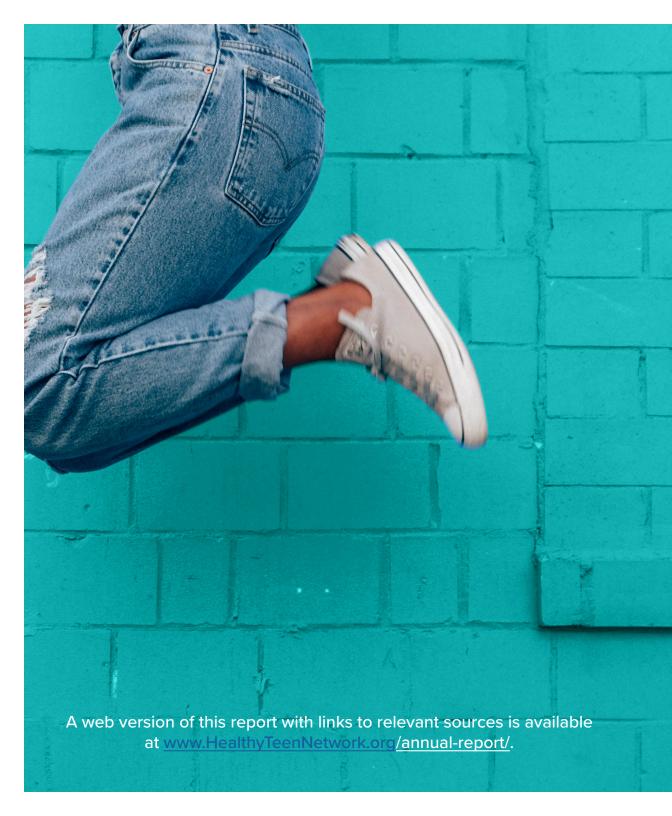
2018 Annual Report





Healthy Teen Network

Maintaining a Spotlight on Adolescent Sexual & Reproductive Health



About Healthy Teen Network

Founded in 1979, Healthy Teen Network fosters a national community where all adolescents and young adults, including youth who are pregnant or parenting, are supported and empowered to thrive. Located in Baltimore, Maryland, we serve as a leading national membership organization (501c3) for adolescent health professionals and organizations, promoting a unique and holistic perspective—we call it Youth 360°—to improve the health and well-being of young people.

Vision

Healthy Teen Network envisions a world where all adolescents and young adults lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Mission

Healthy Teen Network promotes better outcomes for adolescents and young adults by advancing social change, cultivating innovation, and strengthening youth-supporting professionals and organizations.

Our Guiding Principles

Rights: A more just and equitable world supports and empowers all adolescents and young adults—including young people who are pregnant or parenting—to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.

Individuality: All adolescents and young adults, including young people who are pregnant and parenting, deserve respect, appreciation, and acceptance for their unique strengths, talents, and potential.

Youth Centered: Youth-centered strategies and approaches are critical to empower young people.

Youth 360°: How and where youth live, learn, and play matters...and needs to be addressed to achieve better outcomes.

Evidence: Evidence-based strategies and approaches are effective and efficient ways to achieve positive outcomes.

Innovation: Innovation is a critical component of a comprehensive strategy to respond to the dynamic lives of adolescents and young adults.

Access: All adolescents and young adults have a right to comprehensive, developmentally and culturally appropriate, confidential support and services, including contraceptive services, and if pregnant, to full options counseling and services.

Letter from the Acting President & CEO

We remain committed as ever to our efforts in #StandingStrong for adolescent health. For us, this means especially maintaining a spotlight on adolescent sexual and reproductive health. It would be easier to shy away from the always-controversial issues of sex and sexuality, but we know how important it is, even when it seems that we face setback after setback, to work toward our mission of advancing social change, cultivating innovation, and strengthen youth-supporting professionals and organizations.

2018 saw the continuation of our efforts as part of our 2017-2020 strategic plan. Our holistic frame, Youth 360°, and the integration of the social determinants of health has been widely embraced by our members. We partnered with the American Journal of Sexuality Education to bring to life how different organizations are integrating the social determinants of health. Our projects in Baltimore City gave us the opportunity to help ensure all young people—including LGBTQ+ youth, youth living in systems of care, and youth who are pregnant and parenting—receive quality sex education and healthcare services.

We support our members to use evidence and innovation to empower youth to thrive. With Power Through Choices, the only sexual health program designed for youth living in systems of care, we are helping providers across the country to use an evidence-based curriculum to meet the unique needs of youth in their care. Our innovative digital tool, Crush, lays the "behavioral groundwork" of sexual health empowerment even before users start to think about having sex—based on findings from our randomized control trial. And we challenged our conference attendees to use human-centered design and rapid prototyping to create innovative solutions for how to center pleasure in sex ed, with our first-ever design challenge.

