

## HOW TO...THROW A FUNDRAISING PARTY

Whether it's a Halloween party, Easter egg hunt, St Patrick's Day knees up, or maybe even a more formal affair, holding a fundraising party is a great way to raise money for ShelterBox whilst also bringing your friends, family, community or work mates together for an evening of fun.



### What It's All About

By organising or taking part in an event that raises funds for ShelterBox, you will be directly providing aid for people affected by disasters all over the world. A great thing about ShelterBox is that every box bears its own unique number, which means that after your event you can find out exactly where the money you raised has gone via our website [www.shelterbox.org](http://www.shelterbox.org). There are numerous ways to raise money for ShelterBox at your fundraising party. You can charge admission, sell drinks and food, hold raffles and auctions, and charge for games. Whilst you don't need to have all of these activities to make your party a success, you will need to decide as early in the planning process as possible.

Expenses are an inevitable part of holding a charity party, so it's important to decide what, if anything, you will provide for free. That way, you can deduct these expenses accordingly from your fundraising profit and make more accurate projections about your potential party earnings.

On the other hand, fundraising isn't always all about raising money, it's just as important to raise awareness about ShelterBox and the work we do too. You can contact our Fundraising Team and they will be happy to provide you with promotional materials for your party. Whether you show a ShelterBox DVD or give out fliers, making people aware of the work we do is just as valuable.

### Choose a Theme

The great thing about throwing a party is you can hold it any time of the year. You may go for the seasonal option, such as a Christmas party or a summer beach BBQ. Or you may choose to base your party on a particular theme, in which case you are only limited by your budget and your imagination. Either way, picking a theme - or even deciding not to have a theme - is the first step in planning your fundraising party.



You also need to decide early what type of party you want to hold. You'll need to consider dress code, activities, food and who you plan to invite and how many; a kid's treasure hunt requires vastly different planning than a black tie dinner and dance!

### Preparing For Your Party

Once you have a plan for your fundraising party, the real preparation begins. First, you will need to find and book a suitable venue for the party. If you're having a small party at your home, this won't be too difficult; however, you can also consider local community centres, such as pubs, clubs, halls and school facilities. All of these venues usually rent their space out for a fee. If you plan on holding your party on private land, such as on a beach or in fields, always make sure you have the full permission and cooperation of the site owner.

When booking your venue, remember to allow adequate time to set up before the party and clean up afterwards. For example, if you're holding a party from 6pm til 9pm, you should book a block of time from 4pm til 11pm to allow for this, however this will vary depending on the size of your venue, the amount of people attending and how much needs to be set up for the party.

You should also find out what will and will not be provided by the venue. When making your booking check if tables, chairs, kitchen facilities or toilet facilities are included. For larger parties, consider hiring a caterer for the evening. They will be able to set up the venue and take care of all of the cooking. Most caterers will even provide tablecloths and cutlery, although they may charge an additional fee for this.



Once you have a venue and a date for your party you can start to book any of the other elements you need. Depending on the size and type of your party you may need to research, contact and book some of the following: DJs, bands, bouncy castles, games, security staff, marquees, volunteers for car stewarding and ticket collecting, prizes for raffles or auctions, portaloos and tables and chairs if they're not included with the venue.

### **Publicising Your Party**

Once everything has been booked, you will need to publicise your party or send invitations. How you do this depends on the size of your party, but make sure you give yourself plenty of time and your guests plenty of notice. For smaller parties, you could send paper invitations or call guests personally, but for a larger party you will have a greater chance of success if you spread the word wider beyond close friends and family. The more people that know about your fundraising party, the more successful it's likely to be and the more money you're likely to raise. There are a variety of ways you can do this. 1) Make eye-catching posters, fliers and signs advertising the event and distribute around your local area. Make sure they are striking, easy to read and include all the necessary details. 2) Send a press release to your local newspaper, magazine or radio to see if they will run an article about the party or place an ad publicising the event. 3) Use social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, Twitter and chat forums to help you spread the word about your fundraising activities quickly and widely. 4) Make a website. There are now many easy to build sites which are free or cost a minimal amount of money and require very little technical skill. Having a website for your event can be a good way to provide information to prospective donors and could even have a facility to donate online. Many ShelterBox supporters create a page through JustGiving.com



### **On The Day**

It's important to plan and prepare for your fundraising party as much as possible ahead of time. This helps to minimise problems that may arise and will also allow you to have more fun!

If you have not hired a caterer, food should be prepared the night before the party. You should also speak with your venue to see if you can come in the morning of the party to decorate, set up tables and deliver items like drinks and games. Don't be afraid to ask family or friends to help you set up. The more you can do before the event, the better off you'll be.

### **Keep It Safe and Legal**

We don't want you getting into trouble when fundraising for us so do bear in mind that there are some rules and regulations for certain fundraising activities. Some guide lines are outlined below. Or you can contact us on 01326 569782 or [fundraising@shelterbox.org](mailto:fundraising@shelterbox.org) for support and advice for your party.

- If children are attending the party, always ensure that they are safe and that you do not allow them to solicit money or collect money alone or without an adult.
- If you are organising a larger party do check with the venue if there are any health and safety issues or if any kind of insurance is required. If you organise an event that involves the public in any way, you will need to ensure you have public liability insurance.
- If you are going to be carrying money around take care with personal security. Always use a safe route and always be accompanied and/or carry a personal alarm.
- If you want to collect money in a public place, you must first obtain permission to do so. To collect in the street, you will need a licence from the local council who will also give you a set of rules to follow during your collection. Street collections are a popular means of fundraising so you need to apply for the licence well in advance. To collect on private property, for example in a shopping centre, you must ask for permission from whoever is responsible for it. Door-to-door collections are illegal without a licence.
- ShelterBox cannot accept responsibility for accidents, so make sure that your event is safe for all concerned. Assess the risks involved and make sure that they are eliminated or minimised to an acceptable level.
- If contractors, sub contractors or external facilities are used, make sure they have the relevant experience and can demonstrate compliance with insurance and health and safety standards.
- Food safety laws apply when food is available at an event whether it is for sale or not. You need to be aware of these and follow food hygiene procedures. Further information can be obtained from your local authority environmental health department.
- A licence is needed if you have alcohol at your event. You can avoid this issue by either holding your event on licensed premises or by asking a local pub to organise a bar at your venue. Event organisers need to issue a Temporary Event Notice to the Local District Borough Unitary Council. See the DCMS website for more information [www.culture.gov.uk](http://www.culture.gov.uk)

### Top Tips

Let ShelterBox know! We have an experienced and dedicated fundraising team here at HQ. We're just at the end of a phone or email if you need any advice or have any questions or queries. Plus, we can provide you with promotional materials to help support your event. Contact 01326 569782 or [fundraising@shelterbox.org](mailto:fundraising@shelterbox.org)

Failing to plan means planning to fail. It sounds cliché but without some sort of plan it will only result in more stress for you and those around you.

Work out a system for the different parts of event management that you need to cover and put some sensible deadlines in place so that you can manage things in small chunks rather than trying to do everything at once.

Keep an event file so that everything is in one place, use the logic that if I was off sick could someone cover this event for me just by reading the file.

A few days before the event, telephone the venue, caterers, bands etc to confirm the booking and clarify the venue details.

If you're the head party planner, you may feel overwhelmed by your tasks at times. Don't let these situations get the better of you. If you have friends, family or other volunteers available, delegate jobs to them. Or ask your venue and caterers for assistance.

Remember: you're doing this for your charity and it's meant to be fun.