

“Outside the Box” Fundraising Ideas

In addition to the standard fundraising ideas such as emailing your friends, family, and business connections and using social media sites like Facebook to get your fundraising page link to donors, many Walkers decide to host different fundraising events on their own or with other Walkers on their team.

These events are a great way to raise funds and spread awareness within your local community and to personally connect with your donors and explain to them how suicide has affected you.

They can be hosted by a single Walker, or by an entire team. If you choose to host an event with your team members, you are more likely to increase the number of people who attend your event and also the number of people who donate to the cause, bringing you and your team member's one step closer to reaching your goal!

Be a Guest Bartender

Contact a local bar and ask to be a guest bartender for a night. Make an agreement with the owner so that you can benefit from some of the proceeds. Work with a friend or teammate and promote it amongst everyone you know. If you have a large crowd you will increase the amount of sales (and your fundraising) for the night. You can also consider having a cover charge at the front door. This is a great way to speak to the local customers about suicide prevention.

Contact Area Sports Teams for Tickets

Contact your local sports teams and see if they will offer you promotional pricing on a block of tickets for a home game. They may even donate a block of tickets themselves! Many professional sports teams will be happy to do this. You can stage an event and sell tickets locally to support your fundraising goal.

Bonus: Add in a tailgate party or barbeque at an additional charge and ask the people buying tickets to join in on the festivities. Make sure you open this up to everyone too! People may want to attend the tailgate party even if they can't go to the game.

Place a Spare Change Jar on Your Desk

Make your own donation jar and place it on your desk at work. Ask your coworkers to support you with any small change they have in their pockets, or at the bottom of their purses and under their desk. You might be surprised what the small change adds up to! You can also substitute the change jar for a “swear jar”. In the past, walkers have raised almost their entire fundraising goal \$1 at a time from donations placed in a swear jar!

Have a St. Patrick's Day Party

St. Patrick's Day is just a few months before The Overnight. Get out the green and host a celebration of Irish good spirits for friends and family. Charge a cover fee and let your guests know that the party is in support of your fundraising for the Overnight Walk.

Teach Someone Something

Do you have a skill that people want to learn? Sewing, woodworking, automotive repair, painting or something else? Use your talent and teach a one-time class or a series of classes for your friends and family. You can charge a fee for each class – making it clear that the fee is for your fundraising efforts. This way, your donors will get something valuable out of the fundraiser and you will be one step closer to your goal.

Car Wash

Gather your teammates and start washing! You can reach out to a local gas station, or even go door to door and ask your neighbors if they need a car wash. Make some flyers and signs. Share with your customers that you and your team are participating in the Overnight Walk and their payment or tips will be going to a good cause!

If you need any help in planning these fundraising events, or have questions about what may have worked for others in the past, give your Walker Coach a call at 888 -THE-OVERNIGHT (888-843-6837) or email coaches@theovernight.org

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Become a Personal Chef

Is everyone around you jealous of your cooking skills? Fulfill their desire to have you cook a delicious meal for them and become their personal chef for the evening. Get a group of them together, charge by the head, and have them pick up the grocery tab.

Organize a Neighborhood Cleanup

Particularly if you have a truck at your disposal, you and your team can set up a neighborhood hauling or moving service for the day or weekend and help your neighbors clear out unwanted items while they help your fundraising efforts.

Save the Planet to Save Lives

Collect bottles and cans from friends and neighbors and cash them in at a recycling center to be used towards your fundraising goal. You can ask people to drop off their recycled items with you, or you can arrange to pick them up.

Pink Flamingo Caper

Sell “insurance” to friends, family, and neighbors to keep the flamingo out of their yard for \$10-15; for those who don’t buy “insurance”, they will have to pay a fee to remove the bird from their yard, and can also pay a fee to have it placed in someone else’s yard. This can be very fun, but make sure everyone is on-board before you upset anyone with this lovely lawn ornament!

Satisfy a Sweet Tooth

Buy candy in bulk at a wholesale grocery or drug store, and create labels that say “End the Stigma,” “Make Suicide Prevention a National Priority,” or any other phrase that you feel represents your journey. Wrap the sticker around the candy bar, and get some friends to help you sell the candy for \$3-5. You can go door-to- door around your neighborhood or even stand outside of your local supermarket!

Host a Concert

Do you know a local band, dance or acapella group? Ask them if they will donate their time to perform one Friday night. Charge a cover fee, sell candy and soda, or even provide food for your guests. You can also make the night more fun and raffle off some donated items!

Set up a “Mini-Overnight”

A few weeks before the event, pledge to pull an all-nighter. Let your friends and family know, and ask them to support you - \$5 for every hour you stay up. Make it fun by posting pictures of yourself on Facebook or Twitter every few hours to prove you’re still awake! If you want to take this one step further, walk on a treadmill throughout the night too.

Money for Miles

Ask donors to sponsor you for a certain mile of your walk. Divide your goal by 18; the number of miles you will be walking during the Overnight. As each mile is sponsored, post on Facebook: “[Donor Name] is my official sponsor of Mile 1! Who wants to sponsor me for Mile 2?” Promise to take a photo next to each sponsored mile marker and post it on Facebook to recognize your donors.

Dunk Tank

Dunk tanks are a great way to fundraise at schools, in the workplace or at your local church. You’ll need an unlucky volunteer or two (preferably a supervisor or school principal) who will sacrifice themselves for the good of your cause. Have participants pay a fee to dunk the lucky volunteer!

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