# How to run a clothes swapping event

Swishing (or clothes swapping) parties are a great way to get a new wardrobe or refresh your current one without buying new clothes. At a swishing event you get together with friends, family, and others to swap your wearable clothes and accessories like shoes, boots, bags and belts.

You can simply organise an informal clothes swapping session with friends. But if you want to have a larger event with people who might not know each other, you may wish to follow the guidance below.

## How it works

- Step 1: Everyone clears out their wardrobe to find wearable items they no longer want to bring to the swishing event.
- Step 2: Guests are given a token for each item donated and items are displayed before the swishing starts.
- Step 3: The swishing starts! Guests are invited to look through the clothes and exchange items for the tokens they have.

## Planning an event

If you would like to plan a swishing party there are some things to consider:

- Event location: First decide on a location, it can be as small as a living room to as a large as a hired hall – depending on the number of people you are going to invite.
- Invites: Once you have a location and date decided, invite people to your event. This can be through text message or email if you're having a small event, or you could consider social media events, posters and invites for larger events.
- Times: Be clear with starting times as it is best to have all items ready before the swishing starts, so nobody misses out. You should have a donations slot before the swishing start time. Encourage guests to donate their clothes in advance if possible to save set up time at the event (you shouldn't take more than 30 minutes for this). Make sure you leave time on the day to start the event with an introduction of how the event will work.
- Event rules: You won't need too many rules, but it is a good idea to set a few. In particular include items which you will/won't accept, e.g., you may not wish to encourage swimwear or underwear. You should also state that all items should be in a wearable condition (items with missing buttons and small repairs can be expected). The times and token system can be explained here too. It would be good to include the rules in the invites and at the event.
- Equipment: Ideally you will need some tables, clothes rails, mirrors and somewhere for guests to change (if possible). You can also make signs for different types of clothes, e.g., men, women, kids etc. and tokens to give in exchange for items (these could even be raffle tickets). It is also handy to have spare carrier bags (or better still reusable bags) to hand for guests to take their clothes away in. For smaller events less equipment will be needed, just space to display clothes.
- Tokens: Try to give one item per token or if you have a varying degree in quality you can give out multiple tokens for more expensive items, e.g., designer gear.
- Refreshments: Providing refreshments will help the event become more social, and are handy for guests while they are waiting for the swishing to begin.

- Tailored events: It's your event so decide how to tailor it to fit your community's needs. You could even consider running events for one type of item e.g., baby clothes if that would be more suitable.
- Extras: If you know someone who is good at making repairs, why not invite them to help out on the day.
- After the event: The aim of the event is to have all items given a new home, but this might not be possible. Have a plan in mind for what to do with items that are not taken away. If there is a charity shop you will take these to advertise this to your guests. Alternatively you can take clothes to your local community recycling centre for recycling.
- A disclaimer: Just in case you have an unhappy swisher it is best to include a disclaimer stating that items handed to the event become the property of the organisers and that the organisers take no responsibility for the quality or condition of the items taken away.
- Feedback: Record the number of items taken away when people exchange their tokens for items and the amount of items left at the end (which can be donated to charity or recycled).