



101 FUNDRAISING ACTIVITY IDEAS

Want to host a fundraising activity and looking for some inspiration? Here are 101 ideas designed to get your creative juices flowing.

Competitions/Contests

1. **Dance Marathon:** A continuous, multi-hour event in which participants raise funds through pledges. This event blends dancing, music, games, food and a variety of entertainment into one amazing experience.
2. **Penny Wars:** Teams compete by decorating and filling jars with pennies with the object of collecting the most pennies. Competitors can throw other coins (and bills) in competing jars to throw off the penny total. The team with the highest penny total (minus the other change) wins!
3. **Set Your Feet Up for a Day:** Raffle off tickets for a chance to sit in a recliner and watch movies for an entire lunch break or class period.
4. **Dodgeball Tournament:** Collect a registration fee from teams and sell tickets. You can earn extra money by having a concession stand!
5. **Baby Photo Contest:** Have participants display their baby pictures and collect \$1 votes for the cutest baby.
6. **Big Losers:** Participants are sponsored for every pound they lose, and donate the money they raise.
7. **Frisbee Golf Tournament:** Turn this popular outdoor competition into a great fundraiser by collecting entrance fees.
8. **Buck-a-Pound:** Participants pay \$1 for every pound they lose and \$2 for every pound they gain in weekly weigh-ins.



9. **Scavenger Hunt:** Each team gets pledges to participate. The team that finds all of the clues first wins the grand prize.
10. **Talent Show:** Encourage participants to show off their talents for a great cause. Choose a location, organize a roster of acts and select a panel of judges. Charge an entrance fee for the acts, admission for the audience and earn extra cash by having a concession stand.
11. **Gumball Lottery:** Fill a gumball machine with gum and plastic ball containers with vouchers good for prizes.
12. **Counting on You:** Participants guess the quantity of jelly beans, paperclips, marbles, coins, etc. and pay to enter the contest. The winner gets a prize.
13. **Flip Your Lid:** Let participants design wild hats to wear on a specific day. For a set donation, each will be entered into prize categories. Winners can be determined by vote-donations or by committee.
14. **Pool Tournament:** Charge an entry fee and see who the best billiards player turns out to be.
15. **Field Day:** Host a day of field events such as a 5K run, an obstacle course and a tug-of-war.
16. **Treasure Chest:** Fill a chest with donated prizes and sell keys to open the chest.
17. **Dart Board Challenge:** Test contestants' aim as they pay to try to hit a bull's-eye for a donated prize.
18. **Raffle/Sweepstakes:** Sell chances to win giveaways. Popular items are always tickets to sporting events. Ask around to find someone who has a season subscription and see if there are any games they can't attend!
19. **Dunk Tank:** Rent a dunk tank and give people a chance to dunk a good sport for a donation. A dunk tank is a great way to enhance a carnival, cookout or bake sale.
20. **Trivia Bowl:** Cater to everyone's competitive spirit and raise money at the same time! Charge a flat fee for people to participate. Create both individual and team challenges, and if you make it a family event, a special round for kids.
21. **Board Game Tournament:** Pick a favorite, such as Monopoly. Assemble 4 person teams that will work together to accumulate points or you can allow individuals to participate. Charge an entry fee for each team in order to earn money for The Children's Institute.



Events

BONUS!! You can often sell sponsorships of events to businesses willing to add their name or logo in exchange for a donation.

