

## **GIRLS ON THE RUN INTERNATIONAL**

### ***“A Lot More than a Running Program”***

As the leadership of Girls on the Run International (GOTRI) planned for their tenth anniversary celebration in September 2006, it was a time for being proud of what they had accomplished, while also being wary of what lay ahead. The Girls on the Run program, which puts pre-teen girls through a 12-week curriculum that uses running-related activities to teach self-respect and healthy living habits, had grown far beyond the wildest expectations of its Founder and Vision Keeper, Molly Barker. From its start in 1996 as a small, after-school effort with 13 girls led by Molly in Charlotte, North Carolina, Girls on the Run had grown to deliver its program to over 40,000 girls per year by 2006, connecting to them through over 140 affiliates (or councils) that operated at hundreds of sites throughout the United States and Canada. Evaluation studies and countless testimonials offer evidence that Girls on the Run has had a substantial impact on the lives of its participants and their families, mitigating problems like eating disorders, childhood obesity, and poor self-esteem.

But Anissa Freeman (CEO), Liz Boarman (COO), and Dee Anna Clarke (CFO), along with Molly Barker, were not interested in resting on their laurels. They felt that continuing to scale up to address the evolving problems of young girls in all parts of the world was their calling, and they were wrestling with the best ways to do this. They knew that many of the forces and strategies that had helped them to scale up to their current state of accomplishment could continue to be harnessed for additional growth and impact, but they also knew that many of the forces and strategies might not function in the same way in the evolving ecosystem in which they operated. In particular, they were trying to determine the most effective approaches for continuing to capitalize on:

- The energy and leadership provided by thousands of *unpaid* volunteers, including many of the executive directors of the councils and all of the coaches/trainers and board members.
- The attractiveness of the curriculum, which contains activities the girls and coaches enjoy, but which needs to be kept timely and fun.

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Senior Research Scholar, Paul N. Bloom, prepared this case as the basis for class discussion rather than to illustrate either effective or ineffective handling of an administrative situation.

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- The favorable results of evaluation studies, which donors are increasingly requesting to ensure that GOTRI is accountable. The research to do evaluations can be difficult and expensive.
- The funds provided by commercial sponsorships. In 2006, GOTRI had three major national sponsors, New Balance, Kellogg's Frosted Flakes, and Goody's (a hair accessory company), all of whom approached GOTRI on their own. Attracting additional sponsors might not be so easy.
- The institutional support provided by collaborating organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and local hospitals, which frequently have served as sites for the program and have also provided staff to manage the program. By using the paid staff of these organizations to provide program management in many locales, Girls on the Run has reduced its personnel expenses.

## **The Origins of Girls on the Run**

Molly Barker recalls that the idea for Girls on the Run came to her one day during a long run in 1993. Reflecting on her experiences as a teacher, coach, social worker, and counselor who had worked with troubled girls, as well as on her experiences as an elite athlete (with four Hawaii Ironman Triathlon finishes under her belt) who observed how ultra-competitive athletes sometimes develop eating disorders and other psychological problems, she came up with the notion of putting together a program that would help young girls escape from what she calls the "Girl Box." She thought that by having girls go through a series of activities that used running games and other exercises as a way to teach lessons about self-esteem and healthy living, she would help the girls avoid feeling like they were "boxed in" and only able to find satisfaction in life by following the crowd or doing what others expected of them. The girls would learn to feel good about themselves and not feel that they must succumb to peer pressure or adult pressure to dress, talk, eat, drink, or exercise in ways commonly portrayed in the media and professional sports.

In 1996, Molly started an after-school program with 13 girls that met twice per week for 12 weeks. Among the topics covered during the sessions were gossip, peer pressure, healthy eating, community service, and the value of goal-setting. The last topic was covered in part by training the girls to complete either a 5K run or a 1 mile run at the end of the program. Finishing was the goal, not achieving a particular time or finishing place. From this initial foray, word spread rapidly about the enthusiastic and inspirational Molly and her exciting program, and soon parents all over Charlotte were trying to enroll their girls between the ages of 8 and 12. Molly recollects that at the time her experience "was Rocky-ish, with a bunch of little girls following me while I was running."

At first, Molly tried to meet the demand herself, coaching at multiple sites and making it a for-profit venture supported by the tuition fees. But soon she realized that the program had the potential to impact so many more girls if it were configured as a nonprofit (501(c)3) organization. As a nonprofit supported in part by donations and grants, Girls on the Run would not have to be reliant on tuition alone and could do things like provide scholarships to less advantaged girls. Indeed, after getting 501(c)3 status in 2001, Girls on the Run quickly became a constellation of multiple nonprofits, as local chapters or affiliates (later labeled "councils) were encouraged to seek 501(c)3 status, maintaining their own Boards of Directors and developing their own business plans. They all taught the same material and used the Girls on the Run brand

name, but they were able to seek their own ways of generating funds. Sites such as schools, Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and local hospitals were used to run the program and frequently formal partnerships were formed with these other community organizations.

One of the developments that accelerated the initial growth of the constellation was a story in *Runner's World* magazine in 1998, in which Molly was announced as recipient of their "Golden Shoe" award. This story caught the eye of numerous women who, as Anissa Freeman describes it, "got goose bumps when they read it" and then contacted Molly to see if they could help out. Many of them were like Mandy Beard, a woman in her late twenties who was about to move with her husband back to her hometown of Durham, NC and was seeking a career change after working in the corporate world for several years. After hearing about Girls on the Run, Mandy decided that she wanted to establish her own independent council and she became one in 2000.

For two years, Mandy worked for no compensation whatsoever to get her Girls on the Run of the Triangle council up and "running." But with her own infectious enthusiasm and inspirational appeals, Mandy was able to follow in Molly's footsteps and build a loyal and dedicated cadre of Girls on the Run coaches, board members, volunteers, donors, and participants, creating paying jobs for herself and a staff member by her third year. Mandy's story is pretty typical, as many of the Council Directors have worked full time for Girls on the Run for little or no pay as they have launched their initiatives. Even in 2006, approximately one-third of the Council Directors did not receive compensation. Moreover, thousands of coaches, volunteers, and Board members have committed countless hours to Girls on the Run for no compensation.

