

# TEAM T★A★P★S®



## FUNDRAISING GUIDE





# TEAM TAPS FUNDRAISING GUIDE

## WELCOME

Thank you for signing up with Team TAPS to reach your personal best and to help the families of the fallen be stronger every day.

This guide is designed to give you the tools you need to design a fundraising strategy and reach your Team TAPS fundraising commitment. We recommend you read through the entire presentation and refer back to it throughout your fundraising campaign. The Team TAPS staff is also here to be your guide as you strive to help us bring help, hope and healing to families of the fallen.

## THIS GUIDE WILL HELP YOU:

- Know your reasons for choosing Team TAPS
- Identify your list of possible donors
- Prepare your fundraising message and supporting materials
- Assemble the tools and resources you need to launch your fundraising efforts
- Set realistic goals and design a calendar to keep your progress on track



## TAPS: OUR BEGINNING

In November 1992, eight soldiers perished in a C-12 crash in Alaska, including Brigadier General Tom Carroll. No support network existed for military families. These survivors found the most powerful comfort from each other, and in 1994, Bonnie Carroll founded the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS). TAPS is a family of military survivors, joining to find strength and hope in the aftermath of the death of a loved one serving in or supporting the military mission. TAPS provides care and resources at no cost to all who are grieving a death in the military. Survivors receive immediate and long-term support through our National and Regional Seminars and Retreats; Good Grief Camps and Campouts; matching with trained volunteers that serve as peer mentors; connections to community-based care, including counseling and support group contacts; casework assistance for benefits, emergency financial assistance, legal assistance, and available education benefits; and access to our 24/7 National Military Survivor Helpline.

## THE TEAM TAPS MISSION:

**Supporting TAPS programs and services through challenge, commitment and compassion.**

Team TAPS participates in endurance events from Alaska to Florida and from Germany to Afghanistan, providing opportunities for survivors and athletes of all experience levels to support TAPS. The Team started in 2000 when two young widows realized that through running they could begin to release the grip of grief and honor their loved ones through sport. Now, a network of tens of thousands participate in Team TAPS endurance challenges annually. These events include running, biking, hiking, swimming, cycling, and ruck-marching – all to support TAPS programs and services.

TAPS survivors use endurance challenges to help heal emotionally and mentally while building physical wellness into their lives. Others join the team because they believe in the TAPS mission and want to establish a meaningful focus for their physical feats by honoring fallen heroes. No matter the motivation for joining Team TAPS, you are a part of a network of participants connected by a common goal and you carry the weight of our surviving military families as you run in honor of their loved ones.



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“My little brother recently passed away and my way of dealing with it was getting myself ready for this race. I wanted to cry and break down the entire time I was running, but knew how proud my brother was of my physical accomplishment and all the money we raised for this amazing organization. I let all my emotions, I had locked inside, out. Thank you Team TAPS for allowing me to be a part of this. I plan on being involved every year.”

“I randomly ran into someone who had a personal story on how much TAPS helped her family after her uncle passed away. I have to say it made me even prouder to be completing the race with you. I’m looking forward to running for you again.”



## WHY TEAM TAPS? Preparing your elevator speech.

- Be prepared to articulate why you are running with Team TAPS.
- Personalize your motivation with a story of a fallen hero and their family.
- Stick to 3 points you want someone to remember when telling them your story.

### #1 – Mention the event:

Hi, My name is *[insert your name]* and I’m running *[insert your event]* for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors, TAPS.

### #2 – Tell them about your cause:

Team TAPS runners like myself fundraise for TAPS, which has been on the frontlines since 1994 reaching out in their darkest hour with hope and healing to those grieving the loss of a loved one in the military. In 2015, TAPS held 35 seminars, retreats, family campouts and Good Grief Camps where 3,500 TAPS survivors were able to connect in a safe and healing environment to share their stories, learn from one another, and gain valuable coping skills from grief and trauma experts.

### #3 – Make the ask:

Would you be so kind and make a donation to my campaign to support the families of our fallen military?

