

Dear Friend of the SUDC Foundation,

Thank you for your interest in planning a Run for a Reason in memory of your beloved child. Please know that the SUDC Foundation is here to help you with any questions you may have and help you along the way in any way we can. We are privileged to work with you as you use your energy and love in such a worthy way, memorializing your child and helping us attain a future free of these tragedies.

The Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) Foundation was created in September 2001 (as a program in a larger nonprofit) and, in 2014, it became its own 501(c)(3). Its mission is to promote awareness, advocate for research and support those affected by sudden unexplained death in childhood.

The enclosed information, the Run for a Reason Planning Guide, may seem like more information than you thought was involved in planning such an event. We have been blessed with founders of the Run for a Reason events, Jen and Mitch Best, who share professional expertise in embarking on such an endeavor. It is through them and the subsequently-created events that we have been able to glean so much information to share with you- all with the intention of making things as easy for you as possible.

The SUDC Foundation gratefully thanks Jen and Mitch Best, Tammy Schweigert, Jane Lally Montei and the Max’s Run for a Reason event team for their donated time and energy to create this guide in memory of Maxwell Best and in honor of all our children. Also, thank you to the organizers of Josh and Gus’s’ Run for a Reason (the Gove and MacDonald families) who provided materials and information for this project.

Once you have had a chance to review the enclosed materials, please call us at your convenience or email me so we can discuss your plans and any questions you may have.

In sympathy and grateful appreciation,

Elizabeth Milliken, Chief Philanthropy Officer

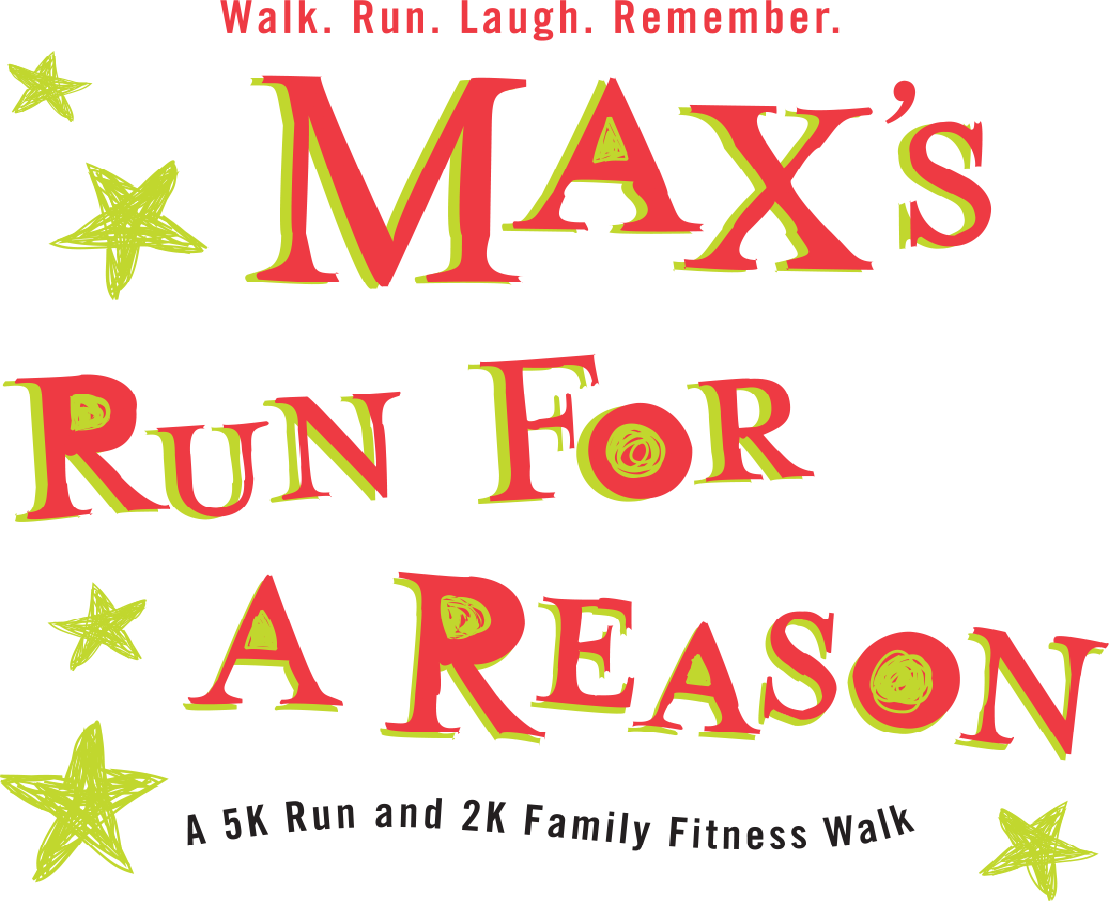
The SUDC Foundation

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Thank you for considering doing a Run for a Reason. We promise it will be a lifelong gift of love and support for your family. The following pages are to provide you and your team with tools and suggestions necessary for putting together a successful Run for a Reason in honor of your precious child. Please do not feel overwhelmed when you read through it. There are many details, but they are meant to help simplify things for you.

