

COLD WEATHER RUNNING TIPS

OVERVIEW

Rain, hail, sleet, snow, and cold can play a factor in the safety level of your run club session. But with a little bit of preparation and a strong desire to be active, we can kick our fears of cold weather to the curb, and get faster along the way.

HOW COLD IS TOO COLD?

Generally speaking, it's safe to be outside in temperatures as low as -17°F. According to research by the American College of Sports Medicine, the risk of frostbite and hypothermia increases at a greater rate past that point. That being said, Marathon Kids does not recommend kids being outside for long periods of time in subfreezing temperatures. As a general rule of thumb, temperatures above 32°F are recommended for outdoor activity.



▶ When looking at outdoor temperatures, pay attention to the windchill factor (the “feels like” temperature) to get the most accurate idea of comfort level for your runners. Knowing the signs of hypothermia and frostbite are key to keeping your runners safe.



AGS #OnTheRun

Au Gres, Michigan

Coach Kelly Gough: “In these chilly, Northern Michigan snowy-weather days, we keep motivated by keeping a clear head without any negative comments like ‘It’s too cold’ or ‘We can never run outside.’ Help each other stay positive. Have a once a month hot-cocoa date after practice to warm up. [And] as much as possible, RUN RUN RUN yourself so your runners know they are not alone and you are giving the same, best effort you are asking of them EVEN when it is cold, wet, and your lungs start to hurt. A rule always is (no matter the weather conditions) if you pass by someone on the trail or the track, you need to offer a piece of encouragement. Have fun! You are building memories with your friends and coaches AND you are building your body to be stronger with each and every step.”

TIPS

Layer Properly

Bundle up in layers that can be removed as kids heat up.

Warm-Up & Cool Down

Refer to the Lessons resource to find some good ways for kids to prepare their bodies for running, and to slow them down after running.

Take Breaks

Allow time to take a break indoors to keep warm, or to remove any unnecessary layers.

Stay Hydrated

Drinking water is a great way to help regulate body temperature.

Check Your Route

Ensure your route is free of any weather-related obstacles that may pose a hazard to you or your visibility to others.

Running Games

If it's too cold to be outside, try playing some indoor running games or sports to allow kids to reach moderate-to-vigorous activity levels (MVPA) and earn some miles. Remember, 20 minutes of MVPA equals one mile!



PERSHING PANTHER PRANCERS

Berwyn, Illinois

Coach Gert August: "We are from Berwyn, Illinois, a western suburb just outside Chicago, so we feel the lake-effect winds and snow. We try hard to have kids wear layers, t-shirts, long sleeves, sweatshirts, hats, and gloves, but most end up wearing their winter jacket [too]." Coach Gert keeps her runners inside when it gets too cold, but mixes it up to keep things fun: "We just started staying in, but the kids never know if we are going to play a game, run laps, or both."



JW SOARING EAGLES

Portland, Oregon

Coach Brent Van Volkinburg: "We are in Beaverton, Oregon. We do tell [our runners] that the quicker they move, the warmer they'll get." Coach Brent has lots of parents and volunteers helping motivate at run club, too. On a recent cold day, he wrote: "These runners are amazing! 25 degrees this morning and these kids were still out there smiling (or maybe their faces were just frozen that way!). Way to go Eagles!"