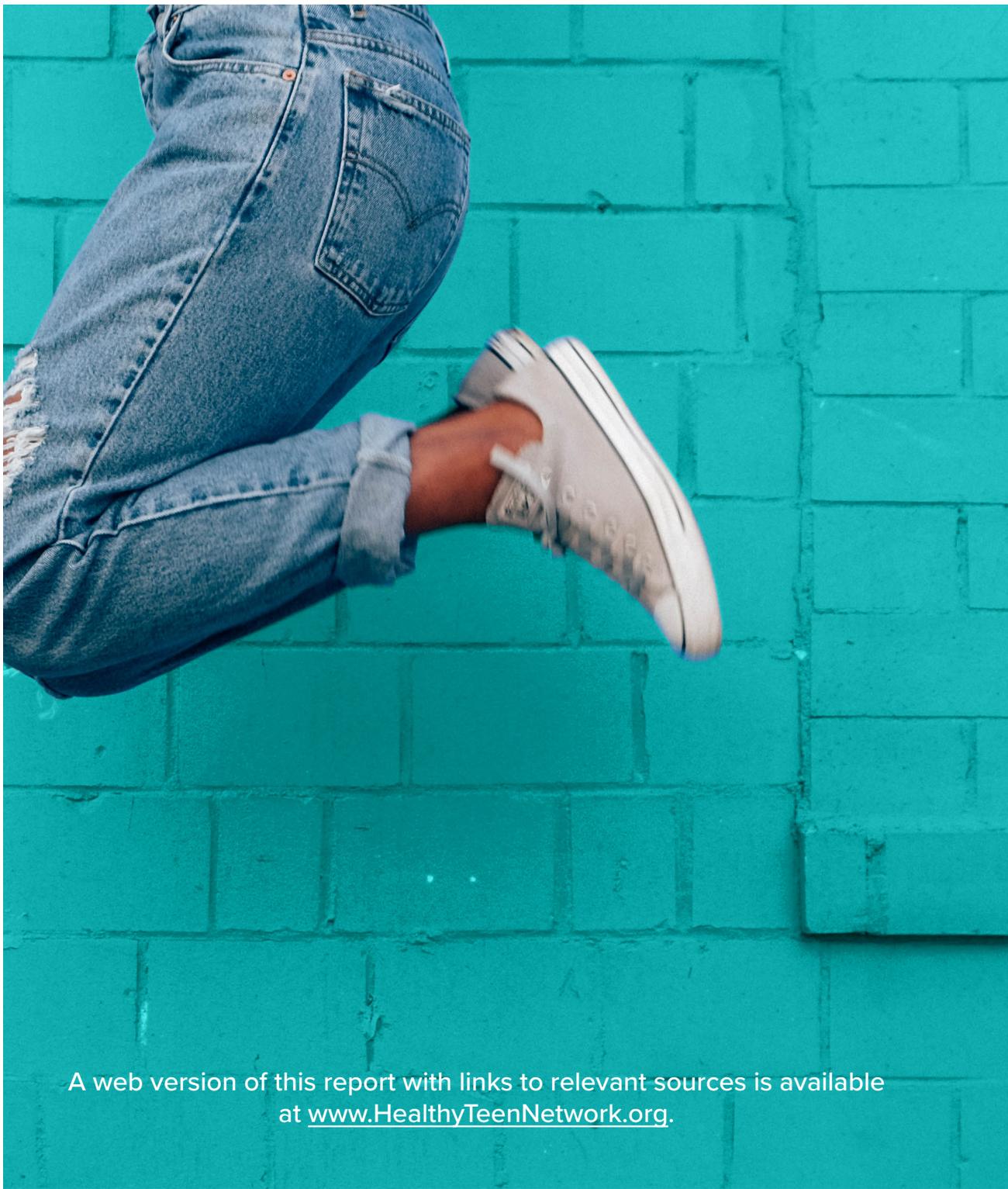




Healthy Teen Network

# Reflecting Back & Looking Forward: A Commitment to Evidence & Innovation



A web version of this report with links to relevant sources is available at [www.HealthyTeenNetwork.org](http://www.HealthyTeenNetwork.org).

