

Adolescent nutrition and anaemia course

In September 2019, Nutrition International launched the Adolescent Nutrition and Anaemia course – a free, 15-module online course with the aim of building capacity to improve nutrition for adolescents around the world. Unfortunately, adolescents are often overlooked and underfunded in health and nutrition interventions, despite this period being a critical window for growth and development. The burden of broader malnutrition and specific micronutrient deficiencies imposes barriers to adolescents realising their full potential. This is especially true for girls who have specific, and often overlooked, biological needs compounded by detrimental social and gender norms. The impact of iron-deficiency anaemia, which is the leading cause of ‘healthy’ life years lost for adolescent girls, is of great concern. Nutrition International’s Adolescent Nutrition and Anaemia course sheds light on this issue, providing valuable insight and guidance regarding this unique and valuable population group.

Designed by Nutrition International’s world-class team of technical experts and programme implementers, this course fills a critical gap in knowledge. It provides practical information to apply to regional, national and global programmes, geared towards helping adolescents to thrive and fulfill their potential. In sharing their rigorously obtained knowledge, Nutrition International hopes to enable other organisations to join the global battle against adolescent malnutrition.

The course has 15 modules which cover a wide range of information on adolescent nutrition, the global situation and the impact of anaemia on women and adolescent girls. Also examined are the causes and consequences of anaemia, the role of iron in the body and some existing interventions used to improve adolescent nutrition at present. The course also covers global guidelines, an adolescent pregnancy subsection and related partnerships in the field as well as an overview of Nutrition International’s adolescent nutrition programmes and lessons learned. Finally, the course includes information on the link between nutrition and education, adolescent health systems, monitoring and assessing adolescent nutrition programmes, data gaps, research needs and how to engage adolescents. Although the course is delivered in English, the narration transcripts for all 15 modules are also available in Bengali, French, Bahasa, Urdu, Gujarati, Hindi, Amharic and Swahili.

There are no necessary prerequisites to begin the course but learners are required to complete the modules in chronological order to progress to the next. The course revolves around video-based learning with the content accessible to a wide audience of nutrition programme officers, non-nutrition development organisations, nutrition graduate students and policy makers at various levels. A personalised certificate is provided upon completion of all 15 modules.

You can sign up for the course free of charge at: <https://global.learning.nutritionintl.org/index>



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The “Adolescent Nutrition Resource Bank”: Practical resources for improving adolescent nutrition programmes

Adolescence is a critical time in the lifecycle, presenting a ‘second window of opportunity’ in an individual’s growth and development. During this time, adolescents build confidence, learn to act independently and make important decisions related to their diet, eating and self-care practices. Addressing the nutritional needs of adolescents presents unique challenges due to the significant variations in their household, school, employment, marital and parental circumstances. It requires the engagement, coordination and joint programming of multiple sectors including health, education, agriculture, food systems, water and sanitation and social protection.

To help to accelerate the design, development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation of adolescent nutrition programmes throughout the world, the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Advancing Nutrition, the Agency’s flagship multi-sector nutrition project, has developed the Adolescent Nutrition Resource Bank (ANRB).¹ The ANRB is a repository of policies, programme examples, guidance and tools to help adolescent nutrition stakeholders – governments, United Nations agencies, USAID and other donors, development partners, private sector entities, faith-based and youth-led organisations, civil society organisations, service providers, communities and adolescents – to improve and expand adolescent nutrition programmes and services. The ANRB was launched during a webinar² in March 2021. Since then, many participants have engaged with and contributed to this resource bank.

The ANRB contains more than 200 documents with new resources regularly added. All the resources on the ANRB are tagged according to various characteristics, such as the technical areas of focus or the language of publication, and users can filter these characteristics to locate resources that suit their needs. To populate the ANRB, USAID Advancing Nutrition built on adolescent nutrition resources collected under the USAID-supported Strengthening Partnerships, Results and Innovations in Nutrition Globally (SPRING) project and sought resources from organisations that had signed the 2018 Adolescent Nutrition Call to Action.³

We continue to identify documents through online database searches and the review of selected websites for the latest adolescent nutrition materials and peer-reviewed literature as well as programme reports and other grey literature.

If you have resources to share through the ANRB, please contact USAID Advancing Nutrition at info@advancingnutrition.org

To find more information on the ANRB, or to conduct your own search for resources, please access

<https://www.advancingnutrition.org/resources/adolescent-resource-bank>

¹ <https://www.advancingnutrition.org/resources/adolescent-resource-bank>

² <https://www.advancingnutrition.org/events/2021/02/25/webinar-usaid-advancing-nutrition-adolescent-nutrition-resource-bank-launch>

³ <https://www.spring-nutrition.org/about-us/news/adolescent-nutrition-call-action-better-data-now-drive-better-policies-and-programs>