22. **Carnival:** Provide games and entertainment with all proceeds benefitting The Children's Institute.
23. **Haunted House:** Scare up some great donations when you build and operate a haunted house and charge admission.
24. **Tee Off for Tots:** Golf scrambles are a great way to capitalize on a popular pastime.
25. **Jail and Bail:** Choose a location to serve as your jail. The "arrested" must call friends to raise funds to be set free. They must raise a certain amount of money to "post bail."
26. **Motorcycle Ride:** Charge a registration fee and collect money from businesses along your route.
27. **Massage-a-thon:** Invite massage school students to gain needed experience hours while patrons pay a fee to have their tense neck and shoulders rubbed.
28. **Walk-A-Thon:** Participants collect pledges for each mile walked.
29. **Laps for Love:** Secure sponsors to pay a set amount for each lap you make around a track or gym room.
30. **Cook-off:** Invite guests to compete for bragging rights as you charge guests to come and sample and vote for the best.
31. **Pancake Breakfast:** Host a public breakfast, charging a set fee for the meal.
32. **Bowl-A-Thon:** Collect pledges and bowl a set number of games.
33. **Picture with Santa/Easter Bunny/etc.:** Charge \$5 per shot, less expensive than at the mall and for a great cause.
34. **Benefit Concert:** Raise the roof while you are raising money! Get a popular band or group of bands to sign on to donate a portion (or all) of the ticket proceeds.
35. **Potluck Days:** Have participants bring their favorite dish along with copies of the recipe and charge each person to eat lunch or dinner. Additional funds can be raised if you sell or auction the recipes.



36. **Comedy Night:** Have a comedian perform. Sell tickets for the event and give a percentage of the proceeds to The Children's Institute.

37. **Luau for Love:** A pig roast + tiny drink umbrellas x grass skirts = equation for a fun time. Charge admission and sell drinks. Hula contests optional!

38. **Softball Game:** Set up teams and charge an entry fee to play. Invite a popular community figure and raise enough interest to charge admission.

39. **Silly String Shoot Out:** Auction off or sell cans of silly string and take aim at volunteers who are good sports like a manager, a teacher or a principal.
40. **Super Bowl/Stanley Cup/World Series Party:** Have a party, charge admission and have people bring lots of food.
41. **Movie Night :** Approach your local theater or movie store to ask about sponsorship initiatives. Many will either give you a discount or provide the event for free with the promise of publicity. If you can offer inexpensive admission, plus donated concession snacks, your Night at the Movies fundraising event will bring in gold!
42. **Skate-a-thon:** Have the use of a skating rink donated for a couple of hours. Participants get sponsors and individuals to pledge for the hours or laps that they skate. Have a concession stand to raise additional funds.
43. **Swim-a-thon:** Each swimmer who competes must complete a set number of laps during a designated day. Individuals and sponsors are recruited to pledge a certain amount for each lap completed.
44. **Office Olympics:** Paperclip chain jump rope, office chair races, post-it origami contests. Entry fees. Enough said.
45. **Male Beauty Contest:** Dress male contestants in pageant attire and collect \$1 votes to find out who wins. Charge campus groups to enter a candidate to boost your donation total.
46. **Magic Show:** Charge for tickets for a special show.
47. **Sock Hop:** Host a dance and charge admission. For extra fun, have a theme like a 50's sock hop and sell refreshments that reflect the theme.
48. **Bachelor/Bachelorette Auction:** Appropriate for adult groups, volunteers offer a date to be auctioned off to the highest bidder for a night on the town. Package the bachelor/bachelorette with the gift certificates based on their interests. Your group may be responsible for making a love connection!
49. **5K run:** If you know some jogging enthusiasts, organizing a run can be just the ticket to raising a lot money along with heart rates!
50. **Celebrity "Roast":** Know somebody of prominence who is a great sport and willing to let people poke fun of him or her for a good cause? Hold this event to pay tribute and sell tickets.
51. **Mystery Dinner:** Offer couples a great night out on the town complete with dinner and entertainment. Contract for a group rate at a local inn or restaurant with a large reserved dining room. Work with a local theater group for script and performers.
52. **Bingo Night:** A perfect event for the whole family. Sell bingo cards and offer prizes or a cut of the money for the lucky winners.
53. **Knit Night:** Hold a knitting class and offer hand-knit items for sale.

54. **Jazz Evening:** Ideal for those long summer evenings, sitting in the warmth of the sunshine, listening to jazz and enjoying drinks and conversation with friends.

