



Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

Why is an organization like JED needed?

Young adulthood is a time of growth, learning, and exploration. Yet for many of our nation's teens and young adults, transitioning into adulthood can be a time of significant changes and intense challenges:

- About 1 in 4 (25.8%) young people aged 18-25 lives with a mental-health condition. *Source: 2017 [National Survey on Drug Use and Health \(NSDUH\)](#), SAMSHA*
- Suicide is the second leading cause of death in teens aged 15-24, after accidents. *Source: 1998-2018 [CDC Underlying Cause of Death Database](#)*
- 13.3% of college students and 17% of high-school students reported having serious thoughts of suicide in the 12 months prior to the survey, conducted in 2017. *Sources: [American College Health Association Survey, Spring 2019/2017 HS Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Survey](#), CDC*
- 60% of first-year college students wish they had received more help with emotional preparation for college. *Source: [JED/The Steve Fund/Harris Poll, 2015](#)*
- 11.8 percent of high-school students who identified as black attempted suicide within the past 12 month, versus 7.9% for white students (8.9% entire population). *Source: [2019 YRBS, CDC](#)*
- Students of color feel less prepared, both emotionally and academically, than their peers during their first term at college. Colleges are the institutions with the largest numbers of young adults, yet most have not implemented recommended practices for promoting student mental health. *Source: [JED Campus baseline data](#)*

What are JED's primary goals?

Mental health impacts all aspects of our lives — school, work, home life, relationships, and our overall well-being. Supporting and protecting mental health during the challenging transition from the teenage years to adulthood requires a comprehensive approach that addresses all the factors that can impact how we think, feel and perceive the world around us.

JED's portfolio of programs is designed to target all of these areas, making it most likely we can change lives, save lives and help young people thrive.

Our work shifts the culture and conversation around mental health by focusing on two components to change and save lives:

1. Strengthening the emotional health of teens and young adults so they can thrive today...and tomorrow.
2. Preventing substance misuse, self-harm, and suicide as a result of emotional distress.

We do this by empowering individuals, strengthening schools, and mobilizing communities.

Empowering Individuals

Research shows that building resiliency and life skills, promoting social connectedness, and encouraging help-seeking and help-giving behaviors in teens and young adults supports their overall well-being, helps them thrive, and protects their emotional health, making it less likely they'll fall into unhealthy behaviors. JED uses digital campaigns, the media, and partnerships to engage this audience where they are and in a way they'll understand.



JED's primary goals cont'd

Strengthening Schools

For students, their school community is a critical part of their support network and emotional safety net. JED works directly with high schools, colleges, and universities — representing millions of students — to put systems, programs, and policies in place to create a culture of caring that protects student mental health, builds life skills, and makes it more likely students will seek help and struggling students will be recognized, connected to mental health care, and supported.

Mobilizing Communities

Our mental health is impacted by the world around us. There are a range of factors that can influence the perspective, well-being, and behaviors of our teens and young adults including families, friends, media, and high-profile voices. JED partners with these communities to create a culture of caring, grounded in deeper understanding and reduced shame and secrecy, and to collaborate on amplifying their positive impact while minimizing potential harm.

What is JED's mental health approach?

We at The Jed Foundation believe in a comprehensive, public health approach to promoting mental health and preventing suicide. JED's programs are grounded in our [Comprehensive Approach to Mental Health Promotion and Suicide Prevention for Colleges and Universities and for High Schools](#). These evidence-based models can be used to assess efforts currently being made in schools, identifying existing strengths and areas for improvement.

The programs and resources recommended through the JED Higher Education and JED High School programs have been developed with an equitable implementation lens that ensures that the needs of students who are potentially marginalized and/or underserved due to societal and structural inequities and school-specific community demographics are considered deliberately and intentionally.

What has JED's impact been?

Empowering Individuals

- JED's Love is Louder project has an online community of over 250,000 followers and has reached over 100 million impressions through digital outreach designed to increase resiliency and connectedness.
- JED Voices has garnered over 3 million views and features intimate conversations with notable and influential mental health advocates who talk about what mental health means to them.

Strengthening Schools

- JED currently works with over 370 institutions of higher education representing over 4.8 million students.
- Additionally, more than 9,000 high schools, colleges, and universities use a JED resource to help strengthen their mental health programming.
- Schools in the JED Campus program are significantly more likely to have cross-department collaboration to promote student mental health, implement mental health screenings, add additional locations for counseling services, and conduct scans for access to lethal means.

Mobilizing Communities

- More than 2 million teens and their families have used JED's Set to Go high school program to prepare emotionally for the transition to college and adult life.
- Video stories for JED's Seize the Awkward campaign with the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention have been viewed over 50 million times. Viewers who have interacted with this campaign are more likely to have talked to a friend about their mental health.

