

**Jess Sparks, LPCC**  
**Executive Director**  
**Girls on the Run of Central Ohio**

Executive Director Jess Sparks' work as a counselor has demonstrated to her how important it is for women and girls to have healthy coping and social emotional skills, which when utilized give them the best chances to experience positive social, emotional, and physical development. Girls on the Run provides volunteers, girls, and anyone that comes in contact with the program the opportunity to learn healthy living skills, increased feelings of confidence, improve frequency of physical activity and experience positive outcomes.

Jess volunteered with Girls on the Run of Central Ohio from the first season of the council's existence in the fall of 2008-July 2015. During this time, Jess head coached for several seasons at a variety of program sites and volunteered as Board Secretary. Her active and dedicated involvement in all facets of the organization naturally progressed into her leadership role as full time Executive Director in 2015. The organization has experienced steady growth since 2008 and now reaches thousands of girls per year in Central Ohio. Jess's experience as a school and clinical counselor greatly influence her leadership of Girls on the Run of Central Ohio. She uses her understanding of educational and health service systems and child development to support girls, their families, and volunteer coaches. As a servant leader, Jess's leadership style is relationship and service focused and she sparks (pun intended) the innovation and growth of the council with her creativity and realistically optimistic vision.

A runner since her teens, Jessica has completed 25 marathons, and is looking forward to joining the 50 States Marathon Club. The second part of her goal is to complete all 50 before she turns 50! She also enjoys being outdoors, fun times with family and friends, and baking. Jess grew up in Arcanum, Ohio (moved to Columbus in 2002). Her favorite local 5k is the Girls on the Run 5k!