

Suggestions & Tips for Successful Fundraising

➤ Explain

- MSC requires volunteers to raise donations for two reasons:
 - Fundraising puts the volunteer in the uncomfortable position of asking for support just as the children of MSC have had to do for their daily survival before being taken care of by MSC.
 - Raises awareness of the needs of the children of MSC

➤ Personalize

- The more personal information about why you have chosen to embark on this mission trip, the more compelled people will find themselves to give to your cause.
 - Was there a moment that your decision to take a mission trip became clear? Describe that moment and why you made the choice. Anecdotal stories allow people to relate to you and your experience, so if you can include one that might be helpful.
 - Is there a quote or bible verse that inspired you to serve?
 - Use the power of a photograph.
 - Is this your second mission trip? Use a photo from a past trip, perhaps of you with the children or doing work. Detail how that experience changed you and why you are choosing to go again.
 - First time missionary? A photo of you will tie an image to the voice.
 - Ask veteran team members for photos of the children and location that they can share with you and that you can share with your supporters.

➤ Details

- Organization: Mustard Seed Communities
- Location: Jamaica, Nicaragua or Dominican Republic
- Dates/Length of your trip
- Who you are serving: information about the children at each location can be found on the website www.mustardseed.com/site/PageServer?pagename=who_serve_index
- If you are traveling to Nicaragua or DR, see the website for more information about Christ in the Garbage Ministries and the communities that you will visit in these two locations.
- If you are traveling to Kingston, Jamaica – you can read more about the Dare to Care program on the website. Dare to Care serves children living with HIV/AIDS.
- Explain what type of work you will be doing during your trip: Assisting with the daily care, physical therapy, medical treatments, and feeding of the children; playing with the children and sharing friendship & love. Work projects: general repairs, painting, construction, landscaping, etc.

➤ Audience

- Think about the people in your life, from friends to family to classmates and beyond. Rather than think of it as bothering them for funds, think of it as sharing a message as you do work that God empowered you to take on. The longer the list of people – the greater the audience that is hearing about the children of MSC who need as much support as we, their voices, can offer them.

➤ Raising Financial Support

- Keys to move past the fear of asking:
 - No one will give if they are not asked.
 - Share your enthusiasm for Mustard Seed Communities – you can inspire others just by

- You are not begging for money; you are inviting people to be a part of cause that you feel passionate about.
- Ask for monetary donations to support **THE CHILDREN** – not to cover your expenses.
- Avoid asking donors to “sponsor you” as this may sound like you are asking the donor to help pay your own way.
- Demonstrate the tangible impact of a gift, i.e. “your donation will change the lives of children who have no family and nowhere else to go by ensuring that they receive love and quality care.”
- In-kind donations
 - Some supporters will be more inclined to donate items than money. Explain to your supporters why the items on our MSC wish lists are important and that you will be bringing them with you. It is incredibly helpful to MSC as these items are often difficult or expensive to get in the various countries where we serve.
- Suggested steps:
 - 1) Make a list of your contacts – include **everyone**
 - 2) Send out your initial letter/email – look at the sample email provided by MSC.
 - 3) Utilize social media tools to spread the message beyond your list
 - 4) Give a presentation to a group about your efforts – church, school, or friends at an informal gathering
 - 5) Follow-up with a phone call. This is a great opportunity to update your supporters and answer any questions they have.
 - 6) Host an MSC Fundraising Event! See our [Event Guidelines](#) on our website.
 - 7) Thank all donors with a letter or card – take a look at the sample email to get you started.

➤ Raising Spiritual Support

- At MSC, we have a tried and true method for raising spiritual support and gathering prayer partners called “Friendraising”. While it is important to raise funds for your mission trip, it is just as essential to raise awareness about the children of Mustard Seed Communities and to ask people to pray for them and you.
- Here’s how it works:
 - **1st hour – PRAY**
Find a quiet place to pray. Pray that God will place on your hearts the names of people that He wants you to tell about Mustard Seed Communities and your trip. Pray that He will bless the children and staff at MSC and your fellow mission volunteers. Pray about who the people are in your life that would benefit from hearing about MSC.
 - **2nd hour – Make your list!**
Get your address book, email list, church membership directory, etc., and begin making a list of addresses/numbers/emails to send out. Brainstorm people from your church, work, sports teams, family, friends, prayer groups, clubs, school, etc. Create a list of all of the people that you want to tell about your trip.
 - **3rd Hour- Spread the word of Mustard Seed Communities!**
Create your letter/email to request prayerful support. Before you send it, ask God to let the words fall on an open heart. Lead the conversation with, “Would you be willing to pray for me when I go on a mission trip to Jamaica?” Almost EVERYONE says, “Yes!” You never know who will be touched by your mission and the MSC children- you just have to ask!
 - **4th hour – Pray some more!**
Pray for the staff and children of MSC and for the increases in the virtues of faith, hope and charity. Take time to listen to God and think about why He has called you to this special trip.