PTA’s Tools You Can Use
National Representative
2016
By the end of this workshop you will be able to:

• Identify and define the importance of the PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

• Access National PTA’s programs and other available resources

• Understand the steps for planning program strategies throughout the school year
National PTA’s Definition of Effective Family Engagement

National PTA worked with the leading researchers to develop a formal definition of effective family engagement.

There are three components.
National PTA’s Definition of Effective Family Engagement

A Shared Responsibility in which:

• Schools and other community agencies and organizations are committed to engaging families in meaningful and culturally respectful ways, and

• Families are committed to actively supporting their children’s learning and development.
National PTA’s Definition of Effective Family Engagement

Cradle to Career:

• Continuous across a child’s life, spanning from Early Head Start programs to college and career.
National PTA’s Definition of Effective Family Engagement

Across Contexts:

• Carried out everywhere that children learn –
  ○ Home
  ○ Pre-kindergarten programs
  ○ School
  ○ After-school programs
  ○ Faith-based organizations
  ○ Community programs and activities
No matter what their family income or background may be, students with involved parents/caregivers are more likely to:

• Earn higher grades and test scores
• Pass their classes
• Attend school regularly
• Have better social skills
• Graduate and go on to postsecondary education

Family Engagement Supports School Reform

New research shows that meaningful family and community engagement is one of five essential ingredients for effective school reform:

1. (Principal) leadership as the driver for change
2. Family-school-community ties
3. Professional capacity
4. Student-centered learning climate
5. Instructional guidance

National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

1. Welcoming All Families
   Standard 1

2. Communicating Effectively
   Standard 2

3. Supporting Student Success
   Standard 3

4. Speaking Up for Every Child
   Standard 4

5. Sharing Power
   Standard 5

6. Collaborating with Community
   Standard 6
Survey Says: Top Concerns for PTA Leaders

**Education**
- Lack of family engagement
- Low levels of literacy
- Funding cuts
- High school dropout
- Educational standards/rigor and assessments

**Health & Safety**
- Childhood obesity
- Drugs/alcohol
- Bullying
- Dangerous routes to/from and around school
- Social and emotional stress

**Arts & Cultural Exploration**
- Reduction in arts education staff
- Lack of resources for arts in education
To enrich the educational experience & overall well-being of every child

FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Education

Arts & Cultural Exploration

Health & Safety

COMMUNITY RESOURCES
Ways National PTA Supports Local PTA Programs & Partnerships

OUR GOAL:
To engage families in education, health and safety, and arts and cultural exploration.

Visit:
PTA.org/programs
PTA.org/awards

Grant Funding
PTA.org/Awards

Turn-Key Family Event Kits

Leader Trainings, Networks & Alliances

Informational Resources for Families & Schools
Program Planning Process

1. Recruit your planning team
2. Develop a plan and timeline
3. Promote your program to families
4. Recruit event volunteers
5. Promote your program to the community
6. Generate community support (i.e., funds, donations)
7. Host the event – HAVE FUN!
8. Recognize volunteers/supporters
9. Celebrate!
10. Evaluate and start planning for next time
Education:

Engaging families in learning and school improvements
At a National PTA School of Excellence, families feel welcomed and empowered to support student success, and PTA is a key partner for continuous school improvement.
Why participate?

• Make your school a *more welcoming place for families.*

• Empower families to *be part of school decision-making.*

• Demonstrate to school leaders that **PTA is a key partner** for continuous school improvements.

• Receive *recognition in your community, state and nationwide* for engaging families in a way that makes a substantial, positive impact on your school and student success.
Program Timeline

April – October
Enroll!

September – November
Submit Family-School Partnership Scan

School Year
Use Roadmap to Excellence to improve Family-School Partnership

March – June 1
Complete School of Excellence Application

August – Celebrate Excellence
Step 1: Enroll!
PTA.org/excellence
Step 2:
Review the
Getting Started Guide
### Step 3: Conduct a Family-School Partnership Scan

1. **Analyze existing family engagement measures deployed by your school/PTA.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Welcoming All Families</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Our school has friendly signs inside and outside to welcome families and visitors in the multiple languages they speak.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Our school and PTA translate communications into the school’s major languages.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Families feel encouraged to volunteer.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Families feel our school’s policies and programs reflect, respect, and value the diversity in our school community.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Families feel they are treated fairly regardless of age, gender, race, or cultural background.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Communicating Effectively

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Our school and PTA communicate with families in multiple ways (e.g., email, phone, web site).</th>
<th>Unknown</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Frequently</th>
<th>Always</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Step #4: Use the Roadmap to Excellence

STEPS TO A STRONGER FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP

The primary objective of the National PTA School of Excellence program is to help PTAs and schools strengthen family-school partnerships to benefit all students’ academic success and general well-being. Your progress toward this objective is what will be assessed through the final National PTA School of Excellence Application, submitted at the end of the school year.

