



Building healthy
communities

A Guide to Planning a Community Event for the YMCA

*Raise awareness and funds in a fun
way!*



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“My Y is a lifesaver.” That was what a grandmother told us last summer when asked what the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka means to her. The Y is a charity, but it is many things to many people. It is a place that welcomes everyone, no matter their ability, race, gender, age or financial capacity. The Y brings people together, strengthens them, teaches them, and allows them to teach and empower each other. For the most vulnerable people in our community, the marginalized youth, the single parents, the isolated seniors and the low-income families, the YMCA is the place that welcomes them with open arms.

Community events are a fantastic way for members of the public to help the Y help their community. By organizing an event you are sharing [our vision \(LINK to strat plan\)](#).

For every \$100 you raise it is enough to send one child from a low-income family to a week of day camp. For every \$500 you raise it is enough to provide a teen with a place to go after school for a year. Every dollar helps others to realize their potential and value to themselves, their family and their community.

Here are 7 easy steps to help you organize and plan a fun and successful event in support of the YMCA.

- 1. Brainstorm** – Talk to your friends, family and coworkers to generate ideas for an event that really excites you. Your event can be as simple or extravagant as you like – anything is possible!

Some ideas include:

- Host a dinner or BBQ and ask for donations in lieu of gifts
- At your workplace organize a silent auction, bake sale, dress down day or potluck
- Have a garage sale and donate proceeds to YMCA
- Set a goal for yourself (ie. bicycle 100km) and ask for donation/pledges
- If you are hosting a bridal shower include a gift basket raffle with ticket sales going to YMCA
- If you have children, host a birthday party asking for donations for charity instead of gifts

- 2. Form your Planning Team**

Whether the event is big or small, ask some of your friends, family or co-workers to share the tasks and help you organize your event.

Successful teams include:

- A leader who can inspire and engage people with their vision
- A person who is organized and can plan event details
- A person to keep track of the money
- A person who can promote your event and recruit help if needed

3. Establish – Who, what, when, where and why?

Things to keep in mind when planning your event:

- Who will be supporting and attending your event? (your target audience)
- What is your event about? It should fit the size, interests and goals planned by your team.
- When will your event take place? Consider competing events or seasonal changes.
- Where will you host your event? Book a venue or simply have it at your home, office or local park.
- Why are you having this? Define how you will tell people that this event supports a great cause.

4. Confirm your Event with us

By submitting the [Community Events Proposal \(LINK\)](#), you will keep the YMCA in the loop about your event. With a better understanding of your event we may be able to offer suggestions, advertising opportunities, more information or even volunteers to help out. For more information [visit our Frequently Asked Questions \(LINK\)](#).

5. Promote your Event

Strong promotion and publicity are key elements to making your event a success. Spread the word about your event by sending your guests an invitation, email or e-vite and post your event on Twitter, Facebook and other social media websites that you belong to. Also submit event postings for free at many online newspaper and municipal websites. You may be surprised how many people are interested in your event and want to attend or help out.

Begin your own Event giving page through <http://www.CanadaHelps.org>. This online site allows you to accept online donations and have them automatically be receipted and tracked and sent to the YMCA.

We'd be happy to share one of our logos with you for your promotional materials, as long as your event and promo materials are approved in advance by YMCA. We can also supply brochures and pledge cards to support your event.

YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka may be able to help promote your event through our social media streams.

6. Say Thank You!

The most important step is to let your guests know how much you appreciated their support. When thanking them you can let them know that they have helped the YMCA to impact the lives of kids, youth, adults and seniors across our community.

7. Tell us how it went and hand in your funds so they can begin helping!

Cheque - mail to YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka, 22 Grove St. W., Barrie, ON L4N 1M7

Online - at www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca

Drop by – visit your local YMCA within our region. [Click here for our locations.](#)

Phone - call us at 705-726-9622 x 444

In support of

