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### Children's First Co-Ed Triathlon Impacts More Than Our Kids

It was a beautiful morning on May 19 at Drake Field in Peachtree City as triathletes busied themselves with setting up at the transition area, warming up and giving and receiving last-minute advice. The race began at 7 a.m.—and so did the cheering. More than 50 Children's employees (both men and women) registered for the event, our first co-ed triathlon to benefit Children's.

Most Children's employees participated in the Super Sprint (300-yard swim, 8-mile bike, 2-mile run), but a few tried their hand at the International Distance (0.93-mile swim, 25-mile bike, 6.2-mile run). Some of our experienced triathletes mentored our newbies during training and also helped to calm first-time jitters before the race. It was truly a perfect day for racing—cool in the morning and warm in the afternoon.

Children's Strong4Life Team created a Yahoo Group for all Children's triathletes, which the team used to communicate training tips, race-day checklists, training opportunities, Tire Change Clinics and our Pasta Dinner. Our group was prepared and looked great on race day. To join the group, simply go to [www.yahogroups.com](http://www.yahogroups.com) and search for CHOAsTriGroup. Click "Join Now," and once approved, you can participate in this online group.



Though a portion of the proceeds from the Peachtree City Triathlon benefitted Children's, the event impacted more than just our patients. A couple employees shared how much the triathlon positively affected them.

Kelly Holden, Technical Trainer, Learning Services, The Park, wrote a thank-you note to our Strong4Life Team following the event:

*Hi ladies!*

*I just wanted to say a HUGE thank you to you both for all that you did getting us ready for the triathlon on Saturday! The pasta dinner was wonderful; I ate my leftovers for lunch and dinner on Friday, which I think helped keep me fueled up on Saturday. Holly, your advice helped so much, I can't even tell you. I just concentrated on each buoy and each mile, one at a time, and I finished! And I wasn't the last one done, even though I was the last international distance person in the water.*

*This has been a goal of mine for such a long time, and the fact that I finished a triathlon of this distance is so exciting to me. If you had told me five years ago that I could actually accomplish this, I wouldn't have believed you. I was out of shape and so unhealthy, both physically and mentally. Completing this triathlon really shows me what I am capable of and I have to thank you both and Strong4Life for that. I don't know that I would have ever attempted such a feat without people who knew what they were doing guiding me. The words "Thank you" seem so small and not enough, but I don't know how else to express my gratitude without hugging you guys! Thank you for this gift of confidence, dedication and determination. Thank you for showing a girl who used to be scared and lacking any self-esteem that she could finish an Olympic-length triathlon. I can only hope to inspire others the way you have both inspired and encouraged me.*

Kelly

Five-time triathlete Kathryn Gregory, Advice Line Nurse, Call Center, The Park, shares what she's learned about being Strong Enough:

- Strong Enough = looking out from the start line, seeing choppy waters and wondering how in the world you are going to make it to turn the corner at the first buoy. But you plunge in any way and make it until you can finally stand on firm ground.
- Strong Enough = moving to your next task, sometimes only being able to spin your way up the rolling hill, then trying to control your balance as the roller coaster takes you flying down.
- Strong Enough = setting out to finish your race and you find your legs just won't cooperate, but you can't stop now! It means having encouragement along the way from your teammates. There are much better guys than you accomplishing their goal, but there are really nice people out there who WANT you to do well, too!
- Strong Enough = digging deep and finishing strong, maybe not with a smile on your face, but with an awesome sense of accomplishment.
- Strong Enough = forgiving your husband when he decides to go the bathroom at the same time you race by so that he misses 2/3 of the race and you crossing the finish line! (To his credit, I did finish the bike portion faster than I predicted.)
- Strong Enough at Children's can change your life friends. Be healthy, be energetic, prevent disease and be part of the team!



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