

# PAWS Chicago

## 101 Fundraising Ideas

1. *Never miss an opportunity: Now is not the time to be shy. Let everyone know that you are fundraising. When they ask why, the conversation door has been opened. Take this opportunity to tell them why you are fundraising for PAWS Chicago and what it means to you. Let them know what your fundraising goal is and then ask for a donation. This is a great opportunity to educate your community and fundraise at the same time.*
2. *Forget-me-knots: Tie a ribbon on your potential donors' finger and ask them not to remove it until they've made a donation. This is a great way to turn the, "Yeah, I promise I'll donate" into action.*
3. *Corporate Matching/Tripling Gifts: Take advantage of corporate matching gifts programs. Many of your donors may work for companies that have a program like this — their donation could double or triple simply by filling out a form from their Human Resources department and following the steps to submit a matching gift. There is a link to corporate giving organizations on our fundraising homepage.*
4. *The Power of 10: Ask 10 friends to ask 10 friends to donate 10 dollars each to reach a fundraising milestone of \$1,000 dollars! Think of the local community impact that \$1,000 dollars from each participant could achieve!*
5. *Corporate Sponsor Shirt: Identify one corporate sponsor that you can ask for a large donation. Offer to wear their shirt for advertising while out and about and at PAWS Chicago events.*
6. *Waiters: Ask the server or bartender at your favorite hangout to donate a day's tips. If you have a friend who serves or bartends, ask them, too.*
7. *Spare Change: Ask your favorite restaurant or local pub to put out a jar for donations of spare change. Decorate it with quotes, pictures, PAWS animals etc., anything to get someone's attention. Put these out somewhere front and center — you're sure to get some attention.*
8. *Run a race: Ask people to donate an amount per each mile or leg of your race. Instead of a one-time \$25 donation, encourage them to make three \$15 donations for each leg of a triathlon! Play up the 13.1 or 26.2 mileage. Ask for \$2/mile or a donation to match your long run mileage.*
9. *Delegate: Give your close friends donation forms and ask them to get donations for you.*
10. *Birthday: In lieu of a gift for your birthday, ask your friends and family to make a donation to your PAWS Chicago fundraising campaign.*
11. *House-Warming: In lieu of a house-warming gift, ask your friends and family to make a donation to your PAWS Chicago fundraising campaign.*
12. *Wedding Gift: In lieu of a gift for your wedding, ask your friends and family to make a donation to your PAWS Chicago fundraising campaign.*

13. *Retirement Gift: In lieu of a retirement party gift, ask your office to support you on PAWS Chicago. What an incredible way to kick off your new life!*
14. *Ask your doctor(s), dentist for a donation.*
15. *Ask your chiropractor and therapist for a donation.*
16. *Ask your masseuse or nail tech, for a donation. Suggest the amount of the service you pay them.*
17. *Ask your yoga instructor or personal trainer for a donation.*
18. *Ask your lawyer and insurance agent for a donation.*
19. *Ask your veterinarian, dog walker, dog sitter for a donation.*
20. *Ask your auto mechanic or dry cleaner for a donation, or for coupons that you can use at a fundraising party or raffle.*
21. *Ask your neighbors: Write a note to all of the neighbors on your block or in your apartment building to ask for donations. Include an update on your fundraising progress.*
22. *Ask your hair stylist: If not a donation in the form of a check, then perhaps in the form of haircuts! See if he/she will host a hair-cut-a-thon in the salon (or in your garage!). You can probably raise more donations in two hours of haircutting than you can imagine — be sure to get the word out!*
23. *Tribute Donations: Encourage your donors to make their donations in “honor of”, “support of”, or “in memory of” a person or pet. This is a great way to let them feel very much a part of your experience.*
24. *“Sit” for Donations: Baby-sit, pet-sit, house-sit. Offer services to the neighbors to get them involved.*
25. *National Holidays: Don’t forget about Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day weekend and all of those picnics. Bring your donation forms and a donation jar — ask everyone in attendance.*
26. *Spinning Class: Hit up your spinning class instructor and classmates. Set a goal at the beginning of the class, and if it’s met, everyone donates \$1 per mile — or \$1 per minute.*

