

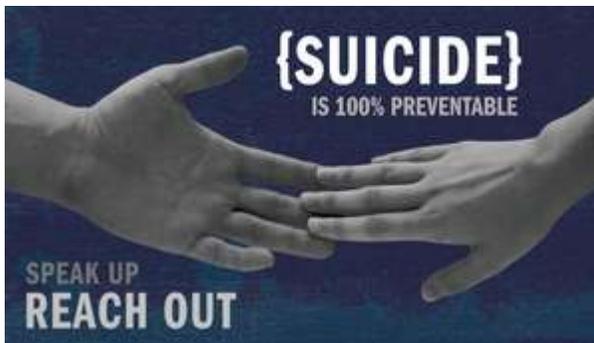


Newsletter #3, September 2017

Together we can achieve more

Inform Yourself!

September is National Suicide Prevention Month and at TeenSmart we take it very seriously. Our JovenSalud.net online confidential coaches report back to us what we also read in the [news](#): suicide and suicidal ideation are on the rise among youth in the region. The percentage of JovenSalud users who say they have tried to commit suicide has increased from 10.5% in 2013 to 12.6% in 2016. In fact, suicide has become the second leading cause of death for young people (10 to 24), which is why it is one of the six risk behaviors TeenSmart works to prevent.



Take Action!

If you think someone you know might be considering suicide, there are actions you can take. Though it may be uncomfortable, experts agree that being direct with the person and talking matter-of-factly about suicide is the best way to help. And most importantly, show them that you care. The [Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) recommends the following when talking to someone about suicide:

- Be direct. Talk openly and matter-of-factly about suicide.
- Be willing to listen. Allow expressions of feelings. Accept the feelings.
- Be non-judgmental. Don't debate whether suicide is right or wrong, or whether feelings are good or bad. Don't lecture on the value of life.
- Get involved. Become available. Show interest and support.
- Don't dare him or her to do it.
- Don't act shocked. This will put distance between you.
- Don't be sworn to secrecy. Seek support.
- Offer hope that alternatives are available but do not offer glib reassurance.
- Take action. Remove means, like weapons or pills.
- Get help from people or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.



TeenSmart youth leaders and staff present at the Suicide Prevention Conversation at Fidelitas University, Costa Rica (above) and prepare suicide prevention materials for their schools (below).



In addition to the confidential online counseling found on [JovenSalud](#), there are a lot of resources for people affected by suicide: Suicide Prevention Lifeline in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), [The Trevor Project](#), [Love is Respect](#), [HelpGuide.org](#), [National Association of School Psychologists](#).

Be Inspired!

“Rather than being your thoughts and emotions, be the awareness behind them.”

– Eckhart Tolle



Celebrate with us!

TeenSmart is growing faster than ever. In fact, our Compounded Annual Growth Rates for new TeenSmart users is 68% a year even though our budget growth is only 15% a year. We are proud of that math!

In the past few months, we've celebrated new partnerships, community leader trainings, and a very successful fundraising campaign. Read more below and thanks for celebrating with us!





The **Agrolibano Foundation in Honduras** is sponsoring TeenSmart's use in five schools. The partnership will result in up to 500 youth registering with JovenSalud.net and 150 graduating from our life-skills course, CRECER-Para-SER.



We are enthusiastic about a new partnership with the Colegio Nacional Virtual Marco Tulio Salazar across **82 virtual campuses in Costa Rica**. This is a school for young people ages 15-25 that have been excluded from the typical education system for various reasons such as teen pregnancies. TeenSmart's online platform complements Marco Tulio's virtual pedagogical model and our coaching service will fill an important gap since Marco Tulio does not have guidance counselors.



Over 300 young adult professionals from **Limon, Costa Rica** have been trained by TeenSmart staff to use the JovenSalud intervention tools in their communities which are at especially high



New and returning donors helped TeenSmart raise almost \$60,000 during our **annual SmartGive Campaign for youth services**. THANKS! *Together we achieve more!*

risk for teenage pregnancy. The project is supported by the US Embassy and the Omar Dengo Foundation to develop leadership and entrepreneurial values in the region.



After eight years with TeenSmart, Interactive Services Coordinator, Mercedes Ramirez, is taking her talents to the University of Costa Rica where she will be running a leadership program. We will miss her professionalism, her sense of humor (and fashion!), and her heart for TeenSmart. Our best wishes for Mercedes and her family.