



Tip Sheet – Healthier Fundraising Choices

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Good-bye bake sales...hello walk-a-thons.
Before schools adopted wellness policies in 2006, fundraisers involving foods and beverages were popular. Times are changing. Today, people are thinking about fundraising more creatively in order to move away from traditional candy and bake sales.

Fundraisers are a popular and necessary way for schools to raise extra money for the annual budget. Money from fundraisers purchases additional classroom supplies, higher end equipment, and special items like cameras. Fundraising also helps support field trips and special events.

Healthier fundraiser choices are doable. Across the country, schools have started to change their fundraisers. According to a recent survey¹, fewer schools sold cookies, baked goods, and “junk foods” in 2006 than in 2000.

So how are schools raising money? A Massachusetts elementary school created a program for recycling ink-jet printer cartridges, toner cartridges and no-longer-used cell phones and receiving money from a company that collects and recycles the items. A California school raised money by selling greeting cards that featured art work from students. Students at a New York elementary school held a walk-a-thon around the school campus, with donations based on the number of laps completed.

Schools that encourage non-food fundraisers and think creatively about other ways to raise money (see box) are doing their part to raise healthier students.

Alternate fundraising ideas

- Silent auction with items donated by parents
- Book fair
- Basketball free throw contest or tournament between teachers and students
- Family bingo night
- Plant sale, with plants donated by a local nursery
- Car wash
- Karaoke contest
- School Spirit Week, selling school-related t-shirts, caps
- Cookbook with recipes supplied by parents

Fundraising Resources

School Nutrition Association, *We Can Work Together to Create and Promote Healthy School Fundraisers and Alternate School Fundraising Resource*. Includes ideas for healthy fundraisers. www.schoolnutrition.org/Index.aspx?id=1

Ms. Hermann specializes in health communications for parents and children. Her articles have appeared in major health, women's, and parenting magazines and websites.

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