



# SOLEMATES<sup>®</sup>

Girls on the Run

FUELED BY



Your journey.



Her future.



Fundraiser Workbook

## Letter from Girls on the Run

### Welcome!

We are so grateful that you have committed to being a SoleMate. You are now part of a global movement of goal-getters who are paying their passions forward. Whether it's suiting up for an ocean swim, chalking up for a climb, kicking up some dirt on a trail hike, or lacing up sneakers for a run, all SoleMates share in their common desire to be champions for the girls in the area they call home.



This guide will help you throughout your journey as a SoleMate. It provides information about Girls on the Run to share with your friends and family when asking for their support and offers simple fundraising strategies to help you meet your fundraising goal. You'll also hear from other SoleMates—they have many insights and tips to share with you!



As you embark upon your journey, we thought that you'd enjoy hearing from 11 year-old Girls on the Run participant Ashley:

**“Girls on the Run taught me that we should believe in ourselves in whatever we do. We all shine brightly, in a way that we may not know yet.”**

You are about to discover all the ways in which you shine brightly. We could not be more excited for you. Thank you for making the commitment and showing up for yourself and the girls in our community.

With gratitude,

**Girls on the Run**



## Table of Contents

**This page is interactive!**

Click on any of the pink circles below to jump to that place in the workbook.



“Our lives are **better and more joyful** when we **commit ourselves to a challenge and a goal that impacts others in a positive way.**”

David, SoleMate from Missouri

## What is Girls on the Run?

Dedicated to a world where every girl knows and activates her limitless potential, Girls on the Run has impacted the lives of millions of girls across the country through fun and effective afterschool and camp programming designed to enhance girls' social, emotional, and physical skills and behaviors to successfully navigate life experiences.

Trained coaches lead small teams of girls in grades 3-8 through the program's intentional curriculum which creatively integrates running. The program culminates with girls completing a celebratory, non-competitive 5K where they learn that the finish line is just the beginning!

### At Girls on the Run, girls will:

- ★ Develop and improve competence
- ★ Feel confidence in who they are
- ★ Develop strength of character
- ★ Respond to others and oneself with care
- ★ Create positive connections with peers and adults
- ★ Build lives of purpose and make a meaningful contribution to community and society.

## Why Does Girls on the Run Matter?

### Did you know that...

- ★ girls' self-confidence begins to drop by age 9?
- ★ 50% of girls ages 10 to 13 experience bullying?
- ★ physical activity levels decline at age 10 and continue to decrease throughout adolescence?

**Participating in Girls on the Run transforms girls' lives** by helping them increase their self-confidence, develop healthy relationships, and feel good about themselves inside and out. In fact, Girls on the Run makes a stronger impact than organized sports or physical education programs in teaching life skills.

- ★ Girls who were the least active at the start of the program increased in physical activity by more than 40%.\*
- ★ 97% of participants learned critical skills to manage emotions, resolve conflict, help others, or make intentional decisions.

\*2016 independent study conducted by the University of Minnesota and positive youth development expert Maureen R. Weiss, Ph.D.

As a SoleMate, you are raising critical funds that will help teach girls how to shut down crippling negative self-talk and arm girls with the tools they need to stand up for themselves and others.





**“Girls on the Run unites girls of different backgrounds and abilities and teaches them how to work as a team. Not only do the girls encourage one another, but they truly respect and accept each girl on the team for who she is.”**

Charnaë, Girls on the Run Coach

**As a SoleMate, you** are furthering a commitment to serving all girls in our community.

Girls on the Run is for ALL girls. As a SoleMate, you are furthering a commitment to program accessibility to ensure that ANY girl—regardless of financial circumstances—is able to participate.

**You** are advancing a national movement.

Girls on the Run is a national movement. By sharing Girls on the Run with your family, friends, co-workers and others, you are advancing the mission and spreading awareness of Girls on the Run in our community and beyond.

**You** are inspiring unimaginable strength.

During the Girls on the Run program, girls are inspired to make a meaningful contribution to society through a team-driven community service project. As a SoleMate, you are showing girls the unimaginable strength that comes from helping others—and also experiencing that yourself!



**Over 200,000 girls served annually across all 50 states**



**Nearly half of all girls nationwide receiving financial assistance**

# Your Fundraising Road Map



Your journey.

