

20 years of empowered youth & brighter futures.



2024





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LETTER FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on this milestone year, marking 20 years of empowering youth through TeenSmart International, my heart is filled with profound gratitude for your steadfast support. Your belief in our mission has been the bedrock of our achievements, and we simply cannot thank you enough.

Because of your unwavering commitment, we have reached over 167,000 young people across 20 countries, inspiring changes in behaviors, attitudes, and motivations.

Together, we've celebrated seven international awards, witnessed more than 25,000 youth graduate from our online courses, and responded to over 180,000 coaching consultations. These milestones are not just numbers they represent lives transformed, futures brightened, and communities strengthened.

TeenSmart remains a unique and vital resource: the only free, 24/7 online platform offering high-quality information, health promotion, coaching, and support to Spanish-speaking youth across Latin America and beyond.

Through JovenSalud.net, we continue to provide a lifeline for young people seeking guidance, personal growth, and healthier futures.

As we look ahead to the future, I humbly ask for your continued commitment to this impactful work.

My request for you:

Listen to your teens and accompany them with kindness, free from judgment, and full of compassion. Provide the free services of <u>JovenSalud.net</u> to every Spanish-speaking youth aged 10 to 24 you know.

3 <u>Support us!</u> With your financial investments, ideas, and recommendations.

Your ongoing support fuels hope and opportunity for thousands of youth who rely on us to help them navigate life's challenges. Together, we can continue building a brighter and healthier future for the next generation.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Adriana Gómez

Executive Director, TeenSmart International



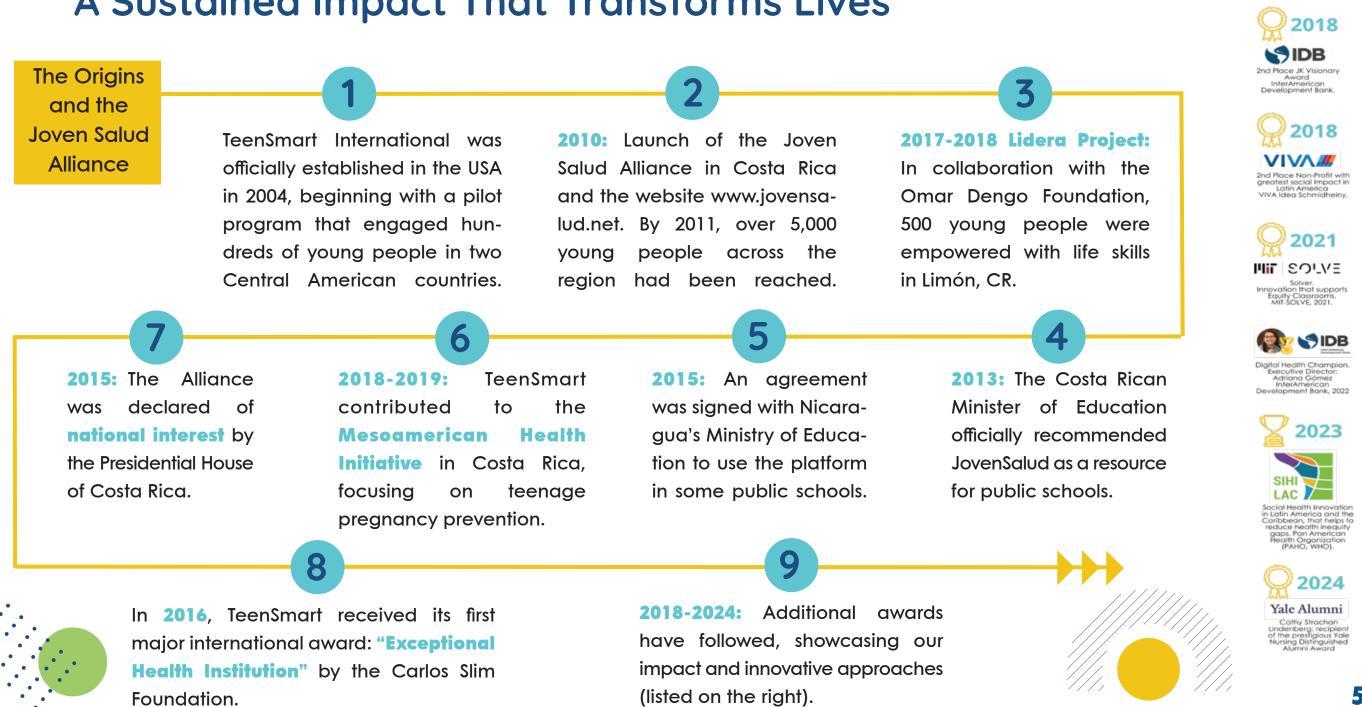
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2024, TeenSmart International (TSI) proudly celebrated 20 years of empowering over **167,000 youth** across **20 countries**. Co-founder Cathy Strachan Lindenberg received Yale University's School of Nursing Distinguished Alumni Award.

