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About First Book

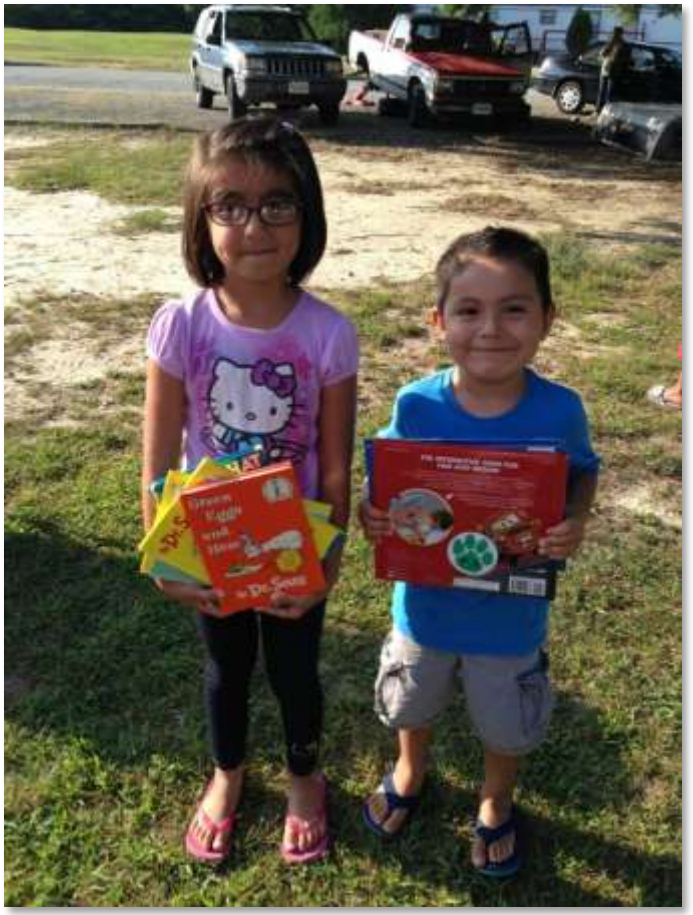
First Book transforms the lives of children in need through equal access to literacy and education opportunities.

A nonprofit social enterprise, First Book provides new, high-quality books and educational resources to children in need, birth to age 18, in the U.S. and Canada.

First Book serves the largest and fastest growing network of educators and program leaders working with kids from low-income families throughout the U.S. and Canada.

Why Books Matter

Having access to books is one of the biggest predictors of a child's academic success. The beneficial effect is greatest for children from disadvantaged homes.[1]



Educational Challenges Facing Kids in Need

- By the time children from low-income families enter kindergarten, they are 12-14 months below national norms in language & pre-reading skills.[2]
- 83% of low-income 4th graders score at "Below Proficient" reading levels vs. 55% of middle-income student cohorts. [3]

Barriers to Books

- In some of the lowest income neighborhoods, there is just one book available for every 300 children. In middle-income neighborhoods, the ratio is 13 books per child.[4]
- Price is the #1 barrier to book ownership. Programs have limited funds and 94% of teachers use their own money to provide books & resources for their students.

1) Family scholarly culture and educational success: Books and schooling in 27 nations By Evans, Mariah, Dr., Kelley, J., Sikora, J., and Treiman, D.J. Published in Research in Social Stratification and Mobility, volume 28, issue 2, June 2010, pages 171-197.
2) Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count 2010
3) Annie E. Casey Foundation, Kids Count 2010
4) Neuman, Susan B. and David K. Dickinson, ed. Handbook of Early Literacy Research, Volume 2. New York, NY: 2006

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why should I start a fundraising campaign for First Book?

A: By starting a fundraising campaign, you have the opportunity to change a child's life. You'll raise funds with the specific purpose of putting new, high-quality books and educational resources into the hands of children from low-income families. Your impact will be tangible, measurable and meaningful.

Q: Who can start a campaign?

A: Anyone willing to raise funds on behalf of kids in need can start a campaign. Start your campaign today!

Q: Where does the money I raise go?