## KNOW WHAT YOUR FUNDRAISING SUPPORTS

Bring donations to life by quantifying your donor’s gifts:

\$5,000	Funds the TAPS Community Care Group for 1 year
\$1,000	Funds one military mentor for a surviving child at the TAPS National Good Grief Camp
\$500	Funds 10 TAPS Resource Kits for newly grieving families
\$250	Supports an active duty / reserve / recent veteran military mentor Paired with a surviving child to attend a TAPS Regional Good Grief Camp
\$100	Registers a surviving child to attend a TAPS Good Grief Camp
\$50	Purchases one TAPS Survivor Resource Kit containing vital information and special items designed to provide a personal resource, as well as items of comfort and care to the newly bereaved
\$25	Purchases a backpack for a military surviving child at a TAPS Good Grief Camp, which they can fill with new memories with their mentor, family and peers



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## WHY TEAM TAPS: DEVELOPING YOUR MESSAGE

Write a sincere, informative message to feature in your fundraising materials. To get yourself started and frame the perspective of your message, ask yourself:

- Why do I want to participate in this endurance event?
- Why is being active and living a healthy lifestyle important to me?
- Who is reading this message?
- Why is this cause so important?
- What aspects of TAPS can I highlight to inspire others to donate?

**Tip:** Find your personal connection to TAPS. You will have a better response to a personal & heart-felt message.

**Use Team TAPS Fundraising Templates available at your Participant Center:**

- Find email and letter solicitations, press release examples, thank you notes and social media tips.
- Insert your style and voice with personal stories, fun fonts, and pictures.
- Get creative! Write from the perspective of your tired, old running shoes.

## WHO SHOULD I ASK? Developing your contact list.



Now that you know what to say, you must decide who to ask. To avoid getting lost in a sea of names, plan out who you will ask for donations in advance. Break your acquaintances into manageable groups like the list below.

- Family
- Friends
- Church groups
- Co-workers
- School (yours or your child's)
- Small business relationships
- Groups, clubs and organizations
- Employer matching grant

### Step 1:

Divide your network into groups. Fill in the names of everyone you know in that group. You can always refine the list later, so add anyone you can think of at this point.

Think about whether each is likely to donate. Take an educated guess at how much each will give. Write the method you will use to ask for a donation.

### Step 2:

Add up the amounts you think you will get from each to see an estimated total.

**Tip:** Don't be afraid to hear no! While many people will be happy to support you, some will say no. That's okay! You don't know if you don't ask.

Group:	Likely to Donate	Amount	How to Ask
Family			
Mom	Yes	\$100	email
Dad	Yes	\$50	Phone
Sister	No		phone
Brother	Yes	\$50	text
		➔ \$200	



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## HIGH LEVEL FUNDRAISING TIMELINE

Within **1 week** of joining Team TAPS: Familiarize yourself with TAPS, categorize your network, customize your Team TAPS Fundraising webpage, create your fundraising strategy, begin outreach, and leverage social media to let people know about your campaign.

Within **2 weeks** of joining Team TAPS: Continue solicitation via email, letters, phone calls, texts, and in-person asks; plan follow up; and brainstorm event ideas and other creative fundraising ideas.

Within **3 weeks** of joining Team TAPS: Continue to post training updates online, make personal requests, and pursue matching gifts.

Within **6 weeks** of joining Team TAPS: Reach out to those who haven't yet donated with a message focusing on where you are in your training, host a fundraiser, continue to mail in checks and cash donations, and thank donors.

Within **2 months** of joining the Team: Continue to update your contacts on training and fundraising progress.

No less than **10 days** before final fundraising deadline: Make final solicitation push and create urgency around the fundraising deadline.

**Tip:** *Create a system for follow up. Don't just ask once, be sure you circle back to friends and family who said they would donate!*

## HOW TO PACE YOUR FUNDRAISING

1. Set incremental fundraising targets to help pace your campaign. Write them in your calendar and set reminders on your phone.

2. Time your targets realistically to reflect your schedule. For example, if you have a birthday during the fundraising season and want to ask your friends and family for a donation instead of a gift, set a high target for that month and be sure to let them know well in advance.

3. Reward yourself for reaching incremental targets. This can be as small as a new pair of running socks for hitting your goal — anything to help you stay focused and excited!

**Tip:** *Start early and don't procrastinate! Give yourself time to be successful.*

## DEVELOPING YOUR STRATEGY

Fundraising commitments vary for each Team TAPS event. Below are fundraising strategy examples for our most frequent commitment amounts. Reference these slides for your own fundraising.





