

# Nebraska Adolescent Health Advisory Committee (NAHAC)

## Operating Guidelines

### I. PURPOSE

NAHAC will inform, advise, and advance the Nebraska Adolescent Health Program.

### II. VALUES STATEMENT, MISSION, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Nebraska adolescents are empowered and able to live safe, healthy, and successful lives.

#### A. VALUES STATEMENT

The NAHAC values the perspective, relevance and authenticity of youth members. We aim to eliminate barriers to participation, understanding and contribution through orientation, mentorship and providing resources allowing for full engagement of all members.

#### B. MISSION

NAHAC will collaborate to develop, advise and advocate for programs that will advance the health of Nebraska adolescents and young adults.

#### C. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Acknowledge the influential role of parents, guardians, and/or caregivers in lives of adolescents and young adults.
- The priority of all adolescent health programming is to support and promote the well-being of youth and young adults.
- Empower the young person to take ownership of their health and decision making.
  - Educate and encourage use of strengths-based approaches and resiliency orientations to empower youth.
  - Provide education to promote youth involvement in their healthcare by increasing awareness and ability to advocate for their rights.

- Promotes access to health care by:
  - Identify systematic barriers that prevent access to quality care to prioritize goals and strategies.
  - Identification of youth friendly care points.
  - Educating providers on resource referrals.
  - Care coordination at individual and systems levels to ensure effective delivery of holistic, quality care.
  - Explore opportunities for positive change through youth-centered policy and legislation.
- Youth and young adults are assets to society with unique developmental strengths and needs. They are resources to nurture and engage.
- All programming shall be medically accurate and evidence-informed.
- All sexual orientations and gender identities must be acknowledged.
  - Strengthen education for all youth-serving professionals.
  - Promote inclusive programming and safe environments for all youth including LGBTQAll youth.
- Encourage recognition and appreciation of the socio-cultural identity and history of youth and their families. Culturally Humility includes:
  - Supporting an attitude of pride and exploration of one's culture
  - Acknowledging that personal worldviews are not universal
  - Acknowledging that a youth's culture can only be appreciated by learning from the youth.
  - Understanding that generalization of youth based on their identifying characteristics may or may not be accurate or helpful in understanding the individual.
- Health Disparities & Inequities – Promote programs that identify and reduce health disparities and address inequities among youth.
- Healthy relationships – Educational opportunities should promote healthy relationships that are consensual, non-exploitive, honest, supportive, and mutually pleasurable.
- Identify and advocate for equal services and education as well as just systems and institutions for unconnected (i.e. runaway/homeless) and system-involved (in treatment, foster care, incarcerated, on probation) young people.
- The NAHAC will value and include the voice of youth and young adults.

### **III. CONDITIONS AND PROCEDURES**

#### **a. Council Responsibilities**

- i. Assess adolescent health needs through review of data and information from credible sources;
- ii. Identify and recommend effective strategies, evidence-based programs, and best practices to promote coordinated school health and healthy youth and adolescent outcomes; and
- iii. Assist in the development of comprehensive coordinated plans, logic models, and strategies to address adolescent health issues in Nebraska, utilizing expertise of members.

#### **b. Composition of the Council/Committee**

##### **i. Council Membership**

The NAHAC will work to ensure cultural humility by seeking a membership comprised of state, regional, and local level adolescent health stakeholders that are representative the state's adolescent and young adult population. Members may include but not be limited to representatives of:

- Adolescent health and mental health professionals;
- Local public health departments;
- Local school district professionals;
- State education affiliated associations;
- Statewide programs, non-profit, organizations and associations;
- Parent organizations;
- Adolescent organizations/councils;
- Youth development/youth serving organization; and
- Other state and local coalitions and organizations serving youth and young adults.

#### **c. Terms of Membership**

Membership is voluntary and may be initiated or severed at any time as desired by the member.

#### **d. Duties of Members**

Each member shall be actively involved in adolescent health efforts as their schedule allows. Each member is expected to represent their agency, association, or constituency, provide input and share information from their

affiliation and in turn, keep their agency, association, or constituency informed a relevant NAHAC efforts. While the purpose of the group is to inform and advise the Adolescent Health Program, the NAHAC will not lobby and group members will not lobby on behalf of NAHAC.

**e. Staff**

Staff support will be provided by DHHS Public Health, Lifespan Health Services.

**f. Sub-Committees and Work Groups**

Sub-committees or work groups will be formed to do more focused advisory work on priority topics as outlined by the NAHAC Guiding Principles and the Program Domains developed by the Council.

Sub-committees or work groups will be comprised of NAHAC members but may also include outside experts or organizations to aid in the development of recommendations or other work products as determined by the NAHAC and/or sub-committee or work group.

**g. Council Meetings**

The NAHAC will meet between 4 and 6 times per year to be determined by work plans, member schedules and workloads. All meetings are open to the public. Decision will be handled by consensus and if consensus cannot be reached, a majority vote will prevail.