



ANNUAL REPORT

■ ■ ■ ■ 2023





TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Letter From The Executive Director	3
Executive Summary	4
PAHO-WHO Recognizes JovenSalud As A Social Health Innovation	5
Why We Do What We Do	7
Mission And Vision	9
Model Of Behavioral Change	10
Our Services For Teens	11
Our Contribution To The SDGs	12

Our Results: Use, Satisfaction and Impact

Use	
TeenSmart By The Numbers	14
Scaling Through Alliances & Digital Marketing	15
Coaching Service	20

Satisfaction	21
Impact	
Online Courses	22

Looking Forward

What's Coming Next?	24
Financial Summary	25
Your Support Matters!	26
Partners	27
Highlighted Significant Projects	30
Board Of Directors	32
Staff	33
Contact Us	34

LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear TeenSmart Family, 

As we bid farewell to 2023, our hearts are filled with profound gratitude to you. It takes an entire community to support adolescents on their journey of growth and well-being. Thank you for being part of our TeenSmart family.

In 2023, TeenSmart took a significant step forward in its goal to transition to scale, enabling us to nearly double the number of young people benefiting from our JovenSalud services.

Our overarching goal is that all Spanish-speaking youth could be aware that these free services exist for them to help them achieve healthy lifestyle behaviors and personal leadership skills, to obtain education, employment, and to participate in social responsibility.

Thanks to your support, we achieved notable milestones in **2023**:

- **+30,000 new users on JovenSalud**, compared to 16,504 in 2022 (In total we have reached more than 145,000 teens in the past 20 years!)
- The launching of **new online technological innovations** like the counselor bot and the gamification, both designed to attract and increase engagement with our educational content.
- **Recognition from** the leading healthcare institution in the Americas, **the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO-WHO)** as a social health innovation contributing to reducing health inequities in Latin America and the Caribbean.

TeenSmart stands as a unique organization, combining two decades of experience in Costa Rica and Nicaragua with the vitality and energy of a startup in other Central American countries, Mexico, and beyond. We are poised to enter the next phase of scaling and growth, and with your continued support, we can navigate challenges with agility, innovation and resilience.

See you in 2024!



MTE. Adriana Gómez G.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

30,000+ new users on JovenSalud, compared to 16,504 in 2022

The launching of two online technological innovations: **Joy, the counselor bot**; and **gamification**. Watch how teens react to them!

2,000+ teens graduated from JovenSalud online courses.

These courses have significant results in improving attitudes, motivations, knowledge, and behaviors.

Some examples of results are:

1 Improved relationships & communication with family and friends

2 Enhanced ability to deal with peer pressure

3 Greater self-esteem & improved body image

4 Enhanced clarity of values when making decisions

5 Reduced self-perception of depression

6 Increased sense of control over life

7 Greater awareness that healthy relationships also involve conflicts & challenging moments

TeenSmart was honored with a significant **PAHO-WHO** recognition as a social health innovation that contributes to reducing health inequities in Latin America and the Caribbean.



With your support, TeenSmart continues to stand out as an impact-driven, one-of-a-kind organization that is now celebrating 20 years!



PAHO/WHO RECOGNIZES JOVENSALUD AS A SOCIAL HEALTH INNOVATION!

JOVENSALUD.NET, the online platform for teens, was awarded as one of the three winners of the **PAHO-SIHI 2023 SOCIAL INNOVATION CALL** for its great work in reducing health gaps in Latin America and the Caribbean.

SOCIAL INNOVATION IN HEALTH (SIHI) is a global network of passionate people, organizations and institutions that advocate for social innovation in health and promote social innovation research.



Watch the awards video in PAHO TV CHANNEL on YouTube



From left to right:
Dr. Mary Lou Valdez, PAHO Deputy Director; Adriana Gómez, Executive Director of TeenSmart International; Sebastián García Saiso, Director of the Department of Evidence and Intelligence for Health Action; Jessie Schutt-Anie, head of the Equity, Gender, and Cultural Diversity Unit.





WHY WE DO What We Do



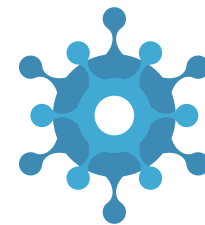
A quarter of the world's population are young people between the ages of 10 and 24, and almost 90% of them live in developing countries (UNFPA, 2023).



