



Spirit. Breakthrough & Hope

Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus
Association of Ontario

Planning an Event

When planning an event to raise awareness – and funds – in support of encouraging women to take a daily multivitamin containing folic acid to reduce the risk of neural tube defects, here are some things you will need to do:

- Estimate how many people will attend.
- Book a venue that will hold everyone you are expecting.
- Advertise in the local paper, on the radio and on your local cable channel – in as many places as you can think of, in fact.
- Hang posters about the event in areas frequented by your target audience (e.g., teenagers, all women of childbearing age, health professionals, etc.).
- Invite local media to attend.
- Ask organizations that interact with your target audience to spread the word.
- If your budget allows, send invitations.
- Make arrangements for refreshments, tables, chairs, linens, etc.
- Ensure you have enough take-away materials to hand out (e.g., brochures and tip sheets that can be found on www.folicacid.ca and www.sbhao.on.ca).
- Confirm the date and time with your spokesperson and with anyone else (e.g., volunteers) helping out at the event.
- After the event, send thank you notes to volunteers, media, and any key spokespeople who attended.

In terms of deciding what type of event to host, and doing the actual logistics planning, there are a number of things you can do – from hosting informational workshops and formal galas to putting on bake sales, car washes and fashion shows – and some tried-and-true ways to do them. Start by figuring out whether you are trying to raise awareness, funds or both; how much time and energy you have to spend on the event; how much money you have access to through personal investment or sponsorship or keynote speakers, for example; and how many volunteers you can recruit to help.

Helpful planning guides for a number of events will soon be available on the Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario's website at www.sbhao.on.ca. In the meantime, some general rules for a bake sale – a low-cost event that requires little lead time and minimal labour – are included here to help get you started.



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BAKE SALE TIP SHEET

Bakes sales are low-cost events that do not require a lot of time to plan and are not labour intensive either – as long as you can get a group of people to help you bake. To make things even easier, you can have volunteers price their own goods, or agree ahead of time to a price for six cookies, a dozen cupcakes or a pie, for example. You can make this event as small or as large as you choose, depending on the resources available to you and what works best in your community. You can include an awareness component by having brochures available at one or all of your bake sale tables (downloaded from www.folicacid.ca), and by having a special presentation or slideshow running at the event (available soon at the same website).

Things you will need for the event ...

- someone to oversee overall organizing of the sale
- place to host the sale (e.g., church, arena, farmer's market)
- volunteers to bake and help set up and sell baked goods at the event, and clean up afterwards
- a handout for volunteers outlining the sale prices
- large tables and chairs, as well as tablecloths
- bags for packaging goods for customers
- cash box(es) and float(s)
- napkins, paper plates, forks and a sharp knife, as well as coffee, tea and beverages, if you want to have a seating area where people can buy one item with a drink to have onsite
- extension cord(s) for coffee urns and computer if running a slideshow
- liability insurance (if not included with the venue)
- municipal permit (if required)
- brochures and other support materials from www.folicacid.ca and www.sbhao.on.ca
- computer with awareness slideshow (optional and available soon at www.folicacid.ca)

Things you will need to do before the event ...

- secure location
- prepare list of bake sale items
- research cost of baked goods in your area
- create pricing sheet to give volunteers at the sale
- recruit volunteers to bake and help at the event, and keep an updated list with their contact information and contribution(s) handy, along with dates to follow up with reminders
- create a volunteer schedule to share before the event and follow at the event (four-hour shifts are recommended)
- secure necessary supplies (see below), and try to get them donated
- rent or borrow urns for coffee and tea (if applicable)
- create and send PSAs to media and follow up by phone (see "Drafting a Public Service Announcement" and "Working With the Media" tip sheets at www.folicacid.ca)
- arrange for delivery of baked goods for day of event
- promote bake sale by posting flyers in various spots in your community



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Things you will need to do at the event ...

- ensure baked goods are delivered to the site
- set up tables
- prepare coffee and tea (if applicable)
- have someone supervise sales and remove cash from time to time for security reasons
- check in with volunteers from time to time, including those selling individual baked goods with beverages (if applicable)

Things you will need to do after the event ...

- collect leftover items and distribution to volunteers and/or a local soup kitchen
- return any borrowed or sponsored items
- send thank you notes to volunteers, sponsors and any media providing coverage and/or in attendance
- sent follow-up release to media announcing the amount raised and thanking participants, sponsors and the community at large (see "Writing a News Release" tip sheet at www.folicacid.ca)
- finalize accounting and deposit funds raised
- send cheque for total net amount raised to the [Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus Association of Ontario](http://www.sbhao.on.ca) and note "folic acid awareness"

Things you can do to help ensure success ...

- price your items just slightly under what your local bakeries charge, not a lot under
- be sure you have a good mix of items and extra popular items (e.g., cookies, brownies, fudge, pies and preserves)
- avoid items that can be easily damaged during transport
- make displays as attractive as possible
- ensure all items are clearly labeled

For more information or assistance ...

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