

## Success Stories

The following success story was taken from the Community Nutritionists' Council of BC's Fundraising for Schools document.

### Story #1

#### **Fundraising with Healthy Food Experiment in selling healthier foods at a sporting event Mile 108 Elementary School**

The Parent Advisory Committee (PAC) at Mile 108 School decided to try selling healthier foods at the concession for a volleyball tournament. The PAC traditionally sold mostly non-nutritious foods. The plan to sell healthier foods was in keeping with the school's aim to make healthy eating the easy choice for students. The Hills Health and Guest Ranch donated money to buy the healthy foods, which were then sold at reduced prices.

Products sold:

- Commercially packaged carrots and dip
- Yogurt tubes (which were frozen)
- 100% fruit juice boxes
- Fruit leathers
- Nature Valley granola bars
- Water bottles
- Pizza pretzels

Hot dogs were also sold to ensure the PAC raised some money but none of the other usual items (pop, donuts, and chips) were made available for sale. Many believed that very little would be sold – and at first the skeptics seemed to be proven right. When the children saw the items for sale, there were groans and comments such as “Oh Yuck!” But as soon as one child bought a frozen yogurt tube, the items started to sell quickly. The pizza pretzels were the first to go (7 dozen), then the yogurt tubes and veggies and dip. Only 6 dozen hot dogs were sold. More water was sold than juice boxes (both costing \$0.50 each). The only items that did not sell well were the granola bars. A total of \$202.00 was raised.

#### **Lessons Learned**

- Children will buy healthier items if they are the only choices.
- All it takes is one child to get the ball rolling.
- A generous donation allowed the PAC to sell healthy items below cost. They will find out next time whether healthy items sell well if not subsidized.

#### **Challenges of Fundraising with Food**

The profits from selling food door to door or in canteens and cafeterias are important to schools. PACs often worry that they will make less money selling healthier items that tend to have a lower profit margin than chips, candy bars, and fried and processed foods. Following are some creative ways schools have raised money while reinforcing positive health messages:

#### **Variations on the Theme**

- Sell nutritious foods door to door. Examples include fresh fruit, dried fruit, trail mix, organic food, and nuts. Rather than having a set price, ask for donations as the Boy Scouts do with their fall apple sales.
- Hold a raffle for gift baskets with different themes, e.g. an Italian basket with ingredients for dinner for 4, plus a red-checked tablecloth, Italian CD, and Italian cookbook).

## **More Tips**

- Promote healthy foods with attractive ads and pictures. Let people know the school supports healthy eating.
- When displaying food, put the nutritious foods in front and less nutritious items at the back.
- Offer samples of nutritious items.
- Aim for 80% of foods on the menu to come from the “Choose most” list.
- Adapt favourites to make them more nutritious, e.g. serve hamburger on a whole-wheat bun with a side of veggie sticks and dip.
- Price nutritious foods attractively.
- Offer incentives such as buy 2 and get the 3<sup>rd</sup> item free.
- For door to door items, try to keep the unit price low (one group tried popcorn sales, but the smallest package was \$18).

The following success stories are taken from the Centre for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) *School Foods Tool Kit*. For more stories search <http://www.cspinet.org/schoolfoods>.

### **Story #2**

#### **Increasing vending sales by increasing the number of machines with healthier beverages North Community High School, Minnesota**

Faced with alarming statistics about childhood overweight and obesity rates Assistant Principal Bryan Bass of North Community High School re-evaluated the school’s beverage vending practices. With the support of the administrative team, he contacted the district’s Coca-Cola representative, who was willing to work with the school to provide healthier choices. As a result, the school increased the number of vending machines from 4 to 16, stocked 13 machines with water or 100% juice, two with sports drinks, and one with soda (which has limited hours of sale). They also instituted competitive pricing, selling water for \$0.75, sports drinks and 100% juices for \$1.00, and soda and fruit drinks for \$1.25. The water machines were strategically placed in high traffic-areas and students were allowed to drink water in the classroom. Today, soda sales are down, but vending profits have increased by almost \$4,000 a year and the total number of cases of beverages sold has more than doubled from the previous school year, with water being the best seller.

### **Story #3**

#### **Improving school meals by adding healthier options and replacing soda with water in vending machines Aptos Middle School, California**

Aptos Middle School, known as the city's most diverse middle school, recently made the decision to provide healthier school foods and beverages. Parents and staff proposed a pilot project to San Francisco's superintendent, Arlene Ackerman, who readily agreed. The move was undertaken after noticing that a number of children were making lunch entirely out of soda and chips. Some of the new healthier options offered at lunch include: fresh deli sandwiches, sushi, pasta, salads, homemade soups, and fajitas. Along with soda and chips, gone are Slim Jims, nachos, pre-packaged burritos, taco pockets, "mega" cheeseburgers, French fries, hot links, hot wings and oversized pizza. The Physical Education Department reports that replacing soda with healthier choices in the locker room vending machines has resulted in an increase in revenue.

### **Story #4**

#### **Replacing unhealthy drinks and snacks with choices that meet California's SB19 nutritional standards Capistrano Unified School District (Orange County)**

Capistrano Unified School District is the third largest in Orange County and has 46,000 students. It was during the bidding process with Pepsi on the district's soon-to-expire beverage contract that the school food services director started talking with school representatives about offering kids healthier foods and beverages. After gaining support for making the change from the principals that rely on the revenue of vending machines, a resolution was unanimously passed by the school board to ban all soda vending machines in all secondary schools in the district (elementary schools do not have vending machines). District schools now offer only water, juices, fruit drinks, and sports drinks that meet the beverages standards set by SB19. Except for chips, all snack vending machines now meet the food standards set by SB19. They plan to offer only baked chips in the future. Next year, the school district will be comparing financial records to determine what effect the change has had on vending revenue.