

Planning Your Event



FAMILY
Fun, Food
& Fitness

Event Planning Checklist

1. Get Organized

- Organize a Planning Committee.** Planning an event can be a time consuming project so share the workload with others. Enlist the help of school personnel (school nurses, PE teachers, classroom teachers, administrators, and school food service personnel), community members (health professionals, public health agencies, extension personnel, recreation center staff, and local business owners), and students.
- Choose a Date.** Consult the school and community calendar. Avoid dates where sporting and popular community events are held.
- Choose a Location.** Have a rainy-day plan if the event is scheduled to be held outside.
- Allow Plenty of Time to Plan.** Be sure to allow adequate time to plan and promote your event to help ensure a successful experience.

2. Determine the Focus of Your Event

- Identify a theme.** A catchy theme or phrase can provide a starting point in planning your event and help tie all the activities together.
- Determine your Target Audience.** Will this event involve all students (K-12) in the district or target a specific grade or grades?

3. Select Activities for the Event

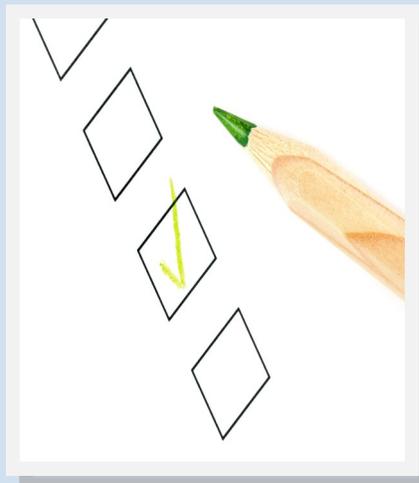
When selecting activities, consider the target audience and focus of the event. Consider the areas of expertise of committee members, look for ways to utilize those skills.

- Choose a minimum of 2 Eat Smart Activities.** Select from the ideas in this guide or brainstorm new ideas. Be sure that nutrition messaging is evidence based and promotes Team Nutrition messages.
- Choose a minimum of 2 Play Hard Activities.** Select from activities found in this guide or be creative and brainstorm new ideas to fit into the focus of your event.

4. Promote the Event

Promotion is key to a well-attended event.

- Invite Parents.** Send notes home with students or email parents.
- Utilize the web.** Post information about the event on your district's webpage or use social media to get the word out.
- Advertise to the Community** through the newspaper or even the local community television channel.



Advice from Former Grantees

Use the notebook as it has lots of great ideas and everything is spelled out for you making it easy to put on an event like this. Make sure you have lots of volunteers!
— **Nancy Arnold, USD 231 Gardner Edgerton**

Make a list of all items needed for every activity and station several weeks before your event. Double check the day before to make sure you have everything. Do a dry run of activities before participants arrive. Expect the unexpected to happen....it always does! — **Ellen Feiden, Holy Trinity Catholic Grade School**

Form a team of people at your school to plan event activities. More ideas come from a large group and everyone has ownership in the evening. Designate a photographer! Ask your food service coordinator to serve on the committee—ours had great ideas mostly because of all her experience with serving large groups. She helped keep the cost down, made us look good and provided us with a great tasting opportunity for participants! — **Wendy Burton, USD 465 Winfield**

By working our event into an existing program we increased participation and both programs won! — **Tandy Rundus USD 333, Concordia**

The sky is the limit! Recruit lots of help and ask for feedback afterwards. — **Geri Beatty, USD 264 Clearwater**

We have had trouble getting attendees to fill out the evaluation survey at past events. This time, I asked the local roller rink to help out and they donated passes. Attendees received a roller pass after submitting a completed survey. It worked great!! — **Elaine Musick, USD 253 Emporia**

Designate a photographer!
— **Wendy Burton, USD 465**

Look around the community for interested people to provide a service or information. Parents can be great resources! — **Krista Linenberger, USD 457 Garden City**

Encourage parents to participate in the activities and stations. We had several parents who just wanted to observe and had to be encouraged to participate with their child. Be sure to have plenty of volunteers. Our school utilized high school students needing community service hours.
— **Norma Sanchez, USD 483 Southwestern Heights**

