

Putting the fun into fundraising

PARENTS need to do their homework if they expect to get a pass mark with school fundraising projects.

Helen Creswick, who runs the Fetes Festivals and Fundraising website www.fetesandfestivals.com.au, a free online guide to running fetes, fairs and fundraisers, says P&C committees can no longer expect the community to support unimaginative events.

"Schools are becoming more professional because they need the money and because there are more companies providing services for them," she said.

"And parents just don't have the time to sit on committees, bake cakes

By MICHELLE COLLINS

and do crafts like they used to."

But that doesn't mean the fete is dead.

"The key to a school fete is getting the children there and if you hire a jumping castle and a slide you are not going to attract the Grade 7 kids," Ms Creswick said.

"It is a mistake to cater only for the young kids. Schools also will have a cake stall and the craft stall and forget that the people spending money there are the kids.

"Kids aren't interested in buying a chocolate cake and they aren't interested in buying a toilet roll holder."

She said other common

mistakes were to spread the event over too large an area and having the event run too long.

For her son's Brisbane school fete next year, Coorparoo's Mandy Stevens plans to have postcards printed and letterbox dropped. Each class will also produce a canvas which will be displayed at the fete and then be auctioned on eBay.

One school bought pop corn machines and fairy floss machines which they now hire to other schools.

Adrienne Katmadas, the public relations officer for the Macgregor State School P&C in Brisbane, is using her skills from a degree in business communication and 10 years as a marketing manager in

shopping centres to help the school's fundraising.

The biggest fund-raiser is the Mayfest which provides about \$50,000 to the school's coffers. They combined it with an attempt to break the global record for the "world's loudest scream" (they missed by 0.1 decibel).

She is also selling a hot pink "SHOP IT" set of number plates by tender to raise funds for a playground makeover. (Send bids to Shop It, PO Box 623, Sunnybank 4109 if you are interested).

She and Naomi Sekeres, convener of the school's Mayfest, have formed a company Blonde & Sharp to take what they have learned and apply it to

schools and community groups.

The company's mission is to combine business enterprise with charity.

"It is getting harder to raise money so we have to think outside the box and do things differently," she said.

To make fundraising easier, Ms Stevens has teamed with Ms Creswick to create the Fundraising Directory, a book of all fundraising services and products that will be sent to every school, kindergarten and childcare centre as well as sporting clubs and charities.

It is due out next year but is already running on the web at www.fundraisingdirectory.com.au