



The National Head Start Association (NHSA) is a nonprofit organization committed to the belief that every child, regardless of circumstances at birth, has the ability to succeed in life. As the voice for 750,000 children, 250,000 staff, and 1500 local Head Start grant recipients across the United States, NHSA advocates for policies that strengthen and expand the program's impact on children and families facing significant challenges in school and in life.

Since 1974, NHSA has worked to remove barriers for these families, ensuring access to Head Start's whole-child approach, built on four pillars: education, health services, family engagement, and wraparound support. Our mission is to coalesce, inspire, and support the Head Start as a leader in early childhood development and education.

What is Dollar per Child?

Dollar per Child (DpC) is NHSA's annual fundraising campaign to support our efforts in Washington, D.C. to strengthen Head Start for the 750,000 children and families, 250,000 staff, and their local communities that we assist. This effort is essential in raising awareness of Head Start's role in communities across the country and securing funding to ensure the program's high-quality education and comprehensive family services reach all eligible children and families.

DpC funds have helped the Head Start community secure increased federal funding nearly every year in the last decade including, most recently, dedicated quality improvement funds to address the effects of adverse childhood experiences and trauma.

How to Use This Guide

The Head Start model is child-centered, family-focused, comprehensive, and community-based. This approach is strengthened through the generous support of our parents and families. The Dollar per Child campaign fosters meaningful connections with parents and families, offering engagement opportunities throughout a child's time in Head Start. With your help, the DpC campaign can create a sustainable legacy that supports children and families for generations.

The Fundraising Guide provides helpful resources and information to help you create your own Dollar per Child campaign, including event ideas, planning tips, and fundraising guidelines.

How are DpC funds used?

The NHSA team uses DpC funds to drive impact in the media, on Capitol Hill, and with the Administration. These funds help NHSA work with parents, families, alumni, and supporters to share their stories and provide critical information and facts about Head Start to policymakers, lawmakers, and thought leaders. Through these efforts, we ensure that the voice of Head Start is heard by our nation's decision-makers.



Grassroots Advocacy

NHSA's government relations team maintains a constant presence on Capitol Hill, making sure members of Congress have the facts about Head Start and Early Head Start and are connected to the programs in their districts and states. DpC funds help NHSA hire a world-class team of expert and respected lobbyists who work with Republicans and Democrats, alike, building and cultivating relationships with Head Start champions on both sides of the aisle.

Local Advocacy

Children only have one chance at a strong start. NHSA mobilizes and supports a network of advocates who communicate this message to legislators. DpC funds support NHSA's work to train advocates, send timely action alerts to help influence national policy and increase awareness of the importance of Head Start's work and its four pillars: education, health services, family engagement, and wraparound support.



Media

NHSA's communications team works with supporters, community leaders, and Head Start and Early Head Start program directors to develop a media presence through letters to editors and op-eds. Locally, we work with programs to lift up their stories and assist with publishing articles on Head Start alumni and their trajectory of success. Nationally, our strategy is to shape the conversations about early childhood education and ensure Head Start and Early Head Start are a well-known model of success.

Policy Agenda

Collaboratively developed every two years with members of the Head Start community, the Policy Agenda guides the work of NHSA's government affairs team. We work with Congress and the administration, including a close relationship with the Office of Head Start, to develop and modify early childhood education legislation and policy, as well as policy directly governing Head Start and Early Head Start. We strive to make sure the voices of the Head Start community are heard.





Fundraising Guidance

The information contained in this Guide are general guidelines. Programs and parents should check their organization's policies, procedures, and regulations to ensure compliance prior to conducting a Dollar per Child event or activity.

There are sometimes misconceptions about what Head Start and Early Head Start agencies can and cannot do when it comes to fundraising. Here are a few facts to guide your thinking:

1. Fundraising Activities

Agencies can engage in fundraising activities without violating federal law or the terms of federal grant awards, so long as no federal grant funds are used to support the cost of fundraising activities. Because activities cannot be supported financially by any federal funds, staff time and program resources cannot be used for fundraising events or activities.

