

## ACT SCHOOL CANTEEN ASSOCIATION



## PLANNING SUCCESSFUL THEME DAYS

The following fact sheet has been adapted by ACTSCA from articles published in *NIBBLES*, a newsletter for school canteens produced by the National Heart Foundation, West Australia

*With the Heart Foundation calendar as your guide, ACTSCA offers some ideas on how to organise the Special Days that you may be planning.*

- ◆ Check your school term planner to see if anything else falls around the days you have chosen
- ◆ Try to choose a day in the middle of the week to run a special menu. Take off or restrict your usual menu on the day. Choose a suitable day so that you have at least one day prior to the event for final preparations and one day after to use up leftovers.
- ◆ When you choose a date and theme ask the principal to mention this at staff meetings and see if teachers can involve classes in raising awareness. Teaching staff may be organizing theme days in their classes, try to co-ordinate with them.
- ◆ Advertise in the school Newsletter, by eye-catching posters, special notes home, word of mouth etc. giving ample time before the event.
- ◆ Design attractive menus, using appropriate creative names for items to be sold.
- ◆ Give plenty of advance notice so that parents and children can budget for the extra expenditure. Most children who may not otherwise buy food from the canteen may be eager to participate in *Special Days*.
- ◆ If you anticipate an increased workload ask for extra volunteers for that week. Don't forget to thank all volunteers and other helpers (teaching staff and students) personally and in an item in the school Newsletter. Name all the volunteers and the amount raised on the *Special Day*.
- ◆ Keep a record of items sold, money raised, theme for the day and a copy of the menu.



### ***SELECTING A MENU***

- ◆ Use imagination and keep the menu simple, offering no more than four food items as a "package". Any more is too many!
- ◆ Make the menu attractive and healthy with a touch of "borderline" foods to satisfy everyone.
- ◆ Try to choose foods that can be pre-made and stored, or are pre-packed, to cut down on the workload during that week.
- ◆ Cost the items you will be selling-don't forget to include the packaging.
- ◆ Decide what profit margin you want to make so that you can set a realistic selling price.
- ◆ Ask students to appropriately name the menu items. Have a competition, with suitable prizes as rewards, and use the winning name for the "food deal".
- ◆ Take orders and payment up to a week before the event and emphasize that *Special Day* foods can not be bought on the day. This way you can obtain a good idea of what the demand will be and ordering will be made more efficient. Ensure that orders to suppliers are ample enough to cover demand and made well in advance.

**SEE OTHER SHEET FOR A TIME-LINE OF PREPARATION AND PLANNING**

## 1 MONTH BEFORE MENU

- Make the final decision on what you will serve- must be good value for money
- Estimate costing i.e.ingredients, packaging etc. and final cost to students
- Check if you can get ingredients
- Plan to take off or restrict your usual menu
- Design and cost the menu

## ORDERING

- Decide how you will take orders
- Decide on containers or packaging to be used

## PROMOTION

- Design a flyer
- Pre-advertise in Newsletter
- Involve staff and students: ie. in making posters, arranging competitions

## 2 WEEKS BEFORE MENU

- Make information sheet or cards with details of menu and serving plan
- Confirm that orders can be filled by suppliers

## ORDERING and SERVING

- Arrange pre-order forms.  
**Designate a date for final acceptances of orders at one week before special day.**  
**Stress that you require pre-payment.**
- Check that all required packaging is available

## STAFF

- Organise your volunteers

## ADVERTISE

- Ask principal to advertise the day at assembly and in the Newsletter
- Arrange for copies of the menu and/or flyer to be sent home with Newsletter
- Display menu and posters prominently around school

## 1 WEEK BEFORE MENU

- **Estimate number of orders already received**
- Double check that you will have everything you need
- Order missing items
- Order non-perishables from suppliers after number of pre-orders is available

## STAFF

- Write out an instruction list of what needs to be done on the day and in what order
- Check that volunteers will still be available

## DAY BEFORE MENU

- Order perishables
- Defrost anything pre-prepared in freezer
- Collate and do final count of pre-orders in preparation for tomorrow

## ORGANISING

- Prepare system to record sales
- Organise a camera and someone to take photos
- Have extra money in float if you have not arranged for pre-payment of orders.
- **Pre-payment is a preferable system as taking orders on the day will be confusing and inefficient and unfair if some students miss out !**

## ON THE DAY

- Set up equipment and ingredients etc. for volunteers
- Refer to instruction list made last week
- Use menu cards prepared 2 weeks ago for volunteers to follow recipes. etc.
- Record sales
- Take photos
- Thank volunteers and staff
- **Evaluate and relax!**