Plan to have a variety of activities for different ages. Smaller kids had trouble with the hula hoop station but could easily do the bean bag toss. — **Peggy Hill, USD 335 North Jackson**

Advertise, Advertise, Advertise! I put a full page flyer in our school newsletter, a small advertisement on the school page of our local paper, on the community service announcements of our local radio station, sent notices home with each student and had it announced the week of the event on our morning announcements at school!
— **Cheryl McAfee, USD 430 South Brown County**



Building Community Support

Hosting a Family Fun, Food and Fitness Event is a great way to promote healthy habits in both students and their parents! This type of event also provides an excellent opportunity to promote the health of your entire community. Gaining the support of your community is an asset to a school. Local community members and businesses can provide valuable resources, expertise, and even funding for your event!

Step 1: Evaluate the resources and assets in your community.

Each community has its own unique strengths. The following list contains organizations that your community or region may have. By no means is this a complete list, but does provide a good starting point when looking for community contributions or support for your event:

- K-State Research & Extension
- Local amateur, collegiate or club sports teams
- Community health club or gym
- College or University with a nutrition, health and/or physical education program or degree
- Kiwanis, Junior League, PEO, Rotary, Lyons Clubs, etc.
- Community-based organizations: 4-H, United Way, YMCA, Boys & Girls Clubs etc.
- Community or Senior Centers
- Hospitals, health clinics and doctors offices
- Community action agencies
- Cultural or ethnic clubs
- Press and media: local or regional newspapers, radio stations, etc
- Local grocery stores
- Co-ops or other agriculture related businesses
- Banks or Credit Unions
- Local small businesses

Involve your planning committee in brainstorming a list of possible community partners. Not only will you get a more comprehensive list, but you are also more likely to identify someone with a personal connection to the organization(s) you are trying to reach.

Step 2: Obtain Support.

When approaching community members for support, it is important to have a well-planned and organized approach. Be sure that when approaching potential community partners, you are able to tell them the mission/message of your event, specific examples of how they can help, and information on how this event is valuable to them. By having a plan before approaching a potential partner, it gives your event credibility and may increase the likelihood of participation.

For example: A member of your planning committee got their degree from a local community college. This individual approaches a former professor about the possibility of a class of nursing students coming to your event, suggesting that the students would help run the stations throughout the evening. Explaining that the event’s focus is, “Mighty MyPlate” and that there will be students and parents in attendance, and that the event could provide an excellent opportunity to promote the nursing program, as well as provide “real-world” experience for students.



Building Community Support

While personal contact is ideal, there are many instances when time and resources prohibit visiting every community partner on your list. See the appendix for sample letters and emails. Be sure to follow-up with a phone call a week or two after sending letters out to gauge interest and to further promote the event

Step 3: Secure Involvement.

Determine what specifically, a community partner is willing to contribute to your event. This step is crucial in determining whether there are any gaps in your event’s program, information, or resources. Learning about potential gaps early ensures that your committee has enough time to find other activities, people and/or resources within your district or organization or from areas outside of the community.

Follow-up to responses from community partners with a phone call or personal visit. Be sure to clearly communicate your expectations. If a community partner has agreed to present at the event, be sure you communicate what time you’d like them to arrive. Find out what they will need to have a successful presentation, such as projector, electrical outlet, microphone, etc. If the community partner is donating something for your event, determine if a committee member needs to stop by to pick it up or if they will be dropping it off at a determined location by a certain date.

Step 4: Keep Supporters Informed.

It is essential to keep your community partners informed about your event. Volunteers need to know logistical information (where, when, how long). Keeping supporters informed is a great way to build or maintain the credibility of your committee, school and wellness program. Be sure to let any supporters know if event information is published or shown by local media.

Step 5: Thank Supporters.

Everyone loves to be thanked! Ensuring that supporters are thanked properly for their donations is a great way to show that their donation was appreciated. Include the impact their donation had on your event to make your note more personalized. Offering letters that state donation type and amount are a nice gesture and are often kept by businesses and individuals for tax purposes.

It’s never too early to start thinking about your next event and thank you letters are a way to bridge the gap to future support. Think of a thank you note as the first step in acquiring the next donation for future events!



