

mighty MILERS IN MOTION

NEW YORK ROAD RUNNERS YOUTH PROGRAMS

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QUOTABLES: "Mighty Milers is one of the best programs I have ever been involved in because of the incentives, because you allow the students to look up their progress on their own website, because it's across the curriculum."
—CARLA ERRICO, P.S. 48



Kindergartners enjoy a relay race at Plantation Park Elementary's annual field day!

Monthly Miles

Despite strict time constraints on P.E. and recess, the staff at Plantation Park Elementary in Bossier City, Louisiana, is full of ideas to keep their Mighty Milers moving. Students are encouraged to walk to school if they can, which many of them do regularly. Every week students enjoy "Monday Miles," a full P.E. period dedicated to running. The school running club meets for 30 minutes every morning for extra running time, which has greatly benefited the student body.

"We've seen new friendships formed, and enemies reconciled through our running club. My favorite thing to see is the older students taking 'care' of the younger ones," says Site Coordinator Konni Falting. "We also find that running club is a place where everyone is reaching for the same goal, and that's all that counts. All other separations and differences — age, race, neighborhood, shoes, etc. — fall away as they push each other to do their best."

All teachers encourage healthy competition within the grade levels, with classroom teachers often rewarding students even after their accomplishments have been recognized in P.E. "This motivates the students even more," she says. "The teachers also make sure to recognize effort as well as talent."

Mighty Milers Games

Looking for more ways to keep your Mighty Milers on their toes? Visit *A Running Start: The Video Resource for Coaching Youth Runners* at www.nyrr.org/arunningstart for some great games to work into practice sessions, including:

Animal Tag – A crowd favorite for many Mighty Milers sites, this version of tag helps students develop body control and overall fitness while using their imagination to imitate different animals.

Obstacle Medley – With just a few cones, you and your students can design a fun obstacle course to bring some healthy competition to your Mighty Milers session.

Continuous Relay – This fun game helps students work as a team while increasing their mileage and improving their speed and pacing skills.

Running All the Time

What do you do if your school doesn't have a gym? Just ask Site Coordinator Carla Errico, who had to hold Mighty Milers sessions in an all-purpose room at P.S. 48 in Queens, New York. The small room was in high demand, had eight doors, and despite its location on the first floor, was essentially a basement.

"If it was being used by someone else, whether it was an auditorium or a lunch room, it wasn't our time," Errico says. "So we had to be inventive." When Errico did have the room, she often could use only half of it. **So she dedicated her prep periods and students their lunchtime recess to Mighty Milers in order to increase their mileage outside of P.E. class.** Errico also took students outside whenever possible. This year, thanks to a renovated soccer field for lunchtime runs and a recent move to a new school with a gym, Errico's students are enjoying Mighty Milers sessions more than ever.

The extra Mighty Milers sessions helped her get to know her students in her first year at P.S. 48. Errico treated running like a teaching tool to support subjects like math and health, but also found it useful for overall classroom management. **Students know that cooperating and behaving in and outside of P.E. means more opportunities to run and work toward their goals.** "I always try to work with the classroom teacher," Errico says.



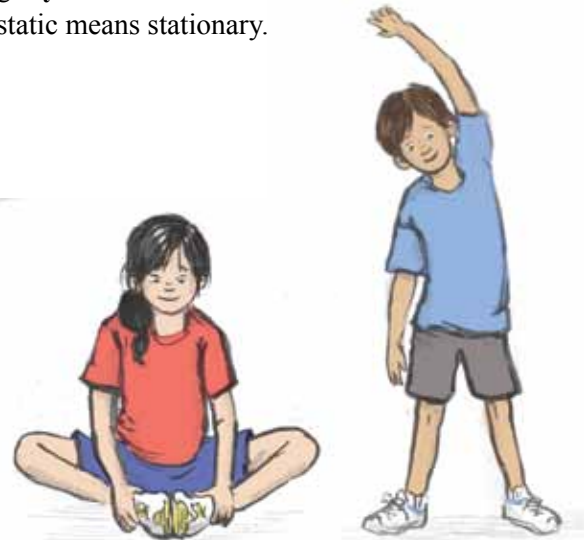
A Mighty Miler from P.S. 196 in Brooklyn, New York, enjoys an obstacle course complete with hurdles.

What's the difference between **dynamic** and **static** stretching?

There are two types of stretching: **dynamic** and **static**. Dynamic means in motion, and static means stationary.



Dynamic stretches get your body ready for exercise through **movements** that warm up your body. They also help lengthen and bring oxygen to your muscles, as well as wake up your nervous system. You can do dynamic stretches **before** and **after** you exercise.



For **static** stretches, you **strike a pose** in order to loosen a specific muscle or tendon. You should do static stretches like the butterfly pose **after** you exercise.

How many stretches do you know?



Happy Thanksgiving! Tamela Thompson-Kennedy at Sandy Valley Elementary in Sandy Valley, Nevada, organizes a low-key Turkey Trot for her Mighty Milers, complete with delicious prizes!

Fun Facts:

- Daniel Browning Smith, also known as Rubberboy, is one of the most flexible people in the world and for sure the most famous contortionist. One of his special tricks is crawling through an unstrung tennis racket – don't try this at home!
- Did you know that stretches should be held anywhere between 10 and 60 seconds? If done correctly, dynamic stretches will lengthen your muscles, help keep your body injury-free, and help you feel relaxed. Wow!
- Double-jointed people don't actually have extra joints. Instead, their joints are hypermobile, which means they can stretch much farther and in different directions than the average joint.