




WISCONSIN ADOLESCENT HEALTH TEAM STRATEGIC PLAN | 2022-2027





**ORGANIZATIONS WHO PARTNERED IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN**

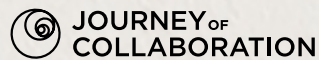
Centro Hispano
DHS-Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs Program
DHS-Division of Care and Treatment Services
DHS-Division of Public Health
DHS-Tobacco Prevention and Control Program
Eau Claire Area Hmong Mutual Assistance Association
Eau Claire City County Health Department
End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin
Great Lakes Inter-Tribal Council
GSAFE
Health Care Education and Training
Medical College of Wisconsin
Mental Health America
Neu-Life Community Development
Office of Children's Mental Health
Sawyer County Health Department
Silver Spring Neighborhood Center
SOAR Fox Cities
State Adolescent Health Resource Center
United Community Center
University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute
UW Extension
UW Health Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine
Providers and Teens Communicating for Health (PATCH) Program
Wisconsin Coalition Against Sexual Assault
Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction
Wisconsin Safe and Healthy Schools
Wyman Center

Special thanks to the core planning team: Kara Benjamin,
Lynn Bretl, Emily Carlson, Kitt Drewiske, Amy Olejniczak,
Maggie Smith, and Fiona Weeks.

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journeyofcollaboration.com

Process facilitated by Darin Harris & Jennifer Wilson



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CONTEXT AND INTENTION: WHY WRITE THIS PLAN?

THE WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH SERVICES (DHS) Adolescent Health Team* is dedicated to serving Wisconsin adolescents in an effective, intentional, and impactful way. In order to turn this commitment into action, the Adolescent Health Team launched a strategic planning process to define our mission, vision, and values and co-create an aligned five-year strategic plan. We collaborated with adolescents, partners, colleagues, and worked to ensure that the plan represented the needs, perspectives, and hopes of the stakeholders they serve and support. Having a strategic plan with clearly defined goals, strategies, and measures of success will help us align efforts and resources for maximum impact.

The Adolescent Health Team defined the following outcomes for the development and corresponding implementation of a strategic plan:

1. Improved service to adolescent populations in the state of Wisconsin.
2. Stronger and more enduring shared purpose in the Adolescent Health Team.
3. Established set of values, long-term goals, strategies, and actions to pass on to future program leaders.
4. Clearly defined scope and services of the Adolescent Health Team.
5. Renewed commitment of DHS leadership.

The Adolescent Health Team is committed to prioritizing and uplifting youth most impacted by inequities and whose voices are often unheard, including Black, Indigenous, and Youth of Color, youth with disabilities and special health care needs, and youth who identify as LGBTQ+. The Adolescent Health Team and their partners recognize that the wellbeing of young people is shaped by many factors and will take an intersectional approach that considers how power, privilege, and social structures play into systems of oppression.

*The DHS Adolescent Health Team is led by Maggie Smith and Kara Benjamin and currently involves administration of several federally funded programs to support adolescent health. This plan was created in partnership with over 30 collaborating partners, including youth, state and local government, and nonprofits who took part in a day-long strategic planning retreat on June 21, 2022. Goals, strategies, and metrics generated at the retreat form the basis of this plan.

Note: In this plan the terms adolescent, youth, and young people are used interchangeably. Generally, we define adolescence as a developmental stage from age 11 through 25.



BACKGROUND: CURRENT STATE AND SCOPE

YOUNG PEOPLE FACE WHAT MANY ARE CALLING A CRISIS. According to the recent Wisconsin Youth Risk Behavior Surveys, positive health indicators such as sleep, physical activity, and eating breakfast continue to decline among Wisconsin's youth. It is also notable that anxiety continues to increase and other mental health issues remain high. Students report a decline in their perceived health, and their sense of belonging in school. There are also some indications of a declining sense of physical safety, and some students even report their basic needs are not being met. Importantly, these factors are highest among students of color, LGBTQ+ populations, students facing food insecurity, female identifying students, and students with physical disabilities and/or special education services. Since the 2019 survey, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused these declines to steepen significantly. From both nationally administered and locally observed data, it is clear that Wisconsin's youth encounter significant stressors and challenges to reaching their optimal health and well-being.

Public, private, and nonprofit organizations have worked hard to address the challenge of worsening and inequitable youth health outcomes. And yet, these problems persist.

This strategic plan, and the planning process used to create and implement it, provides:

A mechanism to explore and recommend specific goals, strategies, and actions to improve the health of Wisconsin's youth.

Alignment within the Adolescent Health Team within the Department of Health Services (DHS) and across DHS divisions and sections who oversee and administer youth-related programs.

Partnership possibilities for collaboration across public, private, and nonprofit stakeholders.