When our son Max died, we felt so alone and lost. This event helped us find a positive place to put our energy. It also gave our family and friends a way to support us. We started out thinking a couple hundred family and friends would come to Max’s Run for a Reason and were so honored and surprised when over 1700 people turned out to support our important cause the first year and even more the second. The event was a beautiful celebration in honor of our son. It showed us how much our community cared and how generous those around us are.

With that being said, your event can take on any size or shape you desire. Do not feel like you need to have a huge event, it can be whatever size or scope you want it to be. Included are some guidelines we have put in place so all the Run for a Reason events are consistent and follow the same guidelines. We hope these efforts allow you to create a very special event in your child’s honor that will undoubtedly help us reach a future free of SUDC.

Finally, we would like to thank the SUDC Foundation for supporting our efforts. We couldn’t have done any of this without them. We would also like to thank our family and friends who have stood by our side during the immediate loss of Max and still continue to be there for us today. By creating this event in celebration of his life and all children, we are able to cope on a daily basis and hold the joy Max was, and still is, close to our hearts.

Sincerely,

Jennifer and Mitchell Best and family

**EVENT HISTORY**

Max’s Run for a Reason was established in 2003 by Jennifer and Mitchell Best following the loss of their son, Max. The event was created to celebrate Max’s life, raise awareness and generate research dollars for sudden unexplained death. The first annual event was a huge success, drawing over 1,700 attendees and raising over $70,000!

The family-focused event allowed the Best family to channel their grief and emotions into something positive, a fun-filled day with extraordinary results. By creating a valuable resource for others affected by sudden unexplained death, by funding both research and awareness campaigns and by establishing an event in honor of their son Max, the Best family found a means of helping them in their journey of healing.

This guide has helped families all across the country put on successful Run for a Reason events. You can find information about these events by going to the SUDC Foundation’s website at www.sudc.org or by emailing us at info@sudc.org.

Proceeds from all events benefit the SUDC Foundation.

| Maxwell Best | Participants in the 1st annual Max’s Run for a Reason |
| --- | --- |

**GET STARTED: Initial Organizational Steps**

1. **Contact the SUDC Foundation**

Please call us if you are interested in putting on a Run for a Reason. We can help you get started. After you begin the process of putting together your Run for a Reason, please remember to send ALL written communication, expense reports, invoices, mailings, and the like to the SUDC Foundation.

1. **Know the Event Brand**

Bringing the Run for a Reason events to other cities is very exciting! Continuity is required to strengthen our mission and our brand as we continue to grow and expand on a national level. This means logos, promotional materials, colors, messages and the general spirit of each Run for a Reason event remain consistent from city to city.

It is essential, therefore, to follow the protocol of this guide when producing your event materials. You should also provide the SUDC Foundation with all artwork, brochures and printed materials prior to being printed for approval.

1. **Prepare an Event Mission Statement**

General Mission Statement: Run for a Reason events will memorialize the life of a child and foster the mission of the SUDC Foundation by generating awareness and raising charitable funds to meet its goals.

The SUDC Foundation’s mission is to promote awareness, advocate for research and support those affected by sudden unexplained death in childhood. Your run should support the SUDC Foundation’s mission.

1. **Choose an Event Chair and Event Team**

It is essential that one person (or co-chairs) oversees the entire event. Most often, the event has been run by the parents of a lost child but this is not required. Because of emotional strains associated with such an event, it may be helpful to involve a third party (i.e. friend or relative). The event chair should understand the mission and the work of the SUDC Foundation and the Run for a Reason event. He or she should be able to educate and motivate his/her team members.

Also, it is important to delegate, delegate, delegate. The more you can divide and conquer the more efficient and manageable the event will be. Your event team should consist of family and friends who are interested in helping. Please keep people’s specific talents and connections in mind.

***Key responsibilities:***

* Provide orientation and materials to team members
* Oversee committees & work with committee chairs on timeline
* Manage timelines to ensure deadlines are met
* Manage financial responsibilities including bank account, invoices, incoming and outgoing dollars
* Be a liaison with the SUDC Foundation to ensure materials, plans, etc. are approved and meet event standards
* Collect and manage all proceeds coming in through donations and sponsorships.
* Thank team members for their time and energy after event (i.e.- volunteer party, thank-you gift)

1. **Choose an Event Date and Location**

After committing to do an event, find a location. Both “non-official” 5K running courses and 2K walking courses have been used. Noting it is a “non-official” course is important so that some of the more serious runners the event draws recognize that the event is a casual, family-oriented (as opposed to being a “qualifying” race) event.

***Things to consider:***

* Significant date & location for example, a birthday and/or anniversary and a locale that has special meaning to the honoree’s family
* Timing/Weather - schedule when weather is best and people enjoy being outside, this is especially important to make it convenient for families
* Parking
* Adequate Space - consider refreshments, registration, kids’ activities
* Public Permits - be certain to research/obtain any public permits required and be certain the plan is approved by appropriate authorities. This usually entails contacting your Department of Parks and obtaining a permit application to use the park. Often proof of insurance is requested and the SUDC Foundation can assist you in receiving that information. Local Police Department will also need to be contacted if any streets are to be blocked off due to the event.

1. **Create an Event Timeline and Budget**

Creating a timeline will help you heading up to the event and on-site the day of the race. With many action items and deadlines, timelines will keep you and your volunteer team in-check.

