



American Heart
Association.

**AMERICAN
HEART
CHALLENGE™**



HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT PLAYBOOK

2023-2024



THANK YOU FOR PARTICIPATING

We are so grateful for your leadership and passion as you build an impactful tradition at your school!

WHAT IS THE AMERICAN HEART CHALLENGE?

- ✓ A **service learning** project.
- ✓ A time to **help others**.
- ✓ A **leadership development** opportunity.
- ✓ A way to earn **community service hours**.
- ✓ A **college application** builder.
- ✓ Juniors and seniors can earn **\$1,000 scholarships!**

WHO DOES IT HELP?

- ✓ It raises funds to help cure congenital heart defects, the #1 birth defect in all babies.
- ✓ It helps build healthier lives at your school and in your community.
- ✓ It helps community programs that fight for nutrition security and health equity.
- ✓ It teaches students healthy behaviors they can carry throughout life.

**BRING
ENERGY!**

**BRING
PASSION!**

**SAVE
LIVES!**

**SHOW THE WORLD THAT YOU ARE THE
GENERATION WITH HEART!**



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Jordan
Survivor, 10th Grade



American
Heart
Association®

OUR MISSION:

**TO BE A RELENTLESS FORCE
FOR A WORLD OF LONGER,
HEALTHIER LIVES.**

OUR WORK:

For nearly 100 years, we've been fighting heart disease and stroke, striving to save and improve lives.



Heart disease is the #1 cause of death worldwide. Stroke is #2. Heart defects are the #1 birth defect of babies in the U.S. Our goal is to create a world without heart disease and stroke.



Together, our efforts have real impact. We've invested more than \$5 billion in research.

**THANK YOU FOR HELPING
US CHANGE LIVES!**

AMERICAN HEART CHALLENGE COMMITTEE

As a student leader, you are bringing this program to life!

The committee plans, promotes and recruits students to participate and fundraise, while contributing a long-lasting program at your school!

HOW TO CREATE A COMMITTEE:



Recruit students from existing clubs like Student Government, National Honor Society, Key Club, etc.



Engage students who want to make a real difference!



Look for students with strong leadership and organizational skills.



Spread the word that community service hours are up for grabs!



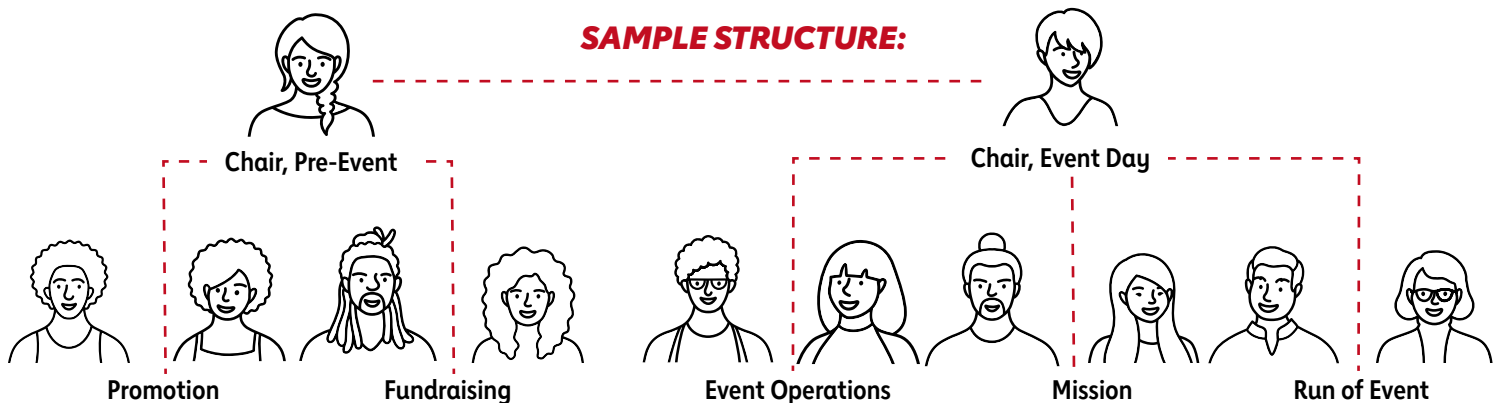
Bring interested students together for a committee meeting to talk about ideas.

