



Gotham FC's Keep Her in the Game

# YEAR 1 IMPACT REPORT



PRESENTED BY  Dove



# **KEEP HER IN THE GAME**

PRESENTED BY 

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# WHY KEEP *HER* IN THE GAME?

Keep Her in the Game (KHITG), presented by Dove, is Gotham FC’s flagship social impact program aiming to combat the high adolescent drop-off rate of girls in sports. The program is designed to empower the trusted adults in girls’\* lives – their coaches and parents – with research-backed training to help girls develop leadership skills, find their voices and stay committed to the sport of soccer. Keep Her in the Game also delivers moments of joy and connection for the girls themselves through unique access to Gotham FC players and experiences at Gotham FC’s home stadium, Sports Illustrated Stadium.

\*“Girl” includes anyone who identifies as a girl, as well as non-binary and gender expansive youth. “Girl” will be used throughout this report to include girls and gender expansive youth.

Keep Her in the Game was founded in direct response to research that shows that despite it being a historic moment in women’s sports, the U.S. is still failing to keep girls in the game:

By age 14, girls drop out of sports at  
**2X THE RATE  
OF BOYS<sup>1</sup>**

Girls have  
**1.3M FEWER  
OPPORTUNITIES**  
to play high-school sports than boys<sup>2</sup>

*“Current research is clear that girls abandon sports far more often than boys, and as such, girls lose out on core development opportunities. Research shows that **girls who play sports are more likely to earn better grades in school and graduate, and more likely to lead at a Fortune 500 company.** Gotham FC believes in the power of sports in a young person’s life, and we are **thrilled to implement a program that will result in tangible change.**”*

–Carolyn Tisch Blodgett, CEO and Founder,  
Next 3 and Governor, Gotham FC

Keep Her in the Game is one of Gotham FC’s social impact programs within the strategic pillar of improving youth access to soccer. Gotham FC’s additional pillars are women’s advancement, LGBTQIA+ rights and advocacy, and sustainability. Learn more at [gothamfc.com/social-impact](https://gothamfc.com/social-impact).

<sup>1</sup> Women’s Sports Foundation. (n.d.). Do you know the factors influencing girls’ participation in sports? Retrieved July 16, 2025, from <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/do-you-know-the-factors-influencing-girls-participation-in-sports/>

<sup>2</sup> Women’s Sports Foundation. (2020). Chasing equity: Executive summary. <https://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Chasing-Equity-Executive-Summary.pdf>

## KHITG PARTNERS

Keep Her in the Game is a team effort. This program would not be possible without **Dove** as a **presenting partner, and founding philanthropic partner, the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund**. The Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund is a New York City-based foundation dedicated to increasing access and opportunity for all New Yorkers. Through strategic grantmaking and innovative partnerships, the Illumination Fund supports programs that use the arts to improve health, expand access to mental health resources, and promote equity—particularly by helping girls stay active and engaged in sports.

*“In just its first year, **Keep Her in the Game** has reached over a thousand girls—giving them not just access to the game, but the confidence, strength, and sense of belonging that come with it. At a time when too many girls drop out of sports, this initiative is helping them stay engaged, healthy, and empowered. We’re proud to support a program that’s changing lives on and off the field.”*

–Laurie Tisch, Founder and President,  
Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund

**Charter Oak Impact**, a social impact and sponsorship firm, supported Gotham FC’s Community Impact team in the creation and implementation of KHITG, and led the design and execution of KHITG’s monitoring and evaluation process.

The non-profit **Girls Leadership** has played an integral role in the development and execution of this program, including the design and execution of the coach and parent training sessions and the research-backed coach curriculum.

**New Jersey Youth Soccer** and **South Bronx United** played an essential role as founding youth soccer partners, helping engage and recruit KHITG’s Year 1 cohort of coaches and teams.

