

HOW TO WRITE A FUNDRAISING APPEAL LETTER



Now that you've set up your child's Good Dog! Fundraising website, it is time to get fundraising!

There is still power in the written word, so here are a few tips to help you get started in creating a fundraising appeal letter that garners donations.

1. **Create a list of EVERYONE you know using our memory jogger.** Don't leave anyone off your list by assuming they can't or won't support your fundraiser. Send them the letter or email and let them decide. Do not hesitate to include casual acquaintances, as they will understand that you are seeking donations for a worthy cause.
2. **Get intimate.** This cause is important to you – tell them why. Include your personal story of why your child needs an autism service dog. Someone will donate to you because they know you, and want to support your efforts.
3. **ASK.** Don't just tell them what you are doing, include a call to action that asks them to donate. Include your fundraising goal in the text, and suggest giving levels. Do not diminish your request by being apologetic or by saying something similar to "I hope you can donate something".
4. **Personalize it.** When mailing your letters, hand address the outside envelope and hand sign each letter. For emails, don't send a mass email with everyone's address showing. It may take more time, but sending individual emails will make potential donors feel special. Write a short personal note to those you don't see regularly, i.e., "Karen, I hope this letter finds you well!"
5. **Make it easy.** Include the link to your Good Dog! fundraising page and encourage online donations. If mailing, include a return envelope labeled with our mailing address: 855 South Main Ave Ste K-162, Fallbrook, CA 92028. Inform them to make check payable to Good Dog! Autism Companions (dba Good Dog! Service Canines) and put your family or child's name in the memo line.
6. **Send a reminder.** Keep a list of those who send in donations. Send a reminder to those who have not yet donated. Include fundraising updates in your reminder. Let them know that fundraising is going well, but you still have a bit farther to go. Sometimes, reminder letters are more successful than original letters for bringing in donations.
7. **Send a thank you card.** Gratitude is powerful. It is nice to receive a note acknowledging the importance of a donation, no matter the amount. Staying connected also develops a rapport that will have many added benefits, from closer bonds of friendship to continued support for future efforts.

A SUPERDOG FOR SEBASTIAN

ADDRESS | PHONE | EMAIL

DATE

FULL NAME
COMPANY (if applicable)
ADDRESS
CITY, STATE ZIP

Dear FIRST NAME,

I'm a kid.

This is an example of the appeal letter we sent for Sebastian's fundraiser, which also included a brochure and pre-addressed return envelopes for mailed in donations. We had Sebastian hand sign the first few with a marker and then I signed the rest (tracing over his signature using my left hand to make it look more authentic.

Like thousands of other 5-year-olds with bounds of energy and wild imaginations, I do kid things... I ride tricycles, draw pictures, obsess over Disney movies, and pretty much follow my big brother everywhere he goes.

But there's something about me that makes me very different from "neuro-typical" kids.

I have autism and sensory processing disorder.

My mommy says that makes me just like a superhero because...

- I love to run, spin, crash, and jump - *all the time*
- I don't really feel pain or sensations like other people because SPD makes my body hyposensitive
- I get myself into scary situations because I have a hard time recognizing danger
- Loud, noisy places like the mall or school auditorium are my kryptonite since they give me "sensory meltdowns"

Most of the time, I like my superhero brain and body. It makes me smart, fun + fearless. But I don't like when it keeps me from being a regular kid like the rest of my friends.

That's why Good Dog! Autism Companions, a California-based 501(3)c non-profit, is working with my family to get me a super dog. They will provide and specifically train a service dog for my needs. My "superdog" will be my constant companion, going everywhere I go, and helping improve my sensory integration, social, communication, and life skills.

It takes about 2 years of specialized training and an investment of \$26,000 to breed, raise, train, and place each dog. My family is responsible for fundraising a minimum donation requirement of \$16,000.

Will you be my hero and help me get my dog? You can donate online at <http://bit.ly/sebastiansdog> or by mailing your check made out to Good Dog! Autism Companions (memo: Sebastian Bordonaro).

Any amount you can afford will be greatly appreciated. Your tax-deductible donation goes directly towards getting my service dog and will have a significant impact on the quality of my life... *so I can focus on being a kid again.*

Sincerely,

Sebastian Bordonaro