

# WORKPLACE GIVING HANDBOOK



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## Message From Executive Director

Thank you for taking the next step to help Autism Edmonton expand its Village that Love Built. As the Employee Campaign Manager, you organize and inspire your team's fundraising efforts. ECMs represent some of Autism Edmonton's most dedicated volunteers; we are grateful you have chosen to serve in this role.

This past year has continued to be challenging for everyone. The Autism community has no doubt continued to experience further social isolation and financial constraints, leaving many mentally, physically and emotionally drained. While navigating new challenges and obstacles, Autism Edmonton has continued to provide its essential services to more individuals than ever. Our commitment to the Autism community and the love and respect we share with them has been the driving force in all we strive to accomplish.

As an ECM, your job is to help build the bridge between your colleagues and the vital work Autism Edmonton does. You are responsible for shaping your organization's Workplace Campaign to fit your company best and to have fun while doing it!

We are here to help. With this guide, along with other resources available on Autism Edmonton's website, and the support from Autism Edmonton staff, your campaign will run smoothly while making it fun and engaging for all involved!

Thank you for your leadership. Let's get started!

**Melinda Noyes**

*Executive Director*



# Your Workplace Campaign Makes a Difference

**Whether you are at a small business or a major corporation, you can join the other local organizations that support Autism Edmonton with Workplace Campaigns each year.**



# How to Run a Workplace Campaign

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# 1. PREPARE

The more you prepare, the more success you will have in your campaign! It's important to know what you need to do before you begin and identify areas in which your team can lean on Autism Edmonton staff for support.

## HOW TO GET STARTED



### TALK TO AUTISM EDMONTON

We are here to help! The most effective ECMs work closely with Autism Edmonton staff and are readily able to share information about Autism Edmonton's local work with their colleagues. We would love to get you up-to-speed on our newest initiatives and help you come up with fun and engaging ideas for your campaign.



### SECURE SUPPORT FROM TOP-LEVEL MANAGEMENT

The most successful campaigns have strong support from the highest levels of leadership. Meet with your senior leadership and confirm their support of the campaign. Map out any places where you'll need their specific involvement, such as having them send out an email to staff to encouragement supporting the campaign. Make sure they know about campaign dates and goals and be sure to ask about any corporate gifts or company matching programs for employee gifts.



### RECRUIT YOUR TEAM

Create a team large enough to help you manage your campaign. Ideally, campaign teams should include employees from a variety of levels and departments. This will help lighten your workload and increase participation across the organization!



### SET A CAMPAIGN GOAL

Your colleagues will likely want something to strive for, so set a goal for them to reach! If you ran a campaign in previous years, look at the numbers and think about what you can achieve. Ask senior leaders if you can offer incentives to employees for hitting the goal, such as a paid day off or catered celebration lunch.

## Understanding your role as the Employee Campaign Manager

As an ECM, your role is to plan, coordinate, delegate and implement a successful Autism Edmonton campaign for your Colleagues.

As the ECM you are responsible for:

- Developing a campaign timeline with your Autism Edmonton representative.
- Serving as the organization-wide leader of your campaign.
- Coordinating the overall execution of the campaign plan.
- Arranging all campaign meetings.
- Monitoring and reporting campaign results in a timely and accurate manner.
- Working with your campaign team to ensure everyone understands their roles.
- Thanking all colleagues who become involved with the campaign.
- Evaluating your campaign and making recommendations or plans for next year.

## SHARING AUTISM EDMONTON'S MISSION

Autism Edmonton has a wide range of programs and services it offers across the Edmonton Area. It can be tough to succinctly explain why it is so important for your colleagues to support the campaign while helping them understand the impact their support has on our community. Here are some quick ways to share why donating to Autism Edmonton matters.

### MAKE IT PERSONAL.

Everyone has experienced adversity somewhere along their journey. Currently in Edmonton 1 in 33 individuals are diagnosed as autistic. Whether you or someone you know is autistic, or if you are someone who appreciates creating equitable opportunities for everyone there are plenty of examples you can share to help make your presentation personal.

