



How to Fundraise for Clean Water

Thanks for participating in the Buzzards Bay Swim/Watershed Ride and raising money to support the Buzzards Bay Coalition and protect clean water in your community!

We know fundraising doesn't come naturally to everyone, so here are a few ideas to help you get started and personalize your approach. Remember – people love to support friends and family and the causes they're passionate about. So read on...and know that you are well on your way to exceeding your goal!

Email Then Email Again...And Don't Forget Social Media

Other swimmers/riders have found emailing friends, family and co-workers to be the most effective way of generating donations. You can tell your personal story about why you're swimming/riding. You can include a link to your fundraising page so folks can easily click and donate right online. Don't be afraid to email multiple times. Folks are busy and don't mind a reminder email...especially if it is personalized and you tell your story.

You can use the Participant Center on our website to upload your contacts and send your emails. We even have sample emails you can customize to make your own. Once you get a donation, don't forget to send a personal email to say thanks.

Social media is also a great way to get the word out, but less effective than email in generating larger donations. If you post to Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter or Instagram, remember to keep it short and make a quick appeal. You could say something like, "I'm swimming to save Buzzards Bay on June 20. Will you donate \$10 to support me and protect clean water?" Don't forget to include a link to your personal fundraising page.

Write It Down

A hand-written letter is an old-school fundraising tool, and it works. Letters can be more personal than email, but they can also make it harder for folks to donate than just clicking a link in an email. Use hand-written letters with friends and family who might be less comfortable with email, or for folks for whom you don't have an email address. Use it to explain the facts – that you'll be participating in a Buzzards Bay Coalition outdoor event and that you'd like their help to support your participation. Don't forget to include a donation form and a pre-addressed return envelope.

Work the Neighborhood

There are countless opportunities to raise money within a few miles of your home. Think about it: the coffee shop, the gym, the laundromat, the car wash, the supermarket, the newsstand, the dry cleaner, the dentist's office, the bar, the deli, the parking lot, the bike shop, the pizza place. You patronize these businesses all the time – ask them to help you out with your fundraising effort. How?

- Just ask for money – businesses, too, can be donors.
- Display a donation box and/or letters and donation forms on the counter.
- Ask the business to donate a portion of their proceeds on a given day.

Make a Connection

Making contact with as many people as possible will be key to your fundraising. Chances are, your friends and family will be more than happy to be a part of your fundraising campaign, but you'll probably need to go beyond your inner circle.

- Throw a party! Ask everyone who attends to write a check when they enter the front door.
- Or host an event – a film screening, a boat cruise, a band night in a local bar.
- Ask your friends to ask their friends for donations.
- Then ask their friends to ask their friends.

Bring It to the Office

Your place of work is another opportunity to reach more people, and they're often a captive audience. Let people at work know what you're doing, and enlist their help.

- Just ask for money. Your company might be happy to donate to your Buzzards Bay Swim fundraising goal.
- Then, ask for more – see if your company has a matching gift program.
- Send an email to the entire company with a donation form attached.
- Hang a flyer or a poster in your lunch room.

Get Crafty

Use your creativity and your personality to come up with unique ideas. Everyone has the ability to do something well; sell your product or skill to benefit your fundraising campaign. A few ideas: cookies, lapel pins, knit caps, poems, chili, short stories, tax preparation abilities, photographs, babysitting time, car washing, drawings, language tutoring, personal training, t-shirts, designated driving, dog-walking, errand-running, gardening.

There's No Limit...

...to creative, effective fundraising techniques. The following is a quick list of ideas successfully used by other event participants to raise funds. Send us your ideas and we'll add them to the list!

- **Garage Sale** - Know all that stuff that's been hanging out in your garage ... in your attic ... in your basement? Gather it up and ask your friends to do the same. Put it in your front yard and sell, sell, sell! Put all the money raised toward your fundraising minimum!
- **Bake Sale** - Channel Julia Child (and ask your friends to do the same) and host a bake sale. You can even have it in conjunction with your garage sale.
- **Extra "Change in My Pocket" Box** - Create these little boxes for your friends and family and have them place it on their dresser. At the end of the day, they can drop that spare change in the box.
- **Office Fundraising Challenge** - Speak with everyone in your office and get them to challenge each other to raise the highest amount. Give the "winner" a prize.
- **Answering Machine Message** - This will alert everyone who calls you at home that you're up to something special! Let them know that you need their support!
- **Return Address Labels** - Print return address labels for your outgoing mail. Write something like, "I'm participating in the Buzzards Bay Swim. Will you sponsor me?" You may want to include a donation form and a self-addressed envelope to make it really easy for them.
- **Ask your local waiter/waitresses to donate a portion of one day's tips** - Ask your local waiters and waitresses to donate a portion of their tips to your cause.
- **Ask your local bartender to donate a portion of one day's tips** - Same as the waiters and waitresses. Ask them to donate tips from one night. You can create a sign for the bartender to place on the bar stating that "All tips collected tonight will go directly to 'Joe Swimmer' who's swimming 1.2 miles to raise money to help save Buzzards Bay." If the patrons see that sign they may be willing to dig a little deeper in their pocket!
- **Fundraising dinner at your local favorite restaurant** - Ask your favorite local restaurant to host a fundraising dinner for you. They supply the food and you supply the donation forms!
- **Theme Party/Dinner** - Hold a theme party for 10 (or more) of your friends. Donation: \$50.00 per person. Spend no more than \$20.00 per person on the food and you'll have \$300.00 (or more) in donations by the end of the night.
- **Movie ticket donation** - Ask your local movie theater to donate several movie tickets. Sell them and put the money toward your goal.
- **Delegate** - Give 10 of your friends 10 donation forms each and ask them to help raise money for you.
- **Doctor / Therapist / Veterinarian / Insurance Agent** - Ask him/her to make a check out for you instead of the other way around!
- **Dentist** - Hopefully you won't have to pull teeth to get him/her to help you out a little!
- **Chiropractor** - They've cracked your back. Now ask them to crack open their checkbook and make a donation.
- **Yoga Instructor** - You've bent over backwards for them...now it's their turn to do the same for you!