2. Staff Involvement

Staff can participate as long as staff members are volunteering their time when they are not being paid by federal funds.

3. Tracking Campaign Funds

Programs can keep track of funds acquired by Dollar per Child campaign activities as long as they are put into an unrestricted budget account and ensured they are sent as contributions for Dollar per Child campaign. Funds cannot be commingled with restricted federal funds. Programs should check with their organization's financial policies and operating regulations to ensure compliance.

While Head Start resources (i.e., facilities, equipment, etc.) cannot be used at any time for fundraising—including when the Head Start program is closed—a noted exception is the de minimis (trivial) use of office equipment to tabulate, record, and track the donations by staff during non-working hours.

All donations to the Dollar per Child campaign are tax-deductible because the recipient, NHSA, is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization. This should be communicated to all contributors for their donations or resources for events and activities.

4. How to Submit Donations

Programs should submit Dollar per Child donations through the NHSA membership portal: mynhsa.nhsa.org/donate-now

Running Your DpC Campaign

Who runs the campaign?

The Parent Council's Dollar per Child fundraising leader and committee spearhead the creation of all DpC campaign events or activities. Head Start staff, during non-work hours, can take a supporting role.

Community Involvement

The Dollar per Child campaign is a great opportunity to engage with the community. Connecting with local businesses, agencies, and community groups will both strengthen your event and send a message that Head Start and Early Head Start programs are important to and valued by the whole community. You may also find willing volunteers through local high schools, universities, or service organizations (Rotary, Lions Club, etc).

Activity and Event Ideas

Policy Councils and DpC committees are encouraged to be creative as you raise funds for the campaign. Below are some fun ideas that have been used successfully by Head Start and Early Head Start programs across the country. Events can be held at any location **outside** of your Head Start program. You could consider a community center, a parking lot, a local church, your local library, or a public park.

Pie-In-The-Face

Pie-in-the-face is a hilariously fun activity that can spark laughter and create memorable moments for children and family alike. Consider reaching out to any existing fairs, church activities, or community events taking place in your area to see if you can host this fundraising activity for Head Start at their event.

How It Works

The “pies” consist of wet dishwasher sponges (to add weight) and whipped cream. Children, family, and community members top the sponges with whipped cream and throw them at the volunteers for \$10 per throw (or whatever price point you choose).

To save on costs, speak to local retailers and ask for donations of kitchen sponges, whipped cream, and garbage bags. In return, they can attend the event and throw a “pie” for free!

For the volunteer “targets,” ask people who are well known at the center or in the community. Then share who will be there in all of your event marketing to generate interest in the activity (and demonstrate high-level community support for Head Start)!

What You Need

- Location
- Volunteers to get “pied” in the face! (They don’t all have to be high profile. Kids like throwing pies at their family members.)
- 5 sponges per volunteer
- 15 cans of whipped cream per volunteer
- Buckets or bottles of water – to wet sponges before and after throwing
- Marketing to get the word out (hard copies and digital)
- Garbage bags, water, soap, towels

For Virtual Participation

- Allow participants to donate online and show their receipt to throw a pie.
- Still wary of crowds? Allow donations to be made ahead of time, and give donors access to a private livestream of the event.

Trivia Night

Trivia Night is a fun and educational way to spend an evening with your family while getting your community involved!

How It Works

Many Trivia Nights are themed (American Pride, Animals, Movies/Celebrities) and consist of 10 questions and 10 rounds with a suggested \$10 entrance fee and prizes. Your DpC committee can choose a theme and research the questions.

Speak to your local retailers about donating prizes for the trivia winners. In return, they can attend trivia night for free! If your space does not provide beverages or food, consider selling concessions at Trivia Night.