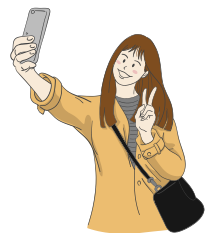
While digital health and well-being adolescent services have proliferated, there is a paucity of information as to their impact, sustainability, and scalability.



This population, commonly known as "Generation Z", **is the first digitally native generation.**



Young people face health and well-being challenges, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.



Gen-Z is engaging in the digital world at younger ages and spending more time online (UN, 2022).



Social determinants limit teens' healthcare access; traditional institutions may not cater to their needs.



75% percent of young people between the ages of 15 and 24 **had access to internet by 2022**, compared to 65% of the rest of the world's population.



Crucially, services should be provided through channels familiar to adolescents for effective engagement and digital solutions have become an excellent approach for reaching this generation.



Digital solutions, while promising, face challenges of survival as a third of educational apps and websites created during the pandemic are no longer available (Unicef, 2022).



Six risk behaviors contribute to 75% of illness and death among adolescents: violence (included self-inflicted), tobacco, alcohol and drugs consumption, sexual risky behaviors, poor nutrition and sedentarism.



Latin America and the Caribbean region is home to 106 million 10–19-year-olds and has the second highest rate of adolescent mortality in the world due to violence, suicide, and adolescent pregnancy (The Lancet Child & Adolescent Health, 2022).





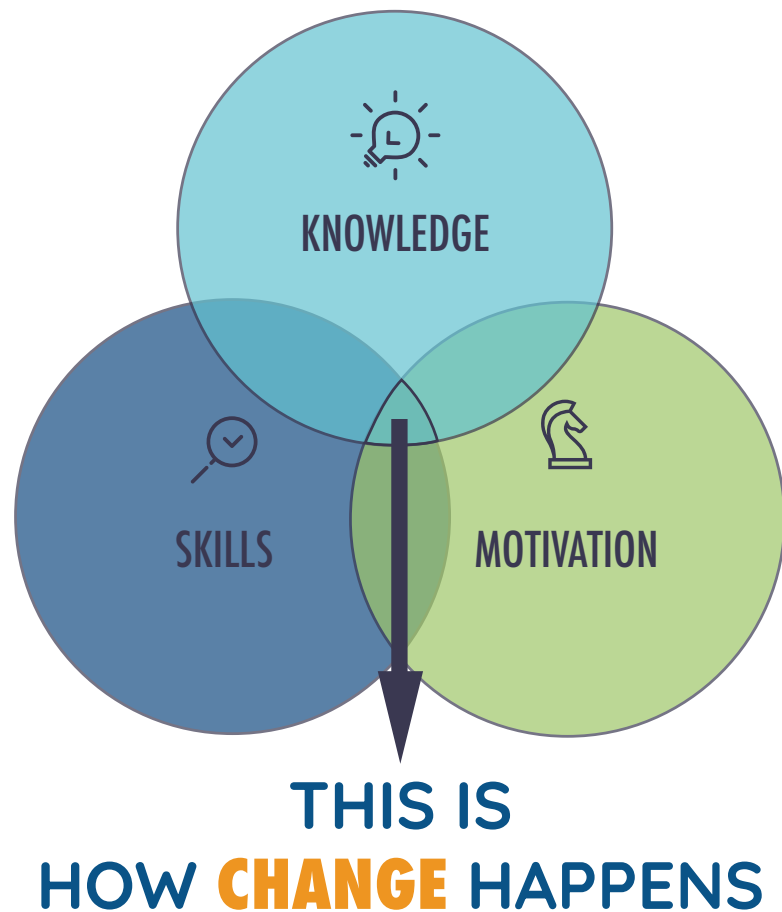
OUR MISSION

TeenSmart International uses online technologies to empower youth to make smart decisions, live healthy lives and contribute to their communities.

OUR VISION

Millions of youth becoming healthier, more educated, productive and active in improving their communities.

MODEL OF BEHAVIORAL CHANGE



OUR MODEL OF CHANGE

When teenagers are **empowered** with knowledge, skills, and motivation, they will make smart choices to reduce or prevent risky behaviors. They also build life skills that promote education, employment, and social responsibility.



OUR SERVICES FOR TEENS

COACHING & SUPPORT



Personalized life coaching from health professionals and a chatbot

MICROMESSAGES



Short mobile interventions with daily cues-to-actions to improve habits.

