

Diabetes: A Family Matter Fundraising Events

Brief Description:

Your *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program may be financially supported by a local hospital or other health organization, but you could be a volunteer group. Either way, you may need to raise some money for support or special activities that you would like to do in your community. Some ideas are suggested here, but many more are available. Using the internet can assist you to find some additional ways to raise money. Make it fun as you plan and get organized for the occasion! Some of the events suggested may not make huge amounts of money for your program, but could be good ways to provide community education in novel ways. Part of the challenge is to find ways to raise local consciousness about healthy living and diabetes prevention while raising some needed financial support. See if some of these suggestions can help you do that.

An important twist for all events sponsored by your *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program is finding unique ways to inform people about healthy activity, healthy eating, and diabetes prevention. Your group should discuss ways to accomplish this as part of any fundraiser selected.

Objectives:

1. Raise money to support projects or activities linked to the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program.
2. Increase visibility of the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program in your community.

Participants:

The participants will vary based upon on the types of events you sponsor and those targeted to participate.

Costs:

Most fundraising events have some outlay costs at the beginning. People are often willing to donate some costs in time and money to prepare for the event. The goal of a fundraiser is to make money in the end. So, be careful about sponsoring events that might not be profitable in the end.

Activity Duration:

Most fundraising events take place at a given time and date, but some might involve greater amounts of time. It is important to consider these factors when you plan. Getting people involved for a brief event is often easier than getting them to commit to a more extended one.

Materials needed:

The materials will vary with the event selected. Be sure to form a committee large enough to assist with the event, but not so large that no one knows who is doing what! Spend plenty of time planning before you start to advertise. It is always good to include a few people that have been involved previously with fundraising events.

Fund-Raising Ideas:

Idea #1: Big Truck and Tractor Rally

How about a totally different event, one that will appeal to children, youth, and many of the men in the community? Arrange with a local farmer, another large land owner, or a public place in the community to hold the event. You will need to have a safe place for people to park also. Many people get to see many large trucks and tractors from afar but never get a chance to see them up close, learn about them, or know how they really work. This is an event that local men will also enjoy arranging and getting involved. A key theme for this event is exposure to equipment that most never come in direct contact with that exists in your community and the larger world. However, each piece of equipment allows opportunities to teach about jobs, safety, work, and healthy living.

You can charge admission to the rally. Be sure to make the cost reasonable so that families can all afford to attend! You might want to sell plastic hard-hats or work vests that say something like *Big Truck and Tractor Rally* and *Diabetes: A Family Matter* in smaller print underneath. The kids, big and small, will all want one and they will be a great way to increase the visibility of your program long after the event is over.

A concession stand is an absolute must. Be sure to have some healthy treats on sale for the participants to buy as well as something to drink.

Liability can be a concern! Even though the kids (and probably some of the adults) would love to ride on some of the equipment, this might not be practical at the event. Check locally to identify what is best. You could allow everyone to climb on board the trucks for pictures to be taken with their own camera! You might want to

charge a small amount for this to happen, maybe 10 or 25 cents. Some will want to have a photo taken with every truck! This could add up to a fair amount of donations by the end of the day.

Speak to a local contractor or heavy equipment rental facility and see if they would be willing to bring some of their equipment (e.g., large earth movers, bulldozer, excavator, and other large equipment). Have them do equipment demonstrations, let the kids sit in the driver's seat with an adult. They can learn about what the equipment is used for and safety. Ask the fire department to bring a fire truck and your emergency squad to bring an ambulance. Kids would love getting on a fire truck, learning more about fire safety, and getting a chance to feel what it is like to wear some of the equipment used when putting out fires. Have the ambulance driver explain what happens in emergencies and what kinds of equipment they carry in the ambulance. You might want to schedule events that take place on the half hour so that people can rotate through stations at the rally and learn as they go. You might want to make a map of where things are to give people as they come in to the event.

