

Episode 9: 'Fundraising Challenges'

Podcast Transcript

Life with Alcohol and Drugs

Host: Sarah Campbell, Scottish Families

Guest Speaker: Christina

Introduction:

This is Life with Alcohol and Drugs. A podcast from the charity, Scottish Families Affected by Alcohol and Drugs.

In this episode our Fundraising Manager Sarah is chatting to Christina, who took on a fundraising in 2021 for Scottish Families. Sarah also gives some tips and advice if you're looking to do your own Scottish Families fundraising challenge in 2022.

Interview Begins

Sarah:

Okay, Christina, I think it's just going to be us, so in case you don't know who I am, I'm Sarah Campbell and I am the Fundraising Manager for Scottish Families. I've been with the charity for about five years. When I started we hardly had anyone fundraising for us, but thankfully, over the years we have been joined by more and more supporters.

We recently added a Community Fundraiser, Clare, who started last summer, and who has just been doing an amazing job since she joined. And obviously, you've been talking to her when you were doing your event and everything.

Christina:

Yes.

Sarah:

I don't really know too much about what you've been doing, so would you mind starting off with just telling me a bit about what fundraising you did?

Christina:

Yes. We actually did two fundraisers. Well, we sort of combined them together. One of them we did was the Kiltwalk in Glasgow, and the second was our race in Edinburgh, the Women's 10k. They were the two events, we sort of put them together, if that makes sense. They were the two that we did.

We basically, we raised money particularly for Scottish Families, well, my family and I, because our mother passed away sadly in June, from the life-long effects of alcohol. So we found Scottish Families basically while we were looking for bereavement counselling. So that's how we came across Scottish Families.

And you saying that it wasn't well known before sort of makes sense because it doesn't seem that a lot of guys know that you are out there and what we've got to offer. So us coming across you guys sort of went together with what happened, which was just amazing to find you guys and to have, yes, to find

that that stuff was happening to other people and other people were doing stuff to fundraise for you guys as well. There's quite a lot of people doing different stuff on Facebook and Instagram, that kind of stuff.

Sarah:

I'm very sorry to hear about your mum. I agree that we need to reach more people and there isn't many families in Scotland that haven't been affected by these issues.

Christina:

Yes. Definitely.

Sarah:

But for some reason there is still a stigma around people talking about it and being open around it. The words that you wrote on your Just Giving page about your mum, I thought, were really, really very powerful.

Christina:

Yes, thank you. Yes, so for us, our mum was a person; she wasn't just her addiction, although that's what's sort of led most of her life in terms of her personal life. In her actual professional life she managed to hide it quite well.

I found that when we were doing the fundraising and actually talking to people, talking about Scottish Families actually prompted other people to sort of reveal their experiences. It's a great wee charity, really impactful, we found.

And our mum, she was a social care worker. She worked through Covid. She was a grandmother, a mother, friend; she was all that to everybody else, but she had this problem.

Sarah:

And one thing I always say about fundraising: the money is amazing and it helps us do our work and reach more families who need our support, but it has also really helped spread the word about what we do as well.

I think our lovely turquoise-blue t shirts and our blue hoodies that we give to our fundraisers, it's such an amazing...I've never worn my t shirt out in the world without someone coming up to me and saying like, 'I've never heard of your charity. How can I help? How can I get involved? I need help. My friend needs help.'

And it's a really powerful stigma-buster as well I think, just having people out wearing t-shirts. So we really can't thank you enough for the work that you have done in fundraising.

Do you want to tell us how much you raised through taking part in your two events?

Christina:

Yes, so we raised £1,100, which we were absolutely blown away by.

Sarah:

That's amazing!

Christina:

Yes. We actually paid to enter the Kiltwalk and the race ourselves because we didn't actually think we would raise enough but oh, we were so wrong! I would say to everybody who is a bit unsure about fundraising, you could be so surprised by your fundraising abilities and what people will contribute to you because it is important to you and what you are doing.

