



Girls on the Run[®] of Charlotte

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 of Charlotte

GOTR of Charlotte 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 of Charlotte was “invented” here in Charlotte in 1996 by Molly Barker, MSW and 4-time Hawaii Ironman triathlete. Girls on the Run of Charlotte is the flagship council and has been joined by over 150 councils across the United States and Canada. In 2008 over 1600 girls in Charlotte and 50,000 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

GOTR of Charlotte has programs running at over 60 sites in the Charlotte Mecklenburg area. 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:

- Q Provide a site liaison to coordinate with GOTR of Charlotte. This can be a staff member, teacher, principal, PTA president, parent and/or interested member of that particular community.
- Q A safe indoor meeting location for the girls to gather prior to Girls on the Run
- Q A safe place for running (for example a track or field that can be measured).
- Q Provide a rain site (classroom, gym, etc.)
- Q A head and assistant coach to attend a volunteer training provided by Girls on the Run
- Q Determine when you will offer the program. We encourage you to choose two days that are not consecutive to provide the girls an opportunity to recover. Please take into consideration that the Girls on the Run programming requires 60 minutes to complete while the Girls on Track programming takes 90 minutes to complete. Please also include travel time in your time allotment.
- Q Distribute registration material to all girls in age group

GOTR will Provide:

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

Site Liaison

The Site Liaison's role is to facilitate the smooth implementation of the program by serving as a contact between Girls on the Run and the site. Girls on the Run of Charlotte primarily communicates via email, so it is necessary for the Site Liaison to have an open email account that they check regularly. A site liaison can also be a coach.

The Site Liaison has the following responsibilities:

- q Arrange for a safe indoor and outdoor activity location to run the program
- q Arrange for a safe meeting location for the girls to gather prior to Girls on the Run
- q Locate and secure access to a restroom for both the participants and volunteers to use prior to and during Girls on the Run
- q Distribute registration and marketing materials to all girls in 3-5th or 6-8th grades (depending on program)
- q Assist in marketing the program to participants and potential volunteers, through newsletters, websites, email blasts and other opportunities at your location
- q Maintain regular communication with Girls on the Run Program Coordinator throughout the season

Coaches

Each site will provide a head and assistant coach. All head coaches must be CPR and First Aid certified and attend a 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 150 cities across the United States and Canada). Please visit the volunteer page of our website www.gotrcharlotte.org for our volunteer coach job descriptions.

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

- q Understand and believe in the mission of Girls on the Run
- q Serve as a role model for young girls; must be 21 years old
- q Become CPR and First Aid certified
- q Attend full day Coaches' Training
- q Attend coaches' meeting throughout the season
- q Prepare, organize and supervise the weekly lessons
- q Lead the program participants through each lesson
- q Interact with parents of program participants
- q Plan and coordinate the community project & end of season banquet
- q Attend the end of season 5k event with the program participants and other volunteers

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

- q Understand and believe in the mission of Girls on the Run
- q Serve as a role model for young girls
- q Attend full day Coaches' Training
- q Attend program on selected day(s) on a consistent basis;
- q Assist with all aspects of the facilitation of the Girls on the Run curriculum
- q Attend coach's meeting in absence of head coach
- q Encourage and cheer for all participants;
- q Participate in games and workouts with the girls as needed by the coaches; and
- q 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 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 receive a discount at all Run for Your Life stores.

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.

- q **Fall Session**, begins in early September and runs for 12 weeks, meeting twice a week, ending around early December with the Thunder Road's Jingle Jog 5k. To begin a session at your site in the fall, planning should begin in early March and be finalized no later than **the last Friday of May**.
- q **Spring Session**, which usually begins in early February and runs for 12 weeks, meeting twice a week, ending around mid-May with the New Balance Girls on the Run 5k. To begin a session at your site in the spring, planning should begin in September and should be finalized no later than **the last Friday of October**.

Registration

Girls on the Run of Charlotte offers registration two ways to accommodate site needs.

- q Online Registration - This is the fastest and easiest way to do registration.
 - o Girls on the Run is responsible for online registration which includes:
 - § Communicate registration procedures effectively with all potential participants
 - § The creation and maintenance of the online registration system.
 - § Collect scholarship forms and coordinate online registrations
- q Paper Registration –
 - o The program site is responsible for paper registration which includes:
 - § Communicating registration procedures effectively with all potential participants.
 - § One assigned site staff member that collects the registration forms, scholarship forms and money on a first come, first serve basis accommodating only the maximum number of participants available for their program.
 - § Creating a roster with the first 15 participants (12 for a new site) listed in order of registration
 - § Creation and maintenance of a waiting list based on a first come, first serve basis
 - § Once the registrations are collected they need to be mailed/delivered to the Girls on the Run office as soon as possible for processing
 - q Each site's registration process will be determined on a case-by-case basis

Fees and Scholarships

The current program fee is \$160 per 12-week season. The actual out of pocket cost to the Girls on the Run program is approximately \$16 per girl for the twice per week, 12-week program. This \$160 covers the full cost of one child's participation. Families who have the ability to and are interested in supporting the program beyond the \$160 will have an opportunity to sponsor additional girls as well on the participant registration form.

The program fee includes:

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

Scholarships are available by:

1. Filling out a GOTR program registration form either online or mailing it in to the GOTR office.
2. Completing a scholarship application available at the school, online at www.gotrcharlotte.org, or by calling 704-333-2566. The scholarship application must be filled out to receive a scholarship.

Full and partial scholarships are available and are based on a sliding scale according to annual household income.

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 email info@gotrcharlotte.org.