Change – the one word that best epitomizes adolescence – changing bodies, changing schools, changing friends. While change is essential for healthy transitions to adulthood, it can also increase vulnerability. For young people today, inequitable social conditions in families, schools, and communities can lead to dramatically differing pathways to adulthood, some healthier than others. Inequities in social determinants of health abound – socio-economic status, housing, physical environment, food security, neighborhood safety, social support, health care services, transportation, and working conditions, to name a few.

What helps all young people achieve their highest level of health? Assuring optimal health for all requires equalizing the conditions for health – life-skills, access to quality services, educational attainment, safety, and meaningful employment, and opportunities to contribute to their communities in positive ways. This means that we must pay attention to creating services and programs that are accessible, acceptable, appropriate, and effective.

During the 2012 Summer Institute in Adolescent Health, consider the myriad of social, political, educational, environmental, and economic conditions that underlie disparities in health. Visit settings that are successfully addressing avoidable inequalities that impact adolescents. Talk with young people and their program leaders along with health providers and educators who have walked the talk of health equity in just, creative, and empowering ways. Learn strategies for assuring supportive environments, sustaining authentic relationships, and providing services that are responsive to the uniqueness of each young person.

Gain new skills to effectively advocate for health equity among all young people.

Who Should Attend?
All who work with young people – teachers, coaches, and administrators; nurses, physicians, nutritionists, psychologists, social workers, counselors, and youth workers; religious leaders and policy makers.
For the past 25 years, the work of Bruck Dick, MD, ScD, MPH, has shaped global efforts to improve the health of all young people. Dr. Dick excells in consensus building aimed at action plans for youth-serving programs, policies, and practices at the country region, and global levels. Led by Dr. Dick, systematic literature review and evaluation studies have guided the priorities of governmental and non-governmental sectors alike. With a focus on low and middle-income countries, particularly South Africa, his UN agency work with UNICEF and the World Health Organization (WHO) has transformed perspectives on best investments for improving the health of all young people. He brings together a myriad of professional health, education, and government, taking on issues most present in adolescence – sexual and reproductive health, HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment, school health, primary care, chronic illness and non-communicable diseases, and refugee/emergency health – all addressed from a youth development perspective.

Dr. Dick’s expertise in bridging clinical service, public health, and policy sectors has been honed through a variety of professional positions in agencies spanning the globe – Department of Child and Adolescent Health & Development (WHO); Youth Health (UNICEF); Cu’s Hospital (London); University of Cape Town (South Africa), and the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. He co-founded the non-government organization, Healthy Planet, Activity and the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine course, Adolescent Health in Low and Middle-Income Countries.

An enduring theme of Dr. Dick’s work is promoting health equity for youth. In his report to the WHO on HIV and young people’s access to health services, he notes: “For those most at risk...there are

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