

Plan USA

Be a part of it!

Fundraising Tool Kit

A

AUCTION

A great way to raise money but this requires a very organized plan. First, always find a group of committed volunteers. Find a forum for your auction, and then advertise in your local schools and newspapers. Then canvas local businesses and nearby popular shops/eateries/places of interest for auction items – facial/manicure/pedicure from the local beauty salon; NFL Football tickets, MLB baseball tickets from season ticket holders in the community; gift certificates, shopping sprees; gift baskets of cheese/crackers, sports items, chocolates...the list can be thematic if you'd like. The more items the better and it's good to have price ranges which vary from everyday items to expensive items.

With a little thought and planning, auctions can be terrific fund-raisers, social gatherings and community-building events. Donors go away feeling positive about your cause and often turn into long-term supporters. Sponsors appreciate the visibility, and staff, volunteers and supporters enjoy a great team-building activity.

TIPS AND HINTS:

Planning:

Planning should start early to make sure there's enough time to recruit volunteers, procure items, and organize and publicize a unique event. Before starting, outline auction goals and estimate all costs. Pick a venue where your guests will feel comfortable, and determine what entertainment, decorations, theme and food will help create a good environment. While many things can be donated, there will still be hard costs involved. Utilize ticket sales and sponsorships to cover these costs. By planning ahead, you can accurately determine how much you'll need to raise through auction revenue to reach your goal.

Auction Items:

Procurement is one of the most important aspects when planning an auction. When determining procurement items, think about the make-up of prospective attendees, their likes/interests, and a realistic budget range for bidders. The best lots are items, experiences and activities that are not easily purchased, which have greater value and will encourage people to attend the event.

School auction:

Attract the latest computer or entertainment systems, family ski or raft trip, mother/daughter outing, or vacation to Disneyland. Put kids' artwork or class projects up for bid. Parents can't resist bidding on artwork made by their own children!

Spread the word:

Make sure to publicize your event well in advance. Send a "Save the

Date" card before your event, and invitations six to eight weeks in advance. Utilize public relations and/or advertising to help increase visibility for the auction, its sponsors/volunteers, unique auction items and auction beneficiaries. Target vehicles that reach your key audience, whether it's a school flyer, local newspaper or wine trade publication. Consider recruiting a local television or radio station to help sponsor and promote the event in exchange for benefits.

ARTS AND CRAFTS SALE

This is a great October/Fall festival idea.

Gather a few committed volunteers and then contact as many local artisans and crafters in the surrounding areas and cities. Ask them if they'd like to donate some time to selling their goods at the local park on a crisp Fall weekend. There might be farmers with jams/jellies, artists with candles and creams, artists with water colors or jewelry. Ask them if they'd donate a fixed percentage of their sales. If you have a reasonable number of interested parties, then start to advertise. Use the local papers, school newsletters, and flyers around your community.

privileged children." People will be more likely to give if they can associate their donation with a specific cause or ongoing program. And if it happens to be one that warms the heart, it's money in the bank!

Publicize your event

Use posters and press releases to notify the community and media of the event. Consider sending out invitations to local organizations, groups, or schools.

Entertainment

Consider having a band, DJ or dance group donate their time to entertain your guests before and after the dinner. Also consider having a group discussion about child exploitation, poverty, and ways the local community can help the world's most vulnerable children and communities.

