



## Girls on the Run of the YMCA of the Sandhills Coach Program Policies

**Program Mission and Intent:** Girls on the Run is a life-changing, character development program for girls, ages 8-12, which uses running as a vehicle to educate and empower them toward a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living. The program combines training for a 3.1-mile walking/running event with a developmentally appropriate curriculum and activities that focus on the well being of the whole girl. The goals of the program are to encourage positive emotional, social, mental, and physical development. Lessons promote self-challenge and teamwork instead of competition, and promote self-worth instead of societal worth.

1. **Accident/Incident Reports:** Coaches are asked to complete an Accident/Incident Report in the event that a girl is injured and required First Aid attention becomes ill during a practice or whose behavior disrupts practices or is hurtful to any member of her team. Forms are to be completed the day of the incident and signed by the parent. Please mail the form to the YMCA of the Sandhills office the following day, sent attention to GOTR. Or, can be given to the GOTR Coordinator directly the following day
2. **Behavior Incidents:** For any incident that causes a disruption, including but not limited to non-cooperation as a team member, disrespect, refusal to participate, negative talk, physical boundary breaking, and disregard of safety rules, please follow these steps:
  1. Immediately stop the behavior in a respectful manner and provide positive redirection.
  2. Calmly pull the child aside and talk with the participant about their behavior. Clearly state your expectations for changes in their behavior and ask for a commitment from the girl to live by the GOTR values.
  3. Respectfully inform the parent of your conversation upon dismissal.
  4. If the same girl is continually disruptive, coaches are encouraged to contact a Program Manager who will provide support and resources to help correct the problem.
  5. If the behavior is not resolved the girl may be asked to leave the program.
3. **Additional Adults/Children at Practices:** Practices are reserved for GOTR trained coaches and participants. Parents, teachers, students, friends, and other observers can disrupt practice and keep participants from fully engaging in the session's activities. Coaches must find childcare arrangements for their own children during practice times. Parents and teachers are invited to participate in the Mock 5k at mid-season, but should otherwise be off-site during practice. Occasionally the GOTR staff, Board Members or, Site Contacts, or Program Volunteers may visit your program to provide support and encouragement for your team.
4. **Altering the Curriculum:** GOTR International governs our curriculum use, therefore coaches may not alter nor eliminate any part of a lesson's *content* based upon their personal perception of what is or is not appropriate. *Length or intensity* of lessons may be slightly altered to accommodate the team's energy level or because of weather during practice. Lesson materials found in your program bin may slightly differ than what was listed in the curriculum in an effort to be more environmentally friendly.

