



Getting Involved in Your Community

By: Kelly Cooper

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A well executed dance team program is one that has great word of mouth in the community, known for their dedication and skill as well as their contribution to the school and local community. This last piece can be the most daunting to tackle, as finding the time for ANYTHING extra in a dance season can seem impossible! Here are some great ways you can get the dance team involved and giving back to those whom they hope to garner support from throughout the year.

Start at School:

- Represent in the on-campus clubs and events- try to have at least one member involved in each of the most active service based clubs on campus, from the Cancer Society club, to the Earth Club: these clubs will be planning events and fundraisers for their causes and can be great inlets for the team to get involved as well.
- Give time to ALL sports- have a representative from the team talk to each coach and find out which are the biggest rivalries, biggest games that they would want extra crowd support for- and add them to your team calendar where you can! It is much easier to gain campus-wide support when all groups feel recognized by your team. Wear a team t-shirt or make ones specifically for the team you are watching, and be loud, positive crowd energy for a big swim meet. Paint some shirts with your mascot name and line the finish line at a cross country event. Hosting a track meet? Track meets usually take nearly 30 volunteers to be successful! Contact the team parent and see if you can help at one of them. Marching band performing in a parade? Put on your rally caps and line the parade route right near the grandstand.
- Make a conscious effort to have your team in uniform or team t-shirts for campus events like cleanups, general fund-fundraisers, freshman orientation, etc.

Now Go Big!

- Check city calendars in the newspaper for any community events like parades, faires, carnivals- and see if performers or volunteers are needed.
- Check with the city Chamber of Commerce about any big store openings- the ones with ribbon cuttings love to have people there! Bring the team out and support the new business! Contact the store owner in advance and see if there is anything you can do.
- Host a childcare event for Back to School Night and Open House in the school library- plan ahead with crafts, games, prizes and snacks- send out notices in the school newsletter and website so that parents know it is available- they will have a great time, and the parents will LOVE you.

- Have the team select a cause they are passionate about, whether it is Breast Cancer Awareness, Anti-Drug Education, Animal Rescue, Elderly Support and Care, Homeless Shelter and Food Programs, Clothes Drives- choose one and make it a team focus.
 - Have a fundraiser not for your program, but for your selected charity- be sure all advertising indicates what you are raising money for!
 - Bring the cause on campus- does it have a symbol that is well known? (Pink ribbon, red ribbon, ARF logo) See about painting that symbol somewhere on campus, like the ground on the main plaza or quad- host an event where people can paint in their own reasons for supporting that cause inside your logo- "In memory of Aunt Elise", "For my sisters," "For all of the unadopted and neglected animals",
 - Attend a community or county event in support of that cause- a walk, an adoption day, a soup kitchen day, etc Take photos and be sure it is on the school website- it's great PR for the whole school!
 - Try to get a corporate sponsor for t-shirts specifically for the cause you are supporting and have a day each month where the whole team wears them!