What You Need

- Location
- Volunteers - emcee, cash box, setup/teardown, concessions
- Trivia cards, pencils
- Challenging Trivia Questions/Theme
- Marketing to get the word out (hard copies and digital)
- Prizes donated by local retailers

For Virtual Participation

- Online trivia and meeting tools make it easy to host this event either completely online or as a hybrid (both in-person and virtual attendees)!

Feed the Pig

A “Feed the Pig” activity is simply a fun way of asking for donations that children and parents can get excited about.

How It Works

Place a piggy bank (or any container which can collect coins) in a high-traffic area, such as a local grocery store or community center. Post a flyer stating that the pig is hungry, and that all donations will go to the Dollar per Child campaign.

Establish a volunteer(s) to:

- Put the piggy bank in a safe locked space nightly
- Empty and count the bank weekly
- Turn all funds in to the fiscal department weekly

What You Need

- Volunteer(s) to manage the bank
- Piggy Bank
- Flyer
- Marketing to get the word out (hard copies and digital)

For Virtual Participation

- In your digital marketing, provide participants with the donation link go.nhsa.org/dpc so they can feed the pig online.
- In your digital marketing, designate specific weeks/days that the pig is hungry for a certain type of change. For example: “This week, Mr. Pig is hungry for dimes!”

Parents' Night Out

A night out is a great way to provide a valuable service to program families while raising funds.

How It Works

Your DpC committee gathers volunteers to provide childcare services for a few hours at a space donated by a local business or community organization, such as a health club, outside of regular business hours. Program parents then donate money to Dollar per Child in exchange for childcare and a few hours to themselves!



What You Need

- Volunteer childcare providers (parents or staff)
- Donated space from a local business or community organization
- Marketing to get the word out (hard copies and digital)

For Virtual Participation

- Instead of a night out, provide a night in! Set up a Zoom room and invite the kids to log-in for an online party!
- Recruit high-energy, engaging volunteers to read stories, sing songs, dance, and play games. Provide families with the Zoom link in exchange for a donation.

Pancake Breakfast

A Saturday morning pancake breakfast is a great way to raise money and get the family together! Connect with a local diner or restaurant to discuss holding a pancake breakfast. Your program will sell tickets to this breakfast for \$10 each and are required to sell at least 50 tickets. Your local diner or restaurant will provide the food, (pancakes, eggs, sausage, etc.), beverages, and chefs. Determine an amount (for example: \$5) of every ticket you sell that will go to your Head Start program!

For Virtual Participation

How about a take-out fundraiser? Ask a local restaurant if they will donate a portion of sales from take-out orders on a given evening. Then spread the word!

What You Need

- Roll of tickets
- Local restaurant
- Volunteers



Trike-A-Thon

A trike-a-thon is a really fun way to raise funds and engage children and families.

How it Works

Trike-a-thon participants seek sponsorships from friends and family members for their effort to ride around a designated track. Children can continue riding for a set amount of time, or they can take turns so they do not tire out.

Sponsors can contribute based on how many laps a child rides or simply donate a flat amount for the child participating in the event. They can then come to cheer on the child participating, which makes for a fun time for children and their friends and families.

A trike-a-thon can be held in a safe outdoor setting, a gymnasium, or an auditorium. Paint or tape a riding track with a start/finish line where you can keep count of how many laps the children ride.

Make sure that lots of parents and attendees are nearby to cheer on children and have a stereo system to play fun music. As always, safety is most important so be sure to check all tricycles for function and safety and ensure all children have a properly fitted helmet.

Fun Additions

- Ask local fire/paramedics/police to join you on your day and talk to the kids and parents about various safety issues.
- Invite community members to tour the preschool and have program information/enrollment packets on hand.
- Ask your local resource center if they would like to set up a resource table at your event.
- Ask local businesses for raffle gift prizes. All donations are tax deductible.