### **Girls on the Run in 2006**

From its beginnings in the homes and garages of people like Molly Barker and Mandy Beard, Girls on the Run International grew by its tenth anniversary to have a paid staff of 9 persons, headquartered in Charlotte, NC, who support a network of 140 councils, each which serves hundreds of girls each year. Job descriptions and short biographies for the top management of GOTRI can be found in Exhibits 1 and 2. Additionally, Exhibit 3 presents information about the growth of the councils and Exhibit 4 presents data on the council in the Triangle area of North Carolina.

With very few exceptions, all of the councils are delivering the same basic program, which is the 12 week curriculum developed originally by Molly Barker. The tuition charge varies across the councils (in Triangle NC it was \$175), although many of the girls receive scholarships if they cannot afford the cost. Exhibit 4 presents information about the philosophy and logic of this program and Exhibit 5 contains the instructions for one of the activities in the program. Council Directors and their Board Chairs go through careful training to make sure that they know how to teach their volunteer coaches how to deliver the program properly (see Exhibit 6). The program has evolved through the years, as Molly has fine-tuned some of the activities after observing how coaches use the material. In fact, the Charlotte council, which has offices in the same suite as GOTRI, is often used to test out new wrinkles in the curriculum.

In addition to the standard Girls on the Run curriculum, Molly has also developed a curriculum labeled "Girls on Track" intended for girls 13 through 15. This program delves into

issues more relevant to older girls, such as eating disorders, substance abuse, and sexual harassment. Only a limited number of councils are offering Girls on Track, as many of the councils have all they can deal with recruiting and training coaches for the core program, for which there is ample demand. For example, Girls on the Run of the Triangle does not offer Girls on Track. Mandy Beard argued against this program because she felt “they had their hands full with the core program” and her successor, Kelly Hurter, has expressed wariness about Girls on Track because of “the intense issues it covers like sex and alcohol, which might generate controversy in our community.”

Molly also developed a curriculum for a “Boys on the Run” program and it was pilot tested in Charlotte for a year. They encountered difficulty recruiting both male coaches and male participants and the program was put on indefinite hold. As several staff members commented, “We found that boys are really different than girls.”

GOTRI broke even financially for the first time in 2005. Fees charged to the councils for joining the network, receiving training, and using the curriculum materials – which in 2006 amounted to \$5,000 when joining, \$800 per year thereafter, and an additional per participant fee beyond the first hundred served – have not been able to cover the costs of staffing and running the office. Moreover, materials like T-shirts for the end-of-program races (which frequently serve as fund raisers) are sold to the councils at cost, and the intent of management is to offer materials like these at below cost in the future as a way to help out the councils financially. Thus, the shortfall at GOTRI has been made up through grants, donations, and, in particular, sponsorships. The New Balance, Kellogg’s Frosted Flakes, and Goody’s sponsorships have made a real difference in the financial health of the organization in 2005 and 2006.

Local councils have benefited from these sponsorships too, as they have helped to keep the costs down on training notebooks, T-shirts, and so forth. Still, the local councils must do fund-raising to cover their expenses that are not covered by tuition charges. For example, the Triangle NC council has relied heavily on proceeds from an annual 5K race (registration fees, silent auction bids, sponsorships), fund-raising done in conjunction with a team of marathon runners (Team Tiara, a program formulated and promoted by the International office), and on funds raised at events like Mother-Daughter Teas to cover its expenses.

When sponsors and others have asked for evidence that GOTRI is having impact, management has been able to point to studies completed by Dr. Rita DeBate, a public health professor from the University of South Florida. She has been conducting simple evaluations for a subset of the councils for several years. Exhibit 8 summarizes the methods she has used for these studies and the results obtained. The results indicate that the curriculum is producing desired effects on the self-esteem of girls and on their attitudes toward healthy eating and exercise.

However, the studies have only been simple before-after designs, which are not as “clean” methodologically as if a randomized trial were done comparing girls who were “treated” with the curriculum to an equivalent control group of girls who had not gone through the program. With a before-after design, it is possible that a pretest could be responsible for creating changes in the girls’ post-test responses rather than just the program by itself. Another shortcoming of the prior evaluations is that they have not monitored the girls over time to see if any changes produced by the program are long-lasting. Still another shortcoming is that some of

the councils, such as the Triangle NC one, have chosen not to be involved with the studies and to do their own evaluations. The management of GOTRI recognizes these shortcomings of their impact evaluation program and is seeking funding to support more rigorous evaluation work. At the same time, they recognize that much of the impact of their programs is hard to measure and quantify, such as when, according to Dee Anna Clarke, “they see fathers crying at the finish line of the final race” or when Molly receives a letter from a girl’s mother stating “thank you for helping me find the courage to get out of an abusive relationship.”

### **Factors Contributing to Scaling**

A host of factors contributed to Girls on the Run’s ability to scale to the point it reached in 2006. Exhibit 9 attempts to identify these factors, proposing how they relate to one another in the overall ecosystem in which GOTR has operated. The exhibit shows the external environmental trends that have facilitated GOTR’s scaling as well as the resource providers and other organizations that have helped the effort.

At the heart of GOTR’s success has been a magnetic mission (i.e., helping pre-teen girls achieve a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living) which resonates deeply within the volunteers, staff, parents, and participants associated with the program. They constantly talk about getting “IT” and how important this cause is to them. With inspirational and charismatic leaders like Molly Barker and Mandy Beard urging them to do what they can for “IT,” GOTR has been able to scale with relatively minimal expenses for human resources (i.e., the “talent pipeline”). Even the paid staff at all their offices and sites work for wages that are far below what they could earn in other endeavors. As Molly puts it, “We found out that there is great desire to hang out in the space of Girls on the Run.”