Sales

55. **Celebrity Doodle Auction:** Though this idea can take some time, it can yield amazing results. Send requests to celebrities asking for their one-of-a-kind doodles for auction. The more you approach, the better your chances of return. You may be surprised what you get in return!
56. **Bake Sale:** Put your Grandma's favorite cookie recipe to good use and host a bake sale.
57. **Kisses for Kids:** Sell candy kisses with a note reminding the recipient that the proceeds benefit the amazing kids at The Children's Institute.
58. **Lemonade Stand:** It's an oldie but a goodie. Pick a location where thirsty people are and sell the summer thirst-quenching classic everyone loves.
59. **Online Sales:** Put your creativity to good use and turn your drawings, paintings or photos into gift items that people can buy online.
60. **Craft Sales:** Rent a space to creative artists in your community. Charge a flat fee for each local artist and crafts person to exhibit and sell their handmade items. Ask each vendor to donate one item, then raffle or auction them off to raise additional funds.
61. **Gift Wrapping Drive:** Buy wrapping paper in bulk or get some donated and wrap gifts for a small fee.
62. **Used-Book Fair:** Ask for donations of gently-used books and sell them.
63. **Tie-Dye For:** Discounted t-shirts can be easy to find and the low-cost of dye make this a great option for lots of sales. You can even offer to tie-dye items that people bring you for a fee.
64. **Holiday Flower Sale:** Team up with a florist or floral distributor. Sell poinsettias, roses, spring bouquets. Provide a delivery service along with the promotion to create additional funds.
65. **Trash and Treasure:** A yard sale is a great way to get rid of all that extra stuff you aren't using any more and help some amazing kids at the same time. Be sure to advertise the sale in advance to maximize traffic.
66. **Car Wash:** Select a location and time that will offer significant public exposure. But be prepared with an alternate plan in case of inclement weather.



67. **Cookbook Sale:** Gather favorite recipes from friends and family and compile a cookbook to sell. Ask well-known people in your community to contribute recipes, and cook-up some great donations!
68. **Online Auction:** Put some memorabilia online and let the bidding begin!
69. **Message in a Bottle:** Sell messages in your school papers or company newsletters. Parents may want to wish their children a happy birthday. Students may want to put in a funny photo. Co-workers might use the space to advertise items for sale or to thank someone for a job well done.
70. **Spirit Chains:** Have each homeroom at a local school sell paper links for 10 cents. The links are assembled together in a giant chain. Use school colors. Homerooms compete for “most spirit.” Provide incentives for the winning homeroom.
71. **Calendar Sale:** Creating calendars is a breeze with prefabricated software or design wizards. Have a theme and personalize with photos and drawings to bump up sales.
72. **T-shirt Sale:** Sell t-shirts with an original design and donate all or a portion of the proceeds.
73. **Pie in the Eye:** Auction off pies (made of thin paper plates and whipped cream) to be thrown at designated volunteers.
74. **Root Beer Floats:** Sell root beer floats for \$2. Fairly low cost with a minimal number of volunteers needed. Pick a hot day in a busy location, and watch the donations roll in!
75. **Photo Scanning:** Digitize old photos stuck in albums, or piled in shoe boxes. All it takes is a flatbed scanner, image scanning software, and a computer. Set a per photo price, or offer volume discounts for those with a lot of photos. Allow participants to bring their own CDs or flash drives to store the scanned photos, or add them to the service for an extra fee. You can buy CDs and paper sleeves for minimal cost at a bulk retailer.
76. **Cards for Kids:** Design and sell one-of-a-kind greeting cards. Offer hand-delivery service for an additional charge!

Collections

77. **Seasonal Chore-a-thon:** Grass mowing/Leaf raking/Christmas Light Removal or Placement. You can either charge a flat fee, or ask for fair donations. If you decide to go with a flat fee, you can offer discounts to elderly neighbors. *Safety first! When putting up or removing lights, at least two people should work together per house so one person can hold the ladder.*
78. **Cell Phone Collection:** Not only will you help the needy and save the environment, but when you make a cell phone fund raising donation, you'll also make money for The Children's Institute.
79. **Blue Jean Dress Down Day:** Have participants pay to have a day to dress in comfy jeans.

