

**UP / US**

**CENTER**  
**FOR SPORTS-BASED**  
Youth Development



**FRONT RUNNERS:**  
**Leaders Of The Sports-Based Youth Development Pack.**



## About this Report...

Up2Us is a coalition of youth sports programs whose members use sports to address the most critical challenges facing youth in America: childhood obesity, academic failure, and the lure of high-risk behaviors like gang participation and drug abuse. Whereas traditional youth sports programs mirror the dominant American professional sports ethos of competition and winning, Up2Us programs approach solving community problems through sports by emphasizing “youth development.” This is why these programs cannot be labeled simply as “sports” programs—rather they are sports-based youth development programs.

Some people intuitively understand the power of sports-based youth development (SBYD) as a tool for teaching the lessons youth need to be successful in life. And that capitalizing on youth passion for sports is a logical vehicle for those lessons. Others, though, have a harder time believing that a recreational activity like sports can truly help youth do better in school, stay out of gangs, or avoid the growing threat of obesity. This report answers their doubt with compelling evidence from SBYD programs with proven track records for fostering educational, health, and/or behavioral outcomes.

### DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE POWER OF SPORTS TO INSPIRE SUCCESS IN YOUTH?

-  Youth in an Up2Us member organization that provides soccer and fitness programming increased their physical activity by 240%.
-  Youth in an Up2Us member program that provides tennis instruction showed an average gain of 2.5 grade levels in English/Language Arts proficiency after a single year of programming.
-  Participants in an Up2Us program that provides soccer activities saw significant reductions in their Body Mass Index (BMI) after just two seasons.



# Up2Us Model Programs in Sports-Based Youth Development

High quality sports-based youth development (SBYD) programs have the following characteristics:

**1. Trained coaches:**

caring adults who have received instruction in modeling and encouraging supportive relationships and positive social norms

**2. Intentional programming:**

developmentally appropriate curricula with a focus on inclusive and engaging instruction, skill development, and mastery

**3. Physical and emotional safety:**

an environment free of hazards with an emphasis on community building, interpersonal skills, and open communication

**4. Strong administration:**

a structure responsible for implementation of programs, evaluation, training, etc.

**5. Context:**

programs that address the child as a whole and connect family, school, community, and culture



In the spring of 2011, Up2Us launched a process to identify members that demonstrate model sports-based youth development (SBYD) programming. To be identified as a model program, organizations had to demonstrate competency in delivering SBYD programming in each of the five characteristics, meet specific criteria for objectively measuring program effectiveness, and show evidence of profound positive impact on program participants.

## Up2Us Model Programs Report Card

-  **Key SBYD Indicators**
-  **Rigorous Evaluation**
-  **Impact**

Under the guidance of the Up2Us Advisory Board, the programs in this report were selected as standout examples of SBYD organizations that improve health, education, and pro-social behavior among the youth they serve.

Each program profile includes a “report card” that shows examples of how they are delivering on each of the model program requirements.



---

## Up2Us Model Programs in Health

---

# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN HEALTH: DC SCORES

When Jamar was nine he struggled with his weight. He weighed more than 100 pounds and had difficulty walking long distance without being exhausted. His days were filled with ridicule from his classmates: during recess the kids created a game called, "poke the fat kid." Jamar's 3rd grade teacher realized that he was staying indoors for recess and didn't seem to have many friends. She thought making him part of a team would help him gain friends while addressing his physical fitness needs. So she approached a DC SCORES coach to see if Jamar could be involved and the coach welcomed him with open arms. At first, Jamar was reluctant to play in games due to his weight and lack of fitness. Even during his third game Jamar was still hanging back on the sidelines cheering for his team. However, he noticed a kid on the other team that looked just like him and he seemed to be having a great time running around.

At half time, Jamar approached his coach and said, "I'm ready to play." Seven years later, Jamar is thriving. He has graduated from the elementary and middle school programs and is currently an active member of the DC SCORES alumni group. More importantly, Jamar continues to play soccer and physical activity is a part of his everyday life. He has lost weight and those long distance walks, which used to pose a problem, are now long distance runs.

