referrals related to gender-based violence.

- **PHI joins the global movement for clean cookstoves**

Funded by: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Exposure to smoke from cooking fires and traditional stoves results in nearly 2 million premature deaths each year, predominantly among women and children. The use of cleaner stoves and fuels will not only save lives but also will reduce rapid erosion of natural resources. This grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) focuses on improving clean cookstove design. The award will support field work on cookstoves in Kenya, Guatemala and India, as well as the convening of a global clean cookstoves conference jointly organized by the CDC and the National Institutes of Health.

- **Center for Research on Adolescent Health and Development to promote adolescent sexual health through research and advocacy**

Project Director:
Norm Constantine

Funded by: William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

To help promote adolescent sexual and reproductive health and rights in California and the U.S., the Center for Research on Adolescent Health and Development and its Adolescent Sexual Health Policy Project create rigorous policy-oriented research that is systematically translated into policy advocacy messages, materials and other support. These are used to educate and influence policy makers and others about adolescent sexual health policy, programs and funding. The expected end results include more effective fiscal and programmatic policies, which in turn will lead to enhanced adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

Recent Publication

- **PHI urges institutions to take the lead in developing workforce diversity**

In a recent report, "Health Professions Accreditation and Diversity: A Collaborative Approach to Enhance Current Standards," researchers at PHI, Tufts University Medical School and Northeastern Ohio Universities examine the roles of health professions educational institutions in building a more diverse workforce. Developed in partnership with educational leaders and accreditors from medicine, nursing, dentistry and clinical psychology, the report offers observations and recommendations to help guide institutions in building a critical mass of diversity and fostering the benefits that accrue from diversity for all students and faculty. To read the complete report, visit http://www.phi.org/resource_library/index.html.