Agency
Girls on the Run is a non-profit afterschool program for 3rd through 5th grade girls. The girls learn life skills while training to run a 5K. By the end of the ten week season, girls develop problem solving skills, an understanding of healthy behaviors and knowledge of working as part of a team. The girls participate in a 5K event which involves all sites in the eighth week of the season.

Overview
The focus of my internship was to assist the program director, Melissa Bixby, in preparing for and coaching during the spring season. I helped facilitate implementing a new national survey in 12 out of the 25 treasure valley sites. Additionally, I attended coaches meetings with my supervisor which allowed me to become familiar with the curriculum involved with teaching and coaching the girls life skills.

In addition to Girls on the Run, I was able to participate in other activities with the program director such as Let’s Move committee meetings and Take Back Your Lunch. This helped me to see how other programs functioned.

CHES Competencies
Implement: I applied implementation by learning the Girls on the Run curriculum. I taught the girls each lesson and coached them while they ran.

Resource: After understanding what the program was about, I became a resource for volunteers, parents, participants and other community members interested in the program. I was able to explain what coaches needed to do in order to be successful at their sites. I explained to others about the program and the impact it has on girls.

Communicate: I used oral and written communication to stay in contact with my supervisor and the various site coaches. I used written communication to update coaches about events and meetings during upcoming weeks.

Summary
Overall, I learned how to run a program, it takes a lot of time and dedication to make it successful. You have to be organized and set deadlines so you don’t get behind. It’s important to have good communication with parents, volunteers, and board members. Being a program director, you wear many different hats. One day you’re answering emails and the next day you could be coaching the girls. Most importantly, having a passion for the program is a key to success.

Words of Advice
This is a great program to be involved with, you’re able to be a coach as well as assist with the interworking’s of the program. I would recommend working with the program director and being a coach. It’s amazing to see how much a girl will change over the ten week season. The best part is running the 5K with your team and seeing each and every one of your girls cross the finish line.