

January 22, 2021
Arizona Women's Partnership
13058 N Surrey Circle
Phoenix, AZ 85029

Attn: Paul Cullison

Subject: End of Year Report Will2Walk Foundation / AZ Women's Partnership
Grant - \$2,000 (April 2020)

Program / Wheels Up Youth w/SCI Stay on Track Program

Project Activities

Funding continues to be used to improve the quality of life and life outcomes for youth with Spinal Cord Injuries. Returning to work and school are often seen as markers of "success" in our society today and the Wheels Up Youth w/SCI Stay on Track Program has funded program support to 70 youth between the ages of 13 – 17 with 35% being female and 65% being male.

Program Participant Ethnicity / Race Characteristics

60% Hispanic
10% Black
3% Asian
2% Pacific Islander
5% Two or more races
20% White

The Will2Walk Foundation is again proud to announce that we collaborated with community partners to deliver this program for vulnerable youth with Spinal Cord Injuries and can without hesitation say that the funding provided by the Arizona Women's Partnership allowed us to both gain and maintain access to this community partner and has set the foundation for a lasting relationship that will benefit our constituents in years to come. This partnership allowed us to continue programming during the pandemic of 2020/21 (COVID 19) a time when youth with physical disabilities again was disproportionately excluded from opportunities because of their disability. We know that youth with physical disabilities remain disproportionately impacted by interrupted home, community and social services and supports, including personal assistance and that is more evident during COVID 19.

Results & Impact

The Pre and Post informal survey results tell us that program recipients, caregivers, and parents reported positive program engagement and improved socialization among youth who participated in the program. We continue to see inquiries from kids, parents, and caregivers about future offerings especially as we since COVID 19 we have offered our program via zoom.

Lessons Learned

In the future we must plan for the unexpected and be prepared to quickly pivot so that we can deliver programming no matter what circumstances arise. Virtual programming has become a new norm however will not replace the must needed personal contact that youth with physical disabilities need to thrive and grow so that they will be prepared to face the challenges that they will face in adulthood.

We continue to underestimate the need and desire for such programing among youth in the Valley and this need has been compounded by COVID 19.

Future Plans and Sustainability

Work diligently to obtain increased funding for this group of kids whose needs continue to be unmet and underfunded. Find creative ways to encourage funding from organizations who themselves have been hit financially due to COVID 19.

In conclusion, everyday lives for individuals across the globe have been severely affected due to COVID-19. Amidst this, it becomes important to keep children with physical disabilities not only physically safe, but also look after their psychological, social, and emotional wellbeing. In particular, social distancing and its effects are extremely novel and difficult to understand for children, especially those who are living with physical limitations and disabilities. This affects their wellbeing and places them at a higher risk for clinically significant social and potentially mental health issues down the road. COVID-19 has disrupted lives across the globe and is more likely to disproportionately affect those children with pre-existing vulnerabilities. We know that effective measures must be taken to seek immediate as well as long-term solutions to battle this socialization and education issues for youth with physical disabilities. As an organization we will dedicate ourselves to working to identify issues and support youth where and when they need it.