

# Reaching adolescents through their parents

Dr V Chandra-Mouli  
([chandramouliv@who.int](mailto:chandramouliv@who.int))

Training Course in Sexual and Reproductive Health Research  
Geneva 2014





**Parents are defined as those who provide primary or significant care for adolescents over a significant period without being paid. They include biological parents, foster parents, adoptive parents, grandparents and other relatives.**

## Key statement 1

**We all recognize the crucial role that parents play in ensuring the survival, health & development of infants and children.**



## Key statement 2

**Adolescents depend on their parents.  
Parents continue have a crucial role to play in  
the health and development of their  
adolescent sons and daughters.**



## Key statement 3

**Parents have five complementary roles to play, each of which has specific influences on adolescent health outcomes:**

- 1. connection – *love***
- 2. behaviour control – *limit***
- 3. respect for individuality – *respect***
- 4. modelling of appropriate behaviour – *model***
- 5. provision and protection – *provide.***

Helping parents in developing countries improve adolescents' health



## **Key statement 4**



**A parent who plays these roles effectively is a powerful positive force in an adolescent's life.**






## Key statement 5

**Many parents find it hard to deal with their adolescents, and do not play these crucial roles in their lives effectively.**

**One area that many studies highlight is the inability of parents to communicate with their adolescents about sexuality and reproduction. (But this is only one of the five roles that they need to play).**

## Key statement 6


**There are many initiatives in developing countries – often led by non government organizations - to help parents support their adolescents. But most of them are small scale and time limited.**



 World Health Organization

Summaries of projects in developing countries assisting the parents of adolescents

 USAID  
HELPING THE WORLD BE HEALTHIER

 World Health Organization

 fhi  
Family Health International

 YouthNet



## Key statement 7

**There are some efforts under way to help large numbers of parents with the knowledge, attitudes and skills they need to help their adolescents.**

