

Top Youth Group Fundraising Ideas

Angel Tree Fundraiser

Angel Tree fundraisers are great for the holiday season, and especially in church settings. All you need is a Christmas tree (plastic or real). Have group members cut out construction paper angels and attach them to the tree using string or yarn.

Put a sign up in front of the tree that asks for a \$5-10 donation in exchange for them to dedicate an angel to a special someone. Allow members who purchase angels to take down the angel to write the name of the person and a short message before reattaching it to the tree.

Talent Show Fundraiser

Advertising for the Big Event

Use any channel of advertising you can get your hands on to promote this event. School newsletters, local papers, church bulletins are all great ways to get the word out. If you can advertise early enough, you can build up the anticipation, drawing an even bigger crowd to your event. Also, don't forget to give yourself enough time for auditions, securing the venue, getting local sponsors, etc. Rushing any of these or not giving yourself enough time to prepare can easily be avoided by good planning.

Auditions: Open up auditions to anyone and everyone. Closing off or limiting the talent show will only decrease event moral and limit your reach of talented individuals.

Venue: Be sure to secure a venue large enough to accommodate the expected audience size. One good idea is to wait until you've gotten a good survey of people that would potentially want to come to the event, and add ~10 people to that, in case of late additions. If you're uncertain of the turnout, it is always much better to secure a larger venue than playing it safe and securing a smaller venue. Even if you have a very large room for only 30 or so audience members, you can always group the chairs together to make it seem more intimate.

Local Sponsors: You can always try talking to local businesses to see if they would like to help sponsor the event in exchange for an advertisement banner placement at the event, or even a "shout out" during the event itself. When talking to them, let them know that any amount of money will help, which will help encourage them to potentially become a sponsor.

Fundraising: A bulk of the fundraising amount will come from ticket sales, so be sure you market and advertise as much as you can. Charge a price you feel will draw the most amount of people, but at the same time, will be enough to make this into a great fundraiser. At the event, you can try making extra money by providing snacks and refreshments (akin to a movie theater showing!) You can also videotape the event and sell copies to audience members (take down interested patron's contact information throughout the event).

Competition

Award prizes based on different categories, and one grand prize to an overall “best” performer. This will help you make this into an annual event, which will only help you in the long run!

Rubber Duck Race Fundraiser:

The rubber duck race fundraiser is a really great fundraiser that can be thrown year after year. Participants look forward to events like these year after year, and each year adds on from the year before due to the added publicity and word-of-mouth buzz.

Basics of a Rubber Duck Race Fundraiser:

Rubber ducks are sold to entrants who then write their contact information on each duck they choose to purchase. Make sure that the contact information is written with permanent marker. Test some under running water to be sure that the names/contact information does not rub off.

At the day of the event, the ducks are placed on a river or a pond. With a preset “finish line” in place, the duck that reaches it first is the winner!

Be sure that: 1) You test out to see that the ducks are indeed able to get to the finish line (no branches/logs that obstruct the path completely) and that you obtain the necessary permissions or permits from a city official before the event.

To make the event more interesting, you can try placing “obstacles” that trap some ducks, so that those in front are not always guaranteed to win!

As for prizes, it is a good idea to offer a 2nd place and a 3rd place prize as well, so that there isn't only one winner. Prizes can be donated from local businesses in exchange for sponsorship.

Making this fundraiser as a community event is crucial to its success. Invite friends and family to the event and make it a city-wide competition. You can use local newspapers, radio stations, school and church bulletin boards to build up anticipation prior to the event. Having nice prizes would also draw more attention from more people.

Having local sponsors sponsor this event monetarily or with supplies should be relatively easy. Simply explain to them the fundraiser as well as the potential reach they have in the community. Invite the local television stations to cover the event to help build a stronger reputation for the following years. The key to the event is also to make it as festive and fun as possible. Helium filled balloons and streamers are cheap but very effective in making any venue look more lively. Having food and beverage carts also help raise the festive mood as well as additional funds.

Polar Bear Plunge

The polar bear plunge fundraiser is where participants volunteer to jump into an iced over lake or other obviously freezing body of water. This type of fundraiser isn't limited to those near icy lakes or ponds. You can create your own “polar pool” by filling a swimming pool with large quantities of ice.

This event is great because there really is no limit to the number of people that can participate.

Having more people participate does not add on to the overall cost of the event. Making this into a competition with different categories also can draw more people to participate.

Once a date is set for the event, start marketing it as soon as you can. Start by sending letters to local businesses, schools and groups. Encourage participants to apply in teams. The more people that they have on their team, the more money they will be able to raise. You should also try to encourage individual participants to enter. To encourage people to raise as much money as they can, have prizes for both the team and the individual who raise the most money.

Each participant of this event should do their best to gather "sponsors". Typically, once they hear of the cause of the event, and the means of the fundraising (jumping into icy cold water), they would be more inclined to donate. If you want, you can also set rules where participants have to either be submerged neck deep or all the way inside the water in order to "qualify."

If possible, you should also charge each team or individual an entry fee. You can explain that the proceeds of the fee will go to the fundraiser itself, as well as in buying supplies to make the event possible.

To make extra fundraising money, you can set up mini hot chocolate or coffee carts.

Breakfast Fundraiser

A pancake breakfast fundraiser is relatively simple. All participants pay a flat entrance fee for an all-you-can-eat breakfast, which usually includes pancakes, eggs and sausage, coffee and juice, etc.

Make sure you factor in the cost of equipment, supplies, rental fees and food before setting the price for tickets to make sure you end up making a profit.

Breakfast is one of the easiest meals you can prepare for a large group as everything can be cooked quite easily. Be sure to have someone that has cooked pancakes before to get them cooked just the right way!

The more creative you are with the meal, the more attention it would draw. Some tips are to have multiple pancake toppings, or have pancakes cooked with bananas and nuts.

Cakewalk Fundraiser

The cakewalk fundraiser is a great fundraiser that allows the entire group to participate. It is also very fun and a relatively inexpensive way to raise money.

Ask several people to bring a cake to the event. Place the cakes along a table and a number next to each cake. For each cake, place a corresponding number into a container.

Start of the round: Participants can then buy tickets (\$0.50 ~ \$2.00) which will then be placed inside a box. The winner of the round will then draw a number from the cake jar and win that corresponding cake.

At the start of the next round, participant will then buy and purchase more tickets. Participants can purchase as many tickets as they wish.

Variation to the game

You can allow winners of the round to pick the cake of their choice, instead of merely picking a cake at random.

Flamingo Fundraiser

The fundraiser requires its team members to not only like to have fun and create a little bit of mischief, but also to be able to meet and work at night.

The only material you need are pink lawn flamingos! The more birds you buy, the higher the shock value of its victims! (You can always buy other lawn decorations as well). In total, initial investments may come out to be a little over \$100. However, you will be able to make this back and much more at the end of this fun event.

Once you have your lawn decorations, pick out your first victim! At night, sneak over to the house, and place the flamingos all across the lawn. Then place a ransom note that can be easily seen demanding a donation for the removal of the birds. You can either set a fixed amount, or decide to leave the donation amount up to each individual.

Once the ransom is paid, the victim family gets to pick the next family to get "attacked." The process is then repeated until the group has reached their target fundraising amount.

You can always target more than one house at a time, which requires more flamingos, but can pay off more in the end.

Offering flamingo "insurance" at the beginning of this campaign is a good way to raise funds without the trouble of setup. Insurance will guarantee a house not to be flocked.