## PERSONALIZE YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE.

Remember that your supporters might be interested in Girls on the Run, **but they are definitely interested in you!** Having personalized content will help to create a powerful, meaningful connection between your donors and Girls on the Run.

## MAKE THE FIRST DONATION.

Kick-off your fundraiser by making the first donation. Not only does this say to your supporters that you are invested in the cause, but studies show that **others are more likely to donate when you do!**

## ASK EARLY AND OFTEN.

Start asking right away. Don't be shy to follow-up with people if you don't hear back. Our world is busy, inboxes get flooded, and commitments pull people in all different directions—so **they appreciate friendly reminders.**

## DO A FINAL, BIG PUSH WHEN YOU ARE CLOSE TO HITTING YOUR GOAL.

Studies show that **people are more likely to donate when a fundraiser has nearly reached its goal.** Go ahead and send out a round of emails, post to social media, and reach out in-person when you are nearly at your goal.

## SET SMALL GOALS ALONG THE WAY AND CELEBRATE MEETING THEM.

Raising \$3,000 might seem intimidating, but \$200? That seems more manageable! Break up your fundraising into smaller pieces by **aiming to raise a certain amount each week.**

## GET SOCIAL.

Continue thanking and updating your supporters on social media. **Tag those who have generously donated!**

Her future.



Excited?

Energized?

Confident because you've done this before?

Anxious to get started because this is your first time fundraising?

These are all normal emotions to have as you begin your journey as a SoleMate! Regardless of your previous experience, there is a superstar fundraiser inside you—and we are here to help that star power shine brightly!

The next few pages walk you through a few key areas to get your fundraiser started off on the right foot. From creating a powerful, meaningful connection between a potential donor and Girls on the Run to thinking about who and how to ask, you will be well equipped to fundraise with confidence!

“Before becoming a SoleMate, I struggled with asking for support or help for what I needed because it made me uneasy. **Challenging myself to fundraise for Girls on the Run provided a larger area of opportunity for personal growth,** as I had to step back and examine this uneasiness.”

Maggie, SoleMate from Minnesota



## I am a SoleMate.

### As a SoleMate, you have a powerful story to share—and your family, friends, and supporters want to hear it!

Before asking for their support, it is important to reflect upon, discover, and clearly understand why you have decided to take a leap of faith. Your story—your reason why—will fuel your passion for training and fundraising, will create powerful connections with your supporters that will drive them to make generous donations, and will ultimately change a girl's life.



“

It is important to recognize that as a SoleMate, you bring your own story to the table. I have found that simply being yourself and sharing your own story is enough to motivate people to be supportive of your fundraiser. Be genuine and really think about how to tell your story in a way that connects with your community and the people who you are asking for support from.

Linda, SoleMate from Vermont

“

Supporting Girls on the Run is important to me because we live in a fear-based society. Fear of not being good enough, fear of not having what it takes to succeed. The GOTR program creates a reality for the girls based on their limitless potential where girls can connect with their true self.

Judith, SoleMate from Florida







PRINT  
this page!

Girls who participate in Girls on the Run are typically between 8 to 12 years old. **Take some time to reflect on your life experiences, thought processes, challenges, obstacles, accomplishments, and joys when you were that age.** Your reflections might help you formulate your reason and motivation for being a SoleMate, which you can share with others as you ask for their support!

**As an 8- to 12-year-old, who is someone that you looked up to and why?**

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**Can you think of something that you accomplished when you were an 8- to 12-year-old that made you feel strong, proud, or empowered?**

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**What were some of your fears as an 8- to 12-year-old? Looking back, what tools were you given to overcome them? What tools do you wish you had?**

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**Can you remember the best compliment that you received as an 8- to 12-year-old? Who gave it to you and how did you feel?**

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**Can you think of a time when you felt limited or told that you couldn't do something? How did that make you feel? How did you respond?**

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**What is something you would tell your 8- to 12-year-old self?**

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## Sharing Your Story

### Authentic Storytelling

After taking the time to respond to the questions on page 8, you are now ready to think about how to share your story. Some of the thoughts you have written down might be too intimate to share with others—and that’s OK! You can still share your story in a way that feels personal and allows for connection. Sharing your story starts with your audience—your circle of supporters.