### CONNECT THE DOTS.

Autism Edmonton leads several programs in the Edmonton Area. We support individuals with or without a diagnosis, individuals of all ages, and the support networks of autistic individuals. Autism Edmonton is a gap filler, we serve the greatest need in our community and ignite the power and potential of our membership. Autism Edmonton is also the oldest autism organization in the province, serving Edmonton and the surrounding area since 1971.

### SHARE THE IMPACT.

Without a unifying force in our community looking at the data behind these gaps in services and needs, developing solutions and ensuring donor dollars are spent effectively, many people in Edmonton would not receive the help they need. Autism Edmonton is here to support and uplift those who need support and it starts when each donor decides to give to this important work.

# WHAT DOES AUTISM EDMONTON DO?

Since 1971, Autism Edmonton (Autism Society of Edmonton Area) has provided services and support to autistic individuals in our community. Autism Edmonton has built a reputation as the "go-to" Autism Centre in Edmonton that connects families, individuals and professionals with autism-related resources and programs.

We provide programs and support services for autistic individuals during all stages of life and any stage of diagnosis. For example, we offer peer discussion groups for autistic adults, LGBTQ+ members, autistic women, and for both partners and parents of autistic individuals. Additionally, we provide respite, recreational, and learning activities for different ages. We also promote well-being and strengthen our community by increasing understanding of autism.

## We lead programs that make a difference.

We lead programs designed to meet specific community needs and provide direct support to families and individuals.

## We tackle the issues.

We identify areas of need & bring together local governments, businesses, schools & volunteers to drive positive change in communities across the city.

## We empower people.

We connect individuals with knowledge & services, which has a positive impact on the lives of people in the community as well as the lives of their family members, friends & neighbors.

## We fill gaps.

We continually evaluate our programs to ensure we are providing supports for the greatest need in our community. We adapt and rise to the occasion when our community needs us most.

## PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT



Occasio aims to provide opportunities of growth for individuals and support for families. Occasio supports autistic kids, and youth to make friends, practice independence, gain confidence, and stay active.



The Pantry program brings fresh and nutritious foods to the tables of autistic families experiencing food insecurity. It is designed to provide access to healthy food and other essential items in an autism-friendly environment for autistic individuals and their families, with limited income.



Autism Edmonton has created an exciting new housing program to advance opportunities with affordable housing providers for autistic adults in Alberta. We are building connections and increasing awareness among communities and rental providers throughout the province.

# YOUR DONATION MAKES A DIFFERENCE

**Your Gift to Autism Edmonton makes a difference in the lives of thousands of Edmontonians.**



**Provides job readiness training and skill development to 96 autistic job seekers.**



**Provides resources navigation services to over 300 individuals across the Edmonton Area.**



**Provides a family of 4 with food on their table for a month.**



**Provides one month of social recreational opportunities to two autistic youth in a safe, inclusive, and fun environment.**

# EXAMPLE CAMPAIGN TIMELINE

## 12 WEEK

- Engage your management team with your fundraiser idea.
- Plan your campaign with the help of your Autism Edmonton representative. Determine start and end dates, map out any events and set your fundraising goals.
- Recruit additional campaign committee members.

## 10 WEEK

- Finalize your campaign committee
- Begin regular meetings

## 8 WEEK

- Finalize your giving platform.
- Develop a campaign theme and calendar of events.

## 6 WEEK

- Develop a communications plan, making sure to check out Autism Edmonton's campaign templates and resources.
- Coordinate with your Autism Edmonton representative to have a story or presentation shared during your campaign.

## 4 WEEK

- Talk to your Autism Edmonton representative about our latest work. Practice your presentation to colleagues so you are ready to tell Autism Edmonton's story and answer any questions that may come up.

## 2 WEEK

- Host events for your top-level donors.

## LAUNCH

- Host kick-off event for all employees
- Send initial pledge email and make sure you have a timeline to send reminders throughout the campaign.
- Continue educating employees, with help from the Autism Edmonton team.
- Remind your team of your campaign goal and set check-ins to discuss updates throughout the campaign.
- Throughout your campaign, make sure you are asking for your colleagues to pledge their gift to Autism Edmonton. People won't give unless you ask!



