

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

Johnson & Johnson is supporting several initiatives aimed at engaging 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 1.5 million people in 2020.¹ Of the estimated 10 million cases of TB that year, 4 million were “missed” from diagnosis, 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 or treatment.⁴ It is therefore critically important to target and reach youth as part of the global effort to end TB.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Johnson & Johnson is supporting a series of initiatives aimed at engaging young people between the ages of 15 and 24 in high-burden countries – with the goal of helping to empower a generation of youth to end TB. The initiatives, in support of global efforts to help find the missing millions⁵ of people living with undiagnosed TB, are part of Johnson & Johnson’s 10-year initiative⁶ to help drive progress toward the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal of ending this deadly, but preventable and treatable, disease by 2030.

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-quarters 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.

Together with our collaborators, Johnson & Johnson is supporting and engaging this generation to drive health-seeking behavior, build community awareness and reduce stigma in order to enhance early diagnosis of TB, and ultimately, help ensure people with the disease are connected to the care and treatment they need.

BY THE NUMBERS



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



42 percent
of the global population is under 25



Aim to reach **4 million** young people through social media or through TB screening as part of Johnson & Johnson’s youth initiatives

OUR EFFORTS

Johnson & Johnson is working collaboratively to engage youth aged 15-24 in high-burden countries, who are both highly affected and highly connected, to drive health-seeking behavior in themselves and those around them. These initiatives include:

As part of the Company's commitment to the Corporate TB Pledge,⁸ Johnson & Johnson launched a youth-focused, digital-first campaign called *Be the Change Badlaav* (change in Hindi). Through social media, chatbots 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.

The MTV Staying Alive Foundation is building on the success of MTV Nishedh,⁹ a youth-focused "edutainment" campaign, which was supported by a Johnson & Johnson educational grant. As part of this initiative, sponsored by Johnson & Johnson, the MTV Staying Alive Foundation is deploying Nivi's askNivi chatbot, providing young people in India with information and resources on TB.

Johnson & Johnson – together with the International Health Exchange and Cooperation Center of the National Health Commission of the People's Republic of China, the China Center for Disease Control and Prevention (China CDC), and the ZhengJiang and SiChuan Provincial CDCs and Education Bureaus – is launching a youth volunteer and patient finding program. The initiative will leverage and train student volunteers across 40 participating universities to build increased awareness of TB among students in an effort to encourage health-seeking behavior and improve early diagnosis.

In Southeast Asia, Johnson & Johnson is launching [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.

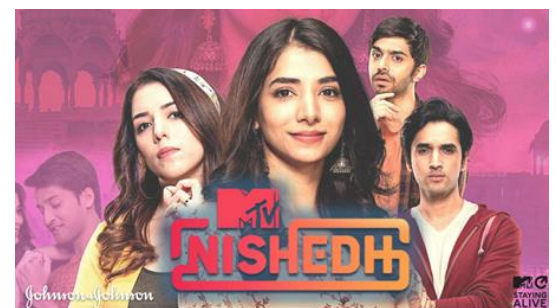
In the Philippines, Johnson & Johnson collaborated with the Philippine Tuberculosis Society Inc. on an "end-to-end" youth community case finding initiative, from awareness to care. The program is engaging Filipinos aged 15-24 to build advocates for TB awareness and identify youth within the local communities most at risk for TB, ensuring they receive comprehensive education, screening, support and encouragement to recognize the signs and symptoms of TB and seek the care they need.

Johnson & Johnson is expanding on its collaboration with Aquity Innovations in South Africa by working with EPCON 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 & Viacom18 Media Pvt Ltd launched a ground-breaking national media and "edutainment" campaign called *MTV Nishedh* 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.⁹ *MTV Nishedh* is a powerful example of how 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 transformation 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 future for the world's most vulnerable and underserved populations.



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