

Healthy fundraising alternatives

What's wrong with high caloric food sales?

Students' lifelong eating habits are greatly influenced by the types of foods and beverages available to them. When non-nutritious foods are sold "for a good cause," students may think these foods are part of a healthy, balanced diet. Such misperceptions can contribute to the development of poor eating habits.

Schools encourage healthful eating habits by avoiding fundraisers that rely on the sale of non-nutritious foods such as candy and cookies.

Positive options

Following is a list of activities for fundraisers that have a positive impact on students, families and the community. This is by no means a complete list. Many additional ideas exist for successful fundraising.

PTA leaders should always consult the current *California State PTA Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide* when planning any PTA activity, especially athletic activities, and follow appropriate financial guidelines.

Support academics

- Read-a-thon
- Science fair
- Spelling bee
- Geography bee
- History challenge
- Workshops or classes

Support the arts

- Art shows
- Concerts
- Dances
- Plays and musicals
- Talent shows
- Singing telegrams
- Rent-a-band, choir or music group

Support physical activity

- Dance-Dance Revolution, Line Dancing
- Walk-a-thon
- Bike-a-thon
- Jump-rope-a-thon
- 5-mile run/walk or another fun run
- Golf, tennis, horseshoe tournaments
- Bowling
- Skate nights
- Family picnic games

- Swim classes or swim party

More activities

- Garage sale
- Live auction or silent auction
- Carnival
- Giant game of musical chairs
- Guessing games
- Car wash
- Game night
- Craft show
- Magic show
- Fashion shows
- Movie nights
- Haunted house
- Hobby shows
- Jail auctions
- Penny war
- Recycling drive
- Festivals
- Bingo night
- Karaoke competition
- Chess, checkers or other tournaments
- Treasure hunt or scavenger hunt

Healthful food items to sell

- Fresh fruit
- Fresh vegetables
- Fruit baskets
- Dried fruit
- Nuts
- Trail mix
- Fruit smoothie mix
- Frozen bananas

Items to sell other than food

- Candles
- Greeting cards
- Gift wrap, boxes and bags
- Magazine subscriptions
- Gift items
- Coupon books
- Holiday items
- Gift certificates
- Cookbooks
- Balloons
- Decorations
- T-shirts and sweatshirts
- Books
- Calendars
- Buttons and pins
- Air fresheners
- Customized stickers
- Crafts
- Bicycle helmets
- First aid kits

- Emergency kits for cars
- Batteries
- School spirit gear
- Plants, flowers, poinsettias or seeds
- Brick, stone or tile memorials
- Temporary tattoos
- Stuffed animals
- Coffee cups and mugs
- Board games
- Pet treats, toys and accessories
- Special parking space
- Foot warmers or slippers
- Scarves and stocking caps
- Spirit, seasonal, state or U.S. flags
- Megaphones
- Decals
- Bumper stickers
- License plate holders with school logo
- Giant coloring books
- Plant sales
- Tickets to sporting or fine arts events
- Jewelry
- Valentine flowers
- Artwork
- School newspaper space or ads
- Stationery
- Stadium pillows
- School Frisbees
- Bath accessories and lotions
- Videos and CDs
- Picnic baskets

Summing it up

School Wellness Policy Model Guidelines encourage schools to limit fundraising activities involving food and/or beverages. There are a many fun, creative and lucrative strategies to raise money in other ways. Fundraisers that involve physical activity can even be used to send positive messages to students, families and the community about the importance of active lifestyles.