- **Radio Station** - Call your favorite radio station and ask them to make an announcement on the air. They may even interview you. Donations can be sent directly to the Coalition and we'll credit them toward your fundraising goal.
- **Gym** - Ask your gym to place a donation jar at the front desk! Leave a stack of donation forms at the counter, too.
- **Hair Salon** - Ask your barber or hairdresser to donate \$1.00 of every haircut they complete over one weekend.
- **Neighbor** - Write to all your neighbors on your block (or in your building). Attach a letter stating what you're training for and ask them to make a donation.
- **Garden Tour** - Check with a local historical society to see if they would sponsor a garden tour of one or several homes in your area. Promote the event in local newspapers.
- **Meet the Press** - Does your company distribute a newsletter? Take advantage of these! It's a perfect way to get the word out.
- **House sit** - Friends going out of town for a while? Maybe they need a warm body to stay in their place in their absence!
- **Neighborhood Chores** - Are you a Mr. or Ms. Fix-it? A lot of your neighbors would probably rather pay you than someone else. Place signs around your neighborhood advertising your services (i.e. watering gardens, cleaning roof gutters, sweeping the driveway, fixing an easy plumbing problem, painting a room, etc.)
- **Karaoke Night** - Who cares if you can't carry a tune. Spend a Friday night at a Karaoke Bar and sing your heart out! Have the announcer tell the crowd that you're singing for donations!
- **eBay** - Remember the garage sale idea? How about rounding up the goods from your friends and putting it all on eBay to be auctioned off?
- **Company Vacation Days** - Ask your boss or human resources director if they can swap one of your vacation days for a day's pay.
- **Game night** - Get out those board games and start playing! Break into teams and let the fun begin.
- **Host a poker game** - Call your serious (or not so serious) card-playin' friends and invite them over for poker night.
- **Bowling Nights** - Plan a fun night of bowling at your local lanes. Ask the owner to waive the cost of bowling and you can collect that money and turn it into donations.
- **Used book sale** - Everyone has books that have been sitting on shelves or in the attic in boxes or in the basement collecting dust. Ask your friends, family and neighbors to donate whatever they've got and set up a little weekend book sale in your front yard.
- **Local Stores** - Ask a local store manager what the hot-selling item is these days. Then ask if they'd be willing to donate a percent of the sales from that particular item to you.
- **Curse Jar** - C'mon, everyone does it. Now they'll have to pay for it. Place a curse jar in your office and whenever someone says a bad word they have to open up their wallet, grab a dollar and put it in the jar.
- **Dress Down Day** - Ask your company to allow an official Buzzards Bay Dress Down Day. For the privilege of dressing down, employees donate \$5.00 toward your event.
- **Church Bulletin** - Place an advertisement in your church bulletin letting the congregation know what you're up to!

- **Other Parents** - If your kids play on soccer leagues or any other sports teams, distribute your donation forms to the other parents at the event.
- **Remind Them** - In case you didn't receive an answer the first time you asked...ask again! Your potential donor may need a little coaxing.
- **Inspirational Book Marks** - Create them and sell them to your friends and family.
- **Universities and Colleges** - Contact your local schools and ask if you can put an advertisement in their school newsletter asking for donations. Some of the organizations may even invite you to make a short presentation.
- **Mechanic** - You've given 'em lots of money to work on your car. Now it's time for them to give a little back to you!
- **Rock on!** - If you know any musicians, ask them to perform a benefit concert. Tell people that their admission ticket is a check made out to the Buzzards Bay Coalition.
- **Share the Experience** - Tell your story. The more you talk about your upcoming swim, the more people will share in that excitement and want to support you.
- **Children's Party** - Throw on that Elsa outfit and get out there! The kids will be having fun as their parents are writing you donation checks!
- **Wine and Cheese Party** - Host a party at a local restaurant and ask the owner to donate the wine and cheese.
- **Do you have a favorite magazine?** - Call the editor and ask them to be your sponsor. If you've subscribed to a particular magazine for a long time they may be willing to give something back to you.
- **Fraternities and Sororities** - Contact the National Chapter of your college fraternity or sorority and ask them to make a donation.
- **Alumni Organizations** - Call your own college or university and ask them to place an ad in the alumni newsletter asking for donations.

**Contact us at (508) 999-6363 ext. 207
or events@savebuzzardsbay.org for
help with your fundraising or to share
ideas. We're here to help you reach
your goal!**