Polar Plunge
Freezin’ for a Reason

Law Enforcement Challenge
TOOL KIT

February 20, 2021
Acworth Beach
Polarplungega.org
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The Polar Plunge is the largest fundraising effort benefiting Special Olympics. Many states across the nation participate in this annual event through the efforts of their Law Enforcement Torch Run program. Its purpose is to simply raise funds to enhance Special Olympics’ mission: To provide year-round sports training and athletic competition in a variety of Olympic-type sports for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, giving them continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, and other Special Olympics athletes and the community. The Polar Plunge is an official Law Enforcement Torch Run event.

What is the Polar Plunge?
In a nutshell, participants collect pledges from friends and family in exchange for the opportunity to jump into icy waters in the middle of winter. All proceeds collected by “plungers” will benefit the over 26,620 athletes of Special Olympics Georgia.

Prizes will be awarded in several categories, including best costume, highest individual fundraiser, highest team fundraiser, and many more.

Still not convinced? That’s alright – we’ll have areas to keep you warm and activities to keep you and the family entertained, so come out and enjoy the day and support all of our Polar Plungers!

What it takes to be a “Plunger”...
Anyone with a little guts and a warm heart wanting to support the athletes of Special Olympics Georgia is welcome to participate. We’ve seen plungers in varying ages, mayors, law enforcement officers, news anchors, sports figures, corporate teams, civic organizations, mothers, high school clubs, college organizations, and everyone else in between!
Law Enforcement CHALLENGE

POLAR PLUNGE Law Enforcement Tool Kit. Party like its 32 degrees!

You may have heard about the Polar Plunge from a friend, seen it on TV or even read about it online, but what exactly is this “Plunge” everyone is talking about? So you’re saying you’ve never jumped into frigid Georgia waters in the middle of the winter? Well, we can help change that! Each year, the Polar Plunge challenges thousands of brave jumpers at numerous locations around the state. It’s a great way for everyone—individuals, organizations and businesses—to get involved in supporting Special Olympics Georgia. All funds raised go towards programs for more than 26,620 athletes statewide. Think you have what it takes? The concept is simple: participants raise a minimum of $50 and take a dip into the frigid waters of Acworth Beach in Cobb County. The Top Fundraising Law Enforcement agency will get an award during the event!

But the Plunge is so much more than that: This is the kind of fun and thrilling event that you really have to experience to understand. Grab some friends, get pumped and register today! Visit polarplungega.org for more information. You can also contact Kait Henderson at 770-414-9390 ext. 1113 or at kaitlin.henderson@specialolympicsga.org.
PLUNGER TOOL KIT

This tool kit is designed to aid participants in their fundraising efforts. Successfully asking for donations involves a good deal of preparation, some solid groundwork in finding the people you are going to ask and using the right “pitch” to convince them to donate.

Why do people give???

The #1 reason that people give? Because you ask them to! Remember that people give to people – not causes - and your passion and enthusiasm for the event and/or the cause is your best asset. Happy Fundraising!!

The items in this kit include:

- **Polar Plunge Info**: Your questions answered! What exactly is the polar plunge? How it works? What is required?
- **Plunger Tips**: a few tips from all first time plungers!
- **FAQ’s**: a few common questions and their answers
- **Greater Giving Online Fundraising Pages**: The key to a successful campaign is creating an online fundraising page where you can tell your own story, post a photo, and collect donations via online. Once it’s created you can send out the URL and ask your friends to forward to their friends. Continue to go to your site to update your progress and let your followers know about your icy water preparations! Approximately 90% of the Plunger funds were raised via this method alone!
- **Plunger Resources**: You didn’t think we would throw you into the ice deep with nothing did you? Some examples of the resources you will need to run a successful fundraising campaign found here. Including:
  - Personal Business Cards
  - Donor Receipts
  - Sample Donation Request Letters
  - And much more!
- **How to raise $500 in 10 Days**: A day by day guide of who to ask to help you reach $500 in donations. Remember, any plunger reaching at least $150.00 in donations will receive additional incentives.
- **Incentives**: If you’re still having “COLD FEET” check out the website for a complete list of incentives that might help fuel your fundraising fire.
- **Special Olympics Georgia Fact Sheet**: Your donors may know you, but do they know about Special Olympics? Your donors will want to know how their donation is going to help.

