



ANNUAL REPORT

2023

TEEN HEALTH
MISSISSIPPI





Youth-led advocacy is not just a moment; it's a movement.

At A Glance Youth Initiatives

505 condoms and 165 Safer Sex Kits distributed.

Youth from Georgia, Louisiana, Alabama, and Mississippi engaged in advocacy.

Project ME. engaged with young people at 16 events across Mississippi.

8,445 youth reached directly through our programs.

1 million lives impacted by THMS online and in person.

151 MYSummit applicants and 83 participants.

Dear Friends,

This year's annual report highlights the many milestones that Teen Health Mississippi has achieved toward carrying out the mission, vision, and values of our organization. We extend our profound appreciation to our dedicated staff, youth and adult partners, donors, board members, and community allies for your unwavering commitment. Your collective efforts have amplified THMS's work, ensuring youth in Mississippi have access to the info and resources they need to make informed decisions for their lives!


Our state experienced several challenging moments in 2023 that have greatly impacted youth, including the state legislature's removal of the repealer on the current sex ed law, rising cases of STIs and HIV, residual mental health effects of COVID-19, and the tornadoes in Rolling Fork and Silver City that affected communities we serve in the Delta. Because of your generosity, we were able to support youth in a variety of ways.

In response to the voices of youth and communities, THMS has adopted a new mission and a new vision, centered on equitable health outcomes for youth and the belief that healthier youth foster healthier, whole communities. Such an approach allows us to address the myriad of factors that impact youth health and well-being and fosters inclusivity and support for all youth. No matter where youth are, THMS will be here to guide, support, and advocate for the overall health and well-being of the next generation.

Sex education is still paramount to our work. And our new mission and vision allow us to be responsive to the challenges more youth face on their journey to adulthood. Building on our work from 2023, we expect that 2024 will bring more focus on tackling bias and discrimination in healthcare, improving workforce programs, and bringing life-skills and leadership initiatives to systems-involved and expectant and parenting youth.

We're energized now more than ever to continue to be a part of the change for the betterment of youth and their communities. Your commitment as a trusted adult, donor, staff, or volunteer empowers our youth to stand at the forefront of leading innovation and change. I know we are positioned for greatness in 2024 and beyond!

In Appreciation for Your Support,



Hope L. Crenshaw, PhD



TEEN HEALTH MISSISSIPPI

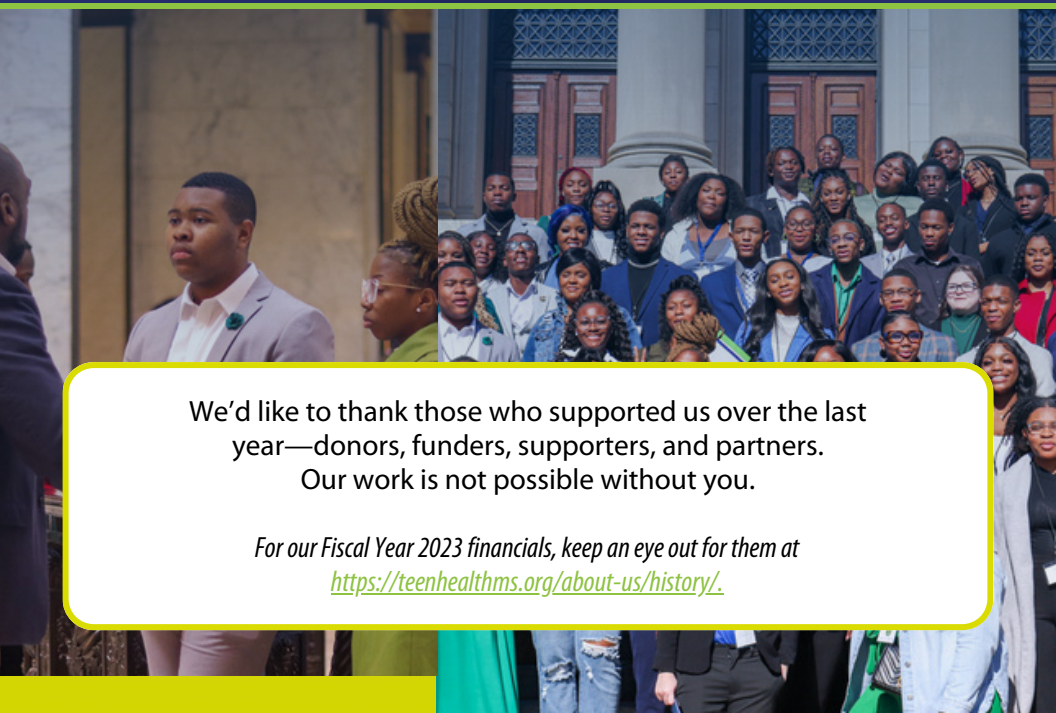
Introducing the expanded mission and vision adopted by THMS board and staff in 2023. Be watching for official rollout news in early 2024.