National PTA offers the following customized recommendations to help your school move its family-school partnership to the next level. Each recommendation is based on your answers to the Family-School Partnership Scan.

Your next step is to review these recommendations with your school leaders and School of Excellence team and determine what you can work on first. Try to make progress by focusing on two to three recommendations per National Standard for Family-School Partnerships. Your focused attention to making substantial progress in a few areas per National Standard will help you to achieve the National PTA School.

If you have questions about these recommendations, email excellence@pta.org or call us at 800-307-4PTA. Your success is ours. We want to help.

### Welcoming All Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>National PTA’s Recommendations</th>
<th>You said</th>
<th>Listening and Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Our school has friendly signs inside and outside to welcome families and visitors in the multiple languages they speak.</td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>Good start—but there is room for improvement! Families feel more welcome when they see friendly signs in multiple languages throughout the building. Use school demographic data to determine the three languages most commonly spoken by families in your school community. Work with the school and your membership committee to update signs throughout the building in these languages. Start with the signs families see first upon entering the building, such as welcome signs on the front door and front office entrances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Our school and PTA translate communications into the school’s major languages.</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>This is an opportunity for improvement! You want families from diverse backgrounds engaged in all school activities. In order to achieve this, it is important to keep all families informed about issues and events occurring at the school. If your school is not translating this information into families’ native languages, you may be missing a great opportunity for effective communication between school and home. Take the first step. Work with your principal, school secretary or parent advisory committee to review current communication practices at your school. You may need to advocate for a more deliberate approach.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Families feel encouraged to volunteer.

You said: “Frequently.” Great job! Take it to the next level: Using the volunteer or membership forms that families complete each year, work with your membership volunteer or hospitality committee to make personal phone calls to diverse parents to solicit their ideas about volunteering. Help connect parents to specific opportunities that interest them. This personal touch will help broaden your volunteer base and engage even more families in serving their school community.

4. Families feel our school’s policies and programs reflect, respect, and value the diversity in our school community.

You said: “Always.” Excellent—keep it up.

5. Families feel they are treated fairly regardless of age, gender, race, or cultural background.

You said: “Sometimes.” Good start—but there is room for improvement! Two-way communication occurs when teachers and families dialogue together, and it is a shared responsibility. The traditional parent-teacher conference is one strategy for building effective two-way communication. Provide families with information about what to do to make parent-teacher conferences more effective. They should be prepared to discuss specific concerns or provide new information about their child. Discussion should avoid blame by taking a solution-focused approach.

National PTA offers additional tips for what to do before, during and after a parent-teacher conference:

- [http://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?ItemNumber=7710](http://www.pta.org/programs/content.cfm?ItemNumber=7710)

6. Families feel our school is inviting and is a place where families feel they belong.

You said: “Frequently.” Great job! Take it to the next level: Families and school staff should collaborate continuously to support students’ learning at home and at school. Teachers and parents can discuss students’ individual learning styles, family cultural experiences, strengths, and academic and personal needs regularly and develop personalized goals to support academic success. Consider implementing one of the following strategies:

- At many schools, parents, students and teachers work together to establish personal education plans (PEPs) to support students’ education or career goals.
- At Title I schools, every family signs a home-school compact. These compacts should be discussed at parent-teacher conferences and can be individualized if a student is not meeting standards.
- This video from Great Schools describes a four-step process for helping children set and reach goals:
Step #5:
Complete the National PTA School of Excellence application by June 1.
Step #6: Celebrate your excellence!