This year, 20,000+ new teens accessed JovenSalud.net, with over 2,000 graduating from online courses, showing significant improvements in family relationships (+19%), communication (+11%), friendships (+9%), and mental well-being

Testimonials highlight TSI's life-changing impact. In 2024 we counted with the support of key grants from AWS (Amazon Web Services) Health Equity Program, Cisco Regional Grants, and Propel. TSI remains cost-effective at just **\$26 per user annually,** proving the power of prevention.



2016

FUNDACIÓN Carlos Jim Ist Piace Exceptional Health stitution in Latin America Carlos Sim Foundation.

Milestones in 20 Years: A Sustained Impact That Transforms Lives

2020-2022 Resilience Users insigths: Development of the Creation of the "My Future 2019-2020: **During the "You Are Not Alone:** Winners of Grand 67% of new users were women. Without Borders" course, COVID-19 • 40% of users reported feeling JovenSalud 3.0" addressing the needs of Challenges Pandemic Canada's Stars depressed. project, integrating teens separated from their • Over 2,500 coaching sessions Al, with support from families due to migration, in Global Health focused on emotional health. the IDB. also sponsored by the IDB. program. • 65.700 personal WhatsApp messages were sent to teens. 2020-2024 Scaling Introduction of Creation of Targeted outreach new 2023: With support Up and 2022micromessages, content, including across Central America Challenges Grand from Expanding gamification, and safe internet practices and Mexico. Canada's Transition to Scale Impact risk prediction and mental health reached program, we algorithms. resources. 30,000 new young users. **Expanding Digital Reach:** Increased Programs extended to indigenous Mental Health Research: Internal studies presence in Colombia and Venezuela youth in El Alto, Bolivia, and La revealed the positive influence of family thanks to social media. Guajira, Colombia. and life skills on youth mental health.

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Cathy Strachan Lindenberg recognized by the Yale School of Nursing as a 2024 Distinguished Alumna

TeenSmart International's (TSI) co-founder, Cathy Strachan Lindenberg, was honored with a 2024 Distinguished Alumni Award by Yale University's School of Nursing (YSN).

This recognition celebrates Cathy's pivotal role in the creation of JovenSalud.net and its profound impact on the health and well-being of over 167,000 teenagers from 20 countries. Recipients of the YSN Award have demonstrated achievement or distinction in their career, in their contributions to their communities, or to the Yale School of Nursing.

Cathy has been a mentor, an influencer, a teacher, a guide, and a thought partner for many of us.

Those who know Cathy are aware of her four- decades unwavering commitment to nursing and public health. Under Cathy's guidance, JovenSalud Alliance was built in 2010 and TeenSmart has evolved seeking to reach 1 million teens by the end of the decade with JovenSalud's free health promotion, coaching, education for Spanish-speaking teens 10-24 years old!

JovenSalud has been awarded for its work by SIHI-LAC by PAHO/WHO, MIT-Solve, Inter-American Development Bank, Viva Idea and Carlos Slim Foundation.



I'm so thrilled for the JovenSalud Alliance, TeenSmart International, and our supporters worldwide" said Cathy Strachan Lindenberg.

"It comes at a time when we are seeing the highest demand in our history for vital support by young people throughout the Americas"

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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).

Young people engage in the digital world at younger ages and spending more time online. (UN, 2022).

75% 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.

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).

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

- While digital health and well-being adolescent services have proliferated, there is a paucity of information as to their impact, sustainability, and scalability.
- Social determinants limit teens' healthcare access; traditional institutions may not cater to their needs.
- 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.
- 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).



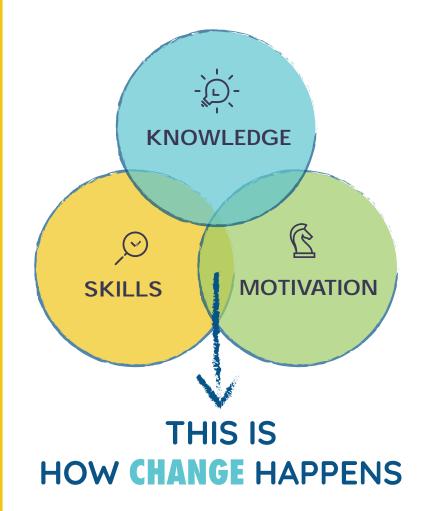
OUR MISSION

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.



