



## 2

## SMART FUNDRAISING

This Guidance Sheet aims to provide further information on fundraising options for your newly opened toy library. Having identified some potential sources of funding whilst in the early stages of setting up your toy library, the following information addresses some further fundraising issues in more depth, including how to create a fundraising group, raising money from fundraising activities and some suggestions of in-house fundraising possibilities.

### Raising Your Own Money

It's a good idea to raise your own funds to supplement the funding you will receive from other sources. In doing so, you will signal to grant-giving bodies that you are serious about your proposals, and have good connections with the local community. Additionally, monies gained from fundraising activities can provide a useful form of extra income that you can spend on unforeseen expenses for which you will be unable to plan. Fundraising events will also stimulate interest in your project, and can therefore help promote your toy library within the local community.

### Setting a Fundraising Budget

You will need to know what funds your toy library needs in order to plan a successful fundraising strategy. The best way to do this is to calculate the anticipated income of your toy library against your total expected expenditure to discover whether there will be a deficit - this is the amount of money you will need to raise through in-house fundraising activities and events.

### Creating a Fundraising Group

Raising funds for your toy library project can sometimes be a daunting task, so it's a good idea to start by forming a fundraising group. Invite some volunteers to help with various fundraising activities, including planning, writing letters, visiting possible donors and making local contacts. Organise to meet once a week to coordinate your efforts - such groups encourage creative fundraising, and allow your toy library to be independent by enabling your volunteers to plan, execute and measure their own campaigns.

### Top Tip



**Try to make every fundraising activity a publicity activity. Whether it's organising a bake sale or allowing a book club to attend your toy library, make sure you invite as many users to the launch of these activities as you can. In doing so, not only will you maximise the amount of money you will make from your chosen activity, but you'll also increase community awareness of your project.**

### In-House Fundraising Suggestions

The following list offers some fundraising suggestions for your toy library, but the list is by no means definitive and we're sure you can think of many more:

- Organise a craft sale. You could either have a range of stalls in your premises, or run a stall at a local festival or fun day. This will allow you to make connections within the local community, raise extra money and publicise your project.
- Produce a charity catalogue. Fundraising catalogues can offer presents for birthdays or Christmas, and can be passed around existing members as well as friends and family in order to raise awareness and raise money.
- Allow a children's book club to meet at your toy library. Many book clubs will offer a percentage / free book deal to their hosts.



# Toy Library Guidance: Series 2

Running a toy library in Scotland



## Membership Subscriptions / Toy Loan Fees

Many toy libraries generate regular income by charging their users a monthly/annual fee for membership. Projects generally set a fee of between £1 and £20 depending on the services on offer. Concessionary rates can be made available for lower incomes families. Some library projects also made a small charge for each toy loan (usually ranging between 20p and £2 depending on size/complexity of toy). Additionally, you could perhaps charge users a 'flat' fee per visit, which may combine a play session with taking a toy home.

## Commercial Sponsorship

One further source of funding for your toy library could be the sponsorship of local businesses. Some businesses may be able to donate goods or small amounts of money, or prizes for raffles and fundraising events. Local businesses may also have community funds available only via employees, so check your members' connections! Additionally, branch managers of many national firms (supermarkets, banks, building societies, etc.) may also have small community funds to distribute. Ask for an appointment and make sure to demonstrate to the business how your project helps their Customers. Supporting local charities is good practice for many businesses, and will result in good publicity for them and funds for you!

## Community Support

Some community groups (rotary clubs, freemason lodges, religious organisations, etc.) may opt to specifically raise money to support local charities and initiatives. Try to organise an appointment, or offer to attend one of their own meetings, and propose that they make you their charity for the quarter/year, or perhaps the recipient of a festive toy appeal. Remember, when meeting with community groups, make sure to fully explain what your project will do, and particularly, how it will benefit the local community of which such groups are an integral part.

## Toy Retailers

It's a good idea to build relationships with local toy retailers. Make them aware that toy libraries are good for their business, especially if you intend to purchase the majority of your toys from one source.

Subsequently, as your project develops, you may even be able to negotiate deals with the retailer. Established toy retailers only sell toys which meet the correct safety standards, and will have experienced staff who can offer accurate advice.

## Checklist

- Set a fundraising budget?
- Thought about establishing a fundraising group?
- Made a list of some possible fundraising activities?
- Considered whether you will charge a membership fee?
- Researched whether any local businesses or community support groups may be able to offer sponsorship

## Smart Play Network Members Support

Member you have access to telephone and email support. For more information about the topics covered in this guidance sheet, or any other queries you may have about your group, please contact us using: 0131 554 2620 or [admin@smartplaynetwork.org](mailto:admin@smartplaynetwork.org)

It is free to be a member of Smart Play Network, for more information on how to become a member please refer to our website: [www.smartplaynetwork.org](http://www.smartplaynetwork.org).