MISSION

To build capacity within youth and communities to attain equitable health outcomes.

VISION

Healthy Youth. Whole Communities.



We'd like to thank those who supported us over the last year—donors, funders, supporters, and partners.
Our work is not possible without you.

*For our Fiscal Year 2023 financials, keep an eye out for them at
<https://teenhealthms.org/about-us/history/>.*

LEADING OUT LOUD

"I really enjoy researching new things for content. Not only does it help spread factual knowledge to teens who don't know anything about the issue; it also teaches me things about that issue too." —Mind Elevation. Influencer

"I have learned how to advocate for myself and others. Teen Health has given me so many resources to use in every day challenges like talks with peers, mental health issues and even talking with adults."

—MYCouncil youth partner

TEEN HEALTH MISSISSIPPI WEBSITE

Page views: **70,169**

Most traffic: **Google organic**

Largest audience: **Female, 18-24**

CHOOSE YOUR METHOD

Method Card Clicks: **1,803**

Filter Clicks: **1,168**

Most Popular Method: **External Condom**



PROGRAMS



MYCouncil teaches youth advocacy and policy-making skills, culminating in attendance at Capitol Day, a youth advocacy event.

MYSummit introduces young people to community-led change and teaches how to create ideas, organize, and implement programs.



Project ME. connects youth to information related to their sexual and mental health through the use of on-the-ground, community-based and social media campaigns. MYVoice is our peer-to-peer sex education youth program.

More2Me is a 4-week computer-based training for juvenile justice-involved youth that emphasizes goal setting, social network improvement, and knowledge and resources for sexual/reproductive health.



MISSISSIPPI YOUTH INNOVATION
TEEN HEALTH MISSISSIPPI

MYInnovation combines design strategies and prototyping to develop public health promotional tools. It connects youth affected by or at risk of HIV with essential health resources.

The THMS Training Cadre provides trainings and support to trusted adults, educators, healthcare providers, and faith-based and community-based organizations on topics like sex education, LGBTQ+ inclusivity, and mental health.



Creating Healthy and Responsible Teens (CHART) is a partnership between THMS and Mississippi State Department of Health that provides abstinence-plus training and education to educators in 19 school districts across the state.

Youth Friendly Health Care Trainings and LinkedUp enhance the quality of healthcare for young adults through connecting schools and healthcare providers with information about health resources.



PLACES OF Impact

States of Impact

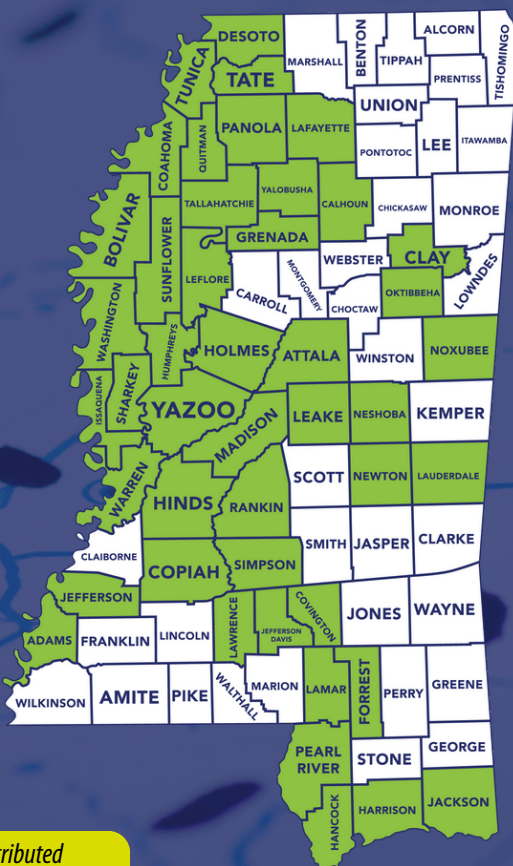
Our influence is widespread.

Key resources have been used
by youth and organizations in

16 other states.

