

# Guide to a Successful Recycling Fundraiser

## Promoting Your Consumer Electronics & Jewelry Recycling Program



Dear Participant:

Congratulations on starting your consumer electronics & jewelry recycling drive! You've joined more than 50,000 organizations nationwide currently participating in the Recycling Fundraiser program. We appreciate your participation and look forward to providing you a superior fundraiser for many years to come.

Based on our experience we have developed a proven fundraising marketing strategy designed to compliment and support your fundraising program. Therefore, we strongly urge you and key members of your organization to review and incorporate the instructions provided. Remember, this system is the result of thousands of Recycling Fundraiser Drives and will save your organization both time and energy while ensuring maximum results.

Enclosed you will find all of the necessary marketing materials including:

- Instructions – Guide to A Successful Recycling Fundraiser
  - Parents & Relatives
  - Developing Business Supporters
  - Conducting a Neighborhood Canvass
  - Donor Solicitation Letter Template

These materials and more can be downloaded online and edited for your particular needs.

NOTE: The Recycling Fundraiser program makes for an ideal on-going, low maintenance, profitable, multi-year fundraiser. In the event you are no longer responsible for coordinating this program in the coming year please be sure to forward this guide to the new teacher / parent fundraising coordinator. Recycling Fundraiser wants to make sure your organization continues to benefit for many years to come.

If you have questions or need additional assistance please feel free to contact us at [info@RecyclingFundraiser.com](mailto:info@RecyclingFundraiser.com) or by telephone at (888) 326-7466.

All of us at Recycling Fundraiser wish you the best.

Thank you,

Ronnie Coleman  
President – Recycling Fundraiser (Formerly EcoPhones)

# Getting Started...

## Steps:

**Set a Goal** – Every successful fundraiser starts with establishing a clear objective. First determine how much money your organization plans to raise and calculate how many items you'll need to collect to achieve your goal. NOTE: There are more than 100 million used cell phones in the US and the average American discards his/her cell phone every 12-18 months.

**Think Ongoing** – Experience has demonstrated that although many parents and others will donate their used consumer electronics and jewelry immediately it may initially take several regular reminders before the majority of prospective donors remember to donate / bring / send their items. Once parents and others are conditioned to associate your school or organization with an ongoing recycling fundraiser the results can be overwhelming. Subsequently, an ongoing recycling drive produces much better fundraising results than a short (1 to 2 day event) or even a multi week effort. (*See important 'Business Donors' section below*)

**Plan to Implement an Active Solicitation Program** – As stated above to ensure maximum results participants must initially actively request, rather than passively await, donations. A program founded on hopes that prospective donors will drop their items off in collection boxes is not effective. There is no selling required, but a certain amount of 'direct appeal' and 'salesmanship' are required to demonstrate the program's benefits to prospective donors. (*See important 'Business Donors' section below*) In addition, it is important to make it as easy as possible for the donor to physically get their donated items to you. People are busy and often want to donate items but just don't get around to finding them and getting them to you. Experience indicates that the single most important factor in conducting a successful drive is a direct appeal.

**Identify Your Target Donors** – Generally speaking, your target donors will be one or all of the following:

- Parents & Relatives
- Business Donors (local business collection points)
- A Community or Neighborhood based canvass of donors.

Each of these target donor groups must be approached in a different manner.

## Directly Related Donors

Again, using a school fundraiser as an example, studies indicate parents are the largest supporters of fundraising activities. Unlike other school fundraisers, however, a Recycling Fundraiser collection program does not require parents to make a cash contribution or purchase something they often do not want. A Recycling Fundraiser drive simply asks them to donate something that is of no practical value to them and yet permits them to claim a tax deduction for a “donation in kind” (See ‘*Motivation*’ section below). They not only help their child’s school, they benefit the environment and often cut down on the clutter in their own homes. Everybody wins!

To execute this strategy it is important to appeal directly to the parents, either by mailing or sending a letter home to them explaining the reason for the fundraiser and the benefits of the program. **NOTE: Please visit [www.RecyclingFundraiser.com](http://www.RecyclingFundraiser.com) to download and edit any of the pre-formatted letters provided FREE by Recycling Fundraiser.** (See ‘*Getting Started*’ below). In addition, we recommend sending home our donation acknowledgement form asking parents to confirm that they did in fact receive the information regarding the recycling fundraiser. This form may also serve as a tax deduction receipt for donations. Again, FREE downloadable drafts are available online at [www.RecyclingFundraiser.com](http://www.RecyclingFundraiser.com).

## Business Donors

Enlisting business supporters can greatly help launch your recycling fundraiser. Schools and organizations that have business supporters are generating three times the number of donations compared to those that don’t have any.

What is a Business Supporter? Business supporters are businesses, churches, or individuals in your community who will collect and donate their items on behalf of your organization. There is no cost for business supporters to participate in your program. In fact, RecyclingFundraiser will send them the same prepaid shipping labels that we send to you.

How do we go about getting Business Supporters? For starters have parents ask their employers. Many corporations regularly upgrade their employees’ cell phones and welcome the possibility of a tax write-off. Corporate IT, Human Resources and Shipping & Receiving departments are generally responsible for the procurement (and storage) of their employees used cell phones. Another great source is your local cell phone store.