• Notification and celebration kit sent in August
  – *Celebrate Your Excellence Guide*
  – Banner
  – Media outreach tools
  – Graphics for school and PTA stationery
  – Event suggestions
  – National PTA recognition
  – State PTA recognition

• Qualify to win a Phoebe Apperson Hearst Award and a $2,000 grant
Enroll!
PTA.org/Excellence
800-307-4PTA (4782)
Family Engagement Tools at PTA.org

- National Standards Poster
- National Standards Brochure
- National Standards Assessment and Implementation Guides
- Tip sheets for parents and teachers
- 100 Ways to Help Your Child and School Succeed brochure and poster
- ...and More!
PTA Parents’ Guides to Student Success

Grade-specific guides that:

• Increase understanding of the importance of academic standards

• Provide key items children should learn in English language arts and mathematics

• Share activities families can do at home to support learning

• Offer methods for families to build stronger relationships with teachers

• Give tips for planning college/career (high school only)

pta.org/commoncore
Family Event Toolkits
PTA.org/programs

• National PTA provides:
  – Planning guide
  – Lesson plans for interactive, family education stations
  – Family take-home tools
  – Family recruitment tools
  – Media and social media tools
  – Training webinars
  – Funding (when possible)
The National PTA® Family Reading Experience, Powered by Kindle was developed to help families get more involved in their children’s reading and enhance their emerging interest in books.
Two Kits:

- Grades K-2
- Grades 3-5
Four Themes:

- On Safari
- Under the Sea
- Out of this World
- Around the World
Six Stations:

- Phonemic Awareness
- Fluency
- Phonics
- Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Technology
Health & Safety:

Building school and home environments that make the healthy or safe choice – an easy choice.
Healthy Lifestyles Month
November

Celebrate Healthy Lifestyles

November is Healthy Lifestyles Month!
National PTA created Healthy Lifestyles Month because research shows that a healthy child can achieve and learn more. PTAs nationwide are encouraged to plan events and activities throughout the month of November to promote health and wellness in their communities.

Healthy Lifestyles Month is a wonderful opportunity for school communities to demonstrate their commitment to ensuring that all students show up each day healthy and ready to learn. Local PTAs participate by conducting programs and events that promote health education, physical activity and parental involvement. This can be something as small as featuring an article in their newsletter or as big as organizing a 5K walk. PTAs also encourage families to increase their physical activity, eat fresh fruits and vegetables, participate in their community’s physical activity programs and promote lifelong healthy behaviors.

National PTA’s Healthy Lifestyles Month has encouraged PTAs across the country to get creative and develop clever initiatives that make healthy living fun. What will your PTA do to celebrate?

Steps for Celebrating Healthy Lifestyles Month
Ideas for Celebrating Healthy Lifestyles Month
Healthy Lifestyles Success Stories

Related Content & Resources
- Be Smart on Facebook
- PTA Position Statement on Mass Media
- Resolution on Internet and Wireless Communication
- Internet Safety Checklist for Parents
- Internet Safety Overview
Fire Up Your Feet programs across the country are encouraging families, students and schools to work together and create active lifestyles which inspire our future generation to live healthy, active lives.
FIRE, BURN AND SCALD PREVENTION

GET LOW AND GO
This activity helps children learn what to do if they are in a fire.

LOCATION:
Indoors. This activity can be conducted on its own in a smaller space (such as a classroom) or as one station of a larger safety fair.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT:
Safe Kids coalitions have experience conducting fire, burn and scald prevention activities in a variety of settings. Partnering with a local coalition is the easiest way to ensure you have access to the expertise, equipment and resources needed to host a successful event.

Consider inviting your local fire department to attend your event. They might be willing to bring a fire truck and offer tours. It’s also helpful for young children to get accustomed to the sight of firefighters dressed in their equipment so that they are less likely to run or hide from help in an emergency.

MATERIALS NEEDED:
- Black crepe paper
- Chairs, desks or other items to be used as “obstacles”
- Hanging crepe paper in a doorway or from a classroom ceiling.

PREPARATION:
- Hang crepe paper in a doorway or from a classroom ceiling.
- Create an obstacle course for children to crawl through.

ACTIVITY INSTRUCTION:
- Explain to students and their families:
  - There can be a lot of smoke in a fire.
  - Smoke is up high, and clear air is down low.
  - Crawling on hands and knees under the smoke to get out.
  - Get outside quick.
  - Go to your family’s meeting place.
  - Ask children to crawl under the crepe paper and through the obstacle course. Remind them that they must stay on their hands and knees to “escape” safely.
  - Invite family members to wait in a designated “meeting place” and celebrate with their children when they complete the course.