# CAMPAIGN KICKOFF!

A campaign kick-off is a company-wide event or meeting to educate and inspire your colleagues about giving back to their community through Autism Edmonton, with an element of fun. Every campaign kick-off is different. Some larger companies, host a campaign kick-off that doubles as a chili cook-off. Some smaller companies, host an all-staff meeting where they invite speakers to present about Autism Edmonton's mission. Your kick-off should be tailored to your organization and what best suits your needs.



## Here are some things to consider when planning a campaign kick-off:

### What is your budget?

You do not want to start planning an event only to realize it is not financially feasible. Talk with your senior executive leadership about plans and a budget first.

### Are your colleagues interested?

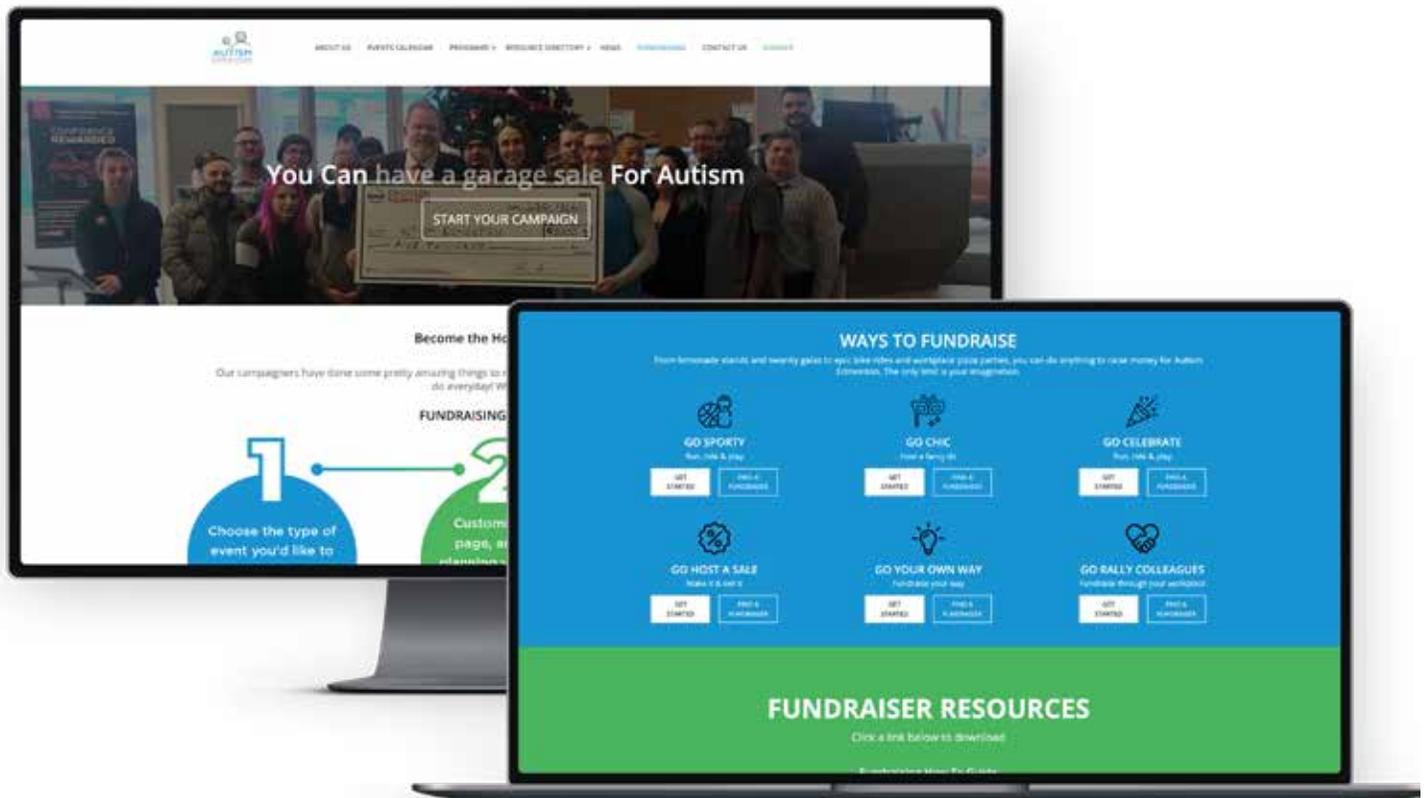
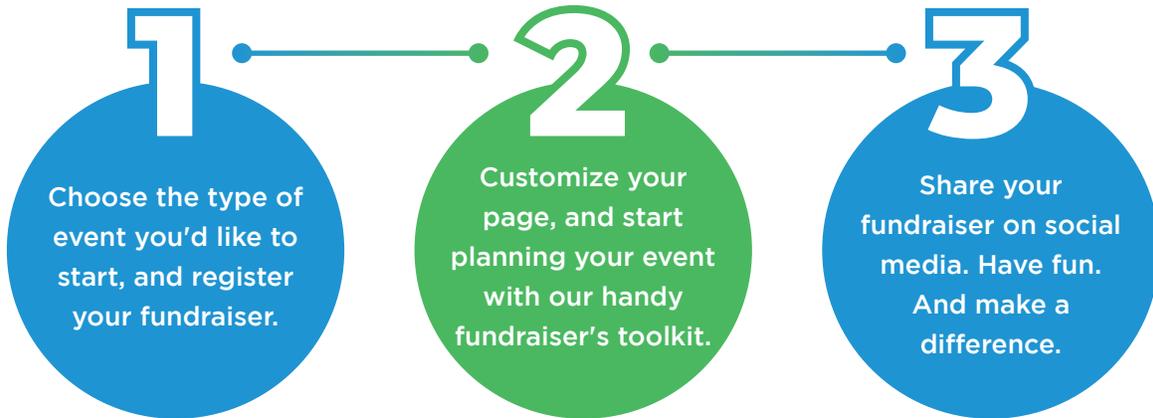
A key factor in planning an event is to plan something fun and interesting for your coworkers. Garnering as much support and participation as possible is what will make your kick-off a success. Know their interests, think about what would work best for your organization's culture and work from there to plan something people will look forward to!

