



Healthy Teen Network

2017 - 2020 Strategic Plan



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at 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.

Our 2017 - 2020 Strategic Plan is our map 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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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.

Looking Forward



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^o 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.



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 2013-2016 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.

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Suggested Citation:

Healthy Teen Network. (2017). 2017 - 2020 Strategic Plan. Baltimore: Author. Available from <http://www.healthyteennetwork.org/about-us/strategic-plan/2017-2020/>



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