



How to...

Use Schools to Promote your Market

“Backpacking” refers to when a school sends each child home with a certain handout to give to their parents. Although many schools won’t allow outside organizations to backpack their flyers, it’s worth pursuing because for the schools that are willing, it’s an easy way to get to the word out to hundreds of neighborhood families!



Equipment:

Copies of your market’s half-page flyers

Partner:

No partner necessary.

What to do:

At office and/or home-

1. Open your Market Contacts spreadsheet on the Grouch to find the schools near your market. Additionally, do a Google search for schools in the neighborhood.
2. Find the contact information for the Parent Coordinator of each school. If this is not listed in your Market Contacts spreadsheet, you can probably find it online. You may also call the school’s main office and ask for this info. (When you find the Parent Coordinator’s contact information, add this to your Market Contacts spreadsheet).
3. Call the Parent Coordinator during business hours. Explain that you’re calling from the nearby farmer’s market and want to get the word out about the market’s opening. Tell him/her the market will have lots of children-oriented activities and that parents who receive WIC farmers market checks can use them there. If you have EBT at your market, say so. Ask her if it would be possible to “backpack” market flyers to the parents of the school.
4. If she/he says yes, ask when would be a good time to drop off flyers. Ask her/him how many flyers you should print for the school. Take the flyers to the school at the agreed-upon time.
5. If she/he says no, ask if she/he has any other ideas about promoting the market. Often schools will let you leave a stack of flyers in their office or hang a market poster on their information board.

6. Whatever the outcome of the call--yes/no/other-- write this in the "Notes" section of your Market Contacts spreadsheet on the Grouch to the right of the school's information. If the school is not listed in your Market Contacts spreadsheet, please add it!

Note: Many schools will not let you backpack flyers. This is normal; don't let it disappoint you! Calling schools is still worth the effort, though-- if even 1 out of 10 schools says yes, you've hit a gold mine. With little effort on your part, 500 families have market flyers delivered directly to their house! Make sure to note which schools say yes and which say no for future market managers.