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MIRAMICHI - Elementary and middle school students throughout the region are going to have tired legs come summer.



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Nathan Rochford photo

A group of students from Ian Baillie Primary School walk around the school during the first day of the Go for 42/Mango Kids Fun program. Pictured from left to right are: Mariah Marcella, Mandy MacLean, Chrislyn Colford, Grade 3 teacher Deborah Hill, Sarah-Ann Fowler and Kori Trevors.

As of Monday 22 schools throughout District 16 kicked off the first day of the third annual Go for 42/Mango Kids Fun Run.

The event, which last from now until the end of the school year, will see students from kindergarten to Grade 8 walk or run a total of 40 kilometres.

An additional two kilometres will be completed at the Mango Kids Fun Run on July 5, at the Miramichi Civic Centre.

Jessica McCallum, Mango coordinator, said the program, a partnership between Regional Health Authority B and District 16, is aimed at getting kids more active.

"A lot of kids are not into sports, but they can do things individually," McCallum said of the decision to hold a walk/run. "They seem to love it...all of them (the students) took part last year and really liked it."

McCallum helped kick off the event at Ian Baillie Primary School Monday morning. She said in total 4,000 kids throughout the region are exposed to the program and last year 300 ended up taking part in the final fun run at the MCC.

Ian Baillie principal Beth McCarthy said the program helps in promoting healthy living in young children.

"It's great because it gives them a reason to move if nothing else," she joked. "You have to start early with kids. Send a message that staying active is important to maintaining a healthy lifestyle."

Members of the Miramichi Police Force will be on hand for the runs over the next couple of months, giving talks about healthy living and talking to the students. Other groups involved include School District 16 Healthy Learners Program, Shoppers Drug Mart, Sobeys, Aliant NB, Miramichi Community Wellness and Recreation Department, Miramichi Association of Police Professionals, Miramichi Kinsmen and Newcastle Recreation and Leisure Council.