A: It's up to you! The funds you raise can be used to support an eligible school or program in your community. Alternatively, First Book can direct your funds where the need is greatest or identify a school on program in a geographic region you specify.

Q: Can I support kids in my community?

A: Absolutely. You can support kids in need in your community through the local schools and programs that serve them. Please ask the school(s) or program(s) you wish to support to sign up with First Book at https://register.firstbook.org in order to receive funds raised.

Q: Can I support a specific school in my community?

A: Yes, you can support any eligible school or program serving kids in need by following these three easy steps:

1) Verify that the school or program you wish to support serves 70 percent or more children from low-income families OR is Title I or Title I eligible.
2) If they are not already signed up with First Book, ask the school or program of your choice to sign up with First Book in order to receive funds raised.
3) Complete and submit the designation form to let us know you'll be supporting a specific school or program.

Q: What does First Book mean by eligible school or program?

A: Any educator, program leader, staff member or volunteer in a Title I school or program that serves at least 70% kids from low-income families can sign up with First Book to receive books and resources. Programs serving children from military families and children with disabilities are also eligible to sign up.

Q: How do I get started?

A: Set up your campaign at https://firstbook.fundly.com. Our online fundraising platform makes it easy for you to promote your fundraiser and collect donations to help kids in need.

Q: I'm having trouble with my campaign. Can you help?

A: We'd be happy to help. What can we help you with? Click on the categories below for more information.

- Starting my campaign
- Promoting my campaign
- Fundraising as a team
- Designating my funds

If you're still having trouble, please call at 1-800-READ-NOW between 8am and 6pm ET or email campaigns@firstbook.org for assistance.

Q: Is there a minimum amount I need to raise or donations?

A: No, but we do encourage set a fundraising goal of at least $100 to ensure maximum impact.

Q: How long should my campaign last?

A: We suggest a 4-12 week timeframe for your campaign. Supporters who raise the most money typically keep their campaigns open for at least one month and promote actively among their friends, family and colleagues.

Q: How should I promote my campaign?

A: It's easy to promote your campaign among family, friends and colleagues using email and social media. Feel free to use our sample promotional messages for inspiration.

Q: Do you have photos I can use to promote my campaign?

A: You bet! Find photos here.

Q: Are donations tax deductible?

A: Yes, First Book is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. All donations to First Book are tax-deductible.

Q: Where can I find more information about First Book?

A: You can learn more about First Book by visiting www.firstbook.org.

Campaign Ideas

Want to start a campaign, but need a little inspiration? Explore campaign ideas to get started.

I want to fundraise:

as an individual

as a family

with a team

Campaign Ideas for Individuals

Do what you love and help kids at the same time with these ideas for fundraising as an individual.

- **Donate your birthday to get books to kids.** Ask for donations in lieu of birthday gifts and surprise a child in need with a gift that lasts a lifetime - the love of reading.

- **Walk, run, ride or swim to help a child succeed.** Kids in need overcome tough obstacles every day. Let helping them succeed motivate you to step, stride and swim your way to your fitness goal.

- **Adopt-a-classroom in your community.** Know a local school or program that could benefit from books and resources? Encourage them to sign up with First Book and host a campaign on their behalf.

- **Honor a friend or loved one.** Celebrate a friend or loved one by hosting a campaign in his or her honor. Your thoughtful gesture will touch their heart and the life of a child who needs you.