***Things to consider:***

* Having a complete contact list of volunteers so volunteers can communicate
* Scheduling regular meetings to ensure lines of communication are open
* Start the first meeting 12 weeks before the event to organize committees and put a plan in place
* Using an agenda to run a meeting. Volunteer situations require strong management
* Creating an overall timeline
* When you are first getting started, define some realistic goals for fundraising. As you plan, try to keep your total expenses no greater than 25% of your expected goal. You may go a bit higher in the first-year due to some one-time costs that keep costs down in future years. (i.e. signage)
* Try to find a volunteer with an accounting background to keep track of all your accounting.

1. **Identify Event Demographics**

Before you begin marketing and planning, you and your team should understand who you are targeting as participants.

***Target attendees are*:**

* Families in the local community
* People who are aware of your story and want to help
* People in your community (local schools, preschools, Early Childhood Family Education programs, churches and other religious establishments, play groups - anywhere that caters to families with young children)
* Runners and walkers - tap into local running groups, there is usually a running circuit that does local races

***Target sponsors are:***

* Community-related groups and businesses - banks, grocery stores, local businesses
* National organizations that may have a presence in your local area

1. **Manage Your Donations**

Check donations should be made payable to the SUDC Foundation.

All donations and/or sponsorships should be mailed to the SUDC Foundation on a biweekly basis prior to the event. The SUDC Foundation, 101 Eisenhower Parkway, Roseland NJ 07068.

Cash received at the event may be used to pay expenses, however, no item can be paid for without a proper receipt. All receipts should be marked accordingly as being “paid using cash from the event”.

Whenever possible, expenses associated with the event should be submitted to the SUDC Foundation with proper receipt for review and payment through the SUDC Foundation.

The SUDC Foundation encourages that all participants, donors and sponsors receive a thank-you letter. It should be noted, however, all donors contributing over $250 must receive a tax receipt by law. Thank you letters can be coordinated with the SUDC Foundation.

All matching fund applications will be promptly sent to the SUDC Foundation together with a copy of proof that the employee made the underlying donation.

Wherever possible, utilize the SUDC Foundation’s state tax exemption letter which provides a waiver from payment of sales tax. Upon completion of the event, all forms, receipts and a formal accounting shall be mailed to the SUDC Foundation for storing.

**DIVIDE & CONQUER: Create Event Committees**

After getting started, it is time to divide and conquer! Separating into groups allows team members to work on an area of interest to them. Each committee will focus on a specific area (i.e. marketing, sponsorships, etc.). Each group will be working simultaneously to achieve their objectives.

There is a lot of crossover between the committees so the event chair and committee chairs must ensure that groups communicate, cooperate and collaborate to accomplish the main goal - a seamlessly-executed event! We recommend creating committees including people with the following skill sets:

* Marketing and Public Relations Committee Members
  + Marketing skills
  + Graphic design skills
  + Copy writing and editing skills
  + Print knowledge (someone who understands printing)
  + Public Relations experience
  + Direct mail experience
* Sponsorships Committee Members
  + Comfortable with sales/solicitation
  + Well-organized
* Operations and Logistics Committee Members
  + Well-organized
  + Event planning and/or running experience a plus
* Fundraising Committee Members
  + Comfortable with sales/solicitation
  + Well-organized
* Children’s Activities Committee Members
  + Those interested in working with children and coordinating activities and prizes.
* Food and Beverage Committee Members
  + Those who want to help coordinate refreshment donations set-up, delivery and clean -up.
* Entertainment Committee Members
  + Small group needed to coordinate sound system and possible entertainment

The following pages include descriptions of each committee, tasks and resource materials. Each of the seven committees listed above will focus on their specific tasks and goals. They will work independently from the larger team, however it is important to hold “all team” meetings (all members of all committees together) to make sure everyone is communicating and collaborating.

For example, Max’s Run team meets three to four times as a whole. We have a prepared agenda with questions and answers plus treats (water, wine, food, etc.) and discuss the status of the event’s progress. Each committee reports in on where they are and asks for help where they may need it. As a result, resources can be pulled in from various areas.

**Marketing & Public Relations Committee**

A nonprofit event requires an efficient and effective team that can use grassroots channels and minimal funds to get the word out. Teams will need to solicit designers, printers, online advertisers and public relations experts to assist in the efforts on a volunteer basis (pro-bono/free of charge).

**Responsibilities of Marketing Chair:**

* Be a liaison with all other committees
* Put together the marketing team…tapping into friends and family with expertise is a must
* Manage design of marketing materials including: brochures, posters, website, signage
  + Suggested paper, 80# text, matte (glossy works also but may smear in mailing)
  + Send all draft of materials to the SUDC Foundation for approval prior to printing
  + Oversee design and production of advertising
  + Oversee any event premiums- find someone to donate all or partial costs of T-shirts for runners and volunteers. Also includes designing, printing and delivering.
* Oversee grassroots promotion
  + Hang posters… everywhere from coffee shops to schools, to churches, to bulletin boards, health clubs, book stores, children’s physicians, etc.
  + Distribute brochures …have all team members take stacks for brochures to spread out around town and to their families and friends
  + Send emails to your team’s personal email list. Include links to your website and the SUDC Foundation.
  + Manage social media such as event website, Facebook page, Instagram and YouTube

**Additional notes about flyers, posters and any other printed materials:**

* Printed materials must be sent to the SUDC Foundation before printing for proofreading
* We can send your event flyer to people in your area who are on our mailing list.
* Be sure to give flyers to your committee persons for them to hand out to local establishments
* Give extra flyers to people for their family members, friends, etc.

