TABLE OF CONTENTS

Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters and Bigs Ignite are dedicated to making your *Run for Kids’ Sake* as easy as possible for you to raise funds and support local children in-need. This toolkit provides all the information you will need, including several easy-to-follow examples and templates to assist your outreach to donors, friends, and family.

**OVERVIEW**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Introduction to Nutmeg</th>
<th>Page 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**RUN FOR KIDS’ SAKE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program Goals</th>
<th>Page 6</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Runner Responsibilities</td>
<td>Page 7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runner Rewards</td>
<td>Page 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runner FAQs</td>
<td>Page 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How to Receive Online Donations</td>
<td>Page 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intro to Accepting Offline Donations</td>
<td>Page 15</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESOURCES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Media Strategy &amp; Templates</th>
<th>Page 16</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emails &amp; Letters</td>
<td>Page 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Fundraising Ideas</td>
<td>Page 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What is the history of Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters?

Since 1966 Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters has been changing the lives of children across Connecticut. As an independent 501(c)(3) organization affiliated with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America, the nation’s oldest youth mentoring organization, the mission of Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters is to provide children facing adversity with strong and enduring, professionally supported one-to-one relationships that change their lives for the better, forever. Through the excellence of our programs and the commitment of our volunteers and staff, Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters is recognized widely as the “face” of child and youth mentoring in the state of Connecticut.

Each year, Nutmeg BBBS offers high-quality mentoring services to approximately 1,000 children and youth from 132 of Connecticut’s 169 cities and towns. Of the children served by Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters: 81% lived with one or no parents; 77% were members of minority groups; 73% lived below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level; and 18% had a parent in prison.

In addition, many children served have been involved with the Department of Children & Families and/or the juvenile justice system, and many have experienced trauma, neglect, or other challenges.
What is Nutmeg’s Impact here locally?

We work carefully to ensure that matches last at least one year, as longer matches have better results. Our volunteers often go above and beyond that target however, as our average match retention rate falls just shy of 3 years. We monitor all matches to ensure satisfaction among children and mentors, the strength of their relationships, and developmental growth of the children. Based our most recent Program Outcomes Evaluation (POE) survey of parents, our results show:

• **95.7%** of children served improved over one year in the areas of Caring (e.g., trust in mentor, improvement in family and peer relationships).

• **95.6%** of children served improved over one year in the areas of Confidence (e.g., self-confidence, ability to express feelings, hope for the future).

• **93.1%** of children served improved over one year in the areas of Competence (e.g., school performance, classroom behavior, avoidance of risky behaviors).
What is Big Brothers Big Sisters’ impact nationally?

The Big Brothers Big Sisters model for community-based mentoring has also been shown to be a blueprint model for effective youth development interventions at the national level. As a study by Big Brothers Big Sisters of America shows, former Little Brother and Little Sisters who participated in community-based mentoring as children reported:

- 85% agree their experience influenced them in overcoming adversity or problems with courage.
- 84% agree their Big taught them the importance of helping others.
- 83% agree that their Big instilled values and principles that have guided them through life.
- 81% agree their Big gave them hope and changed their perspective of what they thought was possible.
- 67% agree that their Big played a role in their decision to attend college.
- Each dollar invested in Big Brothers Big Sisters programs generates $18 in social return on investment through higher taxes and higher spending due to increased income and increased charitable donations in time and money.
What are some key facts about Big Brothers Big Sisters and youth mentoring?

- For more than 100 years, Big Brothers Big Sisters has operated the nation’s largest donor- & volunteer-supported mentoring network. Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters operates Connecticut’s largest one-to-one mentoring program, serving over 1,000 kids each year while serving 132 of Connecticut’s 169 municipalities.
- Researchers found that after 18 months of spending time with their Bigs, Little Brothers and Little Sisters, compared to those children not in our program, were: 46% less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27% less likely to begin using alcohol, 52% less likely to skip school, 37% less likely to skip a class, and 33% less likely to hit someone.
- More than three quarters (76%) of at-risk young adults who had a mentor aspire to enroll in and graduate from college versus half (56%) of at-risk young adults who had no mentor.
- At-risk young adults with a mentor are more likely to hold a leadership position in a club, sports team, school council, or another group (51% vs 22%).
- At-risk young adults with a mentor are more likely to volunteer regularly in their communities (48% vs 27%).
- One in three young people overall (34%) and even more at-risk youth (37%) report they never had an adult mentor of any kind (naturally occurring or structured) while they were growing up.
- Nationwide there approximately 16 million youth, including 9 million at-risk youth, will reach age 19 without ever having a mentor.
The goals we’ve set for our Run for Kids’ Sake program are no different than any other of our fundraising activities: to raise the awareness and funds necessary to enhance the overall level of support provided to at-risk children across Connecticut. However, the Run for Kids’ Sake program attacks these goals in a different fashion than our other fundraisers.