**KEEP HER IN THE GAME**  
PRESENTED BY 



# BY THE NUMBERS

Year 1 | August 2024 – July 2025



**97 COACHES TRAINED**

across five coach training sessions



**700+ GIRLS CELEBRATED**

during pre-game ceremonies at the 2024 KHITG launch game and the 2025 Keep Her in the Game Day, presented by Dove, at Sports Illustrated Stadium



**1,783 GIRLS AGED 11-14**

reached via curriculum deployed by their coaches



**226 PARENTS/ CAREGIVERS TRAINED**

through two Raising Resilient Athletes Workshops



**160+ GIRLS VISITED**  
by Gotham FC players



**15 GIRLS IN 9TH-10TH GRADES**

engaged via an intensive five month leadership development program called the KHITG Youth Leadership Council



## Impact Results

# KHITG COACHES

KHITG trained 97 NJ and NY based coaches of U12-U14 girls' soccer teams in the KHITG curriculum across five interactive training sessions over fall 2024 and spring 2025. Throughout these coach training sessions, participants collaborated in group discussions focused on strengthening their communication, community-building and mentorship skills. Spring training attendees engaged with Gotham FC coaching staff, hearing from Head Coach Juan Carlos Amorós on the crucial responsibility that coaches have to keep girls in the game.

At the completion of their training, KHITG coaches received research-backed KHITG curriculum activity cards, designed by Girls Leadership, to leverage in their team practices and games.

### Spring 2025 Pre- and Post-Coach Training Survey Results

- There was a **45% increase** in coaches saying they are “confident” or “very confident” in supporting girls’ emotional and social needs in sports.
- There was a **40% increase** in coaches saying they are “aware” or “very aware” of the challenges girls face in sports.

### End of Spring 2025 Season Survey Results

- The Net Promoter Score (NPS) from KHITG coaches is **79 on a scale of -100 to 100** – a powerful indicator of satisfaction and willingness to recommend the program to fellow coaches.
- **98% of coaches reported using KHITG activities at least once a month**; 50% reported using them weekly or more.
- **93% of coaches strongly agreed or agreed** the KHITG program helped them build team connection and chemistry among players.

- **83% of coaches agreed or strongly agreed** that the KHITG program helped them successfully foster a positive and inclusive environment for girls.
- **70% of coaches agreed or strongly agreed** the KHITG program helped their individual players build resilience and a growth mindset.



### Testimonials from KHITG Coaches

*“One of the most valuable aspects of the KHITG program is that it expands the role of the coach. I think it’s important for coaches to reflect on their impact on players besides teaching them the sport. I also think the program gives power back to the players to be involved in their playing experience.”*

–Coach Amy

*“After [KHITG] growth mindset activities, the team learned about the fears our new player had at playing at this level. The team became her biggest cheerleader – really supporting her when she made mistakes and making a very big deal about her when she did something well in practice and games. She has really integrated well into the team since.”*

–Coach Filipe

*“In the fall, I was at a new club, and a player of mine fell through the cracks, and quit. If I had this training sooner, that may not have happened. I hope to implement this learning from training to ensure this doesn’t happen again.”*

–Anonymous



Impact Results

KHITG GIRLS

In Year 1, KHITG programming reached 1,783 girls on U12-U14 soccer teams across NJ and NY, with a priority on supporting teams from historically marginalized communities. In addition to girls benefiting from the KHITG curriculum in games and practices, over 160 had the added value of practice visits from Gotham FC’s star athletes throughout the fall and spring seasons. Gotham FC players participated in KHITG curriculum activities alongside the girls and shared stories of their own experiences facing challenges in the game to inspire the next generation.



100%  
of girls surveyed at the  
end of the season reported  
seeing themselves

PLAYING  
SOCCER  
A YEAR  
FROM NOW

Spring 2025 Pre- and Post-Season Survey Data

For Year 1, a small portion of teams piloted having girls participate in an optional, anonymous pre- and post-season survey. The KHITG team looks forward to scaling and optimizing the process for Year 2 to deliver a wider scope and more concrete results of the program’s impact on girls.



Testimonials from KHITG Girls

“I feel encouraging other girls to keep them in the game is very important because kids lose confidence, and if they were to hear it from someone important, or a famous soccer player it would mean a lot more to them.”

“I question sometimes if I should quit. But then I step on the field again and that feeling goes away. I genuinely don’t know what I would do without soccer.”



“I loved the team handshakes exercise because I FELT VERY COMFORTABLE WITH MY TEAMMATES.”