**Manage mailing lists:**

Collect committee members, email list or address list, to reach as many friends and family as possible. The SUDC Foundation can also send your flyer/brochure to our regional mailing list.

The second year will be easier for you because you will have the first year’s participants and donors.

Mailing should take place four to six weeks before the run and one as a thank-you with results and tax information within a month after the event (that is why you collect all addresses).

Reach other bereaved families: We had T-shirts available that said, “In our hearts forever” on the back where families could write (w/ a fabric pen) their child’s name. Other ideas include having a memorial photo board.

Contact local media – The public relations person should distribute a press release to local media and follow up with personal phone calls. Once the text is created, please forward to the SUDC Foundation for review.

Press releases should be sent to local newsletters, school newsletters, work newsletters, etc. They are always looking for things to write about. A sample press release is available and can be obtained from the SUDC Foundation. Remember to send it to the SUDC Foundation for proofing before sending it out.

Educate about SUDC. You may want to have a table or station set up at the event with materials on SUDC. Preferably an SUDC Foundation Ambassador would be able to attend and tend to the table.

**Marketing & Public Relations Committee Plan:**

**Long-lead Outreach (3 Months prior to event)**

* Long lead publications
* Calendar sections of running club newsletters
* Athletic club newsletters/mailings
* Weekly newspapers
* Online sites
* Sports/running publications
* Running blogs
* Newsletters at schools, clubs, park and recreation departments, children’s hospitals

**Pre-run outreach (2 Months prior to event)**

* Daily newspapers
* Local broadcast TV
* Grassroots/flyers
* Running blogs

**Sponsorships Committee**

Sponsorships are important in many different ways. They provide tangible benefits such as cash flow and donated items for operating materials/premiums. It is important to remember that sponsorships can be in various forms. For example, donated equipment is just as valuable as a monetary contribution. In addition, sponsorships add intangible benefits like credibility and recognition. Soliciting, securing and fulfilling sponsorships is an essential part of a nonprofit event.

An in-kind gift is a tax-deductible donation and is a gift of service (i.e. design) or material (i.e. printing, water) that is required to successfully produce the event.

**Responsibilities of Sponsorship Chair:**

* Be a liaison between Sponsorship and other committees (especially for fulfillment of obligations-i.e. logos placement on event materials)
* Track progress and monitor incoming dollars/commitments
* Be a liaison with the SUDC Foundation for any national-level sponsorships
* Work with subcommittee chairs to monitor progress and ensure the fulfillment process.
* Solicit sponsors
* Work with other committees to ensure fulfillment
* Maintain spreadsheet of sponsor contact info (use donation template in operation resource guide)

**Sponsorship Committee Tasks:**

* Solicit sponsors with phone call and letter (personal contact important). The key is having the right person to ask.
* Create and monitor a sponsor agreement chart (i.e. how much value of donation, are they putting information in goody bags, race day signage, website acknowledgement, logos on T-shirts, etc.)
* Work with the sponsor to make sure they are kept up-to-date on run progress and are satisfied.
* Work with other committees to ensure promises are kept
* Clarify other committee needs for donating supplies or services (i.e. T-shirts, printing, tents and photography)
* Follow up with summary/results and thank you gift (i.e. T-shirts from event have been well-received)

A goal of the Run for a Reason event on a national level is to recruit national sponsors. We are in the process of putting a plan in place and are open to suggestions. Please contact the SUDC Foundation’s Chief Philanthropy Office, Liz Milliken, if you have any contacts or ideas that would be worth pursuing.

**Sponsorship Committee Tasks Timeline:**

**5-12 Months before event:**

* Identify potential sponsors - we recommend starting with family and friends’ businesses or places where you have a personal connection
  + Contact larger organizations early on in the year before they allocate their yearly funds
* Determine co-chairs for committee
* At volunteer meeting distribute sponsorship packets to all volunteers that include sponsorship forms and protocol for handling new sponsors
  + Protocol: Once sponsor is identified, have completed form forwarded to committee co-chair
  + Committee co-chair then takes over all communication with sponsor
  + Co-chair responsibility: communicate with sponsor and confirm commitment (emailed letter, phone call, hand-written note – use your discretion), create spreadsheet tracking form, obtained company logo for use on signage, brochures and T-shirts

**2-5 Months before the event:**

* Follow up with committed sponsors that haven’t sent checks
* Make sure logos are in before brochures, flyers, registration forms and posters went to print
* Maintain contact with the website coordinator to make sure that all sponsors have their logos posted
* Continue to secure sponsorships

**1 Month before event:**

* Distribute flyers and posters to all sponsors for use within their company
* Contact all sponsors to see if they had promotional materials for run bags
* Continue to secure sponsorships

**Week of the event:**

* Continue to secure sponsorships
* Answer any questions that sponsors may have

**Day of the event:**

* Make sure all sponsors attending the race are greeted, etc.
* Help out wherever needed

**Follow-up:**

* Send master spreadsheet to Run chairperson for thank-you purposes – thank-you letters were sent out within two weeks
* Make sure all sponsors received run T-shirts

**Operations/Logistics Committee**

Operations/Logistics require a very detail-oriented team! You may consider breaking into subcommittees based on the following responsibilities.

