

Alliance Alternative Fundraising Ideas

The purpose of this document is to offer ideas for fundraisers that engage the community and students in meaningful ways and that do not undermine the nutrition and health of students. For more resources on health-promoting fundraisers, visit www.HealthierGeneration.org/Fundraisers.

Step Up to Creating Healthier School Fundraising is a turnkey and online guide, with downloadable tools, that leads school-community representatives through the process of planning and implementing changes to school fundraisers. Go to www.HealthierGeneration.org/FundraisingGuide.

For general information on healthier snacks and beverages, including links for celebration and reward ideas, go to www.HealthierGeneration.org/snacksandbeverages.

Ideas for Alternative Fundraisers: (These suggestions were compiled from the National PTA, North Carolina and Michigan Action for Healthy Kids, Center for Science in the Public Interest and California Project LEAN.)

- **Organize events like walk/bike/dance/skate/jump rope-a-thons or fun runs** for which sponsors pledge money by the mile/hour or by the sit-up or push-up (**sit-up for cents or push-up for pennies**)
- **Hold a book reading contest** where families seek sponsors and raise money based on how many books are read
- **Organize a car or dog wash** that helps promote school spirit and physical activity or **raffle student services** such as lawn care, babysitting or driving (be mindful not to put students in unsafe situations)
- **Plan a parent-teacher talent show** or basketball game and sell tickets
- **Book fairs** that promote literacy while raising revenue
- **Invite chefs from local restaurants** to donate healthy hors d'oeuvres and desserts for a "Taste of [your town]" event - charge for admission
- **"Men (or women or students) who cook,"** local dads are particularly popular as a group of "chefs" that prepare a community meal together and charge by the plate (grocery stores often donate food) – partner this event with a **cookbook fundraiser**
- **Have a PTA yard sale or auction** and ask students, teachers and parents for donations of items
- **Seek support from local businesses** and ask them to donate a certain portion of sales from a given date or time to the school - avoid fast-food chains; promote restaurants with only nutritious options
- **Live or silent auctions** with local businesses and community members donating items and services (e.g., weekends at vacation homes, pool or lawn care, baby-sitting, lunch with a local celebrity)
- **Sell raffle tickets** for prizes such as tickets for movies, sporting events, concerts or amusement parks; spa treatments; gift certificates from local retailers; and vouchers for car washes or dry cleaners. Raffle organizers ask local businesses to donate prizes, including products, gift certificates, or services. Alternatively, in a **"50/50" raffle**, the prize is half of the money raised. (Since raffles are regulated in many states, consult local and state laws in advance.)
- **Sale of school-related promotional items** such as t-shirts, sweatshirts, pens, pencils, calendars, book covers, key chains, hats, stadium pillows, decals, buttons, bumper stickers, water bottles, mugs and other items branded with the school logo can help build school spirit within the community
- **Recycling fundraisers** include computers, printer cartridges and cell phones that recycling companies purchase from schools
- **Grocery store fundraisers** whereby grocery stores give a percentage of community members' purchases to a designated local school

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- **Ask parents for a donation at the beginning of the school year.** Many parents prefer to pay an upfront donation to the school to reduce the number of other fundraisers during the rest of the school year. Parents can pay the fee in one lump sum or in installments over the school year.
- **Organize a festival or craft fair** and charge admission or sell locally created arts and crafts – or make it a **student art sale** where students' artwork such as cards, drawings, jewelry is sold
- **Singing telegrams** are popular with music students. People can purchase a telegram for birthdays and other special occasions.
- **Sell ad space in the school newspaper** to community businesses
- **Healthy food sale or theme baskets** such as for Super Bowl parties, Valentine's Day (heart healthy!) or Mother's Day. Make up baskets filled with healthy fare and non-food items that symbolize the day/theme – like a rose for mothers. Take orders ahead of time.
- **Coin drive** is easy with each class decorating a large jar for their collections. The jars are set up in an accessible place in full view. Competitions can occur between classes.
- **Connecting classrooms and donors** at www.Donorschoose.org and www.Adoptaclassroom.com
- **Establish an Alumni Foundation** or fund

Steps to Healthier Fundraisers in Your School:

- It is important that all foods and beverages sold at and by schools make a positive contribution to children's diets and health. Work with your school principal, district school board or food service staff to adopt nutrition standards for all food sales outside of school meals, including fundraisers.
- Talk with PTO/PTA/PTSA representatives, principal, coaches, school and booster clubs, and food service staff about healthier fundraising options. Provide them with examples of alternatives.
- Set a policy that fundraisers be activity-based or sell non-food items or foods that meet school nutrition standards.
- Enlist students in developing healthy, profitable fundraising ideas. For example, a business class could be tasked with developing and implementing a healthy school fundraiser.
- Track groups participating in, and amounts raised from, fundraisers. School administrators have the responsibility and authority to review and approve fundraising conducted in a school's name. Outside groups that support school clubs and other programs may not be sharing information with administrators about their activities which makes it difficult to determine how much time and money students and parents are being asked to contribute to programs that support the school. Every group should develop a budget for the school year that clearly outlines fundraising activities including:
 - Estimated revenue
 - Estimated expenditures
 - What the funds will be used for
 - The fundraising activity to be conducted
 - If there will be a vendor, product or service
 - How many hours students and parents will be expected to participate
 - When the activity will occur

If You “Must” Sell Food: To identify products that meet the Alliance Guidelines, see the Alliance Healthy Schools Product Navigator® (www.HealthierGeneration.org/ProductNavigator), and Product Calculator (www.HealthierGeneration.org/ProductCalculator).

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Guiding Principles for “Value-Added, Values-Based Fundraisers”

1. Align with educational goals, school’s mission and school wellness policies
2. Are consistent with cultural representation and practices
3. Positively engage community members and resources
4. Students have a meaningful role that builds personal and/or social skills and does not compromise their safety or comfort level
5. Community, school and students will not be burdened by questionable goods and services - volume of solicitation to sell/purchase unnecessary goods

For more tips on how to plan and organize your fundraiser, visit the PTA's Web site at <http://www.pta.org/fundraising.asp>.