



YMCA

Your fundraising guide

Welcome

Hello and welcome to our YMCA fundraising guide. It's packed with tips and ideas about how to organise great fundraising events, so that even more young people can be supported in turning their lives around.

Because of your commitment, we're able to make a huge impact on the lives of young people across England and Wales. We're providing safe accommodation support to those with mental health problems, and practical help accessing education and training.

Many young people don't know where they'd be today without the help of YMCA. What they do know is that they wouldn't be where they are without your support and the vital funds that you – and others like you – raise.

Thank you for everything, for being the reason more young people can go on to overcome the hurdles, achieve, accomplish and lead fulfilling lives.

With sincere thanks

Jo Chettleburgh
Director of Income Generation

Contents

- 3** Getting started
- 4-5** Share the story
- 6** Support
- 7** Accommodation
- 8** Family Work
- 9** Health and Wellbeing
- 10** Training and Education
- 11** Legal & safety advice





Getting Started

We're thrilled you've decided to fundraise for YMCA. It's really easy to find a way to make a difference, and whether your event is big or small, every bit counts.

To help you get ahead, here are our top five fundraising tips.

Get help

Above all, don't go it alone. Don't be afraid to ask for support helpers to come along on the day, companies to donate prizes or your partner to give you a hand loading up the car with supplies! Remember you're doing an amazing thing for an amazing cause so spread the load and get others on board.

Make it your own

While we've provided you with ideas throughout the guide, feel free to come up with your own grand plans or customise ours to fit around your likes.

Don't forget the add-ons

Think about the simple things you could add to your fundraising event to boost your totals. Will you charge for refreshments? Or add a raffle, an auction or a tombola?

Start with what you have

What are you good at? What do you love? What resources do you have? Capitalise on these. If you're brilliant at baking, make some cakes and tempt your workmates. If you love long dog walks in the countryside, set up a sponsored walk and invite mates with canines to join you.

Think prices

Consider how much you can charge for tickets, refreshments and the like. Look at similar fundraisers locally to get a feel for what's expected. Remember it's all about trying to strike a balance between offering an event that's good value and not underselling your efforts. That way, you'll maximise the amount that you raise.



Share the story

The best thing you can do for your fundraiser is spread the word and let everyone know about it! Here's how.

Go social

Get your event or challenge out across your social media channels. Tag friends who you think might be interested and don't forget to thank people publically when they give, or reach out to local influencers to get their help with promotion.

Get in local publications

In the lead up to your event, it's great to engage publications online and offline with what you're doing. Share stories with them about why you're fundraising and how people can lend their support. Include a photo of the people involved – as smiley as possible and taken in natural light (which instantly improves picture quality). Follow up with stories and pictures after the event too.

Make it personal

Start with your warmest audience – your friends and family. Start by sending them a personalised invitation then, when they're on Team YMCA Fundraiser, see if you can encourage them to recruit more supporters.

Poster up

If you're fundraising by putting on an event, pop up posters and leaflets in busy places locally. If your fundraiser involves being sponsored, a poster can work wonders in spots such as your workplace or place of worship as a visible reminder for people to make their pledge.



Get sponsored

Think about setting up an online fundraising page too, either **JustGiving** or **Virgin Money**, where friends can sponsor you and read about your progress.

Check out [justgiving.com](https://www.justgiving.com) and uk.virginmoneygiving.com and search for **YMCA**

If you'd like a sponsorship form you can print, please get in touch at - supporterservices@ymca.org.uk or on **020 7186 9518**.



SUPPORT & ADVICE



YMCA is there for every young person in the community, supporting them with a wide range of services. It's work that sees us support more than 100,000 people each year with services including counselling, housing advice, employment and careers advice and food banks.

Taybah, 16, is involved with YMCA Coventry and Warwickshire, and takes part in a weekly girls' group.

She says: "Before I attended, my self-esteem was pretty low. Growing up I experienced and witnessed a lot of domestic violence, as well as verbal and emotional abuse."

Taybah started by taking part in our Flourish programme. This helped her get out of the house over the summer, have new experiences and ultimately, embrace her personality. She recently gained a sports leader qualification through her studies at a local college.

"The girls' group allows me to make new friends as well as chill out."

FUNDRAISING IDEAS

1. Ask the expert

- What's your area of expertise? Gardening? DIY? Rollerskating? Offer the fruits of your finely honed labour for a good cause. Then invite friends and colleagues to share in your knowledge by letting them book a support session for a small fee.

