

FUNDRAISING PACK

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

We're doing all we can to break the cycle of homelessness for young people in your community. We positively impact the lives of over 10,000 children, young people and families each year. But we cannot do it alone. With your support we can continue our work and create a better future for young people across Sussex and Surrey.



YMCA

Here for young people
Here for communities
Here for you

**The following pages will
give you the information
you need...**



Who are YMCA DownsLink Group?

We're the largest charity in Sussex and Surrey working to prevent youth homelessness and support children and young people's emotional and mental health.

We provide a home to over 650 young people every night. We reach a further 9,000 children, young people and their families through our other services such as, counselling, support and advice, mediation and youth work, so that all children and young people have a fair chance to be who they want to be.

Many children and young people experience extraordinary challenges and adversity that can prevent their lives starting well. The ever-increasing level of risk and complexity they face has driven our services to be needed now more than ever before.

Your support enables us to continue making a difference

Our mission is to end youth homelessness, but we cannot do it alone. By taking part in an event and fundraising for us, you will help change lives in your local community.

So, will you join us and do something great that will be good for you and change the future for others?



Set up a JustGiving page

This enables everyone to see your fundraising targets and allows them to donate online and track your progress. If you don't have a target set for your event, set an aspirational target of your own. You are likely to raise over 40% more if you have a target. Think about a video blog and make people feel involved in your fundraising and event journey. This may take effort, but has proved to be very effective. If you achieve your target – raise it... few people will be as generous if you have already hit your goal.

IT IS SO EASY!

Just follow the 7 steps below to get started.

- 1.** Go to the JustGiving homepage and click 'start fundraising'.
- 2.** Click on 'Yes, I'm fundraising for a charity' and log in using your JustGiving account via Facebook or by entering your email address. If you haven't set up an account yet, click on 'Sign up' to create one.
- 3.** Search for and select 'YMCA DownsLink Group'.
- 4.** If you are taking part in one of our organised events, look for it in the event list. If you can't see the event listed, select 'I'm doing my own activity'.
- 5.** Finalise your selection and enter your fundraising target.
- 6.** Personalise your page, including choosing your JustGiving web address – this is the link you'll be sharing with friends and family so they can donate to your page.
- 7.** Check you're happy with your page and click 'launch my page' to make it live.

Top tips from JustGiving

Are you getting the most from your fundraising page?

Use this checklist to make sure you're taking advantage of all the different features:

Have you:

- ▶ Added a photo? Fundraisers who add a profile picture tend to raise 15% more.
- ▶ Added a fundraising story? An engaging story can make all the difference. Not sure what to say? Share what you know about the charity, what the challenges are, why the funds you are raising are important and why you want to make a difference. If you are unsure – simply ask us as we'd be more than happy to share details.
- ▶ Set a fundraising target? Target setters raise up to 46% more, so it's a great way to kick-start your fundraising. If you achieve your target there is no incentive for new supporters to donate, so consider increasing it and share you have done this in your comments – thanking all those who have donated.
- ▶ Added a fundraising summary? Make sure your supporters know what you're doing, for who and why. A page with a summary raises an average of 9% more.
- ▶ Added updates? Regular updates keep your page looking fresh and give you plenty of opportunities to share it. We've found that you could raise an average of 6% more for every update you make!
- ▶ Chosen a page theme? Give your page a background that really reflects your fundraising.
- ▶ Joined a fundraising team? There really is strength in numbers - pages that are part of a team raise an average of 10% more.
- ▶ Joined your company's fundraising? If your company has a JustGiving profile, add your page to it. It's yet another place for people to find out about your fundraising.
- ▶ Add any cash or cheque donations (off-line donations) you've collected so everyone can see the total amount you've raised.
- ▶ Contact your most generous sponsors first and ask them to donate so that people feel more obliged to dig deep...sneaky, but it works and the charity can really benefit!!!



Becky's story

Becky is 19 and left home after her Dad's drinking became too much for her to cope with. Her mum died when she was 10 and her Dad turned to alcohol to deal with his grief. She moved in with her boyfriend at 17 as a way to get away from her Dad, but when that didn't work out she found herself facing homelessness. She was given a home with YMCA DownsLink Group in 24-hour supported accommodation and with the help of her project support worker she has gone back to college to study music and is slowly rebuilding her relationship with her Dad.



