

Girls on the Run/Heart & Sole Coach Information Packet

Allegan and Ottawa County

Spring 2017

Timeline

February : Coach Training Begins. More details to come later.

Mid February: Final rosters and practice schedules will be given to coaches and liaisons online via raceplanner.

March: Program start up for schools. The start date will be dependent on the school calendar and programmed events such as Spring Break and conferences. Most schools should plan on starting the first week of March.

Shoe Delivery

March: Shoe Delivery to CWIT. When shoes are ready to be picked up, coaches will be notified via E-mail. Coaches will be responsible for picking up their teams shoes at the Center for Women in Transition in Holland.

Once the shoes have been delivered coaches will be responsible for making sure the shoes fit team members properly. If a shoe exchange is needed, coaches must fill out an exchange form and return it to the Council Director within 48 hours of the girls receiving their shoes. Any shoes that are worn outside or have writing on the box cannot be exchanged.

5K Supply Pick-Up

May: When event t-shirts and race information become available coaches will be notified via E-mail to come pick up supplies from the center.

Late May/Early June: Celebration 5K for ALL schools hosted at Grand Valley State University, Allendale Campus.

Please be sure to "Like" us on facebook! www.facebook.com/gotroac and check your email regularly. All communication is sent to coaches via email

Policies and Procedures

In order to maximize your experience as a coach and the outcomes of Girls on the Run for our participants, there are a few policies and procedures we believe vital to our program. Please take the appropriate time to review these policies and procedures before you begin the program.

1. **Accident Incident Reports:** Fill out an accident incident report for any injury to a student, coach, or volunteer. Return these forms to your program coordinator immediately following the incident via fax or email. FAX: 616.355.9760
2. **Additional Adults/Children at Practices:** There shall be no additional adults at practices other than volunteer coaches who are trained and registered with Girls on the Run of Ottawa and Allegan Counties. Coaches should find other arrangements for their own children during practice times.
3. **Altering the Curriculum:** GOTR International governs our curriculum use, which means that coaches cannot alter or eliminate all or part of the lesson content based upon their personal perception of what is not appropriate content. Length or intensity of lessons may be slightly altered to accommodate the teams energy or external circumstances, such as weather and supplies.
4. **Appropriate Coach Behavior:** To the best of their ability, coaches should display positive behavior, encourage the girls, eliminate competition, and practice open communication with co-coaches, program staff, and school staff. There should be NO competing between teams. Coaches should show respect and a positive demeanor to her coaches and teams. Coaches should make their best effort to leave their personal life outside of practice. Remember, the girls are learning from you!
5. **Background Check:** All coaches are required to have a criminal background check done per GOTR international. This can be done via a online service that is used by GOTR International, or if you have a background check currently on file with the school, you may fill out a waiver and have it signed by a school official.



Policies and Procedures

6. **Attendance for Girls:** Attendance for girls: Girls are required to attend all lessons and are allowed a total of 4 excused or unexcused absences. If a girl is nearing her 4th absence, the coach should explain to her parents or guardians that if she misses more than 4 she will no longer be able to participate in the program. You must notify both the Program Coordinator and parents if a participant has missed too many practices. Absences of other team members should not be discussed in a group setting. Participants are not to arrive late or leave early unless extenuating circumstances exist.
7. **Final/Optional Meeting:** Please talk with other coaches at your school about the final/optional lesson you will be hosting, if you decide to. Coaches should come to a mutual agreement pertaining to the celebration. Please note all celebrations should be held at your practice site. You may not hold celebrations or sleepovers at your home.
8. **Be on Time:** Coaches are highly encouraged to arrive at least 10-15 minutes prior to the start of practice. Coaches may not leave or end practices early unless prior arrangements were made with the program coordinator, school staff, and parents. Please note your tardiness and absenteeism set a precedence for the participants.
9. **Behavior Incident Reports:** Coaches are encouraged to fill out a behavior report for any incident that causes disruption to the program. This includes, but is not limited to: non-cooperation as a team member, disrespect, refusal to participate, negative talk, physical boundary breaking, and disregard for safety rules. This form must be given to the program coordinator via fax or email. The program coordinator will then set-up a meeting with the participant, her parent/guardian and the coach who witnessed the incident. The participant in question will not be allowed to participate in the program until the meeting takes place with the program coordinator, the issue is resolved, and the participant recommits to following the Promises and Expectations of the program. If the program participant continues with disruptive behavior in future practices, the coaches should fill out another incident report and the program coordinator may remove her from the program. If a participant is removed they will not be refunded or allowed to keep the shoes.



