

Healthy Fundraising



Promoting a Healthy School Environment

Candy, baked goods, salty snacks, soda, and other foods with little nutritional value are commonly used for school fundraisers. Schools may make easy money selling these foods, but students pay the price. An environment that constantly provides children with unhealthy foods promotes unhealthy habits that can have lifelong impact. As America faces a national epidemic of overweight children, many schools are turning to healthy fundraising alternatives.

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 lessons are meaningless if they are contradicted by activities that promote unhealthy choices, like selling candy. Classroom learning about nutrition remains strictly theoretical if the school environment regularly promotes unhealthy behaviors.
- **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 in children's diets. According to the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), approximately 1 in 5 U.S. children and adolescents have obesity. This results in serious health consequences, such as increased incidence of type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.

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. This supports the classroom lessons students are learning about health.
- **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 because they promote positive lifestyle choices to reduce student health risks and improve learning.



Healthy Fundraising

Ideas for Healthy Fundraising Alternatives

Schools can help promote a healthy learning environment by using healthy fundraising alternatives.

Items to Sell

Activity theme bags
Air fresheners
Bath accessories
Balloon bouquets
Batteries
Books
Brick/stone/tile memorials
Buttons, pins
Candles
Coffee cups or mugs
Crafts
Coupon books (nonfood items)
Emergency kits for cars
First aid kits
Flowers, bulbs, plants
Foot warmers
Football seats
Garden seeds
Gift baskets (nonfood items)
Gift certificates (nonfood items)
Gift items
Gift wrap, boxes, and bags
Graduation tickets
Greeting cards
Hats
Holiday ornaments
Holiday wreaths
House decorations
Jewelry

Magazine subscriptions
Monograms
Newspaper space, ads
Parking spot (preferred location)
Pet treats/toys/accessories
Plants
Phone cards
Raffle donations (nonfood items)
Raffle extra graduation tickets
Raffle front row seats at a special school event
Rent a special parking space
Scarves
School art drawings
Souvenir cups
Spirit/seasonal flags
Stadium pillows
Stationery
Student directories
Stuffed animals
Valentine flowers
Yearbook covers
Yearbook graffiti

Healthy Foods *

Fresh fruit
Frozen bananas
Fruit and nut baskets
Fruit and yogurt parfaits
Fruit smoothies
Trail mix

Custom Merchandise

Bumper stickers and decals
Calendars
Cookbook of healthy recipes
Flying discs with school logo
License plate holders with school logo
Logo air fresheners

School spirit gear
T-shirts/sweatshirts

Activities Supporting

Academics

Read-A-Thon
Science Fair
Spelling Bee

Things to Do

Auction
Bike-a-thons
Bowling night/bowl-a-thon
Car wash (presell tickets as gifts)
Carnivals/festivals
Dances (kids, father/daughter, Sadie Hawkins)
Family/glamour portraits
Fun runs
Gift wrapping
Golf tournament
Jump-rope-a-thon
Magic show
Raffle (movie passes, theme bags)
Raffle (teachers do a silly activity)
Rent-a-teen helper (rake leaves, water gardens, mow lawns, wash dog)
Recycling cans/bottles/paper
Singing telegrams
Skate night/skate-a-thon
Tag sale, garage sale
Talent shows
Tennis/horseshoe competition
Treasure hunt/scavenger hunt
Walk-a-thons
Workshops/classes

* Foods and beverages sold to students as fundraisers must meet specific federal and state requirements (refer to the [“Fundraising with Foods and Beverages”](#) section of the Connecticut State Department of Education’s Program Guidance for School Nutrition Programs webpage).