“My support worker is great and she's always there if I need someone to talk to. I'm back in college now and doing music which I love. I feel like I've got a future now and things are even getting a bit better with my Dad.”

It's weird but I never thought of myself as homeless – that's something that happens to other people – older people sitting in doorways – not someone like me.

Before my mum died I think I had a really normal life, you know, just normal stuff – school, friends, all that. But then it was just me and my Dad and everything changed. It was all right at primary school but everything seemed to go wrong when I started secondary school. I found it harder to make friends and I got really badly bullied – I never had the right stuff – people would call me skank cos my uniform was always a mess – I got bad acne and was really skinny. I felt like I didn't fit in. My dad was hardly ever at home and when he was I didn't really talk to him as I just seemed to make him angry. It was even worse if he'd been drinking – which was most of the time – and I sort of kept out of sight as much as possible. I started to feel like I was invisible.

When I was 17 I got a boyfriend. I thought he was so nice – he would buy me things and look after me. I didn't plan it but one day my dad was shouting at me so I just packed my stuff and went to live with him. But, he wasn't nice to me anymore and he said he didn't want me there. So suddenly I had nowhere to go – nowhere to sleep. I went to my nan's for a bit, but we're not that close. She let me sleep on the sofa for a few weeks but my grandad's got dementia and they live in a one bed flat so I couldn't stay there. I really didn't know what to do and that's when it hit me that I was actually homeless. I felt so hopeless and like there wasn't anyone in the world who cared about me. I missed my mum.

Coming to live at YMCA has been amazing. I'll be honest, I thought it would be horrible – like some dingy hostel full of scary people. but it's not like that at all. The staff are so nice, they really care about you and they make you feel like you've got a real home.

Fundraising do's and don'ts

Before holding a fundraising event in aid of YMCA Downslink Group it is important you understand and agree to the guidelines listed below to ensure a successful partnership.



Do!

- ▶ Inform us of any fundraising plans and stay in contact to let us know how things are going. We are here to help so make use of us!
- ▶ Promote YMCA DownslinkGroup! Awareness of us and what we do is really important and so if you can share information about our services and the young people we help. This means you are a spokesperson for our charity which carries with it the responsibility of ensuring our good reputation is maintained.
- ▶ Be clear on what funds YMCA DLG will receive from the event and what funds might be used to cover costs.
- ▶ Ask us about YMCA fundraising materials and how we can help promote your event either through social media or through our website. Remember we cannot control the success of an event, this is down to you getting the word out and promoting the event.



Don't!

- ▶ Use our logo without seeking permission first. We need to maintain control over our logo tightly so please ask us for a high-resolution version and let us know how it will be used.
- ▶ Misinform the public about what the fundraising event is for and who will benefit. Be clear what you are doing, why and who is going to benefit.
- ▶ Don't forget to thank everyone who has supported you, attended an event and given generously. This could be in person, or via your Just Giving page. Share your success with them.
- ▶ Don't forget to get any necessary permissions for street collections, selling alcohol or public entertainment. Ask your local council.
- ▶ Do not run fundraising events on public property without permission (including pubs / shops).



Remember

- ▶ Collect and hold all money raised in a safe and secure place (particularly CASH).
- ▶ Keep all money raised separate from your own.
- ▶ Keep details of amounts raised, with accurate records of all donations received or pledged, all event proceeds, plus a record of activities carried out to raise the money.
- ▶ Return all original sponsorship forms to YMCA DLG (if applicable) along with the monies you've raised.
- ▶ Ensure all cheques from you and your supporters are made payable to YMCA Downslink Group – not to you personally.
- ▶ Provide receipts to us for expenses to be deducted from funds raised.
- ▶ Offer donations back to the appropriate persons should your event be cancelled or fail to take place. Most frequently in this situation donors are happy for the charity to still benefit and if this is the case, that money must be paid promptly to YMCA DLG.

Our Top Fundraising Suggestions!

There is not a one size fits all solution to fundraising. With the changes in where and how we work new opportunities are available, while others traditional fundraising methods are near impossible. Some people through their contacts and a well-timed email or phone calls can achieve their fundraising target, but this is not true for all. Below are ideas, but they are simply ideas to get you thinking. YOU know your contacts, your friends, your resources and you know what time and motivation you have so get creative and see what will work for you.