# Letter from the President & CEO



**Pat Paluzzi,  
CNM, DrPH**  
*President & CEO*

We've made great strides in the past decade, and [teen births in the U.S. are at an all-time low](#). A number of factors have contributed to this downward trend, most significantly declines in the number of teens who have ever had sex, and among sexually active teens, increased use of effective contraception.

This progress is the result of a commitment to relying on what we know works—the evidence—as well as using that evidence to support research and development of new solutions—innovation—in the pursuit of continued access to quality sex ed and reproductive health services.

However, despite the downward trend in teen births, the [U.S. teen birth rates are still the highest of all industrialized nations](#), about [half of all new cases of STIs each year in the U.S. are in young people](#), and [great disparities persist](#) among racial and ethnic groups in this country. Yet we face a constant onslaught from the current federal administration, threatening the health and well-being of our nation's youth.

[Given recent threats to federal support](#) for evidence and innovation, unfortunately, we know can no longer rely on public funding to ensure youth-supporting professionals receive the critical

training and resources they need to ensure we are using the best evidence and fostering innovation to provide quality sex ed for our nation's young people.

And yet we know these capacity-building supports matter. Research tells us that teachers, social workers, health-care providers, and other professionals who receive training and educational resources are better able to do their jobs. And when professionals are better prepared, we see more positive outcomes for young people.

Reflecting back on Healthy Teen Network's leadership in the field—most notably since 2000 where we have seen a tremendous surge in learning more about what works—and looking forward to how to increase our impact and address disparities, Healthy Teen Network reasserts our commitment to evidence and innovation.

We dedicate this annual report to reflecting back on our contributions to evidence and innovation since 2000, as well as looking forward with our new strategic plan for how we will continue to lead the field to support and empower young people to thrive.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Paluzzi'.

**Pat Paluzzi, CNM, DrPH**  
*President & CEO*



## **Social Justice**

Social justice includes a vision of society that is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure.

# 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.

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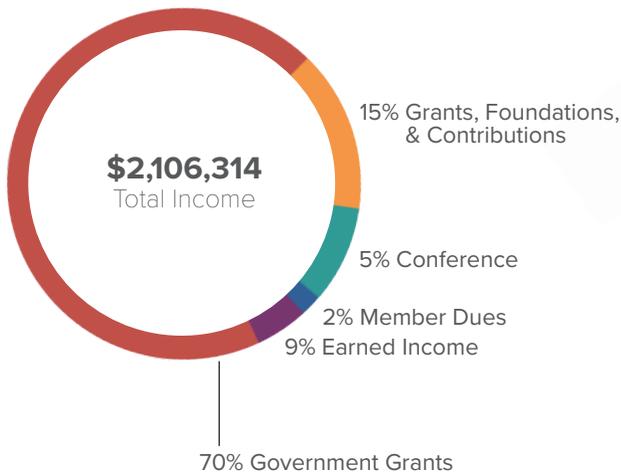
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# Reflecting Back

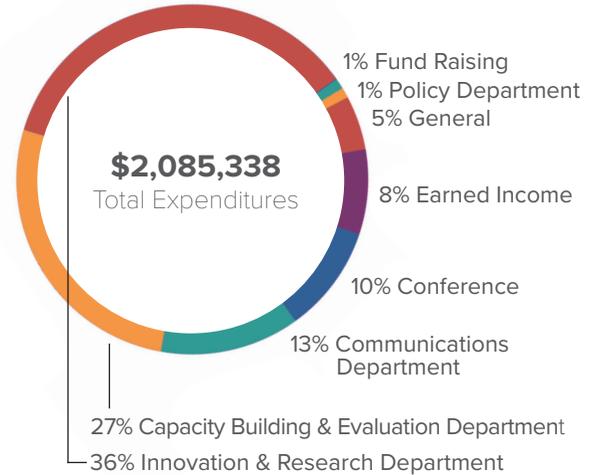


# Fiscal Year 2016 Financial Data

Sources of Income



Expenditures by Program Area



## Thank You for Helping Us Make a Difference.

*To our supporters, funders, 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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Jenifer DeAtley

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## **Evidence**

Evidence-based strategies and approaches are effective and efficient ways to achieve positive outcomes. (Related terms include science-based, research-based, or proven effective.)