Janet Max, MPH, CHES
Acting President & CEO



Even as the attacks on sexual and reproductive health care and education continue across the country, our national partnerships are strong. Together, we are united in ensuring that young people and their right to sex ed and health care are not forgotten. We've developed advocacy tools to provide our members with the tools they need to continue #StandingStrong. We share the lessons learned from our members in how to build support among stakeholders and what it takes to implement quality sexual health education.

Through these efforts—working to ensure we are integrating the social determinants of health in order to address health disparities—leading the field in the use of evidence and innovation—and always maintaining a spotlight on why sexual and reproductive health is critical to adolescent health, we are #StandingStrong with you, our members and supporters.

In solidarity,

Janet Max, MPH, CHES Acting President and CEO

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Fiscal Year 2018 Financial Data

Sources of Income



44% Grants, Foundations, & Contributions

Expenditures by Area



Thank You for Helping Us Make a Difference

To our supporters and donors, we thank you for your generous and continued ongoing support of Healthy Teen Network. Our important work with young people continues due to people like you.

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Alison Politziner



By 2020, Healthy Teen Network will work in all 50 states, US territories, and the District of Columbia to build the capacity of youth-supporting professionals to empower young people to thrive.

2017-2020 Strategic Plan

Healthy Teen Network believes that adolescent sexual and reproductive health is a social justice issue with public health impacts. These impacts are confounded by how and where youth live, learn, and play and require a holistic Youth 360° approach to achieve equity.

Goal 1

Advance integration of a holistic approach to adolescent sexual & reproductive health programs & services.

Healthy Teen Network will build the capacity of youth-supporting professionals and organizations to:

- Adopt a holistic approach and integrate the social determinants of health into their work.
- Broaden their scope by building partnerships and collaborate beyond the field of adolescent sexual and reproductive health.
- 3. Ensure that they are inclusive of all young people, especially young families.

Goal 2

Lead the use of innovation & evidence to support & empower young people to thrive.

Healthy Teen Network will:

- 1. Incorporate both innovation and evidence in our work.
- Develop solutions that are responsive to peoples' needs using a human-centered approach.
- Build the capacity of youthsupporting professionals and organizations to incorporate innovation and evidence into their work.

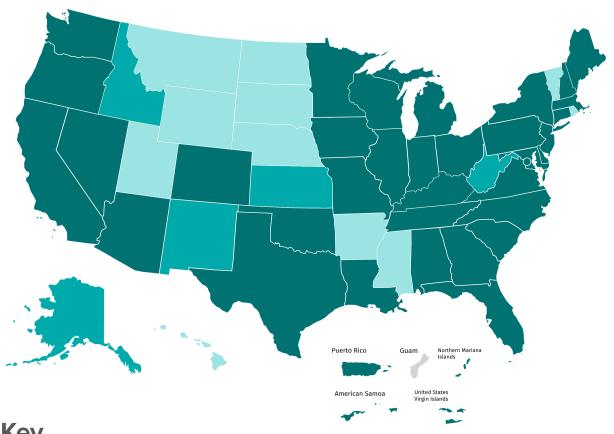
Goal 3

Promote & advance adolescent sexual & reproductive health as critical to the well-being of our nation.

Healthy Teen Network will advocate to:

- Maintain a spotlight on adolescent sexual and reproductive health.
- Promote understanding of the interplay of the environment and individuals on sexual and reproductive health outcomes.
- 3. Build the capacity of youthsupporting professionals and organizations to use effective messages and delivery strategies to mobilize diverse audiences to promote adolescent health.

Map of Capacity-Building Assistance Provided



Key

High Intensity

- Training

Medium Intensity Low Intensity

- Membership
- Webinar
- Presentation
- Cluster calls

- Blog Posts
- Policy Updates

Sharing Our Progress

We are tracking our capacity-building assistance across the nation and categorizing the level of assistance as high, moderate, or low, based on the type of activity(ies) received or attended.

We are committed to standing behind our 2017-2020 Strategic Plan and our promise to our members and funders to report back on our progress each year. This annual report includes highlights of our progress in the 2018 fiscal year (September 2017 – October 2018).

Goal 1

Advance integration of a holistic approach to adolescent sexual & reproductive health programs & services.

Increasing Our Reach & Integration of Social Determinants of Health



What determines how long we live...if we thrive...how healthy we are? Is it...what we do...who we are...where we live...our families?

How and where we live, learn, and play matters.

