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Every minute matters

Whether it's 10 minutes or an hour, regularly spend time with your kids in activities that you all enjoy. #PTAhealthy



Rebecca Cahill
MoPTA VP Membership

As I look ahead to the New Year, I promise myself to be a better wife and mother, be more organized, work out more often, eat better, clean out my closets, take more pictures, and not to over-commit myself! I begin to fill out my new calendar, set my due dates, appointments, meetings and commitments, add in everyone else's schedules, and before I know it, my next few months are laid out for me in color-coded perfection. If only it would stay that way!

Engage your members with a purpose

Whatever your role in PTA, you may find yourself going through the same process of reflection and goal setting. I hope that you do. It is important to look back at what was successful, remember the children you spoke up for, and recognize how PTA improved the health, safety and education of the children in your community. We improve ourselves by setting goals for what is to come next, and use what we have learned to our benefit.

My suggestion to you, as you look ahead to the next six months of PTA, is to plan with purpose. Do not just do what has always been done. ASK what is needed! Make an effort to communicate with children, parents, teachers and administration to truly ask what they need. Children may tell you they need a safer walking route to school or a better system to deal with bullying. Parents may tell you they need a better understanding of the latest social media apps their kids are using. Teachers may tell you they need ideas on how to build a relationship with parents that are not involved. Administration may tell you they need help with family engagement programs. Whatever it is, as PTA leaders, we need to ask, listen and then work at how to implement those needs and ideas.

As needs change within our school communities, PTA has always worked to recognize and meet those needs to the benefit of our children. **Grow your membership and engage your members with purpose.** Communicate with your members what PTA has accomplished and what your next steps are. Show your school and community that PTA is a strong and relevant voice for children. What will your PTA goals be for 2015?

This article is part of a series from the vice presidents of Missouri PTA.

Missouri Parent Teacher Association

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15 minutes for 2015

By Rebecca Cahill,
MoPTA Vice President
of Membership

Goals, goals and more goals; if only the follow through was as easy as writing them down! While this may not work with every goal you have, I have a solution that will work for many of them.

1. **Write out your goal.** Make it a real goal by giving it importance and write it down! Place your written goal(s) in a place you will see every day so that you are reminded of your intentions.
2. **Spend 15 minutes a day on your goal. Set a timer.**
3. **Your goal is to be more organized.** Spend 15 minutes a day doing something that helps you to be more organized. One day it may be cleaning out the fridge. Another day it may be throwing out junk mail. Two days may be needed to work on a section of your closet.
4. **Your goal is to spend more time with your kids** or do a better job connecting with them. Spend 15 minutes a day without the TV on, without distractions and sit down with them. LISTEN to them and let them do the sharing. Be the person they can come to with anything.
5. **Your goal is to begin working out.** Set a timer for 15 minutes and get busy! Many people jump into work out programs that are just too hard, too long or not even fun. Sore and unmotivated, we give up and won't start again for another 365 days. Easing into a workout routine is the way to go. Walk the dog for 15 minutes (your dog will benefit too!) Before you know it, your walk is a routine, a habit that you (and your dog) will miss when skipped. Don't have a dog? Find a friend!

The point is, in order for a goal to become a reality, there has to be commitment. Make that commitment by starting small and building on it. Once your goal has become a habit, it will be easier to devote more time to it if needed.

Legislative Report January Update

Advocacy is what PTA was founded on 117 years ago and is just as important today as it was for our founding members. January 7, 2015 began our state legislative year and the number of bills that have been filed is long and range from topics of early childhood education, to school funding, to health and safety.

As parents we need to make sure we are understand what is being negotiated and discussed in our legislatures; and we need to contact our legislators and let them know where we stand as their constituents. This is ADVOCACY!! And we can all do it!

The link to the bill watch list can be found at <http://mopta.org/advocacy/capitol-chatter/bill-watch-list-2015-legislative-session-as-of-january-1st/>



The Outstanding Membership Campaign Rides Again

With the western theme of, "Roundin' up Members for Sequiota PTA", Sequiota Elementary PTA kicked off their 2013-2014 membership campaign with a, "Yee-Haa"! Membership tables were decorated with cowboy hats and bandanas, welcoming parents with exciting western themed décor during Meet the Teacher and Open House nights. Board members staffed the tables in order to provide information to anyone interested in PTA. Every member who joined the PTA received their very own sheriff badge along with their PTA membership card.

The fun and energy didn't stop there. Western themed clip art was used on membership forms for teachers and parents, as well as 4" x 5" welcome cards with Sequiota PTA's website and important upcoming dates. Sequiota Elementary PTA hosted their first ever Fall Hoe Down to kick off the new school year! Every PTA member that flashed their PTA membership card or their sheriff badge, received a FREE frozen custard at the Hoe Down. PTA information tables were set up at school events throughout the year.

Sequiota Elementary PTA submitted a whopping 379 members and amazing 32 business members in the 2013-2014 school year. Four tiers of business memberships were offered, with varying promotion benefits offered at each level for the business. Sequiota's student enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year was 363; proof that a visible and coordinated membership campaign only results in success for your PTA.