Campaign Ideas for Families

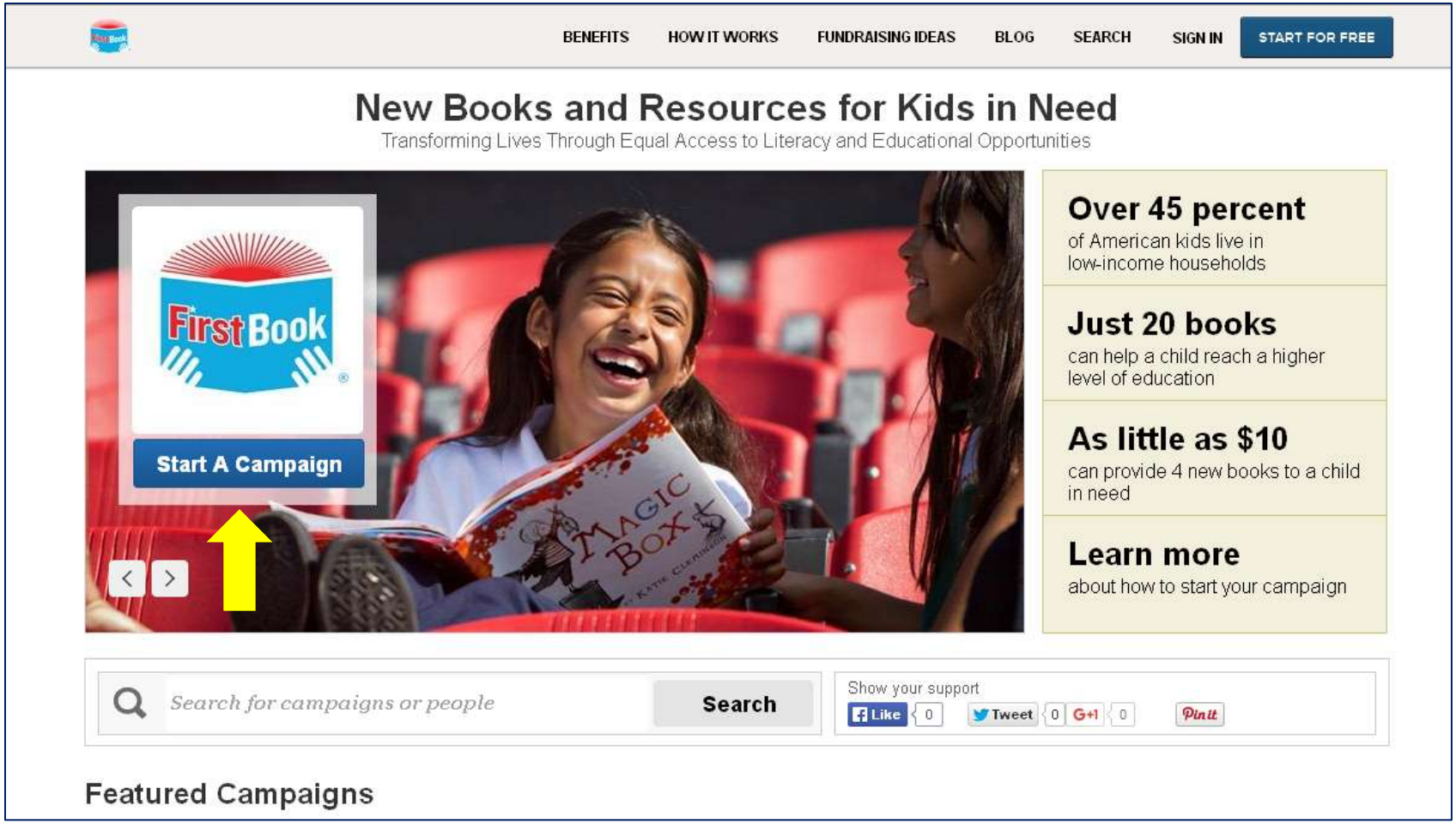
It’s never too early to teach kids the importance of giving back. Start a campaign as a family with these fundraising ideas for the young and young at heart.

- **Host a lemonade stand.** Make life a little sweeter for children in need. Host a lemonade stand and donate the money raised to provide new books to kids in your community.

- **Share an allowance.** Ask your kids how much books mean to them. Let them know that by donating just a few months allowance they can give a book to a child who might not otherwise have one.

- **Spare your change.** Save your spare change in a family or classroom piggy bank. Help your kids count it up at the end of the year and donate it to First Book.

How to Set Up Your Campaign



Why Campaigns Work

Campaigns rally people and communities to emotionally invest in helping kids in need read, learn and succeed.