**Responsibilities of Operations/Logistics Committee Chair:**

* Location (permits, parking)
* Registration (logistics on site and money, tax IDs, etc)
* Security/Ushers (traffic coordinators - Max’s Run has used Rotary club, or school groups)
* Race Logistics (start/finish, winners’ prizes, race clock, sound system, making sure event is on time)
* At Max’s Run we hire an MC who comes w/ a sound system. He has experience running 5Ks or other outdoor events and is extremely helpful in helping us stay on time and organized!
* Race Materials (T-shirts, race day bags, numbers, etc.)
* T-shirts: try to have donated or at least get at cost (100% cotton, nice quality)
* Race day bags. Fabric bags with the SUDC Foundation logo can be requested through the SUDC Foundation for you to include SUDC Foundation information, sponsors’ info (coupons, local ads, etc.), food samples and other appropriate giveaways.
* Race numbers can be ordered at runnersworld.com for free
* Equipment (tents, port-a-potty, waste baskets, garbage pickup, etc)
* Event banners should have the current SUDC Foundation logo on them. Additional signage with sponsor names/logos should be produced because they tend to change which will require new signage.
* Try to have printing donated on materials that will last from year to year
* Coordinate with each committee what they need for signage
* Coordinate with equipment manager how and where to hang
* Other decorations (enlarged photos of your child everywhere, memory photo board, balloons, etc.)

**Fundraising Committee**

At Max’s Run for a Reason, in addition to the run, the event team uses a silent auction as a supplementary means of raising dollars. The SUDC Foundation does not have a gambling license therefore, selling raffle tickets will not be permitted and you are encouraged to organize a silent auction instead. This area takes an aggressive approach and detailed-oriented team. Some people are great at soliciting donations, some are not. Make sure the fundraising team is comfortable with asking for donations. Also, we recommend having the entire event team bring in these types of donations whenever possible. Tap into family/friends who own businesses or offer services they would be more than happy to donate. These donations are also tax write-offs for companies.

One other great way to raise money is to have individual walkers/runners use the pledge form to collect donations for their participation. Josh and Gus’s Run used a pledge process where participants collected donations for their part.

**Responsibilities of Fundraising Chair:**

* Maintain spreadsheet of donors contact information (use donation template under operation resource guide)
* Solicit donations for auction and drawing
* Identify potential donations and coordinate pre-event and on-site drawing and logistics.

**Silent auctions are a great way of fundraising.** We decided to bundle our auction items in themes like Spa Day, Date Night Out (hotel and restaurant), Weekend Get-away, Arts and Crafts for kids, Makeover, etc. You should expect to have about 12-20 good baskets. The smaller items were bundled for the drawing. There were a lot of little things (i.e. books, manicures, etc.). The drawing takes a while so it makes it easier to bundle the smaller items.

**Fundraising Committee Tasks Timeline:**

**5-12 Months before event:**

* Identify potential donations and coordinate pre-event and on-site drawing and logistics. We recommend starting with family and friends’ businesses or places where you have a personal connection. Contact larger organizations early on in the year before they allocate their yearly donation funds.
* Determine co-chairs for committee

**2-5 Months before the event:**

* Develop committee and distribute roster with phone, email info.
* Set future monthly meeting dates five months out
* Distribute neighborhood contacts requesting volunteers to contact five to 10 businesses to solicit donations
* Distribute form letters for solicitation purposes
* Determine goal-number of items for silent auction
* Locate/purchase bid sheets for the auction

**1 month before event:**

* Organize donations for auction, determine what area of interest still needs to grow based on donations, start putting baskets together of small items
* Follow up with outstanding requests

**Week of event:**

* Complete bid sheets and assign number/folder to each bid sheet and item
* Set a deadline for receiving donations-we have a great deal of last-minute items which are often not tracked and underbid due to rush. Try to get donations in as early as possible.
* Identify timeline with planning committee-allow 30 minutes prior to the end of the event that day to close out the auction. Winners must be present and pay upon closing of the auction.

**Day of event:**

* Set up tables, tape bid sheets, provide pens.
* Display large items
* Check in with emcee to ensure promoting of items
* Provide security personnel, appoint volunteers to watch high ticket items and provide assistance.
* Close out 30 minutes prior to end of event-have emcee announce 30, 20, 10 minutes and then close of auction, go to the tent to collect your winnings.
* During close out, match the folder with the number on the bid sheet, put in numerical order, the winner collects the carbon of their bid and brings it to pay out. You each keep a copy of the original/carbon.

**Follow-up:**

Thank you letters need to go out within two weeks –use an approximate total if necessary and keep a database of your donors.

**Children’s Activities Committee**

The addition of children’s activities makes this a wonderful family-oriented event.

**Responsibilities of Activities Chair:**

* Coordinating activities and supplies
* Coordinate staff, set-up and supplies for each activity and prizes if applicable
* Have “donation boxes” at each activity so attendees can contribute if they wish
* Possible sites for obtaining prizes: Centurynovelty.com, Orientaltrading.com
* Refreshment table (juice boxes, milk, birthday cake, whatever treats you can solicit)
* Solicit businesses for supplies, refreshments, prizes, their services (delegate to all members of the committee)
* Signage, tent, tables (coordinate with Operations Committee)
* Recruit volunteers for day of race (we had 13 volunteers plus the committee members) and coordinate all volunteers on day of race
* Have “donation boxes” at each activity so attendees can contribute if they wish
* Make sure each event has what it needs to make it a successful, fun activity- keeping it simple works best.