The most effective fundraisers don't try and do it all themselves, they get the support of friends, family and colleagues to help think through what will be effective, what resources you can pool together and this maximises the return of your time and efforts.

When you consider putting your time into something; work out if the money likely to be raised justifies the effort!

- ▶ **Bake some cakes** and sell each slice to your colleagues for a £1. Who doesn't love cake?! Maybe expand this to a bake off competition and come up with a fun prize!
- ▶ **Ask your boss** whether you can approach the whole company with an email asking for support from colleagues. Would the company contribute towards a raffle or competition prize?
- ▶ **Ask your employer** if they offer matched giving which can double your fundraising total.
- ▶ **Guess how many...** sweets in a jar or balloons in a car! This can be anything - be as creative as you like! Winner takes the sweets (you might need to think the balloons and car thing through!).
- ▶ **Sweepstake** - get the whole office or family involved in a sweepstake for a football match, Strictly Come Dancing, PGA Golf, Wimbledon Tennis... or something specific to your work and office.
- ▶ **Ask your local pub** to put on a quiz night (we can supply some questions). Wear our t-shirt and have some fun perhaps hold a raffle halfway through. (*see notes below on how to get raffle prizes).



- ▶ **Bag packing** – pre Covid this was popular for Scouts and other groups to get involved in and still has potential. To pack bags for those who can benefit from assistance and carry bags to their car for a donation can work well and if wearing our t-shirts can raise great awareness. Take a collection box for the donations.
- ▶ **Come Dine with Me** – one of the most popular ways to raise funds. Put on a high-end dinner party inviting guests who are not short of a few £££ and love to dress up smart. Serve up a lovely meal and between courses show them a video (on a laptop?) about what we do and why (easiest way to share why they should support us). Ask guests at the end of the meal to donate what they might expect to pay for a meal of that standard at a restaurant. As supportive friends, knowing you are raising funds for charity – people are usually very generous. Your gift could be the cost of the food or if necessary, take the cost from the donations.
- ▶ **Cocktails and canapés** – similar to the above, but on a smaller and less involved way! Make it fun and give it your own twist.
- ▶ **Christmas wrapping** - offer to wrap other peoples' goodies for a donation - a sure fire way to make cash during the festive time!
- ▶ **EBay sale** - get in that attic and dig out any unwanted clothes, jewellery, sports equipment and make money for YMCA DLG on the online market place! Still got that fishing gear? Been lately? SELL IT!
- ▶ **Get some mates together** and wash cars, windows, anything that could do with a clean in exchange for a few quid. Set yourself up at a Fire station, supermarket, school, office carpark, local church / mosque or community centre... there are endless places to try.
- ▶ Have a look on the internet for charity items (such as Charity Scratch Cards) which might bring in some additional funds. (Ebay)
- ▶ **Speak to friends and family...** who do you know? Who do THEY know? What do they do? Who could donate a product/service or experience that people would pay good money for!? Know anyone that would donate a ride to a leavers prom in their flashy car? Would anyone donate a weekend in their holiday cottage? Maybe you know someone who works for a cinema / i360 / an airline / hairdresser / a car valet / a carpet cleaning company... donations of an experience or service all work!
- ▶ **Got kids at school?** Perhaps their school may hold a non-uniform / mufti day to raise money. Maybe we could provide you with some information so you could speak for a couple of minutes to the pupils and share why supporting young people is so important or play a video about us.
- ▶ **Hire a venue for a party or a 80's YMCA disco!** Get a DJ/ Band to donate their time, sell some tickets and get the party started! 80's nights are ALWAYS popular. Get out those leg warmers, hairspray and luminous fingerless gloves!



Raffle Prizes

For a really successful raffle you ideally need one 'big ticket' item. Something that stands out as a great prize for the cost of a ticket – this gets people excited, and the tickets will soon sell. Hype it up a bit, but also have some good other prizes available too.

