

Sole Fit:
A “Shoes That Fit” Chapter



Sole Fit Founder:

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I. Introduction- A Note from the Founder

Hello Fellow Podiatry Colleagues,

Thank you for your interest in learning more about Sole Fit! Sole Fit is an organization that promotes the importance of podiatric care and provides new, athletic shoes to underprivileged children in the community. Our mission is *“To promote the importance of podiatric care and provide fitting shoes for the children in our community so they can have a healthy today and an even healthier tomorrow”*.

As a podiatric physician, I believe it is crucial to establish a strong foundation for the community regarding podiatric health. I founded Sole Fit in 2015 and my goal is to expand this organization to other podiatry schools and residency programs in the nation. Our group is affiliated with a countrywide known organization named, Shoes That Fit. This manual will further explain our mission, goals and affiliation with Shoes That Fit. I encourage the podiatric community to join our mission to better aid children in communities across America.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments or suggestions.

Thank you for your interest in joining and learning more about Sole Fit!

Sincerely,

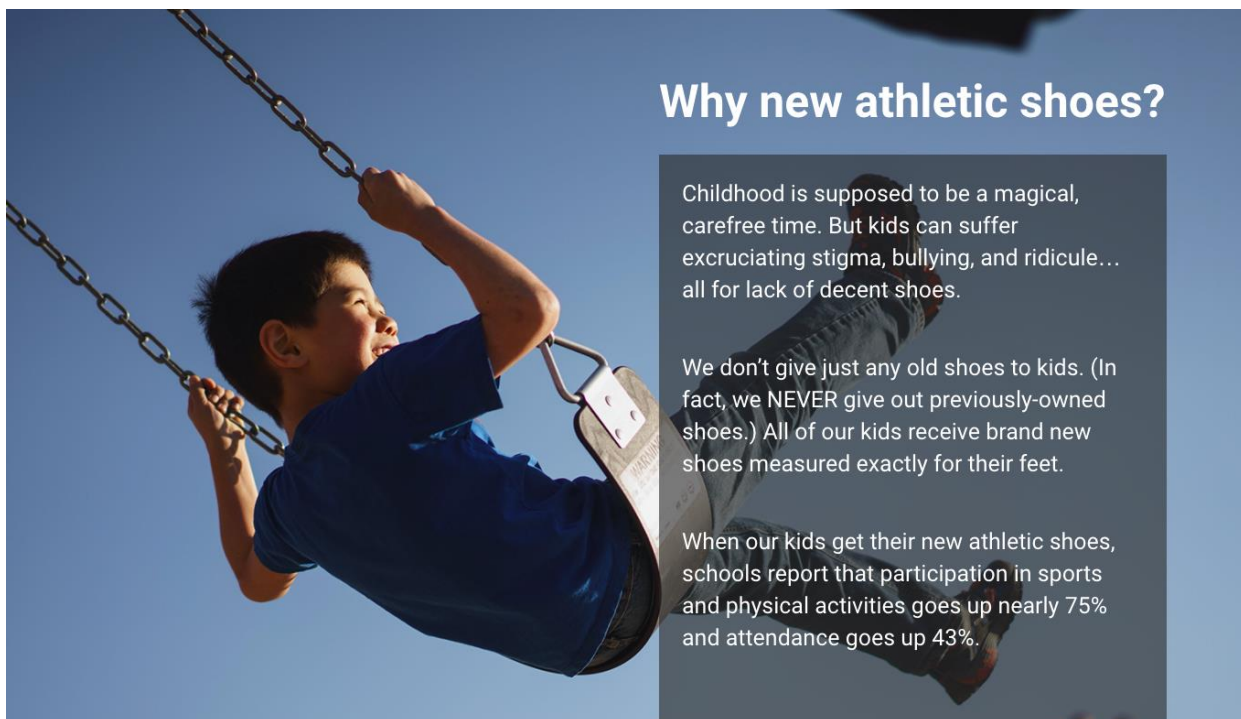
Katerina Grigoropoulos, DPM
Sole Fit Founder



II. Target Population

Elementary school children are the primary target population sponsored by Sole Fit. In underprivileged communities, it is common to see children wearing ill-fitting shoes. In many cases, the parents are not able to provide a fitting pair for their children and the lack of such a simple necessity has cost children pedal complications. It is our duty as health professionals to not only educate children about proper foot care, but also help provide the resources they need to practice what they learn.

Children's feet grow at a rapid rate, making them the target demographic for this project. By the age of ten, most girls have completed 90% of their foot growth and most boys have completed 80% of their foot growth. Prior to age twelve, a child's foot typically grows one centimeter per year. It is very important for their shoes to accommodate their growth during this developmental period. A child's foot is soft and flexible and abnormal pressures caused by tight shoes can have severe consequences on their growth. Their quickly developing feet have made them a high-risk target population in need of fitting shoes.



