

# RISE PARTNERSHIP IN ACTION

Cradle of Liberty Council, Boy Scouts of America



## Overview

Cradle of Liberty Council, Boy Scouts of America (COLBSA) is headquartered in Wayne, Pennsylvania and serves thousands of youth and their families across Philadelphia, Delaware, and Montgomery Counties. Led by thousands of volunteers, COLBSA aims to teach young people leadership skills, team building, practical knowledge, active citizenship, resilience, and personal responsibility through an array of activities and programs.

In 2018, the Council developed the Afterschool Scouting Program in partnership with Philadelphia Public Schools to bring Boy Scouts to students during afterschool hours at no cost to families. The program was created with funder support to address disparities that have existed for decades between “traditional programs” operating in suburban, more affluent communities and the lack of programs in urban, less-resourced communities. The goal was to provide youth the benefits of Boy Scouts of America’s programs regardless of zip code or means.



We realized that we actually had the software and the ability to do a lot of the things that we wanted to do. RISE helped our team build a data collection system and train our part-time staff to use it properly.

**Lonce Scott**, field director at COLBSA

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

At the beginning of COLBSA's journey with RISE, the afterschool program included more than 50 programs housed within local schools and supported by school administrators, staff, and a paid part-time program specialist at each site. The Council wanted to know if the program was having an impact, but there was no centralized, easily accessible way to collect even the most basic information like attendance.

"Is this something that is actually making a difference in the lives of these young people? Is this something that is a good financial investment from a funder standpoint? These were the big questions we needed answered and we couldn't even get reliable attendance data," said Lonce Scott, field director at COLBSA.

The afterschool program specialists needed a system for collecting information like student enrollment and attendance, the number of activities and events planned, and the number of

parents involved – and reporting that information in a timely manner back to COLBSA. Collecting and reporting this data was the first step and served as the foundation for eventually capturing how students are advancing through the program and assessing impact.

"Our hope was that the afterschool programs would eventually integrate into the network of traditional programs that exist across the state within the purview of Cradle of Liberty and then become a model for how to do this effectively in an urban setting," said Stacy Graham, former coordinator of afterschool scouting programs at COLBSA.

RISE helped the afterschool programs implement Scoutbook, a tool used by the traditional programs to track scouts' information, achievements, and advancements. At first, some afterschool program specialists had trouble using or accessing the platform, due to less technological proficiency or to a lack of access to a smartphone, computer, or internet connection.

"We realized that we actually had the software and the ability to do a lot of the things that we wanted to do," said Scott.

“

RISE brought to the forefront why it was so important for us to have this data for purposes of promoting equity, for purposes of ensuring that these youth are given a chance to participate in a program that can provide life-changing opportunities and benefits to them.

**Stacy Graham**, former coordinator of  
afterschool scouting programs at COLBSA

“RISE helped our team build a data collection system and train our part-time staff to use it properly.”

RISE helped COLBSA work through these challenges by hosting training sessions, communicating the value of data collection and use, and building buy-in among the afterschool program specialists by helping them understand the power of data.

“RISE brought to the forefront why it was so important for us to have this data for purposes of promoting equity,

for purposes of ensuring that these youth are given a chance to participate in a program that can provide life-changing opportunities and benefits to them,” said Graham.

The afterschool program specialists eventually learned the platform and began collecting and reporting data and, importantly, that data was used to inform programming decisions. COLBSA determined which programs would continue as is, which would merge, and which would be discontinued. These were difficult decisions for the Council,





but ultimately resulted in approximately 20 well-functioning afterschool programs, which was a much more reasonable number for staff to oversee with limited time and resources.

“For the first time, I feel like I have a team versus a group of people just doing a job or looking at me as their

scoutmaster,” said Graham. “We are all working together for this main cause.”

“I want RISE to be beside us every step of the way as we rebuild, sharing their expertise and resources for how we can use this clean slate to come back stronger than before,” Scott added.



Established in 2018, The RISE (Readiness, Implementation, Sustainability for Effectiveness) Partnership supports promising Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey nonprofit organizations. The RISE Partnership Evaluation Funders Learning Community is the first convening supported by a network of funders in the region. The Learning Community is a collaborative effort with the Barra Foundation, Campbell Soup Company, Horner Foundation, Nelson Foundation, Philadelphia Foundation, PropelNext/Edna McConnell Clark Foundation, Scattergood Foundation, and United Way of Greater Philadelphia and Southern New Jersey, and a partnership with YaleEVAL of The Consultation Center at Yale. The Partnership provides nonprofits with resources and training to strengthen organizational effectiveness and ensure a greater impact on social, economic, health, and educational conditions in communities, including the effects of racism, intergenerational poverty and trauma.

For more information visit [therisepartnership.org](https://therisepartnership.org)