### What can you do?

If you are at a large organization, think about how you can engage smaller sets of employees to keep them interested. If you are at a small workplace, maybe there is another organization you can team up with for a kick-off event. If you are running your campaign at your busiest time of year, a kick-off event outside of your busy workday or during a break might be the most practical. There are plenty of ways to have great kick-offs, large and small, but be aware of what is realistic.

# USE AUTISMEDMONTON.ORG TO HOST YOUR EVENT

Our campaigners have done some pretty amazing things to raise money for autism. And they're thinking of new things to do everyday! What will you do?



## 2. INSPIRE

A key part of your campaign is inspiring your colleagues to support Autism Edmonton's work in our community. Below you will find ideas for how and when to share information about Autism Edmonton with your team.



### **VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

Engaging employees in volunteer opportunities will allow them the opportunity to directly connect with Autism Edmonton's work. If you are interested in setting up a volunteer opportunity for your organization, please contact your Autism Edmonton representative.



### **PROMOTIONAL OPPORTUNITIES**

We're here to help! Autism Edmonton has materials available for you to promote your campaign, including:

- Posters and Flyers
- Template email messages
- Informational materials about our work in specific areas
- Pop-up banners for decoration at events
- And more!



### **CUSTOM PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS**

Many organizations like to develop their own materials to promote their campaign. We think that's great! Talk to your Autism Edmonton representative to brainstorm ideas and see where we can be helpful.

# THREE PHASES OF PROMOTION

## BEFORE CAMPAIGN

- Share information about Autism Edmonton's latest work. This can be done via email, during planning meetings, in the break room - anywhere!
- Thank last year's donors. It is important to acknowledge employees that have given in previous years. Be sure to appreciate them leading up to the campaign kick-off.
- Share prior year results. By sharing last year's results and your campaign goal for this year, you are giving your colleagues something to work toward. If this is your first fundraiser, share your goal and what you hope to accomplish together as a team!
- Share a schedule of activities for the upcoming campaign. This schedule will generate excitement among employees and give your team an idea of what to expect.
- Send a campaign preview email.
- Display Autism Edmonton materials throughout the office.

