

**SUMMER SOLSTICE**

**PLAY-A-THON**

Prescribed by  
PROJECT   
**sunshine**

## **THE SMALL BUSINESS PARTNER TOOLKIT**

**All the tools and resources you need to get started on your  
FUNdraising efforts for Project Sunshine!**



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## Welcome to Play-A-Thon!

As a partner of Project Sunshine’s 2026 Summer Solstice Play-A-Thon, you join a powerful, grassroots fundraising community working together to deliver the healing power of play to children and families facing medical challenges. Your support brings light to cloudy days of stress and fear by fueling free programs proven to spark joy, connection, and hope.

In the U.S. alone, 1.3 million children are hospitalized annually and 15 million live with chronic illness. These children experience stress and isolation as they navigate appointments, procedures, and missed school days. As their medical needs take center stage, and their interactions become centered around their conditions, these kids lose out on play – a key part of reaching developmental milestones, processing feelings, relieving stress, connecting with others, and just being a kid! That’s why Project Sunshine delivers free, research-backed play programs to over 265,000 children at 550+ medical facilities every year.

Our small business partners are an essential driver of our mission, raising funds and awareness for our critical programs. You represent diverse sectors, locations, and models – but each of you is an integral part of your local community, beloved and trusted by your patrons and neighbors. We are grateful you’ve chosen to support Project Sunshine, and we’re determined to ensure you benefit from the partnership just as much as we do.

Thank you for helping to spread much-needed joy in hospitals, medical facilities, clinics, and homes where children receive care across the world.

**Let’s play!**

### HOW TO USE YOUR SMALL BUSINESS PARTNER TOOLKIT

This toolkit is your one-stop shop for every step of the awareness and fundraising process. Whether you’ve been partnering with Project Sunshine for years, or just joined the team, you’ll find all the resources and guidance you need to be successful.

Be sure to check out our blog and social media, and tag us in your posts so we can amplify your efforts to our community!

 [@projectsunshine](https://www.instagram.com/projectsunshine)

 [@projectsunshineUSA](https://www.facebook.com/projectsunshineUSA)

 [Project Sunshine](https://www.linkedin.com/company/project-sunshine)

If you have any questions or need support, you can reach Anna Costantini, Development Manager, at [acostantini@projectsunshine.org](mailto:acostantini@projectsunshine.org).



## PLAY-A-THON: HOW WILL YOU PLAY?

There are three simple ways for small business partners to have a profound impact in support of Project Sunshine during Play-a-Thon.

1. **Point of Sale Fundraising.** Incentivize customers by offering a register round-up or donating a percentage of sales to Project Sunshine. In this guide, we offer suggestions for incorporating play and whimsy into any business operations, maximizing the fun and value.
2. **Event-Based Fundraising.** Host a fundraising event (workout class, Pints for Play night, gaming tournament, Scoops for a Cause, etc.) to gather donations for Project Sunshine during the course of usual business. In this guide, we provide fundraising ideas that will help you gather donations and showcase your commitment to the healing power of play.
3. **Post your Play.** Project Sunshine wants your business to help spread the word on the healing power of play. However you choose to support, tag us [@projectsunshine](https://www.instagram.com/projectsunshine) and use the #playforprojectsunshine to raise awareness. We'll amplify your efforts to our community of donors, volunteers, and partners!



## YOUR FUNDRAISING PAGE

We are thrilled to partner with DonorDrive to provide a simple, engaging fundraising platform for our small business partners. Your business fundraising page will help you:

1. **Publicize your support** of Project Sunshine.
2. **Collect online donations from patrons** during fundraising events in a smooth, pain-free process. Gone are the days of relying on cash! Just share the link with customers, and they have
3. **Make donations from funds raised during point-of-sale fundraisers**. If your business would like to make the gift online, your branded fundraising page is a quick, easy place to ensure a tax-deductible donation.

### Setting Up Your Fundraising Page

1. Click [here](#) to register.
2. Select “Register Now!”
3. Create an account.
4. Select your role. You can either create an “Individual” page to represent your business, or a “Team” page that can host many individual pages under it, all fundraising towards the Team’s goal. Select the role option that suits your preferences. In most cases, we recommend that small businesses create an “Individual” page for the business.
5. Set your fundraising goal and provide all the required contact information to create your page.
  - a. Note: the language on an individual page reads “personal fundraising goal.” If you are using an individual page for your business, you can consider this your business’s goal.
6. Verify your email address using the code sent to the email you used to set up your account. The email will come from [donations@projectsunshine.org](mailto:donations@projectsunshine.org).
7. Customize your page. Add your own language and photos to share the story of your business and why you’ve chosen to support Project Sunshine. Be creative and show off your business’s identity and personality!
  - a. Pro-tip: You can even create a custom link to make your page easier to remember and find.
8. Save your page link! Copy and paste it to somewhere that you can return to anytime you’d like to share it with patrons or community members.



## Making the Most of Your Fundraising Page

**Story-Sharing:** Make your page stand out by adding photos and language that represent your business. This is a great opportunity to share how supporting Project Sunshine aligns with your business values and give the “why” behind the partnership will encourage donations!