## DC SCORES

- ✓ Inspires urban youth to lead healthy lives, be engaged students, and have the confidence and character to make a difference in the world
- ✓ Creates an engaging program model by combining soccer, literacy, and service-learning
- ✓ Offers programming 5 days per week with 2 days of poetry and literacy learning, 2 days of soccer practice, and 1 game day; programming runs at least 1.5-2 hours each day
- ✓ Serves 27 low-income elementary and middle schools and provides programming to more than 800 DC students aged 8-15



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<b>Key SBYD Indicators</b>	<p><b>Trained Coaches:</b> Motivated D.C. public school teachers are hired and trained to run the program and become trusted mentors to student participants.</p> <p><b>Intentional Programming:</b> Curricula are designed to be age-appropriate for elementary and middle school students. Program graduates can also participate in alumni programs.</p>
<b>Rigorous Evaluation</b>	<p><b>Outside researcher:</b> Symphonic Strategies</p> <p><b>Tool:</b> Survey instrument developed externally and administered to youth, parents/guardians, and coaches.</p> <p><b>Outcomes Tracked:</b> Physical fitness assessments and literacy improvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● BMI scores (measure of body fat based on height and weight, important indicator for overweight or obesity)</li> <li>● PACER Test (multi-stage fitness test to measure maximum oxygen intake)</li> </ul> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> America SCORES Program Standards used to ensure consistency in program implementation.</p>
<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The number of DC SCORES participants who were classified in the normal BMI range increased by 8% for boys and 3% for girls.</li> <li>● Boys classified as overweight decreased by 10%, and boys classified as obese decreased by 2%.</li> <li>● Girls classified as obese also decreased by 3%.</li> <li>● Both elementary and middle school students improved in physical fitness assessments and attitude towards physical fitness.</li> <li>● Students reported having more energy; for middle school students, having more energy correlated with more homework completion.</li> </ul>

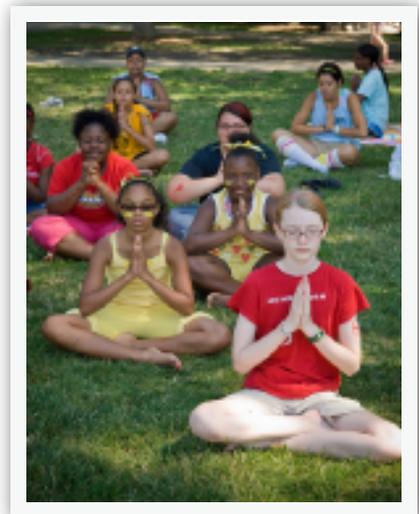
# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN HEALTH: Girls in the Game

Jocabed grew up thinking that she was not athletic and didn't have the skill set required to play sports. When she was in middle school, she joined Girls in the Game's afterschool program because she was attracted to the all-girl format; being new to sports, she thought she would be more comfortable in an environment where she wouldn't be judged or afraid to try new things. Through Girls in the Game, Jocabed received a scholarship to attend the 6th Biennial Childhood Obesity Conference in San Diego, CA. The conference answered questions about her own struggle with weight gain and health issues—it also motivated and taught her to make changes.

Jocabed is now healthier than she has ever been. She joined the Girls in the Game triathlon team and finished her first triathlon this summer. She also joined her school JV cross-country team and is providing mentorship to a freshman runner on the team. At home, Jocabed has helped her sister get active: the two of them run and enjoy making healthy meals together. Jocabed attributes her knowledge of nutrition and her change in lifestyle and health to being involved in Girls in the Game.

## Girls in the Game:

- ✔ Provides and promotes sports and fitness opportunities, nutrition and health education, and leadership development to enhance the overall health and well-being of girls
- ✔ Serves 2,500 girls age 7-18 from a diverse array of Chicago neighborhoods; the girls self-identify as: 53% African American, 24% Latina, 7% Caucasian, 3% Asian, 3% Multi-racial, 3% Middle Eastern and 8% unreported
- ✔ Operates afterschool programming for 1.5 hours per day, once per week for 30 weeks; runs intensive summer camp for 4 weeks with programming 5 days per week for 6 hours per day
- ✔ Offers a continuum of year-round programming to fit the needs of each girl in the program
- ✔ Exposes participants to a variety of sports and physical activities in addition to nutrition education



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<p><b>Key SBYD Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Intentional Programming:</b> Girls in the Game programming is evidence-based and responsive to the unique needs of girls, many of whom otherwise do not have the opportunity to participate on teams or try new sports.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Girls in the Game engages in conscientious outreach to families to have them actively involved in their daughter's experience.</p>
<p><b>Rigorous Evaluation</b></p>	<p><b>Outside Researcher:</b> Dr. Amy Bohnert, Loyola University</p> <p><b>Tool:</b> Survey administered multiple times per year to girls, parents, coaches, and teachers.</p> <p><b>Accelerometer</b> (device used to measure duration of physical activity) Data measured against control population</p> <p><b>Outcomes Tracked:</b> Access to and involvement in afterschool programs and recreation centers, physical activity and nutrition habits, adjustment, pro-social behaviors, and body image, height, weight, and BMI.</p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> Implementation checks to ensure curriculum is delivered as intended.</p>
<p><b>Impact</b></p>	<p><b>Improvements were statistically significant in the following areas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants increased their exercise levels.</li> <li>• Participants and parents reported eating less unhealthy foods.</li> <li>• Youth and parents correctly answered more nutrition knowledge questions.</li> <li>• When shown a range of body types, Girls in the Game participants chose less emaciated bodies as ideal showing a better understanding of what it means to be healthy.</li> </ul>

# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN HEALTH: I Challenge Myself

Johnny first joined the Cycling Smarts program through I Challenge Myself (ICM) in 9th grade. Weighing 255 pounds at 13 years old, Johnny already had hip difficulties which made it painful for him to play sports that required running. In Cycling Smarts, Johnny quickly became one of the hardest working and most dedicated students. Peers described him as always willing to: “help change a flat tire,” “motivate the team up a steep hill,” or “endure a long spin session.” Cycling, spinning, weightlifting, and swimming even helped alleviate the pain in Johnny’s hip. By 10th grade, Johnny had lost 46 pounds. His mother explained how Johnny had persuaded her to switch from white bread to whole wheat and from white rice to brown—just a few examples about the positive influence Johnny’s cycling coaches had not only on him, but on the whole family.

## I Challenge Myself

- ✓ Helps young people lead healthier and more productive lives through endurance fitness challenges and leadership development
- ✓ Combines cycling fitness with applied academic curriculum, character development, and urban service learning
- ✓ Serves 133 students in three New York public schools
- ✓ Focuses on youth who are at risk of long-term health problems related to physical inactivity and unhealthy life practices
- ✓ Offers in-school programming that can be taken as an elective so that students can receive school credit



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<b>Key SBYD Indicators</b>	<p><b>Context:</b> Programming is fully integrated into the school day and participants receive school credit upon program completion.</p> <p><b>Physical and Emotional Safety:</b> ICM ensures, through extensive training, physical safety for novice bicyclists and an emotionally safe place for kids to try a new sport that might otherwise make them uncomfortable or afraid of failure.</p>
<b>Rigorous Evaluation</b>	<p><b>Outside researcher:</b> Relearning Curve</p> <p><b>Tool:</b> Pre- and post- tests using: FitnessGram (fitness improvement test); Cycling Skills Assessment; self-esteem student survey; Cycling Knowledge Assessment (covers safety, nutrition, etc.); and interviews and focus groups with teachers and students.</p> <p><b>Outcomes Tracked:</b> Fitness levels, socio-emotional development, and academic skills. ICM also tracks attendance and dosage.</p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> Athletic Director conducts monthly site visits to set accountability goals with ICM coaches.</p>
<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over the course of the year, more than 81% of students either increased their fitness levels or obtained the highest possible fitness scores at initial testing and maintained that score throughout the year.</li> <li>• 100% of participants improved their overall cycling skill scores.</li> </ul>



## **Up2Us Model Programs in Education**

# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN EDUCATION: Academics in Motion

As a freshman in high school, Justin was already a member of a gang and, like a number of his friends, was straddling the football team and the gang world. During his junior year, when his friend was shot and killed, gang members approached him to rally support for retaliation. Instead of following along, Justin went to his Academics in Motion coach for help, a choice that probably saved his life. By choosing his team over the gang, Justin was able to continue being supported in his academics and his physical and emotional health. He was coached toward understanding NCAA clearinghouse qualifications and succeeded in joining a Division I college football team. Reflecting on his transition from high school to college, he noted it was easier for him than some of his classmates because, thanks to Academics in Motion, he was accustomed to a rigorous workload and structured schedule. He also knew he had mentors, coaches, and teammates back home rooting for him—whenever he felt discouraged after a test or a practice, he had only to think of them to find inspiration and motivation.

## Academics In Motion:

- ✔ Uses a holistic approach to youth development where sports participation is an academic catalyst for students in underperforming schools and under-resourced communities
- ✔ Serves more than 1,400 NYC public school kids who qualify for free or reduced-priced lunch. 72% of participants list themselves as African-American, 21% as Latino, 5% as White, and 2% as Asian or Pacific Islander
- ✔ Works within the framework of New York City schools and partners with athletic teams to address widespread academic and mentorship gap
- ✔ Trains and certifies Youth Development Coaches as mentors who work individually with students 20 hours per week throughout the year