Policies and Procedures

10. **Coach Gender, ratio, and Age Limit:** Males and females are allowed to be coaches for Girls on the Run. However, a male must co-coach with a female. There shall be at least 2 coaches for a team of 8-15 girls and no more than 4 coaches per team. Coaches must be at least 21 years of age by program start. Coaches that are 18 years of age can be coaches as long as they are paired with somebody 21 or older. **Junior coaches must be at least 16 years old.**
11. **Dress Code:** Coaches need to dress in a neat, casual manner. Non restrictive or athletic clothing should be worn for ease of movement. Mid-Drifts, short skirts, or clothing that advertises violence, alcohol, cigarettes, or other drugs shall not be permitted.
12. **Empowerment:** The purpose of the Girls on the Run program is to help and encourage girls to realize and maximize their personal strength. Although the program is specifically for girls, at no time should boys be portrayed in a negative way.
13. **First-Aid:** Coaches are not expected to administer extensive first aid. One coach must be first Aid/CPR certified per team for the current season. You must take any complaint of pain or discomfort seriously. Although it may be difficult to distinguish if a participant is truly in physical pain or just tired, you must still encourage her to walk, and if the pain persists, rest for a few minutes. If the pain is severe, have her rest, contact a school professional, and notify her parents. If an injury does occur you must fill out the Accident Incident Report. All coaches are encouraged to have a small first aid kit for practices ; if you do not own one it should be provided by the school.
14. **Transportation and Health History and Consent Forms:** Girls must have completed and handed into you the Transportation Release form by lesson 3. If she has not turned in the form by lesson 3, she is required to sit out until she has turned in the paperwork . These forms are provided in your coach bag and may be acquired on our website. The Health History and Consent forms are filled out by parents during the registration process. They can be accessed online via raceplanner. You must keep all returned forms in your bag until the end of the season. These forms are extremely important in the case of emergency.
15. **Immediate Termination for Coaches:** Arrest for drug related activities, child abuse/neglect, or drinking and driving is grounds for immediate dismissal from Girls on the Run.
16. **Pick-up Dates:** There will be two important pick-up dates during the season. The first pick-up will be for shoes in early march and the second will be for event supplies in the beginning of May. Unless otherwise agreed upon you will be required to pick up these materials from the Center for Women in Transition in Holland.



