Students Run PHILLY STYLE

2023 IMPACT REPORT
Mentoring and Milestones

Fostering Moments of Hope, Inspiration and Joy

When the Rain Poured

during this year’s Broad Street Run, our students and mentors arrived at the starting line knowing they couldn’t let the weather get in their way. For 10 miles, they dodged raindrops down Broad Street in pursuit of a culmination of months of effort, personal growth and shared memories.

Students Run Philly Style strives to create opportunities in which young people can discover who they are at their best and reach for the support they need to navigate the days when they aren’t. Throughout the year, our incredible mentors guide and train alongside their student runners to achieve a long-distance goal respecting the routine joy and pain of putting one foot in front of the other. On race day, our young people can look back at how far those steps have taken them, and look forward to the untested possibilities of the course to follow. In any conditions, they cross the finish line more confident, connected and resourceful in pursuing their goals. In times when our city’s young people are facing so many challenges, these moments of hope, inspiration and joy have never been more important.

As we approach our second decade in 2024, we know our community of young people, mentors, partners, and volunteers will continue to lift up one another. We thank you for your support of Students Run Philly Style, and the courageous students and mentors who show up to shine in any weather. We look forward to the milestones and moments as we take our next steps, together.

Lauren Kobylarz
Executive Director

Courage Effort Respect

Our program values reflect the challenge of completing a long distance race and honor the relationships formed along the way.
The mission of Students Run Philly Style is to transform students’ lives through mentorship over miles of long distance running and achievement.

Marathon Model

Students and mentors train up to 10 hours weekly March through November to run the Philadelphia Half or Full Marathon in November.

MileUp

In partnership with the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office, MileUp uses our mentoring model to offer an evidence-based diversion option for youth facing delinquency charges.

OUTPace

OUTPace improves health outcomes and increases protective factors for LGBTQ+ youth by offering inclusive, informed support and specific LGBTQ+ programming.

School Year Model

Students and mentors train up to 6 hours weekly September through June to run the Blue Cross Broad Street Run in May.
OUR IMPACT

86% OF STUDENTS maintained or increased support from their mentors over the course of the season, and 83% reported maintained or increased support from family members. Students who reported increased social support from mentors were 8 times more likely to report increased goal-directed behaviors.

SOCIAL SUPPORT

80% OF STUDENTS maintained or increased health practices such as taking care of their bodies, eating well and regular physical activity. First year participants reported significant decreases in generalized anxiety, and 70% of students maintained or increased their use of venting as a positive coping strategy.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH

81% OF STUDENTS maintained or increased aspirations to make a positive difference in their communities. Students are almost 3 times as likely to report increased goal-directed behaviors related to other aspects of their lives from pre to post season.

GOAL SETTING AND ASPIRATIONS
BY THE NUMBERS

- 406 Volunteer Mentors
- 1,329 Student Runners
- 17 Staff Members

Dedicating up to 10 hours per week for 9 months

Including 7 full-time and 10 part-time or seasonal staff

96,136 MILES RUN

In practices and races

54 TEAM SITES

Serving young people in grades 6-12, from every Zip Code in Philadelphia

$977 PER RUNNER

Invested in Philly’s Future

Serving young people in grades 6-12, from every Zip Code in Philadelphia
STUDENT REFLECTIONS

COURAGE

“Running changed my life because before I never thought that I could actually do it. I always just thought I’d follow what P.E. had in store for me. Until I actually did it and started running. I feel better about myself physically and I feel like I’m starting a new journey. Running has opened my mind to so many possibilities. Joining other sports, finding patience, not just physically, but emotionally, too, like with friends.”

- L.P., age 15

EFFORT

“SRPS helped me know I can do things I never thought I could do, like running long distances. It is fun and hard sometimes. I like my running coaches, they motivate me.

I gave effort because I tried my best each week. And you may not think it, but it goes by fast. You have to work hard if you want to get something good out of situations.”

- Z.W., age 16

RESPECT

“My team has a shared energy that motivates me. I am better at problem-solving, more confident to contribute and this is an inclusive environment. This sport can be challenging but we take time to talk about how to think positively and encourage each other. We all have different goals but we respect what everyone wants to do and we hold each other accountable as friends.”

- C.Z., age 17
This year Students Run Philly Style welcomed its first exclusive footwear and apparel partner in Brooks Running. As part of Brooks’ Future Run initiative, SRPS is able to provide new running sneakers, uniform shirts, and running gear to all program participants at no cost. During the season, young people earn their shoes and gear as they hit certain milestones, such as their first race or completing a goal distance. In June, student runners and mentors were also able to learn from (and run with!) two of Brooks’ sponsored athletes, Erika Kemp and Colin Bennie, who attended our annual Leadership Summit weekend in Bucks County, Pennsylvania.
Students Run Philly Style’s annual Go Farther! Leadership Summit brings together 100 students and mentors from all 54 team sites across Philadelphia for a summer camp experience focused on leadership development. The three-day, two-night retreat includes daily leadership lessons, running and a chance to practice teamwork, goal-setting and reflection. Students return to their teams with new friendships and unforgettable shared experiences, energized to lead among their peers. This year’s Leadership Summit was sponsored by Philadelphia Insurance Companies, which also provided input on the weekend’s leadership content.
OUTPace provides LGBTQ+ students and student allies with resources, activities and connection from which they can build self confidence, expand their communities and learn life skills to overcome challenges. Across all SRPS teams, 16% of student runners identify as LGBTQ+ and throughout the year, are able to participate in public events and races in gender categories that reflect their true selves. In 2023, SRPS sponsored more than 55 race entries for students participating in the nonbinary gender category.

