

Soccer Tournament Planning

What is it?

This is your chance to have fun while raising funds for Children's Cancer Research Fund when you set up your very own soccer tournament!

How does it help?

Every day, 43 kids in the U.S. will be diagnosed with cancer. That number is no fun. But the good news is, this is your chance to help change that! By dedicating your tournament to Children's Cancer Research Fund, you will be raising money to support amazing scientists looking for better, safer treatments to help children everywhere.

Getting Started—Before Your Tournament:

- 1. Pick a date and location.** Think about where you can have your tournament. School gyms, community centers, and churches work great! Select a few locations, dates and times you think will work and contact them. Remember to avoid holidays and 3-day weekends. Bonus points: When you call a location, let them know this is a fundraiser for Children's Cancer Research Fund—you may get the space for free! Confirm availability, any prices or rental fees and find out if they include soccer balls in their space rental.
- 2. Set a fundraising goal.** How much are you hoping to raise? Don't be afraid to go big!
- 3. Fundraising strategy.** Good news! There are lots of great ways to raise funds, here are a few:
 - **Fundraise to participate:** Ask your participants/teams to fundraise to be part of your event. This helps to spread the word about what you are doing and leads to more people donating, even if they don't plan to attend.
 - **Sponsorships:** Ask local businesses to sponsor your event to help pay for any event expenses like field rental, equipment fees, event merchandise or concessions. You can also ask businesses to make an in-kind donation for the winning team or gift baskets for raffles, contests or door prizes.
 - **Raffles:** Did you get any items donated from a local business? Is it something you think your participant/attendees want? Create a basket of coveted items and sell tickets to raffle it off.
 - **Sell event merchandise:** From t-shirts to hats, you have lots of great options!
 - **Sell concessions:** Pick up snacks, water and juice boxes in bulk and sell them at your event.
 - **Special contests:** Hold special contests for participants and attendees. How many goals can you get in 30 seconds? Can you charge \$5 for each participant?
- 4. Registration.** How can individuals/teams sign up for your tournament? We have a great option! Have them use the CCRF fundraising platform where they can easily sign up and also create a personal fundraising page, which will show real time fundraising results. Check it out at ChildrensCancer.org/Fundraise.

5. Promote Your Event. What's your connection to childhood cancer? Why is supporting research important to you? Be sure to always talk about why you are passionate about raising money for research. People will want to support you because they connect to your passion!

- **School:** Post or pass out flyers or add your event to your school's newsletter.
- **Soccer community:** Is there a website or board where you can find soccer tournaments and organizations in your community? If so, ask to promote your tourney on their website.
- **Media:** Reach out to the local newspapers/news stations. Depending on what type of news day it is, they could cover your event leading up to event day.
- **Social media:** Can you or your parents help spread the word about the event? It's a great way to get people who can't attend your event to make a donation anyway!

6. Recruit volunteers to help you with some roles throughout event day.

- **Registration:** Welcoming teams, collecting entrance fees, signing waivers, or giving participants a run down for the day.
- **Referees:** Do you want refs to enforce the rules in each game? Another option is to have your games self-officiated.
- **Concessions:** This is a great way to get families involved during the game.
- **Photographer:** Take team photos and "action shots" during the event.

7. Add divisions for age, gender, or experience level to help make the competition fair.

8. Create brackets. Decide between single or double elimination and use a bracket template or generator to easily create the order of the games – many free ones can be found online. Single elimination means that if a team loses 1 game, they're out of the tournament. Double elimination is a tournament style that lets teams lose 2 games before they're eliminated, giving them more playing time.

9. Are you honoring a specific person at your event? Can you invite someone that's been affected by childhood cancer to speak at your event about why cancer research is important?

Tournament Day To-Do:

10. Set up. Goals, field lines, and inflate soccer balls.

11. Safety. Be sure you know where there is a first aid kit or other emergency items can be found.

12. Registration check-in. Assign a volunteer to coordinate a registration check-in area for teams arriving at the tournament. Have participants fill out and sign insurance waivers and medical release forms upon arrival.

13. Educate. As teams huddle before their game, stop by (or have talking points provided for volunteers) to educate them of the game rules, about CCRF, why cancer research is important and thank them for their participation.

14. Scorekeeping. Have clipboards, print out copies of schedule, rosters, and map of fields.

15. Share schedule and results. Print out extra copies of brackets/schedule and tape them up in main areas of the venue. Fill in the result grids as the tournament progresses so spectators and teams can easily check the wins and losses.

Post-Event Wrap-Up

16. Thank supporters. Be sure to thank your supporters. You can do it in person or with a thank you note. If you had a lot of donors and didn't keep track of those that donated, ask your school if you can add it to the school announcements, to an email to parents or use the same methods you used to promote your fundraiser to thank donors for supporting you.

17. Once all costs are paid for, you can write a check to CCRF or donate through the personal fundraising page you set up at ChildrensCancer.org/Fundraise. (If mailing in a check, please enclose a letter about your event – the name, date, and how many participants).

Send checks to:

**Children's Cancer Research Fund
Attn: Community Fundraising Manager
7301 Ohms Lane, Suite 355
Minneapolis, MN 55439**

If you created a CCRF fundraising page but mail in a check, we will add the check to your fundraising page totals.