

# **RUNNING TIPS FOR KIDS**

## **Wylie Ryan Guide for Parents and Teachers**

We hope "Running Tips for Kids" is helpful in making the 21Km **Wylie Ryan Spring Half Marathon for Kids** journey an enjoyable and satisfying one for kids, teachers, and/or parents.

### **Some things to know – Put yourself in their shoes – Think like a kid!**

Kids running must be approached from a kids' point of view. Unlike some of us adults, kids are too smart to run for running sake, for fitness, or to lose weight –.

Running has to be disguised or have a purpose, for kids to want to do it. It has to get them somewhere, or get them something. Running around the block to get back to where they started, just doesn't cut it for most of them.

Winning isn't a motivator for the vast majority of kids, because so few can. Avoid introducing the concept of winning/losing, or 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> into their running activities. Everyone has to be a winner if running is going to be enjoyable for kids.

Kids aren't aerobic animals built for long distance runs (1Km is a long way for them). They should be allowed to run fast, or slow, and to intersperse stopping, walking, hopping, somersaults, or whatever, into their "runs".

Kids are also social creatures, so running with others in groups or teams will be easier and more fun than running alone.

### **Disguise running or give running a "kids' purpose" – Be creative**

- Run regularly with the kids to keep them company, while chatting about stuff other than running.
- One or two days a week, run to school with the kids. Take a longer route if necessary to make it 1Km, and keep chatting about stuff.
- Once in awhile head to the local convenience store on a 1Km run to get a treat, being sure to run 1Km to get there.
- At school, build the program into the curriculum. Try things like organizing a team treasure hunt that requires the kids on each team to run at least 1 kilometre in pursuit of the treasures.
- Or have small groups of kids pass a soccer ball back and forth while running around the park, to see how many passes they can make in 1 kilometre.
- Visit the local conservation area or ravine, and run/walk/jog along nature trails (the rougher the better) checking out the trees, flowers and wild life.
- Come up with your own creative ideas to make running "fun and kid purposeful". Share your ideas with us so we can build a better program.