Remember, if you can’t find what you need call the Plunge Hotline at (770) 414-9390 ext. 1113 or email kaitlin.henderson@specialolympicsga.org. We are always happy to help!
How the Join the Law Enforcement CHALLENGE

Here’s your Plunge call to battle – take the Polar Plunge law enforcement team challenge and compete against hundreds of other teams raising funds to plunge into the frigid waters. Are you ready to battle against other Plunge teams for bragging rights and win the coveted Polar Plunge Plaque?

HOW TO JOIN:

1. To form a team, visit polarplungega.org, go to the “Polar Plunge Registration” tab, register a new team, or go to the “Plunger Directory” tab to join an existing team.

2. Follow the directions under the “Setup Your Fundraising Page” tab

3. If you are a Team Captain, create your team name and set your Fundraising Goal!

4. Recruit your coworkers, management, etc. to join your team! Use the Plunge tools provided on the website and in this toolkit to raise awareness of your team and raise more funds for Special Olympics Georgia.
HOW TO RALLY YOUR AGENCY TO GET INVOLVED

We’d love to see your law enforcement agency become involved to help us continue to grow the Plunges, and raise more funds to support Special Olympics Georgia!

The following are several ways your agency can help spread the word about the Polar Plunge, and get people excited about being “freezin’ for a reason!”

- Advertise the Plunge around your agency and town by displaying the following:
  → Plunge Table Tents
  → Fundraising Icons
  → Plunge Brochures
  → Polar Plunge Posters
- Host a Plunge booth. Recruit team members or pledges by handing out Plunge materials.
- Ask for support by posting your team information on the agency website or intranet with a link to the Plunge team page.
- Email fellow officers information about the Plunge and instructions on how to join the team.
- Include Plunge information in your email (e.g. email tagline).
- Social Media: Use Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, blogs, etc. to recruit team members, bring awareness to your Plunge and ask for pledges!
- Feature a team member, a.k.a. Plunger, weekly/monthly. Highlight their Plunge story, pledges raised, their 2021 Plunge plan including costume and more!
- Hold Plunge contests within the agency to see who can raise the most pledges. E.g. Your Chief/Sheriff will Plunge if a certain amount of pledges are raised or if a certain number of employees will Plunge and/or raise a certain amount of pledges. Don’t forget to make the contest competitive yet fun!
- Form teams within your agency to raise the competitive spirit. Set goals such as recruiting the most Plungers or raising the most pledges.
- Challenge another agency to take the Challenge!
- Spread the word about your involvement by placing Polar Plunge ads wherever you can; newsletters, closed circuit TVs, announcements and booths during sporting events.
- **Remember:** Your Plunge team does not need to consist of only officers. Invite your family and friends to join in on the freezin’ for a reason, as well. The options are endless to spread the word out about the Plunge!
EMAIL OUTREACH

Email is an incredibly effective fundraising tool, reaching people all over the world with the click of a button! It is a great way to spread the word about your Plunge participation, and to ask others to join your team or pledge your cause.

**Tips & Tricks**

- Make it personal: Tell your story. Share with others why you participate, whether it’s because you are Plunging for fun or you love Special Olympics Georgia.
- If you’ve Plunged before, share a picture of your previous polar plunge.
- If it’s your first time, share your nerves and excitement!
- Have fun with it! Make a contest or game out of it - the first person to donate, or the largest donation gets a gift from you.
- Follow-up. Be sure to say thank you to donors after they make their donation, and again after you take the Plunge. Send them a picture of you Plunging with the results from the event.

**Sample Email:**

It’s going to be frigid! This winter I will be taking the Plunge to support Special Olympics Georgia. You might be asking yourself what this Polar Plunge is? Well, I will be raising money so I can jump into a frozen Georgia Lake! The Plunge into the water may be a little frigid, but I don’t mind because I am supporting the amazing athletes of Special Olympics Georgia. To jump into the frigid waters, I have set a personal fundraising goal of $(amount), and I need your help to reach it. I’m hoping you’ll make a donation to Special Olympics Georgia on my behalf and support my Polar Plunge. Don’t you want to see me be “Freezin’ for a Reason?” You can support my Plunge several ways. The best and easiest is to visit polarplungega.org and pledge online. My personal page can be found at *(personal url)*. You can check this page to see my goal, pledges raised and a photo of me after the Plunge! If you prefer not to donate online, you can also give your donation directly to me, or mail it in to Special Olympics Georgia at the address below. Please make sure to include my name with your donation so I receive credit for the pledge. Special Olympics Georgia, Attn: LETR Liaison, 6046 Financial Drive, Norcross GA 30071. If you can’t support my Plunge through a donation, why not consider being bold in the cold and join me in taking the Plunge? You can join my team online now! To learn more about the Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Georgia, visit polarplungega.org
SOCIAL MEDIA

It has become common practice for Plunge participants to do all of their fundraising entirely through social media. Facebook and Twitter are incredibly powerful tools for fundraising! They are easy tools to use and a personal way to connect with friends and family all over the world with a minimal effort.

