

A MOVEMENT TO EMPOWER YOUTH TO BECOME  
EMPOWERED ADULTS IN THE DIGITAL AGE



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## DEFINITIONS

**Media** – n. the means of communication that reach or influence people widely: radio (online, terrestrial, satellite), television (traditional and online), computers, smart phones, tablets, video games, social media, books, magazines, newspapers etc.

**Media Literacy** – n. the ability to critically analyze and communicate messages and information in all media.

**Critical Thinking** – v. reasonably and rationally thinking about what to believe and how to behave.

## THE BIG PROBLEM IN NORTH AMERICA

Media affect the way we think, feel, and behave. Used responsibly, they present unprecedented opportunities for connecting, sharing, and learning. Unfortunately, many of our teens command the power of these tools without the media literacy and critical thinking skills necessary to navigate them safely.

In fact, young people spend 11 hours per day with media, from music to online video to social media and more.<sup>1</sup> They are being exposed to a complex landscape littered with portrayals of violence and bullying, sexualization, materialism, and drug and alcohol abuse. **Studies** show these kinds of messages can influence negative attitudes and behaviors in youth that follow them into adulthood, and fuel public health crises.

## WHAT WE CAN DO

We can equip your teens with the media literacy skills to think for themselves and lead healthy and successful lives in the digital age. We offer 3 programs (JUMA Talks, The Message Tour, and The Message Academy) to help prepare them to be leaders and independent thinkers, creative problem solvers, and wiser consumers and creators of media. Our approach aims to improve the way young people interact with the world, and each other.

1. Hamel, L., Cho, S., Brodie, M., Foehr, U., Roberts, D., Saphir, M., (2010). Generation M2: Media in the Lives of 8- to 18-Year-Olds A Kaiser Family Foundation Study. Kaiser Family Foundation. Retrieved February 20, 2013 from <http://kff.org/other/event/generation-m2-media-in-the-lives-of/>



# DIRECTOR



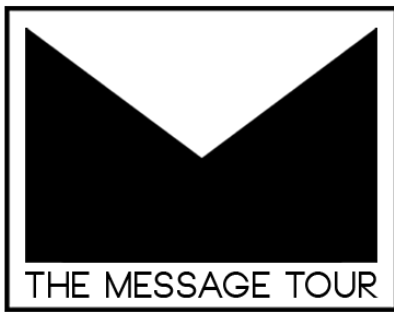
Juma Inniss is a recording artist/songwriter/producer from Boston, MA, using his music to expose the myths in pop culture and raise social awareness. He is also the director of The Message and a principal at the Inniss Entertainment Group [IEG], a boutique marketing and creative media company. Through IEG he produces and promotes his own releases and addresses the marketing challenges of clients in entertainment, technology, and philanthropy.

He has written and produced two full-length albums: *Fall of the Giants* and *Blast Music*, which features a guest appearance from Grammy award winning singer, John Legend. His music has been featured on multiple major music channels including VH1 Soul, VH1.com, MTVHive.com, and JCTV [Trinity Broadcasting Network]. With a sound that blends current hip-hop sensibilities with positive messages, he has toured throughout the US and Canada for over 7 years, gracing more than 150 stages. His performances are embraced at venues running the gamut, from festivals to nightclubs, to college and high school campuses, and houses of worship.

Juma has worked extensively in his local community, helping at-risk youth develop social consciousness and media literacy skills through music. As co-facilitator of a music therapy group, he helped youth in transition voice the complexity of their plight through song, teaching songwriting and production as a means of positive expression. He has served Boston's juvenile delinquent population for 6 years through his local faith community, offering parochial study and counseling sessions at lock-up facilities throughout Boston.

Juma holds a B.S. in Marketing Communication from Emerson College, an A.S. in Television Broadcasting from the New England Institute of Art, and currently pursues graduate studies in Management at Harvard University Extension School. He is a member of the National Association for Media Literacy Education and an advisor to Media Literacy Now, America's leading grassroots organization for media literacy policy. Juma has also lectured for high school and college students on various topics, from media literacy to the use of art for social change.





The Message Tour (TMT) is the world's first live music tour promoting media literacy and critical thinking among teens. TMT brings a popular and relevant live music experience to high school auditoriums with a teaching objective. Using music as a lens and a tool, the Message Tour engages youth in a multi-sensory conversation around the importance of thinking critically about the messages in their media.

The Message Tour is carried out through a combination of live concerts, interactive discussion, and Q&A with a flexible runtime of 30-60 minutes. TMT is multifunctional as an entertainment education event, able to meet a range of programming needs, from back-to-school kick offs to year end celebrations. The Message Tour can also be tailored to address any specific issue(s) facing your youth.

