

A photograph of three children playing on a modern playground structure. A girl in a green tank top is climbing on the left, a girl in a striped shirt is hanging from a bar in the center, and a boy in a white polo shirt is standing on the right. The structure is blue and grey with a green slide on the left. The background shows a sandy playground area with trees.

Playground Fundraising Guide



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Let's Get Started

Over the years, our team at ABC Recreation has worked closely with many schools and service groups to bring enriching and inclusive play spaces to their community. Along the way, we have gained some valuable insight into the effective and innovative ways that these groups are raising the necessary funds to make their play vision a reality.

Looking at the financial hurdle you must overcome to build or modify a play space in your community can be daunting, but fundraising doesn't have to be a chore – it can be fun, rewarding and a great opportunity to rally your community together for a shared cause.

We developed this fundraising resource to help guide you through the process as you take the first step on this exciting journey. This guide includes:

- Recommended steps to help you establish your playground plan before you start fundraising
- Helpful tips on what to look for when choosing your playground manufacturer
- Suggestions for how you can spread the word about your project
- Fundraising ideas and creative ways to acknowledge your supporters




We look forward to working together to enhance outdoor spaces in your community! Reach out to us by phone at 1-800-267-5753 or e-mail info@abc recreation.com if we can help.

Signing off from the playground,

ABC Recreation Team

PS. Have we worked together on a project?
Share your photos online and tag us!

Stay Connected

 @abc recreation
 @abc recreation
 @abc.recreation





Establishing Your Playground Goal



It's important to have a clear picture of what you're working towards in order to maximize your fundraising efforts. Our team at ABC Recreation can provide you with resources to help you more clearly define your goal if you are in need of some guidance when considering:

- 1 What type of playground would your school or community benefit from?
- 2 What are the ages and abilities of the children who would use the playground?
- 3 What structures or components would you like to have on the playground?
- 4 What is a realistic budget and timeline for your project?



PLANNING TIP

Community members are more likely to be motivated to support your playground project if they are involved in the process and understand the vision for the space.

Some individuals—children in particular—may respond better to visuals. Using a “Dotmocracy” voting method is a great way to gather feedback from your community on what features they like the most. To facilitate this method, simply follow these steps:

- 1 Participants are each given a set number of dot stickers.
- 2 They place dot stickers next to options presented that they like.
- 3 Options with the most dots “win”.

Establishing a Budget & Timeline



One of the first tasks of your fundraising committee will be to outline a playground budget.

A detailed budget will make the fundraising task more manageable and keep everything on track as expenses pop up. Generally, your budget should account for:

Site Preparations

For a new playground installation, you may need to start with site preparations, such as leveling the terrain or adding surfacing. If you're replacing an old play space, you'll need to budget for removing the previous equipment.

Equipment

The playground equipment itself is one of the major costs and is often what you'll want to focus on in your fundraising efforts. Determining the type of playground equipment required for your project is key to developing a budget. Plan to purchase quality play equipment that is durable, safe and designed with inclusivity in mind.

Amenities

In addition to playground equipment, you should also consider site amenities, like shade structures, benches, litter receptacles, signs, lighting, picnic tables and other features.

Installation

Installing the equipment and amenities at your playground will carry an additional cost. Professional and certified installation is a smart move since it ensures your playground equipment is safely and expertly put into place.



Additionally, you will want to anticipate any expenses required to carry out fundraising events, like supplies and rentals. Setting a clear budget will help establish goals for your project, as well as any limitations for fundraising. A timeline will also keep things moving and everyone working towards your playground fundraising goal. Start with your build date then work backwards and be sure to include different milestones that need to be accomplished by a certain date. Put everything on the timeline from grant deadlines to fundraising events to holidays and school breaks!

Your Playground Journey



1

Playground Committee

Rally together a team of 4 to 8 parents, teachers, school administrators or other community members. Prepare a fundraising calendar and schedule meetings well in advance so your volunteers can plan ahead to attend.

2

Field Trip

Visit some playgrounds in local parks to determine what equipment is the best fit for the kids you're serving.

3

Interview Playground Companies

Do your research and ask plenty of questions so you can be confident you're making the right choice.

4

Select Your Playground Partner

They are meant to be a resource and will guide you every step of the way to ensure your project is successful.

5

Design Your Playground

Consider colour palettes and themes as you start to visualize how your play space will appeal to the community.

