

Nicoletta Nerangis, LMSW, is the Founder and Executive Director of Run4Fun, a nonprofit organization advancing mental health and socio-emotional wellness in children and youth through the transformative power of running and play. Nicoletta created Run4Fun's evidence-based, trauma-informed SEL curriculum for young people, recognized for its innovative use of movement-based practices to support emotional regulation, resilience, and youth leadership. Run4Fun serves thousands of young people annually in New York City and Kefalonia, Greece, including girls, youth of color, LGBTQIA+ youth, and young people with disabilities who are often navigating systemic inequities, reduced access to care, and disproportionate challenges to their mental health and well-being. She has also developed tailored adaptations of the curriculum designed specifically for girls and LGBTQIA+ youth, centering identity, belonging, and emotional safety through movement-based practices.

With over 30 years of experience across clinical, educational, and creative roles, including as a therapist, school-based crisis counselor, music educator, and coach, Nicoletta is widely recognized for her work with children and individuals with disabilities. She brings clinical expertise and decades of applied experience at the intersection of trauma-informed care, inclusive education, and youth development. Her approach is deeply rooted in personal story and professional practice. Inspired by her son Panagiotis, who had anxiety around competition, but loved to run, Nicoletta founded Run4Fun to create joyful and healing spaces where movement and play are tools for emotional growth, belonging, and resilience. When he told her, "I'll join, if you start it," Run4Fun was born.

A lifelong advocate for disability inclusion and access, Nicoletta also founded the Achilles Brooklyn chapter of Achilles International, a global organization supporting athletes with disabilities. Her longstanding commitment to inclusion is reflected in Run4Fun's founding values, ensuring that all children, regardless of ability, identity, or background, can fully participate in movement-based wellness through universal design and healing-centered practices.

Nicoletta is also a sought-after speaker on youth mental health, trauma-informed care, and movement-based interventions. She has shared her insights at legislative hearings, community panels, and international stages, including the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Nostos Conference in Athens, Greece on Mental Health. Her work has been featured in media outlets including USA Today, BBC Sport, VOA's Sonny Side of Sports, and others covering youth development and mental health.

A marathon runner and trained opera singer, Nicoletta has completed 12 marathons, including the New York City and Boston Marathons, and has guided athletes with disabilities through Achilles International. She sings the national anthem at the start of many running races before running alongside her son, youth, and community members. She believes deeply in the brilliance of young people, and that their ideas, voices, and leadership can truly change the world.