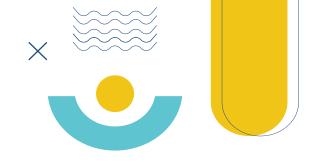


OUR MODEL OF CHANGE

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





ONLINE COURSES

Courses to develop life skills.

COACHING & SUPPORT

Personalized life coaching from health professionals and a chatbot

UNDERSTAND YOUR HEALTH

Questionnaires so teens can learn about their health

INFORM YOURSELF

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



www.jovensalud.net



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HEALTH DIRECTORY

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



MICROMESSAGES

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



CHATS AND FORUMS

Spaces for interaction among youth about various topics.

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Through www.jovensalud.net 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 drug and tobacco use.

Roadway safety.



Initiatives that promote staying in school, the importance of education, and skills for employment. 16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

Special interventions to prevent violence.



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

Development of employment skills.



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 2024 USE, SATISFACTION AND IMPACT

"It is in your moments of decision that your destiny is shaped." 5 Tony Robbins





USE. TEENSMART BY THE NUMBERS



INDICATOR	Unit of measure	Before 2021	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cumulative
Total registered users	Number of youth	82,482	18,384	16,504	30,269	20,123	167,762
Health profile	Number of completed instruments.	81,136	8,204	5,997	4,766	3,061	103,164
Completed online courses	Number of courses	12,037	3,230	3,124	2,385	2,156	22,932
Online queries	Number of queries	125,213	22,916	14,942	9,517*	8,963	181,551
Youth using ¿Buscas Consejo?	Number of youth	4,474 annual average	5,623	4,366	4,155*	3,585	
Usage concentration of ¿Buscas Consejo?	Number of queries per youth	2.5 average	3,1	3.42	2.3*	2.5	N/A
Organizations served	Number of organizations	82 annual average	120	151	167	101	
Income (USD)	Dollars	2,576,561 cumulative	396,457	508,175	516,037	558,397	N/A
Expenses (USD)	Dollars	2,753,929 cumulative	389,925	504,629	541,821	543,115	N/A





How do young people find us?

In 2024, JovenSalud welcomed **20,123 new young users**. These users discovered the platform through two main channels:

Partnered Institutions (62.5%):

The majority of young people learned about JovenSalud through partnerships with educational institutions, libraries, universities, community youth groups, churches, sports organizations, health centers, and professionals. These alliances are instrumental in reaching teens directly within their trusted environments.

Independent Discovery (37.5%):

A significant portion of users found JovenSalud on their own via search engines, social media platforms, news, and digital marketing efforts. These channels extend the platform's reach to a broader audience of self-motivated teens.



Gender:



49%

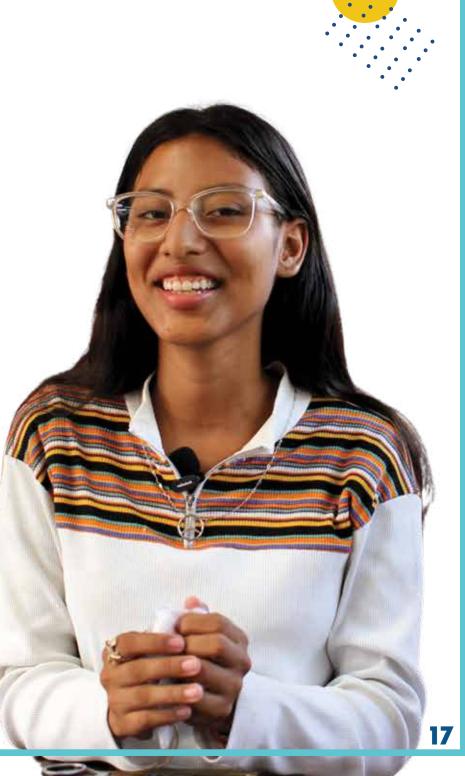




Geographic Distribution

- 55% Nicaragua
- •17% Costa Rica
- 8% Venezuela
- 5% Mexico
- •4.5% Colombia
- 8% Other Central American countries
- •2.5% Other countries





Use of the Counseling Service

In 2024, more than 8,000 young people utilized our counseling service, generating over 4,000 inquiries to both our professional counselors and Joy, our chatbot. These interactions revolved around five key topics:



Joy functions as an advanced search engine in our extensive database of +100,000 counselor-adolescent interactions to provide meaningful answers. While young people express satisfaction with Joy, we believe we can do even more!

