

Site Guide

Girls on the Run



Girls on the Run

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Everything you need to know to have a great season!

girlsontherunatlanta.org

Contents



| | |
|--|---|
| About Us..... | 2 |
| Why Girls on the Run?..... | 3 |
| Program and Participant Resources..... | 4 |
| Site Liaison and Hosting a Site..... | 5 |
| Coach Information..... | 6 |
| Participant Registration..... | 7 |
| Season Timeline..... | 8 |



“ This experience taught me that we should believe in ourselves in whatever we do. We all shine brightly, in a way that we may not know yet.
- Emily, 9

About Us



Girls on the Run is a nonprofit, positive youth development program for girls in 3rd-8th grade that uses running as a tool to promote physical, social and emotional growth. Volunteer coaches lead teams through a 12-week program at local schools, parks and other community sites, exploring issues critical to the holistic health of pre-adolescent girls, all while training to complete a 5K. The Girls on the Run curriculum empowers girls to successfully navigate life experiences and encourages a lifetime appreciation of health and fitness.

We believe ALL GIRLS are born with power and purpose. Using our research-, sport-based curricula, we inspire every girl to reach her limitless potential - not just for the length of our program, but for life!

Our Girls

Girls on the Run inspires girls in 3rd through 8th grade from a range of backgrounds. We have participants with and without disabilities. Girls who participate may live with both parents or with relatives, foster parents or other caregivers. We have participants with different sexual orientations and gender identities. Girls come from all races, religions and nations of origin and may or may not speak fluent English.



Our Programs

Girls on the Run (3rd - 5th grade)

The Girls on the Run program supports girls in gaining a better understanding of who they are, developing the importance of teamwork and healthy relationships and recognizing how they can positively connect with and shape their communities and world. We offer a 20-lesson curriculum that takes place twice each week for 90 minutes. Social-emotional curriculum themes include:

- Turning negative self-talk into positive self-talk
- Understanding emotions
- Standing up for self and others
- Making and maintaining healthy relationships
- Making an impact on the community

Heart & Sole (6th - 8th grade)

The Heart & Sole program addresses the whole girl – body, brain, heart, spirit and social connection – and supports participants in building critical life skills such as team building, developing a support system, boundary setting, decision making, positively impacting others and asking for and providing help. We offer a 20-lesson curriculum that takes place twice each week for 90 minutes. Social-emotional curriculum themes include:

- Getting to know and understand yourself
- Goal-setting
- Overcoming obstacles
- Asking for and giving help
- Positively impacting others

Why Girls on the Run?

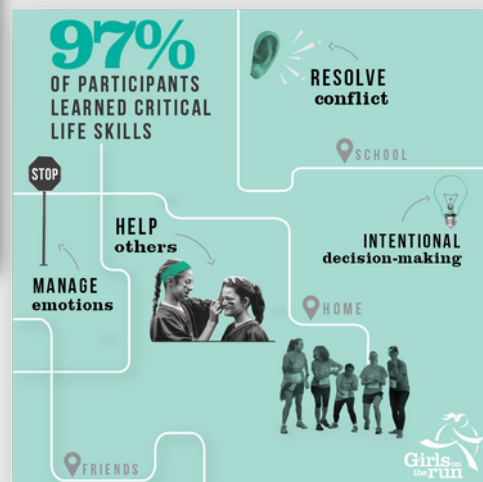


In late 2021, the U.S. Surgeon General issued a warning about the nationwide youth mental health crisis we are experiencing, and this crisis has been exacerbated by the pandemic and racial inequality.

While Girls on the Run may not be the only solution to address this ongoing crisis, we are proud to be part of the solution, providing a safe place for connection and community for girls at such a critical age. And with social-emotional learning as the cornerstone of our research-based lessons, we support girls in identifying and processing their emotions, and learning to stand up for others – skills that are needed now more than ever.

Our Impact

Girls on the Run is the only national physical activity-based positive youth development program for girls with compelling evidence of program impact. Findings from an independent study show that Girls on the Run has a significant impact on the lives of girls – teaching critical life skills, increasing physical activity, building connections between peers, and more.



“

When you look at the core group of girls participating in the program you see them standing a little taller among their peers and how they solve problems, speak up, and then aren't afraid to express how something made them feel.

- Sharon, School Administrator

Participant and Program Resources



Program Fees and Financial Assistance

We believe in the limitless potential of each girl and will never turn a girl away based on financial need. We offer adjusted program fees on a sliding scale based on household income beginning at \$0.

Participant Resources

- ★ Program T-shirt and journal
- ★ 5K entry, medal and finisher's T-shirt
- ★ Running shoes and/or sports hijab for participants who qualify
- ★ Sports bra for middle school participants who qualify (elementary students may also receive upon request)



Program Resources

- ♥ **Girls on the Run/Heart & Sole Curriculum:** We provide a research-based curriculum that has been proven to increase physical activity and social/emotional skills in participants even after the program ends.
- ♥ **Field bag of supplies:** You have everything you need to run practices including worksheets, cones, lap counters and more!
- ♥ **National Coach Training** in which coaches will learn about lesson facilitation, trauma-informed coaching, and creating an atmosphere in which all participants can feel welcomed and included as their whole selves.
- ♥ **Marketing materials** to drive girl recruitment and registration and email templates for caregiver communications.
- ♥ **Staff support:** Girls on the Run staff is always available for questions and concerns.
- ♥ **Attendance App:** You will have all of your participants' information at your fingertips.

Site Liaisons and Hosting a Site



The site liaison is the organizational leader for their Girls on the Run or Heart & Sole team. The site liaison is closely connected to their site and serves as the main point of contact between Girls on the Run, the site and the team. Site liaisons may also be coaches at their site (although it is not required).

