



CITY OF CHICAGO • OFFICE OF THE MAYOR



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**MAYOR LIGHTFOOT AND THE CHICAGO PARK DISTRICT ANNOUNCE
"CHICAGO'S FASTEST... THE RACE TO GATELY"**

Calling all Chicago youth runners! Compete to be one of Chicago's fastest kids!

CHICAGO – Mayor Lori E Lightfoot joined by Reverend Jesse Jackson Sr., Chicago Park District, and Chicago Public Schools today announced a series of events centered around track and field to find Chicago's fastest. Competitions will be available for boys and girls in first grade through high school (6-18 years old). Several locations across the city will offer "Track and Field Experiences" or a 60 meter "Fastest Kids" race competition. Qualifying times per grade, location and gender will advance to race 60 meters at the new Track and Field Center at Gately Park on July 10.

"After the difficult year we've had and with our city beginning to open back up, it is essential that we get our young people outdoors and keep them engaged as they chase after their dreams both literally and figuratively," said Mayor Lightfoot. "The Race to Gately will do just that by giving young people across our city a chance to have fun with other young people their age and help to restore their sense of normalcy through an exciting sports competition."

"Let me express my thanks to Mayor Lightfoot and the City of Chicago for co-hosting what will be an annual event." said Reverend Jesse Jackson Sr. "Track inspires our youth to develop their raw athletic talent for a keen sense of competition, discipline and the ability to earn scholarships to attend colleges and universities. We will have coaches from many colleges and universities including HBCUs to recruit them."

"We are thrilled to welcome Chicago's fastest runners into our parks for these competitions," said Chicago Park District General Superintendent and CEO Michael Kelly.



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“Not only will the races be fun, but it will also be physically and mentally great for our youth.”

“This great series of running events not only educates our Chicago kids about track and field, but also sparks a friendly competition and showcases some of our City’s great assets like Gately Park,” said City of Chicago Chief Marketing Officer Michael Fassnacht. “I am very thankful to BMO Harris and Quaker Qats who are acting as true civic leaders in enabling this initiative with their support. I can’t wait to find who are the fastest kids in Chicago.”

Each participant will receive a t-shirt, certificate, and additional awards as they advance. Special guests will be present at many of the events. Everyone should leave with information on programming and resources to further their development in track and field. All skill levels are encouraged to join in on the fun.

Participants will be required to register on ActiveWorks in advance. A limited number of spots will be available for each location and time slot on the designated days. The maximum number of kids per session is 60. The maximum number of kids in each group will be 12. LakeShore Athletics will provide Fully Automatic Timing (FAT), hip and race numbers, along with heat information for June and July competition.

“Considering the challenges we’ve all faced over the past year, the “Fastest Child in Chicago” initiative, with its focus on outdoor youth athletics, couldn’t be better timed,” said David Casper, U.S. CEO, BMO Financial Group. “At BMO, our purpose is to boldly grow the good in business and life, and we believe that supporting youth athletics is a very important way to give back to the communities we serve.”

“The Chicago Sports Commission is committed to using sport as a vehicle to create positive impact and benefits to the city of Chicago, its residents and our youth.” Said Kara Bachman, Executive Director of the Chicago Sports Commission. “CSC, and its partners, are thankful for the opportunity to be part of this initiative and helping showcase new, tremendous facilities, such as Gately.”

Please find the event information below:

“Track Experience” for the youngest group (1st- 4th grade) is a one-day event.



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Register for a 90-minute time slot for various track and field activities at one of the following outdoor track locations: Lindblom Park, Jackson Park, Dunbar Park, Lincoln/Montrose Park, La Follette Park, Marshall High School, Brooks High School, Steinmetz High School, * Indoor Gately Track Center (June 5th ONLY); This is a non-qualifying event. Kids will **not** compete on July 10. Activities include: dynamic drills; sprints and hops; games and demonstration.

- Saturday, May 22 | Ages: 6- 10 (1st – 4th grade) at 8 sites
- Saturday, June 5 | Ages: 6- 10 (1st – 4th grade) at Gately Track

➔ Time Slots: 9:00 am -10:30 am or 11:00 am – 12:30 pm

“Race to Gately” 60m sprint (qualifying competition) for 5th- 12th graders.

