

**Train Your Children to Participate in  
the Junior Classic Mile!  
Saturday June 12, 2010**



**Four Weeks to Fitness**, by Hal Higdon

*A program developed by Jan Tipton, P.E. Teacher, Alimacani Elementary School, Jacksonville, FL.*

Jan Tipton feels the way to make running or walking fun for young children is to take the emphasis off distance and place it on time. Tipton says, "The worst thing is to take a group of children outside and tell them to run four laps on the track (one mile). Every single day the same child "wins" and the rest "lose."

Instead, Tipton asks everyone to run four minutes-and freeze! Each child sees how far he or she went. The next day, they return and try to run farther. "Suddenly, the focus is off the child that won and on what each child accomplishes." Over a period of weeks, Tipton gradually increases the time in two minute increments to 12 minutes. At that point, most children find they can run and/or walk the four laps and feel proud of their achievement. At the end of the school year, the children are tested on their ability to run and/or walk one mile. Teachers can reinforce this program during recess, as well as parents at home.

The program begins with daily four minute runs and/or walks. Each Friday, the time increases. Tuesdays and Thursdays are designed as speed days with the Friday time split in half. On Tuesdays, encourage the child to go farther in the second run and/or walk than the first. On Thursdays, have the child run and/or walk the first time and stop; then after a rest, run and/or walk back faster and try to pass the start line.

Following is the program training chart:

**Program Training Chart**

Week	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
1	4 Minutes	2 x 3 Minutes	4 Minutes	2 x 3 Minutes	6 Minutes
2	6 Minutes	2 x 4 Minutes	6 Minutes	2 x 4 Minutes	8 Minutes
3	8 Minutes	2 x 5 Minutes	8 Minutes	2 x 5 Minutes	10 Minutes
4	10 Minutes	2 x 6 Minutes	10 Minutes	2 x 6 Minutes	12 Minutes

Rest on weekends.

Think about making your children's final week's last run and/or walk as participants in the Junior Classic on June 9. What seemed imposing on day one, will now be fun and will provide a great sense of accomplishment for your children at the Junior Classic. Whether running, walking or a combination of both, reaching the finish line is the goal!

***Do not start this running program, or any exercise program, before receiving your doctor's permission.***