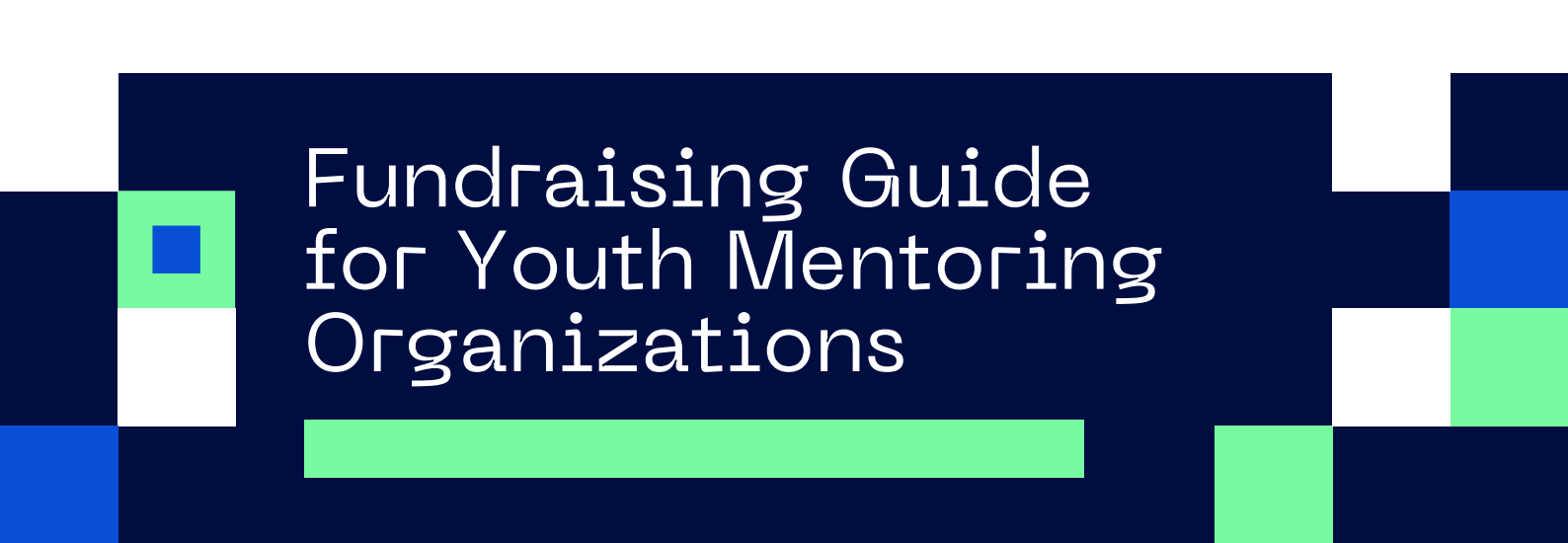




Fundraising Guide for Youth Mentoring Organizations

A free resource for youth mentoring programs, after-school clubs, and youth development organizations from [Healthy Fundraiser Hub](#)

The Real Costs Youth Mentoring Organizations Face

Youth mentoring and after-school organizations carry costs that go beyond simple programming: mentor training and background checks, transportation for participants, program materials and activities, staff coordination, and facility or space rental. Many programs aim to remain free or low-cost for families, which means fundraising must cover the gap that participant fees alone can't.

Common Problems These Groups Are Trying to Solve

- Mentor training, background checks, and screening costs
- Transportation for participants who can't get to program sites on their own
- Program materials, activities, and supplies for weekly sessions
- Staff and volunteer coordination costs
- Facility or space rental for programs without a permanent home

Fundraising Ideas Built Around Youth Development

Event-based ideas

- Mentor-mentee event (bowling, sports day, talent show) with a suggested donation
- Community 5K or fun run themed around youth development
- Silent auction or gala with donated items from local businesses
- Graduation or milestone celebration with a giving component

Recognition and sponsorship ideas

- "Sponsor a mentee" style recognition giving tied to program costs per participant
- Local business sponsorship packages with recognition at events
- Matching-gift challenge from a lead donor or corporate partner
- Alumni giving program for former participants who want to give back

Everyday, low-effort ideas

- Donation jar or QR code sign at program sites and community events
- Merchandise sale (shirts, gear) with proceeds tied to a specific program cost
- Round-up-at-checkout partnership with a local business
- Participant success stories on social media (with permission) that double as a soft fundraising ask

Getting a Program Site QR Code Right

- Keep the sign message specific: "Scan to help fund transportation for 10 mentees this month" works better than "please donate"
- Place it where parents and volunteers naturally see it at drop-off or pickup
- Test the link on a phone before printing — a slow page loses supporters fast
- Pair the code with a photo or story from a recent program activity
- Refresh the message occasionally so regular visitors don't stop noticing it

Building a Donor and Volunteer Network

- Start with your inner circle: mentor and mentee families, board members, and longtime volunteers
- Move outward to local businesses, schools, and community organizations that share your mission
- Ask supporters whether their employer offers matching gifts or volunteer grants
- Keep a simple worksheet: name, relationship, likely gift level, best way to ask, follow-up date
- Recognize donors consistently at events and in newsletters

A Simple Campaign Timeline

- **One month before:** confirm the specific need, set a goal and deadline, and prepare materials
- **Two weeks before:** begin promoting through newsletters, social media, and partner schools
- **Campaign or event period:** share updates and thank early supporters
- **Within 48 hours after:** share the final total, thank supporters publicly, and explain the impact

Curious About an Easier Option?

If you're looking for a low-effort way to raise support between campaigns and events, [take a look at our free fundraiser](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

How do we ask for support without it feeling like we're highlighting a family's need?

Frame the ask around the program and its impact, not individual families. "Help fund mentor training for 20 new volunteers" focuses on the organization's capacity, not any one participant's circumstances.

Should we fundraise for general operations or specific program costs?

Specific asks tend to perform better. "Sponsor transportation for one mentee for a semester" gives supporters a concrete reason to give, while "support our program" is harder to act on.

What's the easiest fundraiser for a small, volunteer-run organization?

A program-site QR code paired with a simple sponsor-a-mentee campaign requires relatively little ongoing effort and gives supporters a clear, specific way to help.

How often should we run a fundraiser without it feeling repetitive?

Space out bigger pushes around specific needs or seasonal moments (back-to-school, program milestones) rather than asking continuously, and let a low-effort background option carry ongoing support between campaigns.

This guide is provided by [Healthy Fundraiser Hub](#) for general planning purposes. This resource does not guarantee any specific fundraising outcome, and any program mentioned should be independently reviewed before your organization participates.