



# Why Be A Buddy Runner?

## Why do we have Buddy Runners?

At Girls on the Run of Northern Virginia, we want all of our Girls on the Run and Heart & Sole participants to have a positive 5k experience at the end of their 10-week programs. By the time they get to the 5k, the girls have hopefully developed the skills they need to be confident, happy, and healthy as they navigate future life challenges.

For many of the girls, the Girls on the Run 5k event is their first 5k. We expect large crowds with more than 2,000 runners at each event day. Buddy Runners provide support and encouragement as the girls participate in the 5k events.

## What is the role of a Buddy Runner

Buddy Runners are able to focus on one specific girl and her personal goals, ensuring she has a positive experience of healthy goal setting and achievement - a lesson we hope will stay with her long after she crosses this finish line.

## Does every girl need a Buddy Runner?

We strongly encourage that all Girls on the Run and Heart & Sole participants have pre-arranged Buddy Runners. Please note that parents and guardians are responsible for ensuring appropriate supervision for each girl before, during, and after the race (even if the girl does not have an assigned Buddy Runner). Coaches are responsible for the team as a whole, and should not be assigned to be Buddy Runners to individual girls unless the coaches have approved it in advance.

## What if I cannot find a buddy runner for my daughter?

We would be happy to help you find one! We have special volunteers (called Road Runners) who sign up to run as a Buddy Runner with a girl during the 5k. The Road Runners are background checked before the race. The deadline to sign up for a Road Runner for your daughter is **May 6th** for the Spring season, and **November 9th** for the Fall season.