Michigan
Texas
Illinois
California
Georgia
Virginia
Louisiana
Tennessee
New York
Florida
Alabama
Arkansas
New Jersey
Pennsylvania
North Carolina

We reached 45 counties in Mississippi with key
messaging about sexual and mental health in 2023.



*2,647 total resource booklets distributed
and/or downloaded*

*Project ME. resource booklets: 1,275
Expectant and Parenting Youth resource guides: 221
LinkedUp resource guides: 1,151*

THMS IN ACTION

In 2022-2023, our work reached:

1,129,962 people

EMERGENCY RELIEF

Motivated by Jackson's water crisis, THMS partnered with the Argosy Foundation to provide water and emergency supplies for young adults. Over 300 youth associated with Mississippi Immigrant Rights Association, Stewpot Community Services, Tougaloo College, and Jackson State University received crucial supplies, including water, back-to-school essentials, and hygiene products.

MENTAL HEALTH—GULF COAST

This year, THMS partnered with Gulfport area parents and teens, the American Heart Association, ClimbCDC, and Galloway Family Farms to shape community-driven mental health policies for the Gulfport Public School District. We also expanded the Expecting and Parenting Youth Program to the Gulf, which provides baby necessities and resource guides to young parents.

SEXUAL AND MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES

The Mind Elevation. Project, THMS's youth-led community-based and social media awareness initiative, reached 160,000+ youth and adults through popular social media platforms and in person events at colleges, health fairs, churches, youth justice programs, and conferences. In partnership with the MSDH STI/HIV Program, many also received condoms and safer sex kits.





1000 HOURS OF TRUSTED ADULT TRAININGS

Youth Mental Health First Aid and sex education training were the most popular workshops attended by youth-serving adults. Training hours increased by 42 percent—to over 1,000 hours of education received. THMS also piloted an intensive training that guides trusted adults through developing rapport, motivational interviewing, and discussing sensitive topics like peer groups, reproductive health, or legal challenges.

LINKAGES TO HEALTHCARE

LinkedUp partners helped reach 1,126 young adults with vital health information and referral resources. Providers at nine healthcare organizations as well as around 500 student nurses in the MS Nursing Association learned how to foster youth-friendly practices, including respect for confidentiality, remaining judgment-free, and providing medically accurate information.

YOUTH LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

146 youth are part of the THMS Leadership Pipeline. They passionately contribute to MYSummit and Capitol Day, lead advocacy projects, design interventions for peers living with HIV, and create health-related social media content. Several THMS Leadership alumni now have successful careers in sexual health education, teaching, public service, and journalism. Others have joined us at THMS as either board or staff members! We're Empowering Youth to Empower Communities!



2023

MOBILIZING
youth
SUMMIT

ENGAGE. EMPOWER. ENABLE.

PRESENTED BY
 TEEN HEALTH MISSISSIPPI

During a 3-day summit in June 2023, 83 youth partners from across the South gathered at Hinds Community College in Raymond to talk and learn about advocacy and making change within their communities. This year marked the fourth Mobilizing Youth Summit. Youth partners spent time creating, participating in discussion circles, and participating in breakout sessions on topics like identity, mental health, advocacy, and being an agent of change. This year's event also included a Sneaker Ball, where staff members, camp counselors, and participants mingled and danced the night away.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Name: *Lakyla Tennin*

Age: *18*

Program: *Project ME. Influencer, 2022-2023*

Major: *Computer Networking*

Future Career: *Software Developer*

What are some of the things that you learned from your time being part of one of our programs?

One of the biggest things I learned was time management because we had assignments due every Sunday, so it helped me balance getting my schoolwork done, plus anything else and then trying to get that done. I learned a lot about sexual education too.

What would you tell young people who want to get involved with THMS and Project ME.?

I would tell them to take it all in because we're giving out resources, and we're learning lots of new things, and it doesn't just have to be for the community (and other young people). It can be for yourself, too, because I definitely learned a lot that, despite me not being on the ME. Project anymore, I still use the knowledge I learned from it.

Why do you think it's important for youth and adults to work together, especially in topics related to youth sexual and mental health?

I think that's very important because they can learn something from each other. I know a lot of young people probably don't feel comfortable talking to adults, and some adults probably don't think the kids should be involved with it, or they don't want to talk to them about (sexual health). I think it's a learning experience from both ends.

Why is being involved in this program important for young people?

Because a lot of young people don't know their resources or how to get to those resources, and we really don't really have access to the basic sexual education that we need.

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Your gift of any amount will allow THMS to expand further in Mississippi and surrounding states. Please donate by going online or mailing your contribution to our main office in Jackson.