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## See Mommy Run

*Area Women Take Kids on Weekly Runs*

By **Sabrina Enayatulla** ✉  
Observer Staff Writer

Rising with the sun is not unusual for moms with small children. Mommy duties often include tending to hungry children, cleaning, or dressing toddlers glued to the television. With a mom's busy schedule, there is little time left for the things they did before potty training and baby formula.

But in 2004, Andrea Vincent decided she was going to keep up with the things she loved even after she had her first child. Vincent was an avid runner through high school and college. She and her husband participated in competitive running often, but Vincent said it had been almost 10 years since she ran consistently.

After moving from Texas to Manassas last year, Vincent decided to use her background in marketing to form a Web site where women could meet other moms interested in staying in shape. Last July, [www.SeeMommyRun.com](http://www.SeeMommyRun.com) was born.

"My intention was to have five or six women come out who were interested," Vincent said. "But through word of mouth, it just grew."

More than 8,000 moms from Oregon to Pennsylvania now use the Web site as a message board and information site to contact other moms to form local groups. Mommies are hitting running trails across the country, rain or shine.

Colleen Gustavson, group leader and coordinator for the Leesburg group of running mommies said she read an article about other moms and wanted to start her own group. Gustavson's dedicated bunch runs on the W&OD trail, Tuesday and Thursday mornings.

Twenty women push their children in strollers as they sweat it out for four miles in 45 minutes. The last 15 minutes of cool down for the moms is playtime for the kids.

"You can meet other moms and kids while doing something," Gustavson said. "You're not just sitting around in a play group."

Gustavson said the group encourages moms of all fitness levels to join

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and said many of the moms are walkers.

"We pair up in groups of two or three," Gustavson said. "It's not competitive, we just get out and get some fresh air. It's totally free, which is a major perk."

Gustavson also said working moms meet at the most convenient time for them, forming groups that meet in the evenings, or on weekends.

Jennifer Small, another Leesburg runner started running with the group in June. Small initially walked frequently during the twice a week get-togethers, but after many mornings with the other women and motivation from her own kids, Small is now able to run the four miles while pushing both her daughters in a double stroller.

"I have never been great at pushing myself alone," Small said. "But the camaraderie of the other women really keeps me motivated."

Small said her husband's busy work schedule and the age requirement for daycare at the gym made it hard for her to find time to exercise regularly. "This group is the best thing for me," Small said. She added that her two-year-old keeps her honest by asking if they're meeting their "running friends" and through the course of their run, reminds her not to walk.

When Kitty Fowler and her husband moved from Charlottesville to Reston in May, she said the group was a great way to meet other women with similar interests. She began running with her 16-month-old daughter and 15 other Reston moms in June and is now the group coordinator for the Reston group.

"We chat about stuff that you don't talk about with your friends who don't have kids," she said. "A lot of us meet outside of the group."

The close-knit group of Reston mothers run Tuesday and Thursday mornings on trails around Lake Anne and Lake Thoreau. Fowler said running with the other moms has been a great way for all the women to exercise, have fun and spend time with their kids.

Another area group is located in Herndon. For more information visit [www.SeeMommyRun.com](http://www.SeeMommyRun.com).

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