

SAILING'S POSITIVE IMPACT ON YOUTH

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For many young people, sailing has been a bright spot in an otherwise challenging year. Getting on the water provides a respite from the difficulties of school and personal lives that have been disrupted, and the opportunity to disconnect from the day to day, digital world. I wanted to share a brief letter from Youth Advisory Board member Emma Friedauer on the impact that sailing has on kids and teenagers, and to highlight her passion for sailboat racing.

By Emma Friedauer, US Sailing Youth Advisory Board

When I race, I feel like I belong. The racecourse is where I can go to decompress after a stressful week and spend time with my teammates and best friends. I have a sense of importance, focus, and drive when I'm racing, supported by a team that is practically my family. Sailing has become my happy place.



One of the most important things I've learned from racing is that there is always room for improvement. I can now apply this to all aspects of my life. In school I won't give up when a certain subject or lesson is challenging. At work I try my best to do every part of my job to the best of my ability, because I know that the details will be important in the long run. Racing has taught me many life lessons that I may not have learned otherwise.

Together, my sailing community has become a family. We've learned how to support each other, on and off the water, encourage each other when we are struggling, and cheer each other on when we are succeeding. The sport of sailing has a way of unifying us, no matter our differences. It has changed my life forever and I will continue to pursue sailing for the rest of my life.

At US Sailing, we feel it is critical to see the sport from the participants perspective, especially kids. Thank you for your support of US Sailing's Youth programs. Together we can help more kids like Emma grow into lifelong sailors.

Sincerely,

John Pearce, US Sailing Youth Director