Facebook
- Like us: https://www.facebook.com/specialolympicsga
- Share a post from our Facebook page.
- Add a link to your online Plunge page to send people directly to your Facebook profile.
- Make your own Polar Plunge an event on Facebook. Invite friends to support your fundraising effort. That way they will have a reminder before your Plunge!
- Share why you are Plunging and what your goal is.
- On your status or event page, update your fundraising progress until you take the Plunge.
- Let your pictures do the talking:
  - If you’ve Plunged before, post a picture of your jump along with your donation request!
  - Set your profile picture and timeline photo to a picture of you taking the Plunge, or the costume you’ll be wearing to Plunge!
- Shout outs: post a shout out to your donors when they pledge! You can even tag them in your post - just type @ + their name.
- Use Hashtags: you can now use hashtags like #PlungeGA on Facebook
- Don’t forget to thank your friends on Facebook after your Plunge!

Twitter
- Follow us: https://twitter.com/SOGAchampions
- Retweet a tweet from our page!
- Use the hashtag #PlungeGA to follow the chatter about the Plunge.
- Upload Photos: tweet a photo of you taking the Plunge, if you’ve done so before. If you’re a rookie, tweet a photo of your costume. Don’t forget to ask for support!
- Create an engaging 280-character message that shares why you are taking the Plunge.
- Shout outs: tweet each time you receive a new pledge. Don’t forget to mention them in your status, just type @ + their name.
- Don’t forget to thank your followers after your Plunge!
ADDITIONAL WAYS TO FUNDRAISE

You’ve sent out emails to friends, called your Grandma asking for her support, and inundated your social media accounts with all things “Plunge!” You’ve raised the $50 minimum, but you still want to do more. Great! There are several other great ways to get the word out about your Plunge efforts and fundraise for your cause. Most of all, have fun with it!

You can Hold Your Own Fundraiser!

- Whether the fundraiser is for your personal efforts or a team fundraiser, it’s a great way to get people together and raise funds AND awareness for the Polar Plunge and Special Olympics Georgia. Some ideas for fundraisers are below. You can use these models and make them your own! Be sure to send any fundraisers you are hosting in to Sara Bruno, LETR Liaison, at kaitlin.henderson@specialolympicsga.org and we will post the details to our upcoming events!
- Host a bake sale at your office, in your neighborhood, or posts your items for sale on Facebook!
- Hold a garage sale with proceeds going to your Plunge team.
- Work with a local restaurant to provide a meal for customers at a set cost, with half of it going to your Plunge efforts.
- Hold a silent auction

Workplace Giving:

- Before hitting up your coworkers for a donation, see if you can form a company team instead. It’s a fun team building opportunity for companies and wearing your company t-shirts is a great way to maximize exposure at the event too!
- Find out about matching gift policies at your company. Some companies match employee fundraising, while others match donations made by employees. This is an easy way to double your donations!
- Have your donors find out about their companies matching gift policy to see if their donation will be matched.
- Host a Casual for a Cause day at work. Employees can donate a set amount to wear jeans (or better yet, Plunge gear from previous participation) and funds raised goes to support your Plunge.

Additional workplace fundraising ideas include:

- Set out a candy jar and ask for change each time they take a piece; purchase bottles of water and pop at wholesale and put in the company lunchroom. Charge $1 for drinks and any profit can go to your fundraising efforts.
- Ask your boss if they’ll get in on the fun! If your company raises X amount, they’ll take the Plunge with you!

FAQ’s
Q: **What is the minimum amount that I need to raise to participate?**
A: Individual plungers need to raise at least $50 in order to plunge. Participants raising higher amounts are eligible for greater incentives.

Q: **Where/how do I turn in my money?**
A: We are hoping the bulk of fundraising will be done online this year. If you do collect cash or checks, please mail them to the SOGA office or bring it by. We will add your cash and check donations to your page.

