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Deirdre Kleske
Healthy Works Program
Specialist
County of San Diego
Health and Human Services
Agency

Healthy Fundraising Success Story

The Opportunity

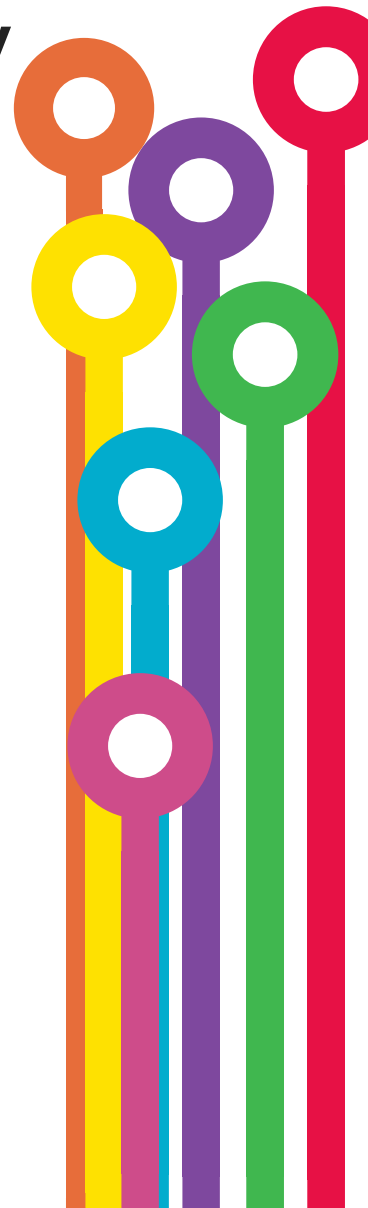
"What is a healthy school fundraiser?" "Will healthy fundraisers make money?" "Where do we start?"

To answer these questions and provide examples of healthy fundraising that works, the Schools and After-School Domain workgroup developed the Healthy Fundraising Champions Recognition program in 2015.

"I like to describe it as 'catching schools being healthy'," explains workgroup co-chair Deirdre Kleske of the County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency. "By identifying healthy fundraising already taking place in schools, providing recognition for these efforts, and sharing best practices countywide, we're hoping to make it easier for other schools to make the switch."

Healthy school fundraisers raise money using physical activity, or rely on direct donations instead of selling items. Any food sold must meet or exceed California's Smart Snacks in Schools nutrition standards. Many groups, including the California State PTA, support healthy fundraising in schools.

"We know some groups are still selling candy and cookie dough to a captive audience of students. They just may not realize how selling junk food to students undermines teacher and parent efforts to teach and model healthful eating habits," said Deirdre.



“Fundraising is an essential part of what we do at Carmel Creek to ensure quality (and fun) programming for our children. Through creative events like our annual Fun Run and our Board Game Sale, we discovered the best fundraisers are those which encourage academic curiosity, propel physical education and, ultimately, bring our community closer together. ”

Rachel Ive, Parent
Carmel Creek Elementary School PTA

The Solution

With a goal to identify and recognize at least one healthy fundraiser in each of the county’s 43 districts, workgroup partners began outreach to school district wellness leads, principals, and parent groups. To date, 16 healthy fundraising examples from 10 districts have been identified, with details captured in a Healthy School Fundraising Champions Success Stories chart (see web address to chart on page 3).

Leaders of healthy fundraisers receive a letter from the COI recognizing them as Healthy School Fundraising Champions, with copies sent to the school’s principal, district superintendent, and wellness lead.

Rachel Ive, a parent with the Carmel Creek Elementary School PTA in the Solana Beach School District, explains why parents at her school focus on healthy ways to raise funds.

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Rachel encourages fundraising groups to look beyond traditional fundraising to see if newer, more creative options involving relationship building and physical activities would work in their community.

“For us, selling quality board games ensures the purchaser can enjoy many hours of good old family fun centered on engaging educational activities while helping us earn funds for our programs and events.”

Other healthy, non-food fundraisers at Carmel Creek Elementary School include sales of yearbooks and spirit wear, activities such as Parents Night Out and Teacher Movie Night, and the Earning 4 Learning program where schools earn money based on parent purchases at local and online retailers.

Solana Beach School District Child Nutrition Director and wellness lead, Siri Perlman, sees a role for her department to support healthy school fundraisers.

“Our SBSBD Child Nutrition department believes strongly in providing support and resources that promote healthy behaviors for our students,” said Siri. “We are very proud of our healthy fundraisers at Carmel Creek Elementary. They are a key ingredient in expanding the culture of health and wellness throughout our district. Our Child Nutrition department is available to assist schools with developing healthy fundraising and celebration ideas, and sharing best practices from other schools and districts.”



Lemon Grove School District's Healthy Fundraising Champion is the Mount Vernon Elementary School PTA which began an annual "Color Fun Run" in 2015. The evening event features obstacle course stations such as a water slide, a pool-noodle crawl, and a balance challenge. Oranges and water were donated by Sprouts, and student prizes, such as jump ropes, airplanes, and flying discs, encouraged physical activity.

The event also featured a Dunk-the-Principal tank as an additional reward for students' hard work in collecting and exceeding the PTA's goal of \$1,500 to help fund class field trips.

"Doing this Color Fun Run was so much less complicated than the typical catalog sales," said Rosa Carney, president of the Mount Vernon Elementary School PTA. "Just four PTA parents organized the fundraiser, with 15 additional volunteers the day of the event to dust the students with colored powder and supervise the stations."

"We didn't have a physical education teacher at the school, and we wanted the children to understand the importance of staying fit and healthy so we created an active fundraiser," explained Rosa. "While we were fortunate to have a physical education teacher this year, the Color Run is so popular we're going to keep it going!"

The Future

Healthy fundraisers can be fun and profitable, in addition to aligning with school and district academic goals. Recognizing and sharing local successes is one step toward shifting the culture and making healthy fundraisers the norm in schools in San Diego County.



Ways You Can Support Healthy Fundraising:

Share local examples of healthy fundraising (<http://bit.ly/2aAOHwT>) with teachers, parents, students, and other fundraising groups

Notify Deirdre Kleske of fundraising leads via email:
Deirdre.Kleske@sdcounty.ca.gov



Core funding provided in part by:



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