

# Programs

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## 7.1 Areas for PTA Involvement

PTAs are encouraged to explore a range of local issue areas, as long as these concerns fall within the scope of PTA activities. PTAs should share their successful programs with their council, district PTA and the California State PTA, so that other units with similar concerns may benefit from their successful experiences. Use these tools, tips, and suggestions as a starting point to seek solutions.

Identify solutions and actions that need to be taken.

Contact community agencies for additional information and assistance.

Make an action plan (Action Plans 7.4; Chapter 9 Forms).

Educate the community including parents, staff, elected officials, and the general public.

### 7.1.1 Points to Remember

Be familiar with the basic policies of the PTA (Basic Policies for All PTAs 1.3).

Review position statements, convention resolutions and issue-related guidelines of California State PTA and the National PTA (Where We Stand 4.4, 4.5, 4.6 and *National PTA Quick-Reference Guide*).

Review California State PTA Legislation Policies (4.2.5) and Legislation Platform (4.2.4).

Utilize existing resources and publications from California State PTA, National PTA, allied agencies, and government sources.

## 7.2 Chairman and Committee Procedures

These procedures have been developed to assist unit PTA officers and chairmen in carrying out their responsibilities (Committee Development and Guidelines 2.5). The president, as an effective leader, will see that officers, chairmen and other volunteers receive copies of their respective job descriptions from this *Toolkit* as soon as possible (Chapter 10 Job Descriptions).

Based on goals established for the year, the president and the executive board determine which programs and projects *should* be implemented and which *might* be undertaken, remembering that all projects must be approved by the membership.

While every PTA operates within the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA, each individual unit will become involved in programs and projects according to its interests, its needs, and its volunteers. No PTA can be expected to do everything.

### 7.2.1 Chairman Duties

Convene a committee.

Serve the executive board, according to the bylaws.

Provide directional leadership for the committee.

Set an optimistic and enthusiastic tone.

Develop and maintain a procedure book (Procedure Book 2.3.4).

Refer to *Bylaws for Local PTA/PTSA Units* as needed.

Assist and/or accompany the PTA president to meetings with decision-makers from the school, community, or city government.

Submit a written/oral report at each executive board meeting. Include all committee recommendations and a written financial accounting of all monies received and disbursed to implement approved recommendations.

Keep the committee focused on making appropriate recommendations.

Ensure that the committee assignment is completed and the action reported back to the board association.

Become acquainted with the school staff, school district staff, and decision-makers, including members of the site council and school board.

Survey parents to determine interests and needs in the home, community, and school.

Develop a program plan. Ensure that the plan meets California State PTA insurance requirements. See *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide* for allowable, discouraged, and prohibited activities.

Coordinate PTA activities with the school calendar and principal.

Present the plan to the PTA board for approval.

Plan all events well in advance, with a minimum timeline of three months.

Educate parents and the community at an informational meeting.

Encourage membership to actively participate in PTA programs.

Collaborate with other PTAs and community agencies to obtain information, materials, and speakers.

Network with other PTAs in the school district to coordinate events.

Communicate with council and district PTA counterparts.

Share information prepared and distributed by the council and district PTA, California State PTA and National PTA.

Publicize activities. Use the newsletter and website to promote, educate, and inform. Contact the media or

enlist the help of the PTA public relations coordinator (Tips for Promoting the PTA 6.2).

Attend council and district PTA trainings, the California State PTA convention and National PTA convention.

Keep fundraisers simple and low stress.

Consolidate PTA activities with school events that bring out parents and students.

Plan more low-key, family-oriented social events.

Evaluate the program and document lessons learned for future program chairmen.

## 7.2.2 Considerations for Year-Round Schools

Make sure all tracks are represented in the yearly planning meeting.

Schedule activities and association meetings evenly among tracks.

Avoid holding special events when the treasurer or chairman of that event is off-track.

Schedule programs (e.g., Reflections Program) and fundraisers to cover all on-track and off-track times.

## 7.3 Creating an Event

If the event is held in collaboration with community organizations or other PTAs, each participating unit, council or district PTA should follow the proper approval procedures specified below.

The California State PTA strongly urges unit, council or district PTAs to refrain from serving alcoholic beverages at PTA functions. PTAs may not engage in the sale of alcoholic beverages. (See the *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*, Red Section, Alcohol; and *Toolkit*, Alcohol and PTA Events 5.9.5b.)

### 7.3.1 Preliminary Planning

Begin six months in advance, if possible.

Discuss and obtain approval to hold an event from the PTA executive board and principal or school representative.

Ensure the event will not conflict with other unit, council or district PTA observances.

Obtain a vote of approval for the event at a meeting of the association. Include a motion to disburse monies to cover the estimated cost involved.

If being held off campus, obtain permission for facility use from appropriate manager. If asked to sign a Hold Harmless Agreement, contact the California State PTA insurance broker.

PTA president appoints the event chairman and committee. Determine the goals of this committee. Articulate what the committee hopes to accomplish with the activities.

Appoint at least seven members to the planning committee. Unit bylaws and standing rules may have information to guide the project. If possible, include the principal or a faculty member, the public relations/publications coordinator (if there is one), and a student (Event Planning Worksheet, Chapter 9 Forms).

Review event material—make copies as needed. From previous chairman or committee, obtain the procedure book, *National PTA Quick-Reference Guide*, *Our Children*, and *PTA in California*.

Discuss budget needs with president and treasurer. Ideally, the budget should be planned with a line item for the event. The planned activities must stay within the budget. If necessary, the community may be asked to partner by donating materials, hospitality items and perhaps even a grant or sponsor to underwrite the planned activity or event. Be realistic in estimating the costs. Remember to include possible custodial costs, publicity, and postage.

Decide on a focus area, if any. Brainstorm ideas with the committee. Decide on activities that have the best chance for good participation from the student-body, the parents, and the community. If the PTA has never held this event before, do not overwhelm the faculty with activities.

Keep in mind past traditions but also investigate new ways to hold an appropriate event that will fit the school and community.

Select a theme as the major focus, and decide on the type of program (e.g., family dinner, musical program).

As early as possible, check school calendar and decide on a date.

The Americans with Disabilities Act requires that disabled persons must be reasonably accommodated by modifying policies, making physical changes and obtaining equipment to assist their participation in any activity. For PTA meetings/events, this could include seating to accommodate an attendant accompanying a member or reserved seating in a location to accommodate a member's special need, providing written handouts to supplement discussion and/or providing qualified readers or interpreters for individuals having a hearing or sight impairment.

Discuss rules and expectations with facility management. Put all agreements in writing. Determine if permission or permits from school district or city are needed.

Notify parents and community to "save the date" for the event. Also send notes to past and present PTA presi-

**Never sign** a Hold Harmless Agreement on behalf of the unit, council or district PTA until the California State PTA insurance broker has been consulted. (Hold Harmless Agreement 5.5.2; Chapter 9 Forms)

dents, leaders and award recipients, and school district and community members.

Notify staff, explaining event goals and requesting their support.

Schedule at least three committee meetings prior to event.

### 7.3.2 Event Development

Begin three months in advance, if possible. Develop a timeline utilizing check sheets. Assign committee members specific duties.

#### 7.3.2a SERVICE PROVIDERS/SPEAKERS/PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS (AT LEAST TWO PEOPLE)

One person should be designated as the contact person on invitation letters.

One person should assist with paperwork (Service Provider/Speakers/Program Participants Check List, Chapter 9 Forms).

#### 7.3.2b PUBLICITY CAMPAIGN (AT LEAST ONE PERSON)

Publicity may include the use of one or more of the following:

News releases

PTA newsletter articles

Posters for placement at local business locations

Radio/cable television PSA "spots"

Website promotion

E-mail alerts

#### 7.3.2c HANDOUTS/FLYERS (AT LEAST ONE PERSON)

Handouts may include the following:

Flyers to parents

Attendee record form

Permission slips, if necessary

Service provider station signs

#### 7.3.2d OPERATIONS (AT LEAST ONE PERSON)

Responsibilities include:

Overseeing facility, equipment, and overall operation.

Checking all participating service provider/speaker/program participant requirements.

Coordinating with school district and school custodian.

Ensuring all equipment is in working order.

Consulting with appropriate facility management.

Considering whether additional service providers are needed and reviewing other logistic issues.

Cleaning up after the event.

#### 7.3.2e OUTREACH (AT LEAST ONE PERSON)

This committee member will

Organize volunteers and coordinate hospitality.

Select invitees from the local area. Send a letter of invitation requesting participation, including a response due date.

#### 7.3.3 Pre-Crunch

Begin two months in advance.

Send follow-up letter to confirm service provider participation, including a map of the school and parking location (Participant Response Form, Fig. 7-1).

Develop flyers to inform parents and community of the event.

Develop news releases.

Request equipment from school district or facility manager to meet service provider needs.

#### 7.3.4 Crunch Time

Begin one month in advance.

Be sure to have sufficient tables and chairs as required by participating service providers. This information will be available upon receipt of response form.

Provide custodian/facility manager with a detailed drawing of the layout for tables and chairs.

Plan for access for the disabled.

Recruit and schedule volunteers. Utilize nursing schools, dental schools, and public health agency health promoters.

Plan refreshments, such as coffee and donuts in the morning or a light lunch for all participating service providers and volunteers.

Check to ensure all equipment requirements can be met.

Distribute event flyers and e-mail announcements to parents and community.

Prepare service provider station signs.

#### 7.3.5 Day of the Event

Have nametags ready for all service providers/speakers/program participants and volunteers.

Check to make sure hospitality area is in order and refreshments prepared.

Check setup of the event stations and all audio-visual equipment.

Welcome the service providers/speakers/program participants and be sure to give them an evaluation sheet (Evaluation Form, Chapter 9) that should be collected before they leave at the end of the event.

(Your PTA Name)



(Your PTA Address)

(Your PTA telephone and e-mail address)

## SAMPLE PARTICIPANT RESPONSE FORM

*(Name) PTA/PTSA (Program)*

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the *(Name) PTA/PTSA ( Program)*. Please mail the completed form to *(Name) PTA/PTSA, (Address)* no later than *(date)*.

- Yes, I will participate in the *(name) PTA/PTSA (Program)* on *(date)*.

Organization/Participant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_)\_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Service and information to be provided:

Please include a detailed description of the services you will provide.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please list any equipment, audio-visual, space or special requirements you have.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- No, I will be unable to participate in the *(name) PTA/PTSA (Program)*, but I would be interested in providing related materials. Please list materials which will be provided.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Fig. 7-1 Sample Participant Response Form

Have volunteers sign in, including addresses, telephone numbers, and e-mail addresses.

Have at least two designated troubleshooters for the day, and make sure that the service providers and volunteers know who they are.

Clean up the facility and leave it in as good or better condition than it was.

### 7.3.6 After the Event

Tabulate the evaluations.

Send thank you notes to all participating service providers/speakers/program participants and volunteers.

Write an event report and place it in the procedure book. Include ideas for changes gleaned from the evaluations and comments from participants.

- Did the activities help to accomplish goals?
- Was there good participation from the faculty and the parents?
- Did the kids enjoy it?
- What are the recommendations for next year?

## 7.4 Action Plans

Determine whether an identified concern is truly a problem that should be dealt with through a broad-based community action plan.

### 7.4.1 Recommended Actions

Prepare a needs assessment worksheet including the name of the PTA, the school, and the identified concern in appropriate places (Needs Assessment Worksheet, Chapter 9 Forms).

Determine who is to receive the needs assessment form, how it is to be distributed and the due date for the return. Determine method of follow-up.

Survey appropriate agencies to obtain statistics on the identified concern. This can be done by making personal contacts or by sending a cover letter and the needs assessment form to some or all of the people and agencies listed below.

- School personnel;
- Private and church-related programs;
- Chamber of Commerce and major employers;
- Local, county, state, federal departments of health, education, probation and social services;
- Libraries;
- Professional and volunteer agencies; and
- Community organizations.

Obtain statistics reflecting the community's ethnic and socioeconomic background. Information may be obtained from the school district office and will be nec-

essary if the PTA will apply for a grant to fund this project.

Evaluate information received. Review all data and compile the responses to the questions on the needs assessment form. Determine whether the school and community concur with the identified concern and believe that a problem exists.

If it is determined that a problem exists, the information gathered will be a basis for the formulation of a community action plan. If it is determined that a problem does not exist or is not of concern to the school and community, it is best not to invest time and money in seeking solutions.

Prepare a final report that includes the following information:

- Reason for the study;
- Statistics that note the numbers by age, socio-economic status, ethnic background, or religious affiliation;
- Community responses;
- Professional resource people interviewed and their responses;
- Other resources used, such as periodicals, books, films, and surveys; and
- Findings that indicate whether a problem exists that requires further action.

As a courtesy, distribute the report to those who participated in the survey. It will compensate them for their cooperation and will raise the level of awareness within the community.

Use the report as a tool in developing and implementing a plan of action. A Sample Agenda for Needs Assessment (Fig. 7-2) for a meeting to discuss the findings follows.

### 7.4.2 How to Make a Study

A study is in order whenever the association (membership) is concerned about a subject or an issue. A study committee must gather facts, investigate carefully and prepare a final report. The possible reasons for making a study are many.

#### 7.4.2a PURPOSES OF A STUDY

The purposes of a study are to:

Acquire knowledge about a subject;

Respond to a concern of the membership in a particular area (e.g., education, health, safety, community problems, state or local legislation);

Respond to a need or problem;

Gather all available facts and information before acting on an issue that concerns the membership;

Develop information on a subject or issue that the association believes should be presented to the California

(Your PTA Name)



(Your PTA Address)

(Your PTA telephone and e-mail address)

## SAMPLE AGENDA FOR NEEDS ASSESSMENT

### CHAIRMAN

Welcome

Introduction of facilitator, recorder, secretary, group members (invited participants)

Explain roles of those introduced

### FACILITATOR

*Facilitator conducts balance of meeting, and chairman becomes a group member.*

Discuss needs assessment

Define the problem

1. brainstorm ideas
2. prioritize ideas
3. develop problem statement(s)

Develop solutions

1. brainstorm ideas
2. prioritize ideas
3. develop solution statement(s)

Develop a tentative action plan

1. brainstorm ideas
2. prioritize ideas
3. examine possible obstacles to plan implementation
4. develop ways to remove any obstacles OR develop alternative plans

Develop final action plan that includes

1. all components (parts of the plan)
2. individual assignments
3. time frame
4. budget needs
5. evaluation method
6. date for final evaluation

*If unable to complete the agenda in the allotted time, set date, time and place for another meeting. At the next meeting, review any statements agreed to at the prior meeting and complete the rest of the agenda. Allow time for discussion of additional information obtained between meetings.*

Fig. 7-2 Sample Agenda for Needs Assessment

State PTA Board of Managers, government agencies (e.g., school board, city council, board of supervisors), other groups or the public; or

Develop a resolution for the California State PTA Convention.

#### 7.4.2b INITIATE A STUDY

Initiate a study with a:

- Motion from the association membership;
- Request from an individual member;
- Recommendation from the executive board;
- Recommendation from a committee of the association; or
- Request from an allied agency, organization or group.

#### 7.4.2c STUDY COMMITTEE

The president appoints the chairman and members of the committee subject to ratification by the executive board. The number and composition may be specified in the motion creating the committee. (If this is done, the phrase “and others as appointed by the president” must always be included as protection against oversight.)

The committee should be composed of at least five but not more than nine people. Members may include:

- PTA members, officers and chairmen whose duties fall within the subject matter of the study.
- Administrators, teachers, students (if appropriate), consultants, and/or community members.
- People with differing points of view on the subject.
- The association president as an ex officio member.
- The committee secretary may be appointed by the president or the committee chairman or elected by the committee at its first meeting.

Committee expenses are legitimate PTA expenses.

#### 7.4.2d STUDY COMMITTEE PROCEDURES

Keep minutes to avoid repetition in subsequent meetings, to ensure that all items in the plan of work are covered, to avoid omissions in the final report, and as a record of the committee's work.

Identify the subject(s) and/or issue(s) to be included in the study.

Set goals. Will the committee gather information, or will it try to develop recommendations for action? If “information only,” how will the information be used? How much time will be needed?

Decide the scope of the study. How much information will be needed to reach the goals? What areas of the subject/issue will the committee try to cover?

Use resources such as films, newspapers, publications, appropriate agencies, and experts in the field of study.

All sources should be verified to ensure the accuracy of the information.