SAFETY AT HOME & AT PLAY

BIKES:

REMINDERS FOR ADULTS, LESSONS FOR CHILDREN

1. Wear a helmet.
   A. Make sure that the helmet fits on top of your head, not tipped back or forward.
   B. Try the Eyes, Ears and Mouth Test
      - EYES Check: Position the helmet on your head. Look up and you should see the bottom rim of the helmet. The rim should be one to two finger-widths above the eyebrows.
      - EARS Check: Make sure the straps of the helmet form a “Y” under your ears when buckled. The strap should be snug but comfortable.
      - MOUTH Check: Open your mouth as wide as you can. Do you feel the helmet hug your head? If not, tighten those straps and make sure the buckle is tight against your skin.
   C. After a crash or any impact that affects your helmet, visibly or not, replace it immediately.

2. Follow the rules of the road.
   A. Ride with traffic and obey the same laws as motorists.
   B. Use the rightmost lane that heads in the direction that you are traveling.
   C. Obey all traffic control devices, such as stop signs, lights and lane markings.
   D. Always look back and use hand-and-arm signals to indicate your intention to stop, merge or turn.
   E. Cycling should be restricted to off roads (e.g. sidewalks and paths) until age 10.

3. Be visible.
   A. Ride where drivers can see you.
   B. Wear brightly colored clothing at all times.
   C. At night, use a white front light and red rear light or reflector. Wear reflective tape or clothing.

4. Be predictable.
   A. Ride in a straight line and don’t swerve between parked cars.
   B. Make eye contact with motorists to let them know you are there.

5. Anticipate conflicts.
   A. Be aware of traffic around you and be prepared to take evasive action.
   B. Learn braking and turning techniques to avoid crashes.
   C. Be extra alert at intersections.
Goal:

To build safe and supportive school environments filled with healthy peer relationships.
Our approach:

Build a Connect for Respect team. Invite students, teachers, community members, and other parents to work collaboratively towards improving school climate.

Assess the school climate from the perspective of students, families and school personnel. Utilize existing tools and resources from your school.

Engage the school community at Connect for Respect forums, where students, families, school staff and community members come together to share their concerns and brainstorm solutions.

Develop an action plan to educate and empower family members and students, create safer and more supportive environments, and enact and enforce effective anti-bullying policies.

Empower students, family members and others to implement strategies that reflect the community’s unique strengths, needs and existing school climate efforts.
Arts & Cultural Exploration:

Expanding opportunities for all children to explore and be involved in the arts and cultural exploration.
2016-17 Theme: *What Is Your Story?*

- Oldest and largest youth arts education programs (~300,000 students and 8,000 PTAs each year)
- Grades Pre-K through 12 and Special Artist Division
Arts in Education Week
September 11-17, 2016
• Reflections Theme Contest
• Mary Lou Anderson Arts Enhancement Grants for in-school and after school arts projects serving at-risk student populations
Visit PTA.org/Programs and PTA.org/Awards
Advocacy

• Sign up for *PTA Takes Action Network*
• Access Advocacy Toolkit
• Review National PTA Federal Policy Agenda
• Join fellow PTA advocates for the annual National PTA Legislative Conference
• For more information, visit pta.org/advocacy
Visit PTA.org to stay connected!

- **Site map** for our programs, tools and resources
- **Social media** (Facebook, Flickr, Instagram, LinkedIn, One Voice Blog, Pinterest, Twitter, YouTube)
PTA Newsletters

PTA Parent
This bi-monthly publication shares ideas on how PTA families can be engaged in their child's education and wellbeing. Content includes PTA toolkit resources, fundraising programs, tips/advice and Our Children magazine content.

PTA Takes Action Update
The monthly newsletter offers the latest news on legislative issues affecting families, children, education, schools and communities. It also highlights National PTA policy priorities and activities.

Local Leader News
This monthly newsletter keeps PTA local leaders informed on the latest National PTA developments, as well as new programs and resources available at National PTA.

Leadership Briefing
This monthly newsletter keeps all PTA stakeholders informed on new National PTA events, partnerships, programs and resources.

sign up — sign up
Membership Benefits

You Are a Part of a Network:
• 54 PTA Congresses: including Puerto Rico, Europe DOD, and Virgin Islands
• Over 20,000 PTAs and several million members

You Are a Part of a Network with Benefits:
• AARP, Boxed, Hertz, LifeLock, MetLife, Quicken Loans, Schwan’s Cares, Sylvan Learning, and TeenSafe
• Visit PTA.org/Benefits to learn more

You Are a Part of a Network with Support:
• Customizable membership applications, marketing materials, and information on new and existing benefit providers
• Visit PTA.org/Today to learn more
Questions?