

Title:

Fundraising Ideas: Keep It Safe

Word Count:

464

Summary:

When your youth group is doing a fundraiser, it is imperative to make sure that the proper safety precautions are followed.

Keywords:

fundraising, fundraiser, fundraisers, non-profit fundraising, school fundraising, PTA fundraiser, church fundraising

Article Body:

When your youth group is doing a fundraiser, it is imperative to make sure that the proper safety precautions are followed.

Never allow door-to-door sales without direct adult supervision. Period.

In a sad case, an 11-year-old boy selling candy for a PTA fundraiser came to the door of a 15-year-old boy who was home alone at the time. The youngster was invited inside, sexually molested, and then murdered.

This is not an urban legend. The murder happened in Freehold, New Jersey on September 27, 1997 and it raised the fundraising safety issue to national prominence.

I'm not usually an alarmist, but I included the example above to heighten awareness of the safety topic.

I am by nature a trusting person, but not when it comes to my children! Nothing is worth such devastating consequences.

Develop An Appropriate Safety Focus

So, how do you build the appropriate safety focus into your program?

You start by stressing safety from the top of your organization to the bottom. You have to make sure that safety is a focal point in all your communications.

1) Use written selling guidelines

Put it into writing that all selling should be supervised. Your organization

needs this as a protective measure and so do the children. If an adult cannot commit to accompanying a child, the child must not perform that type of sales activity.

Make sure that each child's parents are aware of these guidelines. Get the message to them that their children are not being encouraged to sell outside their comfort zone by your group.

Tell them that they should focus on their core contacts - family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers of parents. In other words, e safe by selling only to individuals who know your parents.

2) Repeat the message

Put up fundraising safety posters at convenient locations to remind young sellers. Make them friendly, but firm.

Example: "What's the last thing you do in a fundraiser? Sell without an adult present."

Print a safety message on all of your sales literature. Look for this from a quality supplier. Put the "Keep It Safe" message on all communications.

Repeat the safety message at every opportunity. Cover it in your kickoff meeting, during sales brochure distribution, in the take home package, etc.

If your fundraiser is school-based, have teachers reinforce the safety message in the classrooms.

3) Put safety into practice

Don't encourage inappropriate behavior such as risk taking, unsupervised sales, shopping center sales activity without prior approval and adult supervision.

Your group's policies and procedures may vary from this approach.

The important thing is to develop a written policy and make sure those guidelines are followed.

Summary

The best way to avoid an unsafe situation is by not going there. Many other youth programs also carry a strong safety message. Make sure yours does too.