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<b>Key SBYD Indicators</b>	<p><b>Trained Coaches:</b> All Youth Development Coaches participate in a comprehensive training session co-facilitated by Springfield College and have an MA/MS in Athletic Counseling or Certification in Sports Counseling.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Academics in Motion works with school-based coaches, athletic directors, and school officials to complement existing school-based services and ensure connection between in-school and out-of-school time.</p>
<b>Rigorous Evaluation</b>	<p><b>Outside Researcher:</b> The Center for Youth Development through Sport at Springfield College</p> <p><b>Tool:</b> Mid- and end-year surveys and qualitative exit interviews of seniors.</p> <p><b>Outcomes Tracked:</b> Pre- and post-data for a wide variety of educational indicators including GPA, NYS Regents Exam scores, graduation rates, attendance, SAT/ACT, and college attendance. Additionally, community service hours are tracked and completion of a life-skill program module is required.</p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> Data and exit interview information used to better coordinate with school athletic directors and program staff.</p>
<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants showed increased: GPA, school attendance, graduation rates, life-skills module completion, community service hours, college attendance rates, and SAT/ACT &amp; Regents Exams scores.</li> <li>• 98% of seniors graduated on time.</li> <li>• Participants had a 96.8% annual attendance rate in schools where 65% attendance is normal.</li> <li>• 78% of seniors were accepted into and planned to attend college.</li> </ul>

# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN EDUCATION: Harlem RBI

At every level of Jacob's school experience, Harlem RBI has helped him face life's challenges. When he finished his freshman year of high school, he had a cumulative average score of 65. Recognizing Jacob's need for extra help, his teachers enrolled him into Harlem RBI's tutoring program. Jacob's scores and confidence began to rise with the help of Harlem RBI volunteer tutors and staff members. After his sophomore year, Jacob brought his average up to 75, and, after his junior year, Jacob finished with an average of 88. When asked to explain this achievement, Jacob identified the influence of the academic tutors and staff at Harlem RBI in transforming him from an underachieving student to an honor roll student. Jacob graduated from high school this past year and is attending college.

## Harlem RBI:

- ✓ Provides inner-city youth with opportunities to Play, Learn, and Grow; the organization uses the power of teams to coach, teach, and inspire youth to recognize their potential and realize their dreams
- ✓ Offers age-appropriate, year-round programming for kids, primarily African American and Latino, aged 6 to 21 in East Harlem
- ✓ Operates programming for 1.5 hours per day that includes baseball/softball, academic mentoring, literacy, and service learning; participants spend 8-15 hours per week during the school year and 35 hours per week during the summer in Harlem RBI programming
- ✓ Provides older students with opportunities to gain work experience and receive college prep services



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<b>Key SBYD Indicators</b>	<p><b>Strong Administration:</b> Harlem RBI has a clear connection between mission statement and programming. Staff regularly conduct internal audits of programming to ensure that it is delivering against the Harlem RBI mission.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Harlem RBI is fully invested in their community and all partners are based in East Harlem. The program works with kids starting in kindergarten and provides afterschool and summer opportunities all the way through high school graduation. They have an active group of program alumni who often come back to work for the organization.</p>
<b>Rigorous Evaluation</b>	<p><b>Outside researcher:</b> Public/Private Ventures Youth Education for Tomorrow (YET)</p> <p><b>Tool:</b> YET Observation Tool to measure reading gains in afterschool settings; Pre- and post- satisfaction surveys for youth, staff, and parents; and focus groups.</p> <p><b>Outcomes Tracked:</b> School-based academic performance and literacy improvement.</p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> Literacy coaches conduct monthly classroom support visits using a standardized observation procedure and share best practices with directors.</p>
<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 97% of Harlem RBI participants received a high school diploma or GED.</li> <li>• 93% of Harlem RBI participants were accepted to college.</li> <li>• Youth showed an average reading level improvement of more than one full grade level.</li> <li>• Out of almost 200 teenagers served in each of the past years, less than 1% became a teen parent, which is one-fourth the national average .</li> </ul>

# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN EDUCATION: Tenacity

When Vladimir enrolled in Tenacity, he was far behind in school having just recently come to the United States as a native Spanish speaker. Despite being a smart student, Vladimir struggled to express his ideas and intelligence in English. He became frustrated and impatient with his slow progress and started to lose motivation. However, just a few months after joining Tenacity's Excellence Program, Vladimir's grades started to improve. His English writing and speaking became more confident and sophisticated and more representative of the high-level in his native language. As a result, his enthusiasm for school increased and his engagement on the tennis courts with other kids became more joyful. Vladimir recently reached his goal of completing both 7th and 8th grades in just one year and was accepted to the prestigious Boston Community Leadership Academy.

