



HOW TO ORGANIZE A 5K FUN RUN **INVISIBLE** CHILDREN **STYLE**



This packet will prepare you with just about everything you'll need to organize and execute a successful 5K fundraising run. You can adapt this model to any type of team fundraiser. A yoga rave, a dodgeball competition, a dance marathon, a ping-pong tournament, or our personal favorite - a slam dunk competition with trampolines. We'll leave that decision up to you.

THE GOAL:

Raise \$5,000.
Think of it as a 5K for \$5K. Boom.



RACE LOCATION AND TIME

PICK A LOCATION: You know your city. Pick a park where you know there is a trail to run on and that has a reputation for being safe.

Keep in mind that your race, if you choose to make it a public event (read: make it a public event), may attract people from the running community. To make sure your race doesn't conflict with another, check out local running club websites for a calendar of local races. Don't be that person that schedules a 5K in Brooklyn on the same day as the New York Marathon. Trust us, it won't work out in your favor.

RESERVE IT: You've scoped out the perfect park and you've made sure it's not happening during another major racing event. Perfect. The next step is to reach out to your local Parks and Recreation Department. Not sure how to get a hold of them? Google it. But beware, you may get distracted and end up on Netflix watching all five seasons of NBC's Parks and Rec. Resist the urge. You've got a race to plan.

Call your city's department or send them a quick email, and say the following:

"Hi my name is (insert your name here) and I'd like to reserve (insert park name) for (insert date) from (insert time you'll start setting up until when you expect to be finished cleaning up). Can you please send me the proper reservation forms?"

Easy, breezy, Ben Keesey.

Here's the only catch. You'll have to pay to use the park. Bummer, right? Well, that's the government for you. We kid, we love the government (cc: LRA Disarmament Bill and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2010). Thanks guys.

Once you've reserved and paid for the park, the Parks and Recreation Department will help you through the rest of the process from that end. Just like the Allstate guy says, "You're in good hands".



GET SPONSORED

GET SPONSORED: Maybe you won't get Nike this year but there are so many opportunities for local companies in your area to help make your race a possibility. Eight times out of ten (this is an arbitrary statistic meant to boost your morale, but it's probably still true), that sponsor will be your friend's dad who owns a restaurant or your neighbor who is feeling generous.

It may seem daunting to approach someone and ask them for large sums of money, but tons of people are itching for ways to give back to their community and just don't know how. Also, local businesses are almost always game for a little advertisement. That's why making a sponsorship an attractive, mutually beneficial partnership is key. Give them options.

Here's an easy-to-follow guide on how to get sponsored:

1. Write a sponsorship letter. Be concise while still making sure you cover all your bases - who you are, what kind of event it is, where the money is going, and a description of the organization you're supporting. Then ask them to sponsor the event.

2. Not everyone can dole out \$250 checks but a lot of people can manage \$50. Create sponsorship levels with different perks. What types of sponsorship levels should I create? We're glad you asked. See the handy chart below:

- **T-Shirt Sponsor (\$250):** Your organization's name and/or logo featured on the back of the official race shirts, recognition in signs and marketing of the event as an official sponsor, advertisements in give-away bags for each participant, two free race registrations (shirt included).
- **Water Stand Sponsor (\$100):** Your organization's name and/or logo displayed on one of our race's water stands, recognition in signs and marketing of the event as an official sponsor, advertisements in give-away bags for each participant, one free race registration (shirt included).
- **General Sponsor (\$50):** Recognition in signs and marketing of the event as an official sponsor.

3. Okay, they're in. Nice work. The next obvious question is how do you get payment from them? The best way to handle this is to have each sponsor donate their contribution to your online registration site, which we'll describe in the next section. If they're not tech savvy, but feel comfortable writing a check in your name, go ahead and let them do that. Just make sure to handle and record the money responsibly.

4. Try to get your sponsors to show up to the race. Get them involved in the organization and community they are supporting.

5. Final step. Send out thank you letters after the race with a description of how it went, in case the sponsor wasn't able to attend.

T-SHIRTS

DESIGN: One of the best parts of organizing a 5K (or trampoline-based slam dunk contest) is that it becomes a tradition. Don't ruin your chances of starting something beautiful because you made a poorly designed T-shirt. It's your best marketing tool for next year's race (or trampoline-based slam dunk contest. Please, someone get on this idea).

GET THEM MADE: Find a local screen-printing shop or check online for a custom T-shirt website. Aim for a price range of \$6-\$8 per shirt. More money to the cause, yo.

Tip: getting in touch with someone local means they can turn your artwork into a T-shirt print, whereas most websites will only allow you to use clip art. Remember what we said about ruining your chances of starting something beautiful? Well, clip art will ruin it faster than anything in the world. Stay away clip art, you're not welcome here.

It's also worth inquiring whether or not your T-shirt provider gives discounts to events raising money for a nonprofit organization. Rumor has it that an Invisible Children club once received 200 printed shirts for free, simply because they asked. F-R-E-E. Just ask. The worse they can do is say no. Actually, the worst they can do is offer to add clip art to your shirt design. Seriously, stay away from clip art.