Check and cash donations can be mailed to:
Special Olympics Georgia
Attn: Polar Plunge
6046 Financial Drive
Norcross, GA 30071

**Checks should be made payable to ‘Special Olympics Georgia’ or ‘SOGA’**

When mailing donations, please be sure to clearly indicate the **Exact** name of the Plunger or Team that the contribution should be credited towards. We will accept donations the day of the event as well but again, we prefer them to be completed online where possible.

Q: **How far do I have to go into the water?**
A: We do not have any requirements on depth for the Plunge. Instead, we leave it up to the comfort level of the individual participant. You may choose to go ankle deep or go in all the way.

Q: **How old do you have to be to Plunge?**
A: While we do not have any age restrictions, participants under the age of 10 must do the following: parent must sign a waiver (which will be posted on the event website), plunge with a parent or guardian, and only go in shallow waters (no full submersion).

Q: **What should I wear to the Plunge?**
A: Pretty much whatever you want to, within the following guidelines:
- Wearing shoes is strongly encouraged
- **Costumes are encouraged for the contest!!!!**
- Lewd or indecent bathing suits, outfits, or costumes are not permitted. Please remember that this is a family event. Participants who disregard this policy will be asked to cover up, or will be escorted from the park.

Q: **How many people makeup a team?**
A: There is no minimum or maximum number of people that can be on a team. We encourage groups to gather as many people as possible to take the plunge! (Keep in mind only 20 Plunger are allowed to plunge at a time)

**PLUNGER RESOURCES**
We have provided every plunger with a variety of resources to help move along their fundraising campaign. *All of these resources are found on our website under the Plunge Resources tab.*

Here are examples of just a few of the many resources at your disposal:

**SAMPLE Plunger Business Cards**
Having a card to hand out allows for you to spread the word of your fundraising efforts at a greater pace. We have provided you with a front & back template for these cards but feel free to design your own!

**DONOR RECEIPTS**
One of the big perks of donating to the Polar Plunge is that it is **100% Tax Deductible!!** These receipts will help your donors to collect on this benefit and provide the peace of mind that their donation is being put to a good cause.

**PLUNGER RESOURCES CONT.**
Sample Donation Letter

Dear [Insert Name]:

I am writing to ask for your help. On February 22, 2020, I have committed to grin and “bear” it for the athletes of Special Olympics Georgia by taking a chilly plunge into Acworth Beach alongside 350 other warm-hearted supporters.

I know – you’re probably getting cold just thinking about it! But the cold that I will feel is temporary...the positive impact this will have on the lives of thousands of citizens with intellectual disabilities will last a lifetime.

I have set a personal fundraising goal of $1,000, and I need your help to reach it! So no, I’m not asking you to take the Plunge alongside, but instead, I am asking if you will make a donation to Special Olympics Georgia on behalf of me taking the 2021 Polar Plunge. Any amount would be appreciated – it all goes to a wonderful cause, and every little bit gets me that much closer to my goal.

In order to support my Plunge, please make your check payable to “Special Olympics Georgia” and return it to me in the envelope I have provided, or you can mail it directly to their office at SOGA, Attn: Polar Plunge, 6046 Financial Drive, Norcross GA 30071. If you do it this way, please be sure to include my name so that the staff will know where to credit the contribution.

Or, if you prefer the web, visit polarplungega.org and click “Donate to a Plunger Here.” Click on my name (or team name), which will take you to my personal fundraising page, and give you the option of making a donation online via credit or debit card.

If you want to learn more about this crazy ‘Cool’ winter event, visit our website to find out all the chilly details at polarplungega.org. Think warm thoughts for me as February 24th approaches. I will do my best to grin and bear it and make my supporters proud!

Thank you!!!
(Plunger’s Name)

PLUNGER TIPS!

So you’ve finally decided to grin and bear it and to take the Plunge! Congratulations – you have signed up for a memorable experience!