Assign responsibilities for research. Each member of the committee should have a specific assignment. Subcommittees may be helpful in completing the research. All research should be available to all members of the committee.

Ensure that all areas of interest on the subject or issue (within the defined scope) are covered. Personal views must not be allowed to intrude.

#### 7.4.2e CONCLUSIONS

All possible solutions, conclusions, etc., should be listed with an evaluation of how they will affect the subject or issue.

##### *Recommended Solutions Should be Tested*

Are they in accordance with the Purposes and basic policies of the PTA?

Is there a strong possibility they will accomplish the desired results?

Are they practical? Are the necessary resources (whatever they may be) available?

Will the proposed solution create other problems that need to be resolved before implementation?

Are the recommended solutions in the best interest of children and youth?

Do the solutions completely address the subject or issue as defined in the scope, or is more research needed?

#### 7.4.2f THE STUDY REPORT

The study report should:

Be written by the chairman (the secretary may assist) and approved by the committee;

Be submitted first to the PTA executive board and then to the association;

Include an appendix listing all reference materials used and any other resources;

Include any recommendations for further study, implementation or action; and

Include the time requirements involved in implementing recommendations.

#### 7.4.2g WHEN A STUDY IS COMPLETED

The association or executive board may refer a study report to another group, although that group had no part in initiating the original study.

Studies forwarded to the California State PTA should be sent through channels—unit to council (if in council) to district PTA.

When appropriate, all studies should be submitted to the council (if in council) and to the district PTA, so the information will be available to other units.

All studies referred to another group or submitted through channels should be accompanied by a study letter.

Following the final report, the study committee ceases to function unless given further responsibilities by the executive board or association.

### 7.4.3 Develop an Action Plan

#### 7.4.3a PURPOSE OF PLAN

Explore alternate solutions to identified problem(s).

Open informal communication among various community groups.

Share information and resources and avoid duplication of efforts.

Ensure that program improvement and changes are relevant to the community.

#### 7.4.3b STEPS TO FOLLOW

Consider the probable community response.

- Is the political climate receptive to improvements in this area?
- Have there been previous efforts?
- What is the general community's attitude toward this problem?

Identify influential leaders to be involved. Make sure the group is balanced and no special interests dominate. Ensure that participant's time and talents are utilized effectively. Consider representatives from the following groups:

- Parents of preschool and school-aged children;
- Students, teachers and school administrators;
- School board members;
- Media representatives;
- Professionals in the field, such as health, welfare, social services;
- Key people from public and private agencies serving children and families;
- Business and civic leaders;
- City, county and/or state officials;
- Representatives from the religious community; and
- Community volunteers and other interested persons.

Set specifics of initial meeting:

- Date, time, place;
- Identify chairman and secretary;

- Establish meeting format and agenda; and
- Assign hospitality responsibilities including coffee/tea/sodas, name tags, and sign-in sheet.

Prepare and send letters of invitation to potential participants. Include the following in letters:

- Meeting purpose;
- Invitation to participate;
- Date, time, place and directions;
- Due date and contact person for response;
- Preliminary agenda; and
- List of invited participants.

At the meeting:

- Review identified problems/leadership needs/goals;
- Determine whether any existing school and/or community programs deal with the problem;
- Analyze existing beliefs, attitudes, circumstances, etc., in the community regarding the problem;
- Determine what changes could cause things to be different (e.g., beliefs, attitudes, circumstances, laws, time, money);
- Develop a tentative action plan;
- Brainstorm ideas;
- Prioritize action (may include immediate and future action);
- Examine obstacles to plan implementation;
- Decide whether ideas presented are feasible;
- Identify available group resources (e.g., people, enthusiasm, dollars);
- Identify obstacles that will prevent effective action;
- Remove obstacles and/or develop alternatives for each part of the plan;
- Determine if additional information is needed;
- If necessary, schedule another meeting in order to obtain additional information;
- If any obstacle cannot be removed, select an alternative action; and
- Assess alternatives for potential obstacles.

Develop a final action plan (Final Action Plan, Chapter 9 Forms):

- List all steps needed to carry out the plan;
- Identify the person responsible for each step;
- Establish the time frame for each step;
- Identify budget needs including amount and sources;

- Obtain necessary approvals;
- Obtain letters of support from appropriate community individuals, organizations and agencies if outside funding is required;
- Identify evaluation method for each step;
- Set date for project completion and final evaluation; and
- Determine whether the agreed-upon goals and objectives are met.

Take the action plan to the PTA board and general membership for final approval.

#### 7.4.4 Implement the Action Plan

Through the evaluation process, show to what extent the group can be a viable community force.

##### 7.4.4a PURPOSE

- To ensure the action plan is being implemented.
- To make modifications to the plan, if evaluation data indicates changes are needed.

##### 7.4.4b STEPS TO FOLLOW

Monitor progress of the action plan through regular reports.

Modify the action plan as necessary. Be flexible.

At a meeting of the group, review:

- Action taken;
- Time and funds spent;
- Difficulties encountered;
- Successful experiences; and
- Unmet objectives.

#### 7.4.5 Evaluate Success of the Plan

A final evaluation report should include (Evaluation Form, Chapter 9):

- Problem statement;
- Summary of the action plan;
- Changes effected relative to the identified concern; by whom;
- Type and extent of school and community involvement;
- Budget and actual dollars spent;
- Project completion (On time? Within budget?);
- Continuing action needed;
- Continuing action planned; and
- A final report presented to the PTA executive board and general membership.

## 7.5 Absentees and Dropouts

### – Education

There are serious truancy and school dropout problems in California. This issue affects students from all socio-economic backgrounds. Truants and dropouts are prone to committing offenses associated with juvenile delinquency and put themselves at risk physically. Keeping children in school through graduation is a proven method for developing productive and successful adults.

#### 7.5.1 Role of the PTA

PTA believes that all children and youth should have the opportunity to develop to their fullest potential.

Therefore, PTA supports programs that encourage regular school attendance.

#### 7.5.2 Recommended Actions

Become familiar with California State PTA convention resolution, School Absenteeism/Dropouts (1986) (Where We Stand, Convention and Board of Managers Resolutions 4.4; California State PTA Resolutions Book, [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)). See “Attendance” in the Advocacy Topic Index for related position statements or guidelines.

Support county and/or local School Attendance Review Board (SARB). If one does not exist, support the creation of a SARB.

Encourage daily attendance awards and incentive programs in grades K-12.

Educate parents, students and the community about the seriousness of the problem, and point out that existing California laws mandate that minors between the ages of 6 and 18 years of age must participate in an approved education program.

Reach out to the private sector and allied agencies for participation and support of programs encouraging school attendance.

In cooperation with school personnel, seek assistance from the School/Law Enforcement Partnership Cadre, a trained cadre of educators and officials from law enforcement and criminal justice agencies that assist in building an interagency approach to improving order and attendance, reducing school violence/vandalism, reducing truancy, and encouraging good citizenship.

Support school district alternative educational programs.

Encourage school districts to incorporate self-esteem programs into the curriculum.

Encourage the use of peer counseling.

### 7.5.3 Additional Resources

School/Law Enforcement Partnership Cadre can provide information. Contact California Attorney General's Crime and Violence Prevention Center, 916.324.7863, or California Department of Education's Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office, 916.323.2183.

California Youth Authority. *The Prevention of Truancy* (1986), a narrative report on successful truancy prevention programs.

California Department of Education. *School Attendance Review Boards Handbook* (2002). Available online at the Safe Schools and Violence Prevention Office ([www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ai/sb/documents/sarb02.pdf](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/ai/sb/documents/sarb02.pdf)) or through the Bureau of Publications, Sales Unit, 916.445.1260.

National School Safety Center. *Increasing Student Attendance* (1994). Available online at [www.school-safety.us](http://www.school-safety.us) or by calling 805.373.9977.

U.S. Department of Education. *Manual to Combat Truancy* (1996). Available online at [www.eric.ed.gov](http://www.eric.ed.gov), or call 877-433-7827; see [www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov).

Bureau of At-Risk Youth. *School Attendance, Truancy and Dropping Out* (1998), available by calling 800.99.YOUTH.

#### Local Agencies to Contact for Assistance:

County Office of Education

County Juvenile Justice Commission and/or County Delinquency Prevention Commission

County School Attendance Review Board (SARB)

County Probation Department, Truancy Mediation Program

County Welfare Department, CalWorks Program

County District Attorney, Truancy Mediation Program

See "Attendance" in the Advocacy Topic Index, Chapter 4, for related resolutions and guidelines.

### 7.6 Awards

To recognize the achievements of members, units, councils and allied agencies, the National PTA and California State PTA coordinate a number of awards programs. This section provides direction on how to apply for or order:

- Phoebe Apperson Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards;
- California's PTA Spotlight Awards;
- Honorary Service Awards;
- Acknowledging Service and Honoring Presidents; and
- National PTA Reflections Program Awards.

Applications for all awards can be found at the California State PTA website, [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org).

#### 7.6.1 Phoebe Apperson Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards, National PTA

National PTA's Phoebe Apperson Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards recognize and celebrate PTAs that are successfully implementing the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.

There are three levels of recognition:

- The Outstanding Family-School Partnership Award will be given to one local PTA that has excelled in implementing the National Standards, and includes a monetary award of \$2,000.
- The Family-School Partnership Award of Excellence will be given to six local PTAs, each representing the best in one of the six National Standards, and includes a monetary award of \$500.
- The Family-School Partnership Award of Merit will be given to all PTAs that apply to the awards program, in recognition of their commitment to building partnerships.

Any local, council, district PTA in good standing with the state and national PTAs may apply.

To be considered for an award, a PTA must complete and submit the online application at [www.pta.org/hearst](http://www.pta.org/hearst) or mail in a hard-copy application.

#### 7.6.2 PTA Spotlight Award Program, California State PTA Award

The California State PTA has reformatted the award formerly known as the My PTA/PTSA Award to reflect the new realities facing local units and councils. This awards program recognizes the achievements of local units and councils in familiar and new categories.

To be eligible for the PTA Spotlight Award, a unit must be a member of the Chairman's Club in the year that it applies for the award (Chairman's Club 3.7.2).

This application allows applicants to qualify for consideration in multiple categories. With one application, units and council have the opportunity to submit for any or all of the following categories:

- Leadership Development
- Student Support and Achievement Award
- Environmental Award
- Family Involvement Award
- Membership and Outreach Award
- Collaboration Award
- Advocacy Award

The winners will be announced at March Board of Managers meeting. Winners will receive two registrations to the California State PTA Convention. Winners will participate in a workshop at the California State PTA

Convention. Awards will be presented on stage at the California State PTA Convention. Other expenses are the responsibility of the winning unit, council, or attendee.

The California State Spotlight Award winners will not be forwarded to National PTA. Units also may apply through channels for the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Family-School Partnership Awards (7.6.1) by following National PTA's Award criteria. The application is posted on the National PTA website at [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org).

All applications must be signed by your council and district president and received in the California State PTA office by February 1. Facsimiles or e-mailed applications will not be accepted.

To apply, complete the application PTA Spotlight Award Application, Chapter 9 Forms).

Responses to questions should be word processed or typed in black ink, standard 12-point font or equivalent type, double-spaced with one inch margins on all sides. No more than 3 single-sided pages for each award category.

Narrative should be organized by category, and each question should be answered for that category. For example, if applying for all categories, page 1 should be titled "Leadership Development Award" and all questions on the application should then be answered, with numbered responses. The next title would be "Student Support and Achievement Award," and all questions should be numbered and answered. Continue on for each category.

Attach up to a maximum of three additional single-sided pages of supplemental information. Letters of recommendation are not necessary. Supplemental materials must not be larger than 8 1/2" x 11".

No folders, sheet protectors, colored paper or three-dimensional attachments.

Unauthorized use of copyrighted materials is prohibited.

Submit original application.

### 7.6.3 Honorary Service Awards (HSA) Program

Honorary Service Awards (HSA) are available to recognize the service and dedication of both individuals and organizations. They may be awarded only by unit, council, district PTA and the California State PTA and should be presented by duly authorized PTA representatives at PTA-sponsored meetings or at functions of allied groups.

The HSA Program includes the Honorary Service Award, Continuing Service Award, Golden Oak Service Award, Very Special Person Award, and donations to the HSA Program. A person may receive more than one of any of these awards.

Funds contributed to the HSA Program provide resources for the California Scholarship and Grant

Program (Scholarships 7.28; Grants 7.17; and Chapter 9 Forms).

Individuals or organizations can make donations:

- As a contribution;
- To say thank you or to honor an individual for service given;
- In tribute to a person who already has received an Honorary Lifetime Membership, Honorary Service Award, Continuing Service Award or Golden Oak Service Award;
- In tribute to an organization or group of people for service given; or
- In memoriam.

An acknowledgement card or certificate suitable for framing will be sent, upon request, when a minimum donation of \$10 or more is made (Donation Form, Chapter 9).

Persons who have received an **Lifetime Achievement Award**, given only between 1927 and 1969, do not have the right to vote or hold office automatically. A recipient may become an active member upon payment of dues to a unit PTA.

For additional information, contact the California State PTA Honorary Service Awards Chairman at [hsa@capta.org](mailto:hsa@capta.org) or 916.440.1985 ext. 327.

A person may receive more than one HSA, more than one CSA, or more than one Golden Oak Service Award, or may have more than one donation made in his/her name.

### 7.6.3a RESPONSIBILITIES

The unit HSA chairman, with a committee appointed by the president, shall

- Study the various types of awards, the donation amounts and the criteria for selecting honorees for specific awards.
- Publicize to the membership that the HSA selection committee will be meeting and ask for suggestions for honorees. (A flyer may be distributed requesting names and information.)
- Meet for the specific purpose of selecting honorees. All proceedings must be kept confidential. Budget allocations must be observed.
- Order specific awards using the order forms in the *California State PTA Toolkit*. Pins may be ordered at the same time. (**Allow four to six weeks for delivery.**)
- Arrange for presentation of awards at a meeting as determined by the executive board and the program committee (e.g., at a Founders Day program meeting or end-of-the-year luncheon).

- Devise an innovative way to present the award(s) using a poem, skit or other unique way to praise the honorees' accomplishments. Be sure to mention that the donation made to the California State PTA scholarship and grant program in the honoree's name assists in the education of other individuals.
- Arrange for families and friends of the honorees to attend the presentation.
- Give a copy of the biographical presentation to the honoree. Assign a committee member to take pictures for the honoree. Retain copies of the pictures, programs and biographies.
- Obtain Media Release Statement signature of recipient to forward biography and photos taken at the award event to the California State PTA.

"By accepting this award and submitting biography and photograph(s) of the Awards event to the California State PTA, you hereby grant and assign the California State PTA and its legal representatives the irrevocable and unrestricted right to use and publish for editorial, trade, advertising or any other purpose and in any manner and medium, including website and internet promotion, all photographic, video, and digital images of you and your guests taken while in attendance at the awards event. You hereby release the California State PTA and its legal representatives from all claims and liability relating to said photographs, video and digital images."

- Write a summary of the event and place it in the chairman's procedure book.
- Maintain accurate records of all awards in a permanent file.

The committee should be:

- Appointed early in the officers' term to allow time for planning and ordering awards.
- Composed of different members each year.
- Representative of the school's community.
- Composed of an uneven number (five is suggested).

The applicants being considered should be recognized for outstanding service to children and youth and not necessarily for routine, assigned responsibilities or for retirement.

It is recommended that you avoid establishing a pattern such as always presenting an award to the outgoing president or retiring faculty members.

Remember to consider those who work behind the scenes, quietly and efficiently serving youth.

### **7.6.3b HONORARY SERVICE AWARD**

An Honorary Service Award (HSA) may be given to an individual or organization in special recognition of outstanding service to children and youth. This award is available by a contribution of \$30 in the name of the

recipient. An HSA pin (tack back) is available at an additional cost (Award Order, Chapter 9 Forms).

### **7.6.3c CONTINUING SERVICE AWARD**

A Continuing Service Award (CSA) may be given to an individual or organization in special recognition of continued service to children and youth and may or may not have received a California State PTA Honorary Service Award. This award is available by a contribution of \$30 in the name of the recipient. A CSA pin is available for an additional cost (Award Order Form, Chapter 9).