Be sure that you have local farmers bring some of their farm equipment so that everyone can learn more about what is grown locally and ways the various pieces of equipment are used. Invite your local highway department, sheriff department, or police to bring some of their vehicles for demonstrations and discussions about their use. This could provide great teaching opportunities about safe bicycle use, driving safety, drunken driven, and other local concerns that relate to the law. If you have a pet shelter in town, perhaps they can

bring the vehicle they use to pick up homeless animals. This can provide a way to teach about pet care. Ask your local electric company and phone company if they would be willing to bring a few of their big trucks. Check with those that have large trucks to pick up refuse and garbage. If you have someone local that uses a large vehicle for recycling materials be sure to invite them.

The local post office might get permission to bring one of their trucks. Perhaps a local UPS office would be willing to take part in the event. If you have someone local that has a large 18 wheel truck ask them to bring it or check with a local car dealer to see if they can assist you in finding one. If you have a logging or mining company nearby, they also might be willing to take part in the rally. What other local business use large trucks or tractors in their work? Be sure to invite them to take part as well.

You could add a classic car show for additional interest if there are folks likely that would like to show off their vehicles. Of course, a really big draw for your event would be to have a NASCAR available with a driver or team.

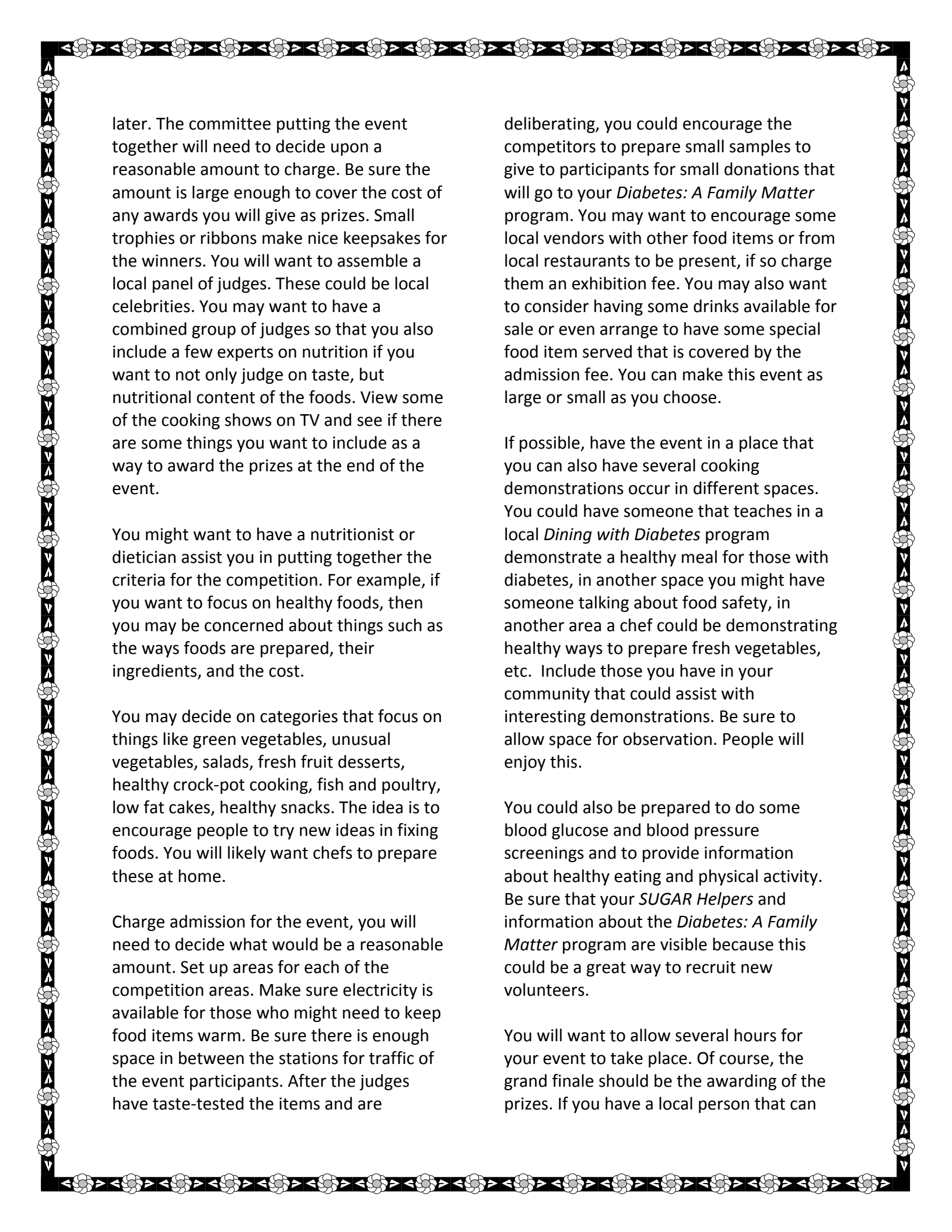
Finally, but certainly not least! Think about ways that you can get as many messages about healthy activity, healthy eating, and diabetes prevention to those attending. Perhaps you can set up a tent where a local health department does blood glucose and blood pressure screenings. Think about ways to provide information that will not get tossed on the ground or in trash buckets. Maybe have a few health professionals present to discuss diabetes and its management. Be creative and see what new ideas you can develop.