- ▶ Go to people you know. Perhaps they sell something as part of their business or create something as a hobby that has a wider appeal. Might they donate one or some items for your raffle?
- ▶ Call or visit local businesses. Send them an email – explain what you are doing and why – include a You Tube link highlighting our work then tell them how they can help.
- ▶ Follow up by a visit – harder to say no to someone standing in front of you!
- ▶ Write a letter and print it off several times asking for support for your event. Hand write some of it so it shows you have taken some time to personalise it to the person / business you are attending. State when and where the event is happening and how a donation or raffle item will help and share details of the charity and what work we do. Explain in the letter that you will return and see if they can help in any way.

Go up and down your local high street and hand a letter to each shop owner / manager and ask that they consider if they can contribute and let them know you will be back. Return a week (or a few days) later and see what they can provide. Let them know you will acknowledge them at the raffle and always follow up with a card or letter of thanks letting them know how much was raised and perhaps some information about a current project the charity is working on.



2022/2023 in Statistics

9,378

young people accessed our services

1,056

young people given a safe home

5,423

people were supported by our counselling services

71%

of the families seen by the Family Mediation Service stayed together, reducing youth homelessness

5,000+

sessions of support and advice were provided by Brighton YAC to young people

86%

of our young people, living in supported accommodation, moved on successfully to independent living

What is Gift Aid?

Gift Aid is a declaration in which you authorise a charity to claim back the Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax you have paid to the government.

If you Gift Aid your donation, YMCA DLG will receive an additional 25p. YMCA DLG can claim Gift Aid tax relief of 25p on every pound you give. If you have a target – it does not include gift aid.

What will you do with money I fundraise?

£25 could provide emergency supplies for a young person removed from an abusive home

£50 could facilitate emergency family mediation

£75 could help a young person get onto a young training scheme to acquire work skills

£125 could train new staff in spotting signs of self-harm

£275 could provide 6 trauma support sessions for sexually exploited young people

£500 could help us fund 'Passport to Independence' – our programme to help young people become independent and make their way in the world

How else can I support?

- ▶ [Volunteer](#) for us
- ▶ [Nominate us as Charity of the Year](#) at work
- ▶ Pro-bono assistance

What events can I get involved with?

- ▶ [Downslink Challenge Walk](#)
- ▶ [Sleep Easy](#)
- ▶ [Skydive](#)
- ▶ [Run](#)

To find out more about our upcoming fundraising events email communications@ymcadlg.org



Shout about it!

Send out a Press Release

It is a great idea to send a press release about your challenge to your local newspaper to tell everyone what you're up to and why. Follow the tips and template below for success. If you have any queries, you can contact us on communications@ymcadlg.org. You can use the YMCA DLG information on page 3 that gives an overview of the work we do.

- ▶ Be concise – aim to keep your story to one page in length.
- ▶ Copy and paste your release into the body of the email, rather than sending it as an attachment.
- ▶ Be objective – don't litter your release with adjectives or subjective phrases (feel free to use puns and be creative in your writing, but don't get too carried away!).
- ▶ Always write in the third person.
- ▶ To find out who to send your press release to, call your local newspaper and ask for the email address for the news desk.
- ▶ Submit a photograph with your story. We can send you a YMCA DLG running vest or t-shirt to strengthen the message.
- ▶ Remember to include the link to your online fundraising page and our website, www.ymcadlg.org

Press Release Template

For immediate release: (Date) – if it's ok for the press to use the story as soon as they receive it
OR

Embargo: (Date) – if you want to forewarn a journalist about an event but don't want them to print your story until a date in the future.

HEADLINE

The headline should capture the editor's interest while also explaining what the press release is about.

PARA 1: summarise the key points of your story in no more than two sentences (include the five w's: who, what, where, when and why).

PARA 2-3: use the following paragraphs to flesh out your story in more detail.

PARA 4 QUOTE: yourself or someone relevant to the story (if not you, ensure the quote is approved).

Contact YMCA DLG if you would like to quote a member of staff.

PARA 5-6: include any extra relevant info here.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Remember to include contact details at the end of the release in case the editor requires any further information (name, details of your online fundraising page, telephone number, email address, website).

NOTES TO EDITORS:

Use this section to include any further relevant background info or to inform the editor that you have attached photos (include captions).

Keep in Touch



Twitter



Facebook



Instagram



YouTube



LinkedIn

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