## HOW IT WORKS

### CONCERT

The Message Tour begins with high-energy performances of positive hip-hop/pop music from JUMA and/or a youth artist, backed by a live DJ. Message Tour concerts are designed to demonstrate that "positive" does not equate to cheesy, and that being socially responsible does not mean you cannot have fun. We reflect the popular tastes of our audiences and expose them to new forms of EDM, singer/songwriter, and pop/rock music with performances from established and emerging youth musicians.



### JUMA TALKS

Following the concert, JUMA opens an interactive discussion about the value of media literacy and critical thinking for healthy decision-making in digital culture. JUMA Talks for the Message Tour may also feature special guest speakers from across media disciplines. This, allowing youth to hear from some of the brand messengers behind the screens of their favorite media, from entertainment to advertising.

### Q&A

TMT concludes with a Q&A session for students and faculty to raise questions and further the conversation.







## YOUTH BENEFITS

- Gain a foundational knowledge of media literacy and how to gain more control over how they are affected by media messages
- Increase online behavioral awareness
- Understand the importance of critical thinking for healthy decision-making in digital culture
- Become active participants in a relevant and purposeful discussion on the pros and cons of media
- Enjoy a fun and engaging live music show with an educational purpose

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## LOGISTICS

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**Format:** general assemblies; may also be booked as an after school event by special request

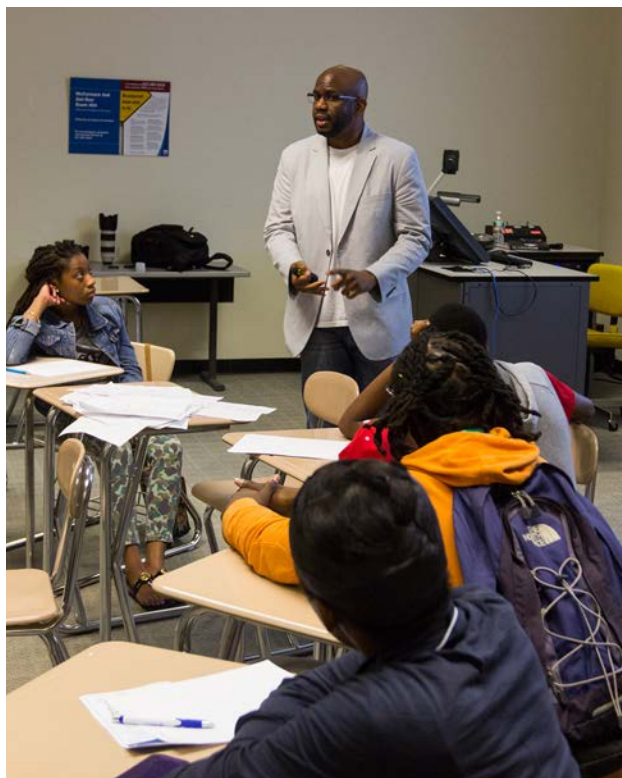
**Recommended ages:** 13+

**Suggested audience size:** 100+

**Runtime:** 30:00 - one whole day

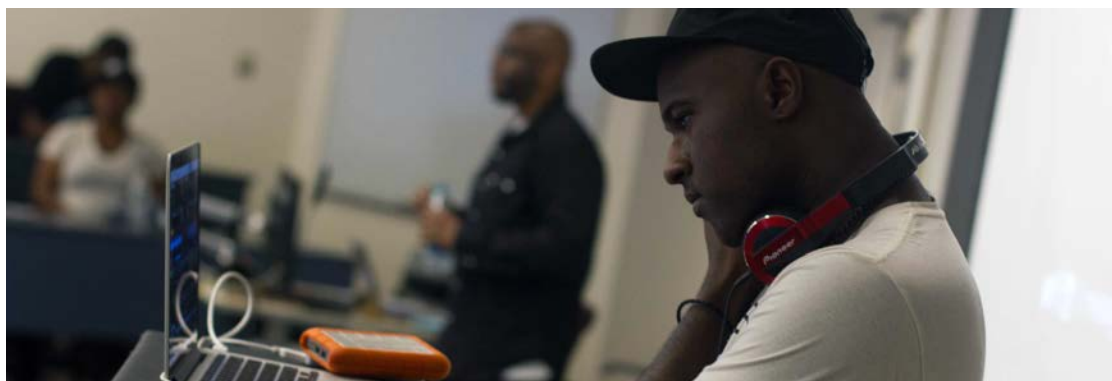
**A/V Requirements:** Sound / amplification system (cordless microphone, 2 powered speakers, 12 channel mixer with 1/4 inch + XLR inputs, CD or mp3 playback capability) and a projector (+screen) with a Mac input for Powerpoint display.





