

We Can Work Together to Create and Promote Healthy School Fundraisers



Growing Healthy Children in OUR School

1. The Challenge

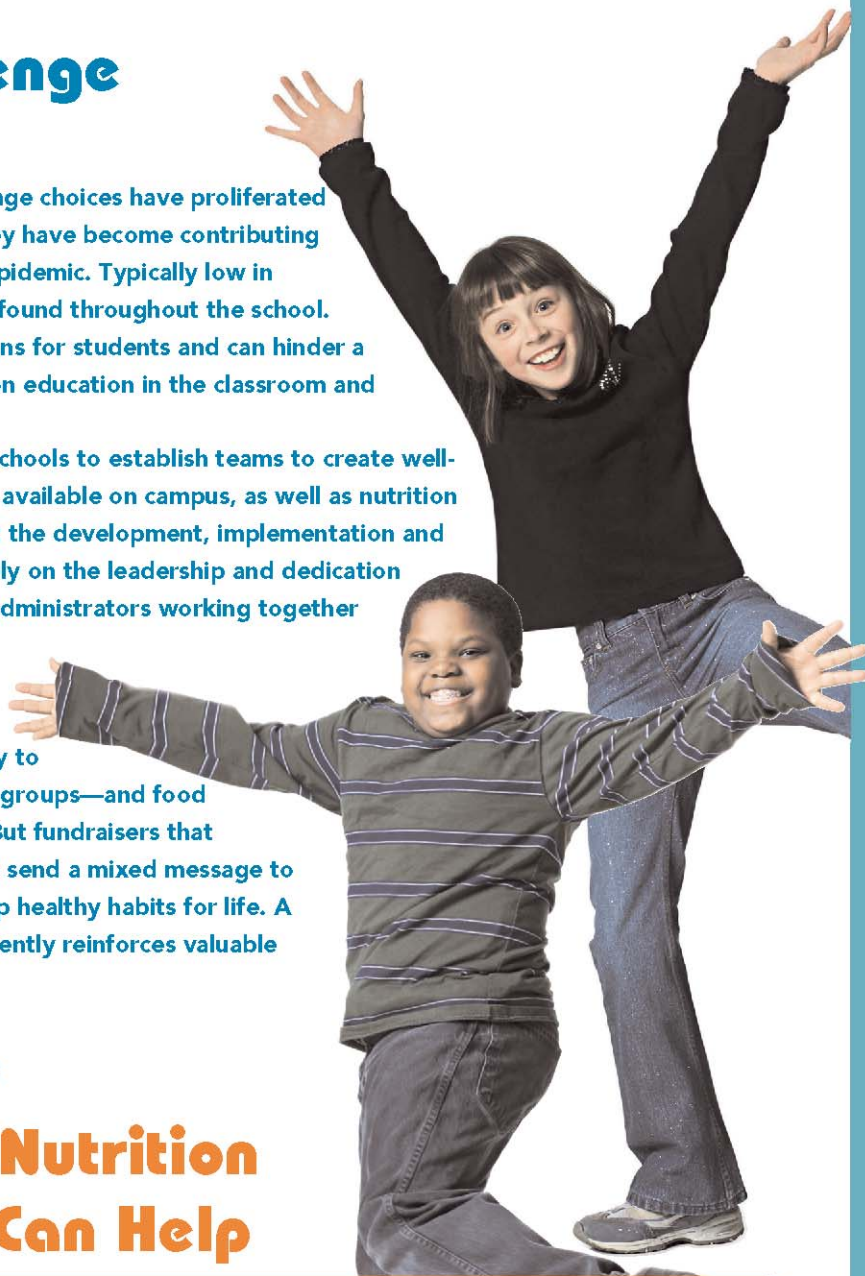
In the last decade, food and beverage choices have proliferated in schools—and research shows they have become contributing factors in America’s child obesity epidemic. Typically low in nutritive value, these items can be found throughout the school. They provide compelling temptations for students and can hinder a school’s efforts to promote nutrition education in the classroom and the cafeteria.

A recent federal law requires schools to establish teams to create wellness policies that address all foods available on campus, as well as nutrition education and physical activity. But the development, implementation and enforcement of such policies will rely on the leadership and dedication of parents, teachers, coaches and administrators working together with school nutrition directors and managers.

There is no debate that successful fundraisers are necessary to support many school activities and groups—and food sales typically are quite effective. But fundraisers that promote foods of minimal nutrition send a mixed message to students about the need to develop healthy habits for life. A healthy school environment consistently reinforces valuable nutrition lessons.