We cannot expect to significantly impact health outcomes and address health disparities without considering the critical factors, or social determinants of health, that shape our well-being.

Healthy Teen Network developed Youth 360° to make it easier to talk about and understand the intersection of the social determinants of health and social-ecological theory, and how each of us is affected by factors at an individual level, but also through our relationships and communities, and in society as a whole. Youth 360° is more than just a messaging tool; it is a way to approach systems-based change to respond to the dynamic lives of young people.

We must address a wide range of factors—such as access to quality education and health services, socioeconomic status, or having life goals and aspirations—that can influence health outcomes and disparities. Youth 360° is a commitment to reach all young people, including marginalized youth populations, such as youth in out-of-homecare, system-involved youth, runaway/homeless youth, LGBTQ+ youth, and youth who are pregnant or parenting.

Each year, we ask our members to report their familiarity with and integration of the Youth 360°.

Over time, we've found that we have indeed been successful in reaching our first strategic plan goal to adopt this holistic approach and integrate the social determinants of health into their work. They are working to broaden their scope by building partnerships and collaborate beyond the field of adolescent sexual and reproductive health and ensuring that they are inclusive of all young people, especially young families.

Twenty-three percent of our members are very familiar, and 43.6% are somewhat familiar with a holistic health promotion approach to integrate the social determinants of health. Fifty-eight percent of our members reported that their organizations are integrating social determinants in their work.

We've been able to increase our reach and promote integration of a holistic approach to adolescent sexual and reproductive health through our varied level of capacity-building assistance (see map, Figure 1). Each year, we assess our members, and they have shared with us that our capacity building has enabled them to:

- · Conduct their own trainings,
- Select effective curricula.
- Build their organizational capacity,
- · Sustain evidence-based programs,
- Build teacher competencies to deliver sex ed,
- Implement curricula with fidelity,
- Build student satisfaction with curricula.
- Create and modify training designs,
- Develop capacity-building strategies,
- Set and meet goals,
- Create public service announcements,
- Work with stakeholders, and
- · Gain insights.

Integrating the Social Determinants of Health: Real-World Examples

Healthy Teen Network partnered with the Center for Sex Education and the American Journal of Sexuality Education to publish <u>a special issue on the integration of the social determinants of health</u>. The special issue journal contains resources, research, and examples of real life attempts to integrate the social determinants and serves as an invaluable reference for others considering doing the same. Healthy Teen Network staff contributed to the special issue with several articles:

"Where Youth Live, Learn, and Play Matters:
Tackling the Social Determinants of Health
in Adolescent Sexual and Reproductive
Health" explores the intersection of social
determinants of health and adolescent
sexual and reproductive health with the
stated purpose of assessing how the social
determinants of health impact outcomes. By
aligning the social determinants of health with
the multiple spheres of influence within the
social-ecological health promotion model, and
attaching recommendations for utilization,
they provide a road map to help us begin to
integrate social determinants of health into our
work.

In "Thriving at the Intersection: Integrating Social Determinants of Health and Sexual Health Education to Achieve Positive Outcomes for Youth," three case studies show us firsthand how other agencies came to the decision that integrating social determinants of health into their programs and practices was essential and take us through their process so that we might be guided in our own process. These two agencies have integrated social determinants of health into their programs but came to that decision from opposite sides of the intersection of positive youth development and adolescent sexual and reproductive health. Their journeys illustrate the importance of using systematic frameworks such as data-driven strategic plans, ongoing program assessment, and willingness to partner as important to adequately addressing the needs of your target population.

These articles, among the others included in this special issue, showcase how real-world organizations are integrating the social determinants of health to improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health education and services.



Engaging School and Community Partners to Improve Sex Ed

Throughout various projects, we are working to engage communities and schools as partners to improve sex ed. For example, since 2009, we have been partners with Baltimore City to improve adolescent sexual and reproductive health outcomes. From a strategic plan which we led development of in 2009, Baltimore City, as one of the B'more for Healthy Babies priority programs, launched <u>U Choose</u>, funded in part by the federal Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program.

Healthy Teen Network has been a critical partner of this initiative since its inception, and we continue to provide the necessary capacity-building assistance to ensure young people in Baltimore have access to sexual health education care and clinical services. In 2018, we delivered customized trainings to facilitators, educators, and clinic staff, as well as 4 fact sheets on topics related to consent, LGBTQ+ youth, transgender and gender non-conforming youth, and youth who are pregnant and parenting. The project reached 10,893 youth in three settings: middle schools, high schools, and clinics, exceeding the annual goal of 10,000 youth.