A foundational platform that can be used to establish and track progress towards specific goals.

This plan is meant to spur forward movement and results. DHS looks forward to your partnership to take bold action for the sake of young people statewide; both now and in the future.

¹ <https://www.hhs.gov/about/news/2021/12/07/us-surgeon-general-issues-advisory-on-youth-mental-health-crisis-further-exposed-by-covid-19-pandemic.html>





MISSION, VISION, AND VALUES

MISSION

To empower young people and partner to promote the well-being of Wisconsin adolescents.

VISION

The Adolescent Health Team is a trusted leader in supporting young people to live healthy and connected lives.

VALUES

Accountability: We are accountable to our communities, our partners, and the young people they serve. We do this by prioritizing honest communication and centering integrity in our shared goals.

Leadership: We are leaders in promoting and protecting the health and well-being of Wisconsin adolescents. We push the envelope. We are committed to innovative and transparent service to the community.

Partnership: We own a history fraught with inequities, and together with diverse partners seek justice, equity, and shared power in order to realize collective impact in the lives of young people. Statewide partnerships are imperative to eliminating inequities and honoring the uniqueness of each young person's lived experience.

Impact: We look for opportunities and solutions to challenges. We are inspired by impacts that improve adolescents' lives. We intentionally facilitate positive change for young people in Wisconsin and their communities at large.

Equity: We lift up the needs, perspectives, and voices of those who have been historically marginalized. We celebrate people and their varied identities. We prioritize youth voice. We believe all young people deserve support to meet their diverse needs and opportunities to thrive.



STRATEGIC GOALS

To achieve our mission and vision, we will pursue the following goals:

GOAL #1

Increase the number of youth participating in program and policy related activities (planning, creating, implementing, and evaluating) to ensure diverse youth voices are heard, cherished, and acted upon.

GOAL #2

Increase the number of young people statewide who have their basic needs met (health, food, clothing, shelter, access to care) so that they feel more connected, safe, and supported.

GOAL #3

Develop long-term collaborations with statewide partners and diverse community organizations to make adolescent health a statewide priority.

GOAL #4

Remove barriers to funding opportunities and equitably distribute funding that aligns with community-informed priorities.



LEVELS OF INFLUENCE

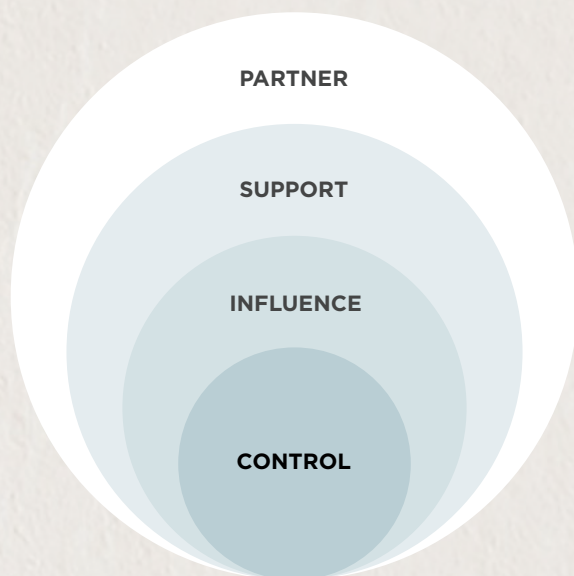
THIS STRATEGIC PLAN IS INTENDED TO GUIDE WORK and spur action of the Department of Health Services Adolescent Health Team, as well as internal and external partners. This diagram illustrates the Adolescent Health Team's sphere of control including what strategies might be direct or indirect outcomes of our work as well as where external partners and stakeholders can lead or collaborate to influence change.

CONTROL: Strategies identified with this label represent work the **Adolescent Health Team can impact directly**, such as the team's partnerships, certain funding decisions, team priorities, and program emphases.

INFLUENCE: Strategies identified with this label are areas the **Adolescent Health Team can influence but are unlikely to have direct decision-making power over**. These include Division of Public Health (DPH) level policies and practices and Department of Health Services (DHS) level policies and practices.

SUPPORT: Items identified with this label are likely to be **outside of the sphere of influence for the DHS Adolescent Health Team even when identified as a priority**. The team can support and advocate in-line with identified strategies, however we recognize that we are unlikely to have a clear, direct influence over things like politics, federal funding decisions, and systemic barriers.

PARTNER: Items identified with this label represent work that **partners external to the Adolescent Health Team can influence or control**, and which the Adolescent Health Team will support.



Strategies in this plan will be labeled with the perceived level of influence. These labels do not mitigate the priority or the needs identified.

Strategies may also fall into multiple levels of influence and may shift over time.