Idea #2: Healthy Food Fair and Cook-Off

One of the challenges faced in many of our families today is finding new and different ways to prepare healthy foods. Many continue to cook the same recipes week after week without trying any fresh ideas. This event can be one to increase awareness about healthy foods and enable folks to sample things and get recipes for things they have never tried before. While this can be a fundraising event, if done in conjunction with a dietician, nutritionist, or your local Cooperative Extension Agency it could also be a way to do some nutritional education.

First you will need to decide who will sponsor the event and where it will occur. Finding a large space that is linked with a place where people are already present or can easily get to will be important. To be sure that you have adequate participation, it might need to be a cooperative effort among several groups in your community who are interested in healthy lifestyles and diabetes prevention. The groups need to be willing to work together to sponsor and encourage participation in and at the event. One way to encourage this form of activity is through a competition. For example, you might get several local church groups to take part, civic groups, local businesses, the hospital, physician offices, health departments, and others. Encourage the formation of groups of people and families to compete. Getting larger numbers of entries in the event will also attract larger numbers of people to attend the event.

Each chef pays an entry fee for each entrée they plan to enter into a competition. You may want to collect their recipes ahead of time and compile them into a small cookbook that you can sell at the event or



later. The committee putting the event together will need to decide upon a reasonable amount to charge. Be sure the amount is large enough to cover the cost of any awards you will give as prizes. Small trophies or ribbons make nice keepsakes for the winners. You will want to assemble a local panel of judges. These could be local celebrities. You may want to have a combined group of judges so that you also include a few experts on nutrition if you want to not only judge on taste, but nutritional content of the foods. View some of the cooking shows on TV and see if there are some things you want to include as a way to award the prizes at the end of the event.

You might want to have a nutritionist or dietician assist you in putting together the criteria for the competition. For example, if you want to focus on healthy foods, then you may be concerned about things such as the ways foods are prepared, their ingredients, and the cost.

You may decide on categories that focus on things like green vegetables, unusual vegetables, salads, fresh fruit desserts, healthy crock-pot cooking, fish and poultry, low fat cakes, healthy snacks. The idea is to encourage people to try new ideas in fixing foods. You will likely want chefs to prepare these at home.

Charge admission for the event, you will need to decide what would be a reasonable amount. Set up areas for each of the competition areas. Make sure electricity is available for those who might need to keep food items warm. Be sure there is enough space in between the stations for traffic of the event participants. After the judges have taste-tested the items and are

deliberating, you could encourage the competitors to prepare small samples to give to participants for small donations that will go to your *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program. You may want to encourage some local vendors with other food items or from local restaurants to be present, if so charge them an exhibition fee. You may also want to consider having some drinks available for sale or even arrange to have some special food item served that is covered by the admission fee. You can make this event as large or small as you choose.

If possible, have the event in a place that you can also have several cooking demonstrations occur in different spaces. You could have someone that teaches in a local *Dining with Diabetes* program demonstrate a healthy meal for those with diabetes, in another space you might have someone talking about food safety, in another area a chef could be demonstrating healthy ways to prepare fresh vegetables, etc. Include those you have in your community that could assist with interesting demonstrations. Be sure to allow space for observation. People will enjoy this.