**Image and associated text via Shoes That Fit

III. Sole Fit Goals

1. Provide fitting shoes for children in need

In order to purchase and provide fitting shoes, proper funding must first be obtained. This will be done through the establishment of fundraising events throughout the year by each Sole Fit chapter. Community partnerships can help sponsor Sole Fit through donations of shoes, funds or service grants.

2. Provide an education component: Raising Foot Health Awareness

One of the project goals is to teach children about podiatric health. The volunteers will teach the children about proper pedal wellbeing and what to look for in a fitting shoe. The overall goal of this education portion is to raise awareness for podiatric medicine and educate the youth about the importance of proper pedal hygiene and care.

3. Involve the podiatric community

Sole Fit would like to encourage all nine-podiatry schools as well as other podiatric organizations to get involved. With this national expansion, Sole Fit will be named the first national, podiatric philanthropic organization integrating different branches within the field of podiatry. We encourage the other eight podiatry schools to participate in our mission and we aspire to involve podiatric residency programs and other organizations nationwide.

IV. Affiliation with Shoes That Fit



Shoes That Fit

Shoes That Fit is a non-profit organization and is the main community partner affiliated with Sole Fit. This organization is nationally known for helping children obtain fitting shoes. Chapters established through various companies, organizations and schools sponsor this foundation. Sole Fit chapters among the different programs will work in close collaboration with this organization. Shoes That Fit helps match Sole Fit with community schools in need of new, fitting shoes. If you know of a school in your community that is in need, you can simply notify Shoes That Fit and they will match you with that designated school. Shoes That Fit is an excellent resource because they are the liaison between every Sole Fit chapter and the designated elementary school. They provide all paperwork needed for the sponsorship including permission slips for parents, photo release waivers, ect.

Once you are partnered with an elementary school, Sole Fit will give the school an estimate of how many children can be sponsored. The elementary school then decides which students are in need of shoes and the teachers size the children in need and sends the sizes to Shoes That Fit. Once all the fundraising is completed, Shoes That Fit collects the funds, purchases the shoes AND delivers the shoes to the elementary school once a distribution event date is arranged between your chapter and the school. So all you have to do is raise money and attend the distribution event where you distribute the shoes and help teach children about proper foot care and the importance of podiatry!

V. Previous Publication in First Step



Group photo of the Sole Fit Volunteers and Greenwood Elementary Students



Left to Right: Brooke Robertson, students Maria and Jose, Katerina Grigoropoulos

Every Pair of Shoes Tells a Story

Sole Fit is an interprofessional, student run organization that promotes the importance of podiatric care and provides new athletic shoes to underprivileged children throughout the community. Sole Fit works in close collaboration with the nationally recognized organization, "Shoes That Fit". Through this organization we were matched with Greenwood Elementary School in Waukegan, IL. We agreed to sponsor 106 students, ages 3-11, to receive free athletic shoes and foot care education. On behalf of the Sole Fit team, we would like to thank the APMSA Partners for their generous service grant. With their support and encouragement, our team was able to make a difference in the lives of underserved children and their families. We believe in empowering children and teaching them the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle, as well as taking care of their feet, which is the foundation of their health.

Having a new pair of fitting shoes affects a child's developmental health and provides them with a sense of dignity, confidence, and self-esteem to help them focus on their academics rather than their circumstances.

We hope Sole Fit's mission continues to impact the lives of children for years to come. Scholl College is the first podiatric institution to begin a "Shoes That Fit"



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chapter, and we encourage other colleges to start their own affiliation with this organization to better help the children in their community. "The most rewarding part of distributing the shoes to the children was their look of pure joy when they realized they finally had shoes their size," stated former Sole Fit Vice President, Derrick Roland. We hope to expand this project in the years to come and continue teaching children the significance of proper foot care. Sole Fit's future holds much promise and we thank the APMSA Partners for inspiring us to surpass our goals and establish a strong foundation for our organization. We deeply thank them for their generosity and for understanding the importance of shoes that fit!

VI. Distribution Event Photos



VII. Closing Remarks

Thank you once again for your interest in learning more about Sole Fit! I hope you found this manual informative and inspiring. I am optimistic that Sole Fit can bring the podiatry community together across the nation to help provide for children in need. Being an active member in Sole Fit is a humbling and extremely rewarding experience. Thus far, our Sole Fit chapter at Scholl College has distributed over 600 pairs of shoes and 1,000 pairs of socks to underprivileged children. If we all participate together, we can help hundreds, if not thousands of children every year!

If you are interested in starting a Sole Fit chapter at your program, please see the "How To Start A Chapter "guide. If you have any questions, please contact me at katdpm@gmail.com.

I look forward to working with you and making a greater impact!

Thank you,

Katerina Grigoropoulos, DPM

To learn more about Shoes That Fit, please visit their website at: www.shoesthatfit.org

