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Running program builds girls' confidence and self respect

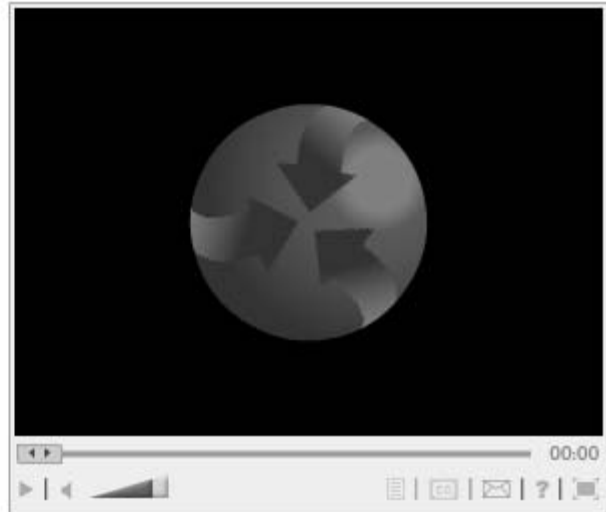
'Girls on the Run' teaches third through fifth grade girls self respect and healthy lifestyle tips through a 10 week program that all leads up to the girls running a 5K in May.

Posted: 9:40 PM Apr 25, 2011**Reporter:** Amelia Cerling**Email Address:** Amelia.Cerling@weau.com

Running program builds girls' confidence and self respect



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Bullying and how to protect your kids from it has been making headlines lately, but one nationwide program is trying to stop bullying at it's root, with a different approach.

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'Girls on the Run' teaches third through fifth grade girls self respect and [healthy lifestyle](#) tips through a 10 week program that all leads up to the girls running a 5K in May.

We caught up with the local chapter of 'Girls on the Run' at Locust Lane [Elementary School](#) in Eau Claire.

From simple advice that has big correlations to the real world, "Before I started girls on the run I'd always try to keep up with other people to be faster and stuff, but 'Girls on the Run' has taught me to keep my own pace," fifth grade Locust Lane student Megan Erickson tells us.

To just providing a [safe](#) space for girls to grow, "It's really fun there's a lot of girls and they're not afraid to laugh or anything like that, they just like to have fun," third grader Olivia Laube says of what she loves about the program.

'Girls on the Run' coach and Locust Lane fifth grade teacher Sara Denoure says the program is about so much more than just running.

"Our big focus is moving forward, it doesn't need to be running we're not trying to build all-star runners or track stars, we're just trying to make girls feel confident about themselves and who they are," Denoure says.

And for fourth grade student Jolene Butterfield, it's working, "Well it's fun coming here because they teach you about positive things, you do arts and crafts sometimes, you do fun things and it just makes you feel like you're a person in this world," she tells us.

And coaches say feeling like you matter can make all the difference in the world for a young girl in elementary school.

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"The other night at a concert we saw one of the girls with her shoulders back, standing up tall, which we didn't see in third grade, so I think 'Girls on the Run' has had a really [positive impact](#) on them," Denoure tells us.

The 'Girls on the Run' would like to invite the public to it's 5K community run at Owen Park on May 14, it's a culmination of all the girls hard work over the past 10 weeks.

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