



Arriving at the Race:

- The *Mercedes Kids Marathon* will not be canceled for inclement or uncomfortable weather!
- Plan to be at the park at least 20 minutes before your grade's scheduled start time. There will be lots of barricades around the park and especially the starting area, so please try to enter the park from the North end (Boutwell side) for the easiest navigation to the starting area.
- The first group will start at 10:00 a.m. Please check for your Grade start times below.
- Parking: The city parking deck west of Boutwell Auditorium will be open and charging \$8 to park all day. The best street parking will be found west of 19th Street North.
- **Make sure to bring both race bibs.** Pin one to the front of your official race shirt and give the other to a parent to securely check you out of the finish corral after race.
- Wear your Official Race t-shirt as your outermost layer of clothing if possible.
- A map of the course is available online at <http://mercedesmarathon.com/images/KidsMap.pdf>

Lining Up:

- Runners should congregate in the south end of the Park and listen for instructions. We will have grade areas in the park each marked with a sign (5th, 4th, ... K) too.
- The NEW starting line is on Park Place between Linn Park and the Birmingham Board of Education.
- We will begin lining up 5th graders promptly at 9:55 a.m.
- The *Mercedes Kids Marathon* will start at 10:00 a.m.
- Please do not approach the starting corral until it is your time. You must allow room for each grade to have access to the corral.
- Grade starts are 12 minutes apart.

Grade Start Times:

- **10:00 a.m. 5th Grade**
- **10:12 a.m. 4th Grade**
- **10:24 a.m. 3rd Grade**
- **10:36 a.m. 2nd Grade**
- **10:48 a.m. 1st Grade (parents can run - must wear parent bib #)**
- **11:00 a.m. Kindergarten**
(Kindergarten Parents, and Parent/Child running team, adult must wear second bib)
- **NOTE** – if you are running with your child and are pushing another child in the stroller, please do not ask for a medal or Powerade for you or the second child. We only have enough for the children that have are officially registered and have trained to complete the 26.2 mile distance over time.

Grade Starts:

As a safety precaution, we are splitting each grade into six groups. This is known as a wave start. Each wave will begin 10 to 15 seconds apart. Please stress to your child the importance of not pushing or shoving at the start of the race. Make certain your child knows they must wait until their wave is instructed to start. We will have plenty of police, official security and ROTC sentries on the course to protect runners during the race. Experienced runners will guide each heat along the course.

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We do not have official times for the kids, so if you want to time your child, you will need to do so yourself. This is the last mile for their marathon training, so everyone who completes the 26.2 mile distance by logging their last mile on race day is a winner. We hope you appreciate our added safety precautions this year and look forward to your volunteering in the future if you have any suggestions for improvement.

Race Photo:

Parents who are running along with their child should plan to step aside at the finish line if you would like the photographer to get a individual finisher's photograph of your child. Our official photographer, Brightroom Photography, will also be available after the run for posed portraits.

Finish Area Instructions, Very Important, PLEASE READ!:

The finish line will be on Short 20th Street on the City Hall side of Linn Park. Any parents not running with children are asked to wait at the end of the finish line chute, outside one of the two finish line corrals in the northwest quadrant of the park. In each child's race packet, there are two matching bib numbers. **Each child's parent must bring the matching bib number with them to the park to be matched up with their child at the secure finish line area.** Children will be directed from the finish line to one of two finish line corrals. The first corral will be for children whose race number ENDS with 0-4. The second corral will be for children whose race number ENDS with 5-9. Within each of these two corrals will be five exits which will be labeled according to the last number of the race numbers, i.e., "0", "1", "2", etc. **Only one parent or guardian** should proceed to the appropriate numbered exit to wait for the children to exit. For instance, if your child's number is 2304, you would proceed to the first corral, exit #4. If your child's number is 1929, you would proceed to the second corral, exit #9. Parents must present their matching bib number for their child to be able to exit into the park.

Please remember that this extra measure of security is being done for the protection of the children, not to inconvenience the impatient parents. It is imperative that we have the cooperation of all parents, beginning with familiarizing yourselves with these race instructions. Please be sure to decide which parent is picking up the child, and please patiently wait outside of the appropriate exit.

Post Race Fun:

- **Children will be offered a bottle of Powerade after they finish.**
- **An official Mercedes Marathon merchandise booth will be in the race expo at Boutwell Auditorium where you can purchase *Mercedes Kids Marathon* souvenirs**

Please Help our Recycling Initiative:

Thanks to the students at the *Alabama School of Fine Arts*, we are making it easy for you to "GO GREEN" with this year's event. Recycling containers will be placed throughout Linn Park for you to place your empty Powerade or Dasani bottles. Bins for plastic will be marked with blue balloons, bins for paper will be marked with yellow balloons and bins for trash will be marked with red balloons. Opportunities to recycle your safety pins and bib numbers or to donate old running shoes will be available at the ASFA booth in Boutwell Auditorium.

See yourself finish on www.myfoxal.com!

Be sure to logon to myfoxal.com after you get home to see a webcast from the finish line for each grade. Remember to smile pretty as you run by the cameraman!

Again, great job runners! If you have any questions prior to race day, please view our

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FAQ's online at www.mercedesmarathon.com or call us at (205) 870-7771 or email us at kids@mercedesmarathon.com. See you on Saturday, February 14th at Linn Park!

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