In 2023, SRPS hosted 17 OUTPace drop-in sessions designed to provide connection, support and resources to LGBTQ+ student runners and allies. This year’s sessions, developed in partnership with OUTPace’s two Student Ambassadors, included visits with the Philadelphia Office of LGBT Affairs, the William Way LGBT Community Center’s John J. Wilcox Jr. Archives, the Mazzoni LGBT Health Center, the Attic Youth Center, GALAEI, the John C. Anderson Residence, Alchemy Hair Lab, South Street Art Mart, and Evolve Fitness. OUTPace also participated in more than 18 community events, and the Philly Pride Run 5K, which hosted all SRPS runners in June.
In partnership with the Philadelphia District Attorney’s Office, MileUp uses Students Run Philly Style’s mentoring model to offer an evidence-based diversion option for youth facing delinquency charges in which young people train with mentors for a 10-mile or 13.1-mile road race. In 2023, 82% of enrolled students successfully completed the program and had their charges dropped, restitution paid, and records expunged. After completing the program, 5 students returned as paid peer mentors to lead students in the following season.

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“MY MENTORS HELPED ME LEARN TO EMBRACE AND ENJOY RUNNING AND THAT NOT EVERYONE IS GOING TO GIVE UP ON YOU. LIKE ACTUALLY THEY’VE BEEN LIKE FAMILY TO ME.”
- MileUp Spring ’23 participant

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A NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED PROGRAM

In June, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recognized SRPS as one of 14 Phase I Finalists in its Children and Youth Resilience Challenge, honoring organizations creating community-led solutions to promote resilience in children and adolescents. SRPS’ MileUp program was recognized for its work with youth in the juvenile justice system and is moving forward to Phase II of the challenge in the coming year, marking the organization’s first federal prize. As a leader in the diversion space, SRPS is co-leading a quarterly convening of local diversion partners and helping develop practitioner-led agendas to keep moving diversion practices forward in Philadelphia.
On 7/11/23, Matthew ‘Slurpee Runner’ Cooper embarked upon a 37-mile route across Philadelphia that saw him stop at 17 different 7-11 stores while raising nearly $1,100 to support SRPS. Matt says, “by some gastrointestinal miracle, I was also able to consume 17 Slurpees throughout the day, one for each stop. My favorite flavor was a new one - Hibiscus Lemonade - but I quickly returned to the more palatable flavors like Coke or Cherry.” SRPS supports inclusive fundraising initiatives with low barriers to entry that are community-led and mission aligned, like Matt’s Slurpee Run.

SRPS values everyone who contributes to our community. With their time-volunteering at a water stop or running with students 10 hours per week. Or with their money- donating $5 one time, or thousands over decades. Every show of support contributes to SRPS’ mission and is valid and valued.

Putting an equitable donor value system in practice means intentional donor stewardship, such as sending a surprise thank you box to randomly-selected donors rather than just to those who give at a certain level, and working with partners to create mutually meaningful volunteer experiences.

Fundraising has a cost and how an organization chooses to spend its budget to raise money is a reflection of its values. SRPS prioritizes local vendors who are BIPOC, women, and LGBTQ+ owned for Extra Mile and other fundraising events. This year new partners included Farina Pasta and Noodle, Blitz Soul Food, El Merkury, and Mac Mart.
EXTRA MILE KICKS OFF PHILADELPHIA DISTANCE RUN WEEKEND

SEPTEMBER 15, 2023
SRPS’ annual Extra Mile fundraiser brought together more than 350 supporters, mentors, board of directors and PDR runners to celebrate youth mentorship.

SEPTEMBER 17, 2023
SRPS co-hosted the 45th Philadelphia Distance Run half marathon and 5K with partners from Philadelphia Runner and Out & Back Creative, welcoming more than 4,500 runners and volunteers on race day.

THE CLAW
This year’s Extra Mile featured a Brooks-sponsored claw machine that raised $3,500 and featured grand prizes like airline tickets and marathon entries.

SAVE THE DATE! 
Join us on September 15, 2024 for the 46th running of the Philadelphia Distance Run. Register at philadelphiadistancerun.com.
PHILLY FAMOUS

MARCH 31, 2023
Students Run Philly Style students and mentors were featured on NBC’s TODAY with Donna Farizan. The three-minute segment culminated in an all-team lap around the track toward surprise sneakers from Brooks Running.

JULY 4, 2023
Students Run Philly Style was honored to be a finalist for the Wawa Foundation Hero Award. SRPS fans and friends from across the country voted to push the program to the finish line, taking home the $50,000 grand prize at Independence Hall during the Wawa Welcome America Ceremony.

WAWA HERO AWARD WINNERS

THANK YOU TO OUR COMMUNITY, SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS FOR CHEERING US ON!

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Special thanks to the following photographers for capturing the spirit of our program:

Darren Burton
Keith Morrison
Matt Stanley

And to Temple University’s Sport Industry Research Center for evaluating our impact through year-round surveys, focus groups and data analysis. Founded in 2008, Temple SIRC harnesses the power of sport for good, providing advanced research services and engaging with stakeholders in the sport industry to expand the definition of success to include positive and measurable societal impacts.