UNDERSTAND YOUR HEALTH



Questionnaires so teens can learn about their health

HEALTH DIRECTORY



Organizations that provide face-to-face support for teens.

INFORM YOURSELF



Scientifically validated information and resources to support knowledge and decision-making.

ONLINE COURSES

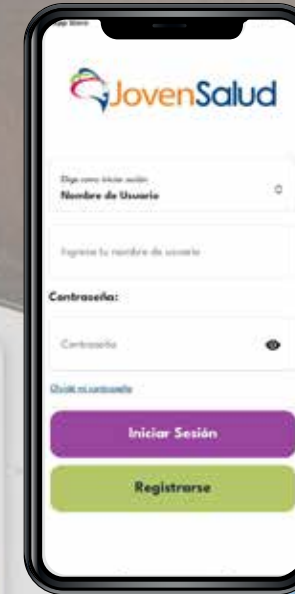
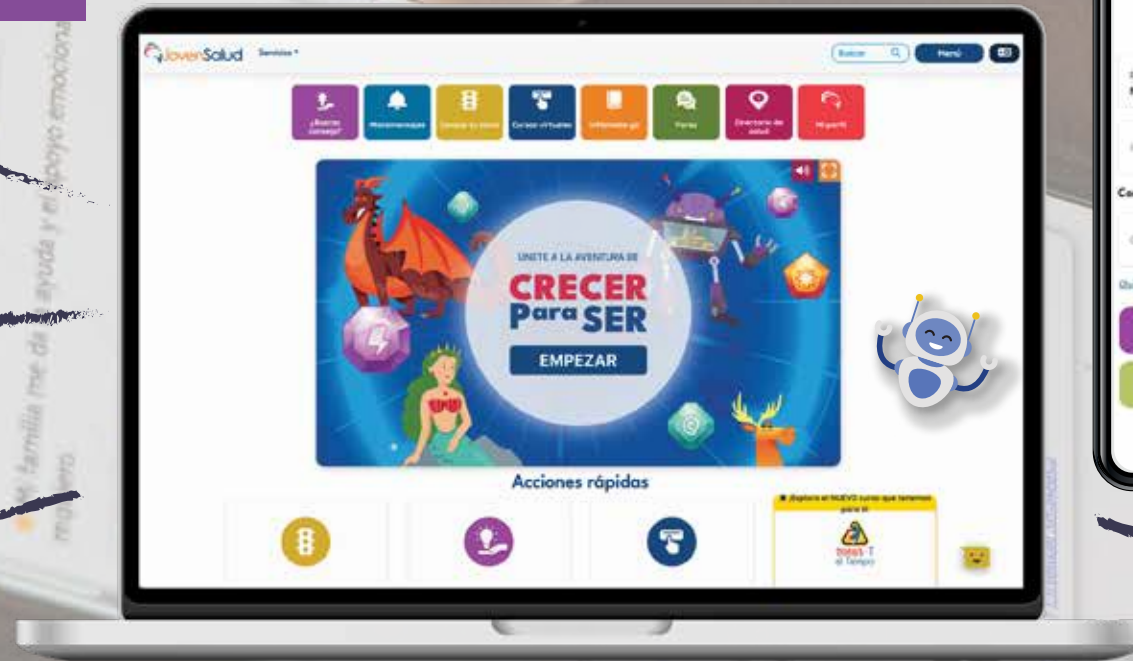


Courses to develop life skills.

CHATS AND FORUMS



Spaces for interaction among youth about various topics.



OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Through JovenSalud and collaborative alliances:



Technology libraries in vulnerable communities.



Sexual and reproductive education programs.
Empowerment of women and awareness-raising for men about masculinity.



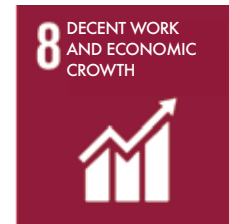
JovenSalud is a technological platform evolving towards scaling up with free, inclusive and confidential access for the region's youth.



Services and tools for wellness, mental health, and sexual/reproductive health.

Prevention of drugs and tobacco use.

Roadway safety.



Initiatives that promote staying in school, the importance of education, and skills for employment.



Special interventions to prevent violence.



Interventions that promote staying in school and education for sustainable development.

Development of skills for employment.



Interventions that empower and motivate youth as community leaders.