You could also be prepared to do some blood glucose and blood pressure screenings and to provide information about healthy eating and physical activity. Be sure that your *SUGAR Helpers* and information about the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program are visible because this could be a great way to recruit new volunteers.

You will want to allow several hours for your event to take place. Of course, the grand finale should be the awarding of the prizes. If you have a local person that can

serve as Master of Ceremonies then this could be turned into an entertaining experience. Calling the chefs forward for each of the competitions, describing the dishes they prepared, and then giving the awards could be great fun if done with a flair of humor and a bit of foolishness. You might want to add some silly awards and also some overall awards. Have fun with the ideas and be sure to make it an experience where people can learn a bit while they are having fun.

Idea #3: All You Can Eat Potato Bar

Want to try something different? Most people in Appalachia love potatoes! So, why not try a new fund-raiser, an all you can eat potato bar. You will want to sell tickets ahead of time so will you have some idea about how many potatoes to bake. It is hard to know how many large potatoes people will eat, but you will certainly need one for each child and most men will likely eat at least two. Be sure to advertise widely in your community and get volunteer *SUGAR Helpers*, coalition members, and others to help sell the tickets.

You will need to provide a variety of items to go on top of the potatoes. Consider things like: shredded cheese, butter, chili, bacon bits, steamed broccoli, melted cheese, shredded cheeses, sour cream, chives, sautéed onions, ham, and spices.

You could arrange a craft station for younger children in one corner of the room, ask some teenagers to assist with the entertainment. Have some carved potato stamps already made, ink, and some paper. Children could make pictures to take home or special cards for their parents or some other person that they choose.

If you feel ambitious, you could have a handmade sale that occurs at the same evening. You might offer either a few or many items for sale.

Idea #4: Pet Parade

People love their animals and they love parades. See if you can arrange to have a route marked off for the parade or have it on a summer evening or a Sunday afternoon when traffic is slower. You may want to use a city park or some other scenic place. Encourage local children, youth, and adults to participate with their dog or cat on a leash. You could have an exotic pet category for those that want to carry their pet rabbit, put their pet goat on a leash, or even carry their turtle in a bowl.

Each participant will need to get sponsors for their pet that they will donate to the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program. Depending on the length of the route, you might want donations to be so much money per block, mile, or just for completing the route. You will need to prepare some application forms to distribute when you begin advertising the event. Some people will need to be available to accept the donations on the day of the event. You might want to work with some scout troops, 4H groups, local ball teams, youth groups from local churches, and others to be sure this event is a success. This is a great way to get kids active while they are enjoying themselves.

Encourage participants to enter their pet in one of several categories. For example, best dressed pet, bicycles and pets, pet floats, family of dogs, and any other categories you can consider. On the day of the parade, have some judges available and some prizes that are local donations for the winners.

Encourage all participants to bring pooper scoopers and trash bags. You may need to assign a special poop patrol and have trash cans for the liter.

You may want to have a refreshment stand with drinks and healthy snacks for sale. This could be a great place to sell some homemade dog biscuits and cat bells and ribbons. Be sure to have bowls of water for the pets available. If you have some local groomers willing to volunteer some time, you could also offer some dog washing, nail trimming, or grooming earlier in the day before the event. This could be another way to make some money at your event.

Idea #5: Blue Plate Specials

Everyone comes to the event armed with a covered dinner plate and their checkbook. The plates could be a full dinner or perhaps an after-dinner event with coffee and dessert. You decide what will work best for your group. This can be a fun event and a twist on regular dinner fundraisers. The event could also serve a church or civic group that would like to have some fun together, but also give a donation to the local *Diabetes: A Family Matter* Program.

It is important to keep the contents of the covered dish secret and to cover it well. You will need a good auctioneer who can entertain and encourage people to spend their money to buy the plates of food. People bid on the covered dish without knowing what is underneath. That is part of the fun as you will not know whether you are buying hard boiled eggs, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, macaroni and cheese, a t-bone steak dinner, or some other exotic treat. Each person decides what to bring. You can start the bidding for each item at the same price or you can try

to fool people by starting at higher or lower bids and then giving some hints about what they might be buying to increase the bids.