Lastly, many businesses that appeal to teenagers make for great collection / drop-off points, e.g. Blockbuster, Wendy’s, movie theaters, etc. These businesses generally are willing to host a collection box and display one of the FREE color posters Recycling Fundraiser provides. After all, it helps the environment, it benefits your school or organization and it demonstrates that local businesses are willing to give back to their communities. In fact, such arrangements have even caught the attention of local newspapers and television stations in many markets.

## Neighborhood Canvassing

A common strategy to expand the prospective donor base is to canvass local neighborhoods. Identify the neighborhoods you wish to canvass and break them down into manageable subgroups you can assign to people. Next, assign parent leaders in each target neighborhood. Each parent leader will help coordinate students assigned to canvass their respective neighborhood(s). We strongly recommend canvassing neighborhoods on weekends, as this is convenient for both the parent leaders and prospective donors. Where younger children will be doing the canvassing, it is important they are accompanied by a parent to ensure their safety.

Download and edit one of the pre-formatted letter templates provided by Recycling Fundraiser. (See *'Getting Started'* below) for your canvassers to use when they canvass the neighborhoods.

Review the announcement letter with participating parent leaders and students. It makes a great script for door-to-door collectors. Role-playing exercises in which one person acts as the door-to-door 'collector' and another person acts as the 'donor' are a good means of familiarizing your canvassers with the program and the questions they may experience from donors. Special emphasis should be placed on the tax-deductible donation receipt section at the bottom of the script.

Participants that are unable to memorize the brief script or are uncomfortable reading it can simply introduce themselves and hand the donor solicitation letter/tax deduction receipt directly to the prospective donor.

In the event that a prospective donor expresses interest but is pre-occupied or no one is home be sure to leave a copy of the donor solicitation letter and notify the person that you will return again on the following Saturday and have them place any donated items inside plastic bag(s) and hang them on their front door. Indicate you will leave a tax deduction form when you pickup their item(s).

## **Communicate, Motivate & Inspire**

**Communicate** - Whether at meetings or via e-mail it is imperative that everyone involved in the fundraiser clearly understands the goal and its associated deadline. We encourage you to conduct regularly scheduled updates and/or reminders.

**Motivate** – Two Groups (Participants (i.e. Students, Members, etc.) & Donors)

### **Participants**

We recognize that while your organization's fundraising cause and the subsequent environmental benefit that a recycling drive affords should provide sufficient motivation for your participants (i.e. students, members, etc.) it doesn't hurt to provide a little extra incentive. The following are a few ways this can be done:

#### ***Peer Recognition***

Organizing regularly scheduled group updates and acknowledging participant's/students' efforts in front of their peers with praise (or words of encouragement).

#### ***Awards Certificates***

Customizable award certificates and Environmental Stewardship Award templates are available online at [www.RecyclingFundraiser.com](http://www.RecyclingFundraiser.com).

#### ***Purchase Prizes***

Foster competition among students by organizing regularly scheduled group updates and rewarding their efforts with prizes such as movie tickets, movie rental gift certificates and anything else students enjoy. It's amazing how much mileage you can derive out of just a few prizes.

#### ***Thermometer Gauge***

If you don't have the time to organize regularly scheduled group updates you can always design a simple image that readily depicts your fundraiser's progress to date and requires very little time to maintain. We recommend drawing an empty thermometer (or other type of measuring gauge) on a prominently displayed chalkboard, whiteboard or poster paper. By coloring in the empty thermometer students and faculty or members can easily track your progress as it rises towards your fundraising objective.

## **Donors**

Understanding what motivates prospective donors and how to harness their motivation is as equally as important as finding ways to effectively motivate students. While many prospective donors are sympathetic to your fundraising cause and are concerned about the environment they may need some extra incentive. Fortunately, we can help. A Recycling Fundraiser drive provides prospective donors with the opportunity to save money on their taxes in the form of a tax write-off. While a donor's used items may only represents a few dollars in fundraising revenue for your organization it could mean much more in tax savings for the donor. You cannot specify what the donor should claim as a tax deduction as this is dependent on the model, age and condition of the item they donate. A relatively new item in good condition, however, could easily justify a large deduction, which would provide a significant tax savings.

**Inspire** – The environmental aspect of the Recycling Fundraiser program can serve to further motivate and inspire students of all ages. For example did you know that for every cell phone your school collects 158,000 gallons of water will be protected from potential toxic contamination? That's 1.2 million 12-ounce sodas for every phone! Moreover, 2 and ½ ounces of oil are used to make a single inkjet cartridge. Stacked end to end, cartridges thrown away in 2004 could circle the Earth! For more inspirational facts about consumer electronics and jewelry recycling visit [www.RecyclingFundraiser.com](http://www.RecyclingFundraiser.com).

## **Resources for Promoting Your Recycling Fundraiser**

Visit [www.RecyclingFundraiser.com](http://www.RecyclingFundraiser.com), click "Resource Center" on the menu bar and download the MS Word File / Power Point template that best suits your needs. If you encounter any problems downloading or opening the files please contact us toll-free at (888) 326-7466.

Open the file(s) using MS Word or PowerPoint.

In the designated spaces edit the document to include your organization's name, fundraising cause, contact name and contact phone number.

Make the necessary number of photocopies for each of the participants.