We are developing a generative AI bot, trained not only on our 20+ years of expertise in adolescent support but also on our unique CRECER coaching model.

Recognizing the importance of responsible implementation, we emphasize that this is a model of accompaniment, not therapy. We envision this tool as a means to promote active listening, foster well-being, and encourage open conversations between adolescents and their families.

Stay tuned for more updates on this exciting innovation!

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VIRTUAL LIBRARY:

THE MOST POPULAR SERVICE IN 2024

The virtual library or blogs with holistic health topics was the most used service during 2024.

During this year, its easy access was improved through search engine optimization (SEO).

Infórmate Ya consists of more than 200 blogs that contain inspiring, brief videos and infographics. These blogs are also very useful for parents and caregivers of adolescents to be able to talk to them about specific topics.







MICRO-LEARNING



There are **21 micromessages** secuences in JovenSalud.

We had **839 sign-ups** for our 21 micromessage sequences, with teens enrolling in one or more of them.

47% (395) of the enrolled sequences corresponded to the "Boost Your Learning!" sequence.

44% (364) of the sequences were fully completed.

Each sequence contains an average of 14 messages.



OUR USERS' SATISFACTION



SERVICE

GENERAL SATISFACTION ONLINE COURSES CONOCE TU SALUD (Understand your Health)

SATISFACTION

86% 87% 83%

A **qualitative feedback** from users highlighted strengths and opportunities for growth:

Strengths: Users value the platform's accessibility, enabling them to engage with health resources at their own pace and in a comfortable environment. The wide range of topics effectively addresses diverse informational needs and concerns.

Opportunities: To enhance interactivity, features like live Q&A sessions, discussion forums, or interactive workshops could foster community engagement and real-time support. Tailoring content to individual health interests or concerns can boost relevance and user engagement. Addressing occasional technical issues, such as slow loading times or glitches, is also essential.

"There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to one who is striking at the root." – Henry David Thoreau

OUR IMPACT 2024

ONLINE COURSES



- 10% reduction in cases of potential eating disorders.
- Improved habits related to nutrition and physical activity in up to 10% of youth.
- Increased self-esteem, with 12% feeling better about their reflection in the mirror.



- Youth report stronger connections with their support networks (+19% improved family relationships).
- Improved mental health (+10% no longer experience deep sadness).
- Increased interest in road safety (+9% always wear a seatbelt).
- Reduced participation in fights (-8% engaged in fights).
- Decreased alcohol and tobacco use (-11% consumed in the last 30 days).
- Greater interest in taking control of and protecting their sexual and reproductive health (+17% used condoms more frequently).



CUIDA-T

Exercise & nutrition

138 graduates

Not enought pre-test data collected in 2024.



• Youth adopt measures regarding social media use, with 8% choosing not to have social media accounts.

These results are statistically significant changes between the pre-test and post-test (P-value equal to or less than 0.025 in the two-tailed test)





- Improved skills and confidence regarding sexual health topics (+11% feel more confident refusing unprotected sex).
- Greater knowledge of STIs (+18% now know most STIs do not have visible symptoms).
- Changes in beliefs related to mental health.
- Strengthening of support networks.
- Improvement in habits for a healthy lifestyle.
- New knowledge related to relationships and conflict.



- 29% reduction in cases of deep sadness among youth.
- 18% show a more positive attitude toward undesired outcomes.
- 24% reduction in cases of intentional self-harm.
- Improved life skills and self-esteem (+20% feel more in control of their lives, and +13% can identify positive traits about themselves).
- Changes in beliefs about mental health (+14% now view professional psychological or psychiatric support as normal).
- Strengthened support networks (+16% report better communication with their families).
- Healthier life habits (up to 13% increased frequency of physical activity or balanced eating).
- Shift in beliefs regarding sexual health and relationships.



 Increased knowledge, reducing myths about alcohol consumption (e.g., +15% understand gender differences in alcohol tolerance).

 Reduced alcohol consumption frequency (+8% have stopped drinking entirely).



- Youth report improved conflict management (+19% no longer frequently get angry).
- Changes in expressing anger (+19% no longer insult others).
- Improved communication skills (+10% no longer interrupt during conversations).
- Positive changes in behavior (+9% stopped teasing or joking with peers).