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## If your goal is \$2,620:

**Start With:** 1 donation from yourself for \$200  
**Apply For:** 1 matching gift for \$200  
**Then Ask:** 25 Facebook friends for \$10 each  
15 co-workers for \$20 each  
10 friends for \$50 each  
5 close family for \$100 each  
1 business associate for \$250  
**Then Host:** 1 dinner party for \$100  
1 happy hour for \$200  
**Then:** Get creative!

## If your goal is \$1,000:

**Start With:** 1 donation from yourself for \$100  
**Apply For:** 1 matching gift for \$100  
**Then Ask:** 10 Facebook friends for \$10 each  
5 coworkers for \$20 each  
3 friends for \$50 each  
2 close family for \$100 each  
1 business associate for \$50  
**Then Host:** 1 dinner party for \$100  
1 happy hour for \$100  
**Then:** Get creative!

## MAKING THE ASK. Setting up your personal fundraising page.

- When you signed up, Team TAPS automatically created a fundraising webpage for you at [team.taps.org/run](http://team.taps.org/run).
- Follow instructions in the Participant Center to add pictures, a personal message and your own unique flare to your fundraising webpage.
- Update the webpage whenever you want with news about your training, fundraising events, or anything else your donors may want to know.
- Keeping your webpage up-to-date and informative will ensure that visitors learn everything they need to know to feel comfortable donating to your Team TAPS event without any additional context.
- Email Team TAPS staff whenever you need help at [teamtaps@taps.org](mailto:teamtaps@taps.org).

**Tip:** Make it easy to donate! Always include the link to your personal fundraising page in your emails, signatures, and social media posts.

## MAKING THE ASK. Diversify your approach.

### Letters:

Consider sending snail mail letters to people who are more responsive to this type of outreach. Include a pre-addressed, pre-stamped envelope to make donating easy and include your event offline donation form.

### Emails:

Use a catchy subject line to encourage opening the email.  
What aspects of TAPS can I highlight to make them want to donate?

### Phone or In-Person:

Talk to friends and family to share your message and fundraise.  
Ask them to share your story.

### Other Fundraising Ideas:

Matching Gifts  
Social media posts with personal URL  
Email signature with personal URL





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**Tip:** *Personalized asks are the most effective. Although sending a mass email may be efficient, you are more likely to get a response if you've personalized the message.*

## MORE CREATIVE IDEAS

1. Use IOU cards (ask for donation in exchange for a service like dog sitting)
2. Post to friends on Facebook (make it personal)
3. Auction off songs on your race day playlist (i.e. for \$26.20, add 3 songs)
4. Auction body parts during the race (i.e. donate \$50 to have your name painted on arm, leg, chest, etc.)
5. Sponsor a mile (have folks pay \$50 to sponsor each mile you run)
6. Birthday or Holiday ask (i.e. instead of gifts this year, please donate...)
7. If I raise \$xxxx, I will \_\_\_\_\_ (shave my head, hold a snake, etc.)
8. Host a bake sale or yard sale
9. Host a dinner party for donors (pay \$50, \$25 covers food/drink with the remaining going to fundraising)
10. Email top 10 reasons to donate to friends and family
11. Online auction – find 3 items you can sell to generate funds to donate
12. Host an event like a trivia night, karaoke night, pub crawl, or happy hour
13. Talk to a church or civic organization
14. Create a short promotional video to share your story
15. Donation “Fish Bowl” at desk, restaurant, etc. with details/photo taped to the side requesting support.

## MAKING THE ASK. Saying thank you.

Thank your donors at least twice, once right after they make the donation and again just before the event. Within a few days after your event, include stories and pictures of your experience in a final thank you note.

- Thank your donors creatively
- Send a handwritten card
- Thank them publically on Facebook or Twitter
- Order custom cards after the race with a race photo
- Thank them by writing their name on your race bib

## Official Thank You from Team TAPS

When any donation is made, Team TAPS automatically sends a thank you email that doubles as a tax receipt. Remind donors to provide their email address when they donate, even by check, to receive the “thank you” immediately.

**Tip:** *Make your thank you the sole purpose of your communication.*

## Thank you and best wishes for your fundraising campaign!

For additional information please contact us.

Email: [TeamTAPS@taps.org](mailto:TeamTAPS@taps.org)

Follow us on social media:

<http://facebook.com/TeamTAPS>

<http://twitter.com/TeamTAPS>

Call: 800-959-8277