### **7.6.3d GOLDEN OAK SERVICE AWARD**

The Golden Oak Service Award is the most prestigious PTA award in California. This award may be given to an individual or organization that has made significant contributions to the welfare of children and youth in the school or community. This award is available by a contribution of \$60 in the name of the recipient. A Golden Oak Service pin (tack back) is available at an additional cost (Award Order Form, Chapter 9).

### **7.6.3e VERY SPECIAL PERSON AWARD**

The Very Special Person (VSP) Award may be given by individuals or PTA constituent organizations to recognize an individual or group. This award is available by a contribution of \$15 or more. A VSP pin is available at an additional cost (Award Order Form, Chapter 9).

### **7.6.3f DONATIONS**

Donations may be given by PTAs/PTSAs or by individuals in tribute to a person, a group or in memoriam. The donation may be made in any amount. An acknowledgment card or certificate, as requested, will be sent when a donation of \$10.00 or more is made. Anyone or any group may donate to the HSA program fund; the fund is not limited to contributions by PTAs (Donation Form, Chapter 9).

## **7.6.4 Acknowledging Service and Honoring Presidents**

In addition to the HSA, other PTA pins may be given to represent an individual's pledge of service and protection to children and youth. Members, by wearing this emblem, indicate that they have a share in this service.

The California State PTA uses a basic design for the pins, to be worn as indicated:

- The membership pin may be worn by members;
- The president's pin with the name of the unit, council or district PTA engraved across the bar is a symbol of the office and is worn by the president during the term of office and given to the succeeding president;
- The unit past president's pin with one acorn may be worn by past presidents;
- The council past president's pin with two acorns may be worn by past presidents of councils;

- The district PTA past president’s pin with three acorns may be worn by district PTA past presidents upon completion of the term of office.

Past president pins should be engraved with the unit/council/district PTA on the bar, and the years of service and their initials on the back of the emblem.

Presidents must have served half of the elected term of office to be eligible for a past president’s pin, except in the case of a first president of a new organization.

Additional acorns are never added for serving more than one term at the same unit, council or district PTA, nor as president of more than one unit, council or district PTA. Separate pins should be provided from each unit, council or district PTA served.

It is appropriate to wear the PTA emblem whenever one is representing the organization or serving it. It is the responsibility of individuals to determine when, where and how many pins should be worn.

Pins may be purchased through the California State PTA.

## 7.7 Child Abuse Prevention

*Revised October 2008 – Community Concerns*

The number of reported child abuse cases (sexual, physical, and emotional) is continuing to rise. Society is ultimately responsible for any resulting foster care placement, institutional care, and medical and court costs. The public must be informed about the causes, prevention and reporting of child abuse. Efforts must be made to better coordinate child abuse prevention and intervention programs.

### 7.7.1 Role of the PTA

PTA’s primary concern is the protection of children who cannot protect themselves from abuse, neglect and exploitation. PTA supports programs that help the family stay together, when this is in the best interest of the child.

### 7.7.2 Recommended Actions

Sponsor parent education programs to address prevention and identification of child abuse, including how to report suspected cases.

Encourage school districts to provide students with education to help them identify and report abuse, and to empower them to report the abuse without retribution.

Encourage schools to include parenting skills in their curricula.

Encourage school districts to provide staff development workshops regarding the recognition and reporting of child abuse.

Inform parents/guardians about curriculum that teaches children to say “no,” and encourage its use in the school.

Inform parents/guardians about school district policies and procedures for handling and reporting child abuse.

Inform parents/guardians how school districts can assist them and their children in dealing with child abuse.

### 7.7.3 Additional Resources

California State PTA Position Statements: Assistance to Families in Need and Family Services (Where We Stand: Positions Statements 4.5). See “Child Abuse” and “Violence and Vandalism” in the Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions or guidelines.

Attorney General’s Crime and Violence Prevention Center (<http://safestate.org>)

National PTA ([www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)). *Kids Need a Future, Not a Funeral* and *Safeguarding Your Children*.

Wooden, Kenneth. *Child Lures, A Need for Prevention*. Shelburne, VT ([www.childlures.com](http://www.childlures.com)).

National Clearinghouse on Child Abuse and Neglect. *Child Sexual Abuse Prevention: Tips to Parents*. Washington, DC.

For free information and free videos, contact:

Office of Child Abuse Prevention  
744 P Street, M.S.11-82  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
916.651.6960; Fax 916.651.6328

### 7.7.4 Additional Agencies

California Consortium for the Prevention of Child Abuse, Sacramento, CA

California Department of Education ([www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov))

California Department of Social Services Office of Child Abuse Prevention (OCAP) ([www.dss.cahwnet.gov/](http://www.dss.cahwnet.gov/))

California Department of Social Services, Children and Family Services Division ([www.childsworld.ca.gov](http://www.childsworld.ca.gov))

Child Abuse Coordinating Councils

County Departments of Public Health

County Departments of Social Services, Child Protective Services

County Offices of Education

Local law enforcement agencies (police/sheriff)

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## 7.8 Child Restraints and Seat Belts

*Revised October 2008 – Community Concerns*

Nationally, automobile accidents are the number one killer of children, youth and adults under age 44.

### 7.8.1 Role of the PTA

The proper use of child restraints and seat belts saves lives. PTA can help educate parents about the importance of using seat belts and child safety seats in automobiles.

### 7.8.2 Recommended Actions

Contact California Safe Kids Coalition to sponsor a PTA program on the importance of using correctly installed child safety seats. Demonstrate various types of safety seats and booster seats to show their correct installation and proper use. Make certain the child restraint unit is the correct one for the vehicle in which it will be used. All car seats do not conform to all child restraint units. Emphasize the correct use of booster seats for children who have outgrown regular child safety seats.

Have material available at PTA meetings that stresses the importance, placement, and proper use of restraints/seat belts and child safety seats.

Become familiar with and work for the enforcement of current laws.

Work with the school principal and school board to include restraint/safety belt curricula at all grade levels.

Encourage the principal to plan a school assembly on restraint/seat belt safety. Set up a display for students on restraint/seat belt safety.

Seek and support legislation that will mandate use of seat belts by passengers in all vehicles not now covered by state law (e.g., pick-up trucks, buses and vans).

### 7.8.3 Resources and References

See “Seat Belts” in the Advocacy Topic Index for related Resolutions and Position Statements.

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety  
([www.aaafoundation.org](http://www.aaafoundation.org))

American Academy of Pediatrics  
([www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org))

California Automobile Association  
([www.csaa.com](http://www.csaa.com) and [www.aaa-calif.com](http://www.aaa-calif.com))

California Child Passenger Safety Association

California Highway Patrol  
([www.chp.ca.gov](http://www.chp.ca.gov))

California Motor Vehicle Code  
([www.leginfo.ca.gov](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov) or [www.dmv.ca.gov](http://www.dmv.ca.gov))

California Office of Traffic Safety  
([www.ots.ca.gov](http://www.ots.ca.gov))

California Safe Kids  
([www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org))

Center for Injury Prevention Policy and Practice  
(CIPPP) ([www.cipp.org](http://www.cipp.org))

California Coalition for Children’s Health and Safety

Child Safety Network  
([www.csn.org](http://www.csn.org))

Local health care providers

Municipal law enforcement agencies

National Safety Council  
([www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org))

National Highway Transportation Safety Association  
([www.nhtsa.gov](http://www.nhtsa.gov))

## 7.9 Citizenship

*Revised October 2008 – Community Concerns*

PTA activities in citizenship are designed to provide information and inspiration, to help members engage as citizens. By reminding the members of their privileges and responsibilities and involving them in community projects, PTA makes an important contribution to the democratic way of life.

### 7.9.1 Recommended Actions

Urge the display, proper use of, and respect for the American flag in homes, schools, and communities.

Recite the Pledge of Allegiance at each meeting. Arrange for short, inspirational, patriotic messages or music when the flag is presented.

Encourage special programs in conjunction with the observance of patriotic holidays.

Cooperate with established organizations working for good citizenship training.

Invite youth participation at PTA meetings, recruit leaders, and sponsor groups when indicated (Community Organizations, Co-sponsorship, and Coalitions 2.7).

Encourage non-citizens to become naturalized, emphasizing the advantages of citizenship. Give assistance and advice on the various steps to citizenship. Arrange for PTA members to attend naturalization ceremonies.

Arrange for community recognition ceremonies of newly-naturalized citizens.

### 7.9.2 Elections

Stress the importance of voting in all elections. Cooperate with other community groups in registration and get-out-the-vote campaigns.

Encourage student participation in the election process.

Emphasize the need for all citizens to know election laws, including registration requirements.

Get involved with school bond and ballot measure campaigns that will improve schools, following California State PTA procedures (See Advocacy 4.3).

Host candidates forums.

### 7.9.3 Government Participation

Make information available on how individuals may participate in government, and encourage them to do so.

Promote projects for the study of local, county, state, and national governments.

Encourage attendance at meetings of boards of education, commissions, city council, and county supervisors, and ask those who attend to report on issues of concern to the PTA.

Encourage appointment of youth to city and county commissions.

Organize letter-writing campaigns to support legislation that benefits children, youth, and families.

### 7.9.4 Resources

*American Legion*  
([www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org))

California Department of Education  
([www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov))

California Legislative Analyst  
(for analysis of ballot measures)  
([www.lao.ca.gov](http://www.lao.ca.gov))

California Secretary of State  
([www.ss.ca.gov](http://www.ss.ca.gov))

California State Library  
([www.library.ca.gov](http://www.library.ca.gov))

Constitutional Rights Foundation  
([www.crf-usa.org](http://www.crf-usa.org))

County Registrar of Voters

League of Women Voters of California  
([www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org))

Local United Nations Association

Rock the Vote  
([www.rockthevote.org](http://www.rockthevote.org))

The Flag of the United States of America  
([www.usflag.org](http://www.usflag.org))

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services  
([www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov))

Youth Vote Coalition  
([www.youthvote.org](http://www.youthvote.org))

Youth group leaders

## 7.10 Community and Wellness Fairs

Sponsoring a community and wellness fair will enable the PTA to share practical and valuable information.

Fairs can:

- Promote good family and personal practices;
- Provide screening services for your school and community (and follow-up, when screenings indicate further testing is required);
- Utilize community professionals to identify potential health-related problems that, if properly treated, can be eliminated or prevented from becoming serious;
- Promote safety in the home, school, and community;
- Provide the community with a variety of educational information and resources;
- Emphasize the practice of good habits; and
- Connect with organizations and agencies in the community.

Materials and planning guides may be found in "Health Fairs at Your Fingertips...a Practical Guide to a Successful Health Fair," [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org), under Programs, Health, events.

## 7.11 Disaster Preparedness and Crisis Response

*Revised October 2008 – Community Concerns*

The PTA disaster preparedness chairman works to increase the awareness of and provide information for the school community on emergencies that might arise and about the importance of being prepared. This chairman works with school staff and other PTA members to ensure parent involvement in the development and implementation of the school's disaster preparedness plan.

### 7.11.1 Recommended Actions for the Disaster Preparedness Chairman

Become acquainted with the school district's state-mandated policies and procedures on disaster preparedness and crisis response.

- Find out how the school has prepared for the unexpected by asking these questions:
  - What emergency situations have been identified that might threaten the school or its surrounding community? What is the response for each threat?
  - Have school staff and students received training or participated in drills using emergency procedures?
  - How do new teachers or staff learn and practice emergency procedures?

- Does each student remember the training provided and have a sense of what he or she is supposed to do?

Seek support from the principal and staff for PTA involvement in the planning and implementation of the school's disaster preparedness plan.

Ask the school principal for permission to form a PTA committee to evaluate a disaster drill at the school and share the results with the principal, staff, unit, and council. As an alternative, ask the school principal for permission to participate in the school's evaluation of disaster drills that the school holds. Evaluation should be based on established policies and procedures. Make recommendations that would make the school safer in the event of a disaster.

Assist the school in providing information to parents about what to expect from the school in case of a disaster.

Work with other community groups to increase awareness of the school's responsibilities in case of a disaster and to solicit community cooperation in both the planning and implementation of preparedness. These efforts might include the donation of supplies and/or funds to purchase supplies. Solicitation of funds must be in accordance with local and state laws and regulations, and any funds deposited in a PTA account must be handled in accordance with established PTA policies and procedures.

Check with the city and/or county Office of Emergency Services for information on emergency services and disaster preparedness.

Consult with school district officials and council and district PTA for opportunities to increase personal knowledge of disaster preparedness and crisis response. Attend workshops and conferences.

Keep a complete procedure book containing current information.

Inform parents, through the PTA newsletter, meetings and/or a program, how they can prepare their homes for disaster.

Work with school district and other local agencies on increasing public awareness of the importance of home planning for disaster. Use local media (e.g., newspaper, radio, television).

Encourage home review, planning, and supply storage.

### 7.11.2 Additional Resources

American Red Cross  
([www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org))

California Department of Education, Education Codes  
([www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov))

County Disaster Plan

Federal Emergency Management Agency  
([www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov))

Governor's Office of Emergency Services,  
Sacramento ([www.oes.ca.gov](http://www.oes.ca.gov))

Listings for first aid and/or survival guide provided in the local telephone directories

School District Disaster Plan

School Disaster Plan

U.S. Coast Guard

U.S. Department of Homeland Security-Links for Citizens ([www.dhs.gov/xcitizens/](http://www.dhs.gov/xcitizens/))

#### Local Agencies to Contact for Assistance

School District

County Department of Education

Fire Department

Police Department

Sheriff's Department

City and/or County Office of Emergency Services

First Aid and/or Survival Guide in local telephone directory

FEMA website at [www.fema.gov](http://www.fema.gov)

American Red Cross website at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org)

See "Disaster Preparedness" in Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions, position statements and guidelines.

### 7.11.3 Family Disaster Preparedness Plan and Emergency Kit

#### *Family Plan*

Check with schools about the plan for children to return home if disaster occurs during school hours. Ask to see your child's school disaster preparedness plan and the school district's disaster preparedness plan.

- Learn about the natural disasters that could occur in the community from the local emergency management office or American Red Cross chapter. Learn whether hazardous materials are produced, stored or transported near the area. Learn about possible consequences of deliberate acts of terror. Ask how to prepare for each potential emergency and how to respond.
- Plan for the safe reuniting of all family members.
- Post emergency telephone numbers by telephones. Teach children how and when to use 911.
- Make sure everyone in the household knows how and when to shut off water, gas and electricity at the main switches. Consult with local utilities if there are questions.
- Take a first aid and CPR class. Keep certifications up to date as procedures change. Local American Red Cross chapters can provide information. Official certifi-

cation by the American Red Cross provides “good Samaritan” law protection for those giving first aid.

- Reduce the economic impact of disaster on personal property and the household’s health and financial well-being.
  - Review property insurance policies before disaster strikes, making sure policies are current, and adequate.
  - Protect the household’s financial well-being before a disaster strikes—review life insurance policies and keep a small amount of cash or traveler’s checks available in a safe and accessible place, in case of an evacuation.
  - Be certain that health insurance information is easily accessible.
- Consider ways to help neighbors who may need special assistance, such as the elderly or the disabled.
- Make arrangements for pets. Pets are not allowed in public shelters. Service animals for those who depend on them are allowed.

Plan what children should do if at home when disaster strikes:

- Earthquake (Stay away from windows and outer walls; duck, cover, close your eyes, and hold legs of furniture.)
- Toxic spills or explosions (Close windows, turn on radio/television and listen for instructions)
- Evacuate if necessary and instruct them to leave a note where they have gone and with whom.

Plan where family will meet; where children will go if parents are not home; what they should carry with them; how to evacuate from second floor or higher in case of earthquake, fire or flood. Establish an out-of-town contact person.

Seek help for emotional needs of children and adults, if necessary. Get back to the family’s regular routine as soon as possible to help reestablish a sense of security for the children.

Prepare a complete plan for the family and home.

*Essentials*

Prescription medication – at least a one-week supply (e.g., insulin, blood pressure, heart, asthma, EpiPen – epinephrine autoinjector)

Battery powered radio and flashlight (extra batteries – check freshness)

Blankets, pillows, bed rolls, Mylar reflective “space blankets” or anything that retains body heat

Nylon collapsible tent

Fresh water in unbreakable containers. Water in water heaters, toilet tanks, and pipes (at least one gallon per person in unbreakable containers plus one gallon per animal)

Matches

Non-electric can opener

Fire extinguisher (keep updated)

Adjustable wrench for turning off water and gas only if leakage is detected.

