



## TAG in Action: Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center

As part of its national call to action, **Adolescent Health: Think, Act, Grow**® (TAG), the Office of Adolescent Health in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has identified a number of successful strategies for improving adolescent health throughout the country.

### The Goal

Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center (MSAHC) provides high quality, comprehensive, and inter-disciplinary health and wellness services focused solely on the unique needs of adolescents and young adults.

### The Game Plan

Established in 1968, the Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center is one of the largest standalone centers of its kind in the United States. MSAHC supports underserved and at-risk young people between 10 and 24 years old. Ninety-eight percent of clients are from low-income families and 70 percent have no insurance. Regardless of their ability to pay, however, MSAHC provides young people access to a wide range of targeted services, including medical, sexual and reproductive health care, dental, optical, behavioral and mental health service as well as nutrition, fitness, and wellness programs. Services are free and confidential. MSAHC also serves as a leading center of specialized training and innovative research in adolescent and young adult health.

At an average annual cost of only \$1,000 per client, MSAHC supports approximately 10,000 patients a year. MSAHC keeps costs down by keeping administrative costs low, which allows them to put the majority of their funding into direct services. MSAHC increases retention by recruiting staff who love working with youth and who are deeply committed to providing teen-friendly and developmentally appropriate services. To meet the continued demand for services, MSAHC plans to expand its capacity over the next 5 years to serve 15,000 adolescents and young adults.

MSAHC's model has been considered a leader in the field of adolescent health for many years. Recently, the New York State Health Foundation created a [blueprint](#) that encourages health care providers and policy makers to adapt or replicate MSAHC's method of providing services to adolescents and young adults. The blueprint includes guidelines to help providers implement key parts of the model or phase it in over time, tailoring it to their needs and capabilities.

### The Winning Plays

Dr. Angela Diaz, the Center's director for more than 25 years, shared that MSAHC focuses on being a safe and welcoming place for every young person. Diaz explained, "We see every young person as full of promise rather than full of risk. There are no judgments, no stigmas at our Center. Each young person is treated with compassion and respect. And then, within that context, we provide them with everything they need to be healthy. We remove all the barriers and we let them take the lead. And, even with our long history, we continue to learn from the young people each and every day."

### Learn More

Mount Sinai Adolescent Health Center  
<http://www.teenhealthcare.org>