## **Innovation**

Innovation is a critical component of a comprehensive strategy to respond to the dynamic lives of adolescents and young adults. Innovation is the creative development or adaptation of something to create something new that adds value or serves a purpose.

# Healthy Teen Network's Leadership in Evidence and Innovation

2000

Lack of Evaluation & Readiness

Capacity Building Is Key

Healthy Teen Leadership Alliance

Capacity Building for Teen Pregnancy Prevention

Adopting Getting to Outcomes®

2004

What Works for Young Mothers?

Getting to Outcomes Manual

Tool to Assess the Characteristics of Effective Sex Education Programs

Integrating Teen Pregnancy, STI, & HIV Prevention

Reaching All Young People

2008

Logic Models for Working with Young Parents

Strategic Plan for Baltimore City

With the turn of the century, the adolescent sexual and reproductive health field began to focus in earnest on evaluating programs and approaches to determine what works to improve health outcomes for young people. This growing body of evidence has improved programming and paved the way for innovation. Healthy Teen Network is a national leader in commitment to evidence and innovation, setting the standard for high-quality capacity-building assistance that ensures effective programming and promotes positive outcomes. This timeline highlights Healthy Teen Network's leadership in evidence and innovation, from 2000 to the present.

2000

**Lack of Evaluation & Readiness:**

With Sociometrics, we published the [Evaluation Readiness Assessment Guide](#), documenting challenges encountered while conducting evaluations of teen pregnancy prevention programs. The Guide provides a step-by-step process to assess organizational readiness for evaluation.

2001

**Capacity Building Is Key:**

We met with Dr. John Santelli, then Chief of the Applied Sciences Center Branch, CDC Division of Reproductive Health, and encouraged CDC to consider the importance of capacity building to train, motivate, and support evidence-based, high quality program implementation.

## 2002-Present

### Healthy Teen Leadership

**Alliance:** We established and continue to facilitate an advisory group of state leaders, to set and move forward on a national vision in support of adolescent sexual and reproductive health.

## 2002-2005

### Capacity Building for Teen Pregnancy Prevention:

As a national capacity-building provider, we built CDC Division of Reproductive Health grantee knowledge and commitment to use evidence-based approaches. Our efforts resulted in increased knowledge and willingness to use evidence-based approaches among both grantees and our membership.

## 2003

### Adopting Getting to Outcomes®:

We introduced CDC project officers to Getting to Outcomes® and played a catalytic role in persuading them to adopt it as the project implementation framework, to integrate evidence-based approaches and improve quality and accountability.

## 2004

### What Works for Young Mothers?:

With The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, we partnered with Dr. Lorraine Klerman to identify what works in preventing additional births to teen mothers, and we published *Another Chance*.

## 2007

### Getting to Outcomes Manual:

We worked with the CDC and Dr. Abe Wandersman to develop the grantee manual to use GTO.

## 2007

### Tool to Assess the Characteristics of Effective Sex Education Programs:

We partnered with ETR Associates to develop the [TAC](#), translating Dr. Douglas Kirby's research to practice with a tool for program assessment. The *TAC* supports using evidence-based approaches to develop innovative programs.

## 2007-2011

### Integrating Teen Pregnancy, STI, & HIV Prevention:

We partnered with agencies in Alabama, Colorado, Georgia, and Maryland to implement evidence-based programs that integrate teen pregnancy, STI, and HIV prevention, resulting in expanded program implementation.

## 2008

### Reaching All Young People:

We convened an expert advisory group to develop a [policy, program, and research agenda](#) inclusive of the needs of marginalized youth.

## 2008

### Logic Model for Working with Young Parents:

We designed a [resource kit and logic model](#) to support evidence-based, comprehensive program and service delivery for young people who are pregnant and parenting.