*First Aid Kit*

Current Academy of Pediatrics or American Red Cross Infant/Child first aid resource guide or equivalent guide

72-hour family prescribed medications supply

Aspirin or pain relievers

Rubbing alcohol

Soap

Gauze (sterile pads and non-sterile rolls)

Elastic bandage

Cotton balls and swabs

Scissors, tweezers, needles and safety pins

Thermometer

Matches

Adhesive tape

Splint material (e.g., wire mesh, cardboard, pillows)

Baking soda and salt (1/2 tsp. soda and 1 tsp. salt in quart of water to replace body fluids in case of shock, vomiting or diarrhea)

Bandages of various sizes

Disposable, nonporous gloves

Flexible roller gauze

Triangular bandage (to support injured arm or hold a splint in place)

Eye dressings (to cover both eyes if a foreign object is present and cannot be removed)

Coins (for pay phone) or phone calling card

Poison Control telephone number

Hard candy (individually wrapped in zip lock bag)

An emergency kit must reflect the needs of each particular family. This list does not include all family needs. These are suggestions to help determine needs. Contact the American Red Cross before finalizing a kit.

All items should be checked and replaced on a regular basis.

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### *Sanitation Kit*

Plastic bags and ties

Disposable, nonporous gloves

Disinfectant in unbreakable containers

Toilet paper, paper towels, feminine hygiene needs

Disposable cups, plates, napkins and utensils

Toiletries (soap, toothbrush and paste, comb and hairbrush, deodorant, mirror, etc.)

### *Food*

72-hour supply that does not need heating, refrigeration or water

Ready-to-eat meats in cans

Canned fruits and vegetables (drink liquids)

Canned fruit juice (change periodically)

Nuts and peanut butter in unbreakable containers

Powdered milk, chocolate mixes and pre-sweetened drink mixes

Infant supplies, if needed

Crackers, cookies in airtight containers

Dry animal food in an unbreakable container along with self-opening cans of animal food

#### **7.11.4 Resources**

American Red Cross  
([www.prepare.org](http://www.prepare.org)) ([www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0\\_239\\_,00.html](http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_239_,00.html))

Life Secure Emergency Solutions  
([www.lifecure.com](http://www.lifecure.com))

U.S. Department of Homeland Security  
([www.ready.gov](http://www.ready.gov))

U.S. Coast Guard

## **7.12 Education**

The California State PTA believes it is important for parents and community members to be knowledgeable about education issues affecting student learning and achievement. PTAs should participate actively at all levels of the decision-making process and the implementation of the legally-required parent involvement policy, Education Code 11500-11506 and the State Board of Education 1994 Parent Involvement Policy. Parent participation should include but not be limited to:

- School Accountability Report Card (SARC), an instrument to inform the local community about the conditions and progress of the school, including holding public forums to share results with the community.

- School Budget

- Curriculum

- Assessment

- School Site Council/Governance

- District Advisory and Community Advisory Committees

- Other matters affecting the outcome of education.

The local PTA education chairman and committee should promote understanding of the purposes and needs of public schools and encourage participation by parents and community members in working toward any necessary improvements in public education. The education chairman and committee should highlight and promote the importance of parents' involvement in their children's education.

For additional details on the responsibilities of the Education Chairman, see "Job Description for Education Chairman."

See "Education" in Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions, position statements or guidelines.

## **7.13 Environmental Protection**

*Revised January 2007 – Health*

Natural resources are being depleted and destroyed at an alarming rate. The world's population is increasing. The delicate balance of our world's ecosystems is upset and, in many areas, this imbalance has become a threat to our health and survival.

### **7.13.1 Role of the PTA**

Inform members that threats to the environment adversely impact the quality of our lives and health and endanger future generations.

Advocate the inclusion of environmental education in school curriculum.

Help members learn how to support a sustainable environment that will be safe and healthy for present and future generations.

### **7.13.2 Recommended Actions**

Review California State PTA Position Statement, Environmental Protection (Where We Stand: Position Statements 4.5). See Environmental Protection in Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions or guidelines.

See also National PTA convention resolutions on Environmental Quality.

Encourage the school and PTA to use biodegradable products whenever possible.

Present at least one environmental or energy education program during the year.

Have PTA members participate in meetings and hearings of local governmental agencies on environmental matters. Report to the unit on such matters as zoning, planning, greenbelts, open space, coastline protection, air pollution, noise, highways, and water quality.

Work with the school to conduct energy audits; study ways to conserve resources, such as gas and electricity, while saving the school money.

Help to identify ways to conserve resources through the reduction of waste, reuse, and recycling of materials.

Learn the effects of energy shortages on schools, and cooperate in conservation efforts.

Develop a project dealing with some form of environmental improvement or conservation of natural resources.

Sponsor or support student environmental improvement or conservation projects such as recycling, ecology clubs, nature trails, field trips, junior museums, outdoor education programs, and the wildflower poppy preserve.

Arrange a tour of a public facility, laboratory or industrial site in the local community to learn what is being done to alleviate environmental problems.

Participate in observances of Earth Day, Arbor Day, Conservation Week, or other related events.

### 7.13.3 Additional Resources

California Department of Education,  
Environmental/Energy Education

California Environmental Protection Agency  
([www.calepa.ca.gov/Education/EEI/default.html](http://www.calepa.ca.gov/Education/EEI/default.html))

California State Parks Foundation  
Oakland, CA

National Park Service  
([www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov))

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency  
Washington, DC

## 7.14 Founders Day: February 17

Founders Day is a perfect time to renew the dedication to the Purposes of the PTA that were defined by PTA's founders more than a century ago. Each year in February, PTA honors the three founders as well as past and present PTA leaders. Through special programs and events, PTA also attempts to increase the awareness of its members and the community by highlighting achievements, activities, projects and goals.

The Founders Day celebration was created in 1910 by Mrs. David O. Mears, a charter member of the National Congress of Mothers founded by Alice McLellan Birney and Phoebe Apperson Hearst in Washington, DC, February 17, 1897. The Founders Day observance has continued through the change of organization names in

1925 to the National Congress of Parents and Teachers, and the uniting in 1970 with the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers, founded in 1926 by Selena Sloan Butler, to become the National PTA (A Brief History: Working Together for Children Since 1987, 1.1.5).

Issues concerning immigrants, homeless children and families, the unemployed and the uneducated, and numerous health and safety concerns still need attention. However, through PTA advocacy to enact and enforce laws, children's health is better protected and children are better fed, housed and educated, with parents more involved in their upbringing. The vision of PTA's founders has been realized in many ways, and now it is up to present PTA members to continue the vision.

### 7.14.1 Founders Day Freewill Offering: "PTA Birthday Gift"

Donations collected during Founders Day observances benefit the entire organization: unit, council, district PTAs, State and National PTA. California State PTA returns one-fourth of its offering to the district PTA and retains one-fourth for its work throughout the state. Half of the offering is sent to National PTA (Unit Remittance Form 5.1.7f; and Chapter 9 Forms).

District PTAs use the funds to:

- Organize new units and councils. Strengthen PTAs and PTSAs. Train leaders through workshops and conferences. Offer leadership training and parliamentary procedure courses. Promote PTA publications and special projects. Plan special contacts with teachers and administrators to increase the value of the PTA to school and community.

California State PTA uses the funds to:

- Service new units and councils. Strengthen PTAs and PTSAs.
- Provide special assistance to council and district PTAs through workshops and leadership conferences. Conduct field services in local areas by California State PTA officers and members of commissions. Perform regional extension work throughout the state. Counsel with individuals and groups.

National PTA uses the funds to:

- Provide requested field services (instructions, guidance and other assistance for California State PTA leaders). Train leaders. Promote contacts with educational groups. Disseminate materials that will further the aims and Purposes of PTA. Hold conferences. Provide extension of parent-teacher services throughout the country.

For details on the responsibilities of Founders Day, see "Job Description for Founders Day" (Chapter 10).

## 7.15 Gangs

*Revised October 2008 – Community Concerns*

There is a serious gang problem in California involving students from all cultures, communities, and backgrounds.

- Gangs are not just a law enforcement problem in urban settings but a quality of life problem and a challenge to the well-being, health, safety, social justice and educational outcomes for children and youth throughout California.
- Gangs are not a recent phenomenon; there is a multi-generational pattern of gang membership and affiliation as well as “newcomer” membership. There also is an interstate/international aspect to many gangs, and the situation is at or near crisis level in many areas of the state.
- Gangs adversely affect the well-being, health, safety, social justice, and educational outcomes for children and youth throughout California communities.

Children and youth who join gangs often become involved in drugs and other criminal activities. Law enforcement, school districts, PTA at all levels, other community agencies, and the general public must work together to inform and educate themselves and develop gang and drug awareness, prevention, and intervention programs. Such vital programs are needed to inform young people how to protect themselves from gang and drug involvement.

### 7.15.1 Role of the PTA

PTA believes that all children and youth should have the opportunity to develop their capabilities to the maximum. PTA supports programs that encourage youth and help them avoid gang participation and drug involvement.

### 7.15.2 Recommended Actions

Review California State PTA Position Statement, Gang Awareness (4.5.33). See “Gangs” in Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions or guidelines.

Partner with school staff, parent/guardian, student, and community leaders and provide informational meetings about gangs and drugs.

Support the adoption and use of school district policies designed to protect children and youth who are threatened or harassed by gangs.

Support the adoption of school district policies that preclude the wearing of gang symbols, colors, and clothing.

Work with local business and corporate offices to educate and inform them about current gang trends.

Sponsor gang awareness, conflict resolution, anger management, and peer-to-peer mediation classes in the schools, with the approval and cooperation of the administration, faculty and the greater community.

Collaborate with local agencies regarding prompt graffiti abatement. Encourage community and youth involvement in these programs where safe and appropriate.

Promote the establishment of supervised quality, out-of-school programs for children and youth as an alternative to gang involvement.

Support community collaboration with law enforcement such as Neighborhood Watch, Retired Seniors Volunteer Patrol (RSVP), Citizen Police Academies, and community support teams.

The greater community must proactively work with parents and family members to break the pattern of gang membership and affiliation. Prevention/intervention programs must begin at the elementary grade levels.

Promote life skill training, conflict resolution training, cross-cultural understanding, and education on hate crime activities, among youth at risk of gang involvement.

Foster appreciation of cultural diversity through workshops, public meetings, and forums.

### 7.15.3 Additional Resources

California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, Division of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) ([www.cdcr.ca.gov/DivisionsBoards/DJJ/index.html](http://www.cdcr.ca.gov/DivisionsBoards/DJJ/index.html))

California Department of Transportation, Division of Maintenance Office of Roadside Maintenance, Sacramento, CA ([www.dot.ca.gov](http://www.dot.ca.gov))

GANGS, California Department of Education ([www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov))

Local law enforcement, school district, county office of education, government, city and district attorney's offices and gang prevention and education task forces.

Office of the Attorney General  
Crime and Violence Prevention Center  
([www.caag.state.ca.us](http://www.caag.state.ca.us); [www.safestate.org](http://www.safestate.org))

U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
([www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org](http://www.ojjdp.ncjrs.org))

## 7.16 Graduation or Prom Night

*Member Services*

A PTA graduation or prom night event is coordinated by a committee whose chairman is an appointed or elected member of the executive board. The committee members can include other members of the board, the principal, a faculty member, the president (ex officio), and other PTA members appointed by the president.

The major responsibility of this committee is to provide a safe, healthy, legal and supervised recreational event for students in cooperation with the community. A sec-

ondary responsibility may be to raise funds to host the event.

### 7.16.1 Activities

Activities should

Be inexpensive, involve many members and students and be fun.

Not involve commercial or advertising obligations.

Not conflict with other PTA, school or community events.

Create goodwill for PTA in the community.

### 7.16.2 After the Event

Complete an inventory of supplies and equipment related to the activity, establish a location to store reusable equipment; determine if the value of stored materials warrants the purchasing of property insurance coverage. (Note: Current PTA insurance does not cover unit PTA property.)

### 7.16.3 Safety

Have proper adult supervision.

Be aware of risks like hiring a limousine or charter bus. Verify their business licenses with the local Public Utilities Commission.

Follow school district safety procedures when using their buses.

See *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide* for allowable, discouraged and PTA-prohibited activities.

A PTA sponsoring or cosponsoring a graduation or prom night activity must follow all California State PTA financial procedures and the *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*.

#### Resources:

American Automobile Association (AAA) Celebrate Life  
California Attorney General's Guide for Charities (2005)

### 7.16.4 Health

Organized events at theme parks or recreational areas create fewer problems than those that are self-catered and supervised by local sponsors.

Every event must be drug-, alcohol-, and smoke-free. Careful consideration must be given to food handling, restroom facilities, rest areas and availability of personnel certified in first aid and CPR.

### 7.16.5 Legal Issues

Parents' Approval and Student Waiver forms should be completed for each student participant. The form can be found in the *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*.

It is illegal for a person under the age of 18 to participate in any form of gambling (including casino activities).

Information on how to conduct a legal raffle can be obtained by going to the California Attorney General's website, [www.ag.ca.gov](http://www.ag.ca.gov). (Refer to the California Attorney General's Guide for Charities and §320.5 Gambling: Charitable Raffles effective July 1, 2001.)

Raffles may include but are not limited to 50/50 raffles, donation drawings, ducky derby and cow chip bingo.

Remember that it is illegal for any person under the age of 21 to possess, obtain or consume beer or alcohol. It is unlawful to possess, offer or sell any controlled substance, alcoholic beverage, or intoxicant on school premises. No person may sell, furnish, or procure intoxicating liquor (including beer) for anyone under the age of 21. It is illegal for anyone to possess any controlled substance without a valid prescription. (See *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*.)

### 7.16.6 PTA Unit Procedures

A PTA sponsoring or cosponsoring a graduation or prom night activity must follow all California State PTA financial procedures and the *Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide*.

The association must vote to sponsor or cosponsor the program, and the action must be recorded in the minutes. The president appoints the program committee, subject to ratification by the executive board. All committee and subcommittee members must be members of the PTA (Committee Development and Guidelines 2.5).

## 7.17 Grants

Grants are available to assist unit, council, and district PTAs to develop and implement programs in parent education, cultural arts, and leadership development. Grants are also available to assist unit, council and district PTAs to translate PTA materials into other languages.

Applications may be obtained from the *California State PTA Toolkit*, the California State PTA office, or on the website at [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org).

Grant funds must be expended by June 1. A report detailing the project's goals and objectives, an evaluation of the outcomes, and a budget of actual expenditures must be submitted to the California State PTA office no later than June 1. Any funds not used for the purpose stated on the original grant application must accompany the Grant Report. See Chapter 9, Forms, Grant Report.

### 7.17.1 Parent Education Grants for Unit, Council and District PTAs

*(Established 1953 - Reviewed October 2008)*

Grants are available annually from the California State PTA for use by unit, council, and district PTAs to develop and implement parent education programs or projects.

**Application:** An application form for the grant is located in the *Toolkit*, Chapter 9 Forms. Applications must be received in the California State PTA office by close of business on November 15. When November 15 falls on a weekend, applications are due in the State PTA office by close of business on the following Monday. Postmarks will not be accepted.

**Eligibility:** Applicant must be a unit, council or district PTA in good standing.

**Selection:** Recipients are selected by the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Committee. A check for the grant is sent to each unit, council and district PTA recipient following the January California State PTA Board of Managers meeting.

### 7.17.2 Outreach Translation Grants for Unit, Council and District PTAs

*(Established 1997 - Reviewed October 2008)*

Grants are available annually from the California State PTA for use by unit, council and district PTAs for written or verbal translation of PTA materials into other languages.

**Application:** An application form for the grant is located in the *Toolkit*, Chapter 9 Forms. Applications must be received in the California State PTA office by close of business on November 15. When November 15 falls on a weekend, applications are due in the State PTA office by close of business on the following Monday. Postmarks will not be accepted.

**Eligibility:** Applicant must be a unit, council, or district PTA in good standing.

**Selection:** Recipients are selected by the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Committee. A check for the grant is sent to each unit, council, and district PTA recipient following the January California State PTA Board of Managers meeting.

### 7.17.3 Cultural Arts Grants for Unit, Council and District PTAs

*(Established 2000 - Reviewed October 2008)*

Grants are available annually from the California State PTA for use by unit, council, and district PTAs to develop and implement student-centered cultural arts programs and projects focused on arts education.