**Exciting Incentives:** Use the “Incentives” section to add fun donation motivators to your page. Be as playful as you’d like here! Here are some suggestions from our team, with the example of a fundraiser at an ice cream shop:

- \$5 donation: With a donation of \$5, you have the chance to win a free scoop. Just answer one pop culture trivia question of our choosing correctly, and your extra scoop is free!
- \$10 donation: For every donation of \$10, you get unlimited sprinkles on your ice cream!
- \$20 donation: For every donation of \$20, our staff will eat a bright yellow Lemonhead candy while saying a sunny tongue twister: "We surely shall see the sun shine soon." Or, you can volunteer to take on the challenge for them!

**Donation Tracking:** Your fundraising page provides details on all the gifts made to your page, including your fundraising total, donor names, donation amounts and dates, and comments left by donors. This is a great place to help you track your community participation and engagement!



## OUTREACH AND MARKETING

### Suggested Language

This June, we're proud to be supporting [Project Sunshine](#) and their mission to deliver the healing power of play to children with medical needs. [BUSINESS NAME] is partnering with Project Sunshine for their annual [Play-a-Thon](#), because laughter, joy, and connection are essential to healing and hope.

Join us on [DATE(S)] for [DESCRIPTION OF YOUR FUNDRAISING EFFORTS]. All funds raised will deliver free play programs to pediatric patients and families in our community. See you there!

### Logos and Brand Guidelines Language

To create materials (such as flyers, signage, social media posts, etc.) that include Project Sunshine's logos, please access our branding toolkit [here](#).

### Publicizing Your Event(s)

Project Sunshine is proud to have a network that includes thousands of dedicated donors, volunteers, and hospital partners who would love to hear about the small businesses supporting our Play-a-Thon. We would be delighted to publicize your partnership and any fundraising events you are hosting to our community on our website, newsletters, and social media.

1. **Tag @ProjectSunshine** (Instagram, LinkedIn) and @ProjectSunshineUS (Facebook) in all your posts so we can see and share your content with our audience.
2. **Include your event on our website and newsletters** by contacting Anna Costantini, Development Manager at [acostantini@projectsunshine.org](mailto:acostantini@projectsunshine.org).



## INCORPORATING PLAY INTO YOUR FUNDRAISING

Whether play is part of your day-to-day or miles away from your business, here's some inspiration for bringing a little child-like whimsy to your fundraising efforts:

- First, consider the many types of play you could incorporate. Play takes endless forms!
  - **Sports and exercise:** basketball, soccer, swimming, rock climbing, Pilates, yoga, spike ball
  - **Outdoor fun:** Nerf guns, scooters and bikes, kites, tag, Marco Polo, Capture the Flag, swings and slides at the park
  - **Music and dance:** try a new instrument, learn a dance routine
  - **Arts and crafts:** sidewalk chalk, painting, coloring, sketching, slime-making, knitting, crocheting, quilting
  - **Video games:** use your computer or favorite gaming console
  - **Toys:** Legos, puzzles, action figures and dolls, magnetic tiles, blocks, Rubix cubes, drones
  - **Board games and cards**
  - **Arcade games**
  - **Theatre and pretend play**
  - **Science experiments**
- Then, consider simple ways to integrate play into your fundraising. Here's some ideas to get you started:
  - **Donate \$5 to add to our sidewalk chalk mural!** Provide space outside your business entrance where patrons can color in support of Project Sunshine.
  - **Donate \$10 to borrow a puzzle or game!** Offer simple games like Jenga, Connect Four, checkers for patrons to enjoy at their table.
  - **Do \_\_\_\_ for 10% off (or a free \_\_\_\_ with) your purchase.** Patrons at a register round-up or point-of-sale fundraiser will be excited to support you and Project Sunshine after engaging in some silly antics at your business. Consider: do a crazy dance for a free sticker, do this crossword or maze in under 1 minute for 10% off, solve a Rubik's cube, beat a staff member at Jenga, etc.

*Our team is happy to help you design a fundraising initiative that aligns with your business and our love of play! For more support, reach Anna Costantini, Development Manager, at [acostantini@projectsunshine.org](mailto:acostantini@projectsunshine.org).*



## FUNDRAISING FAQs

### Are donations made to my fundraising page tax-deductible?

Project Sunshine is a 501(c)3 tax-exempt organization. Donations made directly to Project Sunshine on your DonorDrive page are tax-deductible within the guidelines of U.S. law. All donors who make their gift online will receive an automated digital receipt.

### What if a donor (or my business) wants to give, but not through the online page?

Project Sunshine accepts many payment methods for donations, including: checks, wire transfers, donor advised funds, stocks and mutual funds, and cryptocurrency.

Donors interested in sending a check should make it payable to “Project Sunshine” with “*Your Business Name* - Fundraiser” in the memo line. Checks must be mailed to the Project Sunshine headquarters: 211 E. 43<sup>rd</sup> St., Suite 401, New York, NY 10017.

Donors interested in giving by any other means are asked to contact Anna Costantini, Development Manager, at [acostantini@projectsunshine.org](mailto:acostantini@projectsunshine.org).

### Can a donor write a check directly to our business?

Project Sunshine can only issue tax receipts for donations made directly to our organization. If the check is written out to you or your business, we will be unable to issue a receipt. We encourage you to ask your donors to make checks payable to Project Sunshine with your business name in the memo.

## HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

Reach out to Anna Costantini, Development Manager, at [acostantini@projectsunshine.org](mailto:acostantini@projectsunshine.org).