KidZCommunity, of Placer Community Action Council, Inc., 2022 Dollar per Child Trike-A-Thon fundraiser

What You Need

- Outdoor lot or Indoor auditorium for event location
- Tricycles for all participants
- Helmets for all participants
- Event Speaker/Coordinator
- Stereo System for music
- Pledge/Donation coordinator

For Virtual Participation

- Host a virtual trike-a-thon! Each participant conducts the race on his/her own and submits the number of laps completed.
- Provide an event landing page and hashtag where people can post pictures, video, and encouragement.
- Direct folks to go.nhsa.org/dpc where they can make their donation!

Fundraising Additions

- Invite high-profile adults in your community to participate in the trike-a-thon!
- Allow babies in a wagon or pushed in a stroller.
- Get water/beverages donated and run concessions.

Gift Basket Raffle

Gift baskets are a fun way to raise money by selling raffle tickets.

How It Works

Gather donated materials from local business, parents, and staff and create gift baskets to be raffled off. DpC committee members (and additional volunteers) sell tickets individually and in batches (ie - one for \$1, 6 for \$5). Set a date for the drawing and go!



For Virtual Participation

Conduct a silent auction online! There are many software options available for setting up an auction. One option is to have donors pay a fee (like a ticket to an event) which allows them to bid on the items they like. Ticket holders can continue to bid, and increase their bids, until the auction closes. Distribute baskets to the winners and you're done.

What You Need

- Gift Baskets
- Donated Materials
- Raffle Tickets

Themed Gift Basket Ideas

- Movie Night Basket: Candy, popcorn, sofa blanket, movies, theater gift certificate
- Spa Basket: Soaps, bubble bath, loofah, pumice stone, candles, lotion, eye mask, massage oil, bath towel
- Beach Bag Basket: Towels, suntan lotion, blanket, beach ball, shovel & pail, underwater camera
- Fishing Tackle Box: Tackle box, fishing line, bobbers, lures, fishing net, Swedish fish
- Ice Cream Basket: Toppings, sprinkles, sundae dishes, ice cream scoop, gift certificate
- Baking Basket: Apron, oven mitts, baking pans, measuring cups, sugar
- Car Care Basket: Bucket, hose sprayer, car wash detergent, car wash mitt, interior wipes, shammy, window cleaner, air freshener

Steps for Planning a Successful Campaign

Step 1: Planning

August – September

Get your Policy Council involved! Attend a meeting, help them determine who will serve as the fundraising leader, and establish your committee. This committee will meet regularly and engage parents and community partners in the campaign. The committee will then introduce families in the program to the DpC campaign. NHSA provides the following support for leaders:

- [DpC Fact Sheet](#)
- [The Academy: Policy Council Basics course](#)

Step 2: Fundraising

September – April

Conduct your campaign. The ultimate goal is to raise one dollar for each child in your program, but every dollar matters. There is no limit to the number of activities you can hold or funds you can raise.

Donations can be made directly online: nhsa.org/dollar-per-child. Individuals can post the link on social media platforms and ask for others to give as well.

Step 3: Celebration

NHSA celebrates all of its Dollar per Child donors at [NHSA's annual National Conference](#). This is a great way to recognize the efforts of your parents and families!

Step 4: Recognition

The programs, states, and regions who give the most per child will be recognized as Dollar per Child leaders at a special ceremony at [NHSA's annual National Conference](#).

Submission of Funds: May – June

NHSA's fiscal year runs through June 30, so all funds received by that date are counted toward the annual total.

Please Note: Donations must be put into an unrestricted budget account and tracked as contributions for advocacy. They may not be commingled in an account with restricted federal funds.

Please direct any questions to dollarperchild@nhsa.org.

Donations may be sent directly to:

**National Head Start Association
Department #3 Donations
P.O. Box 829929
Philadelphia, PA 19182-9929**

When mailing your donation, please include a cover sheet with your program name, contact information, and donation amount. If you are sending gifts from multiple sites, create a line item for each.