



AGL



Letter from our Board Chair

What an honor to serve on the board of such an amazing and impactful organization, especially alongside a team of staff and volunteers who are passionate, talented, and so dedicated to carrying out the mission of YoungMoms. We served 60 young women in 2019, providing teen mothers with the connections, training, and resources needed to complete school, find jobs within the community, parent effectively, and develop key life skills.

This year we achieved a number of exciting milestones as an organization, including:

- Holding 45 Club Nights, workshops, and training events— our largest yearly number to date
- Expanding our staff to include 3 fully bilingual case managers, as well as a dedicated Development/Communications Coordinator to enhance our ability to share about YoungMoms' impact in the community
- Moving into a house in downtown Kennett that opened up space for additional programming, mentor/mentee activities, volunteer trainings, ESL classes, and client study/work areas

2020 will mark a year of transition for YoungMoms, as we say farewell to our Executive Director of 6 years, Linda Mercner. Under Linda's direction, YoungMoms built strong community and funding partnerships, expanded services to the Oxford area, and grew the organization's infrastructure and programming capabilities. We are confident that Linda's capable leadership has helped position YoungMoms for even greater future impact. Molly Henry, one of the founders of the organization, longtime Board president, and current head of development/communications, will be acting as Interim Director. We're excited to see YoungMoms continue to grow as an organization and to transform the lives of even more teen moms in our community.

I'm so thankful for the generous funding of hundreds of individuals, churches, businesses, foundations, and the United Way of Southern Chester County. And we couldn't do it without our committed Board of Directors, staff, volunteers, and community partners who work collaboratively with us every day to make this life-changing work possible. **It's because of you that we are able to expand our reach, strengthen our partnerships, and help teen moms in our community build thriving futures for themselves and their families.** Thank you!

Casey Irwin YoungMoms Board Chair

"Being a part of YoungMoms has opened doors that I thought were closed for me..." -Lidia







about Us

Our mission is to inspire and equip young moms to build thriving futures for themselves and their families.

#### Who we serve:

YoungMoms serves pregnant and parenting young women living in Southern Chester County, PA, who enter the program between the ages of 14 and 21 years old. Teen moms face enormous challenges, including single parenthood, poverty, language barriers, incomplete education, domestic violence, depression, lack of transportation, and inadequate healthcare. These challenges are compounded as teen moms navigate adolescence and motherhood simultaneously. Through their involvement with YoungMoms, this high-risk group of young women is finding the support, resources, and skills they need to overcome obstacles and make positive life choices.

# What we do:

YoungMoms equips teen mothers to overcome barriers and create new and better futures. We accomplish that through:

- Goal planning & execution
- One-to-one mentoring
- Academic support & employment assistance
- Parenting education & development
- Case management & connection to community partners
- Monthly Club nights, workshops, and trainings (in both Kennett Square & Oxford) that provide life-skills instruction & relationship-building opportunities

#### How we serve:

YoungMoms utilizes a combination of individualized case management services, one-to-one mentoring, life skills instruction, and communitybuilding activities to accomplish our mission. Our holistic approach provides participants with the support and resources necessary to help them gain control of their lives, make healthy personal decisions, attain financial stability, and improve their lives and the lives of their children. Young women remain in the program between two and four years, allowing us to assist them in overcoming obstacles which might normally derail their progress in achieving goals. This multi-year investment makes YoungMoms unique and life-changing.

Building Thriving Futures



# Reaching Academic & Employment Goals

Most of our young moms face major obstacles as they try to continue schooling and/or gain meaningful employment: finding and paying for child care, obtaining transportation, and juggling multiple family/life commitments. Through an intensive goal-setting and planning process, these young women are equipped to complete high school, attain a GED, and/or enter training, certification and degree programs. We also work with our young moms to develop resume writing/interviewing skills, connect to local job opportunities, maintain employment, and move toward financial stability. **This year, 80% of our young moms held jobs and/or attended school and** training programs.

