

# Safety in Fundraising

Last year America's school kids, scouts, sports teams and other non-profit groups sold over 4 billion dollars worth of candy, gift wrap, candles and other fundraising products and services. They are in the business of raising money and it is big business. What child that you know doesn't have to raise funds for a group they belong to?

This sales force of primarily kids is present in every community, and we need to be ever vigilant of their safety whenever they are fundraising. Take fundraising safety seriously!

- **Know the Rules**

First and foremost, know what your groups rules are for fundraising and follow them as a minimum guideline. Many groups, or their parent organizations, have now banned door to door sales and other techniques that they have identified as too risky. Other groups have no rules or guidelines and you are left to determine what is right for your group.

- **Safety Don'ts**

Everybody wants to have a successful fundraising campaign, but not at the cost of the safety of anyone involved. Stress safety above everything else! Lay down the minimum do's and don'ts throughout the fundraising campaign.

Here are the generally accepted fundraising no-no's:

- Do not sell alone - ever!
- Do not sell door to door without a responsible adult present.
- Do not approach or talk to strangers.
- Do not enter anyone's house.
- Do not carry large amounts of cash.
- Do not sell in front of stores or malls without permission and a responsible adult present.
- Do not sell at stop lights or street corners.

- **Safety Do's**

Incorporate these ideas into your fundraising campaign and safety rules:

- Stress common sense and safety.
- Follow all safety guidelines your group has established as minimum guidelines.
- Parents should be involved and supervise their child's fundraising.
- Make sure mom and dad pre approve who their children ask.
- If a child does go door to door with a responsible adult, only approach familiar houses.
- Never go out to sell after dark.
- Walk away from any dangerous or unfamiliar situations.
- Immediately notify your parent or teacher of any strange activity.

- **Practice Safe Sales Techniques**

There are many creative ways to make your fundraising sales goals without compromising safety.

Here are some good ones:

- Sell to your relatives (parents, aunts/uncles and grandparents).
- Ask your relatives to sell at work and to their friends.
- With parents permission, children may telephone friends and neighbors they know.

- **Let the Fundraising Companies and Reps Help**

Many fundraising companies have jumped on the safety bandwagon. They have designed their sales programs and brochures with tips and techniques to encourage safe fundraising.

Check before you choose a fundraising product or company and make sure they either practice and encourage fundraising safety or that they don't encourage unsafe fundraising practices.

Many fundraising reps now include safety instructions in their kick off presentations and may have flyers and posters for you to use. Ask if yours does.

- **Get the Safety Message Out**

The most important part of safe fundraising is getting the message out to the kids, parents and volunteers. If they don't know what you expect of them, how can they do it?

Make sure everyone concerned gets a printed copy of the fundraising guidelines. Review the guidelines with the kids.

Many groups now send safety guidelines home with the kids and have them returned, signed by the parents.

- **The Bottom Line**

It's not just about raising money.

Fundraising is an excellent time to re-enforce the everyday rules for children's safety and to encourage the use of common sense in worldly situations. Don't try and scare the kids, use this opportunity as a learning experience. If presented correctly and supervised properly, fundraising can be a positive life experience for a child. It can teach the benefits of volunteering, philanthropy and responsibility.