GETTING YOUR RACE ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB: That's the "internet" for all of you young folk. It's the 21st century, and unless you get your race registration digitized, you'll be in for world wide stress halfway through the registration process. Thankfully for us both, websites providing race registration services have come a long way in the past couple years. Also, they're free to use. Word.

HERE ARE A FEW WEBSITES TO CONSIDER:

<http://www.eventbrite.com>
<https://www.raceit.com>
<https://runsignup.com>


Once you've found a site you like, you'll need to provide the following information about your race:

- Where and when?
- How much will it cost? \$15 is reasonable. Don't go above \$20. Remember that each person will get a T-shirt (subtract \$6-\$8), so how much do you have left over per person? Multiply that by the number of people you expect to show up and that's how much money you'll make (not including sponsorships, those will cover the cost of renting the park). I know, math. Here's an example: At \$20 per person minus \$8 for each shirt, you'll need to get a little over 400 people registered for the race. Totally feasible, especially if you get several additional sponsors.
- Directions to your race location. You'll want those posted on your registration/race website.

What information do you need from each person who registers?

- Their name
- Phone number
- Email
- T-shirt size
- Race category (Adult Female or High School Boy? etc.)

ONLINE REGISTRATION



RUNNING CLUBS: Remember those local running club websites that helped you schedule your race? Well, now you can use those calendars to advertise your race. Genius. But whatever you do, don't pay to post your event. There are far too many free options available.

SOCIAL MEDIA: A little over a year ago we made a little film called KONY 2012 which became the most viral video of all time. And before the Olympics decided to make a Facebook page, we were the most liked nonprofit on Facebook (not that we're bitter). So if you only take to heart one thing in this packet (other than trampoline-based slam dunk contests), take this: Advertise your event on social media.

Make a Facebook event page, create a Twitter handle, make an exclusive hashtag for Instagram. Do it all. You'll thank yourself later.

And don't forget to always link to your race registration page. That's the whole point of advertising - to get people signed up for the race.

ADVERTISEMENT



VOLUNTEERS

YOUR VOLUNTEERS ARE YOUR LIFE: That's a bit dramatic, but they'll be irreplaceable during the planning and execution of your race. Consider them your family of little elves that do your bidding and sing carols while they work. Put them to work (but be kind to them - they're helping you raise money for a human rights organization, after all).

JOBS:

Race set-up volunteers (for your early risers)

Water stand volunteers (have them donate supplies)

Race timers (must have good handwriting and be able to read a watch)

These are just a few of the potential jobs that you may need on race day. Also try to get volunteers to donate bananas, granola bars, water, Gatorade, etc. It cuts back on your expenses and most people don't mind pitching in.

THE ESSENTIALS: There's a website called Road ID. They manufacture bracelets with your name and emergency contact info in case you were to get hit by a car or faint while running or walking (hopefully that doesn't happen). They also sponsor races for free by providing bib numbers, gift certificates (for category winners), and Road ID fliers with coupons for their website. It's a win-win. Unless you win the race. Then it's a win-win-win. Here's their website: <http://www.roadid.com>

FINISH LINE: This is pretty do-it-yourself. Find a rope and paint it a bright color or attach hand-crafted flags to it. Make it cool.

REGISTRATION MATERIALS: Print out a list of registrants - your online registration site will have a way to download this information as a spreadsheet that you can print.

MEDALS: Everyone loves medals. But in the fundraising 5K world, only the winners get medals (because medals are expensive. Everyone "wins" when they raise money for charity). Order medals for your first place winners in each group.

RACE PACKS: Get gallon bags and put in sponsor advertisements, race shirts, and bib numbers. Use the label wizard on your computer's word processor to print out labels with the racer's name and shirt size and stick them onto each bib number. Then bag the correct sized shirt with the bib number. Make sure that the bib number is written by the corresponding name on your registration list so you can easily pass out race packs during the morning of the race.

TIMING MATERIALS: You can use your phone or a sports watch but at least have 2-3 timers start at the same time when your race begins; have clipboards with runner's bib numbers and name, and a place to record their times.

WATER/FOOD: Volunteers can handle this, just give them assignments.

RACE MATERIALS



PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

TIPS:

1. Stay in touch with your community of runners. Their emails will be provided during the registration process and you should make sure to send updates reminding them of the race twice in the last weeks before the race.
2. Music: have it at your race. Avoid those awkward silences. Maybe get a fitness trainer or yoga instructor to lead a group stretch session right before the race. Hire 80's rock band Europe to play "The Final Countdown" as racers round the final lap. Do what you do best and make the race fun.
3. Registration: Have people show up at least 20 minutes before the beginning of the race so that you can check them in and give them their race packs. Have several safety pins on hand.
4. Get up early on race day.
5. Have fun. People can tell if you are stressed and tired. Grab a coffee and put on your best smile.
6. Sign up and participate in a 5K a couple of weeks before your race.

FINAL THOUGHTS: You're now ready to host your very own 5K Fun Run or trampoline-based slam dunk contest. Good luck, and we'll see you at the finish line. Figuratively and maybe literally.