2. Get your coach on

- If you've got coaching or mentoring skills, perhaps picked up in the workplace or through training, why not help friends and colleagues move forward in their lives? Offer a series of supportive meetings to help them meet their life goals, all while inviting donations that will see you smash your fundraising targets.

3. Random acts of kindness

- Though kindness costs nothing, it could just raise vital funds for young people and communities in need. Letting your nearest and dearest offload on the phone after a tough day at work, walking their dog when they're tired or doing some DIY they've been putting off? Next time they ask what they can do in return, why not suggest that they make a donation to YMCA and help spread the love?

ACCOMMODATION



At YMCA, we believe every young person should have a safe place to stay. It's why we supply nearly 10,000 beds every night, ranging from emergency accommodation to longer-term housing, making us the largest voluntary sector provider of supported housing for young people in England and Wales.

Mel was 16, the relationship with her parents had completely broken down and she was made homeless.

She says: "I found myself in a very dark place sleeping rough." Finally, Mel got in touch with YMCA and we gave her a room and the support she needed to make a fresh start. After graduating from university, and unable to secure paid work, Mel found herself facing homelessness for a second time.

After a period of sofa surfing, she contacted YMCA again. With our support, Mel gained the courage to take on an art project that has led to a full-time job at YMCA.

"If it wasn't for YMCA, I don't know where I would be now."

Sleep Easy

Every year, hundreds of our supporters sleep rough to raise money for local YMCAs. Sign up to one of our events all over England and Wales at www.ymca.org.uk/sleep-easy

FUNDRAISING IDEAS

1. A night in the wild

- Organise a sponsored night under the stars and get a gang of friends to camp al fresco in the great outdoors. Or take them on a night hike, walking through the wee small hours into the dawn.

2. Silly sock day

- Socks are one of the most commonly requested items by those forced to sleep rough. Put the fun into fundraising by charging everyone a quid to wear truly outlandish socks to work. Then stage a lunchtime fashion show with everyone getting their ankles out for young people who need our support.

3. Knit bobble hats

- Know any knitters? Whip up some woolly wonders to keep heads cosy, sell them for a few quid and bring young people off the streets and into the warm. You could also take knitting commissions, or hold a knit-off to find out who can make the most show-stopping headwear?

FAMILY WORK



We know that the right start in life makes a big difference. So we work with people from birth to adulthood, enabling individuals and families to flourish.

It means supporting 230,000 children, young people and parents every year through a range of services including nurseries, after school clubs, holiday camps and relationship services.

Rhiannon was homeless, pregnant and alone – until she found YMCA.

Rhiannon says: “It was a really scary time having nowhere to go and a baby on the way. Luckily I found a space at YMCA. My YMCA engagement officer, Elizabeth, was amazing.

“After my son Isaac was born, I had postnatal depression and was really struggling to bond with him. At the Easy Peasy Pods group, YMCA supported me through my difficulties and helped me build my relationship with him.

“YMCA helped me get into college. Now I have a place at uni. I’m so proud of how far I’ve come.”

FUNDRAISING IDEAS

1. Bake off

Bring out your inner Mary Berry and bake away to raise money for families who need our support. Sell your wares at work or hold a coffee morning and invite lucky guests to tuck in for a donation.

2 Teddy bears’ picnic

If you go down to the woods today, you could raise lots of money for families in need of our support – by inviting all your friends to a picnic. Teddy bears aren’t compulsory but they could add some fun for the kids.

3. Community day

You don’t need a royal wedding to get everyone out together in your local area. Why not hold a day for all the community and invite everyone to play their part? Set up stalls along your street and invite local businesses to contribute services or donate prizes. Cook up a storm in your kitchens and sell the grub. And provide games and face painting for the kids.

HEALTH & WELLBEING



Marathon

Want to run the real deal in real time? Why not join Team YMCA? Find out more at ymca.org.uk/london-marathon

Gyms

Checked out one of our YMCA gyms where everyone can feel welcome and supported? We have 30 across England and Wales. Find your nearest at ymca.org.uk/gyms

Without their health and wellbeing, young people simply can't flourish in other areas of their lives. It's why we provide health and wellbeing services that support more than 125,000 people each year – everything from our YMCA gyms to disability programmes.

We also place a firm focus on mental health. It's the thinking behind our exciting new Mental Health Champions service, which will recruit a network of young volunteers to help raise awareness of mental health among their peers.