## Tenacity

- ✓ Improves the scholastic, character, and physical development of urban youth by combining tennis instruction and academic support with a focus on life skills
- ✓ Serves 5,500 youth annually at five Boston public middle schools
- ✓ Meets 4 times per week for 3 hours, 30 weeks per year
- ✓ Offers age-appropriate programs that participants move through as they get older
- ✓ Provides instruction in tennis and literacy using a curriculum based on the Department of Education's English/Language Arts guidelines



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<p><b>Key SBYD Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Intentional Programming:</b> Programming has a focused holistic approach to youth development by using successful tennis, literacy, and student resiliency methodology.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> Tenacity program staff and family engagement staff conduct bi-annual family visits to improve the relationship between participants, their families, and the organization.</p>
<p><b>Rigorous Evaluation</b></p>	<p><b>Outside Researchers:</b> Christina Ballweber, MA, External Program Evaluation Specialist, PhD Candidate in Social Psychology, Claremont College</p> <p><b>Tools:</b> US Tennis Association and Pre-Post National Junior Tennis Rating Program; fitness and wellness tests; resiliency pre- and post-survey; Group Reading and Diagnosis Evaluation (GRADE) to measure literacy; and parent and youth surveys.</p> <p><b>Outcomes Tracked:</b> Attendance, attitude, effort, student resiliency, and academic performance measurements (e.g., GPA, graduation rates, and college enrollment).</p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> Formal feedback system for program observations.</p>
<p><b>Impact</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants made an average English/Language Arts gain of 2.5 years in one year of 8th grade.</li> <li>• Youth who begin Tenacity in 6th grade are, on average, six months behind grade level in English/Language Arts. After two years of participating in Tenacity, these same youth finish 8th grade seven months ahead of grade level.</li> <li>• Youth showed statistically significant increases in a battery of fitness tests measuring speed, endurance and muscle strength, like timed trials in sit-ups, push-ups and the 20 yard dash.</li> </ul>

# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN EDUCATION: The Youth Foundation

Hugo became involved with The Youth Foundation when he was in fourth grade. As a young student, Hugo struggled academically and was challenged with learning disabilities. Through the support of The Youth Foundation's PwrHrs afterschool program and a Community Coach Mentor, Hugo met the challenges of learning disabilities and, when he was older, became a leader and mentor to many other students. Last year, Hugo was instructing a new group of Community Coach Mentors and was concerned about how to hold high standards without seeming too bossy. He pushed past this fear and showed excellent leadership skills. Hugo made his expectations clear, modeled what he expected of others, engaged his team with a sense of humor, and reminded them that as Community Coach Mentors they are role models to the kids they serve. Thanks to the Youth Foundation, Hugo learned not to be slowed down but rather to feel motivated by obstacles and he has been an inspiration to others at The Youth Foundation. Hugo graduated from high school with honors, received college scholarships, and was recognized by his school's faculty and administration with the Award for Best Service to the Community for the hundreds of hours he spent mentoring and coaching younger students.

## The Youth Foundation:

- ✓ Prepares children for success in life through education and recreational opportunities
- ✓ Serves 1,100 students between kindergarten and 8th grade in 9 Colorado elementary and middle schools
- ✓ Provides each participant with an average of 200 hours of programming per year
- ✓ Emphasizes closing the achievement gap through academic support and enrichment programs
- ✓ Trains Community Coach Mentors (CCMs) to provide mentorship, tutoring, and coaching to students



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<p><b>Key SBYD Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Trained Coaches:</b> The Youth Foundation dedicates significant human and financial resources to the training of coaches. For example, they pay for each soccer coach in their program to attend national coach certification programs.</p> <p><b>Context:</b> The Youth Foundation works with school partners to offer a fully integrated, holistic afterschool experience.</p>
<p><b>Rigorous Evaluation</b></p>	<p><b>Outside researcher:</b> Child Trends, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center that studies children at all stages of development</p> <p><b>Tool:</b> Flourishing Children's survey tools; Colorado English Language Acquisition Assessment (CELA); and surveys of participants, parents and staff.</p> <p><b>Outcomes Tracked:</b> GPA, school attendance, literacy gains, fitness, and nutrition knowledge improvement.</p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> Program staff and coordinators are asked to assess numerous components of PwrHrs programming such as: children's safety, appropriate program structure and content, supportive relationships, and integration of family and community.</p>
<p><b>Impact</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PwrHrs participants showed significant increases in CELA (English) scores.</li> <li>• The Youth Foundation students showed a 240% increase in physical activity.</li> <li>• PwrHrs participants showed average literacy growth of more than 16 months over a 12-month period of programming.</li> </ul>



---

**Up2Us Model Programs in  
Pro-social Behavior/Avoidance of Anti-social Behavior**

---

# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR: Doc Wayne

During the first few games of the basketball season, Victoria was unable to complete a game without getting into a confrontation with a player on the opposing team. However, with the Do the Good (DtG) skills that she learned and the support she received from her Doc Wayne coach, she began to pay attention to her feelings. In particular, her coach was relentless in asking her to “show up” during the game. Showing up is one of the key competencies of the DtG curriculum and means that players are ready to leave everything off the court and be fully focused on the game. When Victoria didn’t “show up,” her coach would substitute her out and talk with her about what happened. Her coach would explain how a small break from the game could make her a better player and give her more control. As the playoffs approached, Victoria’s self-control improved. During one game toward the end of the season, it was clear that she was becoming upset. She turned to her coach and asked to be subbed out. When she sat down, her coach asked if she was okay. She admitted that she wasn’t “showing up” and needed a quick break to get her head back in the game and maintain self-control. With the help of DtG, Victoria achieved true emotional self-awareness and control, even amidst the high-stress and high-stakes of a playoff game. Victoria learned for herself and modeled to others how much fun playing basketball could be while staying in control.