ASSEMBLE COMMITTEE:

- ✓ 7-12 members is ideal and makes it easier to divide out responsibilities.
- ✓ Assign responsibilities so roles don't overlap.

- ✓ Consider having two chairpersons serve as leads of the committee.
- ✓ Include a mix of grade levels to create a sustainable program for next year!

SAMPLE STRUCTURE:



COMMITTEE RULES & EXPECTATIONS:

- ✓ Hold your committee members accountable!
- ✓ Require attendance at meetings.
- ✓ Ask for timely responses on emails and texts.
- ✓ Lead by example and set fundraising, time and event goals!

STUDENT COMMITTEE CONTACT INFORMATION

Name	Position	Email	Phone

EVENT BASICS

How to create an amazing American Heart Challenge event!

CHOOSE YOUR ACTIVITY:



Basketball



Glow Kickball



Glow Volleyball



Walk



Field Day



Your Choice

CHOOSE YOUR FORMAT:



Open gym with multiple activities



Student vs. faculty game



Team tournament



Skills contest

CHOOSE YOUR EVENT DATE TIPS:



Get date approved by the administration and on the school calendar.



Find out when P.E. equipment and gym space are available.



Select a date that does not compete with other events/exams happening at your school.



Look for academic breaks, such as a day in a week prior to Thanksgiving, Winter or Spring Break, etc...



Give yourself enough time to plan!



Consider half days!

EVENT TIMING:



Keep in mind setup time before any event!



We suggest a 1-2 hour time frame for your event.

EVENT LOCATION:



Is the space available?



Is there enough room for your activities?



How many students will it hold?



If outdoors, is there a backup location in case of bad weather?

YOUR EVENT INFO:



Event Date

Event Time

Event Activity & Format

Event Location



GOAL SETTING

It is important to set goals at the beginning to see how successful the event was at the end. Incorporate the S.M.A.R.T. goals method (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, Time-Based) as you look at your overall school and committee goals. You will also want to look at short-term and long-term goals with date benchmarks along the way.

Goals will help you to prioritize your focus and resources, as well as keep you on track for success.

YOUR AMERICAN HEART CHALLENGE GOALS:



\$

School Fundraising Goal



Fundraising Students.

Recruitment Goal

For team events, you may want to set a goal for number of teams.

S.M.A.R.T. GOALS:

TIMELINE

This is an example timeline. Your committee should create its own!

Make sure to include your short-term and long-term goals and deadlines to help keep you on track.



2 MONTHS PRIOR

1. Begin to hold regular meetings.
2. Finalize event date, location and time.
3. Set your goals.
4. Draft a logistics day of event(s) schedule.
5. Finalize any incentives.
6. Create a promotional plan and start to promote to your school and your community.
7. Ensure fundraising website is personalized.
8. Recruit team captains if needed.



1 MONTH PRIOR

1. Hold a kickoff to share about your event.
2. Encourage students to sign up online and begin fundraising through fun competitions.
3. Finalize event timeline and ensure you will have all equipment needed.
4. If needed, recruit staff and student event day volunteers who will help with day of logistics.
5. Keep the buzz going about fundraising standings.
6. Keep promoting your incentives!



EVENT MONTH

1. Hold your American Heart Challenge event!
2. Celebrate your success and the impact you've made!
3. See Event Day Wrap-Up on page 17 for details on what to do after your event.

DON'T FORGET, YOUR AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION PARTNER WILL GUIDE YOU ALONG THE WAY!

TIMELINE TEMPLATE



MONTH:



MONTH:



MONTH:



MILESTONES AND INCENTIVES

Milestones and incentives will help you reach your goal and make the biggest impact possible.

Milestones are mini-goals on the path to the overall fundraising goal, as a way to keep excitement high. An incentive rallies the school together toward your overall goal!

IDEA STARTERS:

Milestones:

- ✓ For every \$___ I raise, I'll post an embarrassing school photo of myself.
I'll personally match any donations that I receive in the next 10 minutes!
- ✓ Raffle off a pair of prom tickets for anyone who has raised \$___+ online.
- ✓ Students who raise \$___+ get to pie, slime or silly string (up to you to decide) your Principal, a teacher or student.
- ✓ _____

Incentives:

- ✓ Grade level or class with highest participations wins _____.
- ✓ An administrator or teacher performs a dance if your goal is reached. This can be done in person or recorded and posted on school social media.
- ✓ If students meet the school goal, your Principal will sit on the roof, dress in a costume for a day, dye their hair a crazy color, get taped to a wall, or have a dance battle.
- ✓ _____



RECRUITMENT TIPS

SHARE WITH FRIENDS!



