

YELLS

Youth Empowerment through Learning, Leading, and Serving

IMPACT REPORT



2019-20

YELLSINC.ORG



YELLS empowers youth to rise as active, healthy, and productive servant-leaders within their communities.

Our innovative, place-based programs work across generations to garner results for the whole child, whole family, and whole community.

We serve as an incubator for youth leaders, a community hub, and a forum for individual and collective voice and action.

COVID RESPONSE

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, YELLS has re-oriented our work to respond strategically to the immediate needs of families and re-vision our services to support youth and families virtually.

We've raised funds to provide rent assistance for families and are offering support and referrals to meet other immediate needs (technology, groceries, utilities, mental health, etc.).

We've also launched all of our programmatic activities virtually, including both school year support with distance learning and an intensive summer camp. Our team is expertly navigating virtual programming, providing engaging workshops, emotional support and wellness, and individualized tutoring daily. They are ensuring our students are successful in digital learning and pouring in love, coupled with tools to help youth and their parents through this challenging time.

YELLS staff has organized activity supply drop-offs, delivery of donated books, and parent support and family success check-in calls to provide parents with tools and coping strategies throughout the pandemic. YELLS also forged a new partnership with **Food Security for America** and our **Franklin Road Community Association** to provide two weeks' worth of groceries to families every other week. The mission of Food Security for America aligns with ours, and is rooted in community ownership – local residents power the program by volunteering to unload, sort, and distribute the food safely at each biweekly drive thru event. Families have already received more than 12,168 pounds of overflowing baskets of groceries, hygiene products, and so much more!

“Participating in YELLS has changed my life because before YELLS I didn't feel like I mattered to anyone. ... I didn't have a place until I joined YELLS. [Then] it became the total opposite.”

MENTORING PROGRAM “BIG”

YELLS ensures **positive outcomes** for youth and families:

Academic Success

- 95% of youth were promoted on grade level and 86% improved by *at least one letter grade* in a core subject.
- 100% of YELLS seniors graduated from high school.

Character Development

Through servant-leadership and character development, youth developed the social emotional skills and self-efficacy to thrive in school and career:

- 88% of YELLS youth reported high levels of self-esteem.
- 89% reported they have made better choices because of the YELLS program.

Increased Stability

Youth and families became more stable:

- 81% of parents reported YELLS is helping their child's behavior improve.
- 80% reported that YELLS has increased their success as a parent.

Community Connections

Families built a network of support in their community:

- 96% of YELLS parents indicated that the YELLS program helps them feel more connected to their community.



"YELLS helped me to grow in my communication skills, keeping eye contact, networking skills, and becoming more of a leader. It helped me to see that there is always a way around things. If there is a bad situation, there's always a way to make it better."

ANYLA EDWARDS - 2019-2020 GRADUATE

112

Youth Served

59.42%

reduction in crime on Franklin Gateway since the launch of YELLS daily programming in 2011



4,298

Volunteer Hours

32

Community Partnerships

\$343,275

in in-kind contributions

121

Volunteers

THANK YOU FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In this challenging year, we have all faced struggles and our fortitude has been stretched. Our YELLS Family, though, ensured we could draw on a network of support and rise to meet the needs of our youth and families. We stand in awe of our team who continue to innovate and navigate virtual programming with grace and creativity, and of our families and Franklin Gateway neighbors who are ready to volunteer and support one another. Our youth also continue to amaze us and achieved incredible outcomes this year, while finding hope, reimagining new ways to build community, and finding their voice in the ongoing movement for racial justice and equity.

Thank you for your investment and faith in YELLS that makes all of this possible. Our work is collaborative and our results draw on the youth, parents, neighbors, staff, partners, advocates, and donors who believe in what we do and continuously pour into our Franklin Gateway community. We appreciate you helping us wrap our arms around our neighborhood to activate the leadership within our youth and families. Please know that your support makes a difference and we are forever grateful. Thank you for being a part of our YELLS Family and helping us equip youth with the skills, character, and confidence to build a thriving community.

Yours in service,

Laura Keefe

Laura Keefe
Executive Director
laura@YELLSinc.org
678-895-2854

“Before my children attended YELLS I was never involved in my community. Now thanks to YELLS, my family is building a strong positive relationship with the community. It is a pleasure to feel helpful.”