

# fundamental requirements for healthy youth development



In the spring of 1973, the Office of Child Development of the Department of Health Education and Welfare asked Gisela Konopka and the Center for Youth Development and Research, University of Minnesota to develop a statement on their concept of normal adolescence and impediments to healthy development. The statement was viewed as a possible base for national policy. Adapted from that position paper, these are the fundamental requirements for the healthy development of adolescents that have become a cornerstone of the positive youth development framework and field.

## Youth need the opportunity to:

- Participate as citizens, as members of a household, as workers, and as responsible members of society.
- Gain experience in decision-making.
- Interact with peers and acquire a sense of belonging.
- Reflect on self in relation to others and discover self by looking outward as well as inward.
- Discuss conflicting values and formulate one's own value system.
- Experiment with one's own identity, with relationships; try out various roles without having to commit ones' self irrevocably.
- Develop a feeling of accountability in the context of a relationship among equals.
- Cultivate a capacity to enjoy life.

Later, Dr. Konopka added another requirement to the list:

- Participate in the creative arts, to learn self-expression and communicate deep feelings from within

## Learn more about what youth need for healthy development and the history of Gisela's groundbreaking work on youth:

[History of SAHRC & the Konopka Institute for Best Practices in Adolescent Health](#)

Requirements for Healthy Development of Adolescent Youth, Konopka G. (1973). *Adolescence* 8(31), 2-25. [Full text available](#) via the Journal of Child and Youth Care Work.

[Youth Need... Fundamental Requirements of Healthy Youth Development & Strategies to Meet Those Needs](#), State Adolescent Health Resource Center (SAHRC) @ Univ of MN

[Adolescent & Young Adult Development](#), SAHRC @ Univ of MN



**If I have done something in my life ... I would like to leave as a legacy people who can work with the young with strength, knowledge, imagination and deep caring.**

*Gisela Konopka*