Specifically, Run for Kids’ Sake is wholly led by Bigs Ignite, a group of active volunteer Big Sisters and Big Brothers, who, in addition to mentoring their Littles, participate in capacity building and program enhancing activities that strengthen the overall mission achievement of Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters.

Run for Kids’ Sake is built on a peer-to-peer fundraising model, which is a form of crowdfunding that engages Big Sisters, Big Brothers, and other supporters of Nutmeg to create fundraising campaigns on behalf of the agency. To put this approach into a wider context, nearly 1/3 of all online donations are now made through peer-to-peer contributions with the average fundraiser raising $568 from 7 of their networked contacts.

In addition to the success of this approach, we love peer-to-peer fundraising because it empowers Bigs to individualize Nutmeg’s broader mission and explain to their network why it matters to them. By doing so, Bigs will leverage their own voice, beliefs, passions, values, and experiences to engage their personal and professional networks – networks which may not be aware of Nutmeg’s work – in support of the agency’s efforts to support local children. We believe this not only affords us the opportunity to build a more robust, authentic, and well connected support network around Nutmeg, but also provides the chance for Bigs to inspire others in their networks to similar acts of service and generosity.
Runners are the keys and cornerstones of Run for Kids’ Sake. Just as so much of our work here at Nutmeg relies on volunteers, so too does the success of Run for Kids’ Sake rely on committed individuals who are ready and eager to engage their networks in order to make a significant difference in the lives of local children in-need. In being the most visible leaders of this initiative – especially in the context of their own communities - runners have the responsibility to lead their individual campaigns in order to reach their pre-set goals. This requires not simply training to run the distance required by the race, but also leveraging the resources provided by Nutmeg to help achieve their fundraising goals. Thus, the ultimate role and responsibility of every runner is to be a reliable ambassador of Nutmeg and its mission, while contributing toward the agency’s broader fundraising objectives.

What is the role of Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters in all this? What is the organization responsible for?

Nutmeg is the facilitator, supporter, and organizer behind Run for Kids’ Sake. As such, Nutmeg aims to not only create an incredible service experience for each individual runner, but also support each runner to the fullest extent of the organization’s ability towards the achievement of their objectives. Though of course these goals will be different for each runner – and could include both athletic and fundraising aims – Nutmeg commits to being ready, willing, and able to support each runner to the fullest extent of the agency’s ability, while ensuring each dollar raised is committed efficiently and effectively to the overall mission of the organization.
Run for Kids’ Sake come with a particular set of benefits and incentives for participant runners. These include:

- Knowing that 100% of each dollar raised goes directly towards taking children off of Nutmeg’s waiting list and connecting them with life-changing adult mentors;
- Absolutely free race registration (if minimum fundraising goal of $25 is met);
- Receipt of your own complimentary race-day t-shirt, including unique shirts for specific fundraising levels;
- Connection with personalized training assistance, including group training runs and on-call training support;
- Access to a bevy of fundraising resources, including exclusive, on-call support to assist in any/all fundraising ideas, activates, or initiatives;
- Completely free fundraising webpage to make soliciting and receiving donations, as well as thanking your donors, quick and easy;
- Inclusion in Bigs Ignite and Run for Kids’ Sake online communities to further support your race training and fundraising efforts;
- Access to completely free Run for Kids’ Sake training runs alongside fellow members;
- Free entry to Bigs Ignite group activities leading up to race; and
- No-cost entry to Run for Kids’ Sake post-race celebration immediately following the race’s conclusion.
What is the minimum fundraising goal?
The minimum individual fundraising goal is $25.