### **IN YOUR COMMUNITY**

27. *Community Finger Print-a-Thon: A suggestion from a fundraising forum: “We used a company called Kid Safe Child ID Network, Inc. We found them on the web at [www.thekidsafenetwork.com](http://www.thekidsafenetwork.com). They were able to custom create 2,200 Bio-Docs for the local kids: The event was sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, so it was free to the community. Kid Safe did all the work and we just promoted the event. It was very easy to do. After the event, we received a check for \$15,324. Pretty nice for a one day event!”*
28. *Coins: Go to your local mall or shopping center and ask what they do with the coins in the fountain.*
29. *“Thons”: Cut-a-thon (hair salon), Mow-a-thon, Shovel-a-thon, Rake-a-thon. You name it. You can do it for donations. You can even use local Girl Scout or Boy Scout troops to help be your man power for this fun activity.*
30. *Check-Out Donation: Make up donation cards for your desk at work. Co-workers can sign their name or purchase the card in someone else’s honor. Hang the donation cards around your office in recognition to those that have donated.*

31. *Donation location at work or other highly visible location: Set up a table in front of your local grocery store. Get permission first, and then ask everyone who enters to support you. While this doesn't sound very glamorous, it's very effective. Remember that in addition to raising much-needed funds, you are also playing an important role in raising awareness.*
32. *Dog walking for donations: Send out a flyer to your neighborhood offering your services to dog walk or dog-sit while the owners are out of town.*
33. *Walk in Public: Set up a treadmill outside of a store, run in place or around a parking lot and run for donations. Set out a donation can for people to drop donations in.*
34. *Lemonade, anyone? Have a yard sale with a lemonade stand, or just a lemonade stand. This is a great way to get your kids or neighbors involved and have them feel like they are joining you in making a difference.*
35. *Benefit night at a local restaurant: Check in with your favorite local hangouts. Many restaurants already have programs in place to help you fundraise at their establishment. Be a guest bartender? A guest griller? Or hand out coupons to their establishment for a percentage of profits for that evening.*
36. *Bottle Drive: If you are in a state that requires bottle deposits, start a bottle drive. Put flyers around your neighborhood telling people to put their bottles out on a certain day and you'll come by to collect and return them. Let your local school, pool, gym know that you will do the same for them.*
37. *Garage Sale: Ask all of your friends and neighbors to participate by donating items for sale. Make signs that indicate all proceeds are going to PAWS Chicago. Add a bake sale and/or lemonade stand, and have a straight donation jar visibly displayed. Don't forget to have plenty of donation forms on hand!*
38. *Super Change Jar: Ask all of your friends and family to put aside their spare change to be added to the super change jar. Every month or so, empty it out and let everyone know how much "a little at a time" adds up! This is a great idea to put into action at work, too.*
39. *Car Wash: Hold a car wash — either in your neighborhood, at your place of worship, or at your place of business. Ask local businesses to donate the supplies you will need and ask your friends to help wash. Add a bake sale; sell chilled bottles of water (that have been donated). If you have enough help, consider adding a dog wash!*
40. *Used Book Sale: A more focused and versatile version of a garage sale. Ask everyone you know (co-workers, neighbors, family and friends) to donate any books they have read and are finished with. Choose a time and place to have a used book sale — maybe your local farmer's market, school carnival or community fair.*
41. *Banner: Have a group of friends, your child's classmates, or a local business help to design a yard sign for your front yard that you can use to promote your online fundraising page.*

### **PARTY TIME!**

42. *House Party: Host a fundraising party at your home for friends, family, co-workers, neighbors. Share your reasons for fundraising; then ask them to support you. This is a great way to try out some ambitious Pinterest recipes.*