**Successful Activities from Max’s Run for a Reason:**

* Kids’ races
* Arts and crafts, face painting (a big hit), ball toss
* Carnival-like games (sometimes churches or local community centers have equipment they will donate)
* Bouncing tent/moonwalk - Make sure that this company provides insurance coverage for these items.
* Petting zoo (huge hit) - requires an additional insurance policy
* Kids’ music and entertainment

**Food & Beverage Committee**

Complimentary snacks and beverages add a special touch to the event.

**Responsibilities of Food & Beverage Chair:**

* Soliciting local vendors, manufacturers and distributors to donate items for the event
* Managing the delivery/pickup, on-site locale, distribution, clean-up and donation of leftovers to food shelves.
* Maintain spreadsheet of donors contact information (use donation template under operation resource guide)

**Suggested Items Include:**

* Water, coffee, juice, boxes for kids, sports drinks
* Energy bars/granola bars
* Bagels/rolls
* Fruit (bananas, apples and oranges are always good)
* Donuts
* Pizza
* Cake (Max’s Run cuts a birthday cake in his honor)

**Entertainment Committee**

Entertainment will depend on the timing of the event and how you choose to approach it.

**Responsibilities of the Entertainment Chair:**

* Working with other committees to ensure your needs are taken care of (i.e. marketing, promotion, logistics)
* Scheduling and tracking entertainment plan (where and what music to be played, where mascots should work, etc.)
* It is very important that a sound system is adequate. This is both the entertainment and the logistics committees’ responsibility.

**Suggestions Include:**

* Local personalities appearing for drawings and auction
* Max’s Run included NBA Mascot, Crunch, mixing and mingling with attendees, starting the race and greeting runners as they crossed the finish line.
* Children’s performers and/or singers who provide family-related entertainment

**Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q.** Who to call for help/questions?

**A.** Call Teri Kandel, SUDC Foundation Development Associate first and she can answer questions or direct you accordingly.

**Q.** How long does a run take to plan?

**A.** At least four to six months. If you start too early, people burn out and you lose momentum. However, secure location and race date as soon as possible, ideally at the start of the year.

**Q.** How many core volunteers for committees do I need?

**A.** It depends on the committee and scope of the event. Marketing may require four to six people whereas Refreshments may need only two.

**Q.** How many overall volunteers do I need for race day?

**A.** Each committee is responsible for organizing their volunteers. Max’s Run had over 50 volunteers on race day. Including 10-12 in registration, six to eight in Children’s activities, six to eight people selling raffles and working the silent auction, eight in Refreshments. Several others directed traffic and kept things organized. Use a detailed plan on race day to make sure everyone knows their role!

**Q.** When do you send out brochures and hang posters?

**A.** Brochures should be mailed six to eight weeks prior to the event date. Hang posters one month before the event.

**Q.** What should I do if I don’t know anyone in Public Relations?

**A.** Ask all of your event team for connections. Someone is sure to have a connection. If not, use the press release to mail to your local media and conduct your own grassroots campaign. The SUDC Foundation has a Media Kit available to be given to any members of the media who wish to cover your event. The Foundation can also provide some tips and resources for assessing the “newsworthiness” of your event, conducting strategic media outreach, producing press materials for your event and being interviewed by the media. Please note that anyone speaking on behalf of the SUDC Foundation must notify the foundation to get approval of key talking points.

**Q.** Should I have someone responsible for photographing and taking video of the event?

**A.** Yes! This is very helpful to document for future marketing as well as a wonderful keepsake.

**Q.** How many people should help set up and break down?

**A.** We designated one person from each committee to be available at set-up (when the tent and tables are going up) to direct the set-up team. If you have too many people it gets unmanageable. All volunteers should show up one hour before the event.

**Q.** How many brochures and posters should I order?

**A.** We recommend at least 1,000 brochures and 100 posters. Please advise printing vendor because adjusting quantities may or may not have a major impact on total printing costs. (Many people do utilize online registration)

**Q.** Do I need to use my own personal money to put on a run?

**A.** The assumption of doing a Run for a Reason is that your fundraising will be successful and far exceed the expenses. With a well-organized plan and coordination with the SUDC Foundation, your approved expenses will be reimbursed.

**List of Materials Available from the SUDC Foundation**

* Color copies of SUDC print newsletter.
* The SUDC Love Beyond Reason photo banner.
* Fabric drawstring backpacks with the SUDC Foundation logo, and other promotional items.
* Digital files of the SUDC Foundation logo, photos and first names of children lost to SUDC whose parents/guardians gave permission for their use in fundraising and memorial activities.
* Event registration website to use for registration and for promoting the event on race websites.
* Explaining the Unexplained: A short and poignant video that captures facts on SUDC and its raw, emotional cost.
* The Faces of SUDC: A video featuring children taken far too soon from SUDC.
* Love Beyond Reason: An 8-minute documentary depicting the challenges the medical community faces as it tries to understand this classification of death and the heartache of parents and families who have experienced the sudden loss of a thriving child with no medical cause or explanation.
* Frequently Asked Questions about SUDC: Find answers to frequently asked questions about SUDC on our website.
* Fact Sheets on SUDC and the SUDC Foundation for general audiences and medical audiences.
* Other SUDC Literature can be found on the SUDC website: sudc.org
* Sponsorship Request Letter
* Sponsorship Thank You Letter
* Donation Request Letter
* Donation Thank You Letter
* In-Kind Donation Request Letter
* In-Kind Donation Thank You Letter

**Key Messages and Talking Points**

These Key Messages provide an overarching communications guide for the SUDC Foundation. They provide the groundwork for all Foundation communications. Message consistency is essential to the success of any organization. All future communications about and for the Foundation should include these messages in some manner.