Congratulations to President Yvonne Turner & Membership Chair Tonya Rinehart of Sequiota Elementary PTA, winner of the 2014 Outstanding Membership Campaign Award!

Did you have an amazing membership drive? Units in good standing for the 2014-2015 school year are encouraged to apply for the Outstanding Membership Campaign Award before April 1, 2015. Find the application online at <http://mopta.org/forms-awards-applications/> and scroll down to Membership Awards

News You Can Use | Highlights This Month

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Science Night is a great idea for your next PTA activity - consider hosting one on Earth Day to celebrate the earth.

Raytown PTA Council's S.T.E.M. in the Gym: a fun night of Science and Discovery

By Kenya M. Pieters, Raytown PTA Council, VP

Two years ago the Raytown PTA Council set out to coordinate an event that would elevate awareness of and develop interest in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math. The event also had to have a fun factor. The vision was an event filled with hands on activities in which kids could solve problems, test ideas and just have fun discovering.

Last November this vision became reality. It was such a huge success that this year the Raytown PTA Council hosted the 2nd annual STEM In The Gym for all Raytown elementary school children and their families.

The Council wanted the event to be as much about community as it was about Science. Early in the planning stages, the Council sought buy in from district administration which was key to selling the event to the teachers and staff. With the support of the district, many teachers volunteered to be a part of the event. High School students volunteered to lead science experiments and were able to receive volunteer hours for their service. The Raytown business community was involved as well.

The gym was packed with presenters from various backgrounds: Astronomy, Robotics, 3D printing/ manufacturing, nature and wildlife, bridge engineering....the list goes on. Teachers and student groups engaged children in hands on activities that were as fun and exciting as they were educational. It was a blast!

Once again, our community science party known as STEM In The Gym was a hit with Raytown families. In the end, the key to our success with this event was meticulous planning, a solid partnership with our district's administration and advertising!

Trouble on Board: Agitators, Instigators, and Malcontents!

By Kathy Nevans, National PTA

Have you ever wondered why some boards just seem to get along better than other boards? What is the root causes of trouble, and how can problems be avoided in the future? Problems can start small but quickly grow. Who is responsible, what can be done?

Prevention starts with Education. Is there an Orientation with bylaws, job descriptions, roles and responsibilities, legal or fiduciary responsibilities explained? Are volunteers provided with leadership skills development and training made available?

Do you have in your bylaws: Terms of position and a process for removal? Do you make renewals automatic or is there an assessment? As a leader, are issues addressed, do you take action, hold people accountable, not play favorites and create a culture of excellence? The above mentioned items are based on prevention but what happens if you already have a board with trouble makers?

The constant questioner can never have enough information. They believe that questioning everything will drive change and sometimes they get out of hand. As a leader, channel that energy, focus on the really good questions and give positive feedback. Assign that person to quietly listen to the discussion and then ask the ONE or TWO questions the group do not bring up.

The Bully can be verbally aggressive, passive/aggressive or controlling. They use language as a weapon and appear to know it all and they do not expect to be challenged. With this type of person, a leader needs to set ground rules for meetings, codes of conduct and boundaries. Challenge with a calm voice and finally a personal conversation to try to turn the behavior around may need to take place.

The Micromanager is high maintenance, tires everyone out, focuses on process and operation instead of results and outcomes. This person fails to understand the board's role and have assigned themselves as the monitor. As a leader your need to make sure that all are trained on board rules and responsibilities, ensure that agendas are outcome and strategy focused and make sure that all board members are partners in the leadership.

The Rule Breaker is absent, unprepared, tardy, disrespectful of the collaborative process and does not understand the role of board members. The answer goes back to bylaws, knowing the rules, job descriptions and responsibilities. It is about holding individuals accountable

The Change Resisters are highly critical of new ideas, have a negative attitude and are an obstacle to creativity, growth and change. They have been around forever and drive off new board members. In dealing with these people focus on priorities and outcomes, educate, explore pros and cons, discuss relevancy. Help the board understand that change is essential and not changing is deadly.

And finally the No-Show. They don't follow through on assignments, don't hand in reports, don't understand role, is unreliable and does a bare minimum or nothing at all. Again, the leader must ensure expectations are clear, follow up on role and responsibilities. Need to ask if the person really wants to be there.

Your role as a leader is a commitment and is not for wimps. It is taking responsibility for the proper facilitation of the work of the association. Leaders need to hold each other accountable and create environments of high expectations for behavior and action. None of this is each, but all of it is possible.