Register to run a 60-meter, automatic-timed sprint at one of the morning or afternoon locations. Morning locations include: Lindblom Park, Jackson Park, Lincoln/Wilson Park, La Follette Park, Afternoon locations include: Dunbar Park, Marshall High School, Brooks High School, Steinmetz High School. The top 5 fastest times at each location, for each gender and grade will advance to the final competition at Gately on July 10. Winners will be notified.

- Saturday, June 12 | Ages: 11- 14 (5th – 8th grade) at 8 locations
- Saturday, June 19 | Ages: 11- 14 (5th – 8th grade) at 8 locations
- Saturday, June 26 | Ages: 15- 18 (9th – 12th grade) at 8 locations

➔ Time Slots: 9:00 – 9:45 am; 10:00 – 10:45 am, 11:00 – 11:45 am (4 morning locations)

➔ Time Slots: 2:00 – 2:45 pm; 3:00 – 3:45 pm, 4:00 – 4:45 pm (4 afternoon locations)

Final Competition “Race to Gately” (Invitation Only) for 5th-12th graders.

Potentially 640 boys and girls will compete in the semi-qualifying 60-meter race. Top times will advance again to the final race to determine the fastest youth in each grade and gender. Groups will run every hour. Approximate times for finals for elementary group is 12:30 and high school at 4:30 pm.

- Saturday, July 10 | Ages: 11- 18 (5th – 12th grade)



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➔ Gately Track Time: 8:00 am – 5:00 pm

More information on all the competitions can be found at www.chicagoparkdistrict.com/fastest-kids

Supporting organizations include the Office of the Mayor, Rainbow PUSH Coalition, Chicago Public Schools, Independent Schools, Archdiocese Schools of Chicago, Chicago Public Library, YMCA (Chicago), Boys and Girls Club of Chicago and the Chicago Park District. Special thanks to the participating sponsors: Quaker Oats, BMO Harris Bank, Chicago Sports Commission and World Business Chicago.

Health and Safety Information: (per CSL Guidance, IDPH/DCEO All-Sports policy)

- Students competing in low-risk outdoor sports and activities are no longer required to wear masks while competing. Students must continue to wear masks in these sports and activities when they are not actively competing (i.e., athletes on the bench).
- Student-athletes should be responsible for their own supplies such as a water bottle, towel placed in a backpack or gym bag.
- Every lane may be used.
- Information about the symptoms of COVID-19 will be posted in order to allow employees, participants, and spectators to self-assess whether they have any symptoms. Before allowing participation in sporting activities, participants will be asked if they are currently exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms.
- Sports organizers and venues should clean and disinfect premises on a weekly basis in compliance with protocols from the CDC and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Venues should frequently clean and disinfect common areas (e.g., restrooms) and surfaces which are touched by multiple people (e.g., entry/exit doorknobs, stair railings).
- Hand sanitizer or hand washing stations available to participants. There will be minimal-no sharing of high-touch equipment between non-household individuals.
- There is no limit to the number of participants, coaches, officials, and meet personnel at indoor or outdoor meets as long as social distancing can be maintained. A host may restrict the number of people that fall in this category in order to maintain social distancing requirements.



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- If social distancing permits, meet hosts may allow spectators as follows, in accordance with regional Tier/Phase mitigation levels. If meet hosts allow spectators, they must maintain 6 feet social distance when possible.
- Communication of guidelines in a clear manner to participants and their parents will take place. Workout activities will be conducted in “pods” of same students who are always training and rotating together.

For park specific, COVID-19 updates, visit [Chicago Park District](#). We also encourage residents to check the [City of Chicago](#) website for vital information including Protect Chicago and Protect Chicago Plus in addition to the [State of Illinois](#) website for Restore Illinois, the most up-to-date information and guidance available.

The Gately Indoor Track and Field complex is a world-class facility with the area’s first hydraulically banked 200-meter track. Located in the Pullman community (10201 South Cottage Grove Avenue), the 139,000-square foot facility has a seating capacity of 3,500 and features a running track, volleyball and basketball courts, fitness & club rooms, along with green space. This facility has supporting amenities such as a meet management control room, concessions, multipurpose rooms, and locker rooms. Additionally, the facility features a 4,000-square foot curtained warm-up area, eight sprint lanes, two long and triple jump runways and pits, pole-vault runway and pads, a high jump area, discus area, and scoreboard.

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