Goal 2

Lead the use of evidence & innovation to support & empower young people to thrive.

Sex Ed for Real Life

Engaging Youth in Data Collection & Learning: Digital Focus Groups & Social Media Recruitment



In 2018, we finalized the development and testing of the digital health tools, <u>Crush</u>. Crush shares sexual health information with adolescent women—anywhere, anytime. Crush is designed primarily for Black and Latinx young women ages 14-18 and is available in English (<u>www.mycrush.org</u>) and Spanish (www.micrush.org).

This innovative digital tool empowers adolescent women

by sharing on-demand access to comprehensive, medically accurate sexual health information. Crush uses interactive, multimedia features to enhance engagement and support diverse learning styles. It offers sex-positive, culturally and age appropriate text, animation, video, quizzes, interactive graphics, and calendar and clinic locator tools to educate users about birth control, healthy relationships, sexual health and anatomy, pregnancy, and clinical services.

Healthy Teen Network partnered with MetaMedia Training International to conceptualize, produce, and rigorously evaluate Crush's ability to promote sexual health among young women ages 15 to 17 years old. Crush utilizes behavior change theories and constructs—Theory of Planned Behavior, Social Learning Theory, and self-efficacy—to increase adolescent sense of control over decisions regarding their sexual behavior. These theories together impact intentions and skills to engage in healthy behaviors.

5 Proven Ways Crush Empowers

When paired with CrushTEXT, Crush lays the "behavioral groundwork" of sexual health empowerment even before users start thinking about having sex. These findings are based on a 2017 randomized controlled trial with 1,210 women, ages 14 to 18, recruited from across the United States:











"I find it very helpful and informative. My school has a decent sex ed program, but nobody ever told me anything about birth control options, especially where and how to get them. Thank you for putting together an app with all the information."

-Crush user

Equipping Youth to Succeed: Power Through Choices



In 2018, Healthy Teen Network acquired the evidence-based program, *Power Through Choices*, and we are now the sole distributor for the curriculum and provider of trainings-of-facilitators and trainings-of-trainers. *Power Through Choices* is the only sexual health program designed with and for youth in foster care and other out-of-home care.

Focusing on self-empowerment and the impact of choices, *Power Through Choices* empowers youth participants to...

- Make healthy, positive choices,
- Develop and practice effective communication skills,
- · Identify and access available resources, and
- Use effective pregnancy and STI protection.

A randomized control trial in 44 group homes across 3 states, engaging 1,036 youth, found the curriculum to be effective. Compared to the control group, youth participating in *Power Through Choices...*

- Had more knowledge of HIV, STIs, and birth control, and felt more equipped to communicate with partners,
- · Had lower rates of sexual activity,
- Were less likely to report having sex without birth control, and
- Were less likely to be involved in a pregnancy.
- The study found that participants increased their ability to prevent an unplanned pregnancy and STI/HIV infection.

Human-Centered Design & Rapid Prototyping to Support Innovation

#HealthyTeen18 Challenge

How might we center pleasure in adolescent sex ed to foster authentic conversations about sexuality and promote positive sexual experiences?

This was the question we sought to answer in the #HealthyTeen18 Design Challenge, held in October 2018 in San Diego, at our annual national conference. Against the backdrop of continued attacks on sex education, Healthy Teen Network, in partnership with youth + tech + health (YTH), called for a new commitment to sex positivity. Creators and practitioners, educators and students, advocates and youth alike from across the United States came together to answer this question, diving into an immersive, design school-inspired process that was at once challenging, rewarding, and exhilarating.

Using the <u>human-centered design process</u>, Design Challenge participants developed rapid, <u>innovative</u> solutions to center pleasure in sex ed. Our participants were incredibly engaged and committed to the process. A diverse panel of judges, consisting of funders, sex educators, and youth assessed the solutions using the following criteria:

- Creativity: How creative is this solution? Is this solution "outside of the box?"
- Design Thinking: How well did this group use design-thinking principles in creating their idea? How responsive was this team to their audience?

- Responsiveness: How well does the solution address the design challenge question?
- Feasibility: Could this idea actually be implemented? Would it be successful?
- Youth-Friendliness: Were the voices of youthcentered? Would youth find their proposed interaction(s) with the idea appealing?

The winning solution, receiving the \$1,000 grand prize, was the Let's Talk Card Game, proposed by Ethan Lopez, Melissa Carnagey, Heather McKenzie, and Rose Barcklow, a card game designed for parents. Using the game, families were supported to create conversations around consent, pleasure, healthy relationships, and inclusivity. This solution, as well as the runners-up, are available on our website.