## DURING CAMPAIGN

- Send a campaign kick-off email from your organization's leadership.
- Share instructions for making a pledge.
- Send donation reminders.
- Invite speakers from Autism Edmonton to campaign events. This will help employees have a better understanding of the work Autism Edmonton does in the community.
- Inform employees about incentives or corporate matching gifts. If your senior leadership has matching programs or corporate gifts, it can encourage employees to give more.

## AFTER THE CAMPAIGN

- Highlight campaign results. Share your total raised and be sure to thank everyone who participated.
- Thank donors for their contribution. Hosting a "thank you" event or giving out tokens of appreciation are two great ways to make people feel like their contribution was important.
- Send a "thank you" email to your campaign team.
- Send a thank you email to donors.

# 3. ASK

People do not give if they are not asked. It is important to directly ask your colleagues to donate to Autism Edmonton throughout your campaign. Your ask may come in multiple forms – in person, during events or through email. Below is information about Giving Communities and tips you can use to make “the ask.”

## MAKING THE ASK



### **TALK TO YOUR AUTISM EDMONTON REPRESENTATIVE**

We are available to help you come up with the best strategy for making your ask.



### **GET THEIR UNDIVIDED ATTENTION**

Schedule a time to your colleagues at a meeting or kick-off event and ask them to participate in your campaign with a donation.



### **TELL THE AUTISM EDMONTON STORY**

Come prepared with reasons why people should give to Autism Edmonton. Use tips on page 8 to help prepare. If you would like to invite an Autism Edmonton representative to tell our story, please let us know and we can send a speaker.



### **EXPLAIN HOW TO GIVE**

As the ECM, you can determine which giving platform will be used and it is your responsibility to tell people where and how they can donate. There are a couple of options to choose from. Keep in mind, if you work for a larger parent organization, your company may have already determined the giving platform to use. Check with your contacts at your parent organization to find out.



### **BE DIRECT**

It is easy to do all the things listed above and still forget to make a direct ask. Make sure you are clear and direct when asking your colleagues to give. Autism Edmonton representatives are available to help during the planning or execution of your campaign. We know it can be especially difficult to ask for donations and we are here to make that process as easy as possible. If you would like suggestions, tips or for a speaker to make “the ask,” please let us know.

# 4. THANK

Thanking those who participated in your campaign is a critical part of your campaign. Not only will your colleagues feel appreciated for their contributions, but they will be more likely to support the campaign in the years ahead because they know their contributions truly made a difference.



## THANK TOP-LEVEL MANAGEMENT SUPPORT

The most successful campaigns have strong buy-in from senior leadership. Thank your executive leaders for their support of the campaign. Be sure to highlight any effort on their part to secure corporate gifts or company matching programs.



## THANK YOUR CAMPAIGN TEAM

Your team will have helped your organization's campaign from start to finish. They were able to lighten your workload and increase the impact of your campaign. Be sure to thank them for their dedication and hard work.



## THANK THOSE WHO DONATED OR PARTICIPATED IN EVENTS

At Autism Edmonton, we are extremely grateful for every gift, large or small. Be sure to acknowledge each employee that donated, advocated, or volunteered during your company's campaign.



# WRAP UP!

## After thanking your colleagues, there are a few things left to do.

### REPORT RESULTS

- Look over any paper pledge forms to ensure everything looks correct.
- Schedule a time for your Autism Edmonton representative to pick up results, any cash donations, and any materials you used during the campaign. We will also do a cheque presentation photo at this time!