6

Start Fundraising

Review our list of grant opportunities and fundraising ideas for some inspiration as you kick-off your campaign.

7

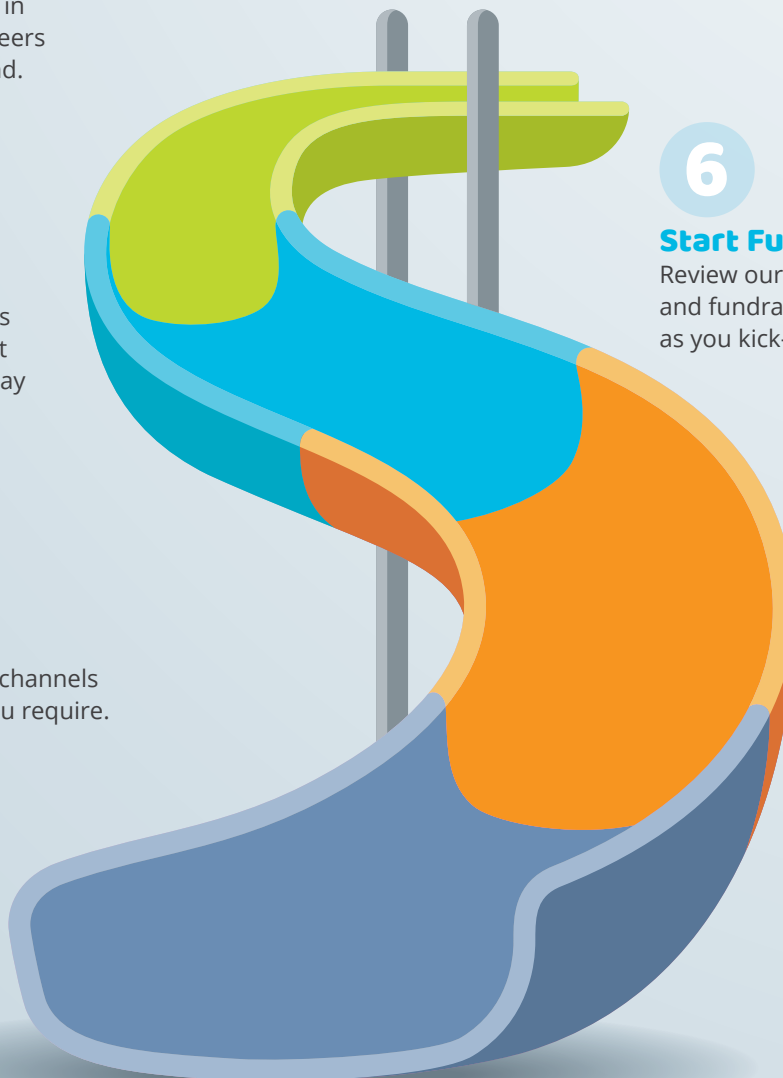
Board Approval

Go through the proper channels to get the approvals you require. You're almost done!

8

Playground Build

Work with your playground company to have the equipment installed or bring local residents together for a community build to reduce your installation costs.



Choosing Your Playground Manufacturer



Kicking off a new playground project is exciting, but it can also be overwhelming as you think about all the options to consider and the questions you have. We've put together a checklist that will help point you in the right direction as you begin your search for a playground partner.

Materials

- Does the manufacturer use aluminum for their posts, clamps and post caps? Aluminum will not rust or corrode and will preserve the structural integrity of your play structure.
- Does the manufacturer use stainless steel and tamper resistant fasteners? These fasteners cannot be removed with common tools which means added security and safety for your users.
- What kind of durable coating is used for gripping or high wear areas? Adequate coating will make the equipment far more user friendly in extreme temperatures.

Warranty

It's imperative that you choose a playground manufacturer that offers a comprehensive and quantifiable warranty. We would recommend you partner with a manufacturer that can provide:

- 100 years for posts, post caps and clamps
- 15 years for all plastic and steel components
- Minimum 3 year warranty on all other parts

Colours & Finishes

From climbing cables to panels and swing chains to decks, it's important that you choose a playground manufacturer that maintains rigorous colour and finish standards for fade-resistance, gloss retention and durability. Your play equipment should be designed to withstand the demands of extreme heat, harsh climates, moisture and UV exposure.

Components

Does the manufacturer offer playground components that are engineered to move? This type of equipment will offer sensory stimulation and develop children's balance, depth perception, coordination, gross and fine motor skills.