Several developments in the economic, social, cultural, and political environment surely contributed to how deeply the mission resonated with GOTR’s constituents. Though it cannot be said that Molly Barker or any of the other leaders of GOTR deliberately or consciously tried to capitalize on these developments – as they were more focused on doing what they could to keep up with the demand for the program – the demand from parents to enroll their girls in the program and the enthusiasm of volunteers were clearly influenced by:

- How young girls are increasingly feeling pressured to grow up faster, being bombarded constantly with messages and images that glorify thin, sexy, adventurous young actresses and performers. Parents want to insulate their daughters from this pressure. They see Victoria’s Secret, and its glamorization of sexiness and thinness, as a potential “predator” to their girls.
- How much attention the media has given in the last few years to eating disorders and obesity, making teaching girls how to achieve a healthy balance in eating and exercise a priority for parents.
- How girls and women are experiencing a growing set of opportunities available to them in education, sports, and careers. Parents are interested in having their daughters possess the self-esteem and skills to go after those opportunities.
- How parents belonging to the Baby-Boom generation have often competed with one another through their children. Having a program where participation and feeling good about oneself are emphasized, and competition and winning are de-emphasized, has appealed to many less-competitive parents.

- How a running boom has occurred among women, with hundreds of thousands entering Races for the Cure, marathons, and half-marathons around the United States, frequently making up more than half the participants. Mothers are interested in having their daughters enjoy the freedom and exhilaration they are receiving from this sport.
- How physical education classes have been cut from many schools. Parents are looking for ways to replace this activity.
- How volunteerism has been encouraged by both government leaders and corporate programs.

A magnetic mission that was in tune with societal trends created conditions that were ripe for rapid scaling, but the “product” itself had to fill the needs of the girls and parents in order for the word of mouth to spread from satisfied “customers,” providing a low-cost and efficient way for the program to be promoted widely. Molly’s curriculum seems to have really hit the mark in terms of generating what she sees as “a need to talk to people about it.” The evaluation studies also attest to the effectiveness of the lessons. Having access to effective “knowledge producers” like Molly and Rita has definitely contributed to GOTR’s rapid scaling.

In fact, the word of mouth that spread about the program led to considerable news coverage and unsolicited offers from “financial providers” like private donors and the three major national sponsors: New Balance, Kellogg’s Frosted Flakes, and Goody’s. These companies came to Girls on the Run because they saw it as an organization that could help them connect with a constituency that was valuable to them.

In fact, one of the reasons Kellogg’s approached them was because the largest Girls on the Run program in the world is run out of Kalamazoo, Michigan, not far from the corporate headquarters of Kellogg’s in Battle Creek. While this sponsorship has led a few constituents to question why Kellogg’s did not choose a less-sugared cereal brand to be the sponsor, Anissa Freeman reports that when approached with the sponsorship the board of GOTRI was totally comfortable with the alliance. Anissa feels “our program is about moderation in everything, not about being ultra-pure on the one hand or extreme on the other. Kellogg’s approached us because of their new program “Earn Your Stripes” which has similar values to the GOTR program.”

GOTR has also benefited by creating supportive networks among the local council directors, facilitated in part by having a Listserv, created by the council directors themselves, that allows them to share ideas with one another (i.e., serving as a “network convener”). Among the ideas they have shared has been the value of working with local Junior Leagues, running clubs, and organizations like 4H to provide volunteers for fund-raising events (e.g., races and teas) and other tasks.

Of particular help on the local level has been the ability to collaborate with Boys and Girls Clubs, YMCAs, and hospitals, which have not only provided sites for conducting the programs, but also have often assigned staff members to be directors of local councils. This has lessened some of the financial demands on local councils, reducing the need to raise funds just so that council directors could draw a salary. These other organizations have frequently donated the time of the directors to GOTR. Besides obviously helping GOTR, these gestures have also helped the local organizations, allowing them to offer the popular GOTR program as part of their

schedules. Until recently, there have been no close substitutes to the GOTR program for serving the needs of pre-teen girls.

With a magnetic mission, a great product, enthusiastic support from volunteers, generous unsolicited donors and sponsors, and helpful collaborative organizations, GOTR grew rapidly to 108 councils in 2004. But if they wanted to scale up even further, Molly Barker and her Board realized that they would need to bring in professional managers to the International headquarters and have them establish better processes and procedures. As Molly recalls, “I was passionate, but with no business sense. And I was trying to do it all.” Therefore, in 2004, Anissa Freeman was hired as CEO and Dee Anna Clarke was hired as Chief Financial Officer. Later, they added Liz Boarman as Chief Operating Officer, after getting to know her while she served on the GOTRI Board. Along with Molly, this management team put particular emphasis on staying on mission, leveraging the brand, setting up a model that new councils could readily replicate, introducing financial controls, and providing training and technical assistance to the councils. They also continued to work to get good publicity and media coverage, to support the fund-raising activities of the councils, and to attract new sponsorships and grants. On this last front, they have decided to move from a passive posture with respect to soliciting sponsorships to a much more active one, with Anissa leading the charge in this territory.

The effort to introduce professional management approaches has not been without “obstacles” or aggravations. One troublesome issue has been how to divide up responsibilities for fund-raising and soliciting sponsorships between the International office and the local councils. For instance, on occasion, local councils have obtained financial support for races and other activities from local sporting goods vendors and then discovered that something about the arrangement violated an exclusivity agreement that International has established with New Balance. Clearer guidelines for soliciting sponsorships have now been issued by International and are being communicated to the councils. But Liz Boarman concedes, “We need to do a better job of educating the councils about the value of sponsorship.”

Another issue has been dealing with what has been called “Founder’s Syndrome.” Molly Barker is still brimming over with new ideas and infectious enthusiasm, and she wishes she could take GOTR in many new directions, such as starting a program in Africa, pushing Girls on Track more aggressively, or giving Boys on the Run a fresh start (configured differently). As Liz Boarman observes, “Molly has an innate ability to excite folks.” Recognizing this and feeling a bit overwhelmed by their recent growth, Anissa and her colleagues, while extremely loyal to Molly, have had to ask Molly in several heart-to-heart discussions to hold back on pushing some of her ideas. Molly is still serving as the major spokesperson for GOTRI and constantly giving speeches and appearing in the news media all around the country. Indeed, Molly was named a “Hero” of running in November of 2006 by *Runner’s World*, along with running luminaries such as Frank Shorter, Deena Kastor, and Paul Tergat. But it remains to be seen how long Molly will remain comfortable in her role, given her penchant for starting new ventures.

