



# 2025 Impact Report

**FACT  
FORWARD**  
ADVANCING ADOLESCENT HEALTH





# Content

- 03** Message from the CEO
- 04** Our Staff
- 05** Vision and Mission
- 07** Conference Highlights
- 10** Project Highlights

# Message from the CEO

As I reflect on the past year, I am filled with gratitude and pride for all that we have accomplished together. The 2024-2025 year has been one of resilience, renewal, and remarkable community impact. At Fact Forward, our mission—to promote the optimal well-being of individuals and communities across the Carolinas by advancing adolescent health—has continued to guide every initiative, partnership, and conversations.



This year, we celebrated meaningful milestones that reflect both our commitment and our growth. Our 2nd Influence for Good Conference brought together young people, parents, and community members from across South Carolina to elevate and inspire youth voices while empowering parents and trusted adults to have meaningful conversations with young people. Together, we cultivated spaces where authentic dialogue and shared learning could spark real, lasting change. We also proudly hosted our 26th Annual Summer Institute, a cornerstone event that continues to equip professionals with the knowledge and tools to support young people in making informed, healthy decisions. The energy, collaboration, and passion shared by attendees remind us that our collective impact is always greater than the sum of our individual efforts.

This year marked an exciting expansion of our emPOWERing K.I.N.G.S. program, creating new opportunities for young men to engage, grow, and lead in their communities. By nurturing leadership and self-efficacy, we're not only helping young people navigate adolescence with confidence—we're shaping a generation that values respect, empathy, and purpose. None of this progress would be possible without the unwavering dedication of our team, the trust of our partners, and the generosity of our supporters. Together, we've faced challenges with determination and embraced innovation with courage. Through every success and every lesson, our focus remains steady: to ensure that every young person in the Carolinas has the support, education, and opportunities they need to thrive.

As we look ahead, I am inspired by what's next. The future of adolescent health in our region depends on strong, connected communities—and thanks to your partnership and belief in the work we do, that future is bright.

With gratitude and hope,

*Rena Dixon*

Rena P. Dixon, PhD, MPH, MCHES  
Chief Executive Officer



# Vision and Mission



## VISION

Fact Forward envisions a world where all youth and young adults have the opportunity of a healthy, bright, self-determined future.

---



## MISSION

Fact Forward's mission is to promote the optimal well-being of individuals and communities across the Carolinas and beyond by advancing adolescent health.

---

# Focus Areas



**Access to Support Service**



**Comprehensive Sexual Health Education**



**Youth-Adult Partnerships**



**Emotional Well-Being**



**Positive Youth Development**



**Youth Resilience**



# our team

## STAFF PHOTO DIRECTORY 2025

### Leadership



**Rena Dixon, PhD, MPH,  
MCHES**  
Chief Executive Officer



**Meredith Talford  
MPH, CHES**  
Deputy Director



**Avis Wright,  
MPH, MCHES**  
Director



**Brittany Wearing  
MPH, CHES**  
Director

### Staff



**Kay Foster**  
Finance & Operations Specialist



**Misty McNair**  
Finance Manager



**Carol Singletary, MA**  
Senior Advisor for Outreach



**Brittany Sydnor  
MSW, CHES**  
Digital Media Specialist



**Katrina James,  
MPH, CHES, FPHW**  
Capacity Building Manager



**Mallory Gibson**  
Evaluation Coordinator



**Damion Addison  
MPH, CHES**  
Program Coordinator



**Denise Marciano**  
Senior Program Coordinator



**Susan Locke**  
Program Coordinator



**Yajaira Maldonado**  
Program Support Specialist





# Our 2025 Reach

2,846 Youth

1,716 Adults

511,653 Digital Engagements



# Conferences Highlights

## NC Adolescent Health Spring Summit

On April 8-9, 2025, Fact Forward hosted the North Carolina Adolescent Health Spring Summit in Gastonia, NC. The event attracted more than 100 professionals, from across the state of NC for two days of learning and collaboration.

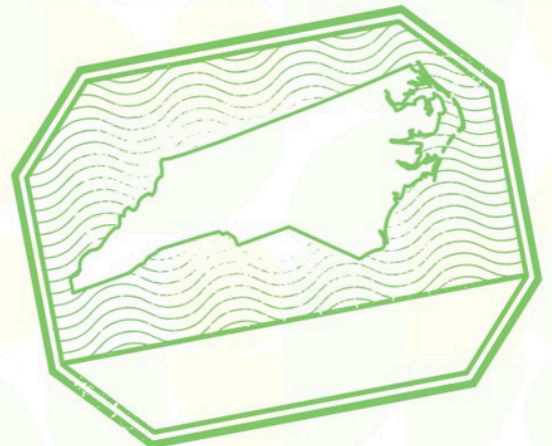
The Summit demonstrated our commitment to integrating the lived experiences of adolescents with research and innovation. Participants engaged in interactive workshops on supporting pregnant and parenting teens, building skills-based family communication programs, and creating adolescent-friendly care environments. Keynotes and plenaries inspired attendees to turn challenges into opportunities for impact, while a youth-led panel “We Listen and Don’t Judge,” reminded everyone that authentic change begins with listening to young people.



## The State of Adolescent Health Roundtable: Charlotte

On September 11, 2025, Fact Forward launched the State of Adolescent Health Roundtable Series, a five-county event held across North Carolina. The series is designed to share key findings in adolescent reproductive health, highlight emerging trends, and showcase how Fact Forward’s 30+ years of experience can help strengthen the impact of youth-serving organizations. The Charlotte roundtable attracted 20 state employees, educators, healthcare providers, Title X partners, and therapists, to discuss how Fact Forward can help support the work in Mecklenburg and surrounding counties.