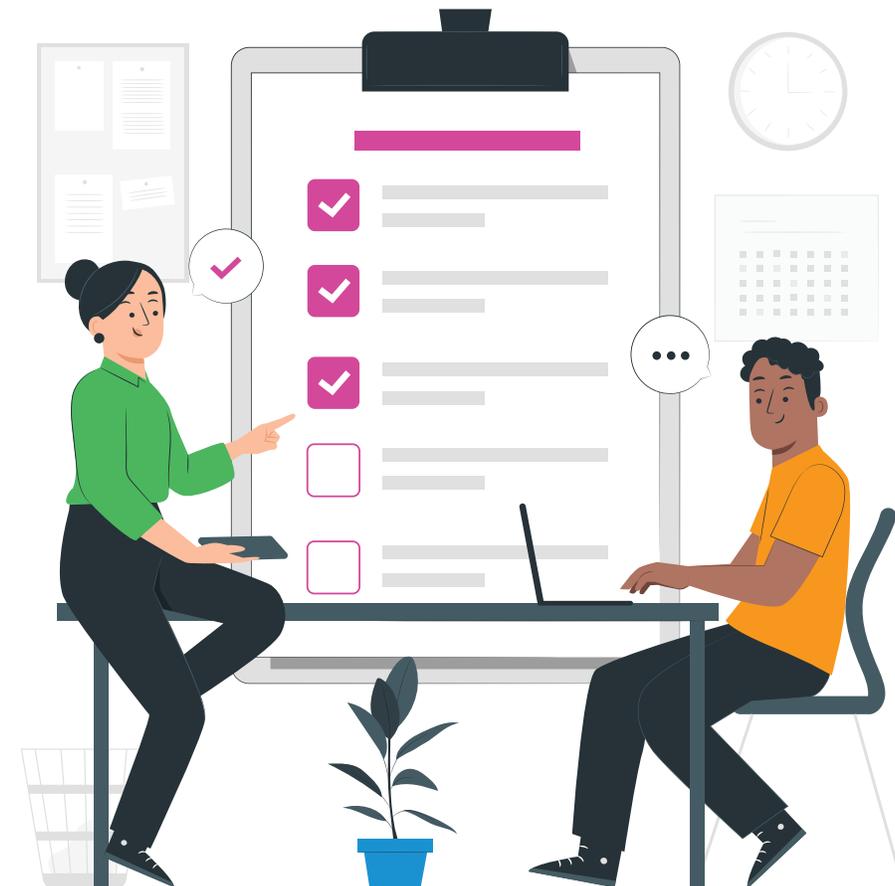
### PLAN AHEAD

- Use our Planning Resource to gather feedback about the campaign from senior leadership, your campaign team and your Autism Edmonton representative. Talk about what worked and what didn't and start a conversation about what next year's campaign will look like.
- Save all relevant notes and resources in an easy-to-remember place for volunteers to use next year.
- Identify next year's ECM and make a formal introduction between the new ECM and your Autism Edmonton representative.

### STAY INVOLVED

Autism Edmonton has events and opportunities throughout the year, even when campaigns are not running. Here are some ways to stay involved and updated:

- Stay in the know! Sign up for our monthly newsletter to stay in the loop on all of our activities, so you are ready to hit the ground running when next year's campaign begins.
- Work with your human resources department to implement a new-hire program to give new employees the opportunity to contribute when they are onboarded. Ask your Autism Edmonton representative for help and ideas on this front



# FAQ

## **How long should a workplace campaign run?**

The average campaign runs for one to two weeks, which is usually enough time to kick off your campaign, effectively promote Autism Edmonton and make your ask without overwhelming your colleagues. An exception might be if you are the ECM at a very large or multi-site organization.

## **When should our workplace campaign take place?**

You should run your campaign at a time that is best suited for your organization.

## **How can employees give?**

Autism Edmonton offers several options. Please connect with your Autism Edmonton representative to discuss what will work best for your organization.

## **How do I work this into my schedule?**

The best way to run a campaign without being too overworked is to recruit a committee and delegate. Work with your Autism Edmonton representative and let them know your limitations. This will allow you to come up with a plan that fits both your organization's needs and your busy calendar.

## **Can my colleagues get a tax receipt?**

Yes! All donations over \$20 qualify for a tax receipt.

