

# South Boston resident to run for lives

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**SOUTH BOSTON** — On April 16 – Patriot's Day – Cristin Dillon will run her first Marathon. As she makes her way around the course and begins the struggle that is Heartbreak Hill just before the end of the race, she'll have a secret weapon to draw upon as inspiration to carry her through to Copley Square and onto the finish line.

Having aspired to run the Boston Marathon for some time now, Dillon chose Julie's Family Learning Center in South Boston as the ideal organization to represent on her quest to conquer this challenge.

"I'm doing [the Marathon] for Julie's because I know about them and the work they do in the community," Dillon said. "I like to do things that I have personal connection with. I can relate with [the families at Julie's] because I live in South Boston and my aunt is working there. I got to know what the program is about. And I see through my little cousin [in Julie's Montessori preschool] the positive impact that

it has on kids and seeing more about the good that it does for the mothers.

"[My sponsorship] has definitely come into play in a huge way with the training," Dillon continued. "Especially on those cold, rainy days and on the weekends when everyone is out doing something else. I've run for many years for exercise, so I know that it's easy to not do it for a day, but doing it for a charity you want to be as prepared as you can and want to finish and do everything you can do on race day for them. You just don't want to fail them."

A self-described "community-based family support and education program that is committed to the development of strong, healthy family functioning," Julie's offers a variety of program services for families both within, and in orbit of, the South Boston area.

For Dillon, the ability to provide families with some of the positive things that she experienced growing up served to further inspire her to run for Julie's.

"I've been lucky enough to have a strong family that was able to give me the things that I needed growing up," Dillon said. "They put me through college and allowed me to advance myself and I think, in that way, Julie's is trying to give mothers more control over their lives. The programs they have help them to control their destinies a little better. The least I can do is give up a little bit of my time. I'm in a position where I can do that [because of

my family]."

As she continues counting down the weeks to race day, and her training sessions become longer and more intense, Dillon spoke about sponsors of her race.

"You know, the way we are approaching it is that, people our age, we go out on weekends and spend all kinds of money on ourselves," Dillon said. "If you think about what you spend on just one weekend and donate that one weekend's worth, these families would be so grateful. Just think about your own situation and the fact is that there is someone a little less fortunate than you are."

"People can always be more aware of what others need," Dillon continued. "It's just really important to do this. There are people of all sorts out there and most of us can help a little bit more."

For more information on how you can sponsor Cristin Dillon and support Julie's Family Learning Center, visit [www.juliesmarathon.blogspot.com/](http://www.juliesmarathon.blogspot.com/) and [www.juliesfamily.org](http://www.juliesfamily.org).