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### Potential Supporters Around Every Corner

It goes without saying that you encounter and interact with a lot of people throughout your life! The model on the next page is just one way to illustrate the different types of people who play a role in your life and your relationship to each of them.

What you share with those who make up your circle 3 or 4, such as friends on Facebook, followers on Instagram, co-workers, or business contacts, most likely will not be as personal as the things you share with your immediate family and best friends. However, you can still connect with these circles in a sincere and authentic way! In fact, fundraising provides a terrific platform to cultivate connections with and find personal commonalities between people whom you might not think to otherwise.

“My first experience with fundraising was as a SoleMate and honestly, I was a little intimidated. Before I began, I committed to personally reflecting on why Girls on the Run is important to me, why I wish I had a program like this when I was younger, and why supporting girls and women in today’s world is absolutely critical. **I found that when I was able to articulate this in a candid and passionate manner from the heart—which definitely took a little bit of vulnerability—my friends and family readily jumped in and provided an overwhelming amount of support.** Sometimes, I had to take a step back just to appreciate and have gratitude for it all!”

Ashley, SoleMate from Washington State



**CIRCLE 4**

*Furthest associations –  
Social media followers,  
general audience*

[Empty box for Circle 4]

**CIRCLE 3**

*Co-workers, neighbors,  
business contacts, place  
of worship contacts,  
hobby groups (ex. book  
club, supper club, running/  
workout groups, etc)*

[Empty box for Circle 3]

**CIRCLE 2**

*Friends and extended family*

[Empty box for Circle 2]

**CIRCLE 1**

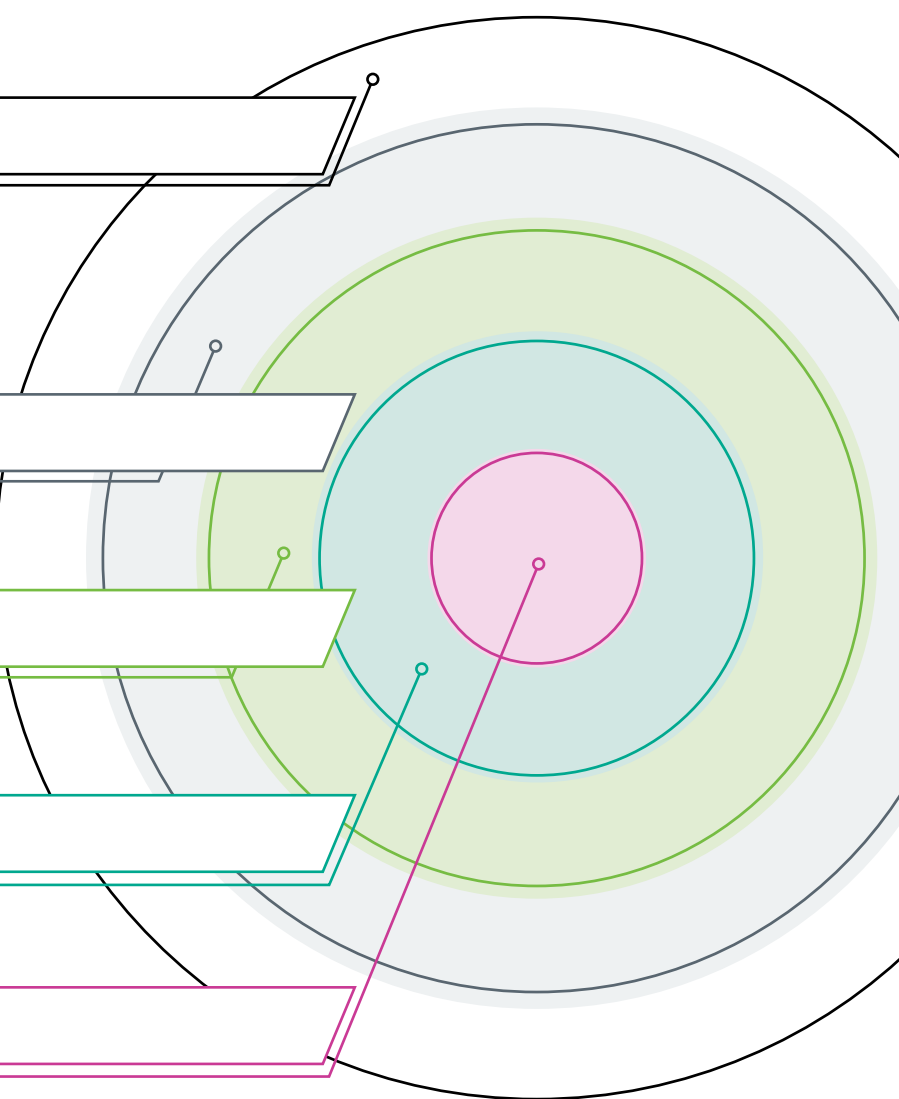
*Closest associations –  
Immediate family and  
closest friends*