Safety & Compliance

Is the manufacturer's products IPEMA certified to [CAN/CSA-Z614?](#) Being an IPEMA member only is simply not enough. Choose a playground manufacturer that can provide you with a letter stating all the products you are purchasing are CSA compliant as per IPEMA.

Quality Assurance

Is the manufacturer [ISO 9001:2015](#) certified? This standard is based on a number of quality management principles including a strong customer focus, the motivation and implication of top management, the process approach and continual improvement.

Environmental Stewardship

Does the manufacturer offer products manufactured using a high content of recycled material? Is the manufacturer [ISO 14001:2015](#) certified? This assures you that the manufacturer is committed to the prevention of pollution and environmental management practices.



DID YOU KNOW?

"Lifetime warranties" offered by some manufacturers can cover as little as 7 years or less. We suggest that you take the time to thoroughly read through the terms of your warranty to avoid any disappointment down the road!





Make Your Pitch

How We Can Help

Our dedicated marketing staff can support your fundraising and storytelling efforts in a variety of ways.

We can:



Work collaboratively with you to develop presentations, posters and other marketing materials to highlight the developmental benefits of each play element within your design.



Help share your project story through targeted posts on social media to attract prospective donors in your community.



Donate ABC Recreation branded items that can be used as prizes for fundraising initiatives.



Act as a resource or second set of eyes throughout the application process should you be applying for a grant.



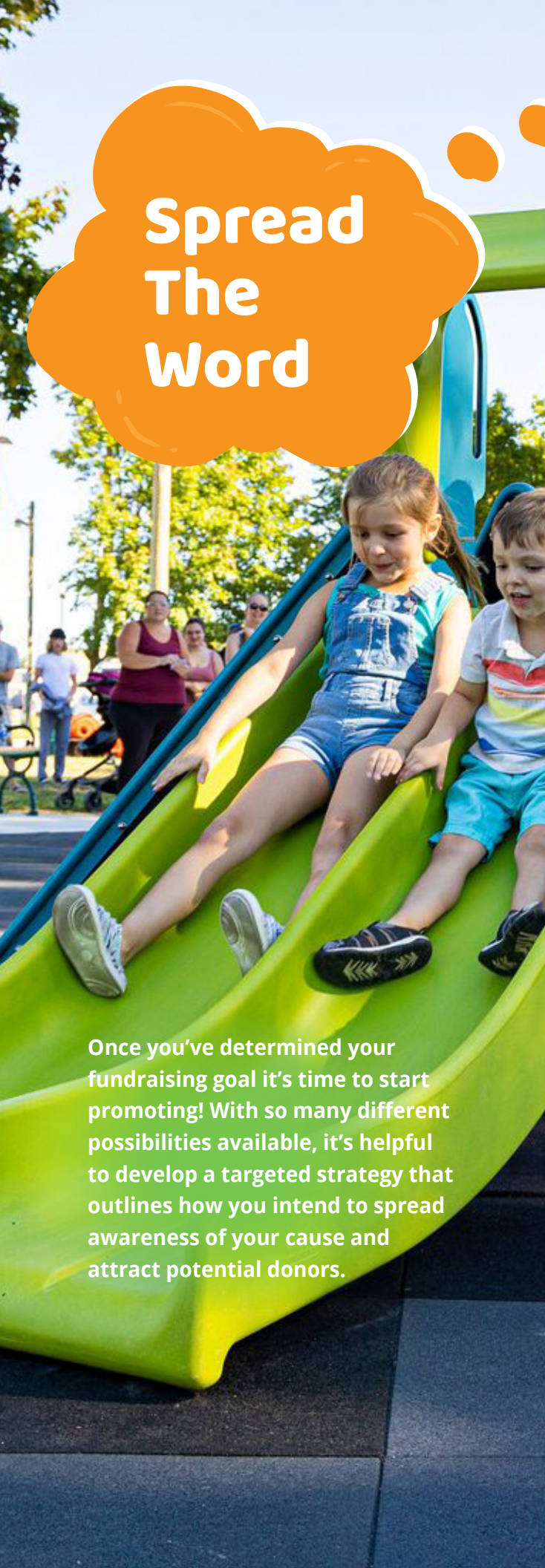
DID YOU KNOW?