“My future without borders” project raised awareness among youth with migrant parents about migration risks.



We use a multi-sector alliance model that seeks collective, regional impact for healthy youth leaders.



OUR RESULTS 2023

USE, SATISFACTION AND IMPACT



INDICATOR	Unit of measure	Before 2020	2020	2021	2022	2023	Cumulative
Total registered users	Number of youth	74,483	7,999	18,384	16,504	30,269	147,661
Health profile	Number of health questionnaires completed	75,257	5,879	8,204	5,997	4,766	100,103
Online courses completed	Number of courses	10,818	1,219	3,230	3,124	2,385	20,776
Online queries	Number of queries	110,713	14,500	22,916	14,942	9,517*	172,588
Youth using ¿Buscas Consejo?	Number of youth	4,618 annual average	3,032	5,623	4,366	4,155*	N/A
Usage concentration of ¿Buscas Consejo?	Number of queries per youth	2.8 average	4.65	3.1	3.42	2.3*	
Organizations served	Number of organizations	77 annual average	127	120	151	167	
Income (USD)	Dollars	2,220,028 cumulative	356,533	396,457	508,175	516,037	N/A
Expenses (USD)	Dollars	2,397,396 cumulative	356,533	389,925	504,629	541,821	N/A

USE

TeenSmart BY THE NUMBERS



*2023 marks a milestone in the online coaching service as Joy- the counselor chat bot- was introduced. These three figures correspond exclusively to consultations made to health professionals.



SCALING THROUGH ALLIANCES & DIGITAL MARKETING

Teens everywhere and anytime can use their cellphones, tablets or computers to access the free JovenSalud services for information, learning opportunities and coaching.

During 2023, TeenSmart promoted access to JovenSalud services via a hybrid model of in-person organizational promoting alliances and digital marketing.





BUILDING STRONG & ENDURING PROMOTIONAL ALLIANCES

The majority of JovenSalud users learned about these services from alliances with Schools and Positive Youth Development Organizations.

In 2023 TeenSmart strengthened partnerships via several activities.

Provided
webinars
for school staff

“TeenSmart’s youth health profile for a digital assessment of risk and protective factors”

“Main challenges and opportunities adolescents face”.

“Technological innovations to enrich educational work”.

“Sharpening the Saw: self-care and personal renewal for health and education professionals”.

Continued to expand and strengthen its relationships with

167 allies

& Developed

9 new alliances

in Central America, Mexico, Colombia and beyond.

The most outstanding partnerships due to their proactivity and commitment with the promotion/use of JovenSalud were:

MINED Nicaragua

MAIA, Guatemala

Esc. María Auxiliadora SJ, C.R.

Asociación Esperanza, Nic.

Fundación Construyendo Sonrisas, C.R.

Fundación H&R Samuel, C.R.

CTP Platanares, C.R.

Education Plus, Nic.

INATEC, Nic.

POSITIONING TO SCALE

TeenSmart participated and collaborated in lots of community events such as **career and health fairs** and youth programming at **skate parks and movie theaters**. The goal is always to promote visibility and the use of JovenSalud services. In these activities, young people used their own cellphones and internet to access JovenSalud services and TSI staff provided motivational goodies such as bracelets and stickers.

These types of promotional activities generated around **4,000** new JovenSalud users and provided brand visibility to upwards of **20,000** individuals (young + adults).





PARTNERING FOR A HEALTH PROMOTION SUCCESS!

The José Dolores Estrada Institute, is a school in Granada, Nicaragua, that started using JovenSalud services in 2019. To date, it has enrolled **1,049 students** in JovenSalud and **802 of their teens have graduated** from TeenSmart's online life skills courses.

One out of every two students at their school is using JovenSalud! The success of this alliance is credited to a dedicated team of educators who not only believe in the program, but have also witnessed significant positive changes in their youth.