Kieron, who has experienced stress, depression and anxiety since his teens, has found support at YMCA.

Kieron says: "First it started with self-harm. It was some form of coping mechanism because I couldn't come up with anything else. I got help because I tried to end my own life, which was the worst possible moment not only for me but my entire family."

"Music is the one way I can escape any sort of down feelings I have. At first it was listening to it, then creating it from scratch."

"The experience I've had can help others in the same situation as me. It's not just the support I give either, but the fact I've got people supporting me. YMCA make you feel a part of a family. I literally grew up here."

FUNDRAISING IDEAS

1. Sports Day

Why not hold your own grown-up version of a school sports day? Run it over an extended lunch hour at work, competing against other teams and departments. Or get together with friends and let the games begin at your local park. Charge everyone an entry fee and ask your company or local businesses to donate prizes.

2. Smoothie bar

Set up a smoothie bar at work or outside your house and dole out delicious, fruity concoctions for donations. Get creative with your healthy blends and throw in oats, veg, coconut water and herbs (but maybe not all at once).

3. Give it up

Could you go for a month without sugar or, worse, social media? Maybe cheese, chocolate or beer is the thing you'd miss most? Whatever it is, take a rain check on this pesky pleasure in exchange for sponsorship from pals, then watch the pennies (rather than the pounds) pile on.

TRAINING & EDUCATION



We believe every young person should be able to fulfil their potential in an environment in which they can flourish.

That's why we offer a range of schemes, covering everything from training in work and employment and basic life skills to further education courses and involving almost 68,000 young people each year.

Carlie, whose apprenticeship was in administration and business, is now a qualified youth worker.

She says: "I'd left college without completing my qualifications. Doing an apprenticeship seemed like a good way of getting a qualification plus a way into a job."

"There are things I learnt that have been really valuable in my day-to-day role as a youth worker. I now have to complete reports, targets, reflections and case studies, skills you wouldn't normally learn on a youth work course."

"Apprenticeships are a really good way for young people to experience a first-time job and get a qualification. I think there just needs to be more available."

FUNDRAISING IDEAS

1. Skill swap

Get together with friends or colleagues to trade in what you're best at, with each participant making a donation. If someone can knit you a scarf, offer them a tennis lesson. Or perhaps you'll swap a singing solo at a friend's party for a three-course home-cooked meal?

2. Sponsored silence

Ever wanted a bit of peace and quiet to get on with the task at hand? Suggest a day of sponsored silence at your workplace and don't forget to charge penalty fees for slip ups.

3. Library service with a difference

Search your bookshelves for those paperbacks you'll never read again and share them with workmates – for a fee. Ask them to bring in their unused tomes and watch the pounds line up.

Legal and safety advice

Now for the serious stuff. To make sure everything about your fabulous fundraising event runs smoothly, please follow the following super important tips.

Money

-
When handling money you should keep good records and be safe. Two people who aren't related should always be present to count money and you should also think about how to transport it to be cashed.

Food

-
If you only handle, prepare, store and serve food occasionally and on a small scale, you don't need to register as a food business. However, you do need to ensure the food is prepared hygienically and it's best practice to provide allergen information. Find out more at [food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene](https://www.food.gov.uk/safety-hygiene)

Risk assessment

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Carry out a simple risk assessment to show evidence that you've considered possible hazards and taken steps to mitigate risks. Use this as a live document, carry out a check before your event starts and record any additional action taken around safety. While this is all common sense, keeping a record means everyone is clear on what they need to do and you can show it has been considered.

Insurance

-
If you are inviting members of the general public to an event and don't have public liability insurance through your workplace or association, it's recommended to get this for the occasion.

Raffles

-
Without an appropriate licence, you can only sell raffle tickets on one single day or to a discrete group of people (for example employees of one company). If you want to sell tickets over multiple days to a wider group of people, you'll need to apply for a small society lottery licence from your local authority. Remember that for any type of raffle every entry must be charged at the same rate, so you can't offer a discount for buying multiple tickets. For more info, visit - [gamblingcommission.gov.uk](https://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk)

First aid

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Think about what first aid provision you need for your event. If it's a large event you may want to engage a supplier such as St John Ambulance.

ymca.org.uk



Registered with
**FUNDRAISING
REGULATOR**



YMCA enables people to develop their full potential in mind, body and spirit. Inspired by, and faithful to, our Christian values, we create supportive, inclusive and energising communities, where young people can truly belong, contribute and thrive.

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