[Empty box for Circle 1]

**INNER CIRCLE**

*Me*

[Empty box for Inner Circle]



**Fill-in the boxes above!**  
Before we move on, **take some time to fill-in the names of some of the people and relationships that play a role in your life.** Start by writing your name in the label for the inner pink circle. Then, write the names of people or groups of people who make up each of your circles into each corresponding box.

## Sharing Your Story with Different Audiences



PRINT  
this page!

There are many ways to share your story—your “reason” for being a SoleMate for Girls on the Run—with the different people who make up your circle of supporters.

**Using your circle of supporters (page 10) as a reference, answer the following questions:**

**Identify someone from your circle 1 or 2. Write his/her/their name down here:**

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**What piece of your story do you want to share in-person or over the phone with him/her/ them? What will strongly resonate with him/her/them?**

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**Identify a person or a group of people from your circle 3. Write their name down here:**

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**What piece of your story do you want to share in a mailed letter or an email to him/her/ them? What about your story (that you feel comfortable sharing) will strongly resonate with him/her/them? You will use this later on page 16.**

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**Identify a group of people or audience from your circle 4. Write it down here:**

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**What piece of your story do you want to share with them online or in a social media post? What about your story (that you feel comfortable sharing) will strongly resonate with them? You will use this later on page 12.**

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Most of the time, you will be asking your supporters to give directly to your fundraising page online. For that reason, having compelling, impactful, and personal content on your page is critical. After all, your supporters might be interested in Girls on the Run, but they are definitely interested in hearing from you.

**There are three key components to your fundraising page:**



## #1: Fundraiser Title

Choose a name for your fundraiser! It may connect with you, Girls on the Run, your reason for being a SoleMate, or the event you are completing. There are a few examples to the right, but the sky is truly the limit!

EXAMPLES:

***30 for 30: Ellen's Birthday Run***  
***Help Kristy cross the finish line!***  
***Go, Greg, Go!***

**The name of my fundraiser is:** \_\_\_\_\_

## #2: Fundraiser Description

You have already thought about your story, your circle of supporters, and the components of your story that you wish to share. Now, it is time to finalize the copy that will display on your online fundraising page by re-working some of the content you have already written. Since this will be displayed publicly online, a good place to start is with the content you wrote in the last text block on page 11 for your circle 4. You can also pull language about Girls on the Run from the letter/email template on page 16 of this workbook.

## #3: Fundraiser Photo

A photo is a terrific way to further personalize your page and a great way to connect with your supporters. Here are just a few ideas of photos:

- ★ Training for your event!
- ★ With the girl or woman in your life who inspires you (perhaps your reason for being a SoleMate?)
- ★ If you have coached or volunteered for Girls on the Run in the past, a photo showing your experience!
- ★ Your 8- to 12-year-old self (Girls on the Run age!)

## Different Ways to Ask

There are many ways to ask for donations and this section reviews a few of them. Regardless of how you ask, it is a good idea to kick-off your fundraising by making the first gift to the fundraiser yourself!



### Start with your Circle 1 and 2

Start by asking people in your circle 1 or 2 for their support. Why start with this group? Because they are highly likely to give! Getting in those first few donations will help build confidence in your ability to fundraise (because you can do it!!) and will allow your fundraiser to gain traction.



### In-Person or Over the Phone (Calling or Texting!)

The power of in-person and one-on-one interactions cannot be underestimated! If you are already meeting a friend for a workout at the gym or a co-worker for coffee, why not mention that you are a SoleMate? If you regularly talk on the phone with a friend who lives across the country or know that your aunt will respond best to a quick text message, why not share a little bit about your goals? Refer back to your reflections on page 11 of this workbook to remind yourself of what you wish to share. You can also use content from your letter or email on page 16!

