



Girls on the Run[®]

New Site Setup Information

Girls on the Run Mission:

*To Educate and Prepare Girls for a
Lifetime of Self Respect and Healthy Living*

About Girls on the Run

Girls on the Run (GOTR) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to helping girls stay out of the “girl box.” We use experiential learning programs, which combine training for a 5K (3.1 mile) race/walk event with curricula designed to promote good choices for a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living. GOTR was “invented” here in Charlotte in 1996 by Molly Barker, MSW and 4-time Hawaii Ironman triathlete. Girls on the Run, serving Cabarrus and Mecklenburg Counties, is the flagship council and has been joined by 160 additional councils across the United States and Canada. In 2010 over 2,000 girls in Charlotte and 80,000 girls nationwide met twice a week for twelve weeks to run, to laugh, to learn and to look at the “girl box” issues they face everyday.

Potential Sites

Our GOTR council has programs running at over 85 sites in Cabarrus & Mecklenburg Counties. We partner with local (private and public) schools, YMCA’s, YWCA’s, community centers, and churches to offer our program in a variety of locations in an effort to reach as many girls as possible.

Site Must Provide:

- A head and assistant coach to attend a volunteer training provided by Girls on the Run
- Provide a contact person at the site to coordinate with GOTR. This can be a staff member, teacher, principal, PTA president, parent and/or interested member of that particular community.
- Provide a safe place for running (for example a track or field that can be measured).
- Provide a rain site (classroom, gym, etc.)
- Choose two days a week for meeting one hour each lesson.
- Distribute registration forms to all girls in age group (3rd –5th for Girls on the Run and 6th – 8th for Girls on Track[®]).
- Provide a space for the end of season banquet (cafeteria, classroom, etc.)

GOTR will Provide:

- Volunteer training for all head and assistant coaches.
- Brochures and registration information.
- Materials and curriculum for each season.
- Site stipend and ongoing support.

Coaches

Each program will have a head and assistant coach. All coaches must be CPR and First Aid certified and attend a thorough, day-long training session before the program begins. They are provided with a well-developed, well-researched curriculum which has been used successfully by GOTR here in the Charlotte area and around the country (Girls on the Run, International[®] has Councils in 160 cities across the United States and Canada).

The **Head Coach** has the following responsibilities:

- Serve as a role model for young girls and understand and believe in the mission of Girls on the Run;
- Become CPR and First Aid certified;
- Attend full day Coaches’ Training;
- Attend pre-season coaches’ meeting, plus at least 2 other meetings spaced throughout the season;
- Prepare for and supervise 24 hour-long lessons in a manner consistent with the GOTR philosophy and curricula;
- Plan and coordinate the end of season banquet;
- Run with the girls in the end of season 5K event.

The **Assistant Coach** has the following responsibilities:

- Serve as a role model for young girls and understand and believe in the mission of Girls on the Run;
- Attend full day Coaches' Training;
- Attend program on selected day(s) on a consistent basis;
- Assist coaches with setting up/breaking down games and lessons;
- Encourage and cheer for all participants;
- Participate in games and workouts with the girls as needed by the coaches; and
- Attend end of the season 5K with coaches, program participants and other volunteers.

At some sites, we have "Co-coaches" who split the head coaching responsibilities between them and work together to facilitate the lessons.

In addition to the wonderful experience of working with these girls, we also offer each coaches and participants discounts on New Balance running apparel. New Balance is one of our corporate and local sponsors and provides discounts on shoes and clothing through their website and at their Charlotte locations. Coaches also received discounts at other GOTR retail partners.

Group Size

We must have a minimum of 8 girls in order for the program to exist. Each group is limited to a maximum of 15 girls. The minimum is based upon both financial and curriculum considerations. Because much of our curriculum is related to team building and group dynamics, fewer than 8 girls may make it difficult to provide the experience we want to offer to the girls and more than fifteen girls make it difficult to establish the group rapport and the depth of community we are seeking. **New sites are limited to one group of 12 girls during the first season only and a minimum of 6.**

Timing and Length of Sessions

We have two sessions of Girls on the Run each year.

