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Runners Going The Extra Mile For Charities

By: Kafi Drexel



When more than 40,000 runners lace up for the New York City Marathon this coming Sunday, between 14 and 18 percent of them will be running for charity, including three reporters from NY1. NY1's Kafi Drexel filed the following report.

Not only is this year's New York City Marathon once again drawing in participants from all over the world, but just over 190 charities will be represented with more than 7,400 runners running on behalf of those causes.

"I think what we've seen in endurance events of all types but particularly with the marathon in recent years is that as more and more people are getting involved in the race, more and more people are looking to add what we call meaning to their miles," said New York Road Runners Director of Development Elizabeth Carr.

NY1 health reporter Kafi Drexel decided to add even more meaning to her miles by signing up to represent Baby Buggy. Founded by Jessica Seinfeld, it provides essential items, products and services for New York City families in need. It's a need they've seen increase by as much as 15 percent in the midst of an ongoing recession.

"We've witnessed personally children who have double layers of sweatshirts on because their parents can't afford coats. Little boys wearing girls shoes, again because they are looking for any kind of hand me downs possible. We want to make sure these parents are able to provide for their children and give them the tools they need to keep their children safe and protected, but also to give them dignity," said Baby Buggy Executive Director Katherine Snider.

Each year through the generosity of New Yorkers and people all around the country, Baby Buggy is able to supply hundreds of thousands of New York City families in need with a wide range of items from teethingers to diapers and cribs, even jogging strollers.

When they're not breaking news, NY1 reporters Dean Meminger and Jeanine Ramirez have also been training to run for charity. Dean is running for Community Access, a group that helps people living with mental health issues find housing and tools they need to lead productive lives. Jeanine plans on footing the race on behalf of Team For Kids, a Road Runner's charity that raises funds for children's running programs. NY1 met a couple of their top student athletes this past summer.

"My fastest mile was actually at the New York City DOE Championships in June, and I actually got six minutes and 18 seconds," said Brooklyn eighth grader Sofia Hargil.

"I've been running around Central Park and my fastest race ever is an eight mile run," said Brooklyn eighth grader Annique Wong. Marathon spirit seems to be a gift that will continue to keep on giving. Many of the kids benefiting from the same programs as Sofia and Annique say they plan on running for charity some day too.