A somewhat parallel situation has occurred at some of the local councils. The founding directors of several of the councils have found that starting up the program was more exciting and rewarding than keeping it running or trying to scale it up at the local level. In several cases, demands of family or career required founders to cut back their time commitments. While a few of the councils have had to shut down in these circumstances (approximately 20 out of 160 that

have started), many have weathered this storm quite effectively. For example, when Mandy Beard of the Triangle, NC council decided in 2005 to pursue other interests (while still remaining as Council Founder and a board member), Kelly Hurter, an experienced marketing manager who had served on the Board of GOTR's Chicago council, came on to take her place as director, overseeing continued steady growth in participants, sites, and financial resources.

One other issue that looms in the background is politics. As Molly Barker argues, "We don't want to express opinions for the girls; we want them to form them on their own." Thus, Girls on the Run has avoided taking stances on controversial political issues, in part to avoid suggesting to the girls how they should feel about issues such as minority and gay rights, educational reform, enforcement of alcohol and drug laws, and other issues. GOTRI has also treaded very carefully around political issues to avoid getting "labeled" as being for or against anything. Getting "labeled" could hurt the recruitment of participants, coaches, donors, and sponsors. On the other hand, by avoiding politics GOTRI may be missing opportunities to help create policy changes that might help young girls.

## **New Challenges**

During a strategic planning exercise conducted in the December of 2005, many of the most pressing challenges facing GOTRI were identified. Exhibit 10 shows a document that came out of that exercise. The chart shows thirty areas that the leadership felt required attention, with five assigned special priority. These five tend to be internally-focused issues, reflecting a desire by the managers in the International office to get things running as efficiently and smoothly as possible at this stage of the organization's development. They would like to see better policies and procedures, a strategic financial plan, better staffing of the organization, better sharing of information about best practices, and guidelines for using the brand imagery. However, the exercise identified many other challenges, both internally-oriented and externally-oriented.

Of course, the individual councils face challenges too. Many are struggling financially and cannot expand to more sites or offer scholarships without improving their fund-raising. Others have more demand from girls than they can handle and are limited by their ability to find qualified and trainable coaches.

Perhaps the biggest long-term challenge for the whole GOTR system is figuring out how to scale up even further. GOTR has helped many girls escape from the "girl box," putting them on a path toward enjoying a lifetime of self-respect and healthy living. But there are countless more girls around the world who have not absorbed these lessons. Moreover, the ecosystem in which GOTR operates is constantly evolving. Molly Barker frames the challenge this way:

*I vacillate back and forth between thinking that we're having an impact that is changing the way things are for girls and then occasionally I'll drop back down to feeling like we haven't done a thing, since we have so much more work to do. What I feel has happened is that the extreme behaviors we are trying to eliminate for girls have gotten more extreme. We've had to change over the 10 years to accommodate those behaviors. For example, when we started in 1996, mean girls and the conscious targeted bullying were not occurring. And now girls in the older age groups are going out of their way to harass and threaten other girls. When I started Girls on the Run, I wanted nothing less*



*than a complete transformation of how girls and woman view themselves. Obviously, we've had to modify our aspirations, but I really think we're capable of doing so much more.*

As they face their second decade, Molly and her colleagues will need to determine whether they can have greater social impact through steadily pursuing the mission and scaling strategies they have employed during the last few years or whether they will need to adopt a whole new vision and approach for influencing many more girls all over the world. Will they need to reconsider how they deal with fund-raising and corporate sponsorships? Can they get better data demonstrating impact that will encourage donors and foundations to be more generous with them? Can they overcome the problems encountered in trying to serve older girls and young boys? Will their approach work in the international arena? Can Founder's Syndrome be managed? What should they do if a "copy-cat" program is developed that attracts girls away from them? What will they do if volunteer support dwindles, in part because women are becoming busier and busier? Will they need to reconsider their stance on politics and advocacy, pushing for changes in the educational systems and laws that will benefit young girls? Clearly, difficult choices loom on the horizon.

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## **Exhibit 1: Job Descriptions**

**Founder and Vision Keeper, Molly Barker:** Reporting directly to the CEO, the Founder and Vision Keeper is responsible for providing on-going leadership to the organization by serving in the capacity of creator and inventor of Girls on the Run International. She plays a critical and visible role within the organization and serves as the national spokesperson for the organization sharing the passion from which the program originated.

**Chief Executive Officer, Anissa Freeman:** Reporting directly to the Board of Directors, and consistent with the mission of Girls on the Run International, the Chief Executive Officer is responsible for all organizational functions. The CEO directs the organization in close coordination with the COO who implements strategic plans and manages the day-to-day operations to ensure the organization's effective and efficient operations. The CEO also serves as the organization's Chief Development Officer, and she develops, implements and leads a comprehensive fundraising program. This position collaborates with the Board Chairperson on board management and board development. The CEO is responsible for leading the staff and board in developing a realistic annual budget and making financial decisions consistent with the budget as approved by the board. The CEO position has three direct reports – Founder & Vision Keeper, Chief Operating Officer and Chief Financial Officer. The Chief Executive works in partnership with the board of directors and the staff to provide leadership, vision, and direction for the organization and to develop organizational strategy and is ultimately responsible for leading the organization including oversight of the programs, fundraising, sponsorship development, board relations and financial management.

**Chief Operating Officer, Liz Boarman:** Reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer and consistent with the mission of Girls on the Run International, the Chief Operating Officer provides a pivotal leadership role within the organization. The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for the execution of the strategic plan and the measurement of the organization's progress to that plan. The Chief Operating Officer is also responsible for developing and enhancing the internal organization, processes and infrastructure. The Chief Operating Officer also develops annual and long range plans for the organization and implements changes and improvements to the current structure. The Chief Operating Officer supervises and manages five staff members and manages the day-to-day organizational operations and acts in the absence of the Chief Executive Officer. The Chief Operating Officer exercises management responsibility over the organization ensuring efficient services that are designed to meet the needs of our program participants, council directors, volunteers and staff.