Site Liaison Checklist

- ☐ Get permission from site administration to host a team at your site for two days each week for 90 minutes and submit the site registration form.
- ☐ Recruit 3-5 coaches per team. All coaches and the site liaison will need to fill out the coach/site liaison application. (You may request assistance from Girls on the Run in recruiting coaches, but we cannot guarantee placement.)
- ☐ Ensure all coaches and the site liaison (you) have a current background check through Girls on the Run. Background checks last two years
- ☐ Ensure at least one coach at every practice is CPR/First Aid certified
- ☐ Recruit 8-15 girls per team. Returning teams may request to have up to 20 girls per team and/or multiple teams. Teams of 20 requires a minimum of 3 coaches at every practice.
- ☐ Offer support to parents/guardians who need assistance registering their girl
- ☐ Host a pre-season planning meeting for all coaches to set the tone for a supportive coaching team
- ☐ Communicate with Girls on the Run staff throughout the season and keep up to date on emails to ensure that your team and coaches are informed



Hosting a Site

Sites may be anywhere that girls are including but not limited to schools, parks, religious centers, community centers, etc.

To host a team, sites must:

- ☒ Offer a safe outdoor space for running such as a track, soccer field or any other accessible open space
- ☒ Provide a designated, accessible indoor space for Girls on the Run to meet in case of inclement weather and accessible bathrooms
- ☒ Accommodate a regular twice-a-week practice schedule (90 minutes per practice)
- ☒ Help promote the program to recruit 3-5 coaches and 8-15 girls per team

Coach Information



Warm up your spirit fingers, lace up your sneakers and get ready to inspire a group of girls to be strong and healthy! Girls on the Run volunteer coaches play such an important role in the lives of the girls on their team. Each Girls on the Run team needs a minimum of three and maximum of five coaches to help facilitate our curriculum with small groups of eight to 15 girls over the course of 12 weeks. Amidst the conversation, laughter and Energy Awards, you will witness a transformational change in the girls, and don't be surprised if you realize that you are positively changing as well!

Girls on the Run coaches may be an adult of any age and gender, and coaches represent all levels of fitness and abilities. Coaches do not need to be runners or athletes and may be:

- School staff and administrators
- Parents and caregivers
- Community members



Girls on the Run Coaches:

- ♥ Believe in the inherent power within every girl
- ♥ Have a desire to help girls learn, grow and have fun
- ♥ Receive inclusive training and ongoing support from Girls on the Run
- ♥ Do not have to think of themselves as a runner or athlete

Coach Responsibilities:

- ★ Serve as a role model for girls on their team
- ★ Lead at least one practice per week
- ★ Prepare for lessons ahead of practice
- ★ Maintain open communications with site liaison and Girls on the Run

Steps to Become a Coach

1. Complete the coach application by the season deadline
2. Complete the virtual training module and attend a four-and-a-half hour, live coach training session with Girls on the Run
3. Complete a background check (required every two years)
4. Complete CPR/First Aid training (a minimum of one coach per practice must be certified)
5. Attend a pre-season planning meeting with your site's coaching team

Participant Registration



All participants need to be registered through the Girls on the Run website. We want to make sure this process is not a barrier for participants to join the program. Here are some ways you can ensure that everyone has the information they need.

Participant Registration Tips

- ★ Share the marketing materials we provide in both English and Spanish and reach out to our staff to request information in any other language that a child at your site may need.
- ★ Share our Girls on the Run Spanish microsite with Spanish-speaking individuals - girlsontherunatlanta.org/es/Inicio.
- ★ Ensure that caregivers know the cost of our program is on a sliding scale starting at \$0.
- ★ Host a registration night at your site or set up a registration table during a time when parents/guardians are already in the school. If applicable, invite an interpreter at your school to assist with registration. Request assistance from Girls on the Run staff if you need help hosting a registration night.
- ★ Paper registration is available on a case-by-case basis when absolutely necessary. We recommend sending home a flier with a QR code first if parents are able to register on their phones. If you opt to use paper registration, the site liaison must manually enter all registration forms into our system by the end of the program lottery period.



“This program has given her so much. New friends that she would not have interacted with at school as well as compassion, empathy and teamwork. We love everything about the program.
- GOTR Caregiver

Timeline



Spring Season Timeline

Updated December 2023

- ★ **December 1 - Spring Season Participant Registration Lottery Opens**
- ★ **January 10 & January 23 - Returning Coach Training (Virtual)**
All returning coaches are required to attend virtual returning coach training receive updates from GOTR staff and connect with other coaches.
- ★ **January 12 - Site Registration Closes**
Site liaison should complete registration by deadline.
- ★ **January 6, 20, & 28 - New Coach Training (In-person)**
Locations vary. Every new coach and site liaison will need to attend one of the in-person new coach training sessions.
- ★ **January 16 - Registration Lottery Closes**
Lottery registration closes at 11:59 pm.
- ★ **January 17 - Participant Placement Day**
A computer-generated lottery will run on January 10 for teams that are full. Registration will reopen at 3 pm for teams that do not fill through the lottery.
- ★ **January 19 - Coach & Site Liaison Application Closes**
Every coach and site liaison should complete by deadline.
- ★ **Week of February 12 - Spring Season Begins**
All teams should host their first practice the week of February 5.
- ★ **February 21 - Last Day for Refunds and Roster Changes**
- ★ **Weekend of April 27 - Girls on the Run 5K**



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We do this to empower young girls, but my soul is fed every time I spend an afternoon with my girls! Darling little girls with goals and endurance to rival no others! I couldn't be more proud of my GOTR warriors!!!

- Coach Racheal 8.