You will need to supply some drinks for people, you could suggest a small donation for them to cover the costs. Also, be sure to mention to watch for concerns about food allergies just in case people are present that this might effect.

Idea #6: Karaoke Night, Talent Night, Comedy Club, and/or Poetry Slam

Many rural communities in the Appalachian region lack for activities for local youth. This idea could be to sponsor an on-going weekly or monthly event in the community that allows your *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program to make do make a regular income, but also provides a meaningful activity for your tweens and teens. You will need to locate a place where you can regularly have this event. You will need to check about any liability concerns also. A local church, school or other community building could serve for this event. Be sure they are willing to cover the cost of the utilities. Decide how the place will be arranged to give a club feel, get some local artists to assist you. Some tables and chairs will be needed. You will need to have regular volunteers to work at this event. You may need a set-up and clean-up committee.

You will need to have a stage of some sort and adequate electronic capacity for microphones and instruments. Connect with local teachers, musicians, poets, etc. that can help you get this organized. Find some local talent to take part regularly. Perhaps some other local people will donate equipment they have and others might be willing to give donations towards

the purchase of a karaoke machine or other needed equipment.

Have a Master of Ceremonies, a high school senior, college student, or youth leader might be willing to do this on a regular basis. The youth will enjoy getting to know some 'regulars' and this could open up ways to serve as mentors to some local youth. Find creative ways to encourage healthy behaviors without 'preaching' to the groups. Humorous advertisements about things will be appreciated. Have information about things like tobacco use, alcohol, safe sex, drug use, etc. available. Keep in mind that some communities or sponsors might want to carefully monitor what is being said to youth.

Have a regular program of events and distribute the schedules publically. You might want to alternate the kinds of things done each month if you have weekly or monthly events. You might consider having a special youth topic for a brief serious conversation during each meeting time. You might want to schedule the event to last for a specific amount of time with people to arrive at the beginning and not to be readmitted if they leave. Your group will need to decide what kinds of rules to enforce.

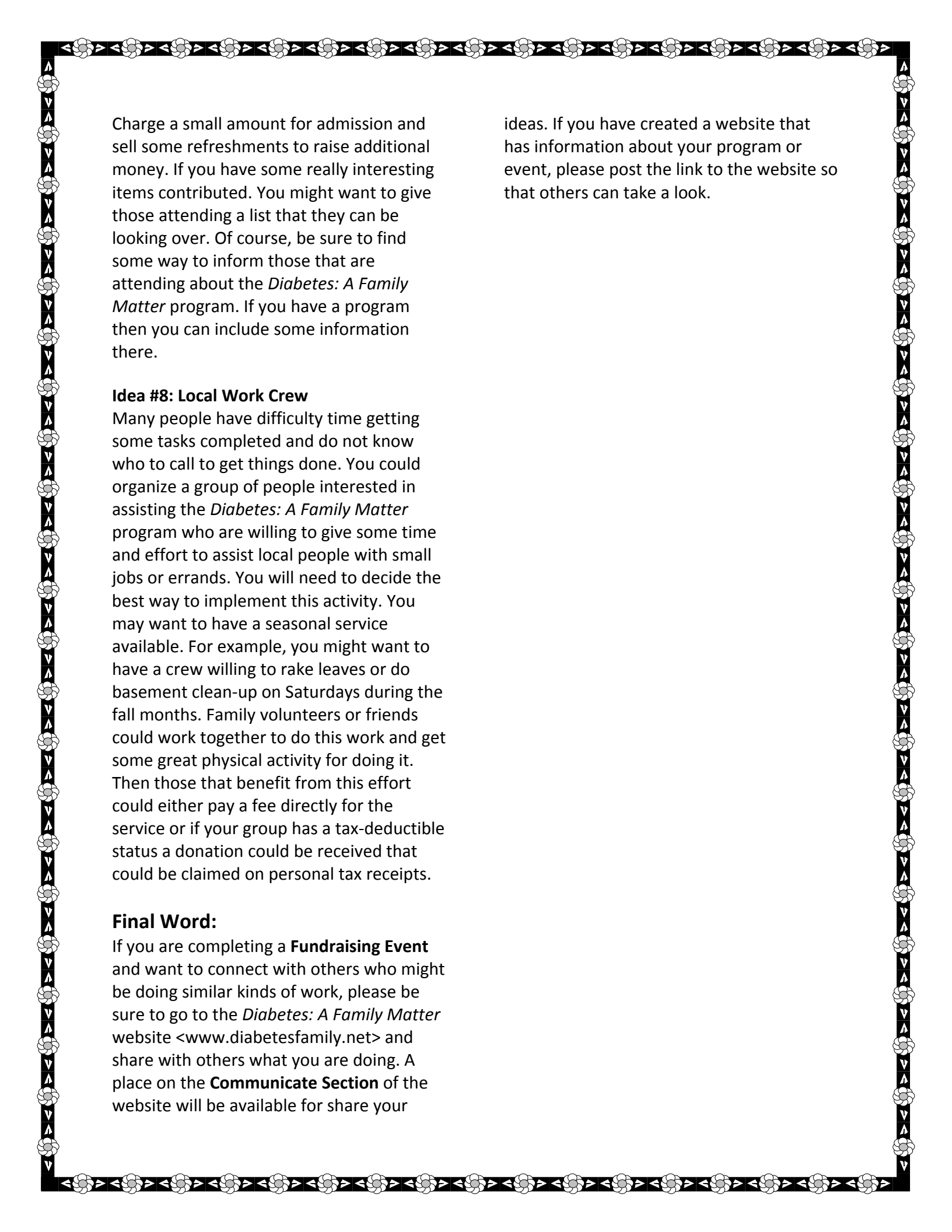
Your group will need to decide on an amount to charge for a cover charge for the event. Keep this as low as you can so that families with more than one child can still afford to take part. The sale of refreshments can be another way to raise some money. If the idea catches on then you might want to sell things like hats or t-shirts for additional fund-raisers.