**Chief Financial Officer, Dee Anna Clarke:** Reporting directly to the Chief Executive Officer, and consistent with the mission of Girls on the Run International, the Chief Financial Officer is responsible for the financial policies and activities of the organization. The CFO also develops annual and long range financial plans for the organization that enhance the current structure and ensure strong financial solvency.

## Exhibit 2: Backgrounds of Management Team

**Founder and Vision Keeper: Molly Barker** is a 4-time Hawaii Ironman triathlete who founded Girls on the Run in Charlotte, North Carolina in 1996. Using her background in counseling and teaching, her personal recovery from alcoholism, along with research on adolescent issues, she developed the earliest version of the 12-week, 24-lesson curriculum with the help of 13 brave girls at Charlotte Country Day School. The next session 26 girls showed up, then 75, and so the program grew. In 1998, *Runner's World*, a national running magazine, awarded Molly its "Golden Shoe Award" for contributions to the community through running. Molly was also named a 2006 "Hero of Running" by the same magazine. She is the author of *Girls on Track: A Parent's Guide to Inspiring our Daughters to Achieve a Lifetime of Self-Esteem and Respect*, an Amazon top ten pick for best parenting book of 2004, and she has been featured in many magazines, including *O, The Oprah Magazine*. She was recently selected as Charlotte's Woman of the Year. Molly enjoys writing, running, and cycling, but enjoys, above all else, hanging out with her 2 kids, 11 year old Hank and 8 year old Helen.

**Chief Executive Officer: Anissa Freeman** joined Girls on the Run International in December, 2004. Prior to that, she was President of Chamber Concepts Inc., a consulting firm dedicated to supporting chambers of commerce and nonprofit organizations. She has fifteen years of experience in nonprofit management. Anissa served as Director of Special Events with the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation and was a Vice President with the Charlotte Chamber and a Senior Vice President for the York County Regional Chamber of Commerce. She is a graduate of the University of Georgia Institute for Organization Management program. Anissa ran her first marathon in 2000 and recently completed her second at the 2005 Chicago Marathon as a member of the Girls on the Run Team Tiara program. She also enjoys playing golf (working on her short game) and is a self-proclaimed newspaper addict. Anissa lives with her husband Jerry and their 4-lb Chihuahua, Gertie, in a historic home they are remodeling in Charlotte.