Evidence-based strategies and approaches go beyond simply proven effective programs (also known as evidence-based programs or interventions).

“Evidence” includes a variety of possible strategies and approaches:

- Using a needs and resource assessment
- Using a logic model to identify goals, behaviors, and risk and protective factors (or determinants), based on the assessment
- Using health behavior change theory/theories
- Using proven effective, or evidence-based programs and interventions
- Using common characteristics of other proven effective, or evidence-based programs
- Conducting process and outcome evaluation

2010

Evidence-Based Resource Center

Core Components of Supportive Housing for Young Parents

Integrating Services, Programs, & Strategies through Community-Wide Initiatives

Enhancing Quality Interventions Promoting Healthy Sexuality

Personal Responsibility Education Program

Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative

2012

Translating Research to Practice

Evidence-Based Sexuality Education in Schools

Road Map for the Future

Native Youth Project

mHealth with Crush

Exemplary Sexual Health Education

Online Learning with Compass

Youth 360°

mHealth with Pulse

Engaging Learners with Games

2014

2009-Present

**Strategic Plan for Baltimore City:**

We led a collaborative effort to develop a [strategic plan](#) to reduce teen births in Baltimore City. The city has since implemented many plan recommendations and experienced a significant drop in teen birth rates. We continue to provide capacity-building assistance and are now collaborating to update the plan.

2010

**Core Components of Supportive Housing for Young Parents:**

We partnered with Child Trends to identify [core components of supportive housing](#) for young parents in support of developing and improving evidence-based and innovative services.

2010

**Evidence-Based Resource Center:**

We launched an [online library and capacity-building tool](#) supporting the use of a systematic framework for evidence-based and innovative programs and services.

2010-2013

**Enhancing Quality Interventions Promoting Healthy Sexuality:**

We partnered with RAND Corporation on a five-year research project on implementing the evidence-based program Making Proud Choices! in Boys and Girls Clubs in Alabama and Georgia. Findings demonstrated using Getting to Outcomes can help community-based settings achieve high levels of fidelity and improve health outcomes.

## 2010-2015

### **Integrating Services, Programs, & Strategies through Community-Wide Initiatives:**

In a third cycle of CDC funding, we built the capacity of grantees to use Getting to Outcomes and implement evidence-based programs with quality and fidelity.

## 2010-Present

### **Teen Pregnancy Prevention Initiative:**

We provide capacity-building assistance for Office of Adolescent Health Teen Pregnancy Prevention and Pregnancy Assistance Fund grantees, increasing their capacity to implement evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and services.

## 2010-2017

### **Personal Responsibility Education Program:**

We built the capacity of Family and Youth Services Bureau State and Tribal PREP grantees, supporting high quality implementation of evidence-based and evidence-informed programs and services.

## 2011-2013

### **Evidence-Based Sexuality Education in Schools:**

We built the capacity of CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health grantees to implement evidence-based sex education using Getting to Outcomes in educational settings. We collaborated with CDC to adapt GTO for school-based settings, developing the resource, [\*Making Evidence-Based Sexual Education Work in Schools\*](#).

## 2012

### **Translating Research to Practice:**

With Dr. Abe Wandersman and others, we published a [study](#) on results from the CDC Division of Reproductive Health project, documenting the benefits of using proactive training and TA to support quality program implementation, as well as the importance of capacity-building assistance to translate research to practice and promote evidence-based programs.

## 2012-2014

**Native Youth Project:** We built the capacity of National Network of Public Health Institutes and CDC grantees—seven tribal communities—to implement evidence-based programs among American Indian and Alaska Native youth.

## 2013-2016

**Road Map for the Future:** An extensive assessment and analysis surfaced the need for a holistic approach for adolescent sexual and reproductive health. In our [2013-2016 Strategic Plan](#), we identified a road map for the field to move toward health promotion and support evidence and innovation.

## 2013-Present

### **Exemplary Sexual Health Education:**

We build the capacity of CDC Division of Adolescent and School Health local education agencies to provide exemplary sexual health education.

