

STUDENTS RUN
PHILLY STYLE

MileUp

SPRING
2020



ABOUT MILEUP

Students Run Philly Style (SRPS) transforms young peoples' lives through running and mentorship. The **courage** and **effort** required to run a long-distance race, the unfailing support of a caring mentor, and the thrill of its ultimate achievement results in a student who knows anything is possible.

In January of 2020, Students Run Philly Style and the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office formalized their partnership to launch **MileUp**, the first Youth Diversion program of its kind, with 15 court-diverted youth under the age of 17.

Pairing a demanding physical goal with mentorship and a supportive and caring community is the perfect equation for helping youth in the juvenile justice system. MileUp utilizes the SRPS trauma-informed and evidence-based model that offers youth facing delinquency charges the chance not only to reflect and heal, but to thrive.

VISION AND GOALS

MileUp program gives young people facing delinquency charges a chance to remain outside of the traditional court system, and holds youth accountable while giving them a chance to build a healthy future.

The goals of MileUp are to:

- Provide youth with a positive caring adult relationship to help them succeed
- Help youth build skills to overcome adversity and manage stress through exercise on the way to positive achievement across all aspects of their lives
- Provide a strengths-based option to increase positive outcomes in youth diverted away from juvenile system involvement
- Create innovative opportunities for diversion
- Build in restitution support to reduce potential debt and continued system involvement for youth and families
- Provide youth with long-term sustainable support



OUR RESPONSE TO COVID-19

Alongside 4 Youth Advocates and 11 Volunteer Mentors (5 from the DA's Office), youth spent 5 weeks prior to the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic running 3 times per week in preparation for their goal to run the Blue Cross Broad Street 10-miler in May. The team was also preparing to run a 5-mile race at the end of March and the Philly Style 8k in April.

Most students were half way to their first milestone of running 20 miles when all Students Run Philly Style programming and targeted races were suspended on March 14th due to the public health crisis.

For the remaining 9 weeks of the program, the 4 Youth Advocates continued to mentor the 15 enrolled youth 3 times per week through phone and text message check-ins focused on continued relationship-building and goal-setting. Some students' goals included: working out at home, eating healthy foods, helping family, creating a daily schedule to get homework done, looking for jobs, and writing new music.

In lieu of a true race finish line, students' new milestone shifted towards working on a final reflection project based in restorative justice practices with support from their Youth Advocate. The goal of this project was to give youth the opportunity to discuss and share about their time in the program, what brought them to the program, what they learned from this experience, and what they hope for their future.

Youth were encouraged to submit this project in the format of their preference, and SRPS received a variety of submissions including: a handwritten essay, typed responses, a poem, and voice recordings.

To honor students' dedication to the program and celebrate their accomplishments despite changes due to the pandemic, Youth Advocates delivered Diadora sneakers, program shirts, and personalized notes to each student. They also conducted exit interviews over the phone with each parent/guardian to gain insight and feedback on the program from the family's perspective.

By May 18th, **100%** of enrolled youth met the revised program milestones per the Philadelphia District Attorney's Office and Students Run Philly Style. All 15 students' restitution fees have been paid, charges dropped, and names submitted for expungement.

Youth have been invited to continue to participate in SRPS programming and meet their original goal to train for and run the rescheduled Blue Cross Broad Street Run in October 2020, at no cost to the student or their families. At this time, approximately 50% of students have expressed interest in this continued involvement with SRPS.

BY THE NUMBERS

15

STUDENTS ENROLLED

All 15 completed the program

11

AFRICAN-AMERICAN STUDENTS

15.5

AVERAGE STUDENT AGE

2

HISPANIC/LATINO STUDENTS

\$657

AVERAGE RESTITUTION OWED

2

WHITE STUDENTS



12

MALE STUDENTS



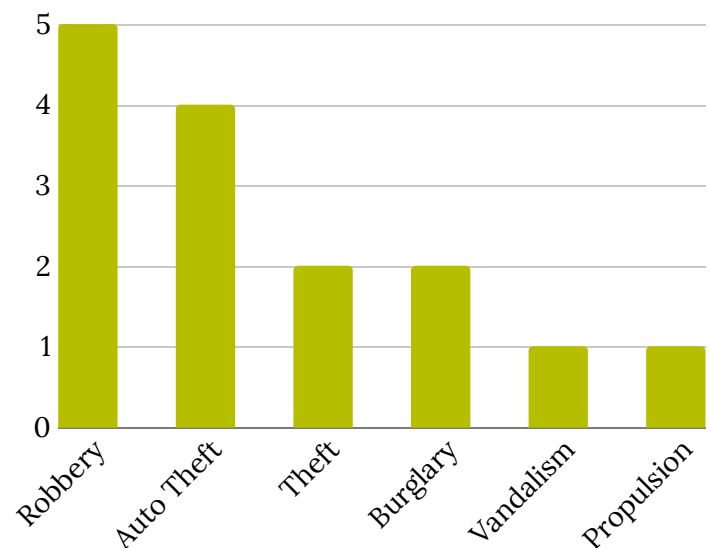
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FEMALE STUDENTS

CHARGES

The District Attorney's Office of Philadelphia referred 15 students to Students Run Philly Style who were not previously eligible for diversion.