The Message Academy (TMA) is a media literacy learning and exploration lab for youth, ages 13-18. Message Academy sessions prepare them to better engage and communicate with popular media through 8 or 10 critical thinking and digital literacy skill building units. Students will put their learning into action by creating or remixing a piece of their own media (audio, visual, or text) using the communication skills they will acquire during the Academy.

With the successful completion of the Message Academy, attendees receive a "Good Thinking" certificate of achievement they may add to their professional resumes or another list of accomplishments. The Message Academy may be hosted at your school or place of programming. We also offer an out-of-classroom experience for US schools in the state of Massachusetts at the Microsoft retail store in the Prudential mall, located in Boston.





## YOUTH BENEFITS

- Understand how to critically analyze media messages and think for themselves
- Learn how to use media to their strategic advantage
- Respond to media messages more intelligently and responsibly
- Gain a new appreciation for how media messages can affect them and their power to affect others through media

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### LOGISTICS

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**Recommended ages:** 13+

**Audience size:** 10-15

**Runtime:** 1 hour per session, 8 or 10 weeks

**Technical Requirements:** Desktops, laptops, or tablets with internet access, consumer audio / visual editing applications (e.g. Windows Movie Maker, iMovie, Garage band etc)







JUMA Talks inject a dose of swagger into the TED format, offering down-to-earth conversations about real life issues facing today's youth. JUMA Talks run from 15-30 minutes, per your event request, and address a range of topics including:

**Social Media**

*The Do's, Don'ts, and Definitely Not's*

**Online Reputation Managment**

*How To Manage Your Profiles For Success*

**Cyber Bullying**

*When Words Become Weapons*

**Personal Branding**

*How To Stand Out In The Crowd*

**Entrepreneurship**

*What It Takes To Be Your Own Boss*

**Financial Health**

*It's All About The Benjamins*

**Teen Dating**

*Everything Every Teen Should Know*

**Sexual Health**

*Beyond The Birds and The Bees*

**Low Self-Esteem**

*Breaking The Cycle of Negative Self-Image*

**Hip-Hop / Hip-Hop Culture**

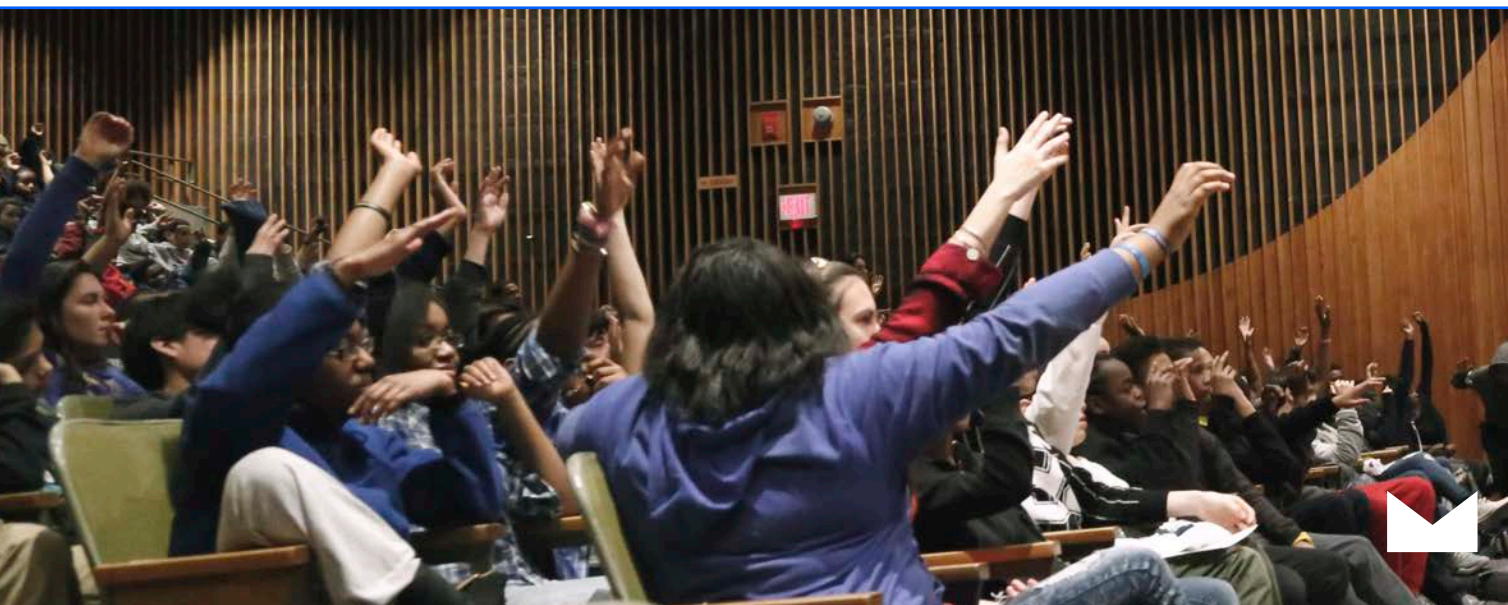
*What Beats and Rhymes Mean In Real Life*