These messages are not a script and do not need to be memorized verbatim. Instead, they should serve as a guide outlining key concepts for all future communications. Key words or phrases are bolded to emphasize those key concepts as well as accurate terminology preferred by the Foundation. But each communicator should use them in a manner that is most comfortable for them and best suited for the audience they are communicating with.

These messages are also not intended to be limiting. Each message point serves a specific and strategic purpose for the Foundation and are written succinctly and concisely for ease of communication. Each message point has additional data points to be incorporated when additional support is needed. Additional support can be added or expanded upon as needed as well.

These Key Messages have four main points:

1. The Need: This message point explains the need that exists, the challenge that has to be overcome or a problem that must be solved.
2. Why We Do What We Do: This message point clarifies why the Foundation exists and the void it fills.
3. How We Do It: This message point describes how the organization works in its unique way to address the need, challenge or problem.
4. Vision: This message point describes the world the organization hopes to create once it has accomplished its mission and the end result of its efforts after the needs are met, the challenges are overcome and the problem is solved.

**SUDC Foundation’s Key Messages:**

**The Need:**

Every year in the United States, approximately 500 children are lost to SUDC. Even after a thorough investigation and autopsy, families, medical professionals and death investigators have no answers on why a healthy and thriving child passes away suddenly and unexpectedly. The only answer we have currently is Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC). Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) is a category of death in a child 12 months of age or older which remains unexplained after a thorough investigation and autopsy. Most often, SUDC occurs in seemingly healthy children during sleep. At this time, we do not know what causes SUDC, how to predict it or how to prevent it. SUDC is believed to be rare; occurring in about one in every 100,000 children. We do not know exactly how often SUDC occurs. Because of inconsistencies in death certification practices and because the World Health Organization (WHO) lacks a specific way to record sudden and unexplained deaths in children that have been thoroughly investigated, it is impossible to know how widespread the problem is.

**Why We Do What We Do:**

SUDC is one of the most under-recognized medical tragedies of our time. The medical community and our society have failed these children and their families. We have done far too little for far too long and we have to change that. Research is crucial to uncovering cause(s) of and ways to prevent SUDC deaths. Families not only need emotional support, but also medical guidance, assistance navigating the difficult and often confusing process of searching for what may have happened to their child and how to live their lives after loss. Medical professionals need help providing the best medical care and emotional support for the families they care for. While it is the fifth leading category of death among children ages 1 to 4, SUDC has received no public funding to date. SUDC families often grieve in isolation, without information, resources or awareness that other families exist with a similar loss.

Due to a lack of consistency and standards in death investigations, coroners and medical examiners don’t always have the resources to perform all the testing needed to thoroughly investigate each child’s death or give the support families need. The lack of consistency and standards leads to a lack of data, further exhausting the medical community’s ability to find overarching connections and trends in SUDC deaths.

**How We Do It:**

The SUDC Foundation is the only organization worldwide whose purpose is to promote awareness, advocate for research and support those affected by SUDC. The SUDC Foundation provides all services at no cost to the people it serves. The SUDC Foundation currently supports over 2,000 families in over 25 countries.

The SUDC Foundation provides personalized, comprehensive care from licensed clinical social workers with a variety of programs and cultivates a community of support for bereaved families so no one grieves alone.

The SUDC Foundation helps families navigate the difficult and often confusing investigation into their child’s death by being a liaison between families and the medical examiner or coroner.

The Foundation assists families in accessing DNA banking services and SUDC research, including the Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood Registry and Research Collaborative (SUDCRRC), at New York University. The SUDCRRC provides families with a thorough case review of a child’s medical history and death, as well as additional testing to examine possible causes and ways to diagnose and prevent SUDC.

The SUDC Foundation helps doctors, medical examiners and coroners to care for and communicate with families experiencing the sudden, unexpected and/or unexplained loss of a child.

The SUDC Foundation supports efforts, including legislative, to ensure comprehensive and standardized death investigations, fair treatment of and appropriate medical care for families and thorough data collection to improve our understanding of SUDC.

**Vision:**

The SUDC Foundation envisions a world where no more children are lost to Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood.

**Race Logistics Checklist**

**Registration**

* Set up online registration/donations through RunSignUp.com
* Coordinate volunteers to work race day registration.
* Coordinate Registration Tent (see registration process as well for more details)
* One Section for pre-registered participants divided into sections alphabetically (ex. A-L, M-Z)
* One section of tent for day-of registration and donations
* Separate area for bereaved parents and families to decorate their dedication T-shirts

**Online Registration**

* The SUDC Foundation utilizes RunSignUp.com for event registration. Contact Teri Kandel, Development Associate to help you with setting up your online registration page. You will be given access to the page to get an update on who has registered or donated. All proceeds received from the registration page are sent directly to the foundation.