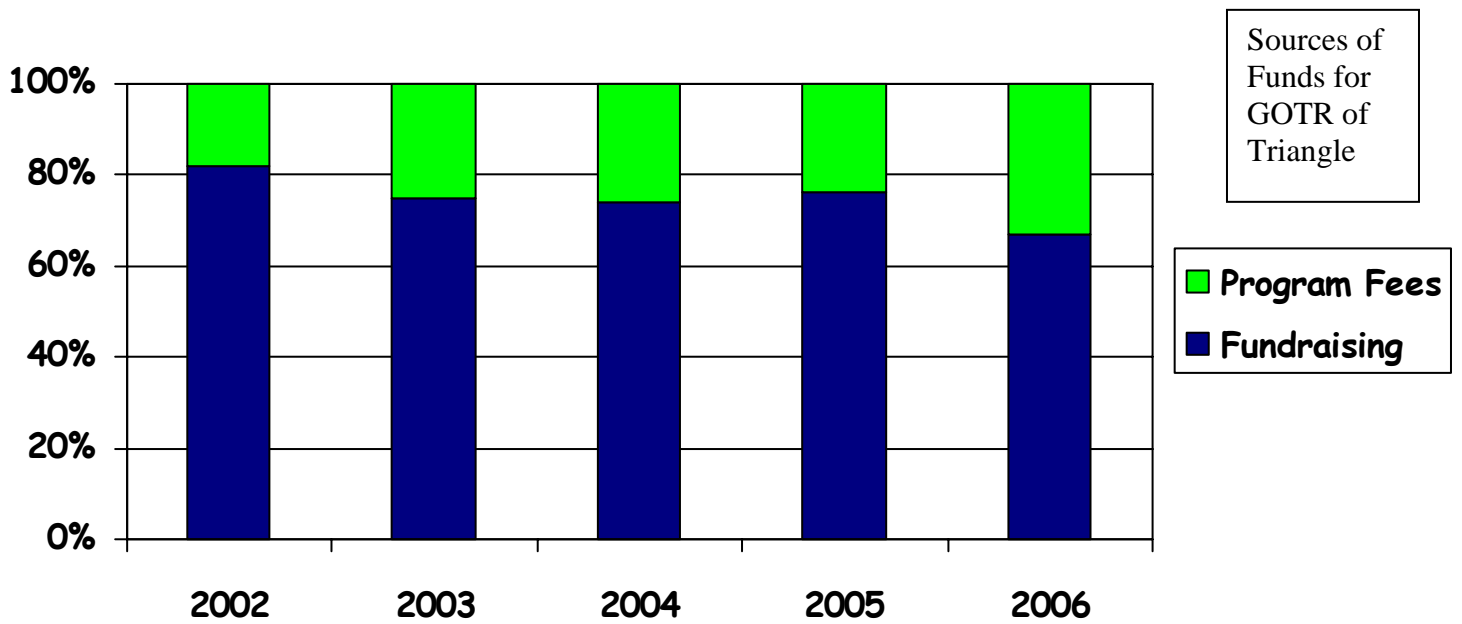
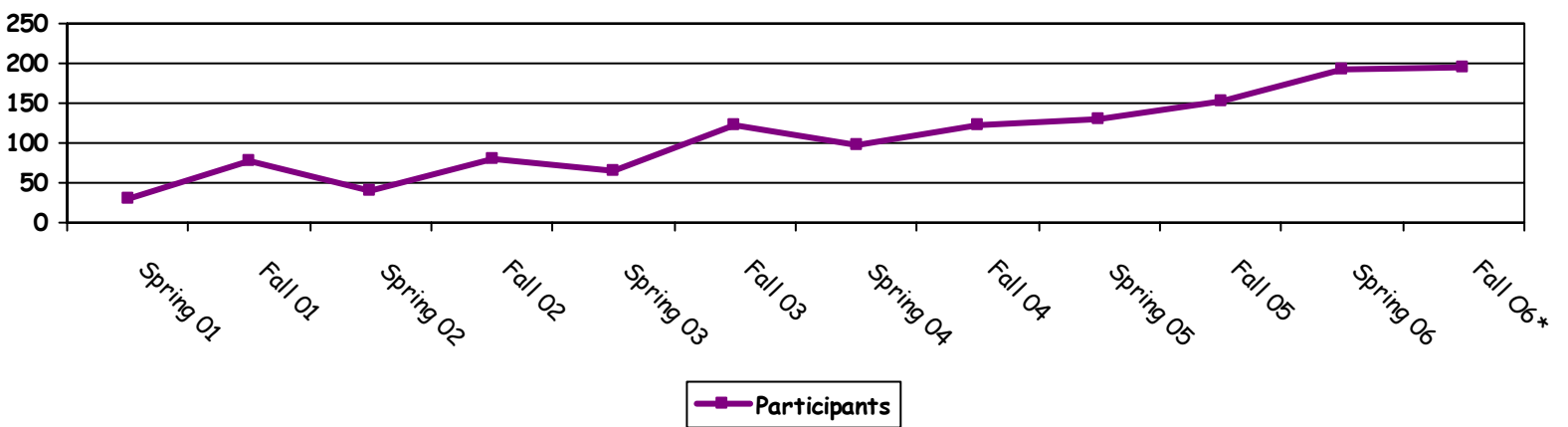
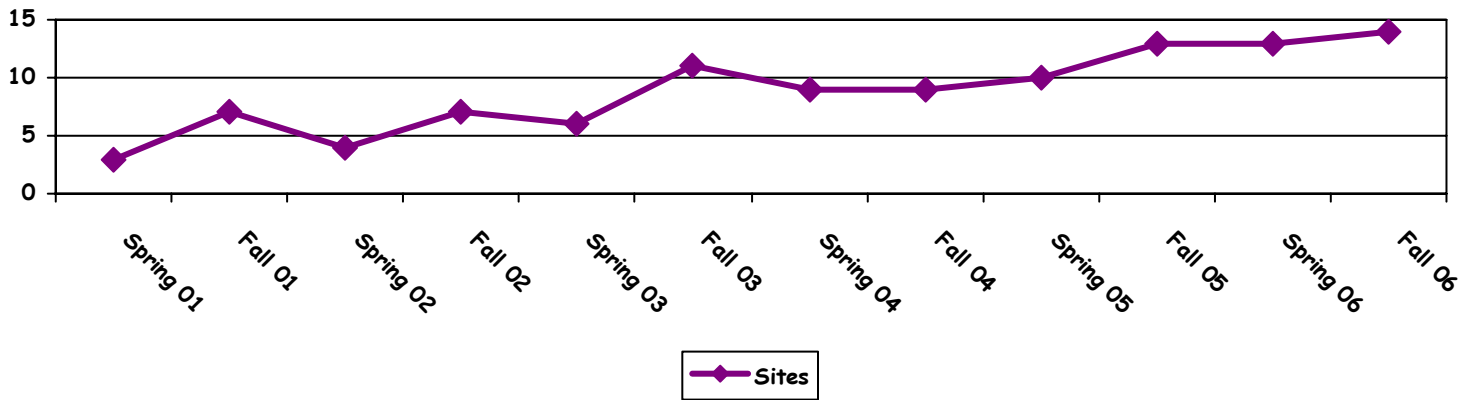
**Chief Operating Officer: Liz Boarman** served on the Girls on the Run International Board of Directors for 2 years before joining the staff in May, 2006. Liz has over 20 years of leadership experience in both the nonprofit and corporate sectors. She and Molly first met in 2000 in the locker room of the YMCA where Liz worked for 9 years. Liz is the proud Mom of 12 year-old Catie. They enjoy music, movies and spending time outdoors – especially in the water! She and her 4-legged daughter, Cassie, are "Girls on the Walk" and can be found each morning completing their own 5k walk.

**Chief Financial Officer: Dee Anna Clarke** joined Girls on the Run International in the summer of 2004. Prior to that, she worked as an accountant for a local CPA firm. Dee Anna grew up in Morganton, North Carolina and graduated from Wake Forest University with a bachelor's degree in Business and UNC Charlotte with a master's in Accountancy. Presently, she is working on obtaining her CMA and CPA license. Dee Anna makes Davidson her home with husband, Brent. She's a devoted NASCAR fan and loves the LA Dodgers. She has completed several half marathons and recently completed her first marathon with the GOTRI staff and Team Tiara.

**Exhibit 3: Data on Councils**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Number Trained</b>	<b>Number Going Inactive</b>
<b>1996</b>	1	
<b>1997</b>	0	
<b>1998</b>	1	
<b>1999</b>	5	
<b>2000</b>	12	
<b>2001</b>	21	
<b>2002</b>	30	2
<b>2003</b>	20	9
<b>2004</b>	20	11
<b>2005</b>	25	1
<b>2006</b>	28	
Totals	<b>163</b>	<b>23</b>

**Exhibit 4: Data on Girls on the Run of the Triangle, NC**



### Exhibit 5: Philosophy and Logic of the Program

The Girls on the Run program is a structured character development program that uses training for a 5k event as a means to teach essential life skills to 3rd-5th graders. Each individual lesson plan is based on the "Whole Person Concept". The "Whole Person Concept" stresses the importance of equally developing the spiritual, emotional, mental, social, and physical parts of the individual to create a well-balanced, whole person. The lesson plans are designed to encourage exploration and use of each of these five parts.