What if I do not reach this minimum fundraising goal?
By signing up for the *Run for Kids’ Sake* program, you are agreeing to reach the minimum fundraising goal. Thus, if you do not reach this goal via fundraising, we ask that you contribute the remainder via an individual donation in order to account for the costs we expend to support your campaign.

What should I wear on race day?
You will be provided a complimentary race day t-shirt to wear on race day, which includes special recognition of your fundraising achievement. Once you are signed up, a Nutmeg representative will be in contact with you to be sure this t-shirt meets your needs.

To whom should my donors make their checks payable?
All checks should be made payable to: **Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters**. Checks should also note your name and “Run for Kids’ Sake” on the memo line.
Does Nutmeg have a training and/fundraising program or coach?

Yes. Nutmeg offers both on-call training and/or fundraising support throughout the entirety of the campaign. If you are interested in accessing this support, please email RyanM@nbbbs.org to express your interest and you will be connected with the appropriate support personnel.

What portion of the funds raised via the Run for Kids’ Sake program will go towards overhead?

Thanks to the amazing team of volunteers who lead Bigs Ignite, every penny of the proceeds generated from Run for Kids’ Sake will go directly towards connecting local children on Nutmeg’s waiting list with life changing adult mentors.

Can I use the Nutmeg logo on promotional material?

Yes, please email RyanM@nbbbs.org for an official version of the logo. We do ask that you notify us when the logo will be printed on promotional material (t-shirts, printed material for public display or distribution, videos, etc.). All promotional materials must be pre approved.

Can I link my personal website or business website to Nutmeg?

Yes, please email RyanM@nbbbs.org for instructions and approval.
Thanks to our partners at RunSignUp, launching, promoting, and accepting donations to your campaign have never been easier. RunSignUp takes care of all the hard stuff and allows you to get to the fun part – fundraising!

To get started follow these easy steps:

1. Visit the **Run For Kids’ Sake** event page, hosted by RunSignUp, and click “Sign Up”
2. Fill out the registration form, beginning with some basic, get-to-know-you info before proceeding to the event waiver form and some additional questions.
3. On the donation page, click “Become a Fundraiser” which will open up a whole menu of options to set up your campaign. This includes your fundraising goal, custom URL, and personal message.
Once you’re all set up, RunSignUp makes sharing your campaign and accepting donations a breeze. Using their simple tools – or, by sharing the link to your campaign with family, friends, and networked contacts – you can get to fundraising in minutes!

Once your campaign is launched and you’re signed in to your RunSignUp account, here are a few provided by the platform to help ensure your campaign’s success:

1. On your fundraising page you can share directly to social using the icons at the top of the page. RunSignUp provides direct links to Facebook, Twitters, Instagram, and even to your email to make asking for support as easy as possible!

2. Use your custom URL (which, you can edit by clicking on “Manage Fundraiser” >> “Edit Fundraiser”) to spread the word by sharing via social media, email, texts, etc.!

3. You can use the “Manage Fundraiser” tab to edit your fundraiser, see your donors (to send those thank you’s!), and update your supporters throughout your campaign!
Once you’ve begun to promote your campaign, donations will be quick to follow. For your donors, the process could not be simpler as RunSignUp allows your donors to simply select their donation level – while knowing exactly what their contribution will be going towards – before clicking “Continue” at the bottom of the page to process payment.

But there’s a few things to keep in mind about this process:

1. You will receive an email notification after registering your fundraiser and after each donation you receive, making it easy to stay in the loop as those donation pour in!

2. Don’t forget to thank your donors! Of course they’ll receive a thanks from us, but be sure you also take the time to send a letter, forward an email, shoot a quick text, post something on social media, etc. to thank everyone who contributes to your campaign.
RUN FOR KIDS’ SAKE: CASH AND CHECKS

Online donations are great, but work colleagues, family members, or random people on the street might be more inclined to hand you a check, or a wad of cash in support of your campaign. In each of these cases, there are existing protocol for managing the receipt of these donations to ensure they (A) get to the right place, (B) donors are properly thanked for their donation, and (C) donors receive a receipt for their contribution.

