

JASMYN FAQs

Q	A
<p>What does youth empowerment mean at JASMYN?</p>	<p>To empower youth, JASMYN provides a safe place and programs that promote health, wellness, joy and belonging.</p> <p>We help young people know their worth and harness their self-determination, enabling them to make safe and healthy choices.</p> <p>Our life-affirming and life-saving programs and services meet young people where they are, while supporting them in becoming who they want to be.</p>
<p>How does JASMYN serve teens from 13-17 year olds and 18-24 year olds?</p>	<p>JASMYN aligns all programs and services for 13 – 24 year olds along their developmental stages.</p> <p>Programs on campus are separated out with eligibility based on appropriate age for each service. For example, our teen programs for 13 – 17 year olds focus on providing a safe place for social gatherings, support for middle and high school students seeking freedom from bullying, and a teen support group that occurs simultaneously with Family Space for parents.</p> <p>JASMYN’s Housing programs and services are aimed at 18 – 24 year olds who are legally able to sign leases and engage in a range of housing and social services.</p> <p>Our Health Services provide STI/HIV testing to young people 13 and older in a clinical setting under a partnership with the Florida Department of Health/Duval</p>

	<p>County. Teens may consent to testing under Florida law, and all services are designed to safely meet each young person at their individual developmental stage and age.</p> <p>Group HIV prevention activities are segmented into teens and young adults.</p>
<p>Why distinguish between minors and young adults?</p>	<p>Teens are in different stages of development than the young adults we serve. They have different levels of maturity and have generally had less experience in the world than our young adults.</p> <p>Any outreach to either audience is always designed with their specific needs in mind.</p>
<p>How do programs for teens differ from those for ages 18-24?</p>	<p>All JASMYN programs are age-appropriate and unique in these ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Program content, including language used, the subject matter discussed and the presentation style - The time of day/week for scheduled programs - Access to resources that fit their needs and age - Facilitation style to raise understanding and awareness and to build confidence in themselves.
<p>Are parents required/allowed to accompany minors to JASMYN programs?</p>	<p>Parents are not required to be present when their teens participate in programs, but we often host a “family space” in tandem with teen groups where parents can come together to find support as well.</p> <p>Often teens come to JASMYN programs to meet other teens and find peer support. To engage, they follow our safety protocols and discover both their rights and responsibilities for participating in a JASMYN group.</p>

	<p>JASMYN operates with a set of rights and responsibilities for every participant, clearly displayed in each building, to maintain safe space and respect for all.</p>
<p>Why does JASMYN do HIV testing?</p>	<p>We provide HIV testing because there is a direct line between treating HIV and preventing its spread.</p> <p>Jacksonville is regularly among the top 10 metropolitan areas in the nation for new infections of HIV, with gay and bisexual men of color bearing most of the burden.</p> <p>JASMYN has been involved in the public health work of testing for HIV since 2000 and regularly is cited as a clinical model for our rate of detecting HIV, then helping connect young people to HIV care.</p> <p>The CDC recognizes the importance of our work and has funded JASMYN for eleven years because we are highly effective at reaching a priority population for HIV prevention.</p>
<p>Why does JASMYN work with LGBTQIA+ teens and young adults?</p>	<p>JASMYN cares deeply about the LGBTQIA+ teens and young adults of Northeast Florida, a marginalized population.</p> <p>We also recognize these individuals, ages 13-24, are moving through stages of life where they are discovering themselves and forming hopes and dreams for their futures.</p> <p>However, here in the deep South, religious beliefs and conservative politics often stigmatize LGBTQIA+ people, and this can have big impacts on a young person's life.</p>

	<p>LGBTQIA+ teens and young adults need advocates and a safe place where they are not judged and can find acceptance and support to live healthy, safe lives connected to community and filled with joy and possibility.</p> <p>We see all the possibility these young people possess and strive to provide programs and services that help them see it in themselves. We know they have contributions to make to a thriving world and encourage them to find their voice and use it.</p> <p>We recognize their creativity, joy, compassion, drive and intelligence and help them find ways to express it.</p>
<p>Why is sexual health information provided at JASMYN?</p>	<p>JASMYN saves lives through the provision of sex health information.</p> <p>For teens, that means age-appropriate materials and discussions about body parts, safer sex practices including abstinence and condom use, personal hygiene, healthy relationships, and answering questions to provide accurate information about sexual risk and health specifically for LGBTQIA+ youth.</p> <p>These subjects are not taught in a comprehensive way in schools.</p> <p>Also included are discussions of dating violence, sexual safety, and impacts of STIs and HIV.</p> <p>In addition, for young adults we use teaching tools such as condom demonstrators to show how to properly use a condom, which can be highly</p>

	effective for preventing HIV when used correctly.
How do you prevent HIV?	<p>HIV prevention starts with destigmatizing discussions about HIV and getting tested for the virus.</p> <p>JASMYN accomplishes this through games or activities in a group environment that promote healthy decision making.</p> <p>The CDC cites condom usage as the number one behavioral intervention to prevent HIV transmission. They recommend regular testing if you are sexually active and have other risk exposures to HIV. Regular testing will help you find out if you have been exposed to HIV, and help you decrease the amount of time you can spread the virus without knowing it.</p> <p>We also provide information on pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) medications, which is an HIV prevention medication that can be used to prevent HIV if you are sexually active but have not contracted the virus, and requires counseling for eligibility and then a daily dose to maintain its effectiveness.</p>

Why is JASMYN's HIV testing and prevention work important to me?