5. **Attendance for Girls:** GOTR asks that the coaches keep attendance for each practice. Please notify the Program Manager within the first week if you find any errors to your program roster. If a participant does not show up during the first week of practice or has missed more than 3 practices, please contact a Program Manager. Coaches are also encouraged to directly communicate with parents about consistent absences in an effort to build positive relationships with our families.
6. **Transportation:** Coaches are not allowed to transport a participant home or to any GOTR related event unless given written permission by a parent. The GOTR office highly discourages this practice.
7. **Practice Locations:** Each site is provided with an indoor and outdoor practice location. Please conduct practices in these spaces only. This ensures parents, site contacts, and the GOTR staff is able to locate your team in case of emergency. Please also maintain a consistent drop off and pick up location throughout the season.
8. **Participant Health Forms and Parental Consent Forms:** Health forms are filled out at the time of registration. The Coaches should keep a record on file in their materials bin at each practice in the event that they would need to refer to it. Please ensure that you have your copies from the GOTR local Coordinator before your first practice session.
9. **Participant Pre and Post Surveys:** Participant Pre and Post surveys provide our Girls on the Run/YMCA of the Sandhills with valuable information on ways to improve our program, as well as significant data that assists in future funding for GOTR. Coaches are required to facilitate the completion of the Participant Pre and Post Surveys, found in the Coach Material Bin for each location. Pre-Surveys should be conducted by NLT the 3<sup>rd</sup> practice Session and the Post-Surveys must be completed during the last week of the Session. Pre and Post Surveys are to be read aloud to the participants. Please annotate on each Pre-Survey that is a Pre-Survey and keep them grouped together in the Coach Materials Bin, and then do the same for the Post-Surveys after they are completed. All Completed and annotated Surveys should be placed back in the Coach Materials Bin and kept “grouped together” to be turned into the GOTR Coordinator at Coach Material Bin turn in at the end of the Session.
10. **Dismissal:** Coaches are asked to supervise dismissal, ensuring each girl has been picked up by an authorized adult. Coaches are encouraged to introduce themselves to parents and caregivers and share brief information on the day’s activities. We ask that two coaches remain on site until all girls have been picked up. If a parent is more than 15 minutes late, coaches should remind parents of the expected dismissal time. Coaches should contact the Program Managers if there are consistent problems with late pick up.
11. **Practice Days and Times:** The GOTR season covers 10—12 weeks (coaches will be notified of how many weeks before each spring or fall session starts. Program days and times are not to be changed over the course of the season. Coaches may not cancel practice due to weather or changes in schedules. Practices are only cancelled when your site location is closed due to inclement weather or holidays.
12. **Appropriate Attire:** Girls are asked to come to practice prepared to be active. Encourage your participants to wear comfortable clothing and appropriate footwear. Clogs, flip-flops, and crocs are considered unsafe, therefore, girls wearing these types of shoes are allowed to walk or watch during practice. Bare feet are prohibited. New Balance has supplied our council with a limited number of free shoe certificates for girls in need of financial assistance. If the Coach identifies a girl in her group that may need financial assistance for a new pair of running shoes, please contact the GOTR coordinator to see if there is an opportunity to receive assistance for shoes.
13. **Snacks:** GOTR does not provide snacks for practices. Girls are welcome to bring their own snacks, but they must be eaten before or after practice time. Coaches should not provide snacks.
14. **Supervision:** Participants should be supervised at all times. Please ensure a coach accompanies girls needing to use the restroom or leave the group for any reason. **At no time should two participants be alone where they cannot be observed by others. This policy must be strictly adhered to for the safety of both participants and coaches.**
15. **Inclement Weather:** GOTR is a “rain or shine” program. Practice is only cancelled due to inclement weather if the site location has determined to close. Coaches are encouraged to use the outdoor space as often as

possible. This includes cooler days and during rain showers. Practice should be held indoors during thunderstorms or when the Heat Advisory is Orange or above.

16. **Electronics:** Girls should refrain from bringing cell phones and portable electronics to GOTR practice. Coaches are encouraged to collect any electronics at the start of practice and return them to girls as they are dismissed.

## Coach Policies

17. **Be a model to our mission:** Coaches serve as mentors and positive role models and are truly the face and mouthpiece of Girls on the Run of the Triangle. We expect coaches to live and promote the values and missions of GOTR through their words, actions, leadership, commitment level, and interaction with all members of the GOTR community.
18. **Coach Attendance and Commitment:** GOTR coaches commit to attending every practice during the 12-week season. To ensure proper supervision and meet national guidelines, we require 2 coaches to be onsite at every practice. In the event a coach must miss a practice, contact the Program Manager with as much notice as possible to secure a substitute.

Additionally, coaches commit to complete coach training, CPR and First Aid certification, along with background check and volunteer documentation. Coaches will also be expected to attend the Mid-Season Coach meeting and the end of season 5k.

