

Go Girls Go! Program Successfully Expanded to Three Area Schools

Healthy Communities Partnership (HCP), with collaboration from the Chambersburg Area School District, has been able to expand its Go Girls Go! after-school running and self-esteem program to host programs in three area elementary schools this spring.

In the fall of 2016, HCP was notified of receipt of a grant from Franklin County Foundation (a regional foundation of The Foundation for Enhancing Communities) to expand the delivery of its new program entitled Go Girls Go! for girls that focused on building healthy self-image through education and activity. The program pairs participating girls in 4th – 6th grades with adult coach/mentors who talk with them about a variety of topics including friendship, teamwork, self-esteem and healthy eating. The funds provided by Franklin County Foundation have allowed for the expansion to work with three buildings this spring and almost 90 girls.

"We are really excited about the expansion to the program," shared HCP Executive Director, Karen Johnston. "This program has been so rewarding for us and the girls, so we are so pleased to be able to expand to three sites and have almost 90 girls participate, as well as over 20 volunteer mentors. The response has been amazing!" The program met after school, twice a week, for ten weeks. Girls and coach/mentors were asked to commit to the length of the program. "The consistency of both girls and coach/mentors is important to build relationships. Those relationships have so many positive impacts in girls' lives," Johnston shared.

Girls joined HCP staff at the end of the school day for activities and snacks, checked in with their coach/mentors on a variety of life topics then have a discussion about the topic of the day. The last half of the program day was set aside for running. "The idea is to help girls build confidence while they take on a physical activity," said Johnston. Studies show that girls tend to drop out of sports at a higher rate than boys when they reach 4th through 6th grades. The Go Girls Go! program is designed to increase emotional health and develop the love of running for girls in the program, and it did just that. The program, whose goal was to work with the girls to engage them in the lessons and encourage them to complete a 5k. Many of the girls completed their first 5k at the culminating event on May 20th.

To volunteer or donate to this program, please contact our office at 717.264.1470. ####