



# Polar Plunge Fundraising Toolkit

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# Request a Donation Sample Letter or Email

Dear (Name):

I will be freezin' for a reason at the Santa Barbara County Polar Plunge to raise money for local Special Olympics athletes. Please donate to my cause and help me reach my fundraising goal!

With your support, we can enrich the lives of thousands of athletes with intellectual disabilities and their communities through sports, education, and athlete health.

Special Olympics provides children and adults with intellectual disabilities with the chance to live happier, healthier, and longer lives. We provide training for life.

For every athlete who has benefited from the programs, there are many more who we have not reached yet. Help give the power of sport to one or more person with intellectual disabilities.

Please visit my online fundraising page at (enter personal web page) to learn more about my great cause and to make a secure online donation. If you prefer to mail in a donation, please let me know. I will provide you with an Offline Donation Form.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration in supporting me and the athletes of Special Olympics.

Sincerely,

(Your Name)

**Special  
Olympics**  
Southern California



# Sample Thank You Letter

Dear (Name):

Thank you so much for supporting me as I am freezin' for a reason at the Santa Barbara County Polar Plunge to raise money for local Special Olympics athletes. Not only am I reaching my goal of \$X,XXX, but I am raising awareness in the community about children and adults with intellectual disabilities.

With your support, we will enrich the lives of athletes with intellectual disabilities and their communities through sports, education, and athlete health.

Every dollar raised through the Polar Plunge not only provides equipment, uniforms, and training for our athletes, but also gives them empowerment, courage, and joy.

Special Olympics is more than a sports program. Special Olympics Southern California athletes are five times more likely to hold a job than the general population of individuals with intellectual disabilities. They are also more physically fit and live happier, healthier, and longer lives.

Thank you again for your donation and support. For more information about Special Olympics, please visit [www.sosc.org](http://www.sosc.org).

Sincerely,

(Your Name)



# Talking Points

As a participant, these talking points may help you in your fundraising efforts when you contact potential donors.

- I will be freezin' for a reason to raise funds for Special Olympics.
- I've set a personal goal to raise (amount) because this cause is important to me. (Share a story about the reason you're supporting Special Olympics athletes.)
- With your support, we can enrich the lives of thousands of athletes with intellectual disabilities and their communities through sports, education, and athlete health.
- Special Olympics provides children and adults with intellectual disabilities with the chance to live happier, healthier, and longer lives. We provide training for life.
- Donating is easy and even small donations can make a big difference. Just go online to (your fundraising page address goes here), click "Donate", and select the amount that you would like to give. I can also provide you with an offline donation form so you can give cash or a check.
- You should give whatever you feel is appropriate. Every donation counts in our goal to raise funds for Special Olympics athletes! Sometimes it helps to think about what you spend during the course of a week and donate an equivalent amount – like what you spend eating out or on coffee.
- Thank you so much, (name)! I'll let you know how it goes. I appreciate your support.



# 10 Creative Fundraising Events

**Host a Breakfast/Lunch/Dinner:** Spaghetti is a low-cost meal that's easy to make, and everyone loves it! Some other fun, low-cost dinner options are pancakes and hot dogs. Add a twist and have a black-tie pancake dinner.

**Yard Sale:** One person's trash is almost always another person's treasure, which is why yard sales are so much fun (and successful). Collect items from your team members and sell them to earn money!

**Trivia or Bingo Night:** A game night is an easy way to raise funds. Sell bingo cards and get some prizes donated for the winners. You can host this event at someone's home or at a local bar or restaurant.

**Cooking Battle:** Have a favorite cuisine or sweet treat? Ask your friends and family to make their best version of a cupcake, chili or other food and host a donation-based competition where attendees taste, judge and pick the winner!

**Sports Tournament:** Everyone loves healthy competition! Reserve a location at a park and have teams pay to play.

**Wine Tasting:** Host a wine-tasting event at one of your favorite restaurants. Guests purchase tickets, which allow them to sample wine selections and learn about wine. You can add a silent auction or raffle to raise even more money. (Remember to check your state's gambling laws before hosting a raffle.)

**Karaoke Night:** Host a karaoke night. Attendees can donate to sing or get their friends on (or off) stage!

**Jeans or Casual Dress Day:** If your school, organization, or place of business has a dress code, opt for a day when people can donate a small amount (for example, \$5) in exchange for the option to wear jeans or casual dress. For an ongoing fundraiser, make it a regular Friday event.

**Guest Bartender Night:** Approach a local restaurant or bar and make arrangements with management to take home a percentage of the total sales that you raise as the guest bartender. Request percentages from the entire night of operations or from a specific time frame. If possible, take advantage of a bar's busy weekend crowd. You can also arrange to keep your portion of tips and donations raised.

**Car (or Pet) Wash:** This is a great way for people to get out of washing their cars themselves and raise money for your cause. Mix it up a little and do a pet wash.