At ABC Recreation, we will supply you with a complimentary large 3-D colour rendering of your playground. You can post this in your community to motivate your volunteers, inspire prospective donors to give and also provide a focal point for meetings.





Spread The Word



Once you've determined your fundraising goal it's time to start promoting! With so many different possibilities available, it's helpful to develop a targeted strategy that outlines how you intend to spread awareness of your cause and attract potential donors.



Fundraising Website

If you intend to market your fundraising campaign online, the first thing you should think about is creating a fundraising website using a platform, such as Canada Helps. Use this site as your fundraising hub — a place to share information with all audiences. Not only will you be able to collect online donations, but this is the logical platform to tell stories about what you're trying to accomplish, explain how funds raised will be used, share pictures and post sponsor logos.

Leverage Social Media

Be sure to spread the word through your social networking channels such as Facebook, Twitter or LinkedIn. Keep followers and fans informed with updated announcements about fundraising activities, donations received to-date and how much is needed to reach your goal. Make the conversation ongoing so people can follow your progress!

Traditional Media Outreach

Mass communication has become easy for everyone, but don't forget the value of more traditional media outlets. Reach out to targeted media organizations to help you spread awareness and promote your fundraising campaign. You may also want to highlight the story of someone who is personally impacted by your project or significantly influenced by your organization's efforts. These inspirational stories may be just what editors are seeking for an upcoming feature. This is a fantastic opportunity to reach a much broader audience at no cost if your story is picked up in a local newspaper or an online blog.

Consider Email Marketing

Email is an excellent way to reach a large audience of potential participants, donors, volunteers, and sponsors. Sending an initial email to your entire database to announce the fundraising initiative is a great way to inform your network of supporters and partners. Include a link to your fundraising website in your email message, making it simple for potential participants to sign up and donors to make online contributions.

Source: <https://bit.ly/3f3ww53>



Let's Get



Fundraising

Many of the groups we work with choose to host fundraising events to generate awareness and funding for their project. Planning a successful first-time fundraising event will motivate your volunteers, local businesses and other community members to support you again in the future.

Recruit a volunteer to lead the class such as yoga or boot camp and ask attendees to donate to participate

Solicit local service clubs to pledge money to help get you on your way towards your fundraising goal

Encourage participating vendors to donate all or a percentage of proceeds

Ask businesses in the area to be check-in points and acknowledge their involvement in event promotions

Solicit local companies to donate prizes and gift certificates

See if prominent leaders in your community would be willing to donate their services for a day

- Live Auction
- Neighbourhood Garage Sale
- Trivia Night
- Community Cook-off
- Gift Wrapping
- Special Event Parking
- Haunted Hayride

- Outdoor Fitness Class
- Craft Show
- Bottle Drive
- Bowl-a-Thon
- City Wide Scavenger Hunt
- Car Wash
- Swim, Bike, Walk or Run-a-thon
- T-Shirt or calendar campaign

- Raffle
- Pancake Breakfast
- Pizza Day
- Golf Tournament
- Fashion Show
- Movie Night



In addition to entrance fees, have hot drinks or snacks available for sale with proceeds supporting your project

Soups, chili and baked goods...oh my! Invite restaurants and home cooks to put their recipes to the test and charge admission

Host a film screening at a local park or auditorium with tickets and treats for sale for a suggested donation



Showing Your Appreciation

All successful fundraisers know the importance of donor stewardship; the relationship-building activities and communications that take place after a gift has been received. There are a variety of meaningful ways you can foster that donor relationship and show your appreciation:

- Handwritten thank you with photo
- Shout out on social media
- Sponsor page with logos on your fundraising website
- Verbally address your contributors at an event such as the grand opening
- Record a video of you and your team saying thank you

Leaving Their Mark

Find opportunities on the playground to acknowledge more significant supporters, such as corporate donors, who may be looking to get some marketing benefit in return for their investment. You could design a panel on your play structure to include company logos, list donors on a sign that welcomes visitors to the site, add custom benches with laser cut logos, build a donor pathway/wall with an engraved stone/brick for each major donor and so much more. The options are endless!

Grants & Funding Opportunities

Before you begin filling out a grant application, it's important to understand the funder's objectives and define how your playground project fits into their mission. This will help you better tailor the content of your proposal and ensure it follows the ideals of the funding organization. In addition to the opportunities listed on our website under the Playgrounds category, we also encourage you to look into any funding that may be available through your municipality (i.e. community foundations) or local recreation organization.





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