

nfxf

NATIONAL FRAGILE X FOUNDATION



X Strides 5k Toolkit

A How-to Guide for Planning and Fundraising an In-person Walk Event

X Strides walk events can be anything from a virtual fundraising by one person, a team, or a few teams walking and/or running together. Social media and email is used to spread the word to solicit donations. It can also be an in-person walk of friends and families with or without a get-together after. These are more casual events, require some basic coordination and can be managed by one person. Your donors will usually be those directly affected by Fragile X and family members and their friends.

This document specifically focuses on a larger event when you want to branch out to raise awareness throughout your community and expand your donor base. The 5K events can raise more money and awareness than a casual walk, but they take a lot of effort to coordinate.

Why organize a 5K?

Yes, it is a large undertaking, and it is best done through committee, but you will find if advertised, you will reach a larger audience. Runners and those not affected by Fragile X will often mark their calendars and come to support your event especially if the weather is good to get miles in for the day and help a cause.

1. Form a Committee

There are a lot of moving parts to manage with a 5K Race & Walk. It can be difficult for one person to handle all the pieces. Having a committee of people who can be responsible for the different areas will make this work happen quickly and will keep the organizer's stress to a minimum. You want to find people who are flexible, responsible, motivated, and committed to Fragile X. Having a runner or two who have participated in 5Ks is also very helpful!

2. Decide - Where & When

Pick a location that is easily accessible and has been used for other events. See if there are other races already being held in your community at the site and talk to the race director. They will often give advice.

Most races start early in the morning. For a 5K to start at 9:00am, setup for the event begins 6 – 6:30am, Check-in from 7:30 – 8:30am, Announcements at 8:45am and 5K Start at 9:00am. If you are including a walk you will want to start it after by 15 minutes if you have a different, shorter loop so your runners and walkers don't cross.

Parks with trails are a great location. Try to avoid high-traffic roads for the safety of your runners/walkers and the additional expense of paying local police officers to perform traffic duty. You can find layouts for previously certified race courses

<https://www.certifiedroadraces.com/search/>

or you can create a 5K for any location using

<https://www.plotaroute.com/>

You may need permits to secure your race and insurance. If it is a frequently used location, it is best to book the site at least 6 -9 months in advance. This may determine when you can hold your event. Other things to consider here are:

- Bathrooms on site or will you need to rent port-a-pottys,
- Parking,
- A pavilion or covered area to gather in case of inclement weather and for a shaded gathering location,
- A place for kids to play or take a sensory break while everyone gathers; there will be some down time during check-in.
- A single place for the start and finish location - Race timers charge more if start and finish line are different spots.
- Number of turns on the course
- Water station location

3. Set a Budget

As a committee make sure to determine your fundraising goals and budget. You will want to create a budget to manage costs. This will guide your decision for what to charge for registration fees and sponsorships. The NFXF will provide the registration and donation platform, but you will need to figure out your entry fee. Your registration fee will probably not cover all your costs. Some categories to consider for your budget are:

- Venue Permits
- Insurance
- Race timer
- DJ
- Advertising & Signage
- Sponsor & Course Signage
- T-Shirts – racers and volunteers
- Banners
- Port a potty rental
- Prizes/Medals for Winners – normally by male & female age ranges
- Table rental
- Water & after race food
- Balloons or other decorations
- Photographer

4. Secure a Timer or Race Management Company

If you are planning a 5K you will need a timer or race management company. They can provide a variety of services. When doing an X Strides 5K, the NFXF already provides the registration platform, so you will not need them to do this for you. You will want them to provide timing services and chipped bibs at a minimum. Extras like advertising, start and finish line signage, mile markers, etc. are costs you will need to determine with your committee. There are a lot of companies out there so it's good to get multiple quotes. It is best to book them after you have secured your race venue. Timers do multiple events a weekend and can offer some support. Normally they will let you list your race on their site for free but advertising or highlighting it on their site usually cost more.

5. Secure Sponsors

Sponsors will not only offset the costs of the race but will enable you to meet or exceed your fundraising goals. Registration fees can only do so much. Multiple sponsors are needed to help offset the costs. Create a sponsor sheet that talks about why you are fundraising for Fragile X and asks for donations. Anything from monetary sponsorships & gift cards to in kind donations of food and water will help offset your costs!

