



Sole Train Boston Runs Together

2022-2023 Social Emotional Learning Report

“Sole Train gives the youth in our community a voice. It gives them focus and guidance, and specifically shows them how great they can be.”

-Site Coordinator, Rafael Hernandez K-8 School

TRINITY
BOSTON
connects



youth community equity



ANALYSIS &
REPORT BY
SEED IMPACT

Sole Train is a community-building and mentoring program that uses running to set and achieve seemingly impossible goals.

Sole Train connects students (Young Soles, grades 4-8) with adult volunteers (**Old Soles, approximately 70 percent of whom are school staff**) in schools across Boston. In addition, this year included our second cohort of Mid Soles: four Young Sole alumni who have moved on to high school and returned as youth leaders to support sites and develop themselves.

Typically, Sole Train school teams practice weekly during the school year and come together for **community-building events and races**. The culminating goal is Boston's Run to Remember, a five-mile race or half marathon.

2022-2023 Highlights

Sole Train engaged **300 students** across **16 sites** this year. Given the post pandemic challenges for schools, we were incredibly proud of the number of participants and levels of ongoing engagement.

Staff reported that both young people and adults craved the Sole Train space, enjoying opportunities to:

- be outside,
- exercise,
- reduce stress,
- experience joy and
- connect and talk about their week with those they came to trust.

An Amazing Run to Remember:

On Sunday, May 28, over 200 Sole Trainers and their families representing teams from 15 sites turned out for Boston's Run to Remember. Everyone crossed the finish line with a deep sense of pride in their accomplishments.

The Difference We Make

Working with [SEED Impact](#), Sole Train staff customized three [SEED Competency Ladders](#) to measure, credibly report and accelerate whole-person development.

We support youth development in three domains:

- 1. Being:** comfort with self,
- 2. Doing:** aptitude with new skills and
- 3. Relating:** interpersonal relationships.



“Sole Train gives young people a sense of purpose and determination to try new things and to work towards their goals. It also motivates them to be their best version and boost their self-esteem.”

-Parent of 5th Grader, UP Acadmy Holland



FINDINGS | Young Sole Achievements:

