

**FORMATION OF AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RUNNING CLUB  
FAIRVIEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
MOUNT PROSPECT S.D. 57**  
(as written by the parent organizer)

I wanted the children to train for the Got2Run race in May. I am not a runner, but my husband is so I got some of this information from him. I thought I had a teacher sponsor, but that fell through. I checked with our PTA officers and got the go ahead to organize a running club as part of the PTA. I obviously needed help and was able to place a notice in our PTA newsletter asking for other parents interested in helping with the running club – both runners and non-runners. Fortunately there were 4 other parents interested in helping. The 5 of us met and decided on a schedule. We decided to begin the club the week after Spring Break, about 6 weeks before the event. We decided to meet Tuesdays and Thursdays after school for 40 minutes (time was just right), and then at a local park on Saturday mornings for longer runs.

We then put a memo in the PTA newsletter with a waiver so we would not be held liable if someone got hurt. In addition to the waiver, we got parents' email addresses and cell phone numbers so we could communicate with them. We did not charge for our program and had 35 kids sign up for it. We asked that the kids bring a water bottle, running shoes, and possibly a snack if they needed it before running. I got the waiver from the RRCA "Kids Run the Nation" Program Guide at <https://www.rrca.org/programs/kids-run-the-nation-program/#booklet>. This program has a wonderful set of lesson plans you can use as a training guide. RRCA is the Road Runners Club of America and the group organizing Got2Run is a member of the RRCA. There are also "CouchTo-2.62" Training Programs on the Got2Run website, which can be used a guide.

I used the website <http://www.mapmyrun.com> to figure out that running around our school block was exactly a half a mile. We worked up to the 2.62 distance. Some days we just did sprints. We had 3 or 4 additional parents that ran with the kids on many days. They got their training in for the race, too! The parents running with the kids at various paces helped keep an eye on the kids and allowed them to run at a comfortable pace.

Our only cost was water that I kept in the trunk of my car in case the kids forgot their water bottles. No sense in a child over heating when a case of water costs less than \$5. If kids repeatedly asked for water, I would send an email reminder to their parents as a reminder that they needed to bring water for running club.

The communication with the parents by email was good as there were times that the weather made running impossible. We would send an email to the parents and the school would do an announcement before the end of the school day that the running club was cancelled.

In the end, we had 90% of our running club participants run the Got2Run race and the total number of students, parents, and school staff running for Fairview School was 115 – the highest number for any one school.