

Empowering Youth to Help Pave the Way to a Tuberculosis-Free Generation

Johnson & Johnson is working to engage young people – who are both highly affected and highly connected – in the fight against TB to help drive health-seeking behavior in themselves and their communities.



THE CHALLENGE

Despite being preventable and curable, tuberculosis (TB) is among the world’s deadliest infectious diseases, killing 1.6 million people in 2021.¹ Of the estimated 10.6 million cases of TB that year, approximately 4 million went undiagnosed and untreated, meaning 4 million people did not know they were infected, putting their own health at risk and potentially contributing to the further spread of the disease.

Youth represent a vulnerable population in the fight against TB. An estimated 1.8 million young people between 10 and 24 years of age develop TB each year, with the highest burden occurring in Southeast Asia and Africa.² TB transmission rates in this age group can be up to 20 times higher than other populations, due in part to having a wider range of personal contacts outside of the home.³ Despite this risk, young people are less likely to seek care due to a lack of awareness of TB symptoms, stigma associated with the disease, structural barriers in accessing complex health systems and a lack of family and social support, leading to millions going without diagnosis and treatment.⁴

THE OPPORTUNITY

Today, young people aged 10-24 represent the largest generation of youth in history, with 42 percent of the global population under 25.⁷ Further, young people aged 12-24-years in Southeast Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, regions that have high TB burdens, make up nearly half of the global youth population.⁷ They’re also more connected to each other and the world than ever before. Nearly three-fourths of young people globally are online, and many are actively engaged in social and civic activities, making them particularly adept at leveraging social media and emerging technologies.

These factors make youth a critical voice and champion in the fight against TB. As part of the Company’s decades-long commitment to ending TB, in March 2022, Johnson & Johnson launched several initiatives aimed at helping catalyze people with TB to seek care for themselves and encourage others around them to do the same. Enabled by our unique expertise in patient insights, we are working in collaboration with governments and organizations to inform approaches to tackling TB.

These efforts are part of Johnson & Johnson’s comprehensive 10-year TB initiative, launched at the United Nations High Level Meeting on TB in 2018, focused on treatment access, patient finding and R&D.

BY THE NUMBERS



1.8 million young people aged 10-24 develop TB each year



42 percent of the global population is under 25



74 million people reached through social media, educational gamification and other efforts as part of Johnson & Johnson’s youth initiatives



62K people have taken action by signing up to support the goals of the youth initiatives

OUR INITIATIVES

In India, as part of the Company's commitment to the Corporate TB Pledge⁸, Johnson & Johnson launched a youth-focused, digital-first campaign called Be the Change Badlaav (change in Hindi). Through social media, rap music, influencers and more, the initiative aims to create youth "changemakers" for TB to encourage health-seeking behavior, increase awareness about the disease and build youth engagement and participation in support of the Government's vision of a TB-free India.

Also in India, the MTV Staying Alive Foundation built on the success of *MTV Nishedh*⁹, a youth-focused "edutainment" campaign, by launching a new season in November 2022. As part of this initiative, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson, the Foundation developed a 10-episode drama series focused on the lives of young people in India and touching on TB storylines in an effort to raise awareness around the disease, reduce stigma and promote early detection of symptoms. In addition to the TV series, the campaign included digital and social media and radio programming.

In India and Indonesia, Johnson & Johnson has been conducting an insights study to capture the attitudes, beliefs and motivations driving young parents' behavior with TB care for themselves and their children. Among the findings, stigma and a lack of education around TB and its symptoms is leading to steep barriers in seeking diagnosis. Moving forward, messaging will be developed and tested to help improve health seeking behavior.

In Southeast Asia, Johnson & Johnson launched TB Warriors, a concerted regional effort across Indonesia, the Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam to engage youth in taking charge of their country's TB trajectory by actively managing their own health and advocating for those around them in fun and engaging ways using social media, mobile games and more.