WHO: A sample of 160 youth from 11 sites, grades 5-9

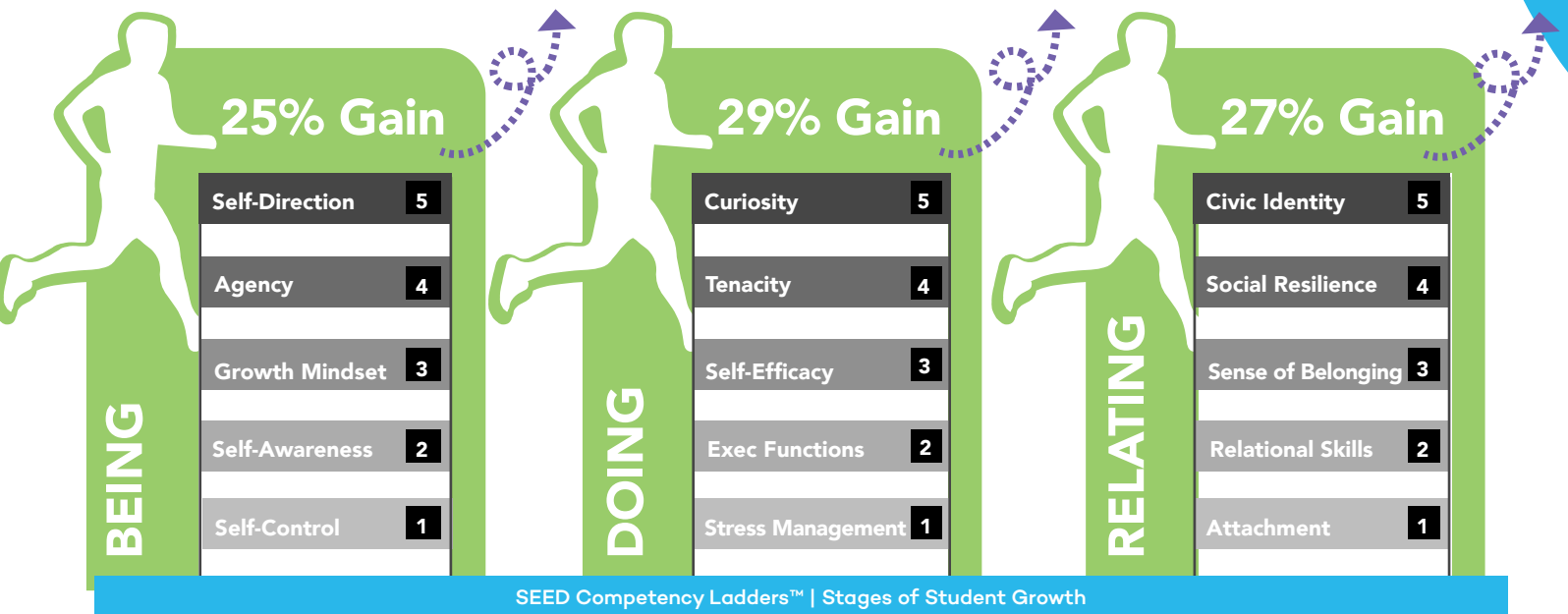
SEL GAINS: 27%

(Average of Being: 25%; Doing: 29%; Relating: 27%, as shown below),

WHY THIS MATTERS: SEL equips youth and adults to “develop healthy personal relationships, treat others with respect and dignity, solve problems, think creatively, advance in education, and the labor market and contribute to a healthy democracy.”¹

Gains in SEL Competencies

Sole Train Average SEL Gain: 27+



Two Young Sole Success Stories*

“**Matthew**, a 5th grader at UP Academy Holland, grew significantly in his confidence. Although the physical aspects of the program posed a challenge for him, he persevered and remained motivated to work hard despite any setbacks. Matthew consistently showed up, encouraged others, and displayed grace in all situations. His transformation from a carefree student to a respected leader cherished by all was remarkable.”

SEL Gains: 40%

“**Micah**, an 8th grader at BCLA-McCormack and second-year Sole Train participant, showed much growth in maturity and leadership. He became more vocal with his ideas and found many ways to keep things positive. He forged strong relationships with his peers. Sole Train provided opportunities for him to emerge as a natural leader.”

SEL Gains: 62%



MID SOLES: 20% Average SEL Gain

Having previously participated in Sole Train as Young Soles, four Mid Soles, now in high school, were hired to assist Young Soles while deepening their leadership and communication skills. The Site Coordinators assessed the Mid Soles progress using the student SEL ladder framework as a guide, and the Mid Soles self-reflected on their experience.



IN THEIR WORDS: MID SOLES

“It felt amazing connecting with the kids. I was proud to see the kids finish the race and receive their medals and sweaters. Something that pushed me to a new level was the kids who were strong runners. They made me try to catch them. In the end, it was the most rewarding feeling when they all clapped for me. I think they were happy for me to be there with them.”

SEL Gains: 15%

“I decided to become a Mid Sole because I am passionate about supporting the youth in their school and communities. I am also motivated to develop my job skills in relation to communication and cooperation. My proudest experiences were motivating the youth.”

SEL Gains: 18%

“I love running and attending races. I wanted to be able to work with kids and continue to work on my running goals. I made lots of great relationships with Old Soles and Site Coordinators. I also got to know and build relationships with many Young Soles. It's useful because I'm bad at interacting with people I'm not used to. I used my teamwork skills outside of Sole Train.”

SEL Gains: 18%



OLD SOLES

Reflecting on the program year, 11 Old Soles completed a survey, and **91 percent** exclaimed that **Sole Train met, exceeded and greatly exceeded their expectations!**

The Old Soles experienced five types of personal gains:

- Greater appreciation for students: **100%**
- Physical Wellness: **82%**
- Joy for life: **82%**
- Appreciation for other Old Soles: **73%**
- Deeper Understanding of Racial Healing: **64%**



IN THEIR WORDS: OLD SOLES

“Participating in Sole Train community events helps lift my soul. Seeing my students in this different setting, watching them deepen friendships, PERSEVERING, and just having fun allows me to see them in a different light.”

“Sole Train allows students of color to build their sense of self, achieve great things and deepen their relationships through running! They gain a sense of community beyond their school campus and experience mentorship that supports their confidence and self-directed, goal-orientated behavior. It adds value to every school community and the lives of every Young and Old Sole!”

Our Thanks

Trinity Boston Connects is grateful for the sustaining **multi-year financial investment** provided for all our Youth Development and Leadership programs, including Sole Train, from:

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• Lingzi Foundation

• Boston Police Athletics League

• Dick's Sporting Goods

• Saucony Run for Good

• Dave McGillivray Finish Strong Foundation

• Global Partners LP

We celebrate our **new institutional funders:**

- The Jinny Chalmers Fund for Education Justice
- The Hamilton Company Charitable Foundation
- DashRunning

Together with our **generous individual donors** and many **other Sole Train 5K sponsors** this funding community makes possible Sole Train's impact on thousands of young people.