



Media Contact:
Marcia Perry Dix
Perry Media Group
(717) 576-1899
marcia@pmg.media

For Immediate Release

PHILADELPHIA NON-PROFITS RISE UP TO PRODUCE VIRTUAL TEEN CONFERENCE

Youth Services Inc., The Advocacy Institute, Health Promotion Council, Urban Youth Racing School and the Mayor's Office of Youth/Black Male Engagement ban together to inspire teens to stand up against gun violence and use their collective voices for change.

Philadelphia, PA (September 22, 2020) – Teens are no strangers to tackling tough issues – from gun violence to tobacco and drug prevention. Youth Service, Inc., nonprofit organization that provides support services to at-risk Philadelphia teens, is hosting its 18th Rise & Dream Philly Teen Conference, a collaboration with The Advocacy Institute, Health Promotion Council, Urban Youth Racing School and the Mayor's Office of Youth/Black Male Engagement. The goal of this year's conference is to empower more teens to stand up against gun violence, tobacco use and address trauma.

On Saturday, October 3, 2020, teens will take these timely topics head-on at the Rise & Dream Virtual Philly Teen Conference on YouTube from noon until 2 pm EST.

This year's Rise & Dream conference occurs in the wake of civil unrest throughout the country, the COVID-19 pandemic, and gun violence on the rise in many U.S. cities. 84 percent of gun deaths in America occur among children and teens between the ages of 15 and 19 years old. 275 Philadelphians were shot to death this August, making it the highest total in a single month since 2007. The reality of gun violence in America as well as in Philadelphia is exactly why these conference organizers want to equip youth attendees with the knowledge to become leaders, positive role models and agents of change.

This year's conference was inspired by this summer's virtual annual Roots Picnic and the impact it was able to have. The organizations involved will be putting together a 60-minute video that will include various teen musicians, dancers, dynamic speakers and mentors to create a fun and inspiring event. This year's event will include guests such as Mayor Jim Kenney, as well as Councilperson Isaiah Thomas and Wallo267. Wallo267 is sure to offer inspiration on rising above adversity considering he served 20 years in prison and has since become a social media motivational guru with over 400,000 followers. Other local artists will be performing such as Rapper Eli Capella and Project Positive.

"The trauma layered on our communities from unnecessary violence will take the entire community rallied to stop the violence," said Gwen Bailey, Executive Director at Youth Service, Inc. "The Rise and Dream Teen Conference is bringing together young people and supporters from all areas to launch an effort to prevent and stop the violence. We need your voice and support."

WHEN: Saturday, October 3, 2020 noon to 2 pm EST.

WHERE: riseanddream2020.eventbrite.com

Interviews can be scheduled with members of participating organizations, including youth.

REFERENCES:

1. <https://www.childrensdefense.org/policy/resources/soac-2020-gun-violence/>
2. <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/pennsylvania/articles/2020-09-12/phillys-gun-violence-a-real-pandemic-in-itself>

###

About Health Promotion Council

Health Promotion Council (HPC) is a non-profit corporation organized in 1981 whose mission is to promote health, and prevent and manage chronic diseases, especially among vulnerable populations through community-based outreach, education, and advocacy. HPC became an affiliate of PHMC in 1999. HPC maintains more than 30 years of experience in chronic disease prevention and management work, and reaches more than 40,000 people annually across Pennsylvania. <https://www.hccpa.org>

About The Advocacy Institute

The Advocacy Institute (AI) is a premiere youth empowerment program, an initiative of Health Promotion Council (HPC), with a mission to empower youth of Philadelphia to make sustainable community changes through policy, community, and social media advocacy. Participants gain not only knowledge, but opportunities to network and build their leadership skills. The twelve week program culminates in participants implementing an action project to address a community issue. Upon successfully completing the program, graduates are inducted into the AI Alumni Network where they are given opportunities to reinvest their experience in future cohorts and ongoing campaigns. <https://www.hccpa.org/programs/advocacy-institute>

About Youth Service, Inc.

Youth Service, Inc. is a non-profit organization that has provided immediate shelter and support services to Philadelphia's children, youth and families for over 67 years. YSI offers unique programs and niche services throughout the city, including Philadelphia's only Crisis Nursery program and the longest standing shelter in the area for runaway and homeless teens. Through shelter, counseling, and in-home support services, YSI reaches more than 5,000 clients annually, the majority of whom live below the poverty level. <https://ysiphilly.org>