The topics covered over the 12 weeks are based on the work of Mario Fantini and Gerald Weinstein who found the problems expressed by students fall into three classifications: lack of identity, lack of connectedness and feelings of powerlessness (i.e., lack of control over one's own life, not to be confused with exerting power over other people.)<sup>1</sup> The curriculum is divided into three 4-week sessions that foster healthy growth in each of these three areas.

The first four-week session provides the participants with opportunities to:

- Gain an understanding of themselves;
- Learn about their strengths and weaknesses and to set personal goals;
- Explore the importance of being physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy; AND
- Examine our own core values and what makes us unique.

The second four-week session provides the participants with opportunities to:

- Explore getting along within a group;
- Learn active listening and confrontation/assertive skills, as well as the importance of "positivism" in how we deal with others; AND
- Examine the components of good decision-making skills.

The last four weeks provides for the participants opportunities to:

- Explore our responsibility to the community;
- Analyze the cultural and social messages girls receive in the media and through other institutions;
- Examine their own stereotyping and discriminatory behavior;
- Define community and our collective and individual roles in it;
- Create and implement a community project; AND
- Be empowered to change their environment around them in a positive manner.

<sup>1</sup>Fantini, Mario D., *Regaining Excellence in Education*, Merrill, 1986.

Weinstein, Gerald and Mario Fantini, eds., *Toward Humanistic Education: A Curriculum of Affect*, Praeger, 1970.

### Exhibit 6: Sample Activity

“Now we are going to do a little Getting on Board that helps us understand what the Girl Box is.”

- Tell a story about a girl you have known (it might even be about yourself) who was very outgoing, vivacious and full of life and how around the age of 5th grade she started to become overly concerned with what other people thought of her. This describes the phrase we have coined at Girls on the Run as the “Girl Box”. It is a place girls go around middle school where they turn in on themselves and morph into what they think others want them to be instead of who they really are.

- Now ask the participants to respond to the following questions out loud:

- o “Can you think of characters in movies that were girls OUT of the GIRL Box?”

- o “Can you name some characters in movies that were girls IN the GIRL Box?”

Warm-up:

- “Now we are going to do a fun game. You can walk, skip, or run in this game. You never should feel like you HAVE to run in Girls on the Run. I believe that you will do what is best for your body!”

- Place the two pieces of poster board (“in the Girl Box” and “out of the Girl Box) about fifty yards apart and line the girls up in a straight line near the poster board labeled “unable to tell whether in or out of the Girl Box based on this behavior”.

- “I am going to call out a behavior and you have to decide whether that behavior refers to a girl in the girl box or a girl out of the box. If you can not tell whether she is in or out of the Girl Box, stay where you are. Once you decide if the behavior is in or out of the Girl Box, run (or walk) to that piece of poster board.” Make sure everyone understands the point of the game before proceeding.

- Now call out the following behaviors one at a time and let the participants go to the appropriate sign. After they have run to a sign for one of the behaviors, call them back to the starting point and then call out another behavior.

#### Behaviors:

People pleasing/doing what she thinks other people want her to do (in the Girl Box)

Speaking positively of others (out of the Girl Box)

Dieting all the time (in the Girl Box)

Bullying either verbally or physically (in the Girl Box)

Follows through on promises she has made (out of the Girl Box)

Manages stress through healthy exercise (out of the Girl Box)

Has tattoos (unable to tell whether in or out of the box)

Takes quiet time for herself everyday (out of the Girl Box)

Highlights her hair (unable to tell whether in or out of the box)

Has a lot of money (unable to tell whether in or out of the box)

Is comfortable in her own skin (out of the Girl Box)

Always compares herself to other girls (in the Girl Box)

Wants to be a model (unable to tell whether in or out of the box”

Smokes cigarettes (in the Girl Box)

Manages stress by sharing feelings with a reliable adult (out of the Girl Box)

Gossips (in the Girl Box)

Is pretty (unable to tell whether in or out of the Girl Box)

Stands up for what she believes in (out of the Girl Box)

Is thin (unable to tell whether in or out of the Girl Box)

Celebrates her gifts and talents (out of the Girl Box)

- Bring all of the girls back to a circle and ask the following questions.
  - o “Can you think of any other behaviors that would go in the Girl Box?”
  - o Can you think of any other behaviors that would go out of the Girl Box?
- Be VERY careful here not to use any kind of physically distinguishing characteristic as criteria for being in or out of the Girl Box. Ironically, if you do use physical characteristics (money, body size, piercings, tattoos etc.) then you are exhibiting a behavior of a girl IN the Girl Box!
- “My hope is that you experience what it is like to be “out of the Girl Box” each time you come to Girls on the Run. You won’t be judged here, or put down. We want every girl to re-discover just how wonderful she is at Girls on the Run, regardless of how well you run, the size of your body, the color of your hair or skin or how much money you have.”
- Take a minute or two and go through some standard running stretches with the girls.

### **Work-Out:**

- Hand each girl a piece of paper and have her write her name at the top of it. If space permits, for this activity, have the girls run this activity (on a track or athletic field). Have each girl place her piece of paper at a spot she designates. With the remaining time, have the girl walk/run/skip/hop laps. She can walk with a friend or group of friends or by herself. Every time she completes a lap, she should write down on the piece of paper something she has always wanted to do, but either been afraid to do...OR hasn’t had the opportunity to do. If space doesn’t permit, have them jot them down on their paper.
- When you have ten minutes remaining, ask the girls to stop and take up the papers. Read out loud some of the “always wanted to do” comments.
- “We are a very exciting group of girls. Would anyone like to share out loud one of the items on her list?” I would like for everyone to take these home with you and put them in a prominent place in your house. At Girls on the Run, we believe that we can create a wonderful life for ourselves, by believing in ourselves. Today you have created an intentional to-do list for yourself that portrays the power of positive thinking.”
- Have the girls form a circle and everyone put their hands in the middle, one on top of the other. On the count of three shout out, “Girls on the Run is So much FUN!” Congratulate everyone on a job well-done!