**These are some of the people I will ask in-person or with a phone call or text message:**

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“As a college student, fundraising was new territory for me! **I had success in focusing on different target audiences and tailoring my fundraising efforts accordingly.** For my extended family and people my parents age and older, I decided to write and mail letters. To reach my friends and peers, I used social media a lot more.”

Emily, SoleMate from Massachusetts



## Mailed Letter or Email

If you are not yet comfortable with making “the ask” in-person, a letter or email can be the next best action step. Additionally, there might be a group of people who you regularly communicate with via email—so communicating with them about your journey as a SoleMate through email probably makes best sense. A letter or email should include each of the following components:

### Why you decided to be a SoleMate

Refer back to your reflections on page 11 to remind yourself of what part of your story you wish to share in a letter or email. Be sure to incorporate your reflections as you write this section of the letter.

### A few facts about Girls on the Run

The template includes a few facts about Girls on the Run. You can use them or the ones found in the first few pages of this workbook (pages 3 and 4). You can also consult your local Girls on the Run council for local statistics and facts.

### Your fundraising goal

Have a goal and declare it loud and proud! Your family, friends, colleagues—everyone who is rooting for you—wants to know your goal so that they can help you reach it!

### A direct ask

Now is not the time to be shy. Be sure that your letter includes a direct ask of, “Will you donate?” You can even consider including a suggested donation amount if you think that will inspire people to give more than they would have otherwise.

### A convenient way to donate

It is important to make donating as easy as possible for your supporters! Be sure to include a link to your online fundraising page along with another method of giving (such as directions for mailing a check). Depending on your audience, you might also consider including a return envelope in the mailing. If you have questions about donation methods, check with your local Girls on the Run council.

### Be sure to send follow-up emails.

Inboxes are flooded with hundreds of emails per day and one can easily get overlooked! Your supporters will appreciate you reaching out again and providing them with a reminder. Use it as an opportunity to provide an update on your progress towards reaching your goal. For example, add a line to your email that reads something like, “If you make a donation today, I will be at 50% of my goal! Will you help me get there?” or “Today, with your support, I can hit a major milestone of \$3,000 raised. Will you please consider making a gift?”

These are the people/  
groups of people I will mail  
a letter or send an email to:

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[Date]

[Name]

[Address]

[City], [State] [Zip Code]

Dear [Name],

Today, I am writing to ask for your support. On [date], I am [insert your SoleMate activity...ex. "running the Twin Cities Marathon" or "participating in a weightlifting competition in San Diego"] as a SoleMate fundraising for Girls on the Run [insert council name].

So, why am I doing this? Because Girls on the Run is important to me!  
[Insert a few sentences explaining why here.]

Your reason  
"why"

If you are not familiar with Girls on the Run, please let me share a little bit about it with you now. Dedicated to a world where every girl knows and activates her limitless potential, Girls on the Run has impacted the lives of millions of girls across the country through a fun and effective afterschool program designed to enhance girls' social, emotional, and physical skills and behaviors to successfully navigate life experience. If there is one thing I want to emphasize to you it is that

**Girls on the Run is for every girl.** Physical activity—including running and strength & conditioning—is woven into lessons but the program is accessible to all girls regardless of athletic ability or fitness level.

A few facts  
about Girls  
on the Run

Why do I need your help? Well, in order to reach all girls and ensure that Girls on the Run is accessible to any girl who wishes to participate, my goal is to raise \$[insert amount] so that more girls here in [insert name of state, region, city/town, etc.] can participate. **Will you consider making a donation?** [Or: Will you consider making a donation of \$[amount]?] Every dollar makes a big difference and I can only reach my goal with your support!

Direct ask

Your fundraising  
goal

You can either give online by going to [insert link to personal fundraising page] or you can mail a check to [insert mailing address].

Convenient  
way to donate

By supporting Girls on the Run, you are demonstrating your belief in me and in a world where ALL girls know and activate their limitless potential and are free to boldly pursue their dreams. Thank you in advance for your support.

With gratitude,

[your name]

## One Step at a Time:



PRINT  
these pages!

### Communicating with & Updating your Supporters

As a SoleMate, your supporters want to hear from you! **Print out this journey map and post it somewhere as a reminder to communicate with them. Start by filling in all of the date milestones and your fundraising goal.** Be sure to update how much you have raised along the way!