Impact Results

# KHITG YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

In late 2024, 15 high school girls across NJ and NY were nominated by their coaches and selected to form Gotham FC’s Youth Leadership Council and represent the important voices of girls who have continued playing soccer beyond the common drop-off age of 14.

From January through May 2025, the Council met twice a month, led by Dr. Jia Nettles, the National Sports Program Director at Girls Leadership, to integrate the perspective of girls in the KHITG program while developing the girls’ leadership skills and helping them find their voices. As 15–16–year–olds who chose to stay in the game into high school, the Youth Leadership Council members were uniquely positioned to share their feedback and lived experience to help improve KHITG for the younger players the program targets, as well as their parents and coaches.

A highlight of the council’s many contributions was their involvement in the Parent Workshop. Parent attendees were able to hear directly from the girls on what was most supportive, and what they wished their parents knew about supporting them.

Youth Leadership Council 2025 Survey Results

- The Net Promoter Score from KHITG council members is **86 on a scale of -100 to 100** – a powerful indicator of the high value of the experience to the Council.
- **100% of council members reported an increase in confidence** as a result of the council, with 43% percent of this group reporting a significant increase.

Testimonials from the Youth Leadership Council

*“The most valuable thing I’ve learned was that **the connection between girls with the same vision can lead to great things.**”*

*“... it feels great that I’m doing something **productive and impactful** especially in the women’s sports field. I will continue to share my ideas that I’ve had during this Council to make changes and keep girls wanting to play soccer and other sports. I may bring up my ideas to my school administration.”*

*“I learned that **OUR VOICES MATTER A LOT MORE THAN I THOUGHT.**”*



Impact Results

# PARENTS

226 parents from NJ and NY came together for two Keep Her in the Game parent workshops centered on providing strategies for raising resilient, confident athletes. Co-hosted by Girls Leadership Co-Founder and Co-CEO Simone Marean and former professional player and Gotham FC Assistant Goalkeeper Coach Michelle Betos, these interactive workshops offered practical tools and guidance on how to support girls through the unique challenges of youth sports, while creating a sense of community support amongst the attendees.

Spring 2025 Parent Survey Results

- The Net Promoter Score from the spring KHITG parent workshop participants was **85 on a scale of -100 to 100** – a strong indicator attendees found it valuable and worth recommending to fellow parents.



Testimonials from Parents/Caregivers

*“Love that parents have a platform to **share** together. **We are all on a similar journey with our girls.**”*

*“Appreciated so much! The community and integration of the chat to give feedback, the polls to make it interactive and immediately applicable to the group, the KHITG team members being part, Michelle Betos’ personal experience playing youth sports, the data from studies about girls in sport and in culture, etc.!”*



# MONITORING AND EVALUATION METHODS

In Year 1, KHITG focused on coaches as its primary audience for monitoring and evaluation, and parents as a secondary focus. Charter Oak Impact and the KHITG team designed, piloted and iterated on data collection methods in the fall 2024 season, and then formally collected data in the spring 2025 season, which is reported in the subsequent survey findings.

The team also piloted early data collection with girls across the KHITG teams which will be built upon in Year 2, when KHITG seeks to more formally report on the direct impact the program has on youth players.

Surveys Collected

- Coach feedback before and after the fall and spring coach training sessions
- Coach feedback at the end of the fall and spring seasons
- Parent feedback before and after the fall and spring parent workshops
- Feedback from girls on KHITG teams at the beginning and end of the spring season
- Youth Leadership Council member feedback at the completion of the leadership council

In addition to surveys, qualitative feedback and testimonials were collected via email and in-person engagement with coaches, players and youth throughout the year.

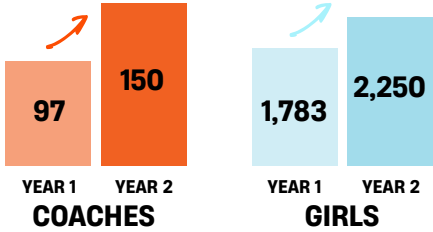


# WHAT’S AHEAD

We’re *JUST* getting started.

