**Community Based Fitness Innovations: Designed by Girls, for Girls**

***Motivating and Empowering 191,000 Ga Middle School Girls to Get Moving***

The Atlanta Falcons Youth Foundation (AFYF) is looking for innovative ideas to increase the time middle school girls spend in moderate and vigorous physical activity– and what better way than uncovering ideas designed by middle school girls for middle school girls.

Every year, more than 1 million Georgia students in physical education are evaluated on their fitness levels using the FITNESSGRAM® assessment. At all grades, girls consistently perform lower on one measure called “aerobic capacity.” Aerobic capacity is defined by FITNESSGRAM® as the “maximum rate that the respiratory, cardiovascular, and muscular systems can take in, transport, and use oxygen during exercise.” In other words, the test reveals how much physical activity a student can do before he or she tires.

In the long term, healthy aerobic capacity lowers the risk of developing high blood pressure, coronary heart disease, obesity, diabetes and some forms of cancer. In the short term, students with better aerobic capacity tend to perform better in school. In the short term, research shows that students who maintain a healthy fitness zone for aerobic capacity have higher scores on academic achievement tests

AFYF knows that despite efforts in current programs – during school and out of school – middle school girls are not moving enough. The numbers prove it. So AFYF is ready to flip the script. Instead of adults developing programs for middle school girls, this grant program seeks to understand what motivates middle school girls and invites them to tell us what they want to do to improve their fitness.

**Listening to and Responding to Middle School Girls**

As a first step, organizations interested in applying for funding should review the executive summary, “Georgia Middle School Girls Empowerment Project.” Conducted in partnership with Georgia Shape and Spitfire Strategies, the report describes the realities girls confront every day, the barriers that prevent physical activity, motivations that can inspire girls to get moving, and attributes of innovative programs AFYF seeks to fund. The report also offers a window into the middle school girl population, offering four categories of girls confronting different challenges across the state.

**Funding Priorities**

AFYF will consider requests for several areas of new and innovative work with middle school girls. The process will begin with organizations completing a questionnaire that serves as a draft proposal. Organizations are encouraged to submit ideas in which girls are making their own decisions about and organizing their physical activity experiences, also called “self-directed activities.” From this submission, AFYF will determine which proposals to consider for funding. Across all areas of work, AFYF will seek evidence that organizations are putting girls front and center in the program design role. Nonprofit organizations with a 501c3 designation are eligible to apply, as are public school districts (for out of school time) and county parks & recreation departments.

1. **Out-of-School Time – Rural, Suburban, Urban**

Across Georgia, middle school girls face different challenges based on the region and type of community in which they live. AFYF expects to fund experiments and innovative approaches in a

representative number of communities across the state. AFYF seeks proposals from organizations that bring innovative programming approaches to after-school and summer periods. Organizations may propose to increase participation in self-directed activities or youth sports. Applicants may focus on middle school girls in a single rural county or multiple county. Applicants must demonstrate that the ideas proposed are designed by girls, for girls. AFYF will consider grant awards for up to three-years and will require grant partners to have strong baseline data on participation and the capacity to track physical activity levels over time. For this funding priority, applicants may seek funding for work in any Georgia community.

1. **Middle School Change Agents: Girls as Peer Influencers**

In the same way food and entertainment companies are using peer-influence strategies to market music, movies and fast food items, AFYF wants to support peer-influence strategies designed to move more middle school girls to healthy lifestyles. AFYF seeks requests from local or statewide organizations that will identify, train and support up to 1,000 middle school peer influencers working through SnapChat, Instagram, Facebook, blogs or other social media channels. For this funding priority, applicants may seek funding for work in any Georgia community.

1. **Middle School Girls Leadership**

In partnership with Georgia Shape, AFYF seeks proposals from a statewide partner with the commitment and capacity to organize regional leadership councils of middle school girls, along with a statewide council that would meet annually. The regional councils would organize and lift the voices of middle school girls on policy issues critical to fitness and healthy lifestyles. The statewide council would focus on peer learning and exchange across Georgia regions and on a statewide policy agenda advanced by middle school girls.

AFYF is looking to fund big ideas with new and innovative approaches with up to three years of support. To be considered for funding, please complete the questionnaire below and return to AFYF by **noon on Friday, March 1, 2019.** Email the forms (saved as *YourOrganization\_RFP-AFYF Middle School Girls 2019*)to Abby.Lutzenkirchen@ambfo.com. Based on its review of the submissions, AFYF will invite a select number of organizations to move forward with final grant applications.

**Name of Organization** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Description of Organization** Click or tap here to enter text.

**501c3 Status** Click or tap here to enter text.

Please include tax-id number.

**Project Title** Click or tap here to enter text.

What’s the title of your program that was developed by middle school girls, for middle school girls?

***Questions in yellow require applicants to refer to the executive summary “Georgia Middle School Girls Empowerment Project”. Applicants will also benefit by participating in the webinar at 10am on Thursday, February 7th.***

**Which barrier does your program target?** Click or tap here to enter text.

1. Out of School Time, 2. Middle School Change Agents, 3. Middle School Girls Leadership

**How does your program help middle school girls manage the tensions that mark daily experiences?** Click or tap here to enter text.

Refer to attached summary for guidance.

**On what motivating factors does your program focus?** Click or tap here to enter text.

**Which girl best represents the target audience you want to reach?** Click or tap here to enter text.

The Overachiever, The Expressionist, The Critic, The Wallflower

**Problem Statement** Click or tap here to enter text.

In the eyes of your organization, what are the reasons for the lower aerobic capacity levels of middle school girls?

**Project Summary** Click or tap here to enter text.

Summarize your project/program request including project/programmatic activities that accurately represent your organizations expectations. Indicate how this project differs from those that exist today.

**Designed by Girls, for Girls** Click or tap here to enter text.

AFYF seeks projects designed by middle school girls, for middle school girls. Describe the role middle school girls have played or will play in the design and implementation of the proposed project.

**Geography** Click or tap here to enter text.

List the specific cities, counties, neighborhoods or schools that will benefit from this programming.

**Demographic** Click or tap here to enter text.

Describe the demographics of the middle school girls in your geographic area (ages, socioeconomic status, etc.).

**Local Collaborations** Click or tap here to enter text.

List the partners, and how you partner with them, that your organization already works with to reach middle school girls.

**Estimated Budget**  Click or tap here to enter text.

Give an estimated budget for programming broken down with expense type. Applicants may apply for up to three years of support.