FEATURED PROJECTS AND EVENTS IN 2024

Acción Social HCB:

Hospital Clínica Bíblica (HCB) and TeenSmart International partnered to support IPA HCB (ASEMECO Para-University Institute) students and Central American youth by creating micromessages on managing studies, staying motivated, and making better life decisions, incorporating student feedback. HCB also facilitated TeenSmart's participation in community fairs in San José, Costa Rica, promoting JovenSalud.net services and encouraging youth registration, significantly expanding the platform's reach and impact.

AWS Health Equity Grant:

From May 2024 to May 2025 this grant aim to improve and accelerate TeenSmart's mental health resources and Joy Responses in this topic. We received \$20.000 in credits to use the AWS server. Thanks to the feedback of 1.000 teens from 18 countries that graduated from the past mental health course, we now created 2 microlearning courses. So far, 832 young people have enrolled in at least one course and +300 have completed them. Next step is to scale these interventions and recomend them to 10.000 young people.

Propel:

Thanks to this amazing collaboration, we have been able to make much for easy for teens to find health topics/blogs in the JovenSalud virtual library.

Marina Pez Vela

TeenSmart International (TSI) and Marina Pez Vela (MPV) partnered to motivate students, prevent school dropout, and support their educational journey. A workshop for MPV scholarship students focused on improving study habits and making learning more enjoyable, while participants registered on the JovenSalud.net platform and completed health assessments to guide future support.TSI also worked with Pacific Technical Professional Colleges to enhance twelfth-grade students' employability skills by implementing a Labor Management Guide to prepare them for internships in regional companies. MPV's Social Responsibility team promoted the "The Power is in You!" campaign and shared JovenSalud videos at family events. Now in its sixth year, this partnership continues to expand the reach of JovenSalud.net, providing critical resources to empower more youth.

CISCO Regional Grants:

From May 2024 to May 2025 the main objective of this grant was to create and launch a second phase of the gamification: a new path about education. This second phase has been lauched and 2025 is all about promoting its use and analyze its impact in School motivation.

Salón de Patines Music:

This Costa Rican family-owned company is the first to invest in real-life rewards for teens, generously donating free passes to their skating park. We hope this inspiring initiative will encourage many Central American corporations to follow suit, rewarding young people in their countries as a way to motivate them to stay on their educational journey, remain in school, graduate, improve their well-being, establish healthy habits, and prevent risky behaviors.



I Empower Myself 2.0

The project strengthened the knowledge and skills of 146 adolescents in sexual and reproductive health, gender equity, and leadership through the JovenSalud.net platform. Virtual courses, reinforcement workshops, and menstrual health sessions promoted the participants' holistic development. The initial goal of 130 youth was surpassed, achieving 112% fulfillment. Key achievements included a 24% increase in knowledge about breast cancer and a 15% improvement in gender equity perception. The project was funded by the Canada Fund for Local Initiatives and carried out in collaboration with Asociación La Esperanza and Education Plus, two community partners in the city of Granada, Nicaragua.

TeenSmart's 20th Anniversary Fundraiser:

TeenSmart proudly celebrated its 20th Anniversary with a heartfelt fundraising dinner that brought together a vibrant community of supporters. The evening featured live music, an exciting auction with works created by professional artists and TeenSmart users, and a special tribute honoring our founders, Cathy and Rosita, for their visionary leadership. This milestone marked our first-ever fundraising event, with 105 tickets sold, creating a warm and celebratory atmosphere. The event not only reflected on two decades of empowering youth but also set the stage for continued growth and impact in the years to come.



"Sometimes you need someone else to believe in you before you can believe in yourself." – Unknown

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2025 & BEYOND 28





The year 2024 marked a very significant milestone for TeenSmart: our 20th Anniversary!

We are grateful for 20-years of your continued support and that of so many partners. You have helped us to renew and enhance our technology, educational contents, and to reach hundreds of thousands of teens from 20 countries.