STRATEGIES

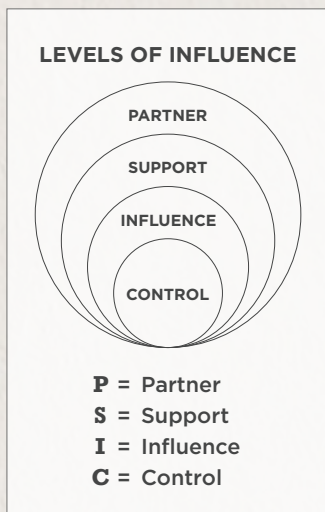


The **Strategic Plan** includes the following set of goals and strategies. For more details for how these strategies will be accomplished, including metrics and action steps, please email the **Adolescent Health Team**



GOAL #1

Increase the number of youth participating in program and policy related activities (planning, creating, implementing, and evaluating) to ensure diverse youth voices are heard, cherished, and acted upon.



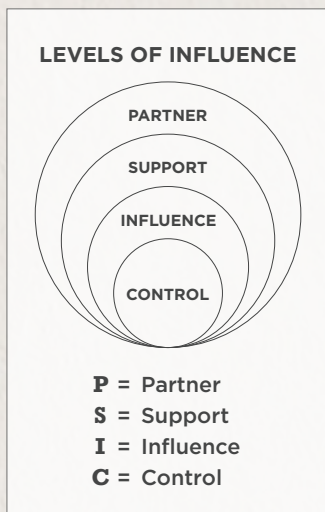
STRATEGIES

1. **Provide training** for adults on how to advocate for and listen to diverse youth voices. **C**
2. **Build community connectedness** by approaching communities in a respectful, restorative manner. **C | I | P**
3. **Engage with and compensate** existing youth advisors to guide adolescent health programming and policy. **I**
4. **Provide professional development** for staff and partners to improve cultural humility and ability to work across power differences to facilitate healing of historical trauma. **C | P**



GOAL #2

Increase the number of young people statewide who have their basic needs met (health, food, clothing, shelter, access to care) so that they feel more connected, safe, and supported.



STRATEGIES

- 1. Engage in quality improvement processes** to support an equitable flow of resources to areas and people in greatest need. **C | S**
- 2. Build and foster partnerships** across agencies to allow for a statewide and equitable distribution of resources. **C | P**
- 3. Identify and eliminate barriers** that prevent diverse partners' access to information, resources, and funding pathways. **I | S**
- 4. Support capacity building** for adults working with youth to develop stronger, more trusted relationships. **I | P**
- 5. Advance policies and partnerships** that increase the number of young people statewide who are connected, safe, and have their basic needs met. **S | P**



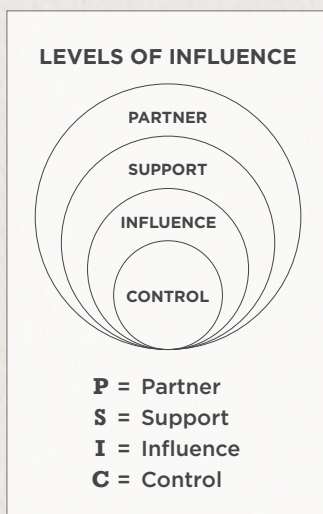
GOAL #3

Develop long-term collaborations with statewide partners and diverse community organizations to make adolescent health a statewide priority.



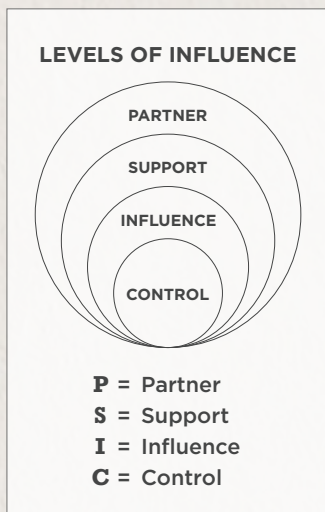
STRATEGIES

1. **Increase collective knowledge and understanding** of resources as well as gaps in providing equitable services to Wisconsin adolescents. **I | S**
2. **Uplift the needs of adolescents** in state and local needs assessments and in state and community health improvement plans (SHIP/CHIP). **C | P**
3. **Support and co-develop grants** with diverse organizations and communities. **S | P**



GOAL #4

Remove barriers to funding opportunities and equitably distribute funding that aligns with community-informed priorities.



STRATEGIES

- 1. Allow diverse approaches** to grant funding applications such as video submissions to further allow for equitable funding and access. **I**
- 2. Support DHS goals** to improve our hiring practices so that our workforces are reflective of the diverse youth and communities that we are funding, creating opportunities for more people to add different cultural views and creativity through programming. **I | S**
- 3. Continue to implement action steps** identified in Adolescent Health Team's Equity Evaluation. **C**