HIV prevention is public health work! If a JASMYN teen or young adult tests positive for HIV, there are treatments widely available, but for many stigmas are attached to seeking out or staying on treatment. This is true for any individual, gay or straight.

JASMYN helps young people address their concerns, fears, and barriers to treatment and get the medical care they require to stay healthy.

Medical treatment gives young people living with HIV a chance to start medications that can lower the counts of the HIV virus (viral load), and this helps the person stay healthy and impacts community health as well.

With medication, a person living with HIV can learn that the virus has become undetectable in their body, and then their chances of transmitting the virus to another person become quite low.

By containing the viral load of individuals, we help contain the viral load of the community. Destigmatizing the virus through education is an important part of HIV work and allows dignity and access to treatment for those with HIV positive results.

<p>What are some HIV stats specific to Jacksonville and the teens and young people JASMYN serves?</p>	<p>Nationally, persons between the ages of 13 – 29 represent more than 50% of all new HIV cases. In 2018, the Duval County HIV case rates were 21.2/100,000, ranking fifth highest among Florida Counties. While Black people comprise 21% of the population, they account for 62.7% of the Jacksonville MSA HIV cases. MSM make up 52.6% and Transgender persons make up .03% of all HIV cases. In HIV cases reported in 2018 young males ages 13-29 represent 51.4% of all males diagnosed with HIV and males ages 30 - 39 represent another 23.9%. HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects gay, bisexual, and other YMCSM, especially African Americans. YMSM made up 54.3% of all people ages 13-35 who were diagnosed with HIV, and 69.6% of were Black. In the <i>CDC HIV Surveillance Supplemental Report – 2018</i>, the Jacksonville MSA ranked 9th in the US for diagnosed HIV cases and has been identified as one of the 57 EHE priority communities that shoulder the greatest share of the nation’s HIV burden.</p>
<p>What other organizations in Jacksonville do this work?</p>	<p>All fee-free:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Florida Department of Health 2. CAN Community Health 3. AHF 4. UF Cares 5. Overflow Health Alliance

<p>How many teens/young adults are unhoused in Jacksonville?</p>	<p>JASMYN developed the Opening Doors for Homeless Youth program in response to the needs of youth and young adults, ages 18 – 24, who are experiencing homelessness in Jacksonville (Duval County). The Changing Homelessness, Inc. (CHI) Point in Time (PIT) 2017 Count of homeless youth ages 18 -24 was 92. By 2020, the count rose to 118, a 28% increase over four years, which accounts for 7.6% of the total 2020 PIT count. In February 2020, the CoC launched HUD-supported 100 Day Youth Challenge with a goal to house 100 youth in 100 days, focusing on LGBTQ, Youth of Color and Trafficked Youth. After 75 days the team identified 106 precariously housed young adults. Under JASMYN’s Opening Doors for Homeless Youth Project during the last year, 178 youth experiencing homelessness were served through street outreach and engagement services, and 1525 contacts were provided during the year from clients on the JASMYN campus for housing support, hot meals, showers, laundry, and Cyber Center, despite fears around the pandemic.</p>
<p>Why have special housing services for LGBTQIA+ youth?</p>	<p>The experience of homelessness for young people is disruptive to their lives and ability to become independent, productive adults, and their risk of trauma, assault and exposure to substance abuse and criminal activity increases the longer they remain unstably housed. Many LGBTQIA+ young people experience rejection from families, neighborhoods, faith communities, schools, and so they find a true lifeline at JASMYN at a time when they need it most.</p>

	<p>JASMYN's street outreach and the J3 outreach center at JASMYN provide a "front door" for the majority of young adults experiencing homelessness, helping them find a safe place to land, get connected to services and housing resources, and begin the journey toward more stable housing. JASMYN staff make direct linkages to emergency shelter through community partners, and help young adults find more permanent and safe places to live by providing housing location services and financial assistance to pay rent and utilities to get young people stably housed.</p>
<p>What happens at peer support groups at JASMYN?</p>	<p>Being a teenager is not the easiest time of one's life, even without layers of angst over gender identity, sexual orientation or pronouns. Teens ages 13-17 come to JASMYN outside of school hours for programs that build community and connect them to others experiencing their same questions, ideas and feelings. We welcome them for weekly groups that gather with a hot meal and a supervised safe space to discuss topics important to them that they can share with like-minded people.</p>
<p>Is it really helpful if our teens and young adults can identify as they choose at JASMYN but nowhere else in their lives?</p>	<p>It is important for teens to have safe space as they explore their unfolding world, and we know from experience, with research to back it up (the Trevor Project), that when teens have at least one caring adult in their lives who sees and understands them, they are drastically less likely to have suicidal ideations.</p> <p>This is particularly relevant to the LGBTQIA+ teen population as they are more likely than non-queer peers to</p>

	<p>experience depression, anxiety and suicide, often in response to bullying, rejection, and misunderstanding.</p> <p>JASMYN provides a relaxed homelike space without judgment and we welcome anyone who comes to campus and provide programs that aim to destigmatize who they are and encourage their hopes for the future.</p>
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