



Presented by the Service Guild of Birmingham

**Saturday, February 13, 2010**

## **ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INVOLVEMENT**

The *Mercedes Kids Marathon*, presented by the Service Guild of Birmingham, is an innovative five month endurance building running/walking program for K-5<sup>th</sup> graders. Our goal is to assist children in building endurance, setting and accomplishing long-term fitness goals and enhancing their self-esteem while teaching them valuable lessons about making health and fitness a regular part of their life. We have outlined steps to make the training months successful and easy for coaches, students and parents. We would encourage you to adapt these steps to your school and your curriculum.

We encourage each school to select one coach or volunteer parent as the key contact with us for your involvement. You might also consider recruiting a parent to assist you with coordination and communication within the school. We will communicate via email with you as needed. Each school coordinator will be provided with the school's participant database to help manage log sheet turn-in and packet pickup/distribution.

**To ensure you receive all communications regarding the Mercedes Kids Marathon, presented by the Service Guild of Birmingham, please send your email address to [kids@mercedesmarathon.com](mailto:kids@mercedesmarathon.com) and be sure to add us to your address book. In addition, be sure to list your contact person's information (i.e., name, email address, phone number), and if this is a coach or parent.**

### **Suggestions to Increase School Participation**

- Begin communications with students and parents now that you will be participating as a school.
- Start your training with a "timed" mile so kids can measure their fitness level now against their time at the end of their training.
- Put information in school newsletter to parents. We will provide race logo if you would like.
- Send information or entry forms home to each student.
- Keep a running mileage log at school in a highly visible place: hallway, entry bulletin board.
- Designate a specific running day at school during P.E. such as a "Mercedes Monday" or "Training Tuesday." This way, parents and children will know that a certain day is a running day so they wear their running shoes and comfortable clothes to run in.
- Have mystery or guest runners come to the school and run with the kids; could be a parent, teacher, local fireman or policeman, high school or college athlete. The kids love this!
- Organize contests between grades for the most miles run between now and February.
- Challenge the kids by making a fun bet with them. Remember, there are cash awards for the highest registrations in different size categories. One teacher bet "if 300 students sign up, I'll run the marathon in pink running shoes...and HE ended up with a darn fast time in those shoes!"
- Create a video of the children training over the next few months to show just before race day.
- Organize race day activities for your school. (e.g. meeting before the race, group photos, etc.)

### **Registration**

There are several options for registration and **EARLY** coordination and completion of the registration for your team's participants ensures that all potential problems can be solved. Each school can choose whether or not to collect all entry forms and fees. It's up to you how to handle registration for your school. However, in an effort to make our event more environmentally friendly, we ask that you encourage your students to go to [www.mercedesmarathon.com](http://www.mercedesmarathon.com) and register online. Be sure to tell parents to save a copy of their receipt. Other options include:

- Send an entry form home with each student, have them fill it out and turn them in to you with the registration fee by a certain date.
- Provide the entry form either from the website or from the school and have the parents mail it in along with their entry fee to the marathon office themselves.

### **Log Data Collection – Best Practices**

Log sheets are used to document the mileage your school's kids have run. A total of 25.2 miles must be completed on the log to be eligible for race day participation. Miles must be completed and Log sheet documentation **MUST** be turned in by January 30, 2010 to be eligible on race day. Our suggestion for keeping this documentation simple is to create a single log sheet that certifies all students at your school have completed their required miles. You may download a log sheet at [www.mercedesmarathon.com](http://www.mercedesmarathon.com). Be sure to let the kids and parents know that you are keeping the log for them. If possible, it is preferred by the *Mercedes Marathon* staff that you notify us via an email to [kids@mercedesmarathon.com](mailto:kids@mercedesmarathon.com) stating that all kids registered at your school have completed the necessary mileage to participate on race day.

### **Extras Provided by *The Mercedes Marathon***

1. CASH AWARDS to schools will be given for the following categories:
  - a. Highest Number of Participants by percentage of enrollment (schools with an enrollment of 250 or more)
  - b. Highest Number of Participants by percentage of enrollment (fewer than 250 enrollment)

### **Race Packets**

Race packet pickup for the *Mercedes Kids Marathon* will be January 28, 2010 at the BMI office located at 2709 19<sup>th</sup> Place South in Homewood. The hours are 8-11 a.m. and 2-6 p.m. Schools should pick up their assembled race packets at that time. You will then have one week to check the bags and make any corrections. **Please check our website for further information regarding packet pick up.**

Packets will include:

- Individual race number (2 sets – one for the child, one for the parents)
- T-shirt (different color for each grade)
- Final Race Instructions with map

### **Race Day Schedule (tentative)**

The final mile for the event will start at 10:00 a.m. We will once again have multiple exit chutes to help parents find their kids easily and most important, safely. The tentative schedule is as follows:

8:00 a.m.	<b><i>BE&amp;K 5K for Kid One Transport</i></b>
9:00 a.m.	<b><i>The Bell Center children of the EIP Run (subject to change)</i></b>
10:00 a.m.	5 <sup>th</sup> graders (black t-shirts)
10:10 a.m.	4 <sup>th</sup> graders (yellow t-shirts)
10:20 a.m.	3 <sup>rd</sup> graders (gray t-shirts)
10:30 a.m.	2 <sup>nd</sup> graders (white t-shirts)
10:40 a.m.	1 <sup>st</sup> graders (blue t-shirts) *
10:50 a.m.	Kindergarteners (red t-shirts) *

\*Parents will only be allowed to run with the 1<sup>st</sup> graders and the Kindergarteners. Parents will NOT be allowed to run with strollers or unregistered younger siblings during the event on race day.

**Log + Final mile = Cool Medal/Healthy Lifestyle Change!**