- Make a list of potential sponsors you want to target. Include athletic stores, local restaurants, small businesses, and large corporations in your area.
- Start soliciting sponsorships.
- Research corporate giving policies for large companies to target and determine who the right point person is.
- Grocery stores will often donate gift cards you can use to purchase water or snacks for after the race. Examples: [Wegmans](#), [Acme](#), [Albertsons](#), [Kroger](#), etc.
- Check and apply to various foundations, they may give grants to help with food donations or gift baskets. Examples [Wawa](#), [Herr's](#), etc.
- Gift baskets can be good for prizes.
- Ask for donations of water bottles or other gifts such as energy bars, pretzels, or fruit if companies don't want to sign on as monetary sponsors.
- See if a local business wants to provide samples of their products the day of the race.
- Local therapy companies, law firms, financial providers may want to support your race, let them set up a table for a sponsorship.

6. T-Shirts

The NFXF has relationships with t-shirt vendors, but you can also call around to local businesses. Get them queued up early in the process and pick your shirt quality. You will want to know dates for t-shirt graphic proof, order deadline for printing, and pickup. The NFXF can help with the X Strides graphic for the shirt front. It's good to put sponsors on the back. Get volunteer shirts in different color from the race shirt but use the same graphics for front and back. Keep it simple and offer one youth size, then adult small, medium, large, and x-large, xx-large. You will probably have a few over, but you don't want to have too many.

7. Advertising

About 3 months before your race, start advertising in your community. Make sure this has been setup with the NFXF and the registration process is ready to go before doing this. Local businesses will often hang your posters advertising your race. Target running stores, fitness centers, and gyms to advertise your race. Attend other local races a few months before your event and ask permission to hand out fliers for your 5K. Add your race to local community calendars, emails, or neighborhood lists of local events. List your event on running sites for free, but you may have to create a login. Here are some examples of sites where you can list your event:

<https://race-find.com/us>

<https://runningintheusa.com/race/overview>

https://racemob.com/community_member

<https://www.active.com/running/5k>

8. Recruit Volunteers for Race Day

High School students, Community Service Organizations are often a good source of volunteers. They can help with setup, cleanup, course direction, water stations, food, and photographer. You will need a check-in table and a separate spot for same day registrations.

9. Odds and Ends

- An experienced DJ helps keep the race moving. Hire one who has done races before. You can use their PA system for announcements.
- Hire or find a photographer who may donate their services.
- 1 month before race notify local Police/Fire Dept of event just so they are aware.
- Set up manual registration systems — online and paper have copies handy on day of race.
- Balloons can be used for start/finish or blowup start finish.
- NFXF logos or other props for pictures is always a good extra.
- Sponsor logos – have them email you the logo file after they have committed.
- Sponsor Signs – have printer make signs thanking sponsors in addition to name on the t-shirt goes a long way!
- To Bring Day of Race
 - o First Aid Kit
 - o Trash bags
 - o Wipes
 - o Food prep gloves for volunteers if handling food
 - o Tape (masking & duct tape)
 - o String
 - o Scissors
 - o Pens & Markers
 - o Signage
 - o Course markings cones, flags, signs
 - o Prizes
 - o Computer/tablet/phone for online registrations
 - o Paper waivers & Registration forms – just in case
 - o Cashbox with some cash for change
 - o Dustpan and broom to sweep up any bottle/cups easily for cleanup
- Thank everyone BEFORE you start the race lineup, especially sponsors and those who helped! People may leave before prizes are given. Write this up a week before the race and have it for race day.
- Walk the course before race day to spot potential hazards or other issues.
- Mark the course clearly with cones, flags and signs the day before the race.
- Station volunteers at every turn, so participants stay on course.
- Stock water stations throughout the course. Plan for more water if the weather forecast is warmer than usual.

- Educate volunteers who they should contact in the event of an emergency.
- Thank everyone AGAIN after the race and before prizes are announced!
- Send out thank you notes as quickly as possible — to volunteers and sponsors.
- Send a thank you email to runners who participated as well. Don't forget to include race details like the number of participants and how much money was raised and event photos.
- Gather feedback from committee on how things went. Make notes for next year.

CELEBRATE You Did It!