

HEALTHY FUNDRAISING



Schools help promote a healthy learning environment by using non-food fundraising alternatives. An environment that provides a consistent message to children in support of healthy living will have lifelong impact. Candy, baked goods, soda and other foods with little nutritional value could be replaced with non-food fundraisers. Schools can make easy money selling these types of foods, but students pay the price.

Benefits of Healthy Fundraising

- **Healthy Kids Learn Better:** Research clearly demonstrates that good nutrition is linked to better behavior and academic performance. To provide the best possible learning environment for children, schools must also provide an environment that supports healthy behaviors.
- **Provides Consistent Messages:** Fundraising with nonfood items and healthy foods demonstrates a school commitment to promoting healthy behaviors. It supports the classroom lessons students are learning about health, instead of contradicting them.
- **Promotes a Healthy School Environment:** Students need to receive consistent, reliable health information and ample opportunity to use it. Healthy fundraising alternatives are an important part of providing a healthy school environment. They promote positive lifestyle choices to reduce student health risks and improve learning.

Consequences of Unhealthy Fundraising

- **Compromises Classroom Learning:** Selling unhealthy foods contradicts nutrition messages taught in the classroom. Schools are designed to teach and model appropriate skills and behaviors. Nutrition principles taught in the classroom are meaningless if they are contradicted by other activities that promote unhealthy choices like selling candy.
- **Promotes the Wrong Message:** Selling unhealthy foods promotes the message that schools care more about making money than student health. As schools promote healthy lifestyle choices to reduce student health risks and improve learning, school fundraisers must be included.
- **Contributes to Poor Health:** Foods commonly used as fundraisers (like chocolate, candy, soda, and baked goods) provide unneeded calories and displace healthier food choices. obesity rates among children are resulting in serious health consequences, such as increased incidence of type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.

Fundraisers Must Meet State Requirements

- Effective July 1, 2014, Maryland school systems must adopt the Maryland Nutrition Standards for all Foods Sold in School.
- The Rule applies to all foods and beverages sold to students on the school campus including vending machines, school stores, fundraising activities, etc. from 12:01 a.m. until thirty minutes after the end of the official school day.
- All food and beverage items sold to students during this time frame must meet the new nutrition criteria. [View the Maryland Nutrition Standards](#) that detail the criteria for allowable foods and beverages can be found at.
- Implementation of this policy will help create a school wide health-promoting environment which will help make the healthy choice an easier choice for Maryland students!

IDEAS FOR HEALTHY FUNDRAISING ALTERNATIVES

Non-Food Items to Sell

- Activity theme bags
- Bath accessories
- Balloon bouquets
- Books
- Buttons, pins
- Candles
- Clothing/T-shirts
- Coffee cups or mugs
- Crafts
- Coupon books (nonfood)
- Emergency kits for cars
- First aid kits
- Flowers, bulbs, plants
- Foot warmers
- Football seats
- Garden seeds
- Gift baskets (nonfood)
- Gift certificates (nonfood)
- Gift wrap, boxes, bags
- Greeting cards
- Hats
- Holiday Ornaments
- Holiday wreaths
- House decorations
- Jewelry
- Magazine subscriptions
- Mulch
- Music, CDs, DVDs
- Newspaper space, ads
- Pet treats, toys
- Plants
- Phone cards



- Raffle donations (nonfood)
- Raffle front row seats at a special school event
- Recycling (cell phones, printer cartridges)
- Scarves
- School art drawings
- Souvenir cups
- Spirit/seasonal flags
- Sporting equipment
- Stadium pillows
- Stuffed animals
- Valentine flowers
- Water bottles
- Yearbook page space

Custom Merchandise

- Bumper stickers and decals
- Calendars
- Cookbook of healthy recipes made by school
- License plate holders with school logo
- School spirit gear
- T-shirts/sweatshirts

Activities Supporting Academics

- Book Fair
- Read-A-Thon
- Science Fair
- Spelling Bee



Fundraising Events

- Auction
- Bike-a-thon
- Bowling night
- Car wash (pre-sell tickets as gifts)
- Carnivals
- Dances
- Family game nights
- Family/glamour portraits
- Festivals
- Fun runs
- Gift wrapping
- Golf tournament
- Jump-rope-a-thon
- Magic show
- Raffles (movie tickets, theme bags, etc.)
- Recycling
- Silent auctions
- Singing telegrams
- Talent shows
- Tennis competition
- Treasure/scavenger hunt
- Walk-a-thon
- Workshops/classes



Adapted from Connecticut State Department of Education, "Healthy Fundraising: Promoting a Healthy School Environment"

Additional Resources

[Healthy Fundraising Tip Sheet](#)

[Non-Food Fundraisers/School Rewards](#)

[USDA Best Practices for Healthy Fundraising](#)