**WELCOME TO**  
**THE STATE**  
**OF ADOLESCENT**  
**HEALTH ROUNDTABLE**





## 26th Annual Summer Institute

The 2025 Summer Institute, themed “Empowering the Next Generation: Health, Equity, and Innovation,” embodied Fact Forward’s vision of creating environments where every young person can thrive. As one of the nations leading conferences on adolescent health, the event brought together 183 professionals, educators, and advocates from across the country.

**19** states and/or us territories represented

**98%** of attendees agreed" or "strongly agreed" that Summer Institute improved their intention to advocate for effective adolescent health programs and is a valuable resource to their professional work.



### Evaluation Highlights:

- Practical application examples and notes for AI prompts.
- “Whew! This was phenomenal! Didn’t realize my level of burnout! I am definitely going to work on this. The presentations challenged my thinking and increase my awareness of what, as a baby boomer/elder, I should be more aligned with, and I must “grow and support” the next generation of leaders and intellectual giants! Loved this among all other sessions.”
- Presenter backed her strategies with research while still keeping it new and fun.





## 2nd Annual Influence For Good

The Influence for Good Youth Summit is Fact Forward's youth-centered event designed to empower young people and the adults who support them to make informed, healthy decisions about their bodies, minds, and futures. The 2025 theme, "The Power of Being Young," celebrates the creativity, resilience, and leadership of today's youth while equipping trusted adults with tools to guide and support them. Attendees left inspired to use their influence—for good.

### 74 Adult Participants

*"I love that I was able to build on my own knowledge instead of only my teens. I have gained additional tools on how I can be more present for them."*

-Parent

### 121 Youth Participants

*"The overall setup was very enjoyable. I like choosing which experience to attend and each thing I chose was very interesting."*

-Young Adult





# Project Highlights



## emPOWERing K.I.N.G.S.

emPOWERing K.I.N.G.S. (Knowledge Instills Next Generational Success) is an evidence-informed health education and mentoring program designed to provide young Black men with the tools, needed to make informed decisions about their sexual and reproductive health.



This year, Fact Forward was one of five teams selected to participate in RTI International's Launch Accelerator Hub, a 12-month program supported by the Office of Population Affairs. Through the accelerator, Fact Forward strengthened the program's framework, refined its curriculum, and engaged young men directly to ensure the content reflected their voices, needs, and realities. The work with K.I.N.G.S. resulted in winning the Audience Choice Award during the hubs Demo Day, a recognition voted on by peers and experts across the field. This award included \$1,500 in funding to further support emPOWERing KINGS.

The lessons learned through Launch are shaping how we will design new programs, evaluate, and scale future initiatives ensuring that innovation remains central to our mission.

## 99 Mentors Trained

*It gave me the opportunity to be that "someone" I needed when I was younger to talk to me about life choices.*

**-Mentor**

## 56 Facilitators Trained

*He expressed his gratitude and thanked me for caring and being a positive influence on him and asked that I keep coming back to check on him although the program is over."*

**-Facilitator**

## 384 Youth Participants

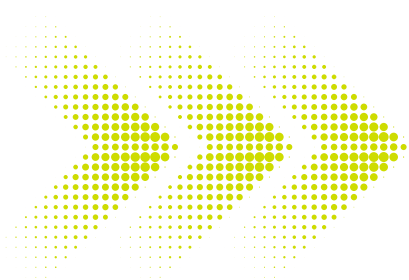
*"I think that the best thing was that I had someone I could rely on and I knew they cared about me. Also that I have someone outside my family that I am comfortable talking with."*

**Young Adult**



# Adolescent Reproductive Health Faith and Clergy Council

Fact Forward's Adolescent Reproductive Health Faith and Clergy Council continued to thrive in 2025, bringing together 14 dedicated members from both North and South Carolina. This diverse group—made up of pastors, youth ministers, educators, social workers, and a nurse midwife—represents a powerful bridge between faith communities and adolescent health education. Together, the Council developed a Readiness Assessment Tool for Houses of Worship, helping congregations identify where they are in addressing adolescent reproductive health and providing tailored guidance to move forward. Alongside this tool, members also assisted with creating a digital download offering practical tips and messages faith leaders can use to start these important conversations within their ministries. The Council's work demonstrates how faith and health can come together to support the well-being of adolescents, making it one of Fact Forward's most meaningful and replicable initiatives to date.



## Yes & Know

Yes and Know is a fully virtual health education program designed to support young people ages 14–19 living in rural areas. The intervention combines group-based education with digital tools to build essential life and relationship skills. Each cohort includes 10–12 participants who complete ten virtual sessions focused on topics such as healthy relationships, sexual health education, nutrition, and goal setting for education and careers. Fact Forward is responsible for marketing the program to recruit youth within the required age range and for implementing the curriculum by facilitating all educational sessions.

## Summer Cool Down

Summer Cool Down was an engaging summer camp hosted by Fact Forward, designed to give youth a fun and meaningful way to stay connected, informed, and empowered. Throughout the program, participants took part in Making Proud Choices, an evidence-based curriculum focused on helping young people make informed decisions about their health and relationships. The camp combined learning with laughter through interactive games, creative group challenges, and hands-on activities that reinforced key lessons about communication, goal setting, and self-respect. By the end of Summer Cool Down, youth left with new friendships, valuable life skills, and a stronger sense of confidence in making proud, positive choices for their futures.

“I really liked how everyone came together and made new friends”





# contact us

**Fact Forward**

C: +1 803 771 7700

E: [info@factforward.org](mailto:info@factforward.org)



@FactForwarddog