



**Statement to the 64<sup>th</sup> session of the WHO Regional Committee for Europe, Copenhagen, 15-18 September 2014 on the European Child and Adolescent Health Strategy 2015-2020 (Agenda item 5c(i))**  
*September 2014*

Mister President, Madam Regional Director, Ministers and Delegates,

We welcome the European Child and Adolescent Health Strategy 2015-2020.

We call on Ministers to take concrete steps to do more and better in supporting early child development, protect children from growing up in poverty, including through addressing the social, economic, environmental, biomedical and commercial determinants of health. In particular, we urge Member States to work towards a tobacco-free generation, promoting healthy diets, participation in physical and other meaningful activity, safe environments, ensure access to sexual and reproductive health and rights for all young people.

Wholeheartedly, we agree that children and adolescents have a right to be seen and heard, and to make decisions about their own lives. On the other hand, the governments have an obligation to see and listen to them, and not to disregard their fully valid health and social experience, and participation in policy planning and implementation. Children growing up in institutional care, of minority or migrant background, and children with disabilities are particularly invisible and vulnerable. We recommend that Member States strengthen their focus on systematic rights-based, evidence-informed and gender-sensitive maternal, child and adolescent policies. Children and adolescents need adequate protection from violence and maltreatment, exploitation and injuries.

In conclusion, please be assured of the overwhelming support and readiness to assist you in the implementation of the strategy among civil society organisations and health professionals.

This statement is delivered on behalf of: the European Public Health Alliance, European Region of the World Confederation for Physical Therapy, the International Planned Parenthood Federation European Network, the World Federation of Occupational Therapists, and supported by Eurochild, Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union, National Roma Centrum, and European Child Safety Alliance.

Full statements from individual organisations are available on the Regional Committee's website.

Thank you.

**european public health alliance a.i.s.b.l.**

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