Sarah:

Fantastic. And do you have any tips for anyone that's thinking about fundraising? What worked for you?

Christina:

My sister worked for us. She was chasing people down...no, no, no, not quite like that. We put out Just Giving page on the normal channels like Facebook and Instagram, but a lot of our fundraising was actually done through word of mouth, like a bit more.

So for the whole time we just hit the donations hard, trying to get the word out that this charity is there and it is there to truly help people and it has truly helped us. We are an example of someone that your charity has helped.

So yes, it was really just about getting out there, talking about it and getting the word out. We didn't do anything particularly special or anything like that, it was just that we managed to talk to a lot of people about it.

Sarah:

Yes, absolutely. A personal ask does have so much impact because it's quite easy just to scroll past things on Facebook isn't it? Actually [inaudible 6:26] is a good way to get them.

You've talked about, was it a team of three that you did both events with? Am I right in saying that?

Christina:

Yes. Yes, my sister and my partner, so we did those altogether. It was good to have a team environment. We were going through quite a bad time but we found it quite focussing for us. So although we had all of that stuff to do we still had a run to do, so it was quite healthy for us and kind of kept us together. Unfortunately, my little brother Ian was going to do it but he, the race was for women and the Kiltwalk he was away for, but he's got plans in the future to do more fundraising for you guys.

We were lucky we had a group, but we many people who did fundraising by themselves and they seemed to be having just as good a time as we were.

We did find it emotional when we started our events; the reasons why we were there, but as we completed our race and our walk, it was so worthwhile and it was really, really helpful to know that we had done that to help other people and we had achieved stuff, and achieved stuff that was good in our mum's memory and not bad stuff - if that makes sense?

Sarah:

It makes total sense, yes, and I think that's really smart what you said about having a kind of positive goal to work towards and something to focus on and healthy habits. Did you find training was something that took up a lot of your time? Was it onerous to train for these events?

Christina:

No, not particularly. It was taking sort of a couple of hours a week to do a run. We weren't setting any records when we did our race. No world records for us. We just took a few hours a week to do it. With the walking, we didn't really have to train at all. We already walk and normally can walk distances so we were okay with that.

The running was a bit so-so. But yes, for the training we used things like the Couch to 10k app, which really, really helped and gave us a structure to it. And as my sister doesn't live in the same city as me, we were able to do that together, but apart.

Sarah:

Ah okay, so you used digital technology to train together. That's a really clever idea.

Christina:

Yes, yes. Whether she did it or not, I'm not too sure but she did run.

Sarah:

Was that the first run that you've done, the Women's 10k?

Christina:

Yes, it was the first run any of us had ever done.

Sarah:

Fantastic!

Christina:

Yes, so it was quite a challenge to get it done to say the least! But we managed it, we got it done eventually. We weren't the last, so that's always good.

Sarah:

Absolutely. I've never undertaken a run. I've done the Kiltwalk for the past 5 years. I'm a massive, massive fan of the Kiltwalk, but I do think sometimes about taking up running. It's...yes. You've given me some inspiration there, Christina!

Christina:

Yes, so we might see you at the next one?

Sarah:

Well, I think it's probably about time, isn't it?

Do you have any words of encouragement for anyone that's listening to us today and maybe thinking they'd like to try something new, challenge themselves? What would you like to say to them?

Christina:

In support of Scottish Families, I would say to definitely do it. The team, as you said, like Clare was absolutely incredible from day one. She really made us feel like we were part of the Scottish Families Family, if that makes sense?

We were totally supported. You know, when we were talking about the stigma, we didn't come across that too much but we found that people could really see the value in what the charity does and the work that you guys undertake to help people.

Yes, I would say do it! And just challenge yourself because at the end of the day, it's only you that's undertaking it. You'll always know that you've done it, and it's such a healthy way to express either grief, or if you're having troubles with, say, someone who you know who suffers from addiction, you can know that you are actively doing something that will maybe trickle down to them and help them.

