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(Neb.)-Girls on the Run Programs Expand Across Panhandle

By: Roxie Graham-Marski Posted at: 02/24/2014 11:52 AM



(CHADRON)-The Girls on the Run program of Nebraska has expanded its offerings in the Nebraska Panhandle this spring. Chadron physical education teacher Linda Rischling says Girls on The Run was first introduced to the Nebraska Panhandle in Chadron and Hay Springs schools in 2013, making them the first Panhandle schools to offer the program.

This year, the program has expanded to schools in Crawford, Gordon-Rushville, Hemingford and Scottsbluff. More than 100 girls are expected to participate in one of seven Panhandle teams throughout the region.

The season begins the week of March 3rd and concludes with a Panhandle-wide 5K fun run/walk on May 17th in Chadron. Teams are coached by positive-minded women volunteers who want to help girls set goals and achieve them.

About the Program

Girls on the Run of Nebraska is one of 212 such nonprofit organizations across that country that offers innovative after-school programming to promote healthy choices and confidence in young girls. The award-winning program combines exercise, education and mentoring to promote healthy living and self-esteem in third- through sixth-grade girls. GOTR teams meet for 75 minutes twice a week for about 10 weeks to play running games that help train them for a 5K run/walk.

Character-development lessons on values, teamwork, communication, goal-setting and health are incorporated with the physical training, so participants get much more than exercise. GOTR is as much about friendship, positive body image and self-esteem as it is about exercise.

GOTR-Nebraska Growth

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Since its inception in September 2003, GOTR-Nebraska has helped 8,800 girls across the Heartland gain a stronger sense of self with GOTR's focus on positive emotional, social, mental and physical development. The Nebraska council is one of about 212 GOTR councils across the country, which collectively served more than 100,000 girls in 2013.

The GOTR curriculum is based on extensive research and "on-the-track" testing of lessons. Each lesson includes an ice-breaker discussion, a warm-up activity, a stretch routine with question and answer time, a workout with a team goal, a cool-down and stretch with additional question and answer time, and a closing cheer or words of encouragement.

Teams are coached by female volunteers who believe fitness is a valuable tool to empower young girls to make healthy decisions as they enter adolescence. Coaches undergo background checks and are trained to use the GOTR curriculum.

For a complete schedule of sites and times, visit www.GOTRNebraska.org. Or for more information, call Chadron Public Schools P.E. teacher Linda Rischling at 308-432-0717 or e-mail linda.rischling@chadronschools.net.

--Chadron Girls On The Run