

Garage Sale

By Tracy Roth

We began planning for the garage sale several months in advance because I knew that the more “stuff” we had, the better. I sent an e-mail to all of my friends and family and asked them, as they were cleaning out their homes to make room for new stuff around the holidays or doing their “spring cleaning,” that rather than donate their items to Goodwill, to donate them to us for the garage sale. This worked really well because everyone usually clears out their stuff once or twice a year, so I ended up with an entire garage full of stuff!

Our original plan was to hold the garage sale in the spring, but I had collected so many things that the idea of pricing everything was a little overwhelming and I kept thinking I didn't have time to devote to it. I was able to overcome the whole idea of needing to price everything by grouping similar items together—children's clothing, books, etc.—and pricing by the type of the item and just hanging large signs so shoppers knew how much each group of items was. We held the garage sale in July, and I called the village beforehand to make sure we didn't need a permit.

We didn't advertise in the newspaper because I didn't think we needed to and ultimately it would take away from the profits. Instead, we made huge signs and placed some of them at the nearest busy intersections to my home and others on the inner, neighborhood streets and in our front yard. Where we live, there are LOTS of people who love garage sales and scour the neighborhoods for them in the summer. We had multiple customers come by the day before the

sale even opened because we were in the garage sorting and pricing with the door open and they wanted to buy stuff early. And we let them—what the heck!



We made sure that the signage was large and that it showed that all of the proceeds were being donated to the CHARGE Syndrome Foundation. That was really important because it made people less likely to haggle over price and it raised awareness. We also had a stack of the Foundation brochures handy so that, when people were paying, we could hand them one or

put them in their bags and explain to them why we were having the sale. This was great because several folks really wanted to stay and talk about CHARGE.

In the end, we made \$1,100! I was super-happy with this because frankly I thought I would be satisfied with \$500. Then, because both my employer and my husband's employer match charitable contributions—mine up to \$1,000 and my husband's the full amount—we requested matching donations from each, so in the end we ended up with a \$3,200 donation to the Foundation!