Tag a friend! Harness the power of your social network and social media.

SHARE WITH TEACHERS!



Have your Principal send an email to teachers to let them know about the event.



Attend a faculty meeting with your advisor to promote the event.

PRACTICE YOUR "EVENT SPEECH"!

- ✓ Have a clear, brief, personal speech with info about the event - 30 seconds or less!
- ✓ Tell them WHAT: info about your American Heart Challenge event.
- ✓ Tell them WHEN & WHERE: date, time and location.
- ✓ Tell them WHY: share why you're passionate about improving the health of your community, the people you're helping and the lives you're saving!
- ✓ Tell them HOW: Share the deadline and how they can raise funds by sending texts, sharing on social media and sending emails!



FUNRAISING TIPS AND IDEAS

Funds can be raised three ways:



Online



Sponsorships



Events

ONLINE FUNDRAISING:



COORDINATOR, start by personalizing YOUR SCHOOL PAGE.

1. Login at heart.org/schools (your username and password are provided by your American Heart Association staff partner).
2. Go to **"My Headquarters."**
3. Update your school fundraising goal by clicking **"Update School Goal."**
4. Have fun editing your school page! Put in a photo of your school or mascot. Add details about your event. Create a custom URL and share your link.
5. **Send emails** to students! Just choose your contact group and sample message. We recommend sending TWO emails a week in the month leading up to your event.
6. Click on **"Reports"** to see who has registered and how much they have raised.
7. If you need help at any time, click **"Live Chat."**



STUDENTS, USE THE MOBILE APP LIKE A PRO!

1. **Search AHA Schools**, download the app and register.
2. **Edit your page!** Upload a personal photo. If you're raising money in honor or in memory of someone, be sure to share that by editing your story. The more personal your page is, the more money you will raise!
3. **Edit your goal!** Family and friends want to help you reach your goal, so be sure to update this.
4. **Complete Finn's Mission!** Ask for support through email and text – and post on social media. (Fun fact: text messages have a 100% open rate!)

FUNRAISING TIPS AND IDEAS

SPONSORSHIP FUNDRAISING:

You can have a company sponsor your event by giving a tax-deductible donation or by donating incentives to motivate and reward fundraising students.

✓ **Brainstorm Prospects & Identify Connections**

1. Warm leads are better than cold calls! Think of family, friends, existing school partners or large businesses in the area who you can connect with.
2. If different committees will be approaching businesses, avoid overlapping or missed asks.
3. Keep a record of all contacts and outcomes.

✓ **The Request**

1. Find out who the business decision maker is and go straight to that person!
2. Send an introductory letter or email and follow up with a phone call (it's much easier to get a "yes" in person or on the phone versus an email).
3. If one exists, have the individual with the connection to the business introduce you.
4. When requesting a sponsorship, lead with the mission and impact of the American Heart Association. Your "event speech" will come handy here.

✓ **The Sponsorship**

1. Consider offering the business benefits like their logo on your school website or event signage. Keep a record of agreed-upon benefits!
2. Send a thank-you note, even if they say no to sponsorship!
3. Invite all potential sponsors to see your event (even if they said no). This can create sponsors for future years!
4. Keep all promises you make. And take photos to show sponsors what they helped bring to life!

✓ **Post Event**

1. Send sponsors an event recap. Share the impact they made! Share photos!
2. Keep records and notes of sponsorship relationships. Pass them along to the group that will be leading your event next year.

OTHER FUNDRAISING IDEAS:

Effective fundraisers are simple and fun! Here are some ideas. Can you come up with more?

✓ Change war

✓ Car wash

✓ "Miracle Minute" where buckets are passed in the stands for donations

✓ 50/50 raffle at school sporting events

✓ Heart-healthy bake sale

✓ Percentage Nights – this could be from your school concession stand proceeds or asking a local store to host a fundraising night where a percentage of sales go back to your event. Keep it healthy!



SAMPLE PROMOTIONAL TEMPLATES

Personalize to make your own!

