



National Hope & Hearts Run/Walk Missing GRACE Foundation's Signature Fundraising Event

How to Get Started as a Hope & Hearts Run State Director

History of the Hope & Hearts Run

The Hope & Hearts Run was created by Candy and Stephen McVicar and April and Dan Wurst in 2006 in honor of their stillborn daughters Grace McVicar and Kaila Wurst. The event not only raises significant funds for the Missing GRACE Foundation (MGF) and their mission to provide resources and support to families who have experienced pregnancy and infant loss, infertility and adoption challenges but raises much needed public awareness about stillbirth and prevention. While it is important that the services Missing GRACE provides are available to help families who are grieving, it is the dream of both families that no parent will ever need these services because they will have their babies safe and well in their loving homes. This dream would not be complete without the hope that couples with a desire to build a family will also have all the services needed available to them.

Our community partners, corporate sponsors and individual donors support MGF and its programs. Each donation and in kind gift is so important and makes it possible for the Foundation to continue providing services, resources and assistance free of charge to bereaved, infertile and adoptive families. We need to continue to educate and advocate in our communities and doctors offices especially. In 2008 MGF helped more than 5,000 families and the need for help continues to grow. This is a great opportunity to inform and empower others to take action.

Hope & Hearts Run is an emotional and exhilarating event that gives participants an opportunity to support other families in our community, to remember those we have lost and to celebrate the future of families.

The Hope & Hearts Run is a 5K Run, 5K Walk and Kids Fun Run in which anyone can participate without training. We hope to grow the Hope & Hearts Runs in states all across the country.

Hope & Hearts Run Mission

- To ensure that all families get the support and resources needed for pregnancy and infant loss, infertility and adoption as well as to have access to comprehensive, patient focused prenatal care.
- To offer Race Directors, Event Participants and Volunteers the opportunity to honor their children, fellowship with one another, realize they are not alone in their grief, and create special memories of the children they have lost.

How to Get Started with Hosting a Hope & Hearts Run in YOUR State

1. **Determine if there is already a Run within 4 hours of your city.** If there is a Run within 4 hours, we strongly encourage you to work together with the existing Hope & Hearts Run.
2. **Determine the date and location for your Hope & Hearts Run.** We ask that you consider hosting your Run within two weeks after Labor Day to maintain consistency with our other Runs, but the Hope & Hearts Management Team is open and flexible to other dates you may choose around that time period. The location you select should be an area where people can gather as groups, where there is room to facilitate the registration and events such as a Kids Carnival, Raffle, Silent auction, etc., plenty of parking and restrooms. And of course, the location must be able to host a certified 5K timed running / walking course.
3. **Complete the following forms**
By filling out and sending in the forms you are agreeing to our policies and procedures outlined in these documents. All Forms must be filed at least 8 months prior to your proposed event date.

1. **MGF Membership Form.** If you are not already a member of the MGF, please submit the Membership Form located on the Missing GRACE website:
<https://missinggrace.com/org/MembershipForm.html>
2. **State Race Director Application Form:** Print and complete the application form located:
[INSERT HYPERLINK ONCE UPDATED ON WEBSITE]
3. **Guidelines & Consent Form:** Print and complete the guidelines & consent form located:
[INSERT HYPERLINK ONCE UPDATED ON WEBSITE]

4. **Mail your completed Application and Guidelines & Consent forms to:**

Missing GRACE Foundation
P.O. Box 1625
Maple Grove, MN 55311

Next Steps

The Hope & Hearts Run Management Team and MGF will review your application within 30 days of submission. The National Directors will be in contact with the outcome of your application and to determine next steps.

For questions please contact National Hope & Hearts Run Directors, Heather and Chad Hemphill, at heather-hemphill@comcast.net or call: 763-427-1236.

What could YOUR event look like?

We encourage State Race Directors to be creative and make the Run their own with their own personal touch. Your Run can include many activities to make the day a memorable experience for all participating, while also raising funds for MGF in honor of your child(ren).

We encourage State Director applicants to consider applying together with another bereaved parent as it can be very helpful to work on an event with a co-director. Working together this way can prove very beneficial in holding a successful event.

The basic event will consist of the following activities:

- Timed 5K Run
- 5K Walk
- Kids Fun Run
- *Hearts to Heaven* Balloon Release

Additional funds can be raised and can add a lot to the event, by hosting activities including:

- Silent Auction and/or Raffle
- Kid's Carnival "Hope Rocks"
- MGF Gifts and Items for Sale table

How will the funds raised benefit YOUR local area?

A percentage of all the proceeds made from the Hope & Hearts Run will go to provide resources and support to the local community and the surrounding areas of the event location. GRACE Care Basket and Tote items will be disseminated to local hospitals to give to parents experiencing a perinatal loss. There will also be scholarships provided for: mother's needing assistance to participate in the National Center for Stillbirth Research (NCSR) home-fetal-monitoring program and to attend MGF Sponored events such as the GRACE Conference.

Benefits of Becoming a Hope & Hearts State Race Director

- The chance to honor your heavenly baby(s) in a very special way.
- Having your baby's own Hope & Hearts logo with their name included that will be seen by and worn by hundreds of people who wear their Hope & Hearts T-shirts at the event and ongoing for years to come.
- Playing a key role in bringing stillbirth awareness as well as infant loss, infertility and adoption issues to the forefront in your community.
- Getting to have your run information and baby's name on the Hope & Hearts Run website, the Firstgiving website and Missing GRACE Foundation website.
- Receiving a Hope & Hearts email address to use for communication with your committee.
- Shared networking, resources and materials with Missing GRACE Foundation and full support by the Hope & Hearts Run National Directors to assist in making your event a success.
- Knowing your efforts will help hundreds of families receive support and resources for their grief as well as to receive the medical help needed to have positive outcomes in future pregnancies.

