



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**POSSIBILITIES FOR CHANGE EXPANDS ADOLESCENT ASSESSMENT TO IDENTIFY RISK BEHAVIORS IN AGES 9-24**

*Leading Provider of Teen Risk Assessment Launches Two New Products to Address Unique Needs and Risk Behaviors in Older-child and Young-adult Populations.*

**ANN ARBOR, MI – December 2, 2013** – Possibilities for Change, the parent company of RAAPS - the leading cloud-based system supporting providers in the identification and reduction of risk behaviors in teens - announces the release of two new standardized and age-specific surveys for Older Children (Ages 9-11) and Young Adults (ages 19-24). With an innovative tablet-based survey platform and a development team that was led by clinical experts - but advised by older children and young adults, these surveys increase youth engagement and improve risk identification and reduction.

Published clinical research provides definitive evidence of the need for age-specific risk assessment in youth populations, and the unique differences in risk behaviors by age are immediately apparent in the data gathered from the original RAAPS survey, completed by more than 30,000 youth, teens, and young adults. For example:

Three of the top risk behaviors for 9-11 year olds include mental health concerns.

- At 27%, at least one child out of every four struggles with anger management in this age range.
- And at 20% each, both bullying and depression affect 1 in 5 kids aged 9-11.

For the 18-24 year olds, sex tops the risk behaviors with 3 out of 4 sexually active.

- Tobacco (40%) and alcohol (35%) are actively being used by a significant portion of young adults.
- Depression remains an issue in this age range . with an even higher rate of 26%, affecting over a quarter of the population.

Said Dr. Jennifer Salerno, Founder of Possibilities for Change, "Our mission is to reduce risk behaviors among our youth, and eliminate preventable illness and death. These two new products support care providers in this critical effort and provide additional flexibility for them to customize their care to the needs of their patient - while filling a much-needed gap in the marketplace."

Emily Morales, Nurse Practitioner at the Open Door Family Medical Center in Port Chester, NY agrees: "We've only been using the cloud-based RAAPS for a few months - and we've already had over 300 youth use the system. Having surveys that are tailored to age really improves our engagement and effectiveness. While the differences in age might be slight, the differences in cognition and risk are vast - for example, our younger kids are wrestling with mental health and bullying issues, while our college-bound patients are bingeing and pushing boundaries with their new-found freedom."

The RAAPS system has been licensed and implemented by hundreds of healthcare sites across the United States (including School Based Health Centers, Hospitals, Primary Care & Pediatric Clinics, and Sexual Health/Reproductive Centers). The Older Child and Young Adult surveys will be delivered as an integrated part of the RAAPS risk assessment system, and all of the current sites and care providers using RAAPS will have access to the surveys at no additional cost.

With up to 75% of illness and death in adolescents directly related to risk behaviors - standardized assessment in adolescents is an evidence-based recommendation across leading medical associations - including the American Medical Association, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the US Preventive Service Task Force: AHRQ.

### **About RAAPS**

The Rapid Assessment for Adolescent Preventive Services is a validated, 21-question health risk assessment tool, which can be completed by adolescents in 5-7 minutes using any device with internet access, including mobile devices. After completing the survey, teens receive specific health resources pertinent to their risk behavior, and clinicians can utilize RAAPS evidence-based messages to provide counseling on identified risks. With this secure online system, clinicians can electronically document the counseling they provide and receive individual and aggregated reports on their patient population by age, risk factor, demographics, and over time. In addition, results can be compared to a "benchmark" population of adolescents who have completed the online survey. For more information about RAAPS, contact Jennifer Salerno, DNP, CPNP, FAANP at [jsalerno@raaps.org](mailto:jsalerno@raaps.org) or visit [www.raaps.org](http://www.raaps.org).