# Strengthening Parenting Skills

Our young moms are growing into equipped and knowledgeable parents as they work alongside mentors and staff, learn vital skills at monthly Club meetings, and discover best practices in parenting through workshops and ongoing instruction. We provide training in child development stages, emphasize the importance of parent/child interaction through play and reading, and encourage facilitation of language and early math skills. Teen moms are given the tools to make wise health and safety choices through instruction on everything from nutrition to car seat/home safety. **97% of participants report that they are better parents because of the training and support provided by YoungMoms.** 



"Before YoungMoms, I did not know the meaning of goals. Now I understand and work hard to accomplish them. I have learned about healthy relationships, nutrition, and how to be a better mom." -Elvira







# Learning Essential Life Skills

Staff and mentors provide ongoing life-skills instruction in areas such as budgeting, healthy relationships, time management, decision-making, and self-advocacy. We also work closely with each young mom to provide sexual health and reproductive education and to connect participants and their children to vital medical and prenatal care. Many of our young women come from backgrounds of trauma and family dysfunction, so we partner with area organizations to provide the mental and behavioral health services necessary for these teen moms to navigate such challenges and chart better paths forward.

Finding reliable transportation to school, work, and appointments is a huge challenge for many of our young moms. We work with them to obtain learner's permits and/or driver's licenses, and organize volunteers when necessary to provide tranpsortation to YoungMoms events, work, school, and medical visits. Lack of language fluency can also hinder progress toward goals, so we connect our young moms who are not native English speakers to language training with local ESL classes. This year we also provided a 5-session summer ESL class for several of our Spanish-speaking moms.

# Building Self-Esteem & Confidence

Lack of self-worth and confidence is crippling, leading a young mom to become depressed, fall short of her potential, and tolerate unhealthy situations and relationships. We help our young moms imagine the possibilities for their future and believe in their potential to make them happen. Each mom develops her own goals-- to graduate from high school, find financial aid for college, save money for a car-- and then creates a step-by-step plan to achieve them. As goals are accomplished, skills obtained, and doors to the future are opened, self-esteem and a sense of agency blossom.

Young moms earn "Bucks" throughout the year as they achieve goals and participate in Club nights, life skills workshops, and other trainings; we partner with Willowdale Chapel to hold a Christmas Shopping Event, where participants spend those hard-earned "Bucks" to purchase educational toys, books, crafts, and gift cards for their families.

97% of participants report that they achieved new goals because of the support provided by YoungMoms.

#### **Overcoming Obstacles**

YoungMoms participants face numerous socioeconomic and relational difficulties, including backgrounds of trauma. Many have endured a significant number of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which statistically increase negative outcomes in adulthood, including poor physical and mental health, substance abuse, and risky behaviors. This year we again partnered with a local professional to offer 5 group counseling sessions ("Thriving Futures") aimed at promoting resilience; the series helped our young moms identify obstacles, learn positive coping skills, and gain techniques for responding to anxiety and navigating complex relational issues. This series is part of our overall organizational effort to practice trauma-informed care.

# **Growing Community**

Through monthly Club meetings, workshops, and special events in both Kennett Square and Oxford, our young moms have the opportunity to bond with peers in similar life circumstances and to develop meaningful relationships with positive adult role models. Many build long-lasting friendships and strong networks of support as a result. We also match many of our young moms with trained volunteer mentors who offer ongoing friendship and practical encouragement. This sense of community lessens feelings of isolation that often accompany early motherhood.

100% of program participants report that they feel part of a vital community of support at YoungMoms.



## **Strengthening Families**

Our work with each young mom has a rippling efffect on her children, partner, and extended family members. As we help young moms develop parenting skills, connect to quality daycare and Head Start programs, and navigate medical and dental care, their children benefit. In addition, the whole family unit thrives as these young women reach educational milestones, become more financially stable, and make healthy life decisions. **Positively impacting the life of a teen mom creates intergenerational impact.** 

## **Empowering YoungDads**

The success and growth of a young mom is often tied to the extent to which her partner/baby's father is on board with her goals and choices. Through YoungDads, these young men are being empowered to reach their potential as men and fathers. Participants meet monthly, in both Kennett Square and Oxford, with a core group of volunteers who encourage and equip them to improve their parenting skills, navigate work/life balance, and make wise relational and life decisions. As these young dads grow, the entire family unit benefits.