**Exhibit 7: Training for Council Directors and Board Chairs**

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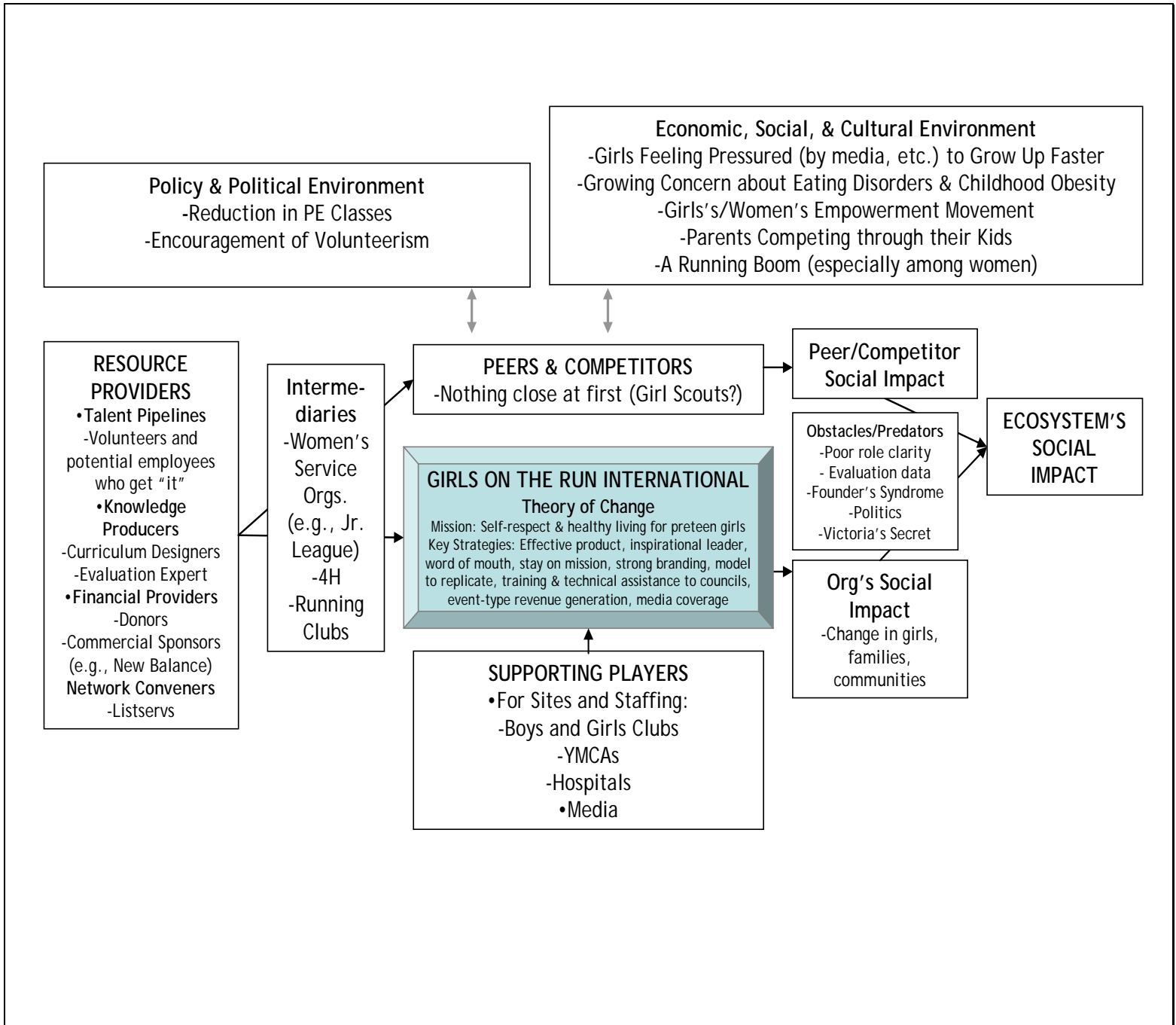
### Exhibit 8: Summary of Evaluation Studies

In 2001, Girls on the Run International contracted with Rita DeBate, Ph.D., MPH, CHES, to perform an impact evaluation. She performed the evaluation in 2002 and 2005. The evaluation assesses the Girls on the Run program and how well it meets stated objectives by using a pre-test/post-test that measures attitudes towards physical activity, self-esteem, eating attitudes, body image and communication. Prior to running our pilot, Dr. DeBate's review of the academic research in the area of girls and sports turned up two contradictory results. On the one hand, girls involved in athletics have higher self-esteem and engage in fewer risky behaviors than girls who are not. On the other hand, girls who become highly competitive in some sports (such as running, figure skating, gymnastics and other sports in which slim body images are admired) have a higher incidence of eating disorders than girls who are not involved in such sports.

Through the evaluations, Dr. DeBate found that the Girls on the Run curricula improved girls' self-esteem, body size satisfaction, and physical activity behaviors to a statistically significant extent. Also noted are positive changes regarding attitudes towards physical activity, health behaviors, and empowerment. More complete explanations of these studies can be found at the Girls on the Run International website ([www.girlsontherun.org](http://www.girlsontherun.org)). Here is the abstract of an academic article written about the studies (See DeBate, R. D. and S.H. Thompson, "Girls on the Run: Improvements in Self-Esteem, Body Size Satisfaction and Eating Attitudes/Behaviors," *Eating Weight Disorders*, March 2005, Vol. 10: 25-32).

*A pilot assessment of a curriculum-based running program geared for girls 8-12 years old (n=322) was implemented to assess influences regarding psychological risk factors leading to disordered eating among girls who participate in sports. Utilizing a pretest/posttest study design, researchers administered questionnaires in pre-program session T(1), and post-program T(2). Statistical tests on self-esteem ( $t=-10.628$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), body size satisfaction ( $t=4.359$ ,  $p<0.05$ ), and eating attitudes/behaviors ( $t=4.806$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) revealed statistically significant improvement from baseline to post program. A sport-training program supplemented with a wellness curriculum may be an effective primary prevention program for disordered eating attitudes and behaviors.*

**Exhibit 9: The Ecosystem of Girls on the Run**



### Exhibit 10: Strategic Map for Girls on the Run

Girls on the Run International  
Strategic Map: 2006-2008