- Make it easy for people to give
- Tell a story about why you support a cause
- Are visually appealing
- Simple, safe way to collect donations

Start Your Campaign

Step 1: Sign up using your Email or personal Facebook account

Step 2: Fill out Campaign Name and Goal

Step 3: You will be taken into a Campaign Creation wizard

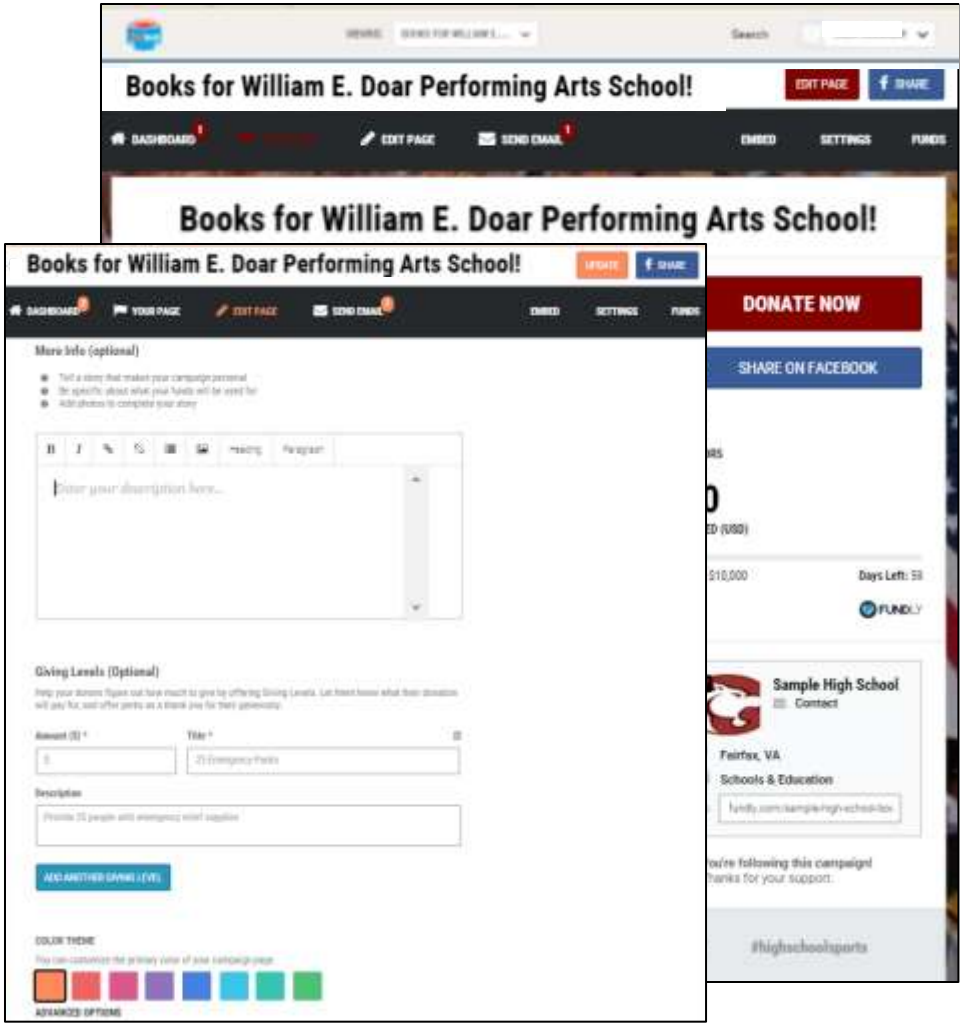
Start Your Campaign

Step 4: Click ‘skip’ to move ahead or click ‘X’ to proceed to the optional Campaign Page Setup Wizard

Step 5: Click ‘Edit Page’ to add pictures and create donation levels

Step 6: Toggle back and forth between Edit Page and Your Page to view changes

Make sure to use Advanced Options



Customize Your Campaign Page

Your campaign page lets friends, family and visitors know why you choose to support kids in need. Customize your page with these FOUR key elements to tell your story and encourage donations.

FACTS

Give donors a compelling reason to give by including facts about the need for books and resources in low-income communities. See why books matter to kids in need.

ASKS

Successful campaigns feature a direct ask for donations like:

- Will you donate today to help kids in need read, learn and succeed?"
- Join me by making a donation today.

IMAGES

A picture is worth 1000 words. Let a beautiful photo of a child enjoying a book help you tell your story. Select one from our online gallery.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Don't forget to say thank you. Some ideas:

- Thank you for giving the gift of reading!
- Thank you for making a difference in the life of a child in need.