In South Africa, Johnson & Johnson expanded on its collaboration with Aquity Innovations in South Africa to reach 0-24-year-olds. The initiative focuses on designing programs to help improve health-seeking behaviors and conducting a new insight study to better understand barriers to care for youth. Additionally, Aquity is deploying artificial intelligence-enabled mapping provided by EPCON to help improve case-finding activities.

SPOTLIGHT ON: MTV NISHEDH

In 2020, with support from an educational grant from Johnson & Johnson, the MTV Staying Alive Foundation and Viacom18 Media Pvt Ltd launched a ground-breaking national media and "edutainment" campaign called *MTV Nishedh*⁸ that reached young people in India via TV, radio and web content to tackle stigma head-on. The show used dramatic storylines and fictional characters to educate viewers about the realities of living with TB, including how to be tested and access treatment. It also highlighted common myths and misperceptions that too often prevent those with TB from seeking the care and support they need.

When the COVID-19 pandemic first emerged and in light of widespread lockdowns in India at the time, Johnson & Johnson and the MTV Staying Alive Foundation quickly pivoted to create *MTV Nishedh: Alone Together*, an entirely shot-at-home digital spin-off series aimed at stressing the importance of TB diagnosis and treatment—even during a pandemic. Together, these campaigns reached **nearly 35 million people** and drove more than 123,000 people to India's national TB hotline to learn more about TB symptoms.⁹

In November 2022, the MTV Staying Alive Foundation premiered the next season of *MTV Nishedh*, demonstrating how the show, supported by Johnson & Johnson, is helping to shift the TB narrative in India and empower a generation of young people to take charge of their health, break down stigma and achieve a future without this disease.



About J&J Global Public Health

Through a dedicated global public health (GPH) organization that combines R&D, global access strategies and programs, and local operations, Johnson & Johnson is putting the world's most vulnerable and underserved at the heart of everything we do—measuring our success in lives improved. As a team of innovators, we are committed to pioneering and sustainably delivering meaningful and transformational products.

Upholding the rich heritage of Johnson & Johnson, we are taking on the toughest challenges, and, ultimately, we hope to do our part to close the gap of inequity and pave the way to a healthier, more equitable future.

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¹ World Health Organization. Global Tuberculosis Report 2022. <https://www.who.int/publications/m/item/global-tuberculosis-report-2022>. ² The incidence of tuberculosis among adolescents and young adults: a global estimate, 2018. Available at: <https://pubs.aip.org/ajph/article/112/2/223/523>. ³ Profiling Mycobacterium tuberculosis transmission and the resulting disease burden in the five highest tuberculosis burden countries, 2019. Available at: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6821016/>. ⁴ Tuberculosis in Adolescents and Young Adults: Emerging Data on TB Transmission and Prevention among Vulnerable Young People, 2021. Available at: <https://www.mndp.com/2414-6366/5/3/1415>. ⁵ Johnson & Johnson Announces Five Initiatives to Help Find the 'Missing Millions' of Undiagnosed People Living with Tuberculosis, 2021. Available at: <https://www.jnj.com/news-releases-on-the-occasions-of-world-tuberculosis-day#---text%20companies%20care%20joining%20on-leverages%20the%20untapped%20potential%20of>. ⁶ Johnson & Johnson Announces 10-year Initiative to Help End Tuberculosis, the World's #1 Infectious Killer, 2018. Available at: <https://www.jnj.com/johnson-johnson-announces-10-year-initiative-to-help-end-tuberculosis-the-worlds-1-infectious-killer>. ⁷ Chart: How is the World's Youth Population Changing? Available at: <https://blogs.worldbank.org/opendata/chart-how-worlds-youth-population-is-changing>. ⁸ Johnson & Johnson Collaborates with The MTV Staying Alive Foundation to Launch Youth-Focused 'Edutainment' Campaign Focused on Tuberculosis & Other Health Issues in India, 2020. Available at: <https://www.jnj.com/johnson-johnson-collaborates-with-the-mtv-staying-alive-foundation-to-launch-youth-focused-edutainment-campaign-focused-on-tuberculosis-other-health-issues-in-india>. ⁹ MTV Nishedh TB Campaign, 2022. Available at: <https://www.jnj.com/621196273>.