**The Music Industry**

*The Truth Behind The Music*

**Careers in Entertainment**

*The ABC's of Working in Show Business*





## YOUTH BENEFITS

- Gain knowledge and education around critical life skills
- Be introduced to intellectual tools to help them safely transition into adulthood
- Actively participate in important conversations about real life issues
- Be inspired to maximize their personal and professional potential

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### LOGISTICS

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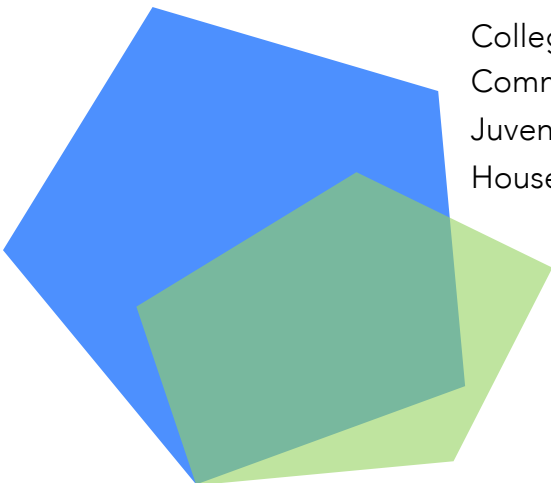
**Recommended ages:** 13+

**Audience size:** 50+

**Runtime:** 15:00-30:00

**Venues served:**

High schools  
Middle schools  
Colleges / Universities  
Community centers  
Juvenile detention centers  
Houses of worship



# IMPACT AREAS



Message programming can improve your youths' thinking and reasoning in 3 key areas: media literacy awareness, critical thinking and analysis, and judgment and decision-making. These cognitive processes represent critical pathways to healthier living for individuals and communities in the digital age.

## MEDIA LITERACY AWARENESS

Your youth can anticipate coming away from the Message with a heightened awareness around the way they engage media messages, and one another. Our efforts aim to positively effect teens' media interactions, from being more conscious about how they consume entertainment, to what they post on social media. Students may also gain a new sense of responsibility for their power to influence others as creators of media.

## CRITICAL THINKING AND ANALYSIS

Message participants should look forward to an improvement in the way they think about topics relevant to their lives. At the heart of our practice is a style of inquiry that, when applied to everyday life, awakens the sleeping giant of critical thinking. With critical thinking comes the ability to identify bias, challenge ideas, assumptions, and conclusions.

## JUDGEMENT AND DECISION MAKING

With heightened media literacy awareness and a critical thinking mind, healthier decision-making is not far behind. Critical thought processes not only effect how decisions are made, but also the quality and kinds of life choices one makes. This is true for our teens and we are committed to empowering them to think for themselves and achieve positive life outcomes.





# TESTIMONIALS

*With The Message, Juma Inniss was a crucial component in helping to make our first Youth Enrichment Day a huge success. His dedication to engaging our youth allowed more than 60 of our young people to participate in his two workshop sessions. The Message was one of the most popular of our over 30 different workshop offerings with the session reaching capacity in our preregistration period. Participants appreciated Juma's kind, down-to-earth personality that made the youth eager to engage with him and learn from his experience.*

- Kristie DeSena , Partnerships Manager, City of Boston Department of Youth Engagement

*As we work towards preparing our students for College and Career Readiness with a focus on Career Awareness, Career Exploration and Career Immersion, Juma was able to connect with our students through a well-prepared presentation and a dynamic personality. His powerful message of appropriate behavior on social media is very important at this age when many students must make decisions against destructive behavior. We look forward to continued interaction between The Message and the Weymouth Public Schools.*

- Elizabeth Harris, Community Relations Liaison, Weymouth Public Schools

*Juma is an act I'm very proud to have hosted and his performance made me want to book him again. He delivers a powerful message, energetic performance, and really connects with the audience in a way many other performers I've worked with haven't been able to do.*

- Niki Gosh, Student Organizer, South Shore Christian Academy



BOOK YOUR SCHOOL OR EVENT TODAY!



#getthmessage

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THINK FOR YOURSELF