**Supplies**

* Tents and tables
* Alphabetized copies of pre-registered participants to check in
* Signage (very visible) banners, tabletop signs, easels; try to produce reusable signage so you can use from year to year
* Tables (pre-registered, registered, bereaved T-shirt decorating)
* Envelopes/cash boxes for cash/checks
* Pens
* Registration forms
* Safety pins (to pin race numbers on)
* Race bags (stuffed with race number, local donations)
* T-shirts (separate pre-registered and extras for day-of registrants)
* T-shirts for sponsors
* T-shirts for volunteers
* Bereaved parents and loved ones - dedication T-shirts
* Fabric pens to decorate dedication T-shirts
* First Aid (band aids, ice bags, ace bandage, athletic tape…)

**Race courses – start and finish (marked with banner or balloon arch)**

* 5K run/walk
* 2K Family Fitness Walk
* Kids Run (very short distance finishing at the official finish line- each child gets a medal. Coordinate with Kids’ activities chair
* Mark course with signs or chalk

**General Race Flow**

* Start/Finish line near activities and music
* Announce start countdown starting at least 20 minutes ahead of time
* Encourage faster runners to line up in front
* Baby joggers and dogs to the back
* Walkers at the end of the line up
* Start the Run
* As soon as all runners pass through start line- start walk
* Kids Run starts about an hour after the 5K start (all runners and most walkers should be finished).

**Other Details**

* Park permit – through local park and recreation department or city
* Parking - volunteers to direct traffic and signs with parking details
* Refreshments – local donations
* Activities area – kids’ arts and crafts, petting zoo, face painting
* Silent auction – local donations
* Music
* Race announcer – you can usually get a referral from a local running store
* Race clock/timer- donated by local running stores
* Sound system – race announcer usually has one or knows where to get one
* Port-a-potties
* Water stations (at start/finish and half way marker) donated
* Running clubs – great contacts, always looking for runs to do; can usually find these by looking in local sports paper, ask at running stores or doing an online search for area running clubs
* Race numbers- “Runner’s World” magazine or local running store
* Clean-up crew - make sure all supplies are stored well for the following year (signage, supplies, etc.)
* Walkie talkies (?)
* Race photographer and videographer
* Notify park police, local police, paramedics, fire dept., etc. to make them aware of event

**Good Local Contacts**

* Health clubs/gyms – to sponsor and promote it
* Running, biking, or triathlon stores – they usually know announcers and have race equipment (timers, cones, race numbers). They also will know of all the local running clubs and any other connections you may need.
* State distance running association (Minnesota = runmdra.org)
* Bottled water company

**Websites to list event on**

* Active.com
* RunSignUp.com
* Runnersworld.com
* Local running club websites
* State distance running association (runmdra.org)
* Allsportcentral.com

**Day of Registration Process**

* 1 20’ x 20’ tent
* 2 6-foot tables on each side forming a square
* 3 round tables in corners for bereaved parents
* 2 “Register” banners
* 2 “Pre-Registered’ banners

How many volunteers do you need? How many chairs (12?)

Have volunteers prepped before race day on what their responsibility is. Only volunteers should be in the registration tent.

**Set-up supplies**

* Pens/Paper
* Registration forms for on-site registration
* Money bags
* Cash (change)

**Race Day Process**

**Pre-Registration**

* Check in and get T-shirt and bag
  + One person crosses off the name on list
  + One person grabs T-shirt and bag
* Check-in person asks if they need bereaved T-shirt (if applicable)
  + If they do give them red T-shirt and directions to tables to write child’s name on
* Check-in person asks if they have kids doing the Kids Race and gives him or her appropriate color sticker
* Check-in person gives participant directions to silent auction, kids’ activities as well as start/finish lines

**On-site Registration**

* Fill in registration form and get T-shirt and bag if there are any left (first come, first served)
  + One person crosses off the name the list
  + One person grabs T-shirt and bag
* Check-in person asks if they need bereaved T-shirt (if applicable)
  + If they do, give them red T-shirt and directions to tables to write child’s name on
* Check-in person asks if they have kids doing the Kids Race and gives him or her appropriate color sticker
* Check-in person gives participant directions to silent auction, kids’ activities as well as start/finish lines

**Bereaved Parent tables**

* Tables w/ fabric pens. Other bereaved parents will be helping.
* Once everyone is registered, take money away.

**Clean-up process**

* Break down T-shirt boxes
* Collect signage
* Throw garbage away
* Keep pens and money bags together
* Put all filled-out registration forms together with rubber bands

**Post Event Checklist**

* This is a checklist of things to do after your event. Of course, your “things to do” may differ somewhat from this list.
* Clean up and store materials that are reusable (i.e. signage)
* Update Facebook, Instagram, website, etc. with photographs from the day. Submit photos to the SUDC Foundation for publishing on their social media as well
* Plan and execute volunteer thank-you party and/or gifts
* Complete an Event Summary Report and submit to the SUDC Foundation
* Transfer funds (cash, checks) to the Foundation
* Send thank-you letters with results to EVERYONE. This includes sponsors, participants, all donors and volunteers. See sample thank-you letters in this kit.