



Healthy Fundraising

Making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice

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

Nutrition Philosophy During Student School Day

School meals are the main source of nutrition.

Snacks are to:

1. Supplement the meal
2. Help, not hinder, students' nutrition
3. Provide serving size and calories based on age and activity

Discretionary calories can be used under the guidance of parents at home.

* See Appendix 6 on discretionary calories

Benefits of Healthy Fundraising

1. 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.

2. Provides Consistent Messages

Fundraising with healthy food and non-food items demonstrates a school's commitment to promoting healthy behaviors. It supports the classroom lessons students are learning about health, instead of contradicting them.

3. Promotes a Healthy School Environment

Students need to receive consistent, reliable health information and ample opportunity to use it. Finding healthy alternatives to fundraising is an important part of providing a healthy school environment.

One in three US children are overweight or obese¹. At 400,000 deaths per year, poor eating habits and a sedentary lifestyle are fast becoming the leading preventable cause of death in the United States, just behind smoking at 435,000 deaths per year².

1. Ogden CL, et al. *High body mass index for age among US children and adolescents, 2003-2006*. JAMA. 2008; 299: 2401-2405.
2. Mokdad AH, et al. *Actual causes of death in the United States, 2000*. JAMA. 2004; 291(10):1238-1246

Consequences of Unhealthy Fundraising

Compromise Classroom Learning:

Selling unhealthy food items 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 and other sweets. It's like saying, "You need to eat healthy foods to feel and do your best, but it is more important for us to make money than for you to be healthy and do well." Classroom learning about nutrition remains strictly theoretical if the school environment promotes unhealthy behaviors.

Promotes the Wrong Message:

Selling unhealthy foods provides a message that schools care more about making money than student health. We would never think of raising money with anything else that increases student health risks, but food fundraisers are often overlooked. 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. Skyrocketing obesity rates among children are resulting in serious health consequences, such as increased incidence of type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure.



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New Paradigm in Fundraising

Traditional school fundraising methods of selling products like popcorn, candy bars, and cookie dough are quickly becoming dated. They have a low margin of return, require peer pressure giving, result in one time gifts, and often include unhealthy foods.

A new approach ties giving to long term school goals whether to group, building, or district-level needs. This method includes cash in both small and large amounts given with **purpose** creating opportunities to cultivate larger donors. It is recognized by its higher margin, absence of a middleman, and mostly online giving.

For more information on healthy, effective fundraising contact Dakota Medical Foundation, www.healthycc.org.

Non-Food Items to Sell:

- Activity theme bags
- Balloon bouquets
- Books, calendars
- Brick/stone/tile memorials
- Buttons, pins
- Bumper stickers & decals
- Candles
- Coffee cups, mugs
- Cookbooks
- Emergency kits for cars
- First Aid Kits
- Flowers and bulbs
- Foot warmers
- Football seats
- Garage Sale

Non-Food Items to Sell:

- Giant coloring books
- Gift items
- Gift wrap, boxes, and bags
- Greeting cards
- Hats
- Holiday wreaths
- Jewelry
- Magazine subscriptions
- Megaphones
- Monograms
- Music, videos, CDs
- Newspaper space, ads
- Plants
- Scarves
- School art drawings
- Spirit/seasonal flags
- Stadium pillows
- Stationery
- Stuffed animals
- Valentine flowers
- Yearbook graffiti



Customized Merchandise:

- Bumper stickers/decals
- Calendars
- Cookbook made by school
- License plate or holders with school logo
- Logo stickers
- Scratch off cards
- School Frisbees
- School spirit gear
- Souvenir cups
- T-shirts/sweatshirts

Healthy Food:

- Fresh and exotic fruit, like cases of citrus fruit
- Fruit and nut baskets

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- High quality potatoes, onions or other produce *items*
- Nuts
- Trail mix

Items Supporting Academics:

- Read-a-thon
- Science fair
- Spelling Bee

Fundraising Events :

- 3-on-3 basketball tournaments
- Auction (silent/live)
- Bike-a-thon
- Bowling night/bowl-a-thon
- Car wash (pre-sell tickets as gifts)
- Dances (kids, father/daughter, Sadie Hawkins)
- Game nights
- Family/glamour portraits
- Festival/Carnival
- Fun runs
- Gift wrapping
- Golf tournament
- Jump-rope-a-thon
- Magic show
- Raffle (movie passes, theme bags)
- Raffle (teachers do a silly activity)
- Singing telegrams
- Skate night/skate-a-thon
- Talent shows
- Walk-a-thons
- Workshops/classes

