Course Title: Adolescent Health & Well-being: A Holistic and Rights-Based Approach

Duration: 5 Days (approximately 35-40 instructional hours)

Course Goal: To equip professionals with the knowledge, skills, and empathy to effectively support the holistic health and well-being of adolescents, with a core focus on mental health and Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights (SRHR).

Core Focus: This course moves beyond a purely clinical or biological view of adolescent health. It integrates psychological, social, and rights-based perspectives to provide a comprehensive framework for creating safe, supportive, and empowering environments for young people.

Learning Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this workshop, participants will be able to:

- Apply a rights-based framework (e.g., UN Convention on the Rights of the Child) to all interactions with adolescents.
- Differentiate between the key developmental stages of adolescence and their unique health needs.
- Recognize the signs of common mental health challenges in adolescents and apply psychological first aid.
- Develop strategies to promote resilience and positive coping mechanisms among young people.
- Communicate accurate, non-judgmental, and comprehensive information about Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH).
- Facilitate conversations about sensitive topics like consent, healthy relationships, and gender diversity.
- Design and assess "youth-friendly" services that are accessible, acceptable, equitable, and effective.
- Understand their role in safeguarding and protecting adolescents from harm.
- Create a personal action plan for improving adolescent health support within their own professional context.

Target Audience:

- **Healthcare Providers** (Nurses, Clinical Officers, Doctors).
- **School Counselors, Psychologists, and Social Workers.**
- **Teachers and Educators.**
- **NGO/Non-profit Program Officers and Managers** working in youth development.
- **Community Health Workers and Youth Peer Educators.**

Prerequisites:

- Professional experience working with or for adolescents/youth.
- An open, empathetic, and non-judgmental attitude.
- A commitment to upholding the rights and dignity of all young people.

Teaching Methodology:

This is a highly participatory and reflective workshop that prioritizes creating a safe learning space.

- **Safe Space Agreement:** The course begins with the co-creation of ground rules to ensure respectful and confidential discussions.
- **Rights-Based Approach:** Every module is anchored in the fundamental rights of the adolescent.
- **Case Study Method:** Complex, real-world case studies are used to explore the interconnected nature of adolescent health challenges.
- **Role-Playing & Simulation:** A significant portion of the course involves practicing communication and counseling skills in a safe, simulated environment.
- **Participatory Learning:** Utilizes a mix of small group work, interactive lectures, values clarification exercises, and peer-to-peer learning.

Materials Provided:

- **The Adolescent Health Practitioner's Toolkit:** A comprehensive workbook with:
    - Key frameworks and models.

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    - Templates for safety planning and session outlines.
    - A glossary of youth-friendly terms and SRHR definitions.
- A curated digital library of trusted resources (WHO guidelines, international NGO reports, etc.).
- A directory of referral pathways for specialized services.
- Certificate of Completion.

Detailed Day-by-Day Curriculum

Day 1: Foundations of Adolescent Well-being

- **Module 1: Understanding Adolescence (Approx. 2 hours)**
    - Welcome, introductions, and co-creation of the Safe Space Agreement.
    - Who are adolescents? Exploring the key physical, cognitive, social, and emotional transitions.
    - Myth-busting: Challenging common stereotypes about teenagers.
- **Module 2: A Rights-Based Framework for Action (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - Introduction to key international conventions (e.g., UNCRC).
    - The core principles: Non-discrimination, best interests of the child, right to life and development, and the right to be heard.
    - **Workshop:** Applying the rights-based approach to a real-world scenario.
- **Module 3: The Bio-Psycho-Social Model of Health (Approx. 3 hours)**
    - Moving beyond a purely medical definition of health.
    - Exploring the interconnectedness of an adolescent's physical health, mental state, and social environment.
    - **Workshop:** Mapping the "Ecosystem of an Adolescent" to identify risks and protective factors.

Day 2: Adolescent Mental Health & Emotional Well-being

- **Module 4: The Mental Health Landscape (Approx. 3 hours)**
    - Common mental health challenges: Anxiety, depression, stress, and self-harm.
    - Recognizing warning signs and protective factors.
    - The impact of social media on adolescent mental health.
- **Module 5: Building Resilience & Positive Coping (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
    - What is resilience and how can it be nurtured?
    - Practical tools and techniques to share with adolescents (e.g., mindfulness, problem-solving, healthy habits).
- **Module 6: Communication & Psychological First Aid (Approx. 2 hours)**
    - The principles of active, empathetic listening.
    - A framework for providing Psychological First Aid (Look, Listen, Link).
    - **Role-Play Workshop:** Practicing supportive conversations with a young person in distress.

Day 3: Sexual & Reproductive Health (SRH) Fundamentals

- **Module 7: The SRH Package: Knowledge is Power (Approx. 3.5 hours)**
    - Puberty and adolescent body changes.
    - Anatomy, conception, and the menstrual cycle.
    - Comprehensive information on the full range of contraceptive methods.
    - Prevention, testing, and treatment of STIs, including HIV.
- **Module 8: Values Clarification Workshop (Approx. 3.5 hours)**
    - A critical self-reflection exercise for professionals.
    - Examining one's own values and biases regarding SRH topics to ensure non-judgmental service delivery.

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- This is a facilitated, confidential group discussion.

Day 4: SRH in Context - Rights, Relationships, and Diversity

- **Module 9: Consent, Boundaries, and Healthy Relationships (Approx. 3 hours)**
  - A deep dive into consent: FRIES (Freely given, Reversible, Informed, Enthusiastic, Specific).
  - Recognizing the signs of unhealthy relationships and gender-based violence (GBV).
- **Module 10: Understanding Gender & Sexual Diversity (Approx. 2 hours)**
  - Introduction to SOGIESC (Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & Expression, and Sex Characteristics).
  - The importance of using correct pronouns and creating an inclusive, affirming environment for all adolescents, including LGBTQ+ youth.
- **Module 11: Facilitating Sensitive Conversations (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
  - Techniques for creating a safe space to discuss SRHR topics.
  - Answering difficult questions accurately and without shame.
  - **Role-Play Clinic:** Participants practice responding to challenging questions and scenarios from young people.

Day 5: Synthesis - Creating Supportive Systems

- **Module 12: Safeguarding and The Duty of Care (Approx. 2.5 hours)**
  - Understanding your legal and ethical responsibilities.
  - Mandatory reporting and referral pathways for abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
  - How to respond safely and supportively to a disclosure.
- **Module 13: Designing Youth-Friendly Services (Approx. 3 hours)**
  - What makes a service "youth-friendly"? (The "A"s: Accessible, Acceptable, Appropriate, Affordable, Equitable).
  - **Workshop:** Participants will assess a sample health clinic or school counseling service using a youth-friendly checklist and provide recommendations for improvement.
- **Module 14: Capstone Case Study & Action Planning (Approx. 2 hours)**
  - **Final Project:** In groups, participants will analyze a complex case study of an adolescent facing multiple, intersecting health challenges. They will develop a holistic support plan.
  - Participants will then create a personal 90-day action plan to apply their learning in their workplace.
- **Course Wrap-up and Final Q&A (Approx. 0.5 hours)**

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