

# One School's Success Story...



Mason Elementary School in Lee's Summit, Missouri participated in CureFinders in April 2008. Teresa Bryant (kindergarten teacher) and Sarah Keller (6th grade teacher) are the Student Council sponsors at Mason Elementary, and they served as the school coordinators for CureFinders. Below they share their experience of participating in CureFinders.

We were approached last fall by a PTA parent asking if the Student Council would be interested in doing a fundraiser as part of our annual service project. Cystic fibrosis had entered into their extended family and she was very aware of the need to raise money for research. We were quickly hooked up with Amy Nyberg from the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation and on our way to what was a fun, easy, and very rewarding fundraiser. We were given a CureFinders packet with many suggestions on how to hold a fundraiser. There were tips in the packet on what it could look like and how to manage it, so we took what we knew would fit our organization and our school and jumped in with both feet.

We chose to do Jar Wars, which is collecting pennies on Monday, nickels on Tuesday, etc. As we worked to prepare for the week long event, we talked with the Student Council kids about how much money they thought we would raise. We had \$250 in mind as a great goal to strive for. With only 350 students in our K-6 building, we thought this would be very reasonable. We used baby formula cans donated by a parent and decorated by our 6<sup>th</sup> grade council members as our change collection containers.

Our student council reps went to every classroom to talk about cystic fibrosis, give them a container to collect their coins in and hand out the flyers that would go home with the students explaining the week long collection. The classroom that collected the most money for the entire week would be rewarded with a pop/popcorn party. You could easily get your principal to dye his/her hair or shave their head if they are game for that to help bring some motivation to the event. Our kids took the competition between the classrooms as incentive to "out-do" each other.



The Mason Elementary School Student Council is all smiles about being CureFinders for the CF Foundation.

The first day was filled with excitement and anticipation. The Student Council reps collected the jars during their study hall period in the morning so we could get the money collected and counted for the end of the day announcement of which classroom collected the most for that day. We thought counting a baggie of pennies would be easy. We had \$2 to \$3 in mind for each classroom...with only 15 classrooms that would be maybe \$30...to count.

Imagine our surprise when the kids started bringing in not only our containers full, but additional baggies and small boxes that the classroom teachers had to scramble to provide when the students were filling up the containers. We quickly had to rethink our counting process knowing this would take much longer than the 30 minutes we allowed, so we loaded the money up in our car and drove to the bank down the street asking them to keep each classroom's total separate so we could determine the winner of the day.

As we announced the classroom winner at the end of each day, the screams came from not only the top winner, but with the total collected for the day...\$135.94 (IN PENNIES!!). We realized that we would easily reach our goal of \$250 and re-set our goal to \$500. We bought additional baggies (heavy-duty) for teachers to have "just in case" we had lots of nickels the next day.

The coins continued to roll in...we made a daily trip to the bank down the street (the tellers actually looked forward to our daily visits as they, too, wanted to see what our totals would be for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.)

Each day we announced the top classroom winner. On Friday, after announcing the winner that day, we didn't announce the overall total. We wanted to announce it at our assembly where we would present our check, given in honor of a 6<sup>th</sup> grade student in Lee's Summit, to the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.

The Student Council Officers made the presentation with the young man and his family on hand. Our little school of 350 students raised \$2,405 in one week for the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation!

We are still in awe of what took place last spring. The organization took little time, brought great results, was a ton of fun, but most of all helped show the kids how good it makes you feel to reach out to help others.

**We encourage you to try this fun, easy fund-raiser to help make a difference in the lives of those who suffer from cystic fibrosis.**