

How to Organize a Successful Dine to Donate for Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS)

By

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What is Dine to Donate?

Dine to Donate is a program that Runyon's of Seaford developed to help me raise money for the Reflex Sympathetic Dystrophy Syndrome Association (RSDSA). It's an easy way to raise a lot of money for a good cause. Simply, you pick a date with the restaurant and you get as many people to come dine that night. The restaurant will donate a portion of the proceeds such as 10% or more of the check to RSDSA. There may also be an option to select a buffet, or a pre-fix menu (\$35 is charged per person, the split is \$25 to the restaurant and \$10 to RSDSA).

Involve your local community. Go around your neighborhood and ask if a restaurant might be interested in running a *Dine to Donate* program. I discovered that many businesses do get involved with fundraisers i.e. bowling alleys, comedy clubs, movie theaters, etc.)

How do you advertise?

Make up a Flyer. Maybe the Restaurant can make up a template for their restaurant.



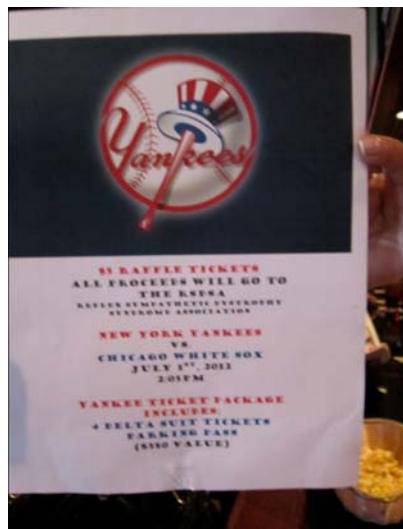
What I did was to go around to local businesses and gave them a flyer and asked if they advertise our event in their store. I asked my physical therapist to also display the flyer in her office with brochures on CRPS for their patients on CRPS. I contacted local newspapers, radio stations and even created a Facebook page which people shared to spread the word.

Tea-cup and silent auctions

These are excellent ways to raise money. For the tea-cup auction, I set up a table in Runyon's atrium room. I bought a roll of 2000 tickets and asked people if they would like to purchase tickets. You can organize it any way you want- 1 ticket for a \$1, 6 tickets for \$5. Individuals deposit half of the ticket in the basket(s) in which they want to win the item.

I also organized a silent auction. In a silent auction, there is a required starting bid, individuals then can up the bid on the desired item. At the end of the raffle whoever made the highest bid wins.

You will be surprised how many local businesses will commit to helping you raise money for our cause. I wrote plenty of e-mails, made phone calls, and even asked in person for donations. When I went in person to ask for donations, I had the event flyer and an official Letter from RSDSA asking for their support.



Decorations

Make sure to ask the place you are doing the event if it is ok to decorate for the occasion. Since CRPS' official color is orange. I went to the local dollar store and asked them to donate balloons. I even got a donation from Oriental Trading. I decorated all around the bar area, the atrium, inside and outside of the restaurant.



Awareness

CRPS is a little-known and misunderstood disease. Most people are not aware of it. Informational brochures are very important. When people walked into the restaurant, there was a designated area with brochures, pens, and wrist bands. We also had a psychologist participate, and she also provided pamphlets if people needed to talk to someone. As I was walking around, many people stopped me and asked me for my story, what is CRPS? , and how does someone get this. So be prepared to discuss. Don't be afraid.



It was a successful Event. We raised more than \$2000 to support RSDSA's educational and awareness programs. I was really worried that the turnout was not going to be as promising as it was. You must express how important it is for people to make reservations so the restaurant is fully staffed. We realized that we over booked but we everyone got in to eat. Prepare a brief speech to thank everyone for coming and please mention your sponsors. Thank-you letters should also be sent to the vendors/businesses for their participations, including perhaps a photo. We also made chocolate lollipops which we handed out to say thank you!

Here are a few more pictures:

