RISE PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION
CODED BY KIDS

OVERVIEW

A core belief of Philadelphia-based nonprofit Coded by Kids is that "equality aims to promote fairness but can only work if everyone starts from the same place and needs the same help," says Program Manager Jesse McKevitt. Coded by Kids provides young people from underrepresented groups with education programs in software development, digital design, computer science, and tech startup-focused entrepreneurship.

"There is no equality without equity," adds McKevitt. "There is significant social and economic inequity created when people from underrepresented groups aren't able to participate in the tech and innovation economies. We are leveling the playing field and creating opportunities for these young people to excel and become leaders in

technology through project-based learning and mentorship."

Coded by Kids is further enhancing its impact as one of 15 organizations selected to participate in the RISE Partnership's "Implementation" phase.

"The RISE Partnership has helped underscore the centrality of data in our work and helped us to create a clear vision of how we can use our data to continuously improve our students' experience," says Melanie Hidalgo-Britt, Coded by Kids' Chief Revenue Officer.

Coded by Kids' involvement with the RISE Partnership could not have come at a better time for the organization. After the COVID-19 pandemic hit, Coded by Kids needed to adjust how they delivered their programs. They applied their learning from the RISE Partnership to use data to implement cost-cutting measures to be more resilient, such as implementing a hiring freeze. They also launched a free, fully virtual tech education program for children, CbK Academy. The Academy is the online version of the Coded by Kids in-class tech and innovation education programs.

"Taking our programming online allows us to continue to provide high-quality coding education to our current students while also giving access to every internet-connected child with a computer in the City of Philadelphia," says Sylvester Mobley,

Coded by Kids founder and CEO. "The antiracism movement has highlighted the importance of our work to help youth overcome systemic racism and create generational wealth."

The Academy is already in its second iteration.

"After the very early days of the pandemic, we learned what works in an online setting and what doesn't for the students we are trying to reach," says McKevitt. "As we navigated this new normal, and worked to develop and then enhance CbK Academy, we were able to apply what we learned from the RISE Partnership to approach this new challenge in a structured way. We are now using a hybrid approach with more virtual hands-on interaction to a smaller group of students."

The collaboration with the RISE Partnership has also enabled the organization to create a shared understanding with staff of all levels about the importance of program evaluation and data collection.

"

Taking our programming online allows us to continue to provide high-quality coding education to our current students while also giving access to every internet-connected child with a computer in the City of Philadelphia."

Sylvester Mobley, Founder and CEO
Coded by Kids

Before RISE, Coded by Kids staff were already thinking intentionally and strategically about long-term outcomes for kids and they knew what those desired outcomes were, such as preparedness to pursue a degree in technology. After joining the RISE Partnership, the team applied their logic model to take their strategic thinking a step further. This model is a detailed, step-by-step description of how a program is expected to work by indicating the activities to be carried out and the outcomes to be achieved. This model helped CbK clarify and chart a tangible path from their inputs, or activities, to the outcomes that they want for students, and ultimately the vision of their organization.

As part of the RISE Partnership, McKevitt works with Amy Griffin from The Consultation Center at Yale University every two to three weeks. Together, they created a matrix outlining these inputs to determine what data they have, how they are gathering it, and what is missing.

"The team learned that they collected a lot of useful data during registration, as well as some inputs in the classroom and at the end of class," says Griffin. "Using the logic model, they can now streamline, extract, and filter the information so they can slice and dice the data to make a bigger impact."

According to the Coded by Kids team, Griffin has been an invaluable resource and thought partner. The team feels she helps them see the data in terms of the big picture, so they can advance the work of the organization and be more effective.

"The RISE Partnership has helped us lay out our vision in a structured, coherent, and transparent way that will serve us for years to come," says McKevitt.

"

The RISE Partnership has helped us lay out our vision in a structured, coherent, and transparent way that will serve us for years to come."

Jesse McKevitt, Program Manager
Coded by Kids