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Maratón na bPáistí: Tús curtha le clár aclaíochta & folláine i scoileanna Gaeltachta

Tá os cionn 1,360 páiste as 38 bunscoil Ghaeltachta i 12 ceantar éagsúil fud fad na Gaeltachta ag cur tús le *Maratón na bPáistí* an tseachtain seo - 100 páiste as 5 scoil Ghaeltachta in Iorras (Tuaisceart Mhaigh Eo) san áireamh. Go n-éirí go geal leofa.

Cuireadh tús leis an gclár 8 seachtaine seo Dé Luain 12 Deireadh Fómhair agus déanfar an míle deireanach den Mharatón Déardaoin 10 Nollaig 2020. Le linn na tréimhse sin, rachaidh na páistí amach sa chlós scoile agus siúlfaidh nó rithfidh siad beagánín níos mó chuile sheachtain go dtí go mbeidh Maratón iomlán, 42.2km déanta acu. Foghlaimeoidh siad faoi chúrsaí sláinte agus na buntáistí a bhaineann le haclaíocht a dhéanamh ag an am céanna. Tá leabhar oibre i nGaeilge curtha ar fáil do na daltaí le ceithre cheacht sa tseachtain, ag cur síos ar an gcaoi a n-oibríonn an croí, an tábhacht a bhaineann le cothú ceart agus na buntáistí folláine, oideachais, sóisialta agus pobail a roinneann le haclaíocht.

Críochnóidh siad an Maratón Déardaoin 10 Nollaig nuair a rithfidh siad an míle deireanach den Mharatón. Bronnfar t-léinte agus boinn speisialta orthu ag ócáid cheiliúrtha ansin.

Is iad Oifigigh Pleanála Teanga na Gaeltachta atá ág reáchtáil Maratón na bPáistí i gcomhar le *Marathon Kids Ireland*. Mar a mhínigh Laoise Ní Dhúda, oifigeach pleanála teanga le Gaeilge Iorrais:

‘Tá ríméad orainn go bhfuil an oiread sin scoileanna ó cheann ceann na Gaeltachta ag glacadh páirt sa chomhthionscnamh tairbheach seo. Tá an-tábhacht le gníomhaíochtaí a dhéanamh amuigh faoin aer, go mór mór na laethanta seo. Guíonn muid gach ádh ar na páistí agus a gcuid múinteoirí leis an dúshlán aclaíochta seo.’

1,360 Children from Gaeltacht schools to Run a Marathon!

Over 1,360 children from 38 Gaeltacht schools around the country, including over 100 primary school children in the North Mayo (Erris) Gaeltacht, have started an 8-week programme during which they will complete *Maratón na bPáistí* and learn about the importance of being active. They will run or walk a specified distance around the school yard four days a week, increasing the distance every week until they have run or walked a full marathon, 42.2km. Each day they run they will also follow lessons to learn about the physical, mental, educational and social benefits of being active.

This initiative is being co-ordinated by Irish Language Planning Officers of the Gaeltacht, in conjunction with Marathon Kids Ireland, who devised the programme and have been running it successfully in Dublin schools for the past five years. This is the first time the programme is being run outside Dublin. Majella Ní Chríocháin, language planning officer with Pobal Rua in an Cheathrú Rua, explained their involvement;

'We are delighted that so many schools in Gaeltacht areas all around the country are taking part in this great project. We are not surprised however, given the importance of outdoor activities for children, particularly in the current environment. This is a fun activity which all children, regardless of their level of fitness or ability, can take part in and enjoy.'

Laoise Ní Dhúda, language planning officer with Gaeilge Iorrais, added the following;

'100 children from Gaeltacht scheme schools in Erris are participating in *Maratón na bPáistí*. This is a wonderful opportunity to become fitter, more confident and to learn about the importance of physical activity, nutrition and hydration. From a language planning perspective, it provides an opportunity for children to socialise and engage in activities *trí mheán na Gaeilge* with friends and classmates in the school yard. We wish all of the children and their teachers taking part in *Maratón na bPáistí* the best of luck, go n-éirí go geal libh!'

Children will run the final mile of *Maratón na bPáistí* on Thursday 10 December, when they will be awarded special medals and t-shirts.