## The Doc Wayne Athletic League:

- ✔ Offers youth who are burdened with complex trauma, serious emotional disorders, and severely challenging behaviors an innovative and therapeutic experience through the medium of team sports, which is based on a specifically designed therapeutic curriculum and stresses positive youth development
- ✔ Serves between 50-75 youth per season
- ✔ Works with a population in which more than 80% of participants are victims of significant childhood physical and/or sexual abuse, one-third have been homeless, and almost all are living in residential treatment facilities
- ✔ Runs a sports league that combines sports participation with “Do the Good” curriculum to provide coping skills and assist in social development



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<p><b>Key SBYD Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Physical and Emotional Safety:</b> Doc Wayne employs trained mental health professionals to create physically and emotionally safe environments for kids who have very violent and traumatic backgrounds.</p> <p><b>Intentional Programming:</b> Doc Wayne intentionally adjusts game formats, rules, and competitiveness to decrease conflict (e.g., changing the consequences of an unintentional penalty in soccer).</p>
<p><b>Rigorous Evaluation</b></p>	<p><b>Outside researcher:</b> Wendy D’Andrea, Justice Resource Institute Trauma Center Fellow</p> <p><b>Tools:</b> Pre- and post-season mental health inventories and focus groups for coaches and students to provide feedback.</p> <p><b>Outcomes Measured:</b> Attendance and demographic data regularly collected.</p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> Observations of coaches and participants to monitor curriculum implementation and participant behavior.</p>
<p><b>Impact</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants showed significant decreases in behavioral incidents, especially more serious incidents requiring restraints and isolation.</li> <li>• Participants had fewer conflicts and fights per game.</li> <li>• Participants showed more helping behaviors and teammate encouragement during games.</li> <li>• Participants showed improved on-court communication.</li> </ul>

# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR: SOS Outreach

Ana first joined SOS Outreach when she was eight years old to learn how to snowboard. At first, Ana was scared of going up the mountain. However, she quickly gained confidence with each new skill she learned. The confidence she gained on the mountain helped Ana make the difficult adjustment from her former life in Bolivia to her new life in Colorado. She transformed from being a timid 8-year-old who dreaded taking risks and speaking English to being a courageous leader for her peers. As a senior in high school, Ana became a Junior Sherpa, or a junior mentor, to more than 50 other SOS Outreach students. Reflecting on her experience, Ana realized that SOS allowed her to give back to her community by helping other underprivileged youth participate in mountain sports and appreciate the fun and beauty of their natural environment. Ana remarked that the core values of SOS Outreach will stay with her as she journeys through life. Though sad to leave behind her role as Junior Sherpa as she heads off to college, Ana knows she'll draw upon and share her experiences from SOS Outreach wherever she goes.

## SOS Outreach

- ✓ Inspires youth to make positive decisions for successful lives
- ✓ Serves nearly 5,000 youth in 15 states and New Zealand
- ✓ Offers a value-based leadership curriculum that enhances the experiences for students by promoting self-respect, positive relationships, social skills, and positive values in the context of participating in an outdoor sport
- ✓ Provides a variety of programs aimed at inspiring outdoor activity skill-learning and applying SOS core values to daily life



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<b>Key SBYD Indicators</b>	<p><b>Intentional Programming:</b> SOS provides a transformative experience for youth by taking kids out of their comfort zone, many for the first time, and exposing them to a part of the world they typically only see in pictures or on TV.</p> <p><b>Trained Coaches:</b> Every adult in SOS receives extensive training in youth development that focuses primarily on building strong relationships with program participants.</p>
<b>Rigorous Evaluation</b>	<p><b>Outside Researchers:</b> RRC Associates, Boulder, CO</p> <p><b>Tool:</b> Post-participant phone survey administered to 400 participants in 2008 and 2011 and Individual Protective Factors Scale.</p> <p><b>Outcomes Tracked:</b> Pro-social behaviors, graduation rates, college attendance rates, resiliency, and long-term impact of program participation on behavioral change.</p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> Qualitative surveys for staff to improve experiences and program efficiency.</p>
<b>Impact</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participants showed significant increases in the following factors: positive attitude toward the future; identification of neighborhood resources; identification of interested and caring adults; sense of acceptance and belonging; value on achievement; liking/perceived competence in the activity; and ability to work out conflicts.</li> <li>• Participants were significantly more likely than their peers to graduate from high school and attend college.</li> <li>• Pre- and post-tests showed that participants scored higher on measures of self-esteem and engaged in more aerobic exercises and sports than they had previously.</li> <li>• More than 60% of SOS program alumni surveyed were enrolled in college compared to less than 30% of high school students from schools with similar high-poverty rates.</li> </ul>

