

MIGHTY MILERS IN MOTION

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QUOTABLES: "A day doesn't go by that I am told not to forget to turn on the music when we do our running! As my students are running and keeping track of their laps, many are also singing and some might stop to dance for awhile as well."
— CONNIE ALCHUS, Adaptive P.E. teacher, P.S. 115 & M.S. 74

A Mighty Milers family

Over at P.S. 305 in Queens, NY students are developing healthy habits through the school's inclusive environment and interdisciplinary focus. In addition to running and walking at the beginning of P.E. and dance classes, these Mighty Milers also learn about lifelong fitness and nutrition during every session. Everyone gets involved, including paraeducators and school aids. **"This program has given the children something to bond over, to be connected with, and something that they can take with them far after their education,"** says P.E. teacher Peter Cantalupo. "They seem to be more of a family since they have become Mighty Milers."

Cantalupo's integrative approach toward running and fitness helps Mighty Milers excel and discover their potential. "We have several superstar Mighty Milers, ranging from children that are just extremely energetic and pumped to students that can't wait to run on weekends and tell me about it," he says.

Even though running outside of Mighty Milers practice sessions does not count towards their mileage goals, many students love to run over the weekend. Hailey often runs and walks with her mother in Central Park, while Angel, who used to dislike exercising, runs up and down his block on the weekends. Cantalupo feels most proud of Margaret, a 1st grader who initially struggled with walking before becoming active and healthier through Mighty Milers. **"My main goal as a P.E. teacher is that my children will know what it means to be fit and will do their best to get there,"** he says.



P.S. 305's Pre-K classes prepare to become Mighty Milers



Mighty Milers bundle up in Massachusetts

Going the Extra Mile

There is always time for Mighty Milers! Emily Huntington at Glickman Elementary in Springfield, MA makes sure her Mighty Milers get their laps in during P.E. class warm ups, recess, and the weekly "Take a Hike" walk that includes a special prize.

Huntington makes the first 15 minutes of P.E. class a Mighty Milers session by starting with a fun warm-up jog that counts toward students' mileage goals. "They really look forward to it, and it's a great way to get them active right away," Huntington says. At recess kids have only 15 minutes to play and many of them choose to run or walk additional laps. **"They can always run or walk the Mighty Milers course,"** Huntington says. **"Everyone is active, which cuts down on behavior problems at recess."** On Thursday mornings students can also participate in "Take a Hike" where they walk, talk, and add to their mileage goals while enjoying the great outdoors. To add motivation, Huntington awards the classroom with the best attendance a pair of "golden sneakers" to hang from their classroom door for the week. She made the treasured prize by spray painting an old pair of running sneakers.

Huntington makes sure to incorporate the school's anti-bullying initiative into her classroom by stressing teamwork and good sportsmanship. Her Mighty Milers are so united that when Huntington shares accomplishments for the week, "you can hear a pin drop throughout the school as the students listen for their names and their friends' names."

Get Moving with a Mighty Milers Music Mini-Grant

It is no coincidence that sports movies like "Rocky" and "Chariots of Fire" are remembered for including empowering songs. Music can be a powerful motivational tool for Mighty Milers, plus it's fun!

Research shows that music can benefit both our minds and bodies during exercise. It can make us feel more motivated, help us focus, and distract us when we feel tired. As we begin the new year and set new goals, now is a great time to integrate music into Mighty Milers practice sessions.

This month all sites can keep their kids moving by applying for a Mighty Music Mini-Grant! **Most schools with satisfactory or outstanding ratings that fill out the grant application will receive a sound system, an MP3 player, and an iTunes gift certificate to make music a part of every practice session.** There is no need to worry about picking out songs—we scoured our CD collection to compile a variety of suggested playlists with salsa, Caribbean, R&B, pop, and more.



We encourage you to apply for a Mighty Milers Music Mini-Grant – the application is short and your students will love exercising to their favorite tunes! For more information or to request an application, contact us at mightymilers@nyrr.org.



A Good Morning Starts with a Good Night's Sleep

Sleep is a necessary part of everyone's day. Whether you are a giraffe, a polar bear, a kangaroo, or a Mighty Miler, you need to rest every night! Sleep gives your body a chance to rest and recharge. You need sleep to focus at school and to run well at Mighty Milers practice sessions.



Tip:

Create a routine to help you relax and prepare for bed



How do **you** get ready for a good night's sleep?



It's great to play music when kids run, but you can use it for a cool-down session too!

Fun Facts:

- There is no "magic number" for how many hours of sleep people need, but babies definitely need the most rest. Newborn babies can sleep for as many as 18 hours a day!
- Blind people can still see images in their dreams. People who were born blind have dreams based on emotions and senses like sound, smell, and touch.
- They say you should count sheep if you cannot fall asleep, but a recent study found that one of the best ways to fall asleep is to imagine a beach or waterfall.