

## Brainwave's Tips for Successful Fundraising

- Pick a fundraiser that you know something about or enjoy doing yourself. For example, if you play golf, you may find it relatively easy to organise a golf classic. If you don't have expertise in the chosen area or if you can't find someone who does, it might be more difficult.
- Work in a small group or committee. Although there is no simple formula for organising events, the key is a strong committee. Don't take everything on board yourself - you are one person and the more help you have the easier it will be to organise the event and avoid undue stress. Also, if you are working too close to the event you may overlook something that a new pair of eyes will be able to see.
- It is not always the case that a big group works better. Generally 3-7 people will work best. Bring in other volunteers if needed at the event or for particular tasks in the build up.
- The key to a successful event is planning. The more you plan your event, the more you will cover all the key areas and the less likely you will run into issues on the day. Devise a work plan early on. Constantly review your progress and update your work plan.
- For fundraising events, try to do a simple budget beforehand. List and tally every cost and include a small sum of money for miscellaneous items – they always turn up!
- Harness community support for what you are doing. Try to involve people well known and respected in your area and have them advocate your project
- Set a realistic and attainable target. Failing to meet an unrealistic target often leaves many people downhearted and disappointed even though they have done a really good job. Don't aim too high on your first attempt at fundraising. Set higher targets as you become more experienced. It can be a steep learning curve and you will easily find out what not to do at next event.
- Minimise the risk. If you are new to fundraising or if you are unsure about the support you will get, plan an event that has little or no financial outlay.
- Don't hesitate to ask Brainwave for help and advice. We will offer any help that we can. It is likely that we have been involved in a similar event to yours at some stage and may be able to pass on advice or learning from our experiences. Working directly with us also adds credibility to your own efforts.
- Contact your local Gardai if you are organising an event in a public place. If you hold a raffle or collection in a public place you will need a permit, so please consult the Gardai in your area well in advance for details. You can also call Brainwave to discuss.

- Be creative when planning your fundraising efforts. Something new, topical or innovative will get more interest and will attract volunteers, sponsors and donors.
- Goodwill is vital to your fundraising efforts. Stay away from controversy. The last thing you want is to create bad feeling around what you are doing.
- Publicity is also vital. Notify as many people as possible about your event. Use the local media as well as notice boards, church newsletters, local websites etc. Give Brainwave details of your event. Members and supporters in the area may be interested in attending or supporting your efforts.
- If you are using a sponsorship card, make sure the first person to sign your card gives you a reasonably large amount of money. Others often follow their example, so select your first donors carefully. Keep your sponsorship card with you at all times – you never know when you need it. If necessary, have several cards on the go at once – keep one at home, one at work, one in the car etc. Put your sponsorship card up on work notice board.
- Use your friends and family wisely. You are pretty well guaranteed support from them but you cannot expect them to come up with all the money. Ask them if they have any contacts in companies or clubs, or even better contact them on your behalf.
- Use your workplace as well. Some companies sponsor their employers for events or even match the efforts. See if you can obtain a donation from your company's charity budget.
- Always have a contingency plan – things, big or small can go wrong on the night. It's how you cope with these that matters.
- Aim for longevity - try to establish an event that becomes known in your area so that people will remember it from year to year and support it.
- Please remember when you are fundraising to bear in mind a number of important safety points. Always wear safety equipment if required. Make sure you have enough people to control any crowd that may build up. Be careful if you are carrying money around. Ensure children are supervised at all times
- Always say thanks. You can go back again and again to people that you have treated well in the past. They won't expect it but they will appreciate the gesture and they will remember you if you go back again for help. Remember it is easier to keep a friend than find a new one.
- And last but not least, have fun!! It will make the event much more enjoyable for all concerned and people will want to get involved again.

**If you have any questions or fundraising ideas or if you need anything for your fundraising event please call Brainwave at 01 4557500 or e-mail [info@epilepsy.ie](mailto:info@epilepsy.ie)**