# Up2Us MODEL PROGRAM IN PRO-SOCIAL BEHAVIOR: MetroLacrosse

When Patrick was in sixth grade, his dad dropped him and his twin brother off at a field in the city and said they were going to learn to play lacrosse. Until that day, Patrick had never seen a lacrosse stick and had never known anyone who played lacrosse. Despite his unfamiliarity, Patrick fell in love with lacrosse on day one—the other kids' enthusiasm for the sport was contagious. He was already an accomplished athlete, so he was comfortable with the physical determination and mental focus lacrosse required. He loved the high level of action, but he also appreciated the discipline that lacrosse demanded in order to excel. Patrick recalls coaches coming up to him after games to tell him how he was improving and even parents approaching his dad to say how fun it was to watch the brothers play. When Patrick was asked what he liked about MetroLacrosse he said, "It made me feel like I was really doing something right and made me want to work harder and get better." When Patrick had to move to a new community, he adjusted to his new team and school without any problems thanks to the peer socialization skills he developed through lacrosse. Lacrosse has continued to propel Patrick: He now plays in college and coaches a MetroLacrosse summer team.

## MetroLacrosse:

- ✓ Addresses the social and economic disparities that exist in urban settings by inspiring personal, educational, and athletic success among urban youth and teens
- ✓ Serves 700 youth per year from urban communities in Boston and Chelsea
- ✓ Provides lacrosse programming during the fall and spring seasons and conducts weeklong overnight summer camps
- ✓ Offers programming that includes year-round academic support, SAT prep, and secondary education placement and advising



## Up2Us Model Program Report Card

<p><b>Key SBYD Indicators</b></p>	<p><b>Intentional Programming:</b> In addition to the game referee, MetroLacrosse uses a Respect Referee to place an equal focus on core values so that winning doesn't dominate the game environment.</p> <p><b>Strong Administration:</b> Uses a comprehensive system for recruiting, hiring, and supporting the volunteer cohort of coaches. Provides all coaches with tools and training to equip them to deliver core values and serve as role models for kids on their teams.</p>
<p><b>Rigorous Evaluation</b></p>	<p><b>Outside Researcher:</b> Center for the 4th and 5th R's (Respect and Responsibility) at SUNY Cortland</p> <p><b>Tools:</b> The Individual and Team Character in Sport Questionnaire (ITCSQ) to measure pro-social behavior; RESPECT Reports to measure player participation based on RESPECT character development curriculum; and parent, coach, and participant surveys.</p> <p><b>Outcomes Tracked:</b> Responsibility, effort, sportsmanship, participation, enthusiasm, communication, teamwork, attendance, and academic outcomes.</p> <p><b>Internal Monitoring:</b> Bi-annual one-on-one performance reviews for staff with performance goals set by leadership team.</p>
<p><b>Impact</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 78% of participants show respect to their teammates even if they do not agree with them.</li> <li>• 82% of participants work hard in practice, even if something does not come naturally.</li> <li>• 75% of participants state that coaches held them accountable for their actions.</li> <li>• 79% of participants admit when they make a mistake.</li> <li>• 83% of participants state that they discuss as a team how well they met both personal and team goals.</li> </ul>



---

## Up2Us Programs to Watch

---

## Playing in the Right Direction

The programs below have shown a significant commitment to improving the lives of their participants through sports-based youth development (SBYD). Additionally, they have begun the process of obtaining outside evaluators and implementing high-quality evaluation systems as part of their program. Keep an eye on them for the future—they are well on their way to becoming model SBYD programs.

### After-School All-Stars

Atlanta, Chicago, Columbus, Hawaii, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, New York, Orlando, San Antonio, San Diego, San Francisco Bay Area, South Florida: Leverages the popularity and power of sports to provide opportunities for students to learn leadership and life skills, to serve their communities, to understand the importance of nutrition and healthy living, to empower girls to be active, to explore nature, and to connect with their parents.

### Boston Scholar Athlete Program

Boston, MA: Enhances opportunities for Boston Public School students by combining the power of sports with academic support.

### Chicago Run

Chicago, IL: Promotes the health and wellness of Chicago children through innovative, engaging, and sustainable youth running programs.

### G-Row

Boston, MA: Runs a girls' rowing program focused on relationship building and increasing physical activity.

### Play Rugby USA

Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Los Angeles: Focuses on youth development through rugby. Programming cleverly combines afterschool coaching and instruction with community-wide competitions to develop and reinforce youth character, conditioning, community, and academic commitment.