2. How Your School Nutrition Program Can Help

- Many school nutrition departments are beginning to manage all school vending operations, keeping machines stocked with nutritious alternatives; getting better prices through district-level purchasing and agreements with suppliers; and splitting profits with various beneficiaries.
- Ask your school nutrition department to cater special fundraiser dinners and buffets; parties; performance intermission refreshments; and sports concessions. The in-house catering service likely will give you better rates than a commercial caterer and also will provide greater food safety than pot-luck contributions brought from home.
- Ask your school nutrition team to promote your non-food-sales fundraiser in the cafeteria, on take-home menus, on its website and through its other communications and displays. You should find that, as vital members of the school community, cafeteria staff are enthusiastic and supportive of fundraising activities that don’t compete with nutritious school meals.



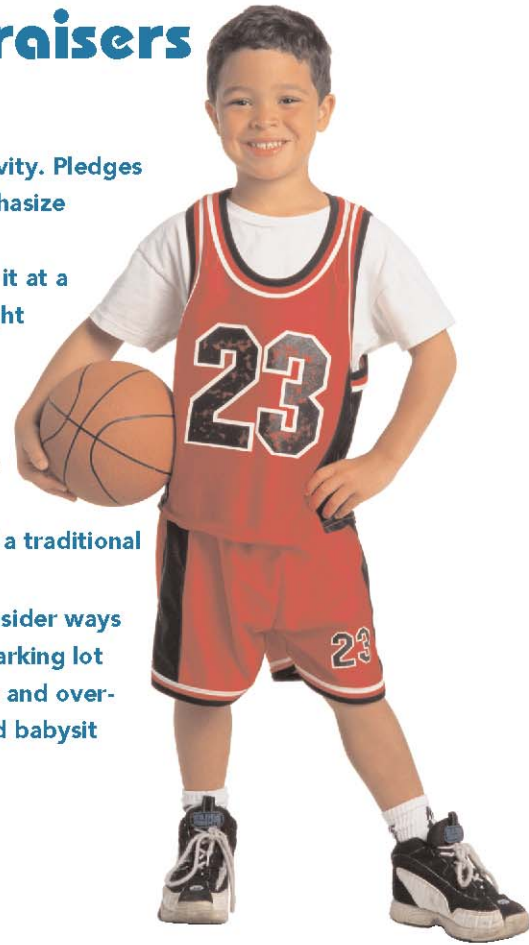


3. The Role of Teachers, Coaches, Administrators and Parents

It is imperative that adults coordinating or supervising school fundraisers take the high road when it comes to selecting sale items. Remember, children are more likely to adopt healthy eating and activity habits when they are modeled by influential adults at home and at school. There are enough food temptations *outside* of school that compete for children's pocket money. Consider some of the alternatives to food-based fundraisers that follow, but remember to check whether your school or district already has set standards or policy in this area.

4. Activity-Based Fundraisers

- Many "thon" events (walk-, dance-, bike-) encourage physical activity. Pledges and sponsors also can be directed to similar fundraisers that emphasize other key goals, such as read-a-thons.
- Kids love to see familiar adult faces poking fun of themselves, be it at a parent-teacher talent show, donkey basketball game, karaoke night or carnival game. Adults get a big kick out of these events, too!
- Suggest that parents in the community forgo their individual yard/garage/tag sales and contribute their accumulated clutter to a school-wide flea market or auction instead, with all proceeds going to the organizing group. Organize two annual events—a swanky auction with more expensive contributions in autumn and a traditional tag sale for donated household items and toys in spring.
- Many students don't realize that they have marketable skills. Consider ways to tout student services, from a periodic car wash in the school parking lot to holiday gift-wrapping at the mall. With appropriate permission and oversight, students also can volunteer to rake leaves, shovel snow and babysit during school meetings, games and performances.



5. Sales-Based Fundraisers

- Arts/Crafts
- Books (new & used)
- Bumper Stickers & License Plate Holders
- Calendars
- Candles
- Coupon Books
- Fruit
- Gift Baskets
- Gift Wrap
- Holiday Flowers & Pumpkins
- Household Items
- Jewelry
- Magazine Subscriptions
- Merchandise with School Name/Mascot/Logo
- Plants & Bulbs
- Privileges (e.g. students pay for the right to wear a crazy hat or pajamas to school one day)
- Raffles
- Stadium Pillows
- Stuffed Animals
- T-shirts/Sweatshirts/Caps

For More Information

- www.schoolnutrition.org/parents
- www.afrds.org
- www.pta.org
- www.fundraising-ideas.com
- www.ptotoday.com
- www.nojunkfood.org/fundraising

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