80. **Teddy Bear Cut-out Campaign:** Sell and make a creative display to show off The Children's Institute Teddy Bear donation cut-outs.
81. **Recycling Drive:** Collect aluminum cans and plastic bottles all year round and donate proceeds from the recycling center.
82. **Wishing Well:** Nobody can resist dropping a quarter or two into a wishing well. To be effective, the well needs to be in a high-traffic area.
83. **Close Shave Challenge:** Set a predetermined fundraising goal, and if your group reaches your goal in the allotted time, one person (a manager, teacher, principal, etc.) could promise to shave his head or facial hair or cut her hair.
84. **Loose Change Collection:** Obtain donation container labels from The Children's Institute (call 412.420.2204) and place them on counters of your business and ask clients for donations to benefit The Children's Institute.
85. **Pin Pals:** Get pledges from family, friends and neighbors for the number of pins you knock down when bowling.
86. **Ballroom Dancing Lessons:** Talk to local dance instructors and ask if they're willing to donate their time for a week of lessons. Sign people up, and collect payment in advance. You can divide students into groups such as beginner and experienced, or into age groups, especially if you decide to include kids.
87. **Tips for Tots:** Find a local restaurant that is willing to host your event. Your group will take over waiting tables and bussing dirty dishes, in exchange for tips for your group. Pick a restaurant that is popular so that you can ensure a large turnout.
88. **Coffee House and Poetry Slam:** Set up a microphone and invite people to share a favorite poem they have written or one written by their favorite poet. Sell coffee house drinks.
89. **Printer Cartridge Collection:** A used cartridge is worth between \$1 and \$20, depending on the popularity of the printer and the cost of a new cartridge.
90. **Rubber Ducky Race:** Sell numbered rubber duckies and set them adrift. The one that crosses a pre-determined finished line wins a prize.
91. **Flamingo Attack:** Deploy a flock of pink plastic flamingoes in someone's yard or outside a business entrance. Leave a note explaining that the person or business has been selected by someone to be

Helpful Hints:

1. *Establish a committee to plan and execute fundraising activities.*
2. *Enlist support.*
3. *Establish a budget and set goals.*
4. *Select a fundraiser that best fits your business or group.*
5. *Develop a timeline.*
6. *Set a challenging, yet attainable fundraising goal.*
7. *Remember the three P's: **Plan, Promote and Publicize!***

"attacked" for a good cause. And, explain that they will have to pay \$10 per flamingo to have them relocated. They can, in turn, "attack" another person's yard.

92. **Video Game Tournament:** Think you are the best gamer among your friends? Prove it! Charge entry fees and have a concession stand and settle.
93. **"Quarter" Rally:** Line a hallway or walkway with double stick tape and invite people to add quarters to make a long continuous rope of donations. Get a shopping mall to participate and host the rally, and get stores involved in the challenge.
94. **Rock-a-thon:** Prove that you really rock by organizing a rocking chair
95. **Award Show Party:** Turn your favorite award show into a black-tie affair of your own. Get a banquet facility to sponsor the event and do it up in style!
96. **Art with a Heart:** Make and sell artwork to benefit The Children's Institute.
97. **Trike Race:** What's funnier to see that adults riding tricycles? Adults *racing* tricycles! Urge racers to collect pledges and offer prizes or a trophy for the winners.
98. **Polar Plunge:** Ask each participant to raise a minimum amount through collecting pledges and then plunge into one of our three chilly rivers. Make participants eligible to win a variety of prizes, and make the day of the "plunge" a fun community event with food and entertainment.
99. **Job Swaps:** We all feel at times we can do better than the boss. Auction off his or her job for an afternoon.
100. **The Lunch-Out:** Ask all your colleagues or fellow students to bring in sandwiches for their lunch and donate the money they saved.
101. **Smoke Out:** Get people to sponsor you for giving up cigarettes.