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## Girls on the Run at ECPL

East Cleveland, Ohio January 30, 2017 – Girls On The Run (GOTR) is a spring 2017 program led by area coaches to help girls grades three through five train for a 5k run. The team is open for new members to join them Wednesdays and Fridays from 4:30 –6:00pm beginning the week of March 6, 2017. The activities start just in time for International Women’s Day (March 8), a global day recognizing the achievements of women.

GOTR recognizes the importance of building safe, body-positive opportunities for pre-adolescent girls, who face conflicting and often negative messages and social pressures. Body-shaming and loss of confidence are all too common at a time when girls are trying to understand themselves, how they should act, and who they should be. Studies show that by adolescence, girls' confidence drops about twice as much as their male counterparts, but participation in physical activity and organized sports have also been shown to offset these factors and improve confidence. The positive impact of sports on self-esteem is likely related to a variety of factors, like helping girls recognize inherent potential, challenging limiting assumptions about their abilities, and developing strength.

East Cleveland Public Library is one of about a half dozen participating sites in Cleveland, joining more than seventy community locations across Northeast Ohio, from Cuyahoga, Lorain, Medina, Portage, and Summit counties. Providing an opportunity for joining together in a proactive environment, GOTR participation helps girls recognize their own potential all while providing socializing and fun.

GOTR is not about speed, but emphasizes empowering and healthy activities to focus on personal development, friendship, fun, and training for a 5k run Saturday, May 20 at The University of Akron InfoCision Stadium. Transportation forms will be sent home with participating girls to enable shared rides. Teams are limited to 15 girls, so registration is required. Online registration opens Monday February 20 at 9:30 and closes on Sunday February 26<sup>th</sup>. Registered participants will receive: 20 lessons conducted by certified Girls on the Run Coaches, one official Girls on the Run T-shirt, option to participate in the Girls on the Run 5k, a water bottle, a healthy snack at each practice, a 5k finisher's medallion at the final run. For information about the organized run or to register, visit [www.gotrneo.org](http://www.gotrneo.org).