

Why is fundraising necessary when the Ministry of Children & Youth Services (MCYS) provides provincial funding?

- The funding allotment provided to each school is a combination of MCYS funds, proceeds of Food for Learning fundraising events and funds donated locally.
- The cost of providing student nutrition programs is very high, and continues to rise with the increasing cost of groceries.
- The funding from MCYS was never intended to provide 100% of required funding to sustain quality programs. MCYS provides a maximum of 15% of the total value of a student nutrition program. There is an expectation that local program providers will input 85% of the value of the programs (including gifts in kind like volunteer hours, donated food, etc.). Food for Learning collects donations centrally, hosts fundraising events and negotiates wholesale purchasing agreements and bulk food donation. But this still does not cover the entire cost of a program. The gap is the responsibility of the school.
- All schools are **required** to supplement the funds received from Food for Learning with their own fundraising or community donations.
- Parental contributions are a critical component of your program. Parents need to be informed that although there is no charge for students to participate, nutrition programs are not 'free', that they are provided with a substantial cost. They should be encouraged to support the programs at a level comfortable for their personal circumstances (volunteer time, donate food, financial contribution).
- The biggest mistake schools make is 'making do' with their annual funding allotment. This will cause a domino effect of decreased funding over years, resulting in a deterioration of the program. (i.e. using only the funds provided by Food for Learning will likely see a decrease in what you are capable of providing – less meals/snacks; this will lead to less funding the following year as the funding allotments are based on a formula that includes the number of meals/snacks served; if a school continues to 'make do' year after year, the program may continue to deteriorate as funding will decrease as program serves less meals/snacks).
- Fundraising activities in your school will not only raise the necessary funds, but will also have the added benefit of increasing public profile and community awareness of your program.
- A fundraising event may also unite the staff of the school and move the program into a prominent, important part of the school culture.