### Row NY

New York, NY: Empowers young people through competitive rowing and personalized academic support.

### Squashbusters

Boston, MA: Combines squash, academics, and community service to challenge and nurture urban youth so that they recognize and fulfill their potential.

### Urban Initiatives

Chicago, IL: Collaborates with schools, teachers, and parents to boost the physical fitness, health education, academic performance, and character development of children from Chicago's underserved communities through soccer programs, field trips, and cultural outings.



## Conclusion:

This report showcases samples of Up2Us programs that have undergone intensive outside evaluation. The Up2Us network includes a wide range of programs that are having impact on their communities using every type of sport to attract and inspire life-skills development among youth. The results of the evaluations of the programs highlighted in this report prove the impact of their programs, making them models for future organizations. The implications of this report are twofold: first, the field of sports-based youth development (SBYD) deserves greater attention and investment as an approach to addressing the physical, academic, and mental wellbeing of underprivileged youth; and second, further funding should be allocated for the study of the SBYD model and for technical assistance to SBYD programs seeking to develop their own evaluation systems and replicate the best practices of these stand-out programs.

In the decades ahead, SBYD promises impressive, measurable results in addressing the health, academic, and social challenges affecting youth today. As the personal stories and the hard statistics show, young people across the country are saying no to violence, making the grade, and preparing for long, healthy lives thanks to the coaches, mentors, and tutors they've gained through these programs. Although still an emerging field, widespread attention must be paid to the early evidence suggesting that SBYD programs are problem solvers, especially in low-income communities where youth otherwise lack recreational outlets.

It's Up2Us to support SBYD programs now.

## Suggested Further Reading...Playing

If reading about excellence in sports-based youth development is still not enough to show you why these programs matter, try one of these assignments:

Play catch with a young girl at Harlem RBI and ask her how it's possible that almost every single one of her teammates will graduate from high school when almost two-thirds of the youth in her community will not.

Go for a jog with some girls at Girls in the Game and meet middle school students who are not only learning to eat better but are also helping their parents and families form healthier habits and practice better nutrition.

Take a snowboard ride down a Colorado mountain with a young man in SOS Outreach and ask him how he has finally begun to believe that the violence and poverty that claimed the life of his father and landed his brother in jail doesn't have to control his future, too.





## About Up2Us

Up2Us is leading a national movement to advance sports as a tool for addressing the critical issues facing youth in this nation, including childhood obesity, academic failure, and anti-social behavior. Up2Us accomplishes this by supporting a national network of more than 500 member organizations operating in all 50 states. Together, they serve 20 million youth through both traditional and non-traditional sports. In joining Up2Us, these members pledge to share best practices; advance initiatives that extend opportunities to new youth; and deliver quality programs in underserved communities where there is a tremendous need for constructive outlets for kids.

## About the Center for Sports-Based Youth Development

The Up2Us Center for Sports-Based Youth Development is the premier research, assessment, and training center for sports-based youth development in the nation. The Center conducts training for coaches on how to use sports to deliver quality youth development outcomes in areas such as health and nutrition, conflict resolution, academic success, and community leadership. The Center also studies the impact of sports on the overall wellness of youth and provides Up2Us members with assessment tools and frameworks they need to measure the effectiveness of their programs.

## Acknowledgements

Up2Us would like to thank members of the staff for their important contributions: Paul Caccamo, Megan Bartlett, Susan Golbe, and Kelsey Pullar. A special thanks to the staff of each of our model programs and programs to watch for their patience with the process and willingness to share their best practices with us. We are also grateful to the members of the Up2Us Advisory Board who consistently provide us with thought leadership and inspire us through their example:

Nicholas Cutforth, Ph.D.  
University of Denver

Ellen Markowitz, Ph.D.  
SuperStarters Consulting

Lisa Delpy Neirotti, Ph.D.  
George Washington University

John McCarthy, Ph.D.  
Boston University

Don Hellison, Ed.D.,  
University of Illinois, Chicago

Gil Noam, Ed.D., Ph.D.  
Harvard University

Jackie Jenkins-Scott, MSW  
Wheelock College

Maureen Weiss, Ph.D.  
University of Minnesota



\*Center for Disease Control. *Teen Birth Rates Declined Again In 2009* (Web site retrieved October 12, 2011)  
<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/dsTeenPregnancy/>

\*\*The Pell Institute. (May 2011). *Developing 20/20 Vision on the 2020 Degree Attainment Goal: The Threat of Income-Based Inequality in Education*. The Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education.





**CENTER**  
**FOR SPORTS-BASED**  
Youth Development



**520 8th Ave, 2nd Floor,**  
**New York, NY 10018**  
**212-563-3031**

**[www.up2us.org](http://www.up2us.org)**