Black Girls RUN! (BGR!) has been fostering fitness among African-American women since 2009. The organization—which has 60 running groups nationwide, including one in Philadelphia—aims to fight obesity by promoting healthful lifestyles and running events.

**IMPACT ON PARTICIPANTS**

- 47% often use their own behaviors to encourage their children to be active.
- 68% think BGR! has positively affected their children’s physical activity.
- 49% use physical activity as a form of family recreation.
- 47% have confronted health issues because of the support they receive from BGR!

**REASONS FOR JOINING**

- 64% for motivation
- 65% to run with others
- 67% to connect with other women runners
- 74% to help with weight loss
- 84% for fitness advice and support

The Sport Industry Research Center (SIRC) in the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management measures and enhances the economic, social and environmental viability of sporting events such as the Philadelphia Marathon, the Broad Street Run and the PGA Tour.

But SIRC also focuses on the underdogs. It helps nonprofit organizations harness the power of sports for communities, enabling groups such as Students Run Philly Style and Black Girls RUN! to measure their impact. Providing these data can lead to greater access to financial resources for the group and, in turn, better outcomes for their participants.

Numerous recent, national studies positively correlate levels of physical activity with academic performance, mood and cognition. Those findings are particularly significant in Philadelphia, where childhood obesity is high and graduation rates are low. Organizations such as Students Run Philly Style and Black Girls RUN! aim to bolster the city’s overall health by offering participants more exercise, stronger communities and better attitudes. Are they having an effect? The data say yes.