Checks

1. Be sure these are made out to “Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters” and be sure your name is noted on the memo line
2. Update your Donation Log before sending the form/check to: Ryan Matthews, Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters, 30 Laurel Street, Suite 3, Hartford, CT 06062

Cash

1. Given the general trickiness of cash, please encourage donors to contribute via check or online.
2. However, if the donor insists, please update your Donation Log and hand deliver the cash to a representative of Ryan Matthews, Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters either prior to or on race day. Please do not mail cash.
Over 8-in-10 Americans regularly log onto social media platforms to stay engaged with their personal and professional networks. Be it Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, or others, the sheer size of this audience can prove absolutely instrumental in helping you to connect with potential donors and supercharge your fundraising efforts.

But how is this done most effectively? What variations exist between platforms and how can we adapt our strategy accordingly? What approaches work best to engage your potential donors and how can you avoid turning them off?

In this section, we’ll cover all the ins-and-outs of the various platforms – platforms which I am sure you are already familiar – to ensure that you are not only aware of these tools, but can are armed with the information necessary to develop specific, platform-focused strategies to engage your network, attract your donors, and smash your fundraising goals.
Facebook: An Overview

79% of all American have a Facebook account. SEVENTY. NINE. PERCENT. This alone should make Facebook a go-to platform for your fundraising efforts, but there are also other nuances that make Facebook particularly helpful engaging (and thanking!) your donors. Here are a few of our favorites:

1. **Status Updates**: The bread and butter of Facebook, status updates can be your way to directly update your network on your progress. Announcing the launch of your campaign, heading out for a training run, thanking a donor, or doing anything else campaign-related? Send a status update to your network and let them know what you’re up to – just be sure to include a link to your donation page!

2. **Photos**: Know who loves photos? The Facebook Newsfeed loves photos! Appearing big, bold, and beautiful in both the desktop and mobile versions of the platform, posting photos (or changing your profile picture or cover photo) can help your Status Updates capture the attention of your audience.

3. **Videos**: Be they live or otherwise, the barrier to posting videos on Facebook have been lowered tremendously and offer a mechanism for providing thoughtful, meaningful campaign updates – or delivering asks! – to your network.
Facebook: Ideas

It’s great to know Facebook is so versatile, but what the heck do you do with it? Here are some of our favorite ideas on getting started fundraising on Facebook today:

1. **Post on/after Training Runs**: Training runs are an excellent chance to remind your network that you’re helping connect local kids with mentors and need their support. Either sweaty selfies or mid-run videos are great ways to connect with your network, showcase your commitment, and encourage donations!

2. **Thank You Messages**: Did you receive a donation? A public thank you – or note of appreciation via Facebook Messenger – can make a huge difference to that contributor! Plus, if done publicly, it might encourage others to donate!

3. **Monthly Challenges**: Any type of challenge will help provide your campaign urgency, and that urgency can help boost donations. Are you striving to raise 50% of your campaign goal in the next month? Tell your network about it and celebrate with them each time you’ve taken a step closer to achieving your goals.

4. **All the Feels**: Running for a specific person, reason, or experience? Tell your network about it! Share why you are running, what the campaign means to you, and how much you value being able to improve the lives of at-risk children across Connecticut.
Facebook: Templates

Last but not least, here are some of our favorite template posts that you should totally steal:

1. Did you know that one-in-three young people grow up without a mentor in their lives? Right now here in Connecticut there are over 300 children waiting to receive mentorship from (TAG – Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters) and now is your opportunity to join me in lending your support for these young people! To support my fundraiser follow the link below – every penny is appreciated!

2. [X] many days until race day! I’m counting down the days while counting up the miles to benefit (TAG – Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters) and YOU can help! Follow the link below to visit my fundraising page to learn more about why I’m running to help benefit local kids in-need!