# How to Raise \$500 (or more) in 10 Days

- DAY 1:** Sponsor yourself for \$25
- DAY 2:** Ask 2 family members to donate \$25 each
- DAY 3:** Ask 5 friends to contribute \$20
- DAY 4:** Ask 5 co-workers to contribute \$10
- DAY 5:** Ask 5 neighbors to contribute \$10
- DAY 6:** Ask 5 people from your place of worship to contribute \$1
- DAY 7:** Ask your boss for a company contribution of \$50. Better yet, find out if your company will match all of what you raise! Learn more at [www.matchinggifts.com/specialolympics](http://www.matchinggifts.com/specialolympics)
- DAY 8:** Ask 2 businesses or companies (ie: insurance agent, lawyer, etc.) that you deal with through work to contribute \$25
- DAY 9:** Ask businesses you frequent to personally contribute \$15 (hair salon, dry cleaner, favorite restaurant, etc.)
- DAY 10:** Hold a fundraiser (Dinner, car wash, etc.)

# Who To Ask for a Donation

Don't think you know enough people to join your team or to ask for a donation? Take a minute to think of 50 people you can ask to help you meet your fundraising.

## Make a phone call to:

- |                   |                    |                   |
|-------------------|--------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Parents        | 5. Brothers-in-law | 9. Nieces/Nephews |
| 2. Sisters        | 6. Aunts/Uncles    | 10. Grandparents  |
| 3. Sisters-in-law | 7. Cousins         |                   |
| 4. Brothers       | 8. Children        |                   |

## Others you might call or email:

- |                         |                         |                       |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|
| 11. College Friends     | 15. Children's friends  | 19. Former Co-workers |
| 12. Fraternity friends  | 16. Children's teachers | 20. Coaches           |
| 13. High School friends | 17. Neighbors           |                       |
| 14. Facebook friends    | 18. Parent's friends    |                       |

## Send an Email to:

- |                |                        |                     |
|----------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| 21. Accountant | 25. Chiropractor       | 29. Physician       |
| 22. Attorney   | 26. Landlord/Manager   | 30. Wedding Planner |
| 23. Babysitter | 27. Real estate agent  |                     |
| 24. Dentist    | 28. Physical therapist |                     |

## Maybe You Know People From

- |                    |                       |                         |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 31. Work           | 35. Places of Worship | 39. Golf Course         |
| 32. Bowling League | 36. Coffee House      | 40. Favorite Restaurant |
| 33. Gym or Yoga    | 37. Neighborhood Café |                         |
| 34. Childcare      | 38. Camp              |                         |

## Drop Off a Letter to:

- |                    |                 |                     |
|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| 41. Pet Groomer    | 45. School      | 49. Gym/Yoga Studio |
| 42. Drycleaner     | 46. Supermarket | 50. Pharmacist      |
| 43. Florist        | 47. Manicurist  |                     |
| 44. Barber/Stylist | 48. Bartender   |                     |



# Social Media Guide

1. Add your fundraising page link to EVERY post so your friends can easily access your page to donate or register. For Instagram, you can put your fundraising link in your profile.
2. Make sure you are asking your friends to do something. Use words like, "Donate now," "Share this," or "View my fundraising page." Remember that you have to be specific to get results.
3. Thank each of your friends on their pages. You never know who else is going to read their page and possibly donate to you.
4. Have fun and make it personal.
5. If you have teammates on your social media channels, tag or message them to create healthy competition.
6. Use the @ symbol to tag your friends. Just type @ in front of someone's name in your post.
7. Don't just use posts to talk about your fundraising goal. Message everyone you know! Spread the word with messages, chat, etc.
8. Why are you fundraising for Special Olympics? Share your story with your friends, and let them know why you are raising funds and awareness for the athletes.

## Imagery

[Download a 2024 Polar Plunge social media graphic](#)

### Sample Fundraising Messages

I am freezin' for a reason at the Santa Barbara Polar Plunge on June 2nd to raise funds and awareness for Special Olympics athletes. Donate today and make a difference! (Insert personal link) #SBPlunge

Your donation can change the lives of thousands of people with intellectual disabilities in Southern California. Support me as I take the Polar Plunge for Special Olympics Santa Barbara County. (insert personal link) #SBPlunge

### Sample Join Fundraising Messages

I am freezin' for a reason at the Polar Plunge at Leadbetter Beach to raise funds for Special Olympics! Join me at (insert website link) #SBPlunge

Who's ready to raise money for a great cause? Join me in fundraising for the Polar Plunge at Leadbetter Beach to support the Special Olympics Southern California. (insert website link) #SBPlunge

### Sample Thank You Messages

Thank you (insert donor's name) for supporting Special Olympics. Your gift makes a big difference! (insert personal link) #SBPlunge

Thank you (insert donor's name) for supporting me as I plunge for Special Olympics. Together, we can help make a difference in the lives of children and adults with intellectual disabilities. (insert personal link) #SBPlunge