# Mentor Program Spotlight







# Leslie & Bev

After leaving a difficult life situation in Honduras, Leslie came to the U.S. and gave birth at 17 to her son Jefferson. Shortly after, she found Young Moms. We helped her learn English, access medical/dental care for her and her son, and, above all, get an education. Volunteers drove Leslie to school and Jefferson to daycare while she completed high school. She proved a motivated and hardworking student, graduating in June 2018 with all A's! YoungMoms encouraged Leslie to go on to complete cosmetology training, connected her to a local immigration attorney to obtain her work permit, helped her earn a driver's license, and worked with her on resume-building and job readiness skills. Leslie created a budget, opened her first bank account, and began saving money for the future.

Things got even better for Leslie when Bev, her mentor, came into her life. Bev is a steady source of friendship and encouragement for Leslie-- and vice versa! Bev met weekly with Leslie over the summer and fall to study for Leslie's cosmetology exam. This January, Leslie received her license and is working full-time at a salon; Bev is one of her regular clients! Bev and Leslie regularly attend Oxford Clubs and mentor workshops together, where Leslie learns valuable life and parenting skills and the two have the chance to bond over their love of crafting. Leslie says, **"Bev is always there for me. She's someone that I can talk to and she helps me achieve my goals."** 

Bev has seen huge growth in Leslie since her involvement with YoungMoms. Says Bev: "Leslie is a beautiful young woman both inside and out. Leslie is patient, loving, and kind with Jefferson, while setting necessary boundaries for him with gentle firmness. I am amazed at how much Leslie has grown this past year. She is not afraid of hard work and long hours. I **cannot express the amount of joy Leslie has brought to my life.** Watching her emerge from her cocoon into a beautiful butterfly ready to take flight has been an experience that I am blessed to have had."

"YoungMoms has given me support and motivated me to succeed." -Leslie



Family Picnic ••••••

# Christmas Shopping Event





New ••••• Home

Fundraising ••• Brunch



2019 Highlights



Cooking & Nutrition Series



Mentor Pair Workshops





•••• Monthly Club Nights

Summer Pool Party

Changing Lives



# **Bridget**

Bridget was one of our first program participants when we started in 2010. At the time, Bridget was in her first month of college, wondering how she was going to manage single parenthood, attend school full-time, navigate complicated family dynamics, and provide for her daughter. A friend pointed her in the direction of YoungMoms, where Bridget worked with staff and her mentor, Tricia, to stay in school, gain parenting skills, plan for a career, and develop an "overwhelming sense of belonging and connection." Through her hard work and dedication, **Bridget became the first person in her family to graduate from college**. Today Bridget is employed fulltime as a Registered Nurse, is an amazing mom to her daughter Allison, and is Vice President of YoungMoms' Board of Directors! Bridget says she will always be grateful that everyone at YoungMoms "saw my potential and that I was worthy of the investment."

# Nicole

When Nicole joined our program in 2015, she was a young mom facing job and financial instability. We worked with Nicole to develop resume-writing, job search, and interviewing skills, and to find employment in the community. We helped her sort out financial difficulties, understand her outstanding student loan, and create a repayment plan. Through Club nights, enrichment workshops, and one-on-one work with her case manager, **Nicole grew in her parenting and life skills and developed a strong network of support**. Nicole was paired with her mentor, Shari, who helped her develop study skills and prepare for her Medical Assistant exam-- or, as Nicole puts it: "encouraged me to keep on pushing and thriving." Today Nicole is a wonderful mother who has maintained a full-time job and financial stability for her family and is staying on at YoungMoms as a volunteer!