Designate Your Funds

Your campaign can support any eligible school or program serving kids in need. Follow these three easy steps to fundraise on behalf of a school or program:

Step 1: Verify that the school or program you wish to support serves 70 percent or more children from low-income families OR is Title I or Title I eligible.

Step 2: If not already signed up with First Book, ask the school or program of your choice to sign up with First Book to do so in order to receive funds in the form of a First Book Marketplace gift credit.

Step 3: Complete and submit the online designation form to let us know you'll be supporting a specific school or program.

First Book Fundraising Campaign: Fund Designation Form

*Required Question(s) Progress:

Please complete the information below to ensure that the funds you raise are allocated correctly.

If you have questions or need assistance at any time, please contact our Help Team at 1-866-READ-NOW.

* Please tell us about yourself!

First Name:
Last Name:
Email Address:
City:
State/Province (US/Canada):
-- Select a state --
Postal Code:

* What is the name of your campaign?

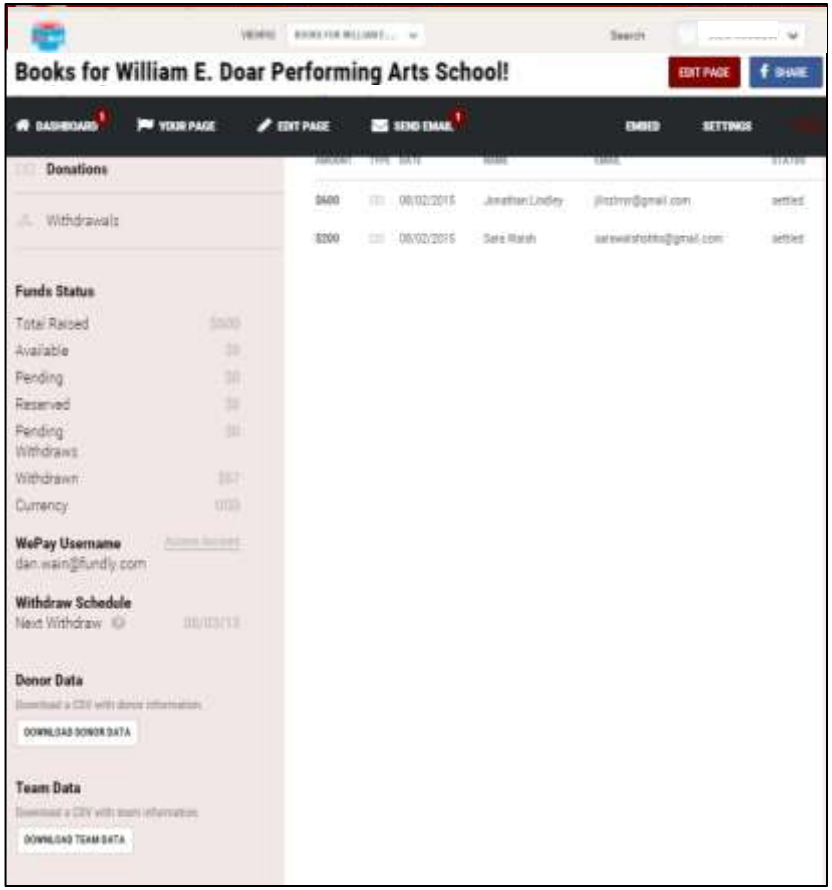
* **Please tell us where you would like your funds to go.**
Selecting "where the need is greatest" means that the funds you raise will be pooled with other donations to help transform the classrooms and communities of children in need served by schools and programs in the First Book network.

- Where the need is greatest
- A specific school or program
- A group in my community: please choose for me

Continue >

Designate Your Funds

Want to find out who is supporting your campaign? The Funds section of your campaign page allows you to access donor data.



Campaign owners will not have the ability to withdraw funds—this is only done by the First Book administrator in order to allocate funds to schools and programs.

