

# Setting Up a Site



**Educating** and preparing **girls** for a lifetime of  
**self-respect** and **healthy living**

# Setting Up A Site for Girls on the Run<sup>®</sup> of South Hampton Roads

## **About Girls on the Run of South Hampton Roads (GOTRSHR)**

Girls on the Run<sup>®</sup> (GOTR) of South Hampton Roads is a 12-week character building program of experiential learning through running. It teaches very specific and well-defined social and personal skills. It is a non-profit organization designed to educate and prepare girls for a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living. The curriculum empowers girls with a greater sense of self-awareness, a sense of achievement and a foundation in team building as well as a commitment to enhancing their communities, helping them become, strong contented and self-confident women. The program culminates in a non-competitive 5K-race event which gives the girls a chance to shine and an overwhelming sense of accomplishment.

Girls on the Run International was founded in 1996 by a woman named Molly Barker in Charlotte, North Carolina. Molly began running at the age of 15 - an age when she found herself stuck in what she calls the “girl box” where only girls who were a certain size with a certain beauty were popular; where girls who wanted to fit in had to mold their bodies and their personalities to fit the requirements of the box.

Nationally there are over **191 Councils** in 45 states and Canada. Over 108,880 girls participated in 2011. Locally there were **23 sites and 26 teams** participating in the program in the Fall of 2011. **Currently, we have 40 teams and almost 600 girls participating for the Spring 2012 season.**

## **Potential Sites**

Potential sites for GOTR/GOT (Girls on Track) include opportunities in the seven cities within South Hampton Roads. We partner with local schools, municipalities, YMCA’s, YWCA’s, and churches to offer our program in a variety of locations in an effort to reach as many girls as possible.

## **Site Involvement**

GOTRSHR provides almost everything needed to run the program. The site would need to:

- Provide a contact person at the site to coordinate with GOTR/SHR. 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. This does not have to be a track. A field is fine. However, there would be a need to measure off part of the area for occasions when lessons require running a certain distance, e.g. 1 mile, 3k, etc.
- Provide a rain site (classroom, gym, etc.)
- Choose two days a week for meeting one hour and a half each lesson
- Distribute registration forms to all girls in age group (3<sup>rd</sup> –5<sup>th</sup> for Girls on the Run, 6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> for Girls on Track)
- Arrange a time/place for a GOTRSHR representative to meet with the girls and/or parents prior to registration to answer questions, encourage registration, etc.
- Provide a space for the end of season potluck banquet (cafeteria, etc.)

**The site also must provide:**

- A coach and assistant – GOTRSHR will train these coaches.

## Coaches

All our coaches must be First Aid/ CPR certified and are required to attend an intensive day-long training session before the programs begin. They are provided with a very well developed, well-researched curriculum, which has been used successfully by GOTRSHR many times. Each site will have a head coach and several assistant coaches.

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

- Serve as a role model for young girls and understand and believe in the mission of GOTRSHR
- Become CPR and First Aid certified;
- Attend full day Coaches' Training;
- Attend pre-season Coaches' Meeting, plus other meetings spaced throughout the season;
- Prepare for and supervise 24 hour long lessons in a manner consistent with the GOTRSHR philosophy and curricula;
- Plan and coordinate the end of season banquet;
- Run with the girls in the end of season 5k race/walk.

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

- Serve as a role model for young girls and understand and believe in the mission of GOTRSHR
- 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 a community running race 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.

## Group Size

We prefer a minimum of eight (8) girls and limit each group to a maximum of fifteen (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 twenty girls make it difficult to establish the group rapport and the depth of community we are seeking. **New sites may have 6 girls minimum and are limited to 12 girls during the first season.**

## Timing and Length of Sessions

We have two sessions of GOTRSHR each year.

- Fall Session**, which usually begins in mid- September and runs for 10 weeks, meeting twice a week, ending in early December. To begin a session at your site in the fall, planning should begin in early April and be finalized no later than **May 1st**.
- Spring Session**, which begins at the end of February and runs for 10 weeks meeting twice a week, ending 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 1<sup>st</sup>**.

## Fees and Scholarships

Our current fee per session is based on household income. It ranges from \$20-\$150 per girl. This fee is based upon an honor system, with the girl's family selecting the fee appropriate for their income level for payment. Scholarships may be offered upon application to GOTRSHR.

Included in the fee price are:

- 20 one-hour lessons conducted by a certified GOTRSHR coach
- Healthy snacks
- Lesson handouts and materials
- Girls on the Run t-shirt
- Water bottle
- End of season banquet

**5k Race:** The 5k race is a critical piece of the program and the \$5 fee for this race is separate from the registration and cannot be paid with a scholarship.

## Curriculum

The curriculum encompasses the following 3 concepts:

- Weeks 1-4: All About Me...Getting to Know Who I am and What I Stand For!
- Weeks 5-8: Building My Team...Understanding the Importance of Cooperation
- Weeks 9-12: Community Begins with Me...Learning About Community and Designing our Own Community 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 Justin Bieber." 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 20 lessons conclude with participation in a 5k run. This is usually a local 5K race or a Girls on the Run of South Hampton Roads sponsored race.

### **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. 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 improved girls' self-esteem, body image and eating attitudes to a "statistically significant" extent.

### **Contact Us**

If you are interested in starting a site in South Hampton Roads, please feel free to call or email us to discuss your interest at 757.403.1154 or amy@gotrshr.org. Please also check out the GOTRSHR website at [www.gotrshr.org](http://www.gotrshr.org) or look at our parent organization website [www.girlsontherun.org](http://www.girlsontherun.org) for more information.

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