



# COMMUNITY-ENGAGED LEARNING MEDICAL EDUCATORS OF SEXUAL HEALTH (MESH)

PATHWAY: HEALTH EQUITY

## Initiative Description

MESH (Medical Educators of Sexual Health) is an outreach initiative that teaches an accredited and comprehensive sexual health curriculum with an effort to engage in developmentally appropriate discussions to promote safe sex practices to prepare pre-teens and teens to become sexual health advocates for their communities. MESH offers 3 different workshop packages, and all are geared toward a lay audience. Below are the MESH workshop options.

- Option 1: Six, 1.5 hours sessions offered on a biweekly basis
- Option 2: Two, 2 hours sessions offered consecutively
- Option 3: One, 4 hour “Bootcamp”

## Annual Student Activities

- Complete accredited, comprehensive training in sexual health curriculum.
- Six, 60-minute monthly sessions per cohort.
- Each session consists of one large group meeting followed by private, smaller breakout meetings.
- Each session has a max of 25 students and no less than 5 Medical and Health Professions students.

## Community Outcomes/Results

- Providing adolescents with a safe environment to voice any concerns and discuss their experiences with sexual decision making.
- Helping youths to understand the risks and health detriments caused by unsafe sex practices and empower them with the knowledge, attitudes, and the skills to make healthy choices.
- Equipping high school youth with the knowledge to make informed decisions about their sexual health.

## Facilitators

Thomas D. Kimble, MD

## Community Partners

- Hampton Roads’ High Schools
- Virginia Department of Education
- Southampton Roads Boys & Girls Club

## The Need

- As of 2018, there were 18.5 pregnancies per 1,000 females aged 15-17 nationally compared to 7.7 pregnancies in the state of Virginia.
- Norfolk consistently ranks among the worst 25% of counties regarding teen pregnancy rates in the Greater Hamptons Roads, VA.
- Recently, statistics have shown markedly increased incidence of STIs and teen pregnancies in Norfolk, VA compared to the state of Virginia.