



Photo courtesy of USDA

Healthy School Fundraisers

How Can You Help?

Schools are a key setting where children and adolescents learn about and have opportunities to practice healthy eating.^{1,2} Foods and beverages sold for fundraisers during the school day must meet new Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards.³ These standards promote options that have whole grains, fruits, vegetables, or low-fat dairy, as their main ingredients, and set limits for calories, sugar, fat, and sodium.³ However, some states allow exemptions for items that do not meet Smart Snacks in School standards to be sold for fundraisers.⁴ Schools can help provide consistent messages about healthy eating by using fundraising activities that support health by aligning with Smart Snacks in School standards, involving physical activity (e.g., dance-a-thon), or selling non-food items (e.g., student artwork).¹

What's Happening at School?

Knowing the answers to the following questions can help you support healthy fundraisers in your child's school. If you don't know the answers to these questions, check out the school handbook or school website, attend a school wellness meeting or Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meeting, or simply ask your child's teacher.

1. Does the state, school district, or school have policies about items sold for fundraising activities?
2. What types of fundraisers does the school have? Do they promote certain brands of food or specific restaurants?
3. If foods and beverages are currently sold as part of fundraisers, is nutritional information available for the products? Do these items meet the Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards?⁵
4. Who is in charge of fundraisers? How can ideas for healthy fundraisers be shared with them?



Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion





Ideas for Parents

You can be involved in your child's school by **attending** meetings, workshops, or training events offered by the school; **communicating** with school staff and other parents; **volunteering** for school events or in your child's classroom; **reinforcing** healthy messages and practices your child learns at school; **helping** make decisions about health in the school; and **being part** of community activities supported by the school. Here are some specific ideas for how you can support your child's school in providing healthy fundraisers.

- E-mail or discuss with other parents the importance of having healthy school fundraisers.
- Join the school or district committee (e.g., wellness committee) that sets the policies for health and wellness, and work to include language about healthy fundraisers in these policies.^{1,6,7}
- Talk with the parent-teacher groups about **healthy alternatives for fundraising events**.⁸
- Work with community groups or local businesses to sponsor a physical activity fundraising event, such as a skate-a-thon or dance-a-thon.
- Learn more about the types of fundraisers available at school. Consider tracking the different fundraisers at your child's school by using an **assessment tool**.
- When you see a healthier fundraiser in place, reach out to the organizers, and let them know you appreciate their efforts.



Check out additional resources for parents related to the school nutrition environment and services, physical education and physical activity, and managing chronic health conditions at <http://www.cdc.gov/healthyschools/P4HS.htm>.

REFERENCES

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. School health guidelines to promote healthy eating and physical activity. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2011;60(RR05):1-76.
2. Institute of Medicine. *Food Marketing to Children and Youth: Threat or Opportunity?* Washington, DC: National Academies Press; 2006.
3. US Dept of Agriculture. *Smart Snacks in School Fundraisers*. http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/allfoods_fundraisers.pdf. Accessed August 5, 2015.
4. National Association of State Boards of Education. *Fundraising Exemption Policies Under 'Smart Snacks.'* http://www.nasbe.org/wp-content/uploads/NASBE-fundraising-exemption-policies_Feb-2015.pdf. Accessed August 5, 2015.
5. Alliance for a Healthier Generation. Alliance Product Calculator. https://www.healthiergeneration.org/take_action/schools/snacks_and_beverages/smart_snacks/alliance_product_calculator/. Accessed August 5, 2015.
6. Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity. *School Food: Opportunities for Improvement*. <http://www.yaleruddcenter.org/resources/upload/docs/what/reports/RuddBriefSchoolFoodPolicy2009.pdf>. Accessed August 5, 2015.
7. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Parent Engagement: Strategies for Involving Parents in School Health*. Atlanta: US Dept of Health and Human Services; 2012.
8. Institute of Medicine. *Nutrition Standards for Foods in Schools: Leading the Way Toward Healthier Youth*. Washington, DC: Institute of Medicine of the National Academies; 2007.