3. Only [X] many more days and [Y] many more miles until the end of my month-long run-for-bucks challenge! It’s my goal to run at least 50 miles this month in preparation of the (TAG – Run for Kids’ Sake) and raise at least $500 to support (TAG – Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters)’s work supporting local kids in-need across Connecticut. Will you make a donation to help support my efforts? Every single penny is appreciated!
Twitter: An Overview

This self-described information-sharing network allows its 328 million daily monthly users access to a platform driven by a part-micro-blogging (140 character or less), part-status-updating approach to user generated content. Growing steadily over the last five quarters, and helped tremendously by the 2016 presidential election cycle, Twitter can be a tremendous resource for cultivating/maintaining your relationship with your donors:

1. Tweets/Retweets: The core of the platform are 140-character posts and reposts, which can share individual ideas, videos, photos, or web links, or respond/build off of those which others have posted. In the context of Facebook, which you may be most familiar, Tweets can be thought of as Status Updates, and Retweets as the “Share” feature.

2. Not Just for Tweets: Twitter is much more dynamic when approached as a portal for conversation. Rookie users can make the mistake of simply thinking of Twitter as yet another medium to push messages out. Not so fast my friend! Engaging with your audience by using replies and retweets can help you engage with individuals and connect with an increasing number of users “following” the conversation.

3. @’s and #Hashtags: To help the flow of conversations users could and should be using @’s and hashtags to their advantage. When tagging a friend (or total stranger!) in a post, Twitter require users type “@” before their username. Thus, when you “@” someone, you are tagging them and encouraging them to participate in the conversation. Similarly, hashtags (which, are shown by the symbol “#” before a word or phrase) can be used to link a broader conversation across the platform. For example, using #SuperBowl during the NFL’s Super Bowl would allow you to participate in the global conversation about the game.
RESOURCES: SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Twitter: Ideas

It’s great to know Twitter is so easy to learn and navigate, but what the heck do you do with it? Here are some of our favorite ideas on getting started fundraising on Twitter today:

1. **Don’t @ Me**: Or, maybe you should! By sending tweets to other users (be they friends, acquaintances, celebrities, brands, etc.) you can look them in the conversation and make them aware about your fundraiser. This is especially great for thanking a donor, who will probably retweet it to their network and expand the reach/awareness of your fundraising campaign! Please also considering tweeting @NBBBS to keep us updated too!

2. **Use #Hashtags**: Help your followers keep track of your campaign by using your own, custom #Hashtag. You can also use #RunforKidsSake to link up with your fellow runners!

3. **Live Tweeting**: As Twitter is a real-time, constantly updating platform, the opportunity presents itself to live tweet a specific experience. Going on along run? Tweet your progress every few miles! Making a delicious pasta dinner to carbo-load? Tweet the recipe and the steps you’re following!

4. **Videos/Photos**: These can be crucial to helping your tweets stick out in a user’s feed. Once you’re comfortable with the platform, you’ll quickly recognize just how much content is being generated every second. To stand our when users are scrolling, use eye-catching photos and videos to be sure your message is being heard.
Your tweets must be to the point and pack a punch. Here are some of our favorite template posts that you should totally steal (and remember, adding photos and/or videos to these posts can be helpful!):

1. 1-in-3 kids do not have access to regular mentorship. Help today by donating to my campaign benefiting @NBBBS (embed link to fundraising page)
2. As I prep for my #RunForKidsSake today, *YOU* can support @NBBBS by donating to my campaign to support youth mentorship (embed link to fundraising page)
3. I’m running for @NBBBS & CT kids in need of mentoring #RunForKidsSake. Help by donating today (embed link to fundraising page)
4. As I #RunForKidsSake, you can help connect local kids with mentors! Visit my fundraising page today @NBBBS (embed link to fundraising page)
5. Thank you so much @YourGenerousTwitterFriend for donating to my campaign! Your support for me & @NBBBS mean the world to me! #YoureTheBest
RESOURCES: SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

Instagram: An Overview

This simple, easy-to-use platform is one-stop-shop for sharing photos (cool filters and all) and videos (up to one minute in length) from any smartphone with the platform’s over 700 million monthly active users. Exploding in popularity, Instagram borrows the status update and timeline approach used by Facebook and Twitter, but simplifies it by relying almost solely on visual media. Though a bit trickier from a fundraising perspective (Instagram hates web links), the platform can still be super helpful engaging with and cultivating donors for your campaign:

1. **Instas:** The core of the platform are eye-catching photos that can be edited/filtered to your heart’s content. Posting about your training progress (e.g. selfies from your runs, photos of landscapes you run by, shots of post-workout meals, etc.) will be especially captivating to your followers. In addition, using @’s and #’s (similar to Twitter!) will be helpful connecting with and thanking friends/followers, as well as participating in the #RunForKidsSakecampaign!