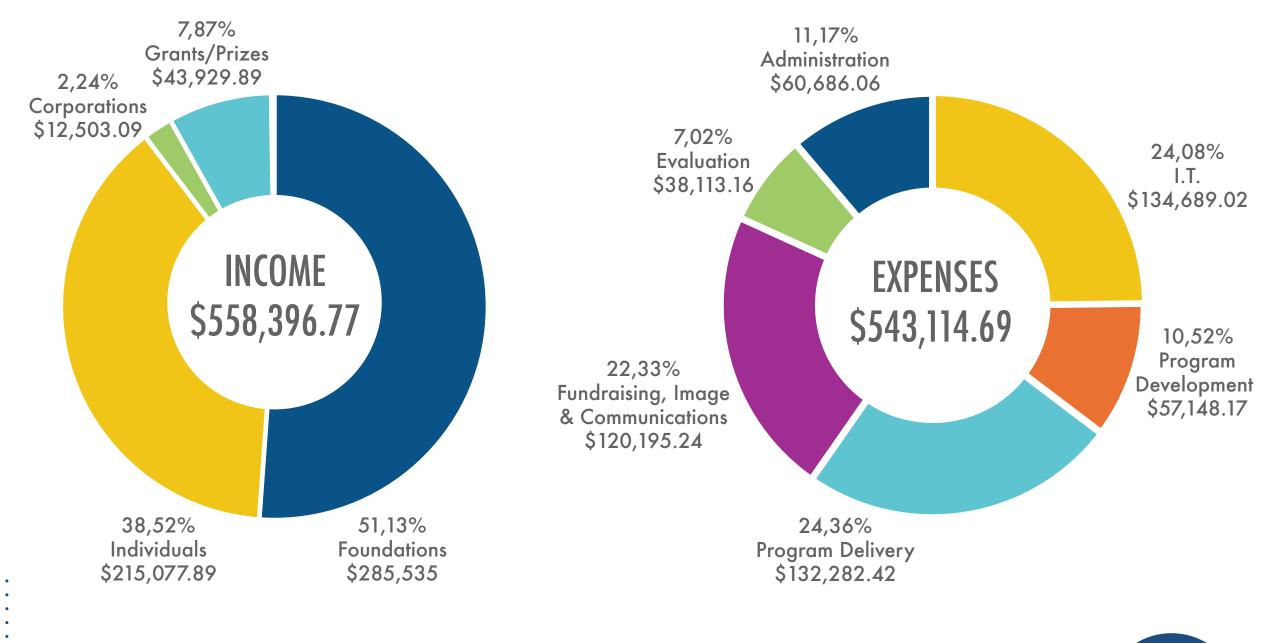
IN 2025 WE ASPIRE TO:

- Reflect on our current impact and the incoming challenges for the world and youth, so we can create our 2026-2030 strategy.
- Deep understanding of the lessons learned of the phase 1 of scalability
- Continue to reach Latin American youth and provide them with the number one online resource for personal growth, well-being, and leadership.
- Have a Strong emphasis in mental health and well-being to prevent anxiety, depression and suicide ideation.
- Create new content paths in climate change and education.
- Unveil a renewed and rejuvenated brand identity, beginning with our refreshed logos. A modern look with the same unwavering mission!



FINANCIAL SUMMARY:

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YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

This is how your future support could help us LIFT:

-Please consider a **Legacy Gift** to help TeenSmart scale and deepen adolescents' access to our Jovensalud.net 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** for more information.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS SPECIAL THANKS IN OUR 20TH ANNIVERSARY TO:

FOUNDATIONS

- Clayton Fund
- CRUSA
- Focus Central America
- Fundacion Uno
- Hershey Family Foundation
- Strachan Foundation
- Troper-Wojcicki Foundation

INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

- Inter-American Development Bank
- Grand Challenges Canada

COMPANIES

- Hospital Clínica Bíblica
- Marina Pez Vela
- Roche

IN-KIND COLLABORATIONS

- Accenture
- CLARO
- Delta Analytics
- Manpalíder
- U Cenfotec





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FOUNDING MEMBERS OF THE JOVENSALUD ALLIANCE

- Asociación Empresarial para el Desarrollo (AED)
- Fundación Omar Dengo.
- Programa de Atención Integral al Adolescente (PAIA), Caja Costarricense del Seguro Social









FOCUS Central America

The	Clayton Fund



Troper-Wojcicki

OUR PARTNERS

Support for TeenSmart's services is provided in part by partners.





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Ulises Torelli Rodríguez Senior Software Engineer Costa Rica

Victor Matarrica Chaves IT- Full Stack Developer Costa Rica





ANNUAL REPORT 2024

US Mailing Address

107 Apple Cart Way, Morrisville, NC 24560 TeenSmart EIN Number: 20-0311647 TeenSmart is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization.

Costa Rica Physical Address

300 este y 50 sur de antigua casa de Matute Gómez Calle 25A, Avenidas 10 y 12, Barrio, San José, Francisco Peralta, 10104. Tel: (506) 8685-6145

Nicaraguan Office Phone Number +505 8876-4031

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