43. *Benefit Night: Throw a fundraising party at a local establishment. Charge your guests an entrance fee (donation). But also make sure to ask that local restaurant, ice cream parlor or teacher's supply store, to support you with a donation of 10% (or more!) of the night's sales — don't be too shy to ask. Also, check with your local restaurant to see if they are willing to support you with a donation of 10% (or more!) on an evening even without a fundraising party — again; don't be too shy to ask. Many local restaurants will support by donating a portion of an evening's profits. You can offer to generate a flyer to promote patrons coming to their establishment to help increase their business, and thus your percentage.*
44. *Spaghetti Dinner: Encourage your place of worship, work, school or other organization to host a spaghetti dinner to benefit PAWS Chicago. Have all of your friends help with the cooking to make an event where families are welcome and are charged a donation entrance fee to join in the fun. Or organize a potluck party along the same lines where everyone brings a dish to pass and gets to socialize with friends and neighbors. The entrance fee to the party becomes your donation. Make sure to have plenty of donation slips and information.*
45. *Movie Party: Host a movie party at your house. Every time the word "dog" is said in the movie, everyone antes up \$1 in a donation bowl. Have pizza donated and charge at the door.*
46. *Theme Dinner: Hold a theme dinner party for at least 10 of your friends with a donation of \$50 a person. Spend just \$20 per person on food and you've raised \$300 in donations. Better yet, have all of the food donated!*
47. *Wine-Tasting Party: Have a wine and cheese-tasting party. If you know anyone (who knows anyone!) who owns, manages, or works in a winery — ask if they will host it! Charge at the door. Blind tastings are fun — or dress up the event with some very special vintages.*
48. *Gala Night: Host an elegant or formal party. Have food and beverages donated.*
49. *Garden Tour: Hold a garden tour at your home or at a local historical home.*
50. *Host a coffee get-together at your home or at a local coffee shop. Ask your favorite coffee shop to donate the coffee (and maybe even some goodies!). Invite your neighbors and friends. Suggest a donation of \$20 (or more!).*
51. *New Job Party: Celebrate landing a new job with a party! Invite everyone you know and ask them to come prepared to support you and your fundraising efforts!*
52. *Pet Birthday Party: Have a fun birthday party for your pet — or a friend's pet. Serve dog biscuits and ask everyone to wear ears! Charge at the door. Take photos of your guests with the guest of honor.*
53. *TV Show Party: Host a party in celebration of the premiere a favorite TV show. Serve donated hors d'oeuvres and drinks. Charge at the door. This idea is great for inviting friends over to watch your favorite awards shows like the Oscars®, Emmy® Awards, Grammy® Awards, etc. Or, ask a local bar that has a big-screen television to allow you to have the party there and donate a portion of the food and beverage sales.*
54. *Movie/TV Marathon: Host a movie or TV series marathon. Choose a theme (True Blood, Friends, Entourage, Seinfeld) and start the popcorn! Charge at the door. Enhance the theme with a suggested \$1*

donation every time a specific word or phrase is spoken, every time X character appears or every time Jerry has an “aside” with Elaine.

55. *Themed Music/Dance Party: Host a music/dance night — 50’s, 60’s, 70’s, 80’s style. Play all of the old favorites. Ask people to come dressed in costume and dance the night away. Serve donated drinks and food. Charge at the door. You can even ask a DJ if they’d donate an evening for you, so you can have a complete selection of tunes! Play up the holidays and seasons. Beach party, 4<sup>th</sup> of July BBQ, St. Paddy’s Day, etc.*

56. *Scrapbooking Party: Host a scrapbooking party at your house, or at the local store. Ask a pro to lead an inspirational idea exchange and have some great samples on display, some special supplies and/or discounts for attendees. Serve donated food and drinks and charge at the door.*

57. *Game Night: Host a game night — Monopoly, Trivial Pursuit, Scrabble, Poker, Bridge, Bingo. Serve donated food and drinks. Charge at the door.*

58. *Sweets Party: Have a dessert auction at work! Ask local restaurants, bakeries and grocery stores to donate yummy desserts. Post signs at work well in advance and then bring all of the desserts in to work on Friday. Hold a silent or live auction — who doesn’t need dessert for the weekend? Add on even more by getting coffee donated — and sell the coffee to go with that cookie!*

59. *Tea Party: Host a traditional High Tea, or ask a local hotel to do so on your behalf. Charge at the door.*

60. *Game Day: Invite your kid’s friends, nieces and nephews, the neighborhood kids, the soccer team, to a game day at a local park or donated indoor location. Like a drop-off party, you coordinate a couple of hours of fun activities and ask the parents for a donation in exchange. Tetherball, Four Square, Jump Rope, Potato Sack races, Yo-Yo contests, you name it! Have donated snack food and juice boxes available to round out the fun.*