You may add offline donations within this section, if you desire. The offline donations will be reflected in the fundraising total on your main campaign page. Offline donations need to be mailed as checks or money orders to:

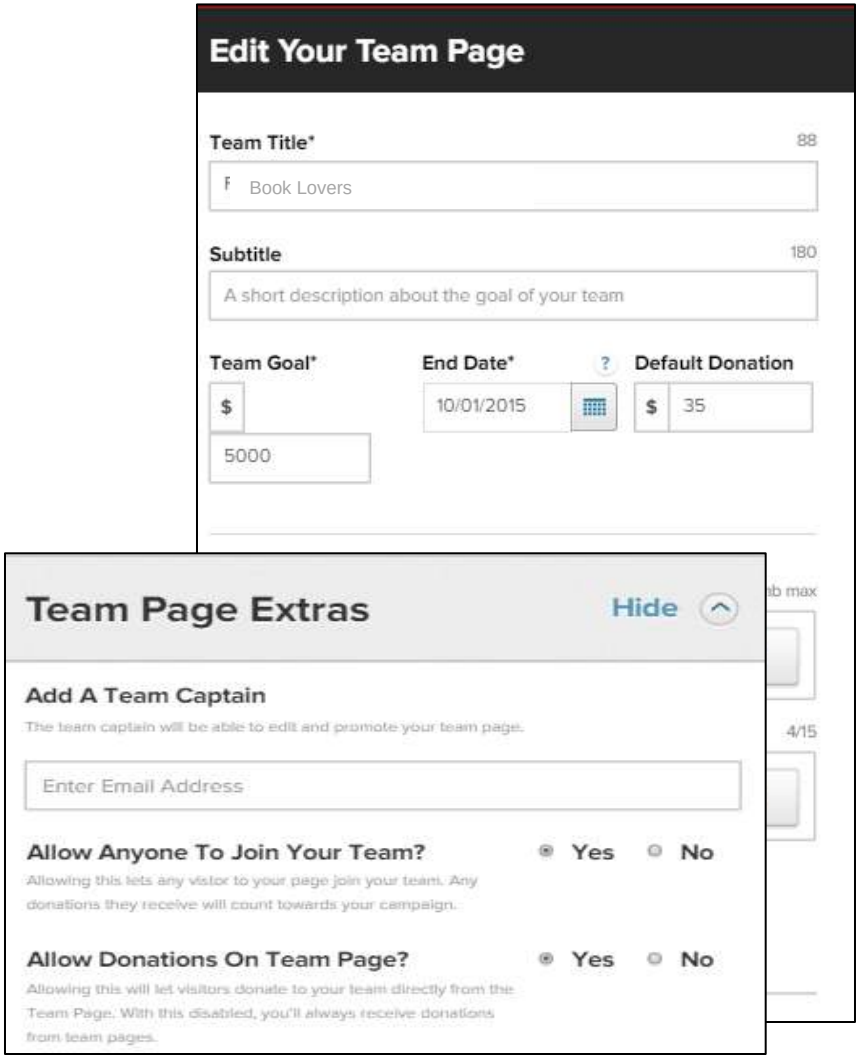
First Book
1319 F Street NW, Suite 1000
Washington, DC 20004

Fundraising as a Team

Know a group of people that all want to support the same cause? Fundraise as a team!

By fundraising as a team, each team member can fundraise individually on behalf of a master campaign. To fundraise as a team:

- Under “Settings” select “Teams” as the administrator of your page to create a team page that raises money for your master campaign
- Team pages will inherit all master campaign content, look and feel
- Teams can have captains who have some page editing capabilities
- The full listing of your team will be listed on your master campaign page



Promote Your Campaign

The success of your fundraising campaign depends on donations from friends, family, colleagues and acquaintances.

Use email and social media to promote your campaign online or share a flyer in person.