One teacher told us, **"This year I saw that even some of our teens that are struggling with substance use were completing the JovenSalud course. That makes me feel hopeful!"**



DIGITAL PROMOTION AND MARKETING

In 2023, we reached more teens than ever through social media:



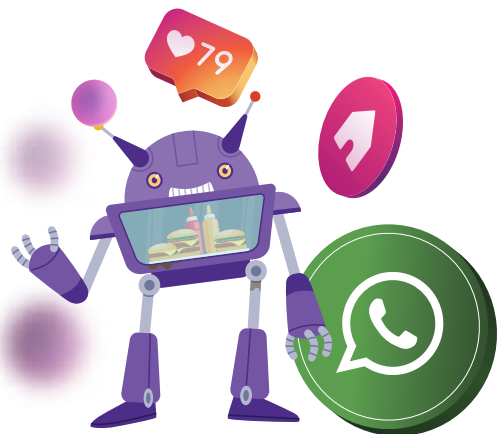
• Around **6,800 registered users** came to JovenSalud via social media (like WhatsApp, Facebook, YouTube, TikTok)



• Most of these users were girls (59%), 14-24 years old (73%) and from major countries in the region like Costa Rica, Colombia and Mexico (64%)



• Did you know: 83% of JovenSalud users in 2023 **accessed our website via their cell phone?**



COACHING SERVICE

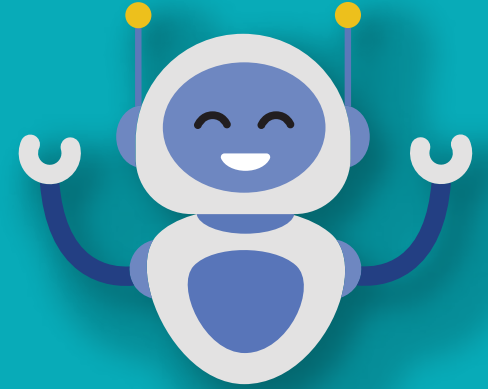
We listened. We coached. We supported.

Coaching services continue to be one of our most popular services for personalized youth empowerment. In 2023, this service received **9,517 inquiries** to health professionals from 4,155 young individuals.

The most frequently consulted topics in the coaching service were:

- 1 Mental health: emotional well-being, depression, suicidal ideation
- 2 Study techniques and motivation
- 3 Self-esteem
- 4 Relationships with peers: healthy dating and friendship
- 5 Personal growth and renewal
- 6 Family: conflict resolution, healthy relationships, and family communication

In 2023, the coaching team welcomed “Joy”, our new counselor bot. Joy helps us immediately respond to teens around certain topics; while other more specific and in-depth queries are addressed by health professionals.



Joy was developed in alliance with Accenture using SAGA Technology. It responds to queries based on a database of over 150,000 real questions and answers that JovenSalud professionals have processed over the past 10 years.

A total of **4,813 young individuals** interacted with Joy. Of those, 55% were female and 78% of the users were Nicaraguans. 89% of Joy users reported being satisfied with Joy. Joy’s impressive results will help TeenSmart with our new scalable approach and reduce human hours.



OUR USERS' SATISFACTION

SERVICE

Satisfaction 4-5 STARS

GENERAL SATISFACTION	85%
CONOCE TU SALID	84%
VIRTUAL COURSES	85%
¿BUSCAS CONSEJO?	89%
INFORMATE YA	86%
FORUMS	83%

TeenSmart evaluates satisfaction continuously and randomly using a five-star rating system and teens rate JovenSalud services on average of 85% or better.

Improved family-friends relationships & communication

- Healthier eating and prevention of eating disorders
- Increased road safety (helmet + seatbelt usage)
- Reduction in bullying
- Decrease in alcohol & tobacco consumption
- Increased condom use among sexually active youth
- Enhanced clarity of values when making decisions



Healthy behaviors
648 graduates



Sexual & reproductive health
276 graduates

- 10-13 yrs old.
- Improved knowledge about pregnancy, menstruation & breast cancer

- 14-24 yrs old
- Improved knowledge about STIs, inappropriate relationships, benefits of postponement, breast cancer, pregnancy & menstruation.

- Improved knowledge about the correct use of condoms.
- Improved skills or confidence to refuse to engage in sexual activity without a condom.
- More willingness to approach parents or trusted adults for information on sexual health.
- Increased frequency in performing breast or testicular self-examinations.



Facing challenges related to migration of loved ones
149 graduates



Violence prevention
330 graduates

IMPACT COURSES

***Only pre-test data collected in 2023



Safe browsing and 21st Century skills
201 graduates

- Increase strategies to prevent falling victim to online threats-frauds.



