



CONTACT: Prabhu Ponkshe, Health Matrix
703-918-4930
Arlyn Riskind, Burness Communications
301-652-1558

“HELPING ADOLESCENTS AT RISK” – *Recommended Policy Changes*

1. Research on the origin, prevention, and treatment of adolescent problems needs to focus on multiple problems, not simply one or two.
 - a. Currently federal funding of research in this area tends to focus on only one or a few problems. However, given that most young people with any given problem are likely to have numerous other problems, federal research needs to reflect this reality.
 - b. This will require greater cooperation among the institutes and research programs that assess the effects of risk and protective factors and prevention and treatment on the entire range of problems.
2. Prevention and treatment practices at the local and state level need to be integrated so that they address the entire range of problems. This will require that drug and alcohol programs, mental health, schools, and juvenile justice develop coordinated efforts that address the entire range of problems of any given youth.
3. A multitude of treatment and prevention programs have been identified that can affect the risk of multiple problems from the prenatal period through adolescents. All of the governmental and nongovernmental agencies that have responsibility for successful youth development should adopt empirically supported practices, because they will reduce the number of young people with problems and thereby the cost to themselves and those around them.
4. States and communities need to monitor the well-being of children and adolescents and use the data to pinpoint targets for intervention and to evaluate the success of their efforts. If this is widely done, we will accumulate more and more effective practices and significantly reduce the burden of youth problems to our society.