2. **Instagram Stories:** Above 200 million daily active users (which is more than Snapchat!), this feature of Instagram helps you share pictures from your day before they are erased after 24 hours. This is especially helpful when sharing a long run, meal prep, or if you’re participating in another Nutmeg event.

3. **Post Your Fundraising Link:** Instagram does not let you include web links in your photo captions! To overcome this limitation, you will need to post a link to your fundraising page in the “info” section of your profile and remind your followers to check your profile page for a web link in each of your posts (e.g., “Link to my fundraiser is in my profile”).
Resources: Social Media Posts

Instagram: Ideas

What is there to do with a photo-based platform? Tons of stuff! Here are some of our favorite ideas on getting started fundraising on Instagram today:

1. **Stories:** This Snapchat-inspired feature allows users to share moments throughout their day without needing to worry about the photos being saved to their profiles. With more daily active users than Snapchat, stories is a great way to share your training progress, posted reminders about donate, or thank you’s to donors without worrying about oversharing as the photos will disappear after 24 hours.

2. **Campaign Approach:** There’s no two ways about it – Instagram doesn’t make fundraising super-easy. Without being able to link directly to your donation page, and needing snappy/fun/artsy photos to share, it can be tough to inspire people to move beyond liking/commenting. To inspire your followers then, its best to think of Instagram in terms of a social campaign. Regularly posting updates (e.g. selfie from a run that announces you’re 50% to your fundraising goal) is a great idea, while using hashtags (e.g. #SarahRunsForKidsSake) to tie everything together.

3. **Say Thank You:** Have a friend who just donated to your campaign? Share a photo of you two and thank them for their generosity in contributing to your campaign. Just don’t forget to tag them (aka “@” them) in the photo and your captions!
Resources: Social Media Posts

Instagram: Templates

Though we can’t provide you any photos in this guide, here are some of our favorite template posts that you should totally steal:

1. Beautiful day for a 5-miler made even more beautiful by all the amazing supporters who’ve helped me reach 75% of the way towards my fundraising goal to benefit @BBBSNutmeg! Check out the link in my profile to help me reach my goal and support local youth in-need of mentorship! #SallysRunningForLittles #RunForKidsSake (include photo/video from your run)

2. In full training-mode today as I continue my prep for #RunForKidsSake! Just over 6 weeks left until race day and just under $200 left to my goal of raising $1,000 to support @NBBBS! Check out the link in my profile to help me reach my goal today! #RunForKidsSake (Include photo/video from your run)

3. Just finished up my long run for the week – logged a mile for every year I’ve served as a #BigSister to my #LittleSister Ashley! You can help connect local kids with mentors like me by visiting my fundraising page (link in my profile!) and donating to my campaign to support local youth in-need of mentorship #EricaIsRunningForNutmeg #RunForKidsSake (include photo/video from your run)

4. Big thank you to @GenerousFriend for donating to my #RunForKidsSake campaign to benefit @BBBSNutmeg! #ImRunningForLittles (include short video thanking your friend)
RESOURCES: EMAIL AND LETTER TEMPLATES

Though social media can be an incredible tool in support of your fundraising efforts, it should not be the only one you use. This is because, according to a 2014 Red Cross survey, donors found direct requests (e.g. phone calls, emails, letters) to be more motivational than social media posts. Thus, social media platforms are perhaps best employed as a way to help sway, remind, and/or thank your network, while more direct forms of communication (e.g. phone calls, emails, letters) should be used to initially introduce your network to your campaign and solicit their support.

But, how the heck do we do this? We’ll provide some super helpful templates over the coming pages, but here are some key things to remember when drafting your emails/letters:

1. **Be sincere.** Is there a compelling reason why you are choosing to support Nutmeg? Share this with your network so they know why you are raising money and why this campaign is important to you.

2. **Be clear.** You’re asking your network to support a great cause that means something to you personally. There is no reason to get cute, disguise your ask, or otherwise downplay your request for support. From your subject line to your closing, be clear, be transparent, and be honest.

