

PKU Awareness and Fundraising Event Ideas

A collection of ideas to host events around PKU Awareness Day, PKU Awareness Month, or other days recognizing PKU and rare diseases. Events can be held any time of the year!

Art Show/Sale

Do you know an artist willing to provide some art for a sale or special showing? Sell tickets to the event or even sell some art. Ask the artists (or local art gallery) to contribute a portion of the sale to your cause. Kids also make some of the best art. Host a few "art days" at someone's home to create some masterpieces. Then auction them off to the highest bidder!

Backyard Carnival

It's easy to turn a small, or large, outdoor space into a fun day at the fair with simple yard games or booths and tasty treats. You can entertain all ages! Sell tickets to the event, or for each game. Prizes are optional, but everyone loves winning a goldfish right? Check with your local fast food places or dollar store for potential prizes or giveaways. Many will donate overruns or leftover products to local charities.

Bake Sale

This time honored idea is one of the easiest to coordinate. Bake your heart out and then sell the items. Ask if you can host a table at your school, work, local grocery store or church a few times a year. Holiday themed treats work well such as heart shaped cookies around Valentine's Day, Holiday favorites around Christmas or even Shamrock cookies around St. Patty's Day!

Bike-A-Thon or Walk-A-Thon or Bowl-A-Thon or Dance-A-Thon

The ideas here are endless. Ask for pledges for every mile biked or walked, every pin knocked down, or every minute danced. Locate a free place and simply charge a small entrance fee or donation for the events that can be witnessed. Raise additional funds by serving snacks and beverages.

Birthday Party/ Wedding/ Anniversary

Donate to a cause in lieu of receiving gifts. While this may seem to make sense for adults who are difficult to shop for because they already have everything.....many children are more than willing to help raise money instead of receiving gifts. Your gentle suggestion to relatives may also help to keep your home free of "toy clutter" while helping support a great cause. Children love to help and you are never too young to learn the joy of giving in support of others.

Car Show

Do you know any car enthusiasts? They love to get together and show off their cars. Ask around to see if a local car group would host a show and donate all or part of their proceeds from tickets or food to support your cause.

Circle of Friends Dinner

Invite over a small group of close friends or ‘friends of friends’ and make a personal ask or show a PKU YouTube video to the group. (Like the one on our *Lifting the Limits for PKU* page.) This intimate group setting may be the easiest way to inform others and in turn ask them to ask their friends for support.

Concert

Everyone loves music right? Why not host an event highlighting your local swing band, a college vocal group, local musician who has made it big, or high school choir? The group will most likely donate their time or charge a minimal fee for the performance.

Cookbooks

Have friends and neighbors pull their best recipes together for a cookbook sale. Make it a theme book---desserts, soups, low-protein treats, or school lunch ideas. Raffle off an item prepared by one of the authors in the book for an extra “sale” option.

Craft Fair

Utilize the talents of your family and friends. Homemade items are quite popular right now. Check with your local school, church, or community center to rent a space (or see if they will donate it). Find crafters through word of mouth or local advertising. Rent them a table for the day and ask if they would contribute a portion of their sales back to the cause.

Flower Sale

Honor your PKUer with a flower sale. Sell flowers “Roses for Research” during sporting events, prior to high school theatrical performances, before school dances, or around Valentine’s Day. Who doesn’t love a flower and helping someone in the process?

Game Night/Trivia Night

This easy idea could even happen in the comfort of your home. Charge a “player fee” to those participating and allow the games to provide the fun and entertainment.

Golf Tournament

This is an idea for a larger fundraiser. Golf Tournaments take a lot of manpower and time. Teams pay a generous entry fee, participate in hole contests, paddle wheel raffles, silent auctions – the additions to a tournament are endless!

Holiday Events

Sell valentine’s or flowers, make leprechaun traps or shamrock snacks, host an Easter egg hunt in your neighborhood, have a block party or pool party, spook folks with a haunted house, and sell holiday wreaths. The holidays are a great way to brainstorm ideas for simple and quick fundraisers you can host in your neighborhood, local library, or school.

Letter Writing Campaign (Or the Non-Event)

You can do this one tonight! Send a simple letter to everyone in your address book detailing your experience with PKU and how important it is to support research. Many times our lives are so filled up with events that family and friends may appreciate a straightforward ask that doesn't involve their time as well.

