

Pointers For Parents

Goodbye Bake Sales, Hello Internet: Going Online For School Fundraising

(NAPS)—More and more consumers are shopping online—and raising money for schools and local PTA organizations at the same time.

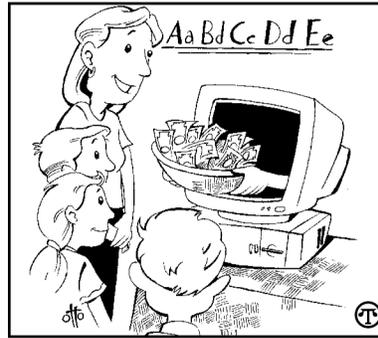
“E-fundraising” is an increasingly popular alternative to traditional fundraising activities. From the comforts of home, committed parents, grandparents and other consumers are shopping online at their favorite merchant Web sites and designated schools or PTA organizations receive a percentage of the proceeds from their purchases. Thousands of schools and local parent organizations are already participating in these programs.

For example, visitors who log onto SchoolCash.com (www.schoolcash.com) designate a school or local PTA organization to support. Then, it’s shopping as usual, as they purchase from more than 200 well-known participating online merchants, including Buy.com, Gap.com, eToys, OfficeMax.com, PC Flowers and Gifts, PetSmart.com, Cooking.com and Amazon.com. Schools and organizations then receive rebates of up to 20 percent off online purchases.

A typical e-fundraising scenario works like this: A dad buys a \$178 suede jacket online and his designated school receives \$8.90. Or a grandmother buys a \$70 gift basket and her designated school receives \$7. Parents find that the beauty of e-fundraising is that they’re donating directly through shopping that they would be doing throughout the year anyway. Parents are really on board because there are no extra steps or hassles to make contributions.

Schools and PTAs are not the only ones benefitting from e-fundraising. There are similar programs that give teachers access to free classroom and teaching supplies as a reward for their everyday online purchases.

Studies show that the nation’s 3.5 million teachers spend an average of \$500 each out of their



No more bake sales? There’s now a simpler way for parents to help raise money for school and other organizations.

own pockets every year to provide classroom supplies, videos and other instructional materials.

For teachers who are constantly burdened with the rising costs of school supplies, e-fundraising programs such as TeacherPoints.com (www.teacherpoints.com) give teachers points for shopping at more than 150 leading merchant Web sites. These points can then be put toward the purchase of classroom materials from Officemax.com and other online merchants. Under this program, purchases are not limited to what teachers spend on classroom supplies—points are also accrued through everyday spending on goods and services for personal or household needs.

Many U.S. classrooms lack the necessary tools and materials required to help students learn successfully. Using e-fundraising programs, teachers can provide students with needed supplies and improve their classrooms without having to spend money out of their own pockets.

Parents, teachers and other consumers are finding that e-fundraising services like SchoolCash.com and TeacherPoints.com make it more convenient to support local schools and PTAs and, ultimately, to improve the nation’s education system and help kids succeed.