



**UCLA**  
Center for  
the Developing  
Adolescent

# Investing in Adolescents

Setting Up Our Country for Long-term Success



## Adolescence is a Time of Remarkable Opportunity

FROM ABOUT 10 YEARS OLD TO 25, WE'RE LEARNING MORE RAPIDLY THAN WE EVER WILL AGAIN.

- During this time, our brains are primed to learn from the world and the people around us.
- We explore and discover in ways that can help us overcome previous challenges and support lifelong success.
- The right support for hands-on, real-life learning during these years can have long-lasting impacts on our lives and communities.

## Smart Policies Help Our Communities Thrive

By grounding legislation in the science of adolescence, policy leaders and influencers like you can help youth succeed now and as adults. As a matter of fact, investing in adolescents is as important as early childhood education in helping our young people grow into thriving adults.



# What We Do at the UCLA Center for the Developing Adolescent

The UCLA Center for the Developing Adolescent (CDA) empowers leading policymakers and child advocates to create modern, effective policies by connecting you with the most up-to-date research and data.

In addition to working directly with community leaders and internationally recognized scientists, **CDA's team:**

**Partners** with the National Scientific Council on Adolescence and other experts in the field to deliver evidence-based recommendations to help adolescents succeed in the world.

**Engages** in innovative research focused on adolescence, from social media's impact to programs that help youth become thriving community members.

**Collaborates** with the Youth National Scientific Council on Adolescence, ensuring adolescents are directly informing the work and solutions.

## Resources to Help You Lead

Evidence from neuroscience, biology and psychology tells us that supporting young people in their adolescent years is critical to their health and wellbeing. **As policymakers and child advocates, it is time for us to lead to ensure youth have what they need to succeed.**

- To consult with the CDA team about your policy ideas or to hear UCLA CDA's recommendations, reach out to us at [cdainfo@mednet.ucla.edu](mailto:cdainfo@mednet.ucla.edu).
- For introductions to adolescents who can share their experiences and help you build policies that help kids and young adults thrive, reach out to **Meghan Forder** at [meghanforder@ucla.edu](mailto:meghanforder@ucla.edu).

WHEN POLICYMAKERS INVEST IN THE ADOLESCENT YEARS, WE ARE HELPING OUR YOUTH THRIVE—AND BUILDING A STRONG, VIBRANT COMMUNITY AND FUTURE THAT BENEFITS US ALL.



Neuroscientists, biologists, psychologists, nonprofit leaders and adolescents themselves all have valuable insights into what our youth need.



When you work with these types of experts—referencing the latest science and data on adolescent development—you can then **invest in smart policies that help adolescents thrive.**



These research-informed investments can ensure that **adolescents have access to the kinds of programs that help them contribute to their communities, set goals, build important values, learn problem-solving skills and navigate challenges.**



These supports help adolescents explore, discover the world and learn in ways that can **build on an already strong foundation—or even overcome challenges** from early childhood years.



Adolescents who have access to the right support and services at the right time are better able to develop strong identities, values and problem-solving skills, and become thriving members of society—**helping build strong communities and economies across the country.**