Prevention of drugs & alcohol consumption
274 graduates

- Reduced alcohol consumption
- Enhanced ability to deal with peer pressure

- Increased weekly hours dedicated to physical activity
- Greater self-esteem: improved body image
- Increased consumption of vegetables and fruits
- Greater participation in groups (artistic, cultural, sports, religious, etc.)
- Perceived increase in the number of friends for communication and sharing



Exercise & nutrition
248 graduates



Mental-emotional health
273 graduates

- Reduced self-perception of depression
- Increased sense of control over life
- Greater awareness that healthy relationships also involve conflicts & challenging moments



LOOKING FORWARD 2024 & BEYOND

WHAT'S COMING NEXT?

The year 2024 marks a very significant milestone for TeenSmart: it's our 20th Anniversary!

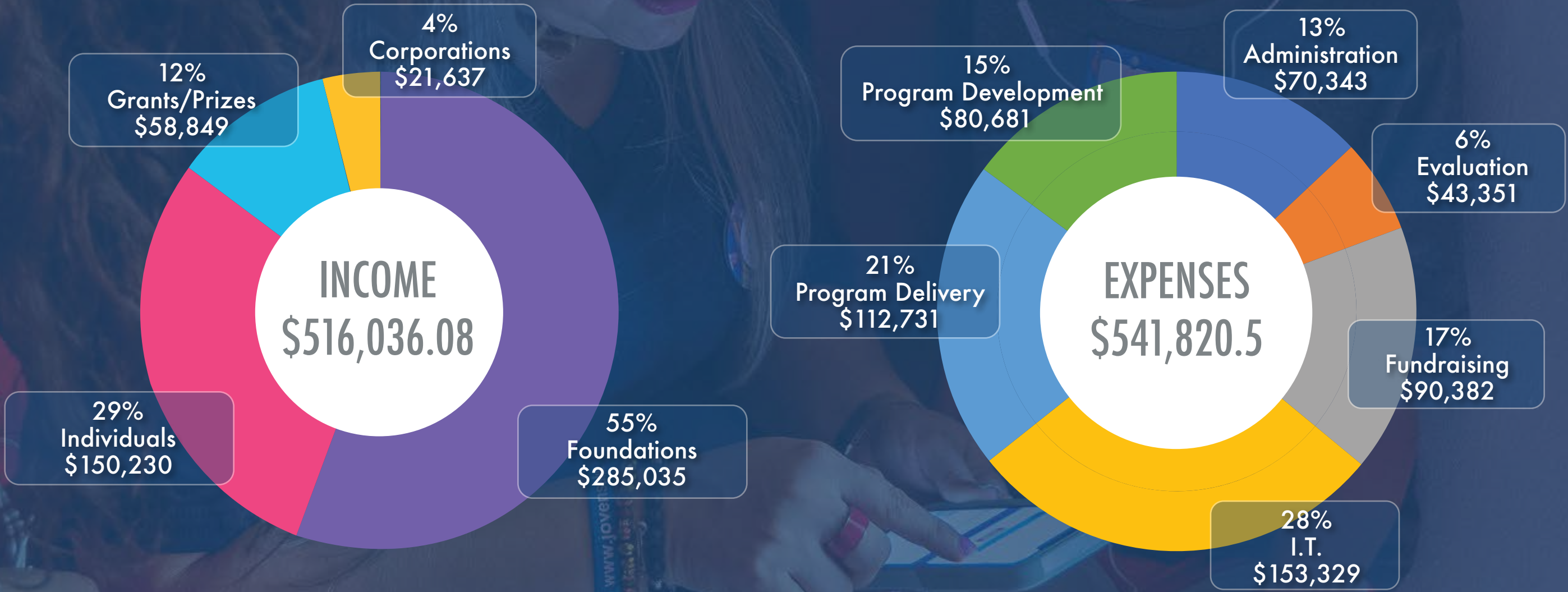
We are grateful for your continued support and that of so many partners. You have helped us to renew and enhance our technology, and to promote best practices addressing the emerging needs of youth. You have played a pivotal role in making an impact on the lives of thousands of young people.

IN 2024 WE ASPIRE TO:

- Continue to scale by implementing lessons learned during Phase One of our Scalability Plan to reach Latin American youth and provide them with the number 1 online resource for personal growth, well-being, and leadership.
- Improve our technology through AI and Machine Learning, as well as enhance gamification.
- Strengthen partnerships in the countries of the region through their governments, NGOs, international agencies, and various types of allies.
- Enhance our digital presence to achieve optimization in search engines, delivering educational content through different communication channels where young people are present.
- Pause and reflect on what we have learned from these 20 years to provide the best educational content, coaching and support to the youth we serve with so much love.