**Application:** An application form for the grant is located in the *Toolkit*, Chapter 9 Forms. Applications must be received in the California State PTA office by close of business on November 15. When November 15 falls on a weekend, applications are due in the State PTA office

by close of business on the following Monday. Postmarks will not be accepted.

**Eligibility:** Applicant must be a unit, council or district PTA in good standing.

**Selection:** Recipients are selected by the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Committee. A check for the grant is sent to each unit, council, and district PTA recipient following the January California State PTA Board of Managers meeting.

### 7.17.4 Leadership Development Grants for Unit, Council and District PTAs

*(Established 2000 - Reviewed October 2008)*

Grants are available annually from the California State PTA to encourage and support attendance at the California State PTA Convention for either emerging leaders or for an individual PTA member's first-time attendance in order to strengthen leadership on unit, council, and district PTA boards.

**Selection:** A check for the grant is sent to the district PTA following the October California State PTA Board of Managers meeting. It is the responsibility of the district PTA to select recipients and forward grants to the individual PTA.

All individual PTA members receiving grants must submit to the district PTA a convention attendance report and receipts along with a detailed list of convention expenses to the district PTA. The district PTA must submit a final report to the California State PTA office detailing the distribution of leadership development grant funds no later than June 1. See Chapter 9, Forms, Grant Report.

Failure to submit this report by the due date will result in an invoice payable upon receipt from the California State PTA for the amount of the grant. The Scholarship and Grant Committee will take into consideration the timely receipt of the report when awarding future Leadership Development Grants.

Direct all questions regarding due dates or rules for all grants to the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Committee Chairman at [grants@capta.org](mailto:grants@capta.org) or at 916.440.1985, ext. 316.

## 7.18 Health

*Revised January 2009 – Health*

The National PTA and California State PTA consider health education to be of major importance.

### 7.18.1 Promote Physical, Mental and Emotional Health Education

Help parents recognize and respond to the health and nutrition needs of their families.

Encourage compliance with health education directives in the curriculum.

Work for the improvement of health care services, particularly in the school nurse-to-student ratios, in the school and community.

Work for better health facilities in schools and communities.

Stress the concepts of wellness and prevention.

Implement, update and evaluate school wellness policies.

Emphasize the importance of healthy lifestyles and modeling these lifestyles for children.

Promote a school environment that is consistent with health education being taught in the classroom.

Make parents cognizant of and responsive to environmental issues and hazards that may jeopardize the health of children and families.

Establish a comprehensive school health program that integrates activities and services designed to promote the optimal physical, emotional, social and educational development of children and youth.

For additional responsibilities of the Health Coordinator see “Job Description for Health.”

Environmental Health ([www.cehn.org](http://www.cehn.org))

Healthy Kids Resource Center ([www.hkresources.org](http://www.hkresources.org))

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov))

See “Health” in Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions, position statements and guidelines.

## 7.19 Homeless Families and Children

*Revised October 2008 – Community Concerns*

Families with young children have become the fastest-growing segment of the population now living on the nation’s streets.

A family is considered to be homeless if, due to lack of housing, they must reside in a shelter, motel, vehicle, campground, abandoned building, trailers on the street, or doubled-up with relatives or friends.

Homeless families do not need to provide a permanent address in order to enroll children in school. All children have a right to public education. It is the shared responsibility of parents and schools to see that each child receives it.

### 7.19.1 Role of the PTA

Support funding and legislation for adequate housing for all families, and inform parents/guardians about how to obtain access to educational, health, and community services.

### 7.19.2 Recommended Actions

Review California State PTA position statement on Homeless Families/Children (4.5.36). See “Minors” in the Advocacy Topic Index for resolutions or guidelines.

Advocate for sufficient emergency shelters and low-cost housing for families.

Advocate for government retraining and education of jobless parents/guardians, so they can become self-reliant.

Become familiar with the policies in the local school district concerning the admission to school of children who have no address or phone number.

Encourage the school staff to be sensitive to the needs of homeless children and the difficulties these children have regarding study habits, completion of homework, and school supplies.

Provide opportunities for children who cannot afford school-related activities to participate.

Establish a “clothes closet” or community partnership to provide clean, new or serviceable used clothing, new shoes, socks, underwear and hygiene supplies for children in emergency situations. Emergency nonperishable food supplies also could be supplied.

Offer parent education meetings, using PTA materials, for all parents including the homeless parents, or locate experts in the field to teach parenting skills, reading techniques, and nutrition as well as self-esteem. Encourage involvement with shelters, food banks, and other agencies in the community that help the homeless.

Provide the school office with a current informational list of local resources, or in areas with 211 referral services assure that the school office knows about this resource.

### 7.19.3 Additional Resources

The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act improves services for homeless people including emergency shelters, health care, and job training. Policies, resources, and a list of current education programs for homeless children and youth in California are available online ([www.cde.ca.gov/cilbranch/homeless/homelessstoc.html](http://www.cde.ca.gov/cilbranch/homeless/homelessstoc.html)).

Bridge of Hope  
([www.bridgeofhopeinc.org](http://www.bridgeofhopeinc.org))

California Housing Advocates  
([www.housingadvocates.org](http://www.housingadvocates.org))

Clothe Homeless Children  
([www.WorldVision.org](http://www.WorldVision.org))

Homes for the Homeless  
([www.homesforthehomeless.com](http://www.homesforthehomeless.com))

National Association for Education of Homeless Children ([www.naehcy.org](http://www.naehcy.org))

National Center for Homeless Education, Greensboro, NC; 800.755.3277 or NCHE Helpline 800.308.2145; [www.serve.org/nche/](http://www.serve.org/nche/)

National Legal Resource Center for Child Advocacy and Protection, Washington, DC

National Resource Center on Homelessness and Mental Illness  
262 Delaware Avenue, Delmar, NY 12054;  
800.444.7415

U.S. Department of Education  
([www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/guidance.pdf](http://www.ed.gov/programs/homeless/guidance.pdf))

## 7.20 Library and Media Facilities in Schools – Education

The California State PTA believes books and reading are vitally important to the lives of children and the development of an informed citizenry. The public library is a symbol of our democracy, and a good school library is essential to an effective educational program for life-long learning.

### 7.20.1 Questions for a Study

Does the school have a library/media center or learning center?

- Do students have regular access to the library during the school day to use its resources?
- Is the school library open before and after school, as well as during the lunch period?
- Can PTA help to provide greater accessibility to the library/media learning center?

Is there a credentialed librarian, library technician or clerk on staff?

- Are they full-time or part-time employees?
- Does the library have trained volunteers?

Is technology available?

- How many computers are available to students? (What is the student-to-computer ratio on campus?)
- Is there Internet access?
- Does the school district have an “Acceptable Use Policy for Electronic Information Resources”?

Does the library/media facility have a filtering system or an automated library system? (Filtering and automated systems have pros and cons.)

- Have there been discussions regarding these systems?
- Is the staff trained and available to provide computer assistance?

Is there a current written policy for selection of books and materials?

- Is there a school district policy?
- Is there a selection committee?
- Do the materials reflect the diverse needs of all students in our multicultural society, particularly the student population on the local school campus?
- Are the books and materials current and relevant to the instructional program?

What are the funding sources for the library?

- Are the funds adequate to keep the library current and well equipped?
- Is there community support to ensure stable and adequate funding for school libraries?

Are there guidelines for evaluating the current collection for relevancy and timeliness?

(Adapted from the National PTA publication, *Looking In On Your School.*)

### 7.20.2 Questions for the Community

What is the district policy on Internet access?

Would it be more effective to have constant supervision of students while they are using/accessing the Internet?

Would an automated system provide a more efficiently run library/media facility and enable students to find what they are looking for more quickly and easily? Should scarce library funds be used to automate library services instead of increasing the library collection?

Does elimination of the card catalog limit the number of students able to access information, depending on the number of computers available?

### 7.20.3 Recommended Actions

Meet with the principal, school librarian, and other appropriate staff to learn about the library/media facilities and the goals and needs for the school.

If staffing is inadequate, the PTA may donate funds to the school district, earmarked for that purpose. PTA should never employ library staff (Gifts to School 5.8.1).

When PTA members volunteer in the library, they should become familiar with the procedures and technology available.

Plan book exhibits and book fairs consistent with criteria suggested in the *California State PTA Toolkit* Finance section and in the *National PTA Quick-Reference Guide*.

The PTA can develop an instruction sheet or handbook that may cover basic items such as class schedules, emergency procedures, basics on checking books out and in, shelving and repairing books, use of and guidelines for technology/Internet.

Call attention to new books, library services and volunteer opportunities through the PTA newsletter.

Support California State PTA efforts to seek credentialed librarians for school libraries.

Become informed about public library facilities in the local community.

- Publicize services such as story hours, book-reading contests, bookmobile, etc.
- Encourage families to read with their children, and help them learn to use the local library.

#### 7.20.4 Additional Resources

See “Library” and “Mass Media” in the Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions, position statements or guidelines.

American Association of School Librarians  
([www.ala.org/ala/aasl](http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl))

California Department of Education and School Libraries Association. *Check it Out*. Publication available from CDE, [www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/lb/checkitout.asp](http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/cr/lb/checkitout.asp)

The Children’s Partnership with The National PTA and The National Urban League. *Tips & Tools for Parents Keeping Kids Safe Online* (December 1997).

Good Ideas! California School Library Association  
([www.schoollibrary.org](http://www.schoollibrary.org)). 1001 26th Street, Sacramento, CA 95816.

American Library Association, [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org)

*Reinventing Your School’s Library in the Age of Technology*, by David Loertscher (2002).

## 7.21 Missing and Exploited Children

*Revised October 2008 – Community Concerns*

Each year thousands of children disappear. Most return home safely. Many do not. They are runaways, throwaways, or victims of parental or stranger abduction. Others are exploited at home by family members or acquaintances. Many of these children either turn to crime to survive or are criminally exploited by people who will abuse them and profit by their vulnerability. Law enforcement agencies, schools and the general public need to work together to ensure all steps are taken to identify and find missing and exploited children and return them to a safe environment.

### 7.21.1 Role of the PTA

PTA supports continued funding for missing children’s programs, including support for programs that explore the extent of the problem of missing children, circumstances involving stranger and non-custodial parent abduction, effective preventive measures, and supportive and rehabilitative services.

PTA supports state and national missing children information centers/clearinghouses and the prompt reporting by law enforcement agencies of children reported missing.

### 7.21.2 Recommended Actions

Review California State PTA Position Statement, Missing and Exploited Children, (Where We Stand: Position Statements). See “Minors” in the Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions or guidelines.

Provide parent education programs; include current information and preventive education in the area of missing or exploited children.

Work with local law enforcement agencies, school districts, and the business community to provide free fingerprinting/DNA clinics for children of all ages.

Work with the school principal to encourage school districts to offer a fingerprint program for children enrolled in kindergarten or newly enrolled in the school district. All fingerprinting is subject to the consent of a parent or guardian.

Work with the school principal to implement personal safety education programs for students.

Partner with community organizations on projects concerning missing and exploited children.

Encourage local media to broadcast PSA information concerning missing or exploited children.

#### For more information

California Missing Children Clearinghouse  
1.800.222.FIND or  
[www.caag.state.ca.us/missing/content/clearinghouse.htm](http://www.caag.state.ca.us/missing/content/clearinghouse.htm)

Polly Klaas Foundation  
1.800.587.4357 or [www.pollyklaas.org](http://www.pollyklaas.org)

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children  
1.800.THE.LOST or [www.missingkids.com](http://www.missingkids.com)

California Attorney General’s Office, Crime and Violence Prevention Center  
[www.caag.state.ca.us](http://www.caag.state.ca.us) and <http://safestate.org>  
Materials, pamphlets, camera-ready masters, current photo files. Information on Megan’s Law, registration, and public information.

### 7.21.3 Additional Resources

Federal Juvenile Justice, Runaway Youth and Missing Children Act (as amended 1984). Authorizes a missing children’s program to assist parents and local law enforcement agencies in locating missing children. Establishes clearinghouse and grant program to provide technical assistance. Provides education and prevention programs relating to missing and exploited children. Includes parents and representatives of parent organizations as a membership category for Juvenile Justice State Advisory Groups (SAGS).

Child Safety Network  
(www.csn.org)

FBI – Kids and Youth Education Page – Crime Prevention (www.fbi.gov)

International Center for Missing and Exploited Children (www.icmec.org)

National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (www.missingkids.com)

National Crime Prevention Council  
(www.npc.org)

Vanished Children's Alliance  
(www.vca.org)

## 7.22 Parent and Family Involvement

*Revised March 2009 – Parent Involvement*

Since its inception, the PTA has made parent education a priority. Parent education is communicating with parents and educating them about issues they face as they raise their children. Parent education was the driving force behind the founding of PTA in 1897 and is still the central focus.

References to parent involvement and to parents may be interpreted broadly to include all adults who play an important role in a child's family life, carrying the responsibility for a child's education, development, and well-being.

Parent and family involvement in all aspects of a child's life is essential. Children can only achieve their fullest potential in school or in life when their physical and emotional needs have been met. Children need to have good self-esteem, be taught how to make decisions and be held accountable for the results of those decisions.

Parent and family involvement includes learning and using the parenting skills needed to raise healthy children, learning about issues that affect children's lives, supporting education at home, and participating with the school in decision-making about children's education.

Research has shown that parent and family involvement in children's education increases student achievement and success. National PTA, building on the work of Dr. Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University, in 1997 identified and adopted six standards for parent and family involvement programs. In 2007 the standards were updated to reflect recent research, and to focus on what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success. (National PTA, *National Standards for Family-School Partnerships*) (see Section 7.23.3). The standards are research based and grounded in sound philosophy and practical experience. The purpose of the standards is:

- To promote meaningful parent and family participation;

- To raise awareness regarding the components of effective programs; and
- To provide guidelines for schools that wish to improve their programs.

### 7.22.1 School District Parent Involvement Policies

Years of research make it clear that when parents are involved in their children's education, the children do better in school. The research also shows that what schools do – their policies, programs and practices – can determine whether parents will be involved, how much and in what way. Therefore, schools need to take direct action to promote effective partnerships with parents.

They should review their own school district policy on parent involvement and become a part of the community action plan, if they find the policy needs revision. Leaders should refer to key points of the policy when speaking at school board meetings.

From the founding of PTA in 1897, the organization has consistently promoted the philosophy that children do better when supported by their parents. PTAs should take a leadership role in working with their school districts to create and reinforce a strong partnership between home and school at every school site.

Each school district in California is required by law to adopt a policy on parent involvement. What happens at each school depends upon the school district policy and the development and implementation of a well thought-out plan for meaningful, ongoing parent involvement.

*To read the law, go to [www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html](http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html) (California Education Code, Section 11500-11506).*

### 7.22.2 California State Board of Education Policy on Parental Involvement

The policy, adopted in September 1994, discusses research on the benefits of parent involvement and the need for the school and family to share responsibility for a child's education. The six points in the policy correspond to the six standards for parent and family involvement identified by the National PTA in its earlier *National Standards for Parent/Family Involvement Programs*.

The policy:

The State Board of Education will continue to support, through the California Department of Education, assistance to school districts and schools in developing strong comprehensive parent involvement. *Comprehensive* means that parents are involved at all grade levels in a variety of roles. The efforts should be designed to:

1. Help parents develop parenting skills to meet the basic obligations of family life and foster conditions at home which emphasize the importance of education and learning.

2. Promote two-way (school-to-home and home-to-school) communication about school programs and students' progress.
3. Involve parents, with appropriate training, in instructional and support roles at the school and in other locations that help the school and students reach stated goals, objectives and standards.
4. Provide parents with strategies and techniques for assisting their children with learning activities at home that support and extend the school's instructional program.
5. Prepare parents to actively participate in school decision making and develop their leadership skills in governance and advocacy.
6. Provide parents with skills to access community and support services that strengthen school programs, family practices, and student learning and development.

These six types of parent involvement roles require a coordinated schoolwide effort that has the support of parents, teachers, students and administrators at each school site. Furthermore, research indicates that home-school collaboration is most likely to happen if schools take the initiative to encourage, guide, and genuinely welcome parents into the partnership. Professional development for teachers and administrators on how to build such a partnership is essential.

The issue of parent involvement in the education of their children is much larger than improving student achievement. It is central to our democracy that parents and citizens participate in the governing of public education.

### 7.22.2a RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The official school district Parent Involvement Policy and Implementation Plan should be developed by a broad-based task force that includes administrators, teachers, classified staff, parents, and community.