Programming and Reach

Keep Her in the Game has an ambitious goal to train an additional **150 coaches** to reach **2,250 girls in Year 2**. As a new offering, KHITG’s nonprofit partner, Girls Leadership, will research and design “Coach Conversation” maps to help guide coaches through challenging conversations with their players. KHITG will also offer new opportunities for coaches to have more access to the KHITG team, including “office hours” and “refresher sessions” that will debut in fall ’25 and spring ’26, and an updated parent workshop with new content to debut in spring ’26.



With Dove as presenting partner of the program, KHITG is excited to bring additional value to coaches by offering powerful resources from [Dove’s Body Confident Sport](#) – designed to serve as a first-of-its-kind and scientifically-proven set of coaching tools to build body confidence in 11-17-year-old girls and encourage them to stay in sports.

Combining Body Confident Sport—a first-of-its-kind, science-backed program for coaches of girls aged 11-17—with Keep Her in the Game, we’re boosting body confidence and mental resilience to help girls stay in sports.

Monitoring and Evaluation

In Year 2, KHITG will continue its pre- and post-coach training surveys, pre- and post-season surveys for coaches, and pre- and post-workshop surveys for parents.

KHITG plans to add more robust pre- and post-season surveys for KHITG youth players, and build in additional parent and player listening sessions into the spring ’26 season to further improve programming via deeper qualitative feedback.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PRESENTING PARTNER



FOUNDING PHILANTHROPIC PARTNER



PROGRAM PARTNERS



In addition to our Keep Her in the Game partners (see above), KHITG would not be possible without the commitment and dedication of the following individuals:

**Corinne Counsell** and **Emma Walley** from Gotham FC’s Community and Social Impact team for their leadership in the design and execution of KHITG.

**Carolyn Tisch Blodgett**, **Ryan Dillon**, **Yael Averbuch West**, Gotham FC’s Leadership team for their investment, contributions and amplification of this work.

**Michelle Betos**, **Juan Carlos Amorós**, and the rest of the **Gotham FC Coaching staff** for their valuable contributions to the KHITG training sessions and workshops.

**Sofia Garcia**, Brand Manager, Engagement & Social Impact at **Dove** for her commitment to Keep Her in the Game and guidance in providing Dove’s Body Confident Sport as additional resources and opportunities for KHITG coaches.

**Laurie Tisch**, **Rick Luftglass**, and **Kira Pritchard** of the **Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund** for believing in Gotham’s vision and providing the support to get Keep Her in the Game off the ground.

**Dr. Jia Nettles**, **Courtney Torres**, **Amal Aziz**, and **Co-CEOs Takai Tyler** and **Simone Marean** from **Girls Leadership** for their instrumental support in the design and implementation of the KHITG curriculum, coach training sessions, parent workshops, and Youth Leadership Council.

**CEO Evan Dabby** and **Breeana Cassidy** from **New Jersey Youth Soccer** for their dedicated support in recruiting early KHITG coaches across NJ, and their ongoing support and amplification of the program.

**Amy Harris**, **Yaliz Campos**, **Andy Jenkins**, **Josh Guerra**, **Executive Director Andrew So** and the rest of the **team from South Bronx United** for their support in early program design, their ongoing support and true partnership in elevating KHITG’s collective impact.

And last but not least, **Tory Faries** and **Will Smith** of **Charter Oak Impact** – who authored this impact report as Gotham FC’s social impact advisory and were instrumental in program design and implementation support.

“KHITG IS MORE THAN AN INITIATIVE –  
*IT’S A MOVEMENT*  
that’s transforming  
how we support girls  
in sports.”



“From empowering coaches with applicable tools,  
to creating safer, more inclusive spaces,  
**KHITG is helping ensure that every girl not  
only stays in the game, but thrives in it.**”

–Michelle Betos, Gotham FC Assistant Goalkeeper Coach and former Club Captain

Gotham FC's Keep Her in the Game

# YEAR 1 IMPACT REPORT



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**HELP KEEP GIRLS IN THE GAME!**

Applications are open for our 2025-2026 cohort of KHITG teams! If you are a coach of a U12-U14 girls' soccer team in NJ/NY this fall, apply [here](#) before the August 18th deadline.

To learn more about KHITG and how you can get involved, visit [gothamfc.com/keepherinthegame](https://gothamfc.com/keepherinthegame).