# Ana

Ana and her son joined YoungMoms at the end of her senior year of high school, shortly after leaving a challenging domestic circumstance. We helped Ana explore continuing education opportunities, complete applications, and figure out how to pay for school and child care-- all while she navigated very difficult relational situations. Her mentor, Jen, provided additional encouragement and guidance, assuring Ana that she always had someone in her corner rooting for her. Through Club nights and workshops, Ana grew in her parenting skills and developed a strong community of support among her peers. This past spring, **Ana graduated from her dental hygienist program and is now working full-time in her field**.

Volunteers

Volunteers and mentors exponentially expand our impact and effectiveness. In 2019 alone, more than 200 volunteers devoted 2,600+ hours of their time, expertise, and energy for special events, tutoring, Club nights, fundraising, and more. Mentors invested in teen moms by providing ongoing guidance and support, and by building intergenerational friendships.

#### We can use your help! Check out our website for more information: www.youngmomscommunity.com/volunteer

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# 2019 In-Kind Supporters



YoungMoms received more than \$30,000 of in-kind support during 2019, in the form of both material goods and professional services. Many people contributed meals, childcare, diapers, toys, and gift cards for moms in need. We also received substantial silent auction donations for our annual fundraising brunch, which raised more than \$32,000 in 2019.

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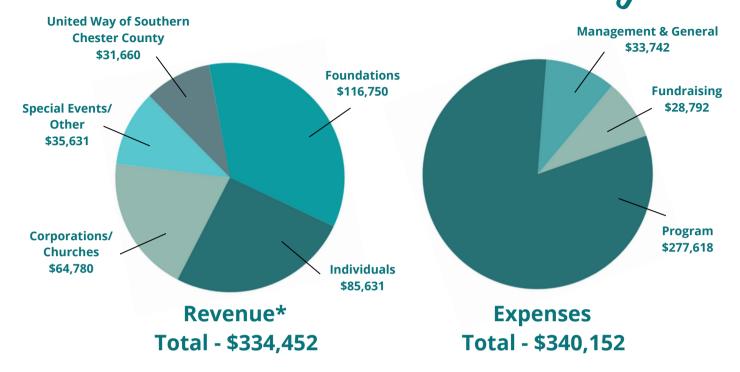
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Tavern 52 Taylor, Courtney The Farm at Oxford The Gables at Chadds Ford The Mushroom Cap The Woodlands at Phillips **Mushroom Farms** Thiis, Nigel Thomas, Julianne Thomas, Leslie Thomas, Mitch Tierney, Sherry Timmons, Erica Tindall. Karen Torres, Heather Torres, Rosa Turk, Trisha U-Financial Group Unionville Presbyterian Church Vann, Barbara & Bill Verbena BYOB Vible, Tammy Videon, Amy Vitola, Rachel Vitola, Ron Walker, Alyssa Walker, Joan Walker, Terri Wallace Landscape Associates Wallace, Natalie Waterway Church Wayback Burgers Weaver, Karen Weber, lanet Weber, Jimi Lee Weber, Nance Weidenmuller, Kristen Weidenmuller, Terri Welch, Becca Wenzel, Michele West, Liz Wheese, Kim White, Rebecca Whiteleather, Carole Willauer, Courtney Williams, Deb Williams, Kathy Williams, Sean Willowdale Chapel Wilson, Melanie Wong, Melonnie & Steve Woodruff, Mary Kay WoodWorksKS Worrilow, Meghan YMCA of Greater Brandvwine Young, Elisa Zale, Kate Zamores, Sarahi Zanfrisco, Maria Zoe's Kitchen Zuleba, Kim

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of this list. Please contact us if you encounter any errors or omissions so we can correct our records.

2019 Financial Summary



\*Includes in-kind donations totaling \$30,193



Inspiring & Equipping

Over the past 9 years, YoungMoms has empowered more than 180 pregnant and parenting teens to stay in school, pursue college education or vocational training, parent more effectively, and make healthy personal decisions. Investing in teen moms has a ripple effect on their children, families, and the entire community.

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- Child care for Club Nights
- Transportation
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