FINANCIAL SUMMARY



YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Help TeenSmart do more in one of the following ways:

- Please consider a **Legacy Gift** to help TeenSmart scale and deepen adolescents' access to our JovenSalud free services throughout Central America! [Click here to know all about the Program.](#)
- **Double** your current gift.
- Make your donation a **monthly gift**.
- Give an **in-kind donation** such as event space, food, T-shirts, or tablets.
- **Spread the word.** Get your friends to invest in TeenSmart and in Central America.
- **Share** JovenSalud.net with any Spanish-speaking youth you know.
- Contact us for volunteer possibilities or visit [**teensmart.org**](http://teensmart.org) for more information.



PARTNERING FOUNDATIONS



Troper-Wojcicki

Special support in 2023 from



Grand Challenges Canada[®]
Grands Défis Canada

OUR PARTNERS

TeenSmart's services are provided in part by partners that provides financial, in-kind and promotional support.



OUR PARTNERS





HIGHLIGHTING SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS WITH PARTNERS IN 2023

Accenture: Donated coding hours for the creation of our JovenSalud's coaching chatbot Joy, enhancing TeenSmart's capacity to reach more youth in a more effective and efficient way. Joy responds immediately to questions from teens, while more specific and in-depth needs are addressed by health professionals.

Marina Pez Vela: Created and promoted a Career Guide for high schools in the Quepos area of Puntarenas, Costa Rica. Over 150 students benefited.

Hospital Clínica Bíblica: Carried out a project with TeenSmart to identify challenges to paramedical professionals in order to develop an intervention that will support these professionals with their life mission, academic performance, and overall healthy lifestyle behaviors.

Propel + PagerDuty: Provided a workshop to address scalability challenges faced by TeenSmart's leadership team.



HIGHLIGHTING SIGNIFICANT PROJECTS WITH PARTNERS IN 2023

Roche Costa Rica: This 3-year alliance reached over 200,000 youth with educational content in Sexual & Reproductive Health (SRH), emphasizing breast cancer prevention. This outreach was achieved through social media and the JovenSalud platform. Graduates of our ConoceT course demonstrated statistically significant changes in SRH knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors—refer to page 14 for the Online Courses Impact.

Delta Analytics: Donated 5-10 hours per week of four professionals over a six months period to collaborate with TeenSmart's evaluation and IT team in the development and enhancement of a predictive algorithm to identify youth at highest risk for risky behaviors, thus allowing early detection and support for these young persons.

Cuadernos El Líder: A Central America publishing company that produces student notebooks throughout Central America added a QR code and special message in its “El Líder” notebooks, promoting visibility and use of JovenSalud services throughout Central America.

Dell: Granted us with a 2-day consultancy to strengthen the capacity of TeenSmart's Sustainability team.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



From left to right: Randolph Kissling, Jack Hastings, Cathy Strachan Lindenberg, Kenneth Hoadley, Alejandro Silva, Eric Liljenstolpe, Rosemary Boehmer and Fernan Gallegos.

Eric Liljenstolpe - **President**
Christian Thwaites - **Vice President**
Rosa María Solórzano - **Secretary**
Kenneth Hoadley - **Treasurer**
Rosemary Boehmer de Selva - **Fiscal**
Alejandro Silva - **Director**
Cathy Strachan Lindenberg - **Director**
Fernán Gallegos - **Director**
Gabriel Balzaretti - **Director**
Jack Hastings - **Director**
Leonor Gutiérrez - **Director**
Mariángeles Morales - **Director**
Randolf Kissling - **Director**

OUR STAFF

Adriana Gómez Gómez
Executive Director
Costa Rica

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Sustainability & Development Coordinator
México

Ana Virginia Esquivel Herrera
Communications Coordinator
Costa Rica

Carla Ruiz
Interactive Services Supervisor
Costa Rica

Carlos Hernández Pérez
TI Project's Administrator
Costa Rica

Carolina Alfaro González
Evaluation Specialist
Costa Rica

Daisy Jirón
Administrative Director
Nicaragua

Ericka Hernández Gómez
Interactive Services Coordinator
Nicaragua

Fernando Martínez
IT- Full Stack Developer
Honduras

Graciela Monge Hernández
Digital Health Promoter
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ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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