61. *Swim Party: Ask a local public pool to donate (or rent at a reduced rate) a couple of hours for a private party. This is a great way to get teenagers involved in the fundraising effort. Have donated snacks on hand, and be sure to include a lifeguard. Turn on some music and charge at the door.*

62. *Children’s Birthday Party: Post signs at local schools and child care centers offering your party planning services for a sizeable donation. Plan a theme party and get supplies, favors, food and beverages donated. If you are crafty, you could even make costumes. Some ideas are a Princess Party or a Harry Potter Party.*

63. *Silent Auction: Ask some local businesses to donate items or gift certificates and hold a silent auction at your fundraising event, or on a payday at work. Things like a book of car wash certificates, \$10 off dry-cleaning, movie passes, play tickets, restaurant gift certificates, pet-grooming, a week of free coffee; the list is endless! Set minimum donation limits and allow people to bid them up. Some walkers even get their place of business to agree to set up a silent auction for one item every Friday at work. They get something donated and the office has fun bidding on something new each week.*

64. *Live Auction: Same as above, but with an energetic auctioneer. Good for a large crowd and some big-ticket items; a trip for two, a special bottle of wine, landscape, pool or housecleaning service, auctioning off husbands for handiwork.*
65. *Golf Outing/Tournament: Work with a local golf course to plan a charity golf outing. Charge a fee to participate and see if you can get prizes donated for the winner of each hole, or the whole course.*
66. *Web-Based Auction: Get friends and family to donate things for you to sell on an internet auction site. Make sure to let bidders know that the item's selling price is going towards your fundraising for PAWS Chicago.*
67. *Special Screening: Ask your local movie theatre to donate a special screening of a new release. Invite everyone you know and make flyers to get the word out. Charge at the door. Ask if the theatre will also donate a percentage of the concession sales for your event!*
68. *Poker Tournament Party: Set up some tables and snacks and let the bluffing begin. Charge a fee to join the tournament and winner takes the rest or donates a portion to the "house." Make it an annual event.*
69. *Pancake Breakfast: Host a pancake breakfast at a school, park or place of worship. Charge a fee. Get the pancake mix and other food items donated by local stores. Make it an annual event.*
70. *Bowling Party: Ask your local bowling alley to donate some lanes for a fundraising party. Invite your office-mates as a team-building experience, your neighbors, your family or a group of old friends. Charge at the door.*
71. *50/50 Raffle: Sell tickets to a 50/50 raffle at a large event or gathering. The prize is half the "pot." The winner splits the "pot" with you — you get 50% of the proceeds and they get the other 50%. See if your boss will let you conduct a 50/50 raffle once a week at work.*
72. *Baseball Game: Or other local sporting event. Buy a section of tickets at a group rate and charge your family and friends twice the price. Get food donated and host a tailgate party.*

### **FUNDRAISE AT WORK OR SCHOOL**

73. *"Loose Change Day": Ask your child's school to have a "Loose Change Day." Make a flyer encouraging each child to bring in loose change from their house to be donated. Encourage the math classes to assist with counting, predicting and rolling the change. This is a great way to involve the entire school. You can hold this event multiple times; every week or every month.*
74. *Personal vending machine at work: Have you ever wondered how much money the vending machine at work clears in a single week? Find out! Purchase some of the office favorites in bulk (or better yet have them donated!), mark them up, and sell them from your desk for \$1 or \$2. If you have a way to keep them cold, do the same with bottled water and sodas.*
75. *Lunch Room: Put up a display in the lunch room at work (a sign with your picture and a note about what you are doing); be sure to include a jar for donations and a stack of your donation slips.*
76. *Dress Down Friday: Ask your boss if you can host a "Dress Down Friday." Employees buy a button and get to dress down on an assigned day.*