- Fall Session**, which usually begins in mid- September and runs for 12 weeks, meeting twice a week, ending around mid-December. To begin a session at your site in the fall, planning should begin in early April and be finalized no later than **June 1st**.
- Spring Session**, which usually begins in mid-February and runs for 12 weeks meeting twice a week, ending around mid-May. To begin a session at your site in the spring, planning should begin in September and should be finalized no later than **November 1st**.

Fees and Scholarships

Our current fee is \$160 per 12-week season. Partial needs-based scholarships are available and are based on household income, number of people in a household and individual special circumstance. A scholarship application **MUST** be filled out in order to be considered for a scholarship.

Included in the fee price are:

- the 24 one-hour lessons conducted by a certified GOTR coach;
- lesson handouts and materials;
- a Girls on the Run t-shirt;
- 5K registration and t-shirt
- End of season banquet, certificates and awards.

Curriculum

Each curriculum (one for spring and one for fall) covers 24 lessons. The curriculum is divided into three parts:

Part One: Understanding themselves and setting personal goals (4 weeks)

Part Two: Learning skills to foster leadership, team building, and cooperation (4 weeks)

Part Three: Examining their relationship to the community, including development and implementation of a community service project

Each lesson focuses on a specific issue related topic and follows a five part format that provides consistency and structure for the girls' experience:

Introduction/Getting on Board: As the girls arrive and settle into a circle, the coach "checks in" with them, seeing how each is feeling, getting a feel for the group's dynamic for the day and introducing the topic of the lesson.

The Warm Up: The warm-up is brief activity or game that energizes the girls and warms up their muscles. The Warm Up activity is usually a short interactive running game that incorporates the lesson topic for that day. For instance, in one of the first lessons, the coach marks off a short running course. The girls stand at one spot and the coach calls out a "like statement" - "I like chocolate chip cookies," or "I like to go to the beach." All those girls who agree with the statement run (walk, jog - they set their own paces) the course marked out by the coach. These statements continue, with contributions by the girls, until everyone has run a few times at least.

Processing: With their muscles warmed up a bit, the coach leads the girls through a brief stretching session. During that time, the girls and the coach "process" the topic. In this example, they might discuss how people can have different likes and dislikes and still be friends or how our likes and dislikes develop, etc.

The Workout: The workout follows the warm up/stretch. This involves more actual running. The amount of running varies based on each girls' ability, pace, and their stage of process. The program starts with shorter periods of running and builds up as the coaches assess each girl's ability and pace. Eventually, the Work Out will build up to a "practice" 5k on site, to give the girls the confidence helpful in participating in an actual 5k racing event (see below) The running also involves the "topic of the day." For instance, in the session on positive attitude, each girl may be asked to make a positive statement about herself to the coach, each time she completes a lap.

The Wrap-Up: Following the workout is a cool-down and stretching period where the girls do a group processing and discussion. Each session ends with positive reinforcement from the coach, a group cheer and a snack.

The season concludes with the opportunity to participate in a 5K event. This is usually in conjunction with the Thunder Road series in December for the fall session and a Girls on the Run sponsored 5K in the spring.

Evaluation

Girls in the program may be given a pre- and post-test to evaluate attitudinal changes. This data helps us to evaluate our programs currently. In the future, we hope to enhance this process so that we may use the data gathered to offer even more support to the girls and their families. This evaluation was created by Dr. Rita DeBate, Ph.D., MPH, CHES. Based on this evaluation tool, Dr. Debate has concluded that the Girls on the Run curricula improve girls' self-esteem, body image and eating attitudes to a "statistically significant" extent.

Contact Us: For further information please call 704-333-2566 or visit us online at www.gotrcharlotte.org.