



Running Buddy Tips

Lace up your sneakers, put on your GOTR gear and get ready for a 5K experience unlike any other! Your girl may want to hold your hand, skip, sprint or walk, and no matter what she chooses, you'll be the support she needs along the course. And at the end, when the finish line comes into sight, you'll never forget the look on her face as she crosses and realizes that, indeed, she can accomplish anything she sets her mind to do.

Running buddies have two very important jobs: **Stay with your girl at all times and provide positive encouragement!**

Did you know?

Research shows that girls report more enjoyment and satisfaction of physical activity when adults create a climate which reinforces improvement, focuses on effort and peer support, and fosters belief in the value and unique role of all athletes. Ego-oriented climates (which focus on outperforming others, exhibit favoritism toward high-ability team members, and encourage competition among members) produce anxiety, less enjoyment and more negative relationships with others.¹

¹ The Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport at the University of Minnesota. *Developing Physically Active Girls*, 2007.

Tips for positive encouragement

As a running buddy, your behavior can help foster a lifelong appreciation of physical activity. Girls on the Run promotes positive encouragement for all participants, even if they're having a bad day. Please see below for phrases GOTR does not recommend and some suggested alternatives:

Not Recommended	More Positive Alternative
"Try to beat at least one more person."	"Let's try to catch up to those girls so we can cheer them on and encourage each other."
"You're never going to finish with that bad attitude."	"Do you think you're plugged into the negative cord or the positive cord right now? What can you and I do to plug ourselves into the positive cord?" "That sounds like some negative self-talk to me. What did you learn about turning around negative self-talk in GOTR?"
"You're not really prepared for this 5k. Do you want to drop out instead of finishing?"	"Let's give it our best effort this time. It doesn't matter how long it takes, I'll be so proud of you for finishing!"
"You can't let her beat you."	"I'm proud of you for doing your best and choosing the pace that's right for you."
"Your time isn't going to be very good if you don't hurry up."	"Let's talk about the personal goal you made for this 5k. What do you need to do to reach that goal?"