On \_\_\_\_\_, I will complete \_\_\_\_\_ as a SoleMate.  
*(date)* *(name of event)*

My fundraising goal: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

#### WITHIN 1 WEEK OF REGISTERING

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Today is the day to get your fundraiser started on the right foot! Start by making a donation to yourself to show your commitment and get the ball rolling!
- Reach out to people in Circle 1 and 2. Decide which fundraising method will work best - in-person, email/letter (see example on page 16) or by phone.
- Post on your social media channels and don't forget to add the link to your fundraiser!

#### HALFWAY TO YOUR EVENT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Your supporters want to hear how your training is going! Post an update to social media. Be sure to include your fundraising link!
- Perhaps your company would be willing to make a donation or match your donations? Now is a good time to inquire! If so, be sure to let your supporters know about the match via email and social media.



**Celebrate what you have accomplished  
now that you are halfway through!**

Total raised: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## 2-3 WEEKS BEFORE EVENT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- By now your fundraiser has gained some traction! Post about your progress on social media, thanking and tagging those who have donated so far. Be sure to include the link to your fundraiser!

## 1 WEEK BEFORE EVENT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Send an email to anyone who hasn't responded yet. Trust us, they will appreciate the reminder!

## DAY BEFORE YOUR EVENT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Use social media to share both your fundraising progress and how you are feeling about the big day tomorrow. Sharing how close you are to your goal will motivate your friends to make a gift and get you across the (fundraising) finish line.

## AFTER YOUR EVENT

### Congratulations!

- If you have reached your goal, share a thank you message on social media, tagging those that have contributed. Be sure to let everyone know how the event went!
- If you have not yet reached your goal, share a thank you message on social media and make one last plea for additional donations.

## Fundraising Tips: SoleMate to SoleMate

### REMEMBER THE REASON

“At first, I was hesitant to be a SoleMate because I am not the type of person to ask for money. Then, I realized that I wasn’t asking people for me personally. Instead, I was **giving them an opportunity** to bring Girls on the Run to more girls in my community.”

—Nancy H.

### GET STARTED ON THE RIGHT FOOT

“If you haven’t yet, make a generous donation to your fundraiser to kick it off! It shows people that you are backing the cause and it helps you reach your goal. **A win-win!**”

—Patricia G.

### PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE

“With more and more practice, I became less uncomfortable with making “the ask” and before I knew it, **I was able to increase my fundraising goal.** I realized that people were really enthusiastic to support me because they knew that it was something I cared so much about.”

—Maggie F.

### TAKE IT ONE STEP AT A TIME

“Think about fundraising as incremental and **take things step-by-step**, donation-by-donation. Be proactive in reaching out to your networks and authentically sharing with them why you are a SoleMate for Girls on the Run and why you are asking for their support.”

—Jill A.

### FIND A MENTOR

“Consider having a **fundraising mentor or partner** to help you along—someone who you run ideas by, keeps you accountable, and asks, “did you think to do this?” or “what about asking this person?”

—Nancy H.

### DON'T BE SHY ABOUT ASKING!

“You can’t be shy about **asking through any means possible.** Calling, texting, e-mailing, old-fashioned mail, and social media all work.”

—Kyla D.

### SAY THANK YOU

“After my race, I sent out a postcard or a thank you note with a finish line photo. I think that **personally following-up** with each of the people who have supported you **is super important.**”

—Alett M.

### BONUS ROUND >>>

#### DON'T FORGET ABOUT YOUR EMPLOYER!

Many companies have matching gift programs or have funds to support an employee’s fundraiser for a nonprofit. **Ask your employer for their support**—perhaps they can make a donation to your fundraiser, match your personal donation, or even match the total amount that you raise!

#### HOST A DONATION DINNER.

Invite family and friends to a Donation Dinner Party. Prepare a delicious meal at your home and ask your guests to give a minimum donation to Girls on the Run. You might consider a theme (such as Hawaiian luau, Mexican fiesta, backyard campfire, pizza night, murder mystery, or appetizers & bite-sized eats). Include auction items or a raffle to **truly bring the fun to FUNdraising!**

#### ASK US FOR HELP!

We believe in you and we are here to help! Please contact your local Girls on the Run for more information.





THANK

YOU!



SOLEMATES®

Girls on the Run

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