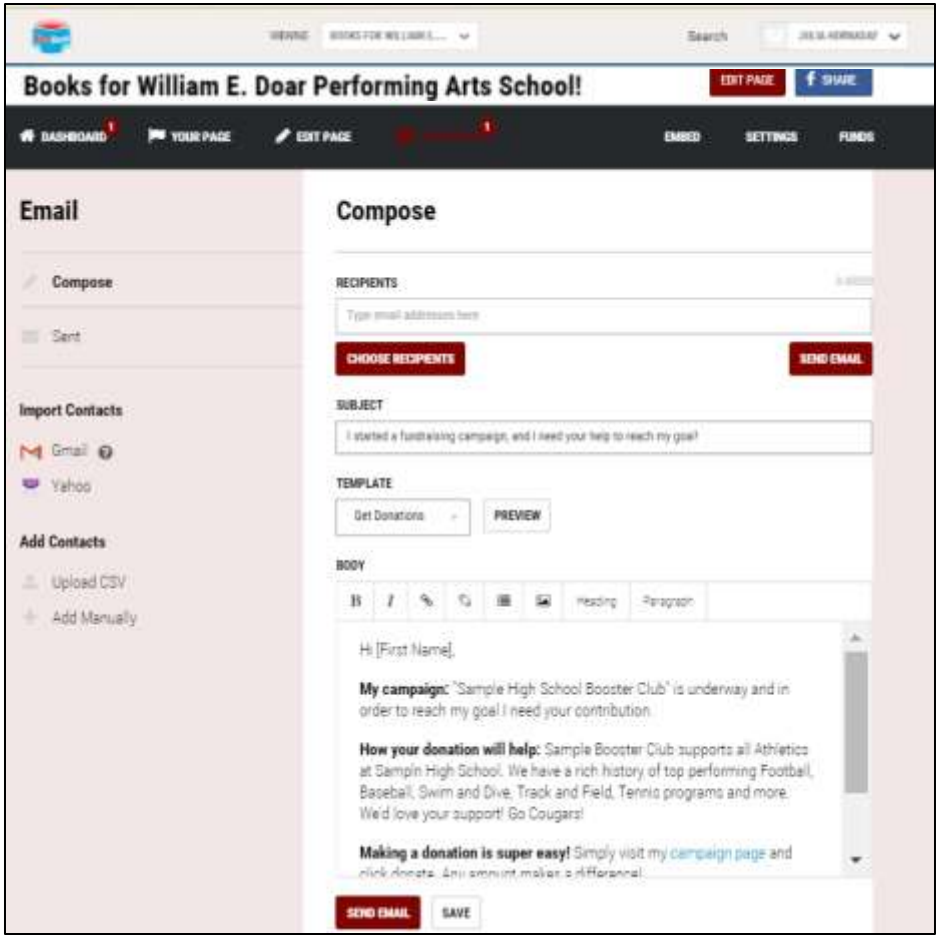
Promote Your Campaign

Email

It's easy to promote your campaign using email templates (provided) OR creating your own custom message.

Tips for Email Promotion:

- Import contacts from Gmail/Yahoo OR upload a CSV file to send email within your campaign
- Provide direct links to your campaign page or team page in your emails
- Send emails to friends, family, colleagues, alumni and acquaintances



*Each team page can send out their own targeted emails

Promote Your Campaign

Social Media

Choose from these social media posts or draft your own to encourage friends and followers to support your campaign. Follow these tips for social media promotion:

- Use the keywords **kids in need, teachers, books, education** to help others find your posts.
- Include your **campaign URL** to make it easy for people to make a donation.
- Use hashtag **#bookstokids** (type the number sign and the whole phrase without spaces) in your social posts so First Book can see and help support your posts.

FACEBOOK

Every child needs books to read, learn, and grow. Will you help me bring books to kids that need them most? <Campaign URL> #bookstokids

94% of teachers use their own money to purchase books and supplies for their students. Help me provide teachers the supplies & books they need for the school year! <Campaign URL> #bookstokids

Keep kids in school and excited about learning by ensuring they have book they love. Help me raise money for new books for kids in need! <Campaign URL> #bookstokids

TWITTER

Help me get #bookstokids in need with @FirstBook! <Campaign URL>

More than 32MM children in low-income families are growing up w/o books - help me work to change that ! <Campaign URL> #bookstokids

Help me get #bookstokids who need them most! <Campaign URL>

I'm fundraising for teachers and #kidsinneed! <Campaign URL> #bookstokids

Promote Your Campaign

Flyer

[Click here for a 8.5x11 printable flyer.]