Idea #7: Celebrity Auction

Conduct this as you would a regular auction. You will need a place for the event and someone to auction the items. You will need volunteers to assign numbers and obtain payment for the items. A local auctioneer might be able to assist with you with some ideas about how to do this. You will also need a recorder for items sold and buyers.

Be sure everything that goes on the block comes from or is associated with some local celebrities or heroes. Make a list of who the local celebrities from your community might be. Remember, even if someone is deceased there might be some family members who would still be willing to contribute to the event. Recognizing several celebrities will increase the number of people attracted to the event.

Ask local celebrities if they would be willing to make some donations to the auction to raise money for your local Diabetes: A Family matter program. Tell them that things like old photos, books, autographs, clothing with significance, personal items, even things they have but never use anymore would make great items for the auction. Some people in the community may have other items that are either from or about local celebrities that they might be willing to sell. Collect stories to share that go with each item that will be sold. People will be interested in knowing something about the items to be purchased. If possible, have the celebrities present for the event. Having them there will increase the size of your attendance for the event and also might raise the amounts of money bid for items.



Charge a small amount for admission and sell some refreshments to raise additional money. If you have some really interesting items contributed. You might want to give those attending a list that they can be looking over. Of course, be sure to find some way to inform those that are attending about the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program. If you have a program then you can include some information there.

Idea #8: Local Work Crew

Many people have difficulty time getting some tasks completed and do not know who to call to get things done. You could organize a group of people interested in assisting the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program who are willing to give some time and effort to assist local people with small jobs or errands. You will need to decide the best way to implement this activity. You may want to have a seasonal service available. For example, you might want to have a crew willing to rake leaves or do basement clean-up on Saturdays during the fall months. Family volunteers or friends could work together to do this work and get some great physical activity for doing it. Then those that benefit from this effort could either pay a fee directly for the service or if your group has a tax-deductible status a donation could be received that could be claimed on personal tax receipts.

Final Word:

If you are completing a **Fundraising Event** and want to connect with others who might be doing similar kinds of work, please be sure to go to the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* website <www.diabetesfamily.net> and share with others what you are doing. A place on the **Communicate Section** of the website will be available for share your

ideas. If you have created a website that has information about your program or event, please post the link to the website so that others can take a look.