



# The ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS PAGE



By Sandra Stimson ADC, CALA, CDP  
Executive Director, [Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care](#)

Music: "Peg of My Heart" furnished by [Heart and Soul Music](#) "Providing Quality Music for Nursing Homes"

## ABOUT SANDRA

Sandra Stimson has experience as a corporate consultant, Corporate Trainer and National Speaker. Her experience is in long term care, as Activity Director, Director of Alzheimer's Units and Assistant Administrator of a 550 bed long term care county home. She is Co-founder of Pet Express Pet Therapy Club, is a Life Replay Specialist. Sandra implements dementia units nationwide. Sandra has written several books, Volunteer Management Essentials for Long Term Care and Pet Express Pet Therapy Program. Sandra has been a facilitator for Alzheimer's support groups and is the Awards Chair for the NJ Association of Activity Professionals. Sandra is the Executive Director of **National Council of Certified Dementia Practitioners**  
<http://www.nccdp.org>.

[Alternative Solutions in Long Term Care](#) offers resources for health care professionals in many areas of dementia care, care plans, Snoezelen products, dementia activity calendars, adult day care calendars, sensory calendars, reminisce videos for dementia, activity books, and dates to remember, party supplies, resources and links.

## WAYS TO EXPAND YOUR BUDGETS. *The Big Secret! WHY ARE YOU PAYING RETAIL?*

Budgets are almost a dirty word in health care. We dread those budget reports and expense reports and every month we pray that we did not exceed our budget. Here are some tips to help you stay within your budget and a big industry secret!

Know your budget. Some of you work for companies with no cap on spending. Some of you are told monthly what you can spend based on PPD and others have a set amount per month. Regardless of your budget, here are some suggestions to help you manage the budget.

1. You should be keeping a daily expense log. This log, just like a check ledger begins with a total amount you can spend. Each time you spend, enter into your ledger exactly what the funds were spent for, date and the amount you spent.
2. Always turn in your receipts immediately. Otherwise the expense will show up on another month's expense report thus putting you over budget for a past month.
3. At the end of the year, complete a spreadsheet by category of expenses to see what you spent your money on for the year. You may find that you need to expand your budget. You may find you have money left over.
4. Plan in advance for those programs that are very expensive. Some of the items you might be able to purchase the month before. You may not need to put the entire event in one month's expense. For example, you might plan an Elegant Dining event. Your decorations and invitations could be purchased several months in advance. No one says that you have to purchase the entire events items in the same month.
5. Always get it in writing. If you want to spend for something expensive, get it in approved and in writing from your administrator. Some times people forget.
6. Fund Raisers are another great way to get extra cash. There are many fund raising ideas and lots of web sites out there. Quick ways are bagel sales, jewelry (vendor) sales, traveling book shows and of course the good old one, Otis Spunkmeyer Cookie Sales. Plan fundraisers events to be held immediately after payday for a better response from staff. Advertise so that everyone knows you have a fundraiser coming.

### The Big Secret:

**Secret # 1:** Why are you paying retail full prices? All those catalogues you use, are marked up to full retail prices. Often times doubled the cost. Or, if you are purchasing at stores, you are paying even higher, as they purchased from whole sale suppliers. Now you can too! Often times you can negotiate a discount with catalogue companies. You may need to speak to the account representative or supervisor. If, you consistently order through them, they should meet your request for a discount. Some companies may not give you a discount but instead may offer you free shipping. You could negotiate both free shipping and a discount. They don't want to loose your business to a competitor. But, you have to ask because they will not offer it out right. Just ask, all they can say is NO. If you are with a large company, they have a purchasing department and that department can negotiate a discount for you.

**Secret # 2:** Buy through catalogues that offer deep discounts. Purchase items when they are on sale. Shop around. Years ago we did not have the kind of choices we have today. Stretch your budgets and make your budget work for you.

Know where the job lots stores and the dollar stores are located in your community, as there are many items you purchase at inflated prices that you can get for only a dollar or very cheap at the job lot stores. (Did you know that many dollar stores will come to you?)

**Secret # 3:** Many directors and large companies are already purchasing from our party supply catalogue and are seeing huge savings. If, you set up an account with us, we can offer 10% off the catalogue price.

If, you are with a large company, we can offer even greater discounts. Cost compare. Look at some of the common things you order on a monthly basis, party kits, decorations, tambourines, streamers, maracas, Christmas and holiday supplies. We can offer these products at a cheaper price compared to a lot of other vendors. A great example is Maracas. You currently pay aprox 12.00 for two maracas. With our catalogue we can offer 24 maracas for under 12.00. That's a huge savings.

We also accept purchase orders once you open an account with us.

We also have a wider selection instead of limited choices.

Visit our catalogue at [www.activitytherapy.makesparties.com](http://www.activitytherapy.makesparties.com)

Or Contact us at 973 729 6601 for information on discounts prices we can offer for large companies or long term care chains



**THE ACTIVITY DIRECTOR'S OFFICE**

*Providing Internet Resources  
for Activity Professionals  
in Long Term Care Settings*  
[admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com](mailto:admin@theactivitydirectorsoffice.com)

**Copyright 2004-Present  
The Activity Director's Office  
All Rights Reserved**

[Disclaimer](#)