Meal Raffle

Have volunteers donate time to make a simple, yet lovely, meal. Sell tickets for each meal. Maybe an area restaurant would sponsor part of the food? Check with local your pizzeria or diners to see if they would donate food. Or ask a local organic farm or community share agriculture farm to host a sustainable tasting dinner. Add another spin – how about a progressive dinner? People travel to several locations for each course of the meal.

Paint for PKU

One of the latest trends is to gather some friends and host an evening of painting. Each person is charged a fee for supplies and registration. The instructor may even donate the entire proceeds to your cause! These events are held at establishments specific to crafting, or even at local wineries, restaurants or in the comforts of home.

Restaurant Night

Many restaurants offer non-profits up to 20% of the proceeds from a night of dining at their establishment. You pick a night and promote it to your community as "Pizza for PKU". By collaborating with local restaurants or area businesses this could be an annual event that builds over time. Everyone likes to eat!

Silent Auction

Silent auctions are a great way to raise funds. Even by combining one with event ideas listed above are sure to be successful! Approach family, friends, community members and local businesses to donate items. Find a local church or other venue that will not charge and host your own silent auction for PKU.

Social Media Campaign

Use your social media outlets to raise funds for PKU. These outlets can serve as the fundraiser itself, or are an important part of planning your events. A quick way to get the word out, build excitement and reach more than just your friends and family. Create a buzz! Even invent a challenge – people love to see challenges, especially to recognize and raise money for a great cause while doing something fun on social media. Encouraging a "call to action" is key.

Talent Show

Host a talent show at a local school or restaurant and charge an admission to enter the contest, as well as, a fee to attend.

The Non-Event (is still an event)

Sometimes the best event is no event at all. Send an invitation for a “Non-Event” Gala and request that individuals simply donate for the cause vs. asking them to send in an auction item or attend. Or, in lieu of an event you have done for many years that lacks to bring in the attendance, funds, or volunteers that it once did, try hosting that an “Anti-Run” or “Non-Golf Outing”. Explain that you are taking a year off from the planning and costs associated with the event but still need to fill that gap in services for individuals with PKU. Ask for donations instead of time or sponsorships.

Tributes/Memorials

Consider gifts in honor, or memory, of loved ones to support research for PKU. Is it hard to find the perfect gift for that person that has everything? Perhaps a donation to a worthy cause that is supported by your family? Advertise these options to your members, friends, and family. A great time of year for this suggestion is Memorial Day or near the Christmas holidays.

Walk/Run, 5K or Marathons

Get your community involved. Hold a walk/run or a competitive 5K or Marathon in support of PKU. People who run love competition and enjoy supporting a great cause in conjunction with the race. This is also a larger fundraising idea as it takes many volunteers and more time to make a successful event. Solicit community sponsors, have participants collect pledges ahead of time, hold bake sales and other smaller fundraisers leading up to the event to make your overall fundraiser a larger success! This event may have more expense involved than other events as you may consider paying for entertainment, a timing company, purchasing medals for participants, buying t-shirts ahead of time to give away or sell at the event.

Wear Jeans for PKU - a “Gene”tic Disease

Ask your employer, or a local business or health care organization, if employees can donate \$5 in order to wear jeans for PKU – a “gene”tic disease. Many office personnel at places of business are required to dress for success and appreciate the opportunity to dress down for the day, while supporting a cause.

Yard/Barn/Garage Sales

Anyone can host these events WHILE cleaning out some clutter. Get the kids in on the fun and have them sell lemonade or bottled water during the sale.

This is simply a list of creative ideas to engage people, while increasing awareness and raising important funds for PKU. While these events can raise money for the National PKU Alliance, they are not sponsored by the National PKU Alliance. Should you prefer to specify where your funds will be designated, this important message should be used in your materials:

“Proceeds will go to the National PKU Alliance (NPKUA), a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. NPKUA's mission is to improve the lives of individuals with PKU and pursue a cure. www.npkua.org”

For questions, or to share your ideas and successes, please email Michelle Pernsteiner, Event & Development Coordinator at michelle.pernsteiner@npkua.org or call (715) 495-4008.