Study and discuss the various concepts people have about "parent involvement." National PTA's *National Standards for Family-School Partnerships Assessment Guide* (see [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)) provides a comprehensive framework for studying the range of ways parents can be involved. Invite speakers to present the issues that will help determine local PTA's vision of what parent involvement should be in the school district. Obtain materials from the resources listed at the end of this section.

Understand that the parent involvement policy, even after adoption by the school district, cannot stand alone. To be effective, the policy requires a plan for its implementation. Obtain examples of policies and implementation plans from other school districts.

### *What Should the School District Parent Involvement Policy Mean for School Sites?*

Advocate the establishment of a broad-based permanent parent involvement committee or task force to draft and approve the policy and plan and to monitor its implementation. Such a task force requires the strong support of the school district administration and the teachers' organization. The committee should reflect the racial, ethnic, cultural, and family diversity of the school district. It is crucial that all groups in the overall school community participate in the process from the beginning. Therefore, it would benefit the committee to have representation from at least the following groups:

- School district administrators
- School site administrators
- Teachers' organization
- School site teachers
- Classified personnel
- PTA members
- Title I School District Advisory Committee members (parents and staff)
- Bilingual School District Advisory members (parents and staff)
- Special Education School District Advisory Committee members
- Members of other groups which include parent members
- Community members

PTA representatives on the committee should participate actively in the process, making sure the PTA voice is heard speaking for parents—all parents. PTA should work to see that the racial, ethnic, cultural, and family differences are considered throughout the process.

In addition to the components required by law, PTA representatives should advocate including in the policy and implementation plan components that study has led them to believe are important.

As the work of the committee progresses, keep the council and district PTA and membership up to date. Take their input back to the committee. Publish articles in the newsletter or on the website that other units can copy explaining the continuing work of the committee and PTA's role.

Make sure there is wide distribution of the final draft to staff and the community for their reaction. There should be sufficient time allowed between sending out the draft and the response date so that the responses can be thoughtful and constructive.

After the policy and implementation plan are approved by the board of education, publish them in the newsletter and on the website so that other units can put similar articles in their newsletters and on their websites.

Publish, with the policy and plan, information that tells units what action they can take to support implementation of the policy at their school sites.

Hold a training session (perhaps together with the school district Title I, bilingual and other advisory committee members) to explain the policy and implementation plan. Explain the parent involvement law and the broad concept of parent involvement to the group, defining what it means for them.

As the committee continues to monitor and contribute to the school district's parent involvement process, keep the various PTA groups informed, and take their responses back to the committee.

### 7.22.3 Focus on the School Site's Priorities

Planners of a parent involvement program at the school site should keep in mind that:

The board of education and school district administration are committed to support school site efforts and actions to strengthen home-school partnerships.

Parent involvement is recognized as an important strategy for increasing student achievement.

Administration and teacher attitudes and actions may determine how much and in what ways parents become involved.

All parent involvement planning and action must be sensitive to the diverse school population.

Program planners at the school site should strive to:

Meet the intent of the parent involvement law, and develop a comprehensive parent involvement program that provides ways for parents and school staff to be involved, such as:

- Co-communicators of their ideas and concerns;
- Co-supporters of the well-being of children;
- Co-supporters of student learning, education and the school;
- Co-learners about school programs and the education system, family; cultures, child development, and children's problems;
- Co-teachers of children and of each other; and
- Co-advisors, advocates, and decision makers.

Organize and distribute school district resources in ways that contribute directly to the effectiveness of school site home-school partnership programs.

Provide training and support to parents and school staff to help each group acquire the unique and common skills needed to develop a partnership.

Link school and community resources in ways that will better meet the needs of families.

(Adapted from *Home and School, Partners for Student Success: A Manual for Principals.*)

### 7.22.4 Parent Involvement Policy Statement Sample

The Board of Education recognizes the necessity and value of parent involvement to support student success and academic achievement. In order to assure collaborative partnerships between parents and schools, the board, working through the administration, is committed to:

- a. Involving parents as partners in school governance, including shared decision making and advisory functions.
- b. Establishing effective two-way communication with all parents respecting the diversity and differing needs of families.
- c. Developing strategies and programmatic structures at schools to enable parents to participate actively in their children's education.
- d. Providing support and coordination for school staff and parents to implement and sustain appropriate parent involvement from kindergarten through grade twelve.
- e. Utilizing schools to connect students and families with community resources that provide educational enrichment and support.

### 7.22.5 Additional Resources

See "Parent Involvement" in the Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions, position statements or guidelines.

California State Department of Education, Family and Community Partnerships Office ([www.cde.ca.gov](http://www.cde.ca.gov)).

Home and School Institute, Washington, DC ([www.megaskillshsi.org](http://www.megaskillshsi.org)).

National PTA *National Standards for Family-School Partnerships* (2007), 312.670.6782 or [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org).

See "Parent Involvement" in Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions, position statements and guidelines.

**For additional information**, contact the California State PTA Vice President for Parent Involvement at [parenting@capta.org](mailto:parenting@capta.org) or 916.440.1985 ext. 307

## 7.23 Parent Involvement Committee

*Revised March 2009 – Parent Involvement*

Parent Involvement includes ongoing skills training to assist parents with issues they face in nurturing the development of their children. Programs should help parents strengthen their parenting skills and family involvement in their child's life. Since parent involvement covers many areas of PTA interest, the committee chairman should work with other chairmen, as appropriate, in planning activities.

The word “parent” is used throughout these sections to refer to those individuals who are involved in a child’s education, recognizing that other adults may also carry the primary responsibility for a child’s education and development. Therefore, all references to parents should be interpreted as including any adults who play an important role in a child’s development and well-being.

### 7.23.1 Suggestions

Work with school staff to develop an ongoing parent involvement action plan.

Sponsor parent information programs on issues such as substance abuse prevention, health, child development, discipline, decision-making, curriculum, textbooks, and computer-assisted learning. Offer language translation when needed.

Take meetings into the community to make parents and others feel welcome.

Offer a variety of family-activity opportunities. Use sensitivity in setting dates, times, and places for programs and events.

Promote teacher-parent communication, and encourage staff-development training to assist teachers in working with and involving parents.

Encourage parents to attend school-sponsored functions such as back-to-school nights and parent-teacher conferences.

### 7.23.2 Specific Ideas

Put parenting tips in the school or PTA newsletter.

Start a parent center at the school with information about parenting, community resources, school information, policy, curriculum, etc.

Establish a “parent shelf” in the school office or library where parents can pick up free materials or check out books and other media on topics of interest to parents.

Create a welcome packet for new parents, with parenting and school-related information.

Develop a website for the PTA. Include links to the California State PTA and the National PTA websites as well as links to important parent involvement sites. See Online Communications (6.2.5) for information on developing a PTA website.

### 7.23.3 National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

National PTA, building on the work of Dr. Joyce Epstein of Johns Hopkins University, adopted six standards for effective parent involvement programs in 1997. The standards, guidelines for use in developing programs to involve parents and families, were updated in 2007 to reflect recent research. The standards focus on what parents, schools, and communities can do together to support student success. Comprehensive local

parent/family involvement programs will be most effective if they include all of the standards. Keep these standards in mind when planning parent involvement programs and activities.

**STANDARD 1: Welcoming all families into the school community** — Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

**STANDARD 2: Communicating effectively** — Families and school staff engage in regular, meaningful communication about student learning.

**STANDARD 3: Supporting student success** — Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

**STANDARD 4: Speaking up for every child** — Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

**STANDARD 5: Sharing power** — Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

**STANDARD 6: Collaborating with community** — Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

### 7.23.4 Additional Resources

See Parent Involvement in the Advocacy Topic Index for Resolutions, Position Statements and Guidelines.

California Department of Education makes an *Educational Resources Catalog* available. ([www.cde.ca.gov/cdepress/](http://www.cde.ca.gov/cdepress/))

U.S. Department of Education ([www.ed.gov](http://www.ed.gov))  
800.USA.LEARN

EdSource ([www.edsource.org](http://www.edsource.org))

California State PTA ([www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)) offers subscriptions to *PTA in California* and *The Communicator*.

California State PTA materials include:

- [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)
- *Parents Empowering Parents Guide* (PEP) in English and Spanish
- School Administrators Manual
- *Parent Talk* brochures (English or Spanish)
- *Things Your Kids Want You to Know* brochures (English or Spanish)
- *Involvement Makes a Difference* brochures (English or Spanish)
- *Parent Involvement Pocket Pal*

National PTA materials include:

- [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)
- *National Standards for Family-School Partnerships*; and
- *Building Successful Partnerships: A Guide for Developing Parent and Family Involvement Programs*.

## 7.24 Parenting Resources

*Revised January 2009 – Parent Involvement*

### 7.24.1 Helping the Child Grow and Learn

The home is where children first learn the life skills needed to be successful as students and adults. Parents provide the setting for a child to learn; teach responsibility; demonstrate how to handle challenges; show that everything will not be handed to the child, that it feels good to accomplish goals independently; that life can be fun as well as work; and that loving and sharing are a very important part of what families do.

#### 7.24.1a RAISE A PHYSICALLY AND EMOTIONALLY HEALTHY CHILD

Feed the child a balanced and nutritious diet – protein (fish, beans, meat, chicken) grains (bread, rice, cereals, pastas), fresh vegetables and fruits and milk (or milk alternative).

Make sure the child sleeps enough and gets physical exercise each day.

Appreciate that the child is a unique individual: Help the child learn to like himself, feel good about who he is and what he can do—without making comparisons to other children. This helps develop self-esteem and helps build understanding that he is a capable, responsible individual.

Parents should value themselves — it makes it easier to be a role model for the child.

#### 7.24.1b SPEND TIME WITH THE CHILD

Have fun and do things together — and learn together.

Play together. Family outings, such as going to the beach or park, enrich each child's experience. Games are fun and can be educational as well, especially when adults play, too.

Work together. Parent and child benefit when daily activities like yard work, shopping, cooking, working on the car, doing home repairs are shared.

Talk together. Let the child know how to handle an unpleasant or unsuccessful situation; demonstrate how to handle bad days. Talk about ideas, talk about dreams, talk about everyday happenings at school or at work. Try to set aside judgments or negative comments.

#### 7.24.1c LET THE CHILD DEVELOP A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND LEARN FROM EXPERIENCE

Let the child begin making decisions at an early age. Make sure the decisions are within age-appropriate limits that the parent has set. Do not shield the child from the consequences of decisions and actions. Help the child understand the consequences of behavior.

- If the child is late because of personal behavior, let the tardiness occur, and then talk about what the consequences were.
- If the child keeps forgetting to take a lunch, state that no one will bring it to school the next time—and stick to it!
- If the child has not finished homework, don't make excuses.

Discuss things with the child to help interpret what is seen and experienced. The parent is the one who can help develop understanding. Do not assume the child understands—verify that the child does. Help the child see the connection between school and life. The parent may take it for granted, but the child may not be aware of the everyday applications of learning unless the parent points them out. Take advantage of home activities to point out practical application of schoolwork. Math is necessary to double a recipe and useful in calculating how to saw a piece of wood to fit a particular space. Reading is needed to follow directions.

Talk with the child about television, music, movies and video games. Discuss the difference between real life and what is on the screen, so that fantasy does not merge with reality.

The parent does not have to be negative about the programming, but keep reminding your child that the people on television and in movies are actors and take off their makeup at the end of the day and go home to different lives.

#### 7.24.1d BUILD FOR THE FUTURE BY TELLING THE CHILD EDUCATION IS IMPORTANT

Send the child to school every day; the child cannot learn when absent. If the parent does not care about attendance, the child will not either and school will not be important.

Stay in touch with the child's teacher. Let the child know that graduating from high school is important. Teach the child that at least a high school education and, probably, additional training is necessary to ensure career choices in the future.

Make sure the child does homework every day. The parent can help, but do not complete the assignment for the child. Encourage the child to work independently with parental support. Practice spelling memorization, vocabulary, multiplication tables and other rote learning. Demonstrate how this information can be used every day.

Set standards for the child. Make sure expectations are known. Show concern when the child does not do as well as expected, but do not demand perfection.

### 7.24.2 Communicating with the Child

Communication is the key to effective parenting. It requires constant effort, but the rewards are great. When the parent communicates feelings honestly and openly—feelings of caring, respect, love, as well as unhappiness and anger—a stronger relationship develops between parent and child. This gives the child a model for communicating feelings, and home is where it can be done safely.

#### 7.24.2a COMMUNICATION IS A TWO-WAY STREET

##### *Listen*

Verbalize that what the child has to say is important to the parent.

Look, act and be interested, without interrupting or being distracted.

Show respect for the child's feelings and opinions, without being judgmental.

Ask the child to do all of the above when the parent is talking.

Listen to the child daily.

##### *Reflect*

Make sure the parent understands: repeat back what was heard, and ask if it was understood correctly.

In a positive manner, rephrase what the parent thought was said until parent and child both agree that now the parent understands what was meant.

This feedback process does not mean necessarily that the parent understands and agrees with what is said, but that the parent is really listening.

Ask the child to do the same when the parent speaks.

##### *Share*

State feelings and opinions without criticizing or lecturing. Encourage the child to do the same.

Every single exchange does not need to be balanced, but make sure communication is a genuine two-sided sharing.

Besides creating a warm and caring environment, this process gives the child practice in developing communication skills.

##### *Discuss*

Talk about issues. Sometimes, if both do not agree, simply agree to disagree.

When a solution is needed, work together to solve the problem.

- Define the problem.

- Set out the options.
- Look at the pros and cons of each and the possible consequences.
- Make a decision.
- Plan to reexamine the decision after a certain time has passed.

#### 7.24.2b EFFECTIVE PRAISE TELLS THE CHILD, "I LIKE WHAT YOU DID."

The closer the praise is to the desired action, the more effective it will be.

**Example:** A mother tells her daughter, who has struggled for several minutes with a stubborn zipper, "You worked hard to zip that zipper!" Don't wait until the next day and then say, "You did a good job of zipping your zipper yesterday. Can you do it again today?" Some children may not remember yesterday's experience.

*Be sincere.* False praise is damaging, but the parent can always find something to praise sincerely.

**Example:** When your son asks, "How do you like my picture?" and you don't like it, you can say, "I like the colors you used. It looks as though you enjoyed painting that picture. Tell me how you made it."

*Be specific.* Children need to know exactly what the parent means when giving praise or discipline.

**Example:** "I am really pleased you made your bed without my reminding you to." The parent can praise the completed task or the effort of trying. "You worked hard trying to get the wrinkles out of your bed." Don't just say, "good kid," which suggests that the child is the issue rather than the action.

#### 7.24.2c EFFECTIVE DISCIPLINE

Discipline should be specific and should immediately follow the undesirable behavior. It should help the child understand what action was objected to and give a positive model for next time.

**Example:** "I don't like the way you treated Jeff," does not give enough information, nor does it give a model.

Saying, "When you laughed at Jeff's drawing, he was hurt," states the action the parent didn't like and opens the door for a solution.

Discipline should give the child the chance to be part of the solution.

**Example:** "If you did not like Jeff's drawing, what could you have said or done that would be honest but still kind?"

Discipline must be consistent and fair. If the parent objects to a certain kind of behavior one day, the child needs the parent to object to the same circumstances on other days. The behavior the parent is requiring must be within the child's ability. Ensure that the expectations are age-appropriate. Attention span, memory, and eye-

hand coordination for a three-year-old differ from the skills of a six-year-old.

On the other hand, if a child thinks that a brother or sister is getting away with behavior that is forbidden to her, the discipline standards must be carefully examined. If there are genuine reasons for the difference, they must be explained, and the child who feels unfairly treated needs the opportunity to say so.

### **7.24.3 Helping the Child Read and Write**

Just as speech begins at home, so do reading and writing. From a very early age, activities that lead to reading and writing readiness have proven to be a key factor in a child's success at school.

#### **7.24.3a HELP READING READINESS**

Reading readiness is learning how to use words to express and understand thoughts, and learning the importance of the printed word.

Helping a child talk to the parent is a key factor. Talk to the child about everything one sees, everything one does.

Listen to the child and answer questions, even the silly ones.

Tell the child stories and have the child tell stories. Tell the child fairy tales and stories one makes up. One of the best ways to talk with the child is by talking about when the parent was a child, about things that happened to parents and grandparents, about parents' happiness when the child was born. Make a scrapbook of pictures cut out from old magazines and have the child tell about the pictures.

