

Halloween Candy Buy Back 2009

Newsletter #4

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From the desk of Dr. Chris Kammer

Hello dental friends,

Welcome to the 2009 Halloween Candy Buy Back! If you are new to the program please be aware that this is our 4th newsletter for this year. If you haven't already done so, please read the previous newsletters online here www.halloweencandybuyback.com/newsletters.html.



Only a few days left and that means it's time to start finalizing plans for your buy-back event. Here are some tips from my team.

1. Overestimate for goody bags and give-aways! More kids will come next year than this year, and even more the year after that! It is better to **be overprepared** for the throngs of candy donors than to run out of supplies unexpectedly.
2. Have your **shipping boxes ready and waiting**. The candy can be dumped into them right away rather than transferred at a later time. This makes it much easier on you and your staff! And the kids can see how much others have given and how their own donations will be sent. You'll get *shock* factor, trust me!
3. Find a local business to **donate boxes** to the cause! You can offer to promote THEIR name with your event, and we don't hear "no" a lot when we tell people what our cause is. Also, same-size boxes are MUCH easier to pack up and send.
4. Ask as many local businesses as you can to **co-sponsor the event with donation of coupons, samples, etc.** Do this as early as possible. Don't wait for them to find you! You have to cold-call or stop in, then follow up once or twice, and finally stop by to pick up the donations. Make sure to mention that you will be promoting them to all these families and through the media in exchange for their generosity.

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5. **Send a personal letter of appreciation** to all your sponsors along with pictures of the event, your business card, and even a great offer for their employees.
6. **Make sure your patients know** what you are doing! From sending out a short letter to your active patient database to letting it all take place in your office while patients are waiting, your patients will appreciate what you are doing and hopefully bring their own children in.
7. **Cash donations are always welcome!** Ask your favorite banks or credit unions to chip in to help defray those expensive shipping costs. You want to be the fun collection center, not the entire factory!
8. Find out if major distributors, like the vendors you buy your dental supplies from, will **donate toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss** for the soldiers! They will need it after eating all the candy you send. You can be sure that **business people** will see the value in donating for this terrific, popular cause. Make it a community event!
9. At least one office provided **a big card for children to sign** for the troops. What a great idea this is, and how easy would it be to set up a small table with posterboard and markers? Or find some inexpensive, blank cards that the kids can write their own message in. This creates fun for small children and will win big points with the soldiers. Just think of the servicemen and -women who open a package with a card like this! Make their day brighter and their jobs a little easier with a heartfelt greeting from home. Make color copies if you are sending multiple boxes.
10. Ask parents to fill out **informational cards** while they wait in line to weigh their candy. Then your staff can just take the card, write down the weight of the donation, and keep it for your tracking information. Make sure to get the child's age and name and the parent's **phone number and e-mail address**. It will give the parents something to do AND free up your staff to have more fun with the kids! Give out something as an incentive, such as the chance to win an iPod or a big gift from your office. Find out if someone can donate a door prize like this!

Follow up on your press releases now!

Be sure to call each and every place that received your press release to follow up. Call, call and call again until you get a reporter on the phone. You are part of a fast growing grass roots effort that now involves 1200 dentist offices. This is big news all over the country!

Important contact information:

Make sure you are listed on the National Halloween Candy Buy Back page www.halloweencandybuyback.com. If you are not listed please register. If you've registered and you need to change your listing please obtain a password by going to www.mylocaldentist.com/admin and using the forgot password option. A screen will come up asking you what email address you are registered under then you will select "Send Password". The password will then be sent to that email address. You will then be able to use this password to edit your listing. This page will be promoted in the national news so be sure you are on there!

Ship your candy to Operation Gratitude! Operation Gratitude (www.opgratitude.com) is a non-profit organization that sends gift packages to our troops in Iraq. They request Halloween Candy to include in holiday gift boxes they send in December. They accept donations from October 1 to December 15, and their address is:

**Operation Gratitude/California Army National Guard
17330 Victory Boulevard
Van Nuys, California 91406
ATTN: Charlie Othold: 818.437.6201**

here are some other items Operation Gratitude would be happy to forward to our troops:

Beanie Babies or other small stuffed animals
Small packages beef jerky
Single serving boxes of cold cereal
Individual packets of hot cereal
Hand-knit/crochet scarves and hats
Computer flash drives
Lip balm, toothpaste, toothbrushes and roll-on deodorant
Personal letters of appreciation

In the Next Issue

We'll learn how all your events went!

Until then, let your dental soul shine!

Thank you one and all,

Chris

PS Please remember to share all of your great ideas with us on Facebook so we can all put on the best Halloween Candy buy Back possible! Please share this newsletter and event with your colleagues. They can register at www.HalloweenCandyBuyBack.com and they will receive all the newsletters and updates too.

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