Policies and Procedures

17. **Meet the School Staff:** It is important to have a relationship with the schools secretary, custodian, and physical education teacher at your location. They may be able to provide you with necessary space, equipment, and information.
18. **Moving a girl to another team:** Girls may not be moved to another team without permission from the program coordinator. Communication from the coach to the school liaison or other coaches should occur if the program coordinator approves the move. Girls may not move teams for social reasons. A girl may not be granted permission to switch teams without approval from the program coordinator.
19. **Non-Compete Clause**– All coaches or affiliates with Girls on Run are on a non-competite clause. It is unlawful to fabricate or perform Girls on the Run lessons (or those similar) without the permission of Girls on the Run International.
20. **No Driving Rule**– **Coaches/volunteers are not allowed to transport a child anywhere in a vehicle.** Coaches should not allow a girl to leave with anyone other than her parent or guardian unless a permission slip has been signed prior to the practice. Please use the transportation release form provided.
21. **Off Grounds:** It is imperative that we are able to locate your team at all times. Girls must be visible and near an adult at all times. Coaches are **NOT** allowed to remove the team off from school grounds at any time. The only exception to this is for the practice 5K and parents will be notified by the coaches of the date and route as it pertains to their school. Coaches must fill out the **practice location change form** and have prior approval from the program coordinator for the temporary practice location change in regards to their schools practice 5K. Failure to comply with this provision compromises the safety of the girls and may lead to dismissal as a coach.
22. **Parents as Coaches:** We believe it is healthy for girls to interact with adult role models outside of their parents. Although we encourage this, if a mother and daughter can commit to not letting their relationship have a negative effect on the group , then we will permit this arrangement.
23. **Performance:** We reserve the right to ask for the resignation of a coach if failure to comply with guidelines becomes evident. If a situation is brought to our attention, mediation will first be executed to try and resolve the issue at hand.



Policies and Procedures

24. **Pick-up:** Coaches may not leave until all girls have been picked up. If a parent is more than 15 minutes late, the coach will be required to talk with the parent and remind them of the appropriate time to pick up their child. If it happens a second time the coach will be required to contact the program coordinator to discuss the issue. If the problem persists, notify the program coordinator so appropriate measures can be taken.
25. **Program Definition:** Girls on the run is a life changing learning program for girls in 3rd through 8th grade. The program combines training for a 5K (3.1 miles) with a curriculum centralized on self esteem enhancing and uplifting workouts. The goals of the program are to encourage positive emotional, social, mental, and physical development. Lessons promote self challenge and teamwork instead of competition. Girls on the Run uses the term “running” loosely. Girls may run, hop, skip, jump, or even dance their way towards their goal. All girls are winners!
26. **Removing Girls from the Program:** Only the program coordinator may remove girls from the program. If a girl is having attendance or behavioral issues, fill out a Behavior Incident Form and contact the program coordinator immediately. Refunds will not be given for any girl who is removed.
27. **Shoes:** Inappropriate running shoes, such as clogs, are not permitted. If a girl forgets her running shoes, she may walk or watch. Bare feet are prohibited. All program New Balance shoes are to be stored at the school or site. Shoes will be collected and dispersed at the beginning and end of each practice. Girls on the Run is not responsible for lost or stolen shoes. Girls are free to take their shoes home after the 5K event in May. ** Please note it is absolutely necessary to let the program coordinator know if a girl’s shoes do not fit properly. We cannot exchange shoes once they have been worn outside. Coaches will be responsible for checking sizes and filling out the necessary form if an exchange is needed. Coaches will be held responsible for any shoe returned due to the coaches failure to fit the participant.
28. **Substitutions:** If you are unable to make the normal meeting time for your site, a substitute is required. Notify both the program coordinator and school liaison of when you will be absent .



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29. **Supplies for the Program:** All program supplies are property of Center for Women in Transition and Girls on the Run of Allegan and Ottawa Counties. Please treat your curriculum and supplies with respect as it will be used for future seasons upon the return of your coach bag. Coach bags are to be returned at the celebration 5K. Please keep lessons and game pieces organized and refrain from throwing out any materials. If you are missing supplies please contact your program coordinator.
30. **Weather:** Please use your best discretion when practicing outside. Refrain from practicing outside if it is raining heavily, lightning, or extremely windy and always follow the school's policy regarding weather. The 5k will only be cancelled in case of severe weather 4 hours or less before event start time. The event will not be rescheduled.
31. **Confidentiality:** As a coach, you will be supplied with participant rosters for your team. Rosters contain personal information for girls such as contact information and health information in case of an emergency. It is **imperative** that personal information remains confidential and is not shared with anyone outside of the coaching team.

Thank You Girls on the Run Coaches!

Please note this is not a complete list of all of the GOTR program policies. Please see your coach folder for details. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact us.

We would love to hear from you!

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