

Coventry Village School Runners Take the Prize

Who said you can't get paid for doing what you love? The student-athletes of Coventry Village School recently won \$1,000 for their Mighty Milers program from the New York Road Runners Foundation (NYRRF) to continue one of their favorite activities, running!

Mighty Milers, the flagship program of the NYRRF, challenges students across the country to run half a mile, at least twice a week, with a school-year goal of completing one to four "marathons of miles" (26.2 miles – 104.8 miles). Since starting a pilot program earlier this year with the third and fourth grades, Coventry Village students have already run 1,000 miles. "My students are very excited," says 3rd grade teacher Jennifer Montgomery who brought Mighty Milers to her school.



Montgomery appreciates the Mighty Milers program for the healthy habits it instills and the sense of community it fosters. Twenty-three kids run or walk three mornings a week and teachers quickly noticed a positive change in student behavior along with other benefits including, cardiovascular health, goal setting, increased self confidence, and camaraderie. Third grader Manisha Gratton sums it up like a veteran runner, "Although I get tired, I am proud of what I have done."

In a time when more than 30% of U.S. children are overweight or obese and one in three children born today are expected to develop type 2 diabetes, programs like Mighty Milers are essential to help instill healthy habits in our kids. Research suggests there is a critical window of opportunity to reach children before they develop lasting weight problems—according to the American Academy of Pediatrics, 80% of obese teens become obese adults. "Mighty Milers was created to educate and empower kids to make lifestyle changes so they can avoid the devastating and life-long consequences of obesity," says NYRRF executive director Cliff Sperber, "but the kids from Coventry Village, like kids all across the country, embrace Mighty Milers because it's fun and challenging in a way that helps them feel good about themselves."

Schools can learn more or apply for their own Mighty Milers program at www.mightymilers.org/apply.