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Sweet treat leaves kids with cash, not cavities

So here it is, the day after Halloween, and you've got enough candy to last a year.

Either your children made quite a haul last night or you were expecting loads of trick-or-treaters who never showed up and instead are left

with loads of Snickers, M&M's and caramels:

Caramels. Who invented that candy? The darn things stick to your teeth better than an adhesive.



**EDDIE
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Anyway, your children don't need all that candy, and you know everyone in the house will overindulge just because it's there.

You also could be thinking that you can keep the extra treats and give them away next year. No, no, I'm just kidding. Bad idea.

The point is, you're trying to figure out what to do with the extra bags of sugar.

Fresno dentist Dr. William M. Netzley wants to help.

He wants to help rid you of the excess sweets and will pay \$1 per pound of Halloween candy turned in from 4 to 7 p.m. today in the River Park shopping center between Borders and Yoshino Restaurant.

It's more than just a publicity stunt. He wants to help promote good nutrition and awareness that too much sugar can lead to diabetes, which "is increasing at an alarming rate in this country."

He wants to help encourage good dental habits, of course. Those turning in candy today will receive a toothbrush and toothpaste.

And he wants to help stock the shelves of the Community Food Bank. He is encouraging those who come to trade in their candy to also bring a nonperishable canned food item. Netzley wants to remind people that with the holiday season coming the food bank could use the donations.

He and his staff hope for a big turnout today for this year's event and is prepared to pay out as much as is necessary.

"It's a win-win-win all the way around," Netzley said.

Netzley is in the business of promoting good dental hygiene, but this effort stems even more so from his desire to push healthy eating. He cites a statistic that the average person in the United States consumes 180 pounds of sugar per year.

Whoa.

"That's really what motivates me," Netzley said.

Corryn McQuown, a hygienist in Netzley's office, said sugar intake and dental health are intertwined.

Diabetics are more susceptible to gingivitis and gum disease.

At the initial event last year, Netzley paid out about \$100 for candy. Some kids donated their cash to the food bank, which also gets the candy he collects.

Now, I know what you're thinking. So the candy is just being recycled. What good does that do? Yes it is, but Netzley and a food bank representative said only moderate amounts of candy will be handed out with nutritious foods to families.

As McQuown said, "No child needs a pillowcase of candy."

Lest you think Netzley is a party pooper, regular Halloween treats are handed out at his house — but, again, he hopes consumption of the candy is done in moderation. Thus, the reason for today's effort.

Said McQuown of last year's buyback, "We had a lot of people say, 'Next year I'm going to bring it straight to you.'"

Here's your chance.

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