Through these projects across the country, we are continuing to increase our reach while supporting the use of evidence and innovation. And we're making sure that the resources we create from these projects can then be made accessible, through our <u>Center for Evidence and Innovation</u>, to even more of our members, beyond initial grantees.

Goal 3

Promote & advance adolescent sexual & reproductive health as critical to the wellbeing of our nation.

Maintaining a Spotlight

Partnerships, Advocacy, & Education

In 2018, we continued to see many setbacks for adolescent sexual and reproductive health, particularly at the federal level. However, these attacks on the rights of all young people have only served to help our field be more collaborative and more determined than ever in #StandingStrong and keeping youth at the center in all that we do.

We've been actively engaged with other national agencies focused on adolescent sexual and reproductive health to remain vigilant and effective in our advocacy to protect evidencebased, medically accurate, inclusive programs and services for all young people. We continue to serve as a key member of the Sex Ed Collaborative, a collective of 17 national, regional, and state-based organizations with extensive experience training educators to deliver school-based sex education. The Sex Education Collaborative aims to ensure that all young people receive sex education that is evidence-informed and rights-based and that schools and communities are fully supported and equipped to deliver school-based sex education in grades K-12.

For our members, we consistently provided timely policy alerts and updates, in what was a tumultuous year of many new, and often controversial, appointments, funding announcements, budget proposals, and legislative initiatives.

Our updates ensured our members received accurate information relevant to their advocacy efforts for adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

Our position statements address relevant issues for young people, both to formalize our stances, as well as to serve as a resource to support our members' advocacy efforts. In 2018, we developed six new position statements:

- √ Youth Engagement
- √ Youth-Friendly Services
- √ Evidence and Innovation
- √ Homelessness and Its intersection with Sexual Behavior among Youth
- √ Substance Abuse and Its Intersection with Sexual Behavior among Youth
- Ensuring Equity for Youth by Affirming Young People Who Are Pregnant or Parenting

Despite yet another difficult year for federal support for adolescent sexual and reproductive health, these partnerships and collaborative advocacy efforts exemplify the commitment our field has for maintaining a spotlight on adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

#StandingStrong

What Does It Take to Implement Quality Sexual Health Education

We remain steady in our resolve, #StandingStrong, so our young people can continue to be supported and empowered to thrive. Building support among key stakeholders is one way we are #StandingStrong to ensure all young people have access to quality sex education.

Healthy Teen Network had the opportunity to spend time with three diverse school districts to find out how they were managing to help their schools implement high-quality sexual health education, despite the many obstacles that often make it hard to teach this topic. These districts received funding from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Division of Adolescent School Health (CDC DASH), and Healthy Teen Network has provided capacity-building assistance to them since 2013. The district staff and teachers shared with us what having this funding has meant for them and how they used it to improve sexual health education.

We created <u>case studies</u> to share their stories. In short, here is what they said matters the most for implementing high-quality sexual health education in schools:

- Strong policies. Policies are especially helpful when they specifically list the topics that must be covered and require that teachers receive professional development.
- A designated (and dedicated) champion. To keep sexual health education from falling to the bottom of the priority list, it's essential to have a point person whose job description includes coordinating sexual health education.
- Relationships. The champion needs to make a plan to build and continuously maintain relationships. Showing up to meetings with counselors, nurses, wellness committees, teachers, and administrators takes time and effort—but it pays off in the end.
- Communication skills. People doing this work need to help stakeholders see the value of sexual health education, and they need to know how to build awareness of supportive policies. This is not as easy as it sounds, and champions sometimes need support from communication experts.



- A logical 'home' for sexual health education.
 Some districts don't offer health as a subject at all, and those that do may only offer it in high school. And even then, health is not always a required subject. But sexual health education can fit into other core academic subjects, such as science and language arts, and the champion needs to help schools figure out where it fits.
- Easy access to high-quality, well-organized, thorough materials. In addition to lessons that are consistent with the characteristics of effective curricula, this could include supplementary guides, student workbooks, slides, educator kits, etc. Teachers are much more likely to implement sexual health education when they don't have to do any extra work to get everything they need.
- Listening to teachers. Taking the time to regularly gather teacher feedback on what works/does not work and revising the lessons and materials accordingly helps teachers feel more invested in the lessons and makes the materials even more user-friendly.
- Professional development and coaching for teachers. Districts need to make sure they have the right people teaching this topic, and that the teachers feel ready to teach it. In addition to providing skills-based professional development, this involves checking in with teachers and following up as needed with coaching and co-teaching or modeling of challenging activities/lessons.

Each of the case studies we developed share more information about how these three districts made these changes to implement quality sexual health education.

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Healthy Teen Network

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