FACEBOOK ANNOUNCEMENT POST:

Our school is participating in a program called the American Heart Challenge sponsored by the [\[insert club name\]](#) in support of the American Heart Association.

This is your chance to show us you have heart by helping others. Your generosity will help scientists develop technology and treatments that literally save lives. To sign up, visit [\[insert school link\]](#).

FACEBOOK REMINDER POST:

It's almost here! #AmericanHeartChallenge event benefiting the American Heart Association is on [\[insert date\]](#). There's still time to sign up, visit [\[insert school link\]](#).

X ANNOUNCEMENT POST:

Get ready for #AmericanHeartChallenge! Our school has kicked off our event to benefit the @American_Heart. Register today [\[insert school link\]](#).

SOCIALLY SPEAKING!



@KidsHeartChallenge



@AmericanHeartAssociation



American Heart Association



@kidsheartchall



@KidsHeartChallenge

SAMPLE EMAIL & PHONE TEMPLATES

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENT EMAIL (FROM PRINCIPAL):

Dear Staff,

In the spirit of giving back, I'm excited to announce that our school will be participating in a program sponsored by the [insert club name] for the American Heart Association.

With your help, we can continue to support the American Heart Association's fight against heart disease and stroke, which are the No. 1 and No. 5 causes of death in the United States, as well as congenital heart defects, which are the No. 1 birth defect of all babies. Their mission is to change the course of heart disease and stroke through healthy habits and critical research. Nearly everyone knows someone who has been touched by their work.

On [insert date] our American Heart Challenge event will take place from [insert time] in the [insert location] for participating students.

Registration has begun, and I would like to invite you to join the effort as part of our school team at heart.org/schools.

I greatly appreciate your support in this endeavor and look forward to kicking this off with our students as we make a difference in the health of our community.

[insert name]

FAMILY EMAIL :

Hello families!

It's almost here! The American Heart Challenge event benefiting the American Heart Association will take place on [insert date].

We're closing in on our service-learning goals, so keep up the good work! We can't wait for next week.

Please register for the American Heart Challenge at [insert custom school link].

ROBOCALL SCRIPT :

Hello families!

This is a friendly reminder that the American Heart Challenge event benefiting the American Heart Association will take place next week, on [insert date]. **Share about the event and incentives.**

Be sure to register online at heart.org/schools today!

Thank you and have a great evening!



EVENT WRAP-UP

Way to go! You just nailed the American Heart Challenge!

Thank you for making a real difference. You helped to save and improve lives in your community and all over the world.

All that's left now is to wrap up your event. Here's how to do that:

WRAP UP CHECKLIST:

- Count cash and check donations and mail in with your pre-paid envelope.
- Tell the world how much you raised! Hit social media, morning show, school website, etc.
- Let your American Heart Association partner know your official total so they can celebrate with you!
- Order thank-you gifts in your online headquarters.
- Have a committee meeting to note what went well and what you'd do differently next year.
- Send thank-you notes to students, volunteers, supporters and sponsors.



American Heart
Association.

**AMERICAN
HEART
CHALLENGE™**

\$1,000 COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

APPLICATION PROCESS:

Fill out the short application and
upload your letter of
support from your teacher

BY MAY 31, 2024.

The American Heart Association is
working with high school students
in a nationwide movement to affect
congenital heart defects, nutrition
security, CPR training, mental well-
being and more as we work to end
heart disease and stroke.

ELIGIBILITY:

- ✓ Must be a current high school junior or senior
- ✓ Demonstrate leadership skills through your school's American Heart Challenge program
- ✓ Have a passion for impacting the health of your community
- ✓ A letter of support by your American Heart Challenge school advisor/teacher



**SCAN THE CODE OR VISIT:
HEART.ORG/SCHOLARSHIP**



American Heart Association.

AMERICAN HEART CHALLENGE™

THANK YOU!



**Charity Navigator
Four-Star
Charity**
*Organización benéfica
de cuatro estrellas*



**Better Business
Bureau Wise
Giving Alliance
Accredited Charity**
*Organización
benéfica acreditada*



**National
Health Council
Standards in
Excellence Certified**
*Certificación de
Estándares de excelencia*



bbb.org/charity

This seal signifies that the American Heart Association - National meets the BBB Wise Giving Alliance's Standards for Charity Accountability.