19. **Preparedness:** Coaches are expected to work as a team to ensure excellence in the delivery of all lessons. All activities and materials should be reviewed and prepared in advance of the day's practice. Coaches should arrive to their site locations 10 minutes prior to the start of practice to meet their girls, set up activities, and begin the session promptly at the designated start time.
20. **Participation:** Coaches are expected to be fully engaged in the lesson activities. Each coach should take an active role during each lesson (i.e.: set up, facilitation, participation). At least one coach should be participating in the "Work Out" activity during each lesson. If the girls are moving, a coach should be moving with them!
21. **Non-Compete Clause:** During coach training all coaches will complete Non-Compete documentation. Under Girls on the Run International regulations, it is unlawful to fabricate or perform Girls on the Run lesson plans (or those similar to the original) in any other manner or place without permission from Girls on the Run.
22. **Performance and Program Evaluation:** The Girls on the Run curriculum is only as good the coaches who facilitate it—therefore we expect it to be amazing! The GOTR staff will provide you with support, resources, and any help you might need throughout the season to ensure success. Site visits, phone calls, and emails are all used as ways to communicate and ensure quality and support. In return, we ask for your feedback and support in evaluating our program.

In the event we find a coach struggling to meet the expectations set forth in these policies, we reserve the right to ask for her resignation from the program. Mediation will be used to resolve every situation that is brought to our attention.

23. **Cause for Termination:** Arrest for drug-related activities, child abuse/neglect, or drinking and driving is grounds for immediate dismissal from Girls on the Run program.
24. **Appropriate Attire:** Coaches are expected to participate in all activities with the girls. Therefore, they should be dressed accordingly. Model appropriate work out wear for your girls by dressing to suit the weather and level of activity.

25. **Cell Phones:** We ask that coaches have access to a cell phone at all times during practice in the event the GOTR staff or a parent needs to reach you.
26. **Acceptance of gifts:** Coaches are welcome to accept thank you gifts from parents, but should refrain from accepting cash. Cash gifts should be returned or encouraged to be used as a donation to Girls on the Run/YMCA of the Sandhills.
27. **Supplies for the Program:** All program supplies and curriculum are property of Girls on the Run YMCA of the Sandhills. 90% of the materials provided in program bins are reused season to season. Coaches are expected to care for materials and return bins to the office in the manner in which they were given to you. Please do not write in the Program Curriculum Books.

## Communication Policies

1. **Communication with GOTR Staff:** The GOTR staff is on hand to help and support coaches or parents at any time. We encourage coaches or parents to contact our office or a staff member's cell phone with any questions, concerns or ideas. A GOTR staff member will respond to the communication within 24 hours of receipt—if this does not happen, try and resend the correspondence or call directly as technology can fail from time to time. In turn, coaches are asked to respond to all emails and/or phone calls from the designated Program Coordinator within 48 hours of receiving the communication.
2. **Communication with Parents and Participants:** As the direct contact to our parents and participants, coaches are expected to communicate routine and important details about GOTR lessons, events, and activities. Please take the time to get to know and communicate with the girls and parents. We encourage coaches to email parents on a regular basis to share pictures or stories from your team, as well as important details on upcoming events or to reiterate program policies.
3. **Coach Communication Resources:** The Girls on the Run Coordinator will inform Coaches regularly of upcoming events, and provide updates as necessary.

## Crisis Management Protocol

In the event of a serious accident or emergency while coaching a Girls on the Run session, the following protocol must be followed:

1. Assess the condition of the victim immediately.
  - a. **Designate someone to call 911, the victim's parents, and a GOTR contact**
  - b. If unconscious, check for breathing and pulse
  - c. If not breathing, provide rescue breathing and CPR
  - d. If a back injury can not be ruled out, do not move the victim and provide inline support for the head and neck
2. Stabilize the situation
  - Isolate the victim.
  - Ensure supervision of the group.
  - Keep the victim and the participants calm.
3. One coach or GOTR staff member should accompany the victim to the hospital. A GOTR staff member will meet you at the hospital if unable to accompany the victim.
4. Document the incident on the Incident/Accident form including specific details on what occurred.
5. The GOTR office will contact the coaches and families of the participants within 24 hours of the incident to inform them of the details of the situation. Girls on the Run of the YMCA of the Sandhills asks that you maintain the confidentiality of the victim by not sharing details of the accident with anyone outside of the GOTR program.