How to Host a Dance-A-Thon

A Dance-a-Thon is a perfect fundraiser for schools—from elementary school all the way up through college. Depending on the age of your students, your event can last just a few hours or through the entire night!

Format:
Decide on the length and structure of your event. Some Dance-A-Thons are designed so that participants must dance continually throughout the event, but many will add entertainment components into the event to give participants a rest. These could include a talent show, step show, break dance show, swing dance lessons, salsa lessons, or karaoke!

If you’re hosting an event for younger students, you might want to have your Dance-A-Thon run for four hours or so. If you’re hosting your event for a college crowd, you just might want to have an all-night affair!

Music and Entertainment:
The main expense for a fundraising Dance-a-Thon is the DJ, unless you can get someone to donate their services! It’s best not to use live music with a band since you will want to have a variety of music and it’s hard to do that with a live band. IPods are a budget-friendly alternative to a DJ, just be sure to use loud enough speakers for your space.

Food:
To raise extra funds, sell food and drinks to your participants such as pizza, popcorn, candy, bags of chips, and even fast food brought in from a nearby eatery. Try to get your local pizza place to donate some pies, or your local deli to provide a sandwich tray for you. You could even have volunteers bring baked goods and hold a bake sale.

Fundraising:
Your main profit will come from ticket sales and your concessions table. Additional profits can also come from having a raffle at the event, or from having a karaoke contest and shout outs where participants can pay a fee per song or shout out. Make sure to have slips of paper pre-printed so the shout outs can be submitted and easily read by the DJ. Here’s an example... “Here’s a Shout Out from Kim to all her soccer team buddies: Wildcats Rule!”

Publicity:
To make sure your event is well attended, publicity is the key. Display and pass out lots of fliers and make announcements during assemblies, lunch periods, etc.

Contact your local Autism Speaks office for autism-related materials to display at your event, such as brochures and Walk Now for Autism Speaks banners.