## 2013-Present

**mHealth with Crush:** With MetaMedia, we developed and tested Crush, an innovative, mobile health (mHealth) resource for Black and Latina adolescent girls, to promote sexual health.

## 2014

**Youth 360°:** We launched Youth 360°, an initiative grounded in social-ecological theory to promote addressing social determinants of health: how and where we live, learn, and play matters.

## 2015

### **Online Learning with Compass:**

We launched the [Compass](#), an online learning management system to facilitate accessible distance learning, or elearning, opportunities, to promote the use of evidence and innovation.

## 2015-2017

### **Engaging Learners with Games:**

Across several projects, we developed games (e.g., [Youth 360°: The Game](#), [LGBTQ+ Who](#), Case-by-Case: Working with Sex Trafficking Victims) to build the capacity of professionals using an innovative, engaging, and effective tactic grounded in adult learning principles.

## 2015-Present

**mHealth with Pulse:** With MetaMedia, we adapted our mHealth resource, Crush, for older young women, ages 18-20, and are rigorously evaluating it (evaluation is currently underway).

Impact  
Recognized

Center for Evidence &  
Innovation



### 2016

**Impact Recognized:** Healthy Teen Network awarded the Sex Ed Impact Award by the Center for Sex Education.

ensure our nation's young people continue to receive quality sex education and access to services and are empowered to lead healthy sexual and reproductive lives.

### 2016-2017

**The ♥Beat Project:** We developed a prototype of a dynamic, app-based virtual community for youth who are pregnant or parenting to facilitate the exchange of user-generated health information and resources. The prototype is primed for the next stage of development.



This select history from 2000 to present represents how we have honed our approach, using lessons learned and evaluation results, to continuously improve and deliver the most efficient and effective capacity-building assistance to support high quality evidence-based and innovative programs and services for youth, always with an eye to improving outcomes. We will continue to lead the field to use what we know works best to meet the dynamic needs of young people.

### 2017

**Center for Evidence & Innovation:** We launched the [Center for Evidence and Innovation](#) to provide critical trainings and resources to

To be effective, innovation should apply evidence. For example, assessment findings could inform the development of a new program that will fit its priority population. Or, health behavior change theory, such as social cognitive theory, is used to develop intervention activities for a new innovative program.

# Looking Forward





## **Social Determinants of Health**

Social determinants of health are elements in the environment in which youth live, learn, and play that shape their long-term physical, mental, emotional, and social health and well-being.

# Center for Evidence and Innovation

Healthy Teen Network is pleased to announce the launch of the [Center for Evidence and Innovation](#). The Center will fill the vacuum left in the absence of public funding, providing the necessary trainings and resources to ensure our nation's young people continue to receive quality sex education and access to services and are empowered to lead healthy sexual and reproductive lives.

The Center leverages our wealth of existing learning materials and trainings to support evidence and innovation, along with our proven effective approach to providing capacity-building assistance and takes full advantage of our staff who possess a broad and deep level of expertise across an

expansive breadth of adolescent health and well-being topics.

Our aim for the Center is to offer low and no-cost distance learning for the field to continue to support efforts to use evidence and innovation to promote youth health and wellbeing.

We are excited about the Center and look forward to working with all of you to make sure that our young people get the evidence based, high quality, youth friendly, and culturally appropriate education and services they deserve so they can lead healthy and achieve their dreams.

## 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 these critical factors,

or social determinants of health, that shape our well-being.

Healthy Teen Network developed Youth 360° (based on an assessment of the field in 2013 2013-2016 Strategic Plan) 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 our marginalized youth populations, such as youth in out-of-home-care, system-involved youth, runaway/homeless youth, LGBTQ+ youth, and youth who are pregnant or parenting.



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<sup>o</sup> approach to achieve equity.

## Goal 1

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

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

1. Adopt a holistic approach and integrate the social determinants of health into their work.
2. 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 and evidence to support and empower young people to thrive.

Healthy Teen Network will:

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

## Goal 3

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

Healthy Teen Network will advocate to:

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

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