Remember: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." Henry de Bracton and "If you will call your troubles experiences, and remember that every experience develops some latent fore within you, you will grow vigorous and happy, however adverse your circumstances may seem to be." John R. Miller



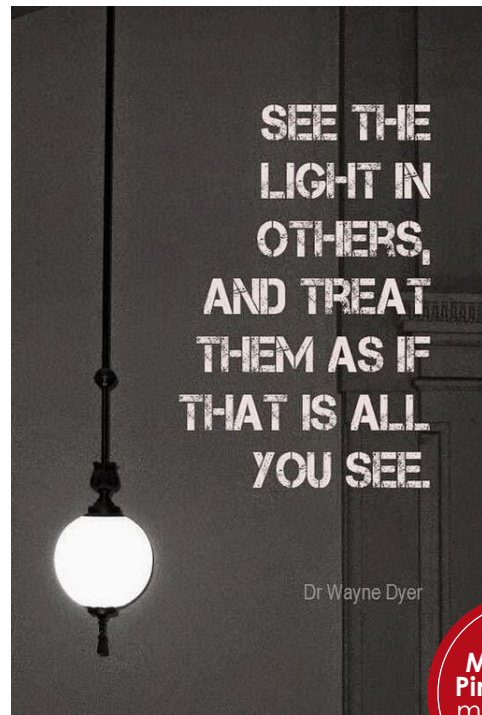
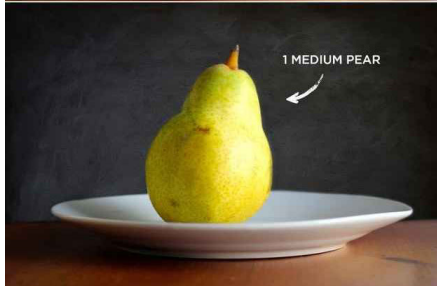
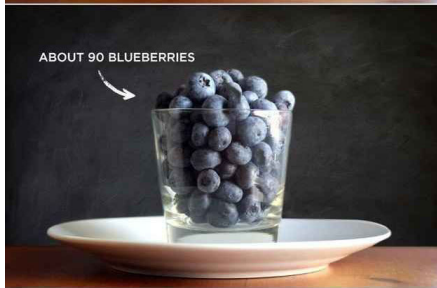
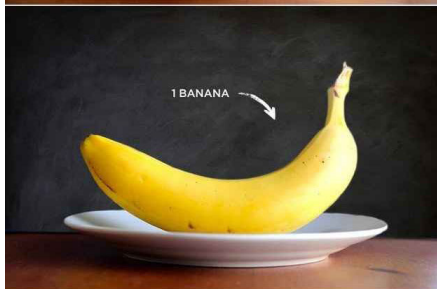
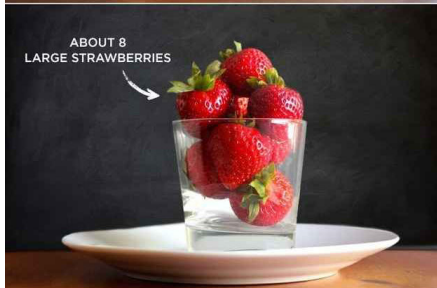
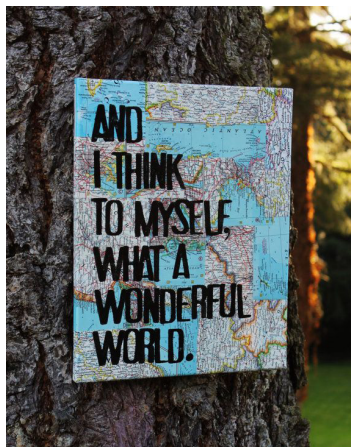
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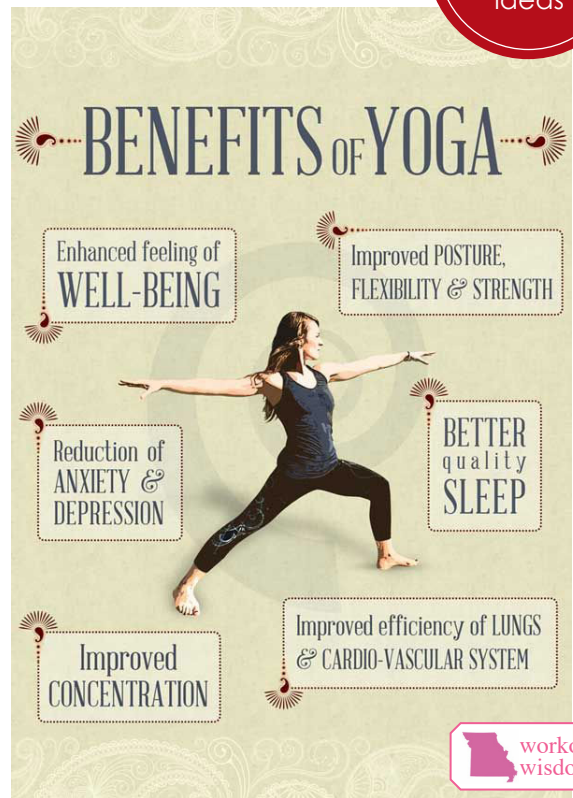


230 degrees / 15 minutes



Dr Wayne Dyer

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