Read to the child regularly, from a very early age. Make reading time a treat – don't insist on reading when the child wants to do something else.

Let the child see the parent reading frequently. Have a variety of good reading materials around, for the child, and for the parent.

Show the child how printed language is related to life all around her, in the supermarket, in the car, in the kitchen.

Take the child to the library regularly. The librarian will be glad to help you choose books that will fit the child's age and interests. When the child becomes old enough, plan to visit during children's story hour, if there is one. Encourage the child to choose books to take home.

Give books that are of special interest to the child. Encourage grandparents, aunts and uncles to give the child books or magazine subscriptions for birthdays and special holidays.

#### **7.24.3b HELP THE CHILD AS A READER**

After the child is in school, the parent will want to talk to the teacher about activities that can be done at home to help make reading pleasurable.

Encourage the child to read everything that is printed: signs, posters, cartoons, newspaper headlines, advertisements, menus, words on the TV screen, etc.

Have the child read to the parent regularly, and continue to read to the child even when the parent knows the technique has been mastered.

Accept the way the child reads with the same pleasure shown when the child first talked. As the child reads, help with unfamiliar words without negative comments. Just as one should not expect the child to be perfect when first learning to talk, do not expect the child to be a perfect reader right away.

See that the child visits the library regularly and has a personal library card.

Play sound games and word games, at home or when traveling in the car.

#### **7.24.3c WRITING READINESS AND PRACTICE**

Writing is another form of language expression. Reading and writing are related skills, and learning one while learning the other makes each skill stronger as each supports the other. Parents need to follow the same steps with printed and handwritten language as they did in working with their child on talking and listening.

Make sure the child has writing materials available. Scribbles are like early babbling and first words; children play with writing, they explore it, they experiment with it. Some materials to keep on hand are chalk and chalkboard or magic slate, felt pens, crayons, pencils and scratch paper stapled together to make a writing "pad."

Encourage the child to write, and provide feedback to the writing, not the form. Even if the parent can't read it, have the child write and then interpret the scribbles.

Write notes to the child frequently. Put them on the child's pillow, dinner plate, toothbrush, in a shoe, or anyplace that might be a pleasant surprise.

Make sure the child sees the parent writing. When the parent has reason to do some writing, suggest that the child write at the same time and for the same purposes that the parent writes: notes to parents, letters to relatives, a list of things to do that day, a birthday card, a story, a notice to put on the refrigerator.

### **7.24.4 Quality Child Care**

For parents who work outside the home and for those who would like to, finding care for their children can be a major problem and a constant source of anxiety, particularly in large, metropolitan areas. With the influx of women into the labor force, in particular mothers of young children, the need for child care in the United States has grown dramatically.

The California State PTA has become increasingly concerned about the shortage of affordable, quality child care available to families in need of child care services. Child care is composed of many types of services, avail-

able under varying systems, and it is available unevenly to parents throughout the state.

A comprehensive system of child care requires public policy that provides for adequate funding, program standards, staff training, parental involvement and equal access. The provision of quality child care is a shared responsibility of parents, providers, appropriate governmental agencies, business, industry, and the community at large. Review the California State PTA Position Statement on Child Care (Where We Stand: Position Statement 4.5.8) and the California State PTA resolution on Child Care Facilities for Latchkey Children (Where We Stand: Convention and Board of Managers Resolutions, 4.4; California State PTA Resolutions Book, www.capta.org).

### 7.24.5 Creating a Partnership Between Home and School

When parents are involved in their children's education, the children do better in school. Parents do not have to be highly educated or well-to-do, but they do need to create a home setting that tells their children education is important, that they want them to do well in school and that they will support their child at home and at school.

#### 7.24.5a Two-way COMMUNICATION

The school needs to communicate with parents and parents with the school.

Always read the material that comes from school, even when there is a lot of it.

When there is a reply-form, fill it out and send it back – the school staff needs to hear from the parent. When the parent does not respond, the staff thinks the parent does not care.

Let the teacher know when things happen at home that may affect the child's behavior at school, causing worry, excitement or fear.

**Examples:** The parent has lost a job; the spouse is coming home from sea duty; the family's pet just died.

Keep informed about the activities going on at school. When? What? For whom? Use the information provided in the school newsletter for parents.

**Parent Note:** If the school does not have a newsletter for parents, urge the principal and school PTA or other parents to get one started.

Always schedule and attend parent-teacher conferences. This is one of the best ways for the parent and the teacher to share information.

#### 7.24.5b VOLUNTEERING FOR THE SCHOOL

Be an active member of the PTA at the school.

Volunteer at the school, in the child's classroom, on field trips, etc.

Attend school and classroom events – Open House, Back-to-School Night, etc.

Help organize student- parent-school activities such as a multi-cultural fair.

Attend parenting education programs that will strengthen parenting skills and knowledge. Help plan programs that parents believe are needed.

#### 7.24.5c LEARNING ABOUT CHILDREN AND THE SCHOOL

Learn about the school policies, what the child is being taught, why, and how the school system works, how to get help for the child, etc. Learn more about parental rights and responsibilities.

Ask for information on how children develop physically, mentally and socially from infancy to adulthood, so that the parent knows what to expect of the child.

#### *Recommended Actions*

Participate in making decisions about how the school should function and in solving problems that arise at the school.

If the parent voice is not being heard and interested parents do not have the opportunity to participate in a meaningful way, talk to the principal about starting activities that lead to greater parent involvement.

Contact all parent groups at the school – PTA, school site council, advisory groups – to set up a task force to study and plan strategies for parents to be more effectively involved in planning and decision making at the school.

In order to participate at this level, the parent must be willing to:

- Spend the time and effort to study and become well informed about issues affecting the school and community;
- Work productively as part of a group;
- Take a broad view of student needs, going beyond those of one's own child;
- Speak up in a sensitive manner; and
- Interact courteously and positively with people who are different.

#### 7.24.5d EDUCATING BEGINS AT HOME

The child tends to copy the parent, so the parent continually teaches the child by the way the parent handles day-to-day situations.

The parent is the most important teacher of the skills the child needs to have for daily living, including responsibility and determination, self-esteem and confidence, concern for and getting along with others, problem solving, and the joy of living.

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### *Recommended Actions*

Share information about the child with the teacher, as the parent knows the child better than anyone else does.

Tell the school community about the parent's culture or travels and parent's work, hobbies and experiences that might be of interest or help to them in some way.

Help the school staff understand the needs of parents in the community.

### **7.24.6 Effective Parent-Teacher Conferences**

The school may schedule conferences regularly with the parent to discuss the child's report card. If not, the parent may ask for such a conference. A conference may also be requested because the parent or the teacher believes there is a problem. Whatever the reason, an effective parent-teacher conference is one of the best ways for the parent and the teacher to establish and reinforce a partnership, so the two can work together for the child's success. Parental knowledge of the child and parental viewpoint are important to the teacher, and the teacher's professional viewpoint and advice should be important to the parent. The conference is the time for this exchange of information to take place.

#### **7.24.6a BEFORE THE CONFERENCE**

Be sure to understand the purpose of the conference. Whether it is one in a regularly scheduled series of meetings to discuss the child's academic progress or report card or has been requested to discuss a problem or concern, remember that the parent and the teacher meet as adults, mutually concerned about the child's achievement and well-being.

Talk with the child before going. Ask about likes, dislikes or other thoughts on school, how it could be changed, the teacher, and the class environment.

#### *What the Parent Would Like the Teacher to Know*

Any unusual stress at home.

The child's relationship with brothers, sisters and others at home.

Favorite free time activities at home.

Organized activities in which the child participates.

Parent's perception of the child as a learner and as a person.

Previous school experiences, if the parents think it would be helpful.

#### *Questions for the Teacher*

How much homework will the child have?

How should I help?

How are grades decided?

What is the classroom discipline policy?

What kinds of tests are given? What do they mean?

#### *Questions about the Child*

Is the child meeting expectations in reading, math and other subjects compared to existing performance levels? Compared to the norm for that grade level?

How is the child doing socially? Does the child get along with others?

What does the child like to do? What does the child not like to do?

Does the child seem happy in school? Are there any problems?

#### *Why are Things Done a Certain Way?*

What happens to the homework after it is handed in, since we don't see it again?

How does a child move into a different reading group, etc.?

Parents should take advantage of and attend parent-teacher conferences whenever possible.

Parents have the right to have an interpreter at the conference. However, if the parent needs one, remember to ask in advance.

#### **7.24.6b DURING THE CONFERENCE**

Parents should keep in mind that they are meeting with the child's teacher, not their own. The parent and the teacher are meeting as partners, sharing responsibility for the child's education.

The parents should ask the questions on the list they have prepared. As other questions come up during the discussion, the parents must make sure to discuss the child's achievements and development—academically, socially, and emotionally.

If the parent does not understand something, immediately ask to have it explained.

Ask the teacher what specific activities the parent can do at home that would help the child's progress. Create an "action plan" to tell the parent what to do to help the child at home and what the teacher will do at school. Make sure it is clear who is to do what and when—what has been agreed on for the teacher to do, the parent to do, and the student to do; and how the parent will stay in contact.

Take notes during the conference, to more easily remember what was said.

Assure the teacher of continued support. Express appreciation for the opportunity to discuss the child's education.

#### **7.24.6c AFTER THE CONFERENCE**

Share what occurred at the conference with the child by:

Stressing positive points brought out by the teacher.

Giving praise for achievement.

Discussing the action plan on which the parent and the teacher agreed.

Follow through with the action plan, keeping in touch with the teacher.

### 7.24.7 Preparing for Life After High School

It is never too early to start planning for the future. Ideally, planning should begin during the child's elementary school years. Whether the child chooses a job, college, vocational school or the military after graduation, these suggestions are designed to help the parent support and guide the child in a chosen "career path" through school.

#### Advice to students:

Set goals for the future.

Know what skills are needed for a chosen career.

Work to achieve the skills to make it happen.

#### 7.24.7a LIFE SKILLS

Even as the parent helps the child with career goals, he/she needs to make sure the child understands the demands and responsibilities of living independently. Talk about how important it is to be able to make productive, effective decisions about one's life. Follow up by allowing the child to make age-appropriate decisions, and to accept the consequences of those decisions.

Items to discuss might include how the child will make choices about housing (rent); paying for utilities; the cost of owning a car (including insurance, maintenance, gas); providing food and clothing; costs of health and life insurance; starting a family; etc. Decision-making can begin with living within an allowance or clothing budget.

#### 7.24.7b HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

The California Legislature sets minimum requirements for high school graduation including the high school exit exam, but parents need to know the complete set of graduation requirements adopted by the local school district. The school district may require additional classes, satisfactory citizenship or even community involvement for graduation from high school. Whether the child plans to go to college, vocational school or directly into the job market, classes should be chosen that further the chosen career goals. To be sure that the child will graduate as planned, check with the counselor at least once a year.

#### 7.24.7c CAREER GOALS

Along with the child, meet with the school counselor to begin exploring the child's interests, abilities and career goals. Discuss the various program options with the child and the counselor, using other resources available at the high school, such as career labs, materials on various occupations or the services of special career counselors. Both parent and child should attend Career

Days and College Nights when they are offered in the school and community. Encourage vacation time employment and volunteer activities that might help to determine career goals.

#### 7.24.7d CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The child can take career and technical education classes starting at the middle school level. Such classes often support and reinforce the academic curriculum. They may be offered through the regular school, through Regional Occupational Programs or at special schools called Regional Occupational Centers.

Community colleges offer two-year career and technical programs, and many are providing programs that are an extension of the classes taken in high school. In addition, there are private schools that offer a variety of training programs, but it is important to make sure that they are accredited schools.

#### 7.24.7e COLLEGE ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS AND TESTS

There are several types of colleges: community colleges, private institutions, the California State University system, and the University of California system. Check with the child's counselor well before ninth grade to learn what entrance requirements and tests are needed for the colleges the child is interested in attending. Requirements do change, so stay current.

It is possible to practice taking college entrance tests such as the Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test (PSAT) as early as the 10<sup>th</sup> grade. When the PSAT is taken in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade, the results are returned and can be used to indicate areas for future study. The PSAT, taken in the 10<sup>th</sup> or 11<sup>th</sup> grade, is needed for National Merit Scholarship consideration. Results can be a factor in determining eligibility for some college scholarships and placement.

The Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), required by all California public universities, is usually taken in the spring of the 11<sup>th</sup> grade and may be retaken in the fall of the senior year, if desired.

#### 7.24.7f FINANCIAL AID AND SCHOLARSHIPS

The parent may be unaware of financial aid that could be available to help the family meet the expenses of vocational school or college. Scholarships often are based on more than academic achievement. Family or student need, ethnic background, career goals, extracurricular activities and parents' employers can be factors that apply to specific scholarships or grant programs. Work closely with a high school counselor as well as the college financial aid office to explore all possibilities for student support in both the public and private colleges. At times, attending a local community college for the first two years can be a financial saving that enables a student to continue on to a four-year college.

### 7.24.8 Alcohol and Drug-Use Prevention

One of the most difficult problems facing young adults is the peer pressure to use alcohol and drugs. The terrible

situations and heartbreak this often brings to families are some of the most difficult problems society faces. Parents need to be even more aware of the devastating results of drug and alcohol use by teenagers.

People who serve alcohol to minors may be found guilty of a misdemeanor and subject to a fine or jail or both.

People who serve alcohol to minors or allow minors to consume it in their homes may be subject to civil lawsuits, if the minor's activities after that drinking result in damage or injury to another person.

It is against the law for minors to purchase alcohol, be drunk in a public place, or carry alcoholic beverages in a vehicle.

More than half of all fatal injuries to 16-19- year-old drivers and passengers occur at nighttime as a result of drinking and driving, according to the Insurance Institute of Highway Safety.

Accidents involving alcohol are the number one killer of youth nationally.

#### **7.24.8a ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

The California State PTA provides resources for conducting Red Ribbon Week (7.25) and has taken a stand on drug and alcohol-related issues (Where We Stand: Issue-Related Guidelines 4.6.5).

California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs  
([www.adp.cahwnet.gov](http://www.adp.cahwnet.gov))

California Healthy Kids  
([www.californiahealthykids.org](http://www.californiahealthykids.org))

## **7.25 Red Ribbon Week Celebration**

*Revised October 2008 – Community Concerns*

The Red Ribbon Week Celebration is held annually during the month of October. Some schools use the entire month for the celebration and others use only the last week of October. The Red Ribbon Campaign began in California in 1986 to commemorate the death of a federal agent Enrique Camarena, who was slain by drug traffickers in Mexico.

The campaign went nationwide in 1987, and the name was changed to Red Ribbon Week Celebration in 1989. The purpose of Red Ribbon Week Celebration is to present a unified, positive and visible commitment toward a safe and drug-free America. PTAs are encouraged to plan prevention activities and programs in schools and communities to support a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.

PTA has been active in Red Ribbon Week Celebration since its inception. There are many activities that are appropriate for PTAs to sponsor or encourage.

Remember to follow all PTA procedures and guidelines, should the PTA unit choose to participate in any activity or distribute printed material. In all cases, the PTA's pro-

cedures and guidelines take precedence over those of other agencies.

If there are any questions or concerns about planned Red Ribbon Week Celebration activities, please contact the council and/or district PTA. Additional information also may be found on the California State PTA website, [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org).

#### **7.25.1 ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

Attorney General's Crime and Violence Prevention Center  
([www.stopdrugs.org](http://www.stopdrugs.org) and [www.safestate.org](http://www.safestate.org))

California Department of Justice/Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement  
([www.ag.ca.gov/bne](http://www.ag.ca.gov/bne))

California Department of Education  
([www.cde.ca.gov/lh/he/at](http://www.cde.ca.gov/lh/he/at))

Community Alliances for Drug Free Youth (CADFY)  
([www.CADFY.org](http://www.CADFY.org))

California Friday Night Live Partnership  
([www.fridaynightlive.org](http://www.fridaynightlive.org))

California National Guard  
([www.calguard.ca.gov/cdtf/ddr](http://www.calguard.ca.gov/cdtf/ddr))

California Parent Teacher Association (CPTA)  
([www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org))

Governor's Prevention Advisory Council  
([www.adp.ca.gov/prevention/gpac.shtml](http://www.adp.ca.gov/prevention/gpac.shtml))

U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)  
([www.dea.gov](http://www.dea.gov) and [www.justthinktwice.com](http://www.justthinktwice.com))

Partnership for a Drug-Free California  
([www.drugfree.org](http://www.drugfree.org))

Sundt Memorial Foundation  
([www.sundtmemorial.org](http://www.sundtmemorial.org))

The Enrique S. Camarena Educational Foundation  
([www.CamarenaFoundation.org](http://www.CamarenaFoundation.org))

Total Recall Learning  
([www.totalrecalllearning.com](http://www.totalrecalllearning.com))

Time to Talk (Partnership for a drug free America website directed at parents)  
([www.timetotalk.org](http://www.timetotalk.org))

The History of Red Ribbon Week ([http://www.camarenafoundation.org/red\\_ribbon\\_program.htm](http://www.camarenafoundation.org/red_ribbon_program.htm))

Today, schools and communities throughout the nation create activities and sponsor media campaigns during **Red Ribbon Week** to increase the public's awareness about the problems caused by substance abuse and promote research-based prevention strategies and programs throughout the year.