## **Do you have ideas on types of fundraisers we could run?**

Endless ideas! Please see the next page for some ideas of what would be. Get creative and have fun!

# FUNDRAISING INSPIRATION

## **Skill Share**

Have you or your colleagues got a special skill? Perhaps you're a yoga guru, a brilliant baker or a fabulous florist. Host a session over lunch or after work, share the skill, and ask everyone for a donation in return.

## **Coffee Break**

Take a break from work with a classic coffee morning. Set a date, spread the word and get baking. Why not give yourselves a theme, or make it a bake-off competition? Ask anyone tucking into the baked goods for a donation to Autism Edmonton. It's a classic and simple office fundraising idea.

## **Enterprise Challenge**

Split employees into groups, set your deadline, pick your judges and then let the competition begin! Each team must pitch a fundraising idea to the bosses to secure seed funding, and then see whose idea raises the most.

## **Dress Up/Down Day**

Whether it's dressing up, donning fancy dress or dressing down, break out of the routine and ask colleagues for a donation for taking part. What other fun fundraising activities could you do on the same day to boost your total?

## **Quiz**

Social, fun, competitive, and a sure way to raise some hard cash! Whether virtual or in person, set a date, find a quizmaster, prepare your questions and watch the money roll in.

## **Physical Challenges**

Get colleagues together and plan a sponsored physical challenge for a good cause. From a sponsored walk to extreme adventures like mountain climbing, you'll raise much-needed funds for Autism Edmonton while team-building.

## **Duvet Day Raffle**

Raffle off the chance for an extra day's holiday. It's an office fundraising idea sure to pique your colleague's' interest.

## **Marathon Events**

How about covering the distance across the Channel from the office on a rowing machine? Or cycling for 24 hours solid? Get a team of colleagues together and decide on a marathon event to ask fellow employees, relatives and friends to sponsor you for.

## **Golf Day**

If you and your colleagues love a round of golf, organise a golf day and invite customers, contacts and friends and family to take part. Invite us as well, we would love to spread the word about Autism Edmonton!

## **Lunch Is On Me**

If your workplace likes to order in lunch on a Friday, why not offer to cater for everyone one week, in return for a donation? A pot of soup or a batch of chilli is cheap to make and your colleagues are sure to dig deep for homemade goodness. Or ask everyone to bring in a home-cooked dish and sell lunch to each other.

## **Gain An Hour, Give An Hour**

When the clocks go back in autumn, ask everyone to donate one hour's pay to Autism Edmonton.

## **Give As You Earn**

One of the easiest ways to give money to Autism Edmonton is through a monthly donation in your wages. Lots of companies offer payroll-giving schemes to enable employees to give to good causes direct from salaries. Consider signing up and encourage colleagues to do the same. It'll make an enormous difference in your community.

## **Office Olympics**

Who will take the gold in speed typing, synchronised chair swivel or paper aeroplane throwing? There's plenty of fun to be had in aid of charity with an office sports fundraising day.

## **Sponsored Silence**

Sometimes the old-school fundraisers are the best! You could also challenge colleagues to give up other things they love for the day, week or month – like chocolate, social media or post-work pints.

## **Lunch & Learn**

Invite guest speakers to support your charity fundraising efforts and lay on lunch for their audience. Sell tickets to the event in aid of Autism Edmonton.

## **What A Difference A Day Makes**

Donate a day's wages and encourage others to follow suit.

## **Office Baby Photo Competition.**

Ask your colleagues to bring in a photo of themselves as a baby, then charge colleagues to guess who's who.

## **Charity Book Sale**

Donate your old reads and hold an office book sale. It's one of the cheapest and easiest workplace fundraising ideas.

## **Job Swap**

Sponsor your manager to work on the shop floor or how about auctioning off the boss's job for the day to the highest bidder? Job swapping is a great fundraising idea for businesses.

## **Dress As Your Teenage Self**

Whether you were a 70s hippy or a 90s grunge kid, recreate your favourite look from your teenage years for the day, in exchange for a donation.

## CONNECT WITH US

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