77. *Fundraising Letter: Send customized letters or emails with a picture and your personal story. Email your fundraising letter to friends, family and coworkers and ask them to support you. Your email will have a direct link right back to your website and when they donate online, they will automatically receive a receipt for tax purposes. Ask everyone to forward on your email to 10 more people!*
78. *Signing Your Correspondence: Get in the habit of signing your correspondence with your name followed by a link to the Fundraising Page. You'll be surprised by how many people will ask you what it means. You can use this method for letters and emails.*
79. *Voicemail: Change your voicemail and answering machine messages to announce the fact that you are fundraising for PAWS Chicago. This will be news to some and a reminder for all!*
80. *Labels/Business Cards: Create (or order) return address labels and/or business cards that state, "I'm fundraising for PAWS CHICAGO! Will you sponsor me?"*
81. *Button: Make a Save the Date button and wear it around town. Ask for a \$1 or 50 cent donation from everyone that asks you about your button or about PAWS Chicago.*
82. *Speak at a place of worship: Ask your local place of worship if you can speak to their congregation about PAWS Chicago and your commitment after a service. Set up a table to collect donations afterwards.*
83. *Create a unique QR code that directs people to your fundraising page. QR codes can be created for free on websites such as, <http://www.qrstuff.com/>.*
84. *Write an article(s) for your organization/company in-house newsletter or company's website to recruit team members and keep them updated on your fundraising for PAWS CHICAGO.*

### **TAP LOCAL TALENT/BUSINESSES**

85. *Actors: Ask your thespian-oriented friends to improvise for a "play party." Invite all of your friends; serve hors d'oeuvres and charge at the door.*
86. *Ask your yoga instructor or personal trainer for a donated class: Invite your friends to attend a special yoga/aerobics/step class donated by a trainer. Their admission fee of \$20 payable to PAWS Chicago becomes a donation, and the trainer gets the chance to build their client base. It's a win-win for all.*
87. *Car Wash — Take Two: Go to your local car wash and talk with the owner/manager about doing a fundraising event there. Many people go to the same car wash every week. Post flyers a week in advance and then spend a few hours talking with people about what you are doing at the cashier stand. Hand people a flyer, accept donations!*
88. *Karaoke Bar: Ask your local karaoke bar to host a benefit night. Invite all of your friends; charge at the door.*
89. *Rock On!: If you know musicians, ask them to perform a benefit concert at a backyard BBQ, block party or local club. The admission ticket is a check made payable to PAWS Chicago.*
90. *Play Tickets: Ask your local playhouse to donate tickets and then auction them off. Better yet, ask them to donate season passes!*

91. *Creative Friends: Ask a local artist or creative friend to donate a piece of art or jewelry that you can auction off. If you aren't creative yourself, ask a friend to design a thank you card or blank note card that you can package, tie up with a ribbon and sell.*
92. *Your travel agency: Ask for a plane ticket to raffle off, a night in a hotel, or a weekend getaway.*
93. *Hair Salon: Ask your hair salon if they will donate \$2 from each haircut over the course of a weekend to PAWS Chicago.*
94. *Gym: Ask your gym if you, or they, can teach an aerobics, yoga, cross fit or spinning class as a benefit for you.*
95. *Free Rent: Get your apartment complex to donate one month's rent to sponsor you.*
96. *Happy Hour: Wear your PAWS Chicago t- shirt to Happy Hour and ask people to sign it for a \$10 donation. Ask the DJ to announce that you are in the bar.*

### **WORK IT!**

97. *Bartender: Ask your favorite bar if you can guest bartend for a night and keep all of your tips. Make sure you invite all of you friends to come in that night.*
98. *Christmas Lights: Offer to put up your neighbors' outdoor Christmas lights. It's a job no one wants to do, and they might be delighted to have it done for them, especially if it's a donation to PAWS Chicago.*
99. *Use Your Talent: Offer any talent or skill that you have for a minimum donation; graphic design, massage, hair stylist, make-up stylist, photography, computer skills, sewing, music, baking, cake decorating, etc. Ask talented friends to donate their skills to your fundraising effort. Tie-in ideas with holidays, celebrations and party themes (wedding makeovers, baking party, holiday portraits, crafting).*
100. *Sell Space on a Shirt: Sell small blocks of space on a shirt you plan to wear at an upcoming event for a suggested \$25 donation. Encourage donors to write a tribute to you, a friend or a loved one. The more you can make your donors feel a part of your experience, the more they are likely to give on your behalf. Having them sign something you will run with is a great way to accomplish this.*
101. *Hold your own T-shirt design contest with an entry fee for all designs and use the winning design for a team T-shirt to be worn on a group outing.*