- CADFY, [www.cadfy.org](http://www.cadfy.org)

## 7.26 Reflections Program

*Revised January 2007 – Member Services*

### 7.26.1 Program Themes:

**2009-2010 “Beauty is ...”**

**2010-2011 “Together we can ...”**

The National PTA Reflections Program is an arts recognition and achievement program for students. The Reflections Program provides opportunities for students to express themselves creatively and to receive positive recognition for original works of art inspired by a pre-selected theme, while increasing community awareness on the importance of the arts in education.

The Reflections Program was established in 1969 by National PTA board member Mary Lou Anderson. Since that time, more than 10 million students have participated in the program. The program’s longevity and participation figures attest to its strength. The excitement and enthusiasm that the program generates for children, parents, schools and communities is unmatched.

Participation and appreciation for the arts is the Reflections Program’s goal. Although the Reflections Program follows a “contest” format, winning should not be the emphasis. Participation in the Reflections Program is a great way for students to explore and learn about various art forms. Creating art is a valuable learning process that challenges students to use their critical thinking skills as well as their creative talents to create art that supports a specific theme.

Students may submit an entry in any of the six arts areas listed below. Only original works of art are accepted. Depending on state and local PTA guidelines, students may enter more than one work of art. The six arts areas are as follows:

- Literature
- Musical Composition
- Photography
- Visual Arts
- Dance Choreography
- Film/Video Production

Participation in the Reflections Program is organized by school grade. Student works are critiqued with others in the same grade division. This allows recognition and judging of artworks by appropriate developmental age and skill levels. The four grade divisions are as follows:

- Primary – Preschool – Grade 2 or up to age 7
- Intermediate – Grades 3-5 or ages 8-10
- Middle/Junior – Grades 6-8 or ages 11-13
- Senior – Grades 9-12 or ages 14+

The Reflections Program is structured for PTAs to recognize students at the local unit, council, district, state and national PTA levels. Entries are first judged at the local unit level, where selected works are chosen to represent the PTA at each subsequent level depending on

each state PTA structure. Once entries reach the state level, the state PTA may select entries to submit to the National PTA. Awards of Excellence and Awards of Merit are recognized at the annual National PTA convention and are displayed as part of the program’s traveling exhibit.

Participation in the California Reflections Program is open to all students in attendance at PTA/PTSA schools where the program is sponsored. Entries are forwarded through channels. Each unit, council and district PTA establishes its own due dates, allowing adequate time for displaying and judging of entries. PTA units should require due dates from their council and district PTA. Only district PTAs may submit entries to the California State PTA.

Please remember that:

- Students may submit entries only through a PTA or PTSA in good standing.
- All entries submitted must be original works and must relate to the annual Reflections Program theme.
- Each entry must be the work of only one student. Assistance from teachers, parents or friends is not permitted, except in special cases (such as for those with visual or physical disabilities).
- Participation encourages creativity and exploration. Students should do their best, but crooked lines, incorrect musical notes, or misspelled words do not disqualify anyone.

### 7.26.2 Future Reflections Program Theme

The National PTA is looking for a theme for its next Reflections Program. A student’s suggestion(s) for the theme ideas may be sent to the state office by the individual student or by a local PTA/PTSA. The theme may include a wide variety of subjects that will appeal to students in preschool through grade 12. The winning student will receive \$100 and recognition at the National PTA Convention held in June. See [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org) for more information.

### 7.26.3 Responsibility

- Become familiar with the materials on the California State PTA website at [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org), the National PTA website at [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) and the Reflections Packet sent to presidents in the summer service mailing.
- Develop a Reflections Program planning calendar using council and district PTA due dates; identify key steps to meet calendar due dates. (Note that this program runs early in the school year for local units; therefore the chairman may have to work around athletic events when planning the calendar.)
- Submit a Reflections Program budget to the budget committee for approval.
- Explain the Reflections Program to the principal and school staff; encourage their support and participation.

Inform parents and community members. Share information about the Reflections Program at a PTA/PTSA meeting, share examples of last year's entries and have current entry forms and rules for distribution.

- Publicize the Reflections Program, theme and due dates in the school or PTA/PTSA newsletter. The local newspaper or cable TV station also could be contacted for publicity.
- Select impartial, qualified judges. Inform judges of the criteria to be used in evaluating/judging Reflections Program entries. (Refer to the rules for each art category.) Remember to accept the judges' selections of winning entries.

**IMPORTANT:** Do not show student information (name, address, etc.) on entries displayed for judging.

- Suggestions for recruiting judges: ask local newspaper or magazine editors, local authors, music instructors, professional photographers, local artists, next-level teachers or professors in respective area, dance studio professionals, professional videographers, film school professors.
- Follow guidelines from council and district PTA regarding the number of entries that may be submitted. Adhere to council and district PTA due dates!
- Make certain each entry meets all judging criteria with regard to size, mounting, etc.
- Be sure the Official Entry Form (form found in Reflections Packet sent to each unit president in service mailing sent in summer) is completely filled out, signed by both student and parent, and attached securely to each entry, according to the National PTA rules.
- Complete and send Participation Form A (form found in Reflections Packet sent to each unit president in service mailing sent in summer) with entries, according to National PTA rules.
- Keep a copy of all Official Entry Forms and Participation Form A.
- After the program, give each participant a certificate of participation.

Please share the Reflections Packet (sent in each summer service mailing from the California State PTA office) with the current Reflections Chairman.

**Important:** Do not show student information (name, address, etc.) on entries displayed for judging.

Reflections Program pins, medals, certificates and stickers are available from the PTA Store, [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org).

**Suggestions for judges:** local newspaper or magazine editors, local authors, music instructors, professional photographers, local artists, next-level teachers or professors in respective area, dance studio professionals, professional videographers, film school professors

- Return entries to students whose work was not selected for the next level of judging.
- Update the Reflections Program procedure book.
- Announce the new Reflections Program theme as soon as it is available. The theme is announced at the annual California State PTA convention.
- Publicize any awards given to local students at other levels of judging.

#### 7.26.4 Recommended Activities

- Hold a Reflections Program workshop or a Family Arts Night on Saturdays, after school or at lunch and provide supplies for students to work on their projects.
- Enlist support of local businesses for supplies, awards and display of Reflections Program entries.
- Ask stores in the area to print student artwork on their bags.
- Inquire with local businesses that print calendars about possible use of student artwork.
- Plan a local traveling art show.
- Print a Reflections Program Awards booklet listing the program participants as well as the award recipients. Acknowledge those who supported the program including parents, staff and community members.
- Display local entries in school (e.g., hallways, display case, library); at PTA functions; in local community buildings (e.g., libraries, museums, banks, hospitals, nursing homes).
- Publish student entries in a special Reflections Program booklet or calendar. Award it to Reflections Program participants, give as a gift or present as a thank you to judges, teachers and volunteers.
- Tape musical compositions and play them at PTA functions and school events. Give a copy to a local radio station to play.
- Organize a special program/reception/assembly where Reflections Program photography and visual arts entries can be displayed, musical composition entries performed, literature entries read aloud, and dance choreography and film/video production entries shown.
- Make all Reflections Program entrants feel special. Consider awarding students with certificates, ribbons, medallions, buttons, plaques, trophies, art supplies, film, music supplies, dance performance tickets, DVDs, gift certificates, books and bookmarks. Send congratulatory letters to students.

**For additional information,** contact the California State PTA Reflections Program Coordinator at [reflections@capta.org](mailto:reflections@capta.org) or 916.440.1985 ext. 329.

### 7.26.5 Additional Resources

National PTA Reflections Packet mailed to unit, council and district PTA presidents during the summer

National PTA website, [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)

California PTA website, [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org)

## 7.27 Safety

*Revised January 2007 – Community Concerns*

PTAs have a responsibility to identify and promote awareness of safety problems in the school community and, in collaboration with others, to help develop solutions.

Safety is a growing concern for the public. Preparedness for emergencies and disasters, as well as the prevention of unintentional injuries, is a serious concern of those who care for children in the home, at school, and in the community.

Activities to promote safety are related closely to and can be incorporated in all PTA interests.

### 7.27.1 Recommended Actions

Establish an ongoing working relationship with the school district and safety agencies within the community (e.g., local branches of the National Safe Kids Coalition). Attend safety workshops, conferences, and clinics.

Research the facts on safety problems and regulations in the school and community. Interview school officials, student leaders, local police, fire officials, and members of health departments, safety councils, automobile clubs, medical societies, and other groups involved in keeping the community safe.

Determine what safety instruction is included in the school curriculum, K-12, and adult education programs.

Become familiar with the school district's and school site's state-mandated disaster preparedness program. Is it up-to-date, adequate and enforced?

Suggest a neighborhood survey to discover toxic substance hazards, and follow up with proper authorities for correction and implementation of safety programs.

Cooperate with school authorities to inform the public of these programs (Family Disaster Preparedness Plan and Emergency Kit 7.11.3).

Cooperate with PTA program chairman to plan a safety program for at least one PTA meeting during the year. Secure guest speakers from community safety agencies. Make announcements and arrange displays, exhibits, and posters at meetings.

For additional ideas, see *Creating an Event 7.3*

See "Safety" in Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions, position statements and guidelines.

Sponsor parent education safety awareness programs.

Keep informed about all safety legislation and pending legislation at the local, state, and federal levels of government. Study measures regulating schools and residential areas.

### 7.27.2 Additional Resources

See "Safety" in the Advocacy Topic Index for related resolutions, position statements or guidelines.

California Attorney General's  
Crime and Violence Prevention Center  
(<http://safestate.org>)

California Coalition for Children's Health and  
Safety ([www.sacadvocacy.com/ccsh/ccsh.html](http://www.sacadvocacy.com/ccsh/ccsh.html))

California Department of Consumer Affairs  
([www.dca.ca.gov](http://www.dca.ca.gov) or  
[www.dca.ca.gov/kids/index.html](http://www.dca.ca.gov/kids/index.html))

California Safe Kids  
([www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org))

California Safe School Coalition  
([www.casafeschools.org](http://www.casafeschools.org))

Child Safety Network ([www.csn.org](http://www.csn.org))

California State Automobile Association  
([www.csaa](http://www.csaa) and [www.aaa-calif.com](http://www.aaa-calif.com))

Insurance Information Institute ([www.iii.org](http://www.iii.org))

National Education Association ([www.nea.org](http://www.nea.org))

National Safe Kids ([www.usa.safekids.org](http://www.usa.safekids.org))

National Safety Council  
([www.nsc.org](http://www.nsc.org))

Safe Kids Worldwide ([www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org))

## 7.28 Scholarships

Funds for the scholarship program to further various kinds of higher education are approved annually by the California State PTA.

Scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors to commend extensive volunteer service in the school and community. Scholarships are for use during the first year, following high school graduation.

Scholarship awards also are available to credentialed teachers, counselors, and school nurses for advanced study, and to PTA volunteers with at least three years of PTA service to continue their education.

Applications are available from the *California State PTA Toolkit*, the California State PTA office, or from the website at [www.capta.org](http://www.capta.org).

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## 7.28a SCHOLARSHIP AND GRANT COMMITTEE

Recommends necessary policies;  
Administers the current scholarship and grant program;  
Reviews each scholarship and grant project;  
Selects scholarship and grant recipients; and  
Recommends, to the California State PTA Board of Managers for adoption, amendments to the scholarship and grant program for the following year.

### 7.28.1 Graduating High School Senior Scholarship

*(Established 1977/1978 – Revised October 2008)*

Scholarships are available annually from the California State PTA to high school seniors graduating between January and June of each calendar year. These scholarships acknowledge the achievement of high school seniors of volunteer work in the school and community. Scholarships are for use during the first year following high school graduation at an accredited college, university, community college, or trade or technical school.

**Application:** An application and reference form are located in the *Toolkit*, Chapter 9 Forms. Applications and reference forms with letters must be received in the California State PTA office by close of business February 1. When February 1 falls on a weekend, applications are due in the State PTA office by close of business the following Monday. Postmarks will not be accepted.

**Qualifications:** Applicant must have volunteered in the school and community and must be graduating from a California public high school that has a PTA unit in good standing. Applicant must be a member of the PTA/PTSA unit at his/her high school.

**Selection:** Recipients are selected by the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Committee. Upon selection to receive a California State PTA Graduating High School Senior Scholarship, a check will be sent to the recipient with the award letter. Checks will be issued to recipients by June first of the current fiscal year.

### 7.28.2 Continuing Education Scholarship for Credentialed Teachers and Counselors

*(Established 1976 – Revised October 2008)*

Scholarships are available annually from the California State PTA for continuing education use, including summer study, from January 1 through December 31.

**Application:** An application and reference form are located in the *Toolkit*, Chapter 9 Forms. Applications and reference forms with letters must be received in the California State PTA office by close of business November 15. When November 15 falls on a weekend, applications are due in the State PTA office by close of business the following Monday. Postmarks will not be accepted.

**Qualifications:** Scholarships are granted to credentialed teachers and counselors who were employed full time in the public schools in California during the preceding academic year, who have a minimum of three (3) years' teaching/counseling experience in public schools, who have a full-time teaching or counseling contract for the current year and who plan to continue as a teacher or counselor. Applicant must be a member of a PTA/PTSA unit in good standing and teach or have a counseling position at that PTA/PTSA school.

**Selection:** Recipients are selected by the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Committee and approved by the California State PTA. A check for the scholarship is sent to the recipient's PTA district president to be presented to the recipient.

### 7.28.3 Continuing Education Scholarship for School Nurses

*(Established 1985 – Revised October 2008)*

Scholarships are available annually from the California State PTA for continuing education use at Board of Registered Nurses-(BRN) approved institutions and/or providers from January 1 through December 31.

**Application:** An application and reference form are located in the *Toolkit*, Chapter 9 Forms. Applications and reference forms with letters must be received in the California State PTA office by close of business November 15. When November 15 falls on a weekend, applications are due in the State PTA office by close of business the following Monday. Postmarks will not be accepted.

**Qualifications:** Scholarships are granted to licensed registered nurses who have been employed as school nurses in the public schools in California during the preceding academic year, who have a minimum of three (3) years' nursing experience in the public schools, who have a nursing contract for the current year and who plan to continue as public school nurses. Applicant must be a member of a PTA/PTSA unit in good standing and have an assignment in at least one PTA/PTSA school.

**Selection:** Recipients are selected by the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Committee. A check for the scholarship is sent to the recipient's PTA district president to be presented to the recipient.

### 7.28.4 Continuing Education Scholarships for PTA Volunteers

*(Established 1993 – Revised October 2008)*

Scholarships are available annually from the California State PTA to be used for continuing education at accredited colleges, universities, trade or technical schools. These scholarships recognize volunteer service in PTA and enable PTA volunteers to continue their education. The scholarships may be utilized during the period January 1 to December 31.

**Application:** An application and reference form are located in the *Toolkit*, Chapter 9 Forms. Applications and reference forms with letters must be received in the

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California State PTA office by close of business November 15. When November 15 falls on a weekend, applications are due in the State PTA office by close of business the following Monday. Postmarks will not be accepted.

**Qualifications:** Applicant must have given three years' volunteer service to PTA/PTSA and must hold current membership in a PTA/PTSA unit in good standing.

**Selection:** Recipients are selected by the California State PTA Scholarship and Grant Committee. Continuing volunteer service in PTA/PTSA is a major criterion in the selection of scholarship recipients. Upon proof of enrollment, a check for the scholarship is sent to the recipient's PTA district president to be presented to the recipient.



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