3. **Make the ask & make it easy.** Don’t close your message without (A) directly asking for a specific dollar value donation (e.g. $25, $50) and (B) providing a way for someone to follow up. In an email, you might consider asking “would you consider support my campaign with a $25 donation?” immediately followed by an embedded web link to your fundraising page.
Template 1: Introducing Your Campaign

Hi,

I’m partnering with Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters to help connect local youth gain access to life-changing one-to-one adult mentorship. To help raise awareness of the need for mentors across Connecticut and provide direct support for children in need, I will be participating in Nutmeg’s Run for Kids’ Sake this October. I’m writing today to invite your support.

There are many ways to participate and, in addition to serving as a mentor myself, I am also doing my part to help spread awareness and support for the organization this fall. (Insert your personal campaign fundraising info here. Tell what you are doing and why it is important to you.)

My personal goal is to raise (insert goal in dollars) and your donation will be of tremendous help. Gifts of any size are appreciated and will make a real difference in raising awareness and allowing Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters to continue providing valuable programs and services to children across Connecticut.

Will you consider supporting my campaign with a $30 donation? Please visit my fundraising page at (insert web address here) to donate today.

If you would also like more information about Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters, or to become a mentor yourself, please visit the organization’s website: nbbbs.org. Thank you for your consideration and for your support!

Sincerely,

Your name, Contact information
Hi,

As I wrote to you a month ago, I’m partnering with Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters and running for kids’ sake this fall to support the one-in-three local children in-need who do not have access to adult mentorship. Throughout my campaign, my goal is to raise (insert goal in dollars) – 100% of which will go directly towards helping children in Connecticut become connected with the potentially life-changing support of a Big Sister or Big Brother.

I’m following up on my original email because, quite simply, I’m running out of time to reach my goal. With only a few weeks left to go in my campaign, I am still (insert amount left towards goal in dollars) short of goal and your contribution can make a tremendous difference in supporting my efforts, as well as in improving the lives of local children in-need.

(Insert your personal campaign fundraising info here. Tell what you are doing and why it is important to you.)

Will you consider supporting my campaign with a $30 donation? Please visit my fundraising page at (insert web address here) to donate today.

If you would also like more information about Nutmeg Big Brothers Big Sisters, or to become a mentor yourself, please visit the organization’s website: nbbbs.org. Thank you for your consideration and for your support!

Sincerely,

Your name, Contact information
Template 3: Thank You to a Donor

Hi,

I cannot say it enough or more sincerely. Thank you so, so much for choosing to support my fundraising campaign and lending a helping hand towards connecting local children with life-changing mentorship. Your gift of (insert goal in dollars) means the world to me and, rest assured, every single penny will go towards to the kids who need it most.

As you know, Big Brothers Big Sisters is an important cause in my life. (Insert your personal campaign info here, including why you are doing it and why the effort is so important to you).

Moving forward – and as we get closer to Run for Kids’ Sake this October – I look forward to sharing my running and fundraising progress with you as I continue to push for more awareness, more support, and more contributions to this cause that means so much to me.

Thank you for sharing in my mission, for being so incredibly generous in your contribution towards that mission, and for so meaningfully supporting a cause that is so near and dear to me heart – I can simply cannot thank you enough!

Sincerely,

Your name, Contact information
Of course, this guide only begins to scratch the surface on how you can raise funds in support of your Run for Kids’ campaign. And, truth be told, the biggest single “X” factor in the overall success of your campaign is your own creativity. To help get those creative juices flowing (though hopefully the rest of this guide has helped do this, too!) here are some of our favorite fundraising ideas that might be a bit outside the box.

• Write a LinkedIn blog post about your campaign and why you are fundraising.

• Provide creative donor incentives by offering to shave your head, die your hair, grow a mustache, create and share a choreographed dance, change your Facebook profile picture, share a karaoke performance, or affix a particular donor’s photograph to your race day t-shirt once a certain fundraising level has been achieved.

• Host a bake sale, donor thank you dinner, garage sale, yard game competition, day at a local brewery, dress down day at work, or mini golf tournament to help support your campaign.

• Offer homemade items (e.g. baked goods, custom magnets, potted plants) to supporters who donate at particular levels.
Thank you!