DO:
→ Wear your plunging suit under the clothes you wear to the event – then you don’t have to change into it just to change right back out of it!
→ Choose your “Plunge Day” outfit (or post-plunge gear) with this in mind – you will be cold, so loose-fitting, easy-on clothes without a lot of snaps, zippers or buttons are best. When the fingers and toes don’t work so well, it’s not easy to get some of that stuff back on!
→ Bring a loose pair of shoes to wear after the Plunge – something easy to slip on
→ Carpool with a group of friends.
→ Choose your “Plunge Day” outfit (or post-plunge gear) with this in mind – you will be cold, so loose-fitting, easy-on clothes without a lot of snaps, zippers or buttons are best. When the fingers and toes don’t work so well, it’s not easy to get some of that stuff back on!
→ Bring a loose pair of shoes to wear after the Plunge – something easy to slip on
→ Carpool with a group of friends.
→ Dress up in a costume if the spirit moves you!
→ Come between 11-1 to be entertained have your face painted or meet up with one of our ‘Special Guests’! There will be music, games, food and fun for everyone!
→ Check out the all new ‘Cash Cube’ for your chance to grab as much Cash as you can!

DO NOT:
→ Do NOT dive in – this is a safety regulation and will be enforced by the safety team! Beyond that, remember that a Plunge is whatever you want it to be, so there is no pressure to fully submerge yourself.
→ Do NOT run into the water, there might be things in the water that you cannot see.

THINGS TO BRING:
→ A plastic bag for wet clothes
→ A backpack to hold street clothes and your new long sleeve Plunge shirt!
→ A towel – bring at least one to dry off with
→ River shoes to wear for going into the water
→ Extra pair of shoes to change back into
→ Clean dry under garments to wear after Plunging
→ A disposable waterproof camera that you can carry into the Plunge Zone with you. Ask a fellow Plunger to capture your big moment on film for you!

DAY OF EXPECTATIONS:
→ Registration opens at 11:00am and all plungers must be signed in by 1:00pm.
→ There will be a few contests being held from 11:30pm to 1:00pm.
→ There will be a short program and safety briefing from approximately 1:00pm – 1:30pm.
→ The actual plunge itself will take place between 1:30pm and 3:00pm
→ You only have to go in as far as you want to
→ There will be concessions and drinks available for purchase at the park.
→ If you are under the age of 18, a parent or guardian must sign a waiver before you can participate!
→ And most importantly – have fun!
PRIZES & AWARDS!

- **Highest Grossing Team Awards:**
  - Top Fundraising Law Enforcement Team Award
  - Top Fundraising Company Team Award
  - Top Fundraising Individual Award
  - Top Fundraising Non-Law Enforcement Team Award
  - Cool School Challenge! Top Fundraising School will get an award: High, Middle or Elementary schools can participate.

- **COSTUME Contest!!** Wear your craziest costume for a chance at our costume award!

- **50/50 contest!!**
Fact Sheet

WHO WE ARE: Special Olympics Georgia (SOGA) is a statewide year-round sports program for Georgia’s children and adults with intellectual disabilities. We currently offer over 26 Olympic-type sports. There are currently over 26,620 Special Olympics Athlete’s age eight and above participating in the program at no cost to athlete or their family.

OUR HISTORY: The concept for Special Olympics was born in the early 1960s when Eunice Kennedy Shriver started a day camp for people with intellectual disabilities at her home in Rockville, Maryland. The first International Special Olympics Games were held in 1968 at Soldier’s Field, Chicago with 1,000 athletes participating from 26 states and Canada.

HOW WE’VE GROWN: Mrs. Shriver’s vision of an international sports organization for people with intellectual disabilities, one that would bring the joy and pride developed through sport competition to those the world believed could not learn or play sports, has grown into one of the largest and most successful sports and volunteer organizations in the world. Special Olympics programs are in every state and in over 180 countries worldwide, serving more than one-million athletes.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE: Any child age 8 through adult who meets the following criteria:
1. Has been identified by an agency or professional as having an intellectual disability, or
2. Has a cognitive delay, as determined by standardized measures, or
3. Has a closely related developmental disability, which means having functional limitations in both general learning and in adaptive skills (such as recreation, work, independent living, self-direction, or self-care).

Throughout Georgia, there are about 74,000 persons with intellectual disabilities and/or closely related developmental disabilities who can benefit from our sports programs. Children 2-7 years of age may participate in age-appropriate Special Olympics training programs (Young Athletes) but may not participate in Special Olympics competition on a State level until 8 years old.

ALL YEAR LONG…AND IT’S FREE! There are training and competition opportunities every day throughout the year. Our programs are free to all eligible athletes and are possible thanks to the generous support from individuals and businesses who believe in Special Olympics athletes. Financial support comes almost exclusively from individuals, corporations, foundations and special events. The average cost to send one athlete to State Games is $104 each, we have 5 State Games each year and over 600 local (county), area (multiple counties combined) competitions, meets or tournaments throughout Georgia.