



## FUNDRAISING IDEAS FOR PTAs AND PAs

PTAs run an enormous range of events, some of which are largely social occasions where the fundraising is incidental and some of which are pure fundraising. At our regional meetings we often get asked, "What is the secret of a successful event?" There is no one magic secret and what works well at one school can be an utter failure at another. However, there are a few general points it is worth bearing in mind.

- | Focus your main fundraising activities on one or two major events so that parents don't see the PTA as always asking for money.
- | It helps if you can tell people in advance what you are aiming to buy and why.
- | Always tell parents how much was raised and what the money was used for.
- | Try to involve the children as much as possible. Ask them what they would like the PTA to do for them. In primary schools, playground games and trips are popular; in secondaries pupils often want lockers.
- | Involve the youngsters by getting different year groups to raise money for different items within the total project.

Until recently most PTAs spent their money on computers, but the Government has made a lot of money available for upgrading school computers in the last couple of years, and PTAs should look to other needs - maybe some staging, or sport/art/music equipment. In rural areas, PTAs often spend most of their money on trips. As for the fundraisers, despite the range of individual events, most fall into a few broad categories.

### The school fundraiser

This can range from a simple coffee morning to a full blown gala with bouncy castle, side shows, pony rides etc. It can be as simple or as complex as you like. It usually includes the sale of home made cakes etc. which remains a good money spinner.

### Sponsored events

These are very popular with the children who are usually good at getting relatives to sponsor them. The sponsored activities can be almost anything - period of silence, walk, cycle ride, swim, bounce, spelling bee, balloon race etc.

### Pure fundraisers

These events are designed to raise money with minimal participation and vary in success. They include: -

- | A major raffle  
The PTA secures big prizes and has proper tickets printed to sell locally. Considerable sums can be raised this way but you do need a licence for this type of raffle. You can get it from the licensing department of your local council.
- | 200 clubs  
People are asked to contribute a set amount, usually £5 or £10, and then there are regular prize draws. Half the money raised must go back as prizes, the rest is for PTA funds.
- | Product catalogues  
Some mail order firms, e.g. Webb Ivory, will give PTAs an "agency" fee if parents order goods through their catalogues.

### Pupil products

This is usually a good and popular money spinner. At the simplest level you can use the children's drawings to produce a calendar or Christmas cards. Some schools go for professional full colour printing, but it is also possible to do a simpler job using the school xerox machine and coloured paper. The advantage of this is that every year, there is a new market!

Commercial companies will also produce specific school goods - the tea towel containing drawings of every child in a class/year group, school mugs, mouse mats etc. The difficulty with this is that you usually have to order quite large quantities and could be left with rather a lot of unwanted items.

### School Uniform

Some PTAs organise the sale of school uniforms or sweatshirts. There can be quite a high outlay in this as well as storage problems. You also might need to consider insuring the goods whilst you are storing them. SPTC can arrange this.

### Car Boot Sales

These fall into two categories. There's the in-house event where it's essentially an outdoor jumble sale or you can make the school available to outsiders and just charge per car. You need to check with the authority about lets and conditions.

#### Fashion Shows

Local shops are often willing to lend clothes for fashion shows although you need to check the insurance situation - again we can help. These work best when the children/staff model the clothes.

#### TV Spectaculars

A number of PTAs are borrowing from TV shows like "Stars in Their Eyes", with the children acting as contestants.

#### Social events

These can be for parents only or for families and whilst they may raise money, the main focus is on everyone having a good time. There's a whole range of such activities including dances, line dancing, ceilidhs, wine tasting, quiz nights, beetle drives and bingo. These last two can be good "getting to know you" events, if you get people to change teams or tables. Race Nights are more complicated as they involve bringing in an outsider with all the equipment, but they can be very exciting and enormous fun.

You can also have themed nights e.g. a "seventies night" for those parents who still have flares, men's quiz nights to get the Dads involved, a ladies keep fit night or karaoke nights.

For specific fundraising ideas got to our ["Tips and Ideas"](#) under InfoShop

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