Sarah:

That's great, Christina. Thank you very much. I don't think I have any more questions for you. On my list of questions I have 'Plans for 2022?' But that's because Craig is due to...he's someone who's doing multiple events. He did one event in December and he's got more coming up this year, but after raising over £1,000, I think you'd probably not be doing anything in 2022?

Christina:

Well, actually we are. Yes.

Sarah:

Oh wow!

Christina:

Yes, I've got a little niece, Charlotte. She was six so she was too young to do the race, and the Kiltwalk that we did was too long for her. So she's taken it upon herself, she wants to do the Kiltwalk this year in Dundee, in August.

Sarah:

Oh bless her!

Christina:

So she'll be doing The Wee Wander, but she calls Scottish Families 'Nana's Charity', that's what she calls it. That's how impactful your charity has been on us as a family. So, we're getting her out there young, so expect some more donations from us.

Sarah:

That is just fantastic, and we absolutely need to see some photographs of that as well. That sounds amazing.

Christina:

Yes. We found that the younger members of our family, not that we didn't consider that they would want to do the charity events, but we found that they actually did. They were maybe inspired by us doing these things that we don't normally do, and for them to do something positive in their nana's name is, I think, important to us as a family, and just as important for them to learn that they shouldn't be stigmatised by this kind of event.

Going forward, they can start talking about these things freely and have the confidence to talk about addiction and not have it be something that maybe plagues their life. Maybe they know that there is help out there and there's people out there that will certainly help.

Sarah:

Absolutely, Christina. That is just fantastic. Thank you so much for taking the time to talk to us today.

Christina:

No problem.

Sarah:

Yes. And best of luck with The Wee Wander.

Christina:

Thank you very much.

Sarah:

If you are feeling inspired by Christina and our other fundraisers and fancy taking on a challenge yourself in 2022, here are some tips for getting started with your fundraising:

When you set up your page and you are sitting on the zero mark, the first thing I would recommend you do is think about the five people who are most likely to make a donation. This could be your partner, a parent, a brother or sister, the people that you know that when you share your fundraising page are the most likely people to make a donation.

For me, that person is always my mother-in-law. She is my ride or die and the person who I know, no matter what, will always make a donation to whatever fundraising endeavour I'm undertaking. So I would ask those five people first. Get off the zero mark.

Then I would think about the next five people who would most likely make a donation. This could be a close colleague at work, it could be someone who's page you've donated to recently yourself and you think you might get a little donation back in return. Then I would ask those people for donations.

By that point, you should be sitting on a fairly healthy amount on your Just Giving page. Then it's a good time to go forward and share it on your Facebook, your Twitter, your Instagram, or whatever social media platform you use.

It's something weird about the psychology of fundraising, but nobody really likes being that person to be the first one. It's like being the first one to get up to dance at a party. And pages, in my experience, do much, much better if they are shared when they've already got a bit of momentum and a bit of cash going into them.

Once your Just Giving page is looking healthy and you've got some donations coming in, here are some other tips for fundraising: don't underestimate the power of a paper sponsor form. We can provide a paper sponsor form which you can then carry with you and take with you wherever you go. I know cash isn't as popular these days but some people do prefer to do a donation in cash, and it's much easier, if you see someone in the street for example, you can ask them then and there when you see them, because you've got the sponsorship form on you.

Another tip would be to speak to your workplace and see if they offer any match funding opportunities. A wide range of companies will match or contribute towards any fundraising that an employee is doing, so it's definitely worth asking to see what's available. And my final tip would be to make sure you speak to people after you have completed the event as well, because some people like to know that you have actually done what you set out to do and you've achieved it. You may find that on the day of your event and the day after, is the day when you actually get the most donations. So make sure you remember to share on the day and the day after.

We have a wide range of events taking place in 2022. The best place to find out about these is on our website, which are linked.

Interview Ends

Exit:

Thank you for listening, if you're worried about somebody else's alcohol or drug use you can contact Scottish Families on 08080 10 10 11 or by email at helpline@sfad.org.uk. We also have webchat and further information on our website www.sfad.org.uk.