The following chart illustrates the breakdown of participant charges:



STUDENT REFLECTIONS

Race finish lines are a great place for reflection. When students complete a milestone, they have the opportunity to look back and think about what went well, what they could have done differently, and what they can do next time. One helpful way grow from these experiences is to reflect on them.

Here is what students had to say about their time at MileUp and the events that brought them to the program.

*MileUp has helped me embody [the SRPS] core values now in my life because I now believe I have the **courage** to make better decisions and think before I do them. I now put more **effort** into my life and goals, so that way I will not get into any trouble. I **respect** myself and I now realize I must respect those around me especially those who care about me. I now have a fresh start on life, and I hope to accomplish the goals that I set forth for myself."*

-DA, 15

"I learned from my mistakes that day. I am a growing leader along with my new peers I choose to associate with. I am now on the right track to success. In 5 years I will have just graduated high school hopefully with an athletic scholarship for basketball or football."

-JB, 15

"I loved the MileUp program, we had to practice as a team, I had fun in the program. I wanna change my life around, I wanna go to school, get a nice job and start a family."

-TP, 18





"My MileUp mentor was extremely helpful. He called in to check on me and gave me advice on how to stay out of trouble. He made me feel like he genuinely cared about me doing better with my life and making better decisions in life."

DA, 15

"Got into a crime with a stolen car
Got in a stolen car and crashed
Really scared cause I ain't want to go to jail
Haven't thought 'bout anything to be honest
My mom she went through a lot with the system
Go to the program during days I had to do stuff
Stay out of trouble and find a hobby to do
He told me right from wrong
Go hard at whatever I do in my future and don't let up
Yes it helped a lot with my goals.
When we was running they pushed up as far as possible
My goal is to invest in something that can take me far in life
And move my mom out of the hood
And better myself in life before my life get took
I felt great about running
It kept me in shape and helped me clear my mind
I actually like running 'cause it was motivation"

-IL, 17

"MileUp has helped me mature myself and made me change my act around. It has also helped me start pushing myself to do home workouts."

-RB, 15

"MileUp has given or showed me more respect and kindness. Dear future self: I want to remember that if you mess up, learn from that mistake and keep going forward."

-SB, 16

PARTICIPANT PARENT TESTIMONIALS

Students Run Philly Style staff conducted in-home intakes with each parent/guardian at the start of the season. Youth Advocates then conducted end-of-season exit interviews with each parent/guardian to gain feedback about the season from the family perspective.

“I thought it was a really cool and innovative idea, and a really good opportunity for kids who deserve a second chance to fix their mistakes. Once the program got started, [my son] became invested in it, even though he wasn't in the beginning. He would come home and run and jog. He took ownership of his own program, and I never would have predicted that. To be able to see that was amazing. It reinvigorated a sense of wanting to succeed.”

“[MileUp] was amazing and welcoming. You all looked at him as a kid with no judgement, no matter what he'd done. That wasn't always true with court and other offices. He was offered good support. We were happy to be a part of it.”

“The mentors/advocates were the most beneficial. They kept him accountable. Also, the contact with other kids who were just like him. All positive connections.”

“The program was wonderful. I was surprised by how much [my son] liked it.”

“I have never been involved in a program that was so willing to make it work with the student”

MILEUP LEADERS SAID:

"I've been a proud running leader for Students Run Philly Style for a number of years, and the MileUp program is one of the most meaningful things I've done recently.

The program takes the core values of Courage, Effort & Respect and levels them up for kids who've somehow ended up in the court system. Through running, MileUp creates a positive framework for personal growth and challenges the kids to go places they probably never imagined. After groaning through the first few miles, most of the kids say they enjoyed the space running gave them to think. "

-Ken Campbell, Youth Advocate

"MileUp is such an incredibly important opportunity for Philadelphia youth. Not only does this program keep them out of the system, it offers them a place to build confidence in themselves and their abilities (something we saw even in just a few months of practice!)."

-Mari Flamm, Youth Advocate

"MileUp is a great diversion program that allows its participants to challenge their bodies and minds; while giving them perspective on just how much control they have over their choices and end results. Throughout their training students in the program get to see and evaluate their efforts in real time and it makes them think things through a bit more; what they got right, and things they could improve upon. Their training also develops their commitment to not give up and to encourage others along the way. All of these aspects help build stronger and more confident individuals that are more likely to make positive contributions to society. I was very proud to be a part of this team."

-C.C. Tellez, Youth Advocate

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

"MileUp is a one of a kind diversion program that helps us hold young people accountable while keeping them out of the court system. In its first season, I was especially impressed with how MileUp advocates and volunteers used long distance running to cultivate goal setting, decision making and commitment among young people and I'm confident these are skills they will carry with them long after their time in the program."

**-Aditi Sherikar, Volunteer Running Leader
Director of Juvenile Diversion Programs,
Philadelphia District Attorney's Office**