

## Young Adolescents . . .

Undergo rapid physical, and social, emotional and intellectual changes.

Change at different rates, according to highly individual internal clocks.

Grow more rapidly than at any time in their lives since birth.

Develop secondary sex characteristics and the capacity to reproduce.

Can be painfully self-conscious and critical. They are defining themselves, and they vary widely in maturation and ability.

Seek limited independence and autonomy. They may imagine themselves to be invulnerable to negative risks.

Identify with the peer group; they want to belong, and they are developing deepening friendships.

Develop new talents, energies, and feelings.

Identify more maturely with their race, gender, and potential for employment.

Are idealistic about social and religious issues.

Are at a uniquely vulnerable time in their lives.

## Therefore they need . . .

To explore who they are and what they can become.

Diverse activities that can appeal to a wide range of skills and interests.

Lots of physical activity – not stressful competition – and time for relaxation, too.

Accurate information and guidance about sexuality.

Many opportunities to achieve and to have their competence recognized by others.

Adult guidance in setting limits, but they should be allowed to help make the rules within these limits.

Opportunities to form positive relationships and experiences with peers.

Outlets for creative expression.

Relationships with diverse adult role models.

To participate meaningfully in their communities.

Reassuring and informed adults – a more caring society.

