

Missouri Parent Teacher Association

CONTACT

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everychild. onevoice.®

Today



EARLY BIRD AWARDS

Units that send the
HIGHEST MEMBERSHIP
based upon last year's
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP to the state office
POSTMARKED ON OR BEFORE
SEPTEMBER 26, 2008 will earn the
EARLY BIRD AWARD
and recognized at the
Missouri PTA Convention
in Kansas City in October!

THREE (3) WINNING CATEGORIES

Early Childhood/Elementary

Middle School/Jr. High/Combined(grade/
middle, grade/high, jr. high/high)

High School

NO APPLICATION NECESSARY

Get those dues in by September 26th, and
YOU MAY BE A WINNER!

We're **Soaring** to
New Heights...Join PTA Today!

Cover photo:

Santa Fe Elementary -
Book Drive Thank you

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PLEASE SHARE THIS MAGAZINE.

Information from this magazine may be excerpted for other PTA publications as long as credit is given to Missouri PTA and any byline that may appear with the item must be included.

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President's Message *By Mary Oyler, Missouri PTA President*

I hope everyone is enjoying their summer and taking time for family and friends. Soon it will be time to begin planning another exciting PTA year in your school. There are certain ideals I would like you to keep in mind as the planning process begins within your unit: Our Purposes, Our Mission and Our Vision. (These are printed below). But along with these, I also want to share the core message of PTA – a message to share with parents, teachers and your community. With this message everyone has a clear idea about why PTA should be an essential part of all schools – “Children succeed when families, schools and communities work together.”

How can your PTA work towards making this message a reality? Let's take a look at three different areas that PTA has the ability to help children succeed.

PTA promotes and supports opportunities for families to effectively participate in their children's life. How can your unit accomplish this?

- By helping to improve communication between home and school – through newsletters, meet and greets, offering programs that encourage interaction between parents and teachers and making all families feel welcome
- By helping parents with resources in such areas as parenting skills, homework, health issues and even guidance for parents to help children with career goals
- By helping the communities provide safe schools, quality teachers, healthy lifestyles and arts education

Students achieve when families and teachers partner through PTA to ensure children are safe and healthy. How can your unit accomplish this?

- By encouraging family-school involvement programs linking learning to student success
- By encouraging partnerships with other groups that share and support our mission to positively impact children's lives

- By encouraging families to speak out on local, state and national issues that affect children's education

PTA connects schools and communities to help children reach their full potential. How can your unit accomplish this?

- By forming partnerships with local organizations and businesses centered on student achievement, social development and healthy lifestyles
- By forming partnerships to help build bridges between schools and business to support the local needs of the school community
- By forming a strong group of parents who volunteer to provide positive role models for their children

Your school can start anywhere in this process as planning begins for your new PTA year. Just always keep in mind the core message, “Children succeed when families, schools and communities work together.” I wish each school in Missouri a successful year – by that I mean that we need to be reaching out TODAY to make every child's potential a reality.

Who We Are

PTA Vision

Making every child's potential a reality

PTA Mission ~ PTA is:

- A powerful voice for all children,
- A relevant resource for families and communities, and
- A strong advocate for the education and well-being of every child.

PTA Purposes

- To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, community, and place of worship
- To raise the standards of home life
- To secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth
- To bring into closer relation the home and the school, that parents and teacher may cooperate intelligently in the education of children and youth
- To develop between educators and general public such united efforts as will secure for all children and youth the highest advantages in physical, mental, social, and spiritual education

Give Parents Homework This Summer

By Jan Harp Domene, PTA National President



Classes may stop for summer, but students' education certainly shouldn't—and neither should their healthy development. Telling kids that their summer break ought to be filled with homework and vegetables, however, is guaranteed to get you little more than a good laugh or roll of the eyes. I've always loved reading to my kids and grandkids, and I've found that the key to continuing their learning and growing in the summertime is, quite simply, fun.

For children, this season is synonymous with fun, so the summer goal for PTA leaders is to help parents connect literacy-building programs and routine exercise with things that their children love to do. Without the structure of school to reinforce positive learning and health-conscious habits, many parents can use all the help they can get in cultivating children's desire to read and be active.

Helping kids get hooked on reading may be simple as finding the right book. Through their websites, the American Library Association, National Education Association, and International Reading Association all publish several book lists aimed at youth. If further "incentives" are needed, your local unit can get ideas for promoting reading at www.pta.org/greatideabank or by checking with a local library for their summer reading program.

To ensure that children get sufficient physical activity during the summer months, a good first step may be a family agreement on time allowed watching television and playing video games, like the PACT available from PTA and Microsoft at www.xbox.com/isyourfamilyset. The next step, naturally, is finding exercise that children will be excited to do regularly. It can be walking, riding a bicycle, basketball, or anything else active—the most important requirement being that they enjoy it. If it's something the whole family can participate in, all the better! Families can find plenty of ideas in PTA Healthy Lifestyles: A Parent's Guide, available at www.pta.org/healthylifestyles.

This summer, let's make sure PTA parents keep advocating for the education and well-being of children, beginning with their own right at home.

PTA Doesn't Forget Hurricane Victims

In an effort to continue to help the victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, PTA is launching Books for the Bayou – a three-year program designed to help provide age-appropriate books to students affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. The books go to children in Louisiana and Mississippi to replenish the children's personal libraries. Books for the Bayou is being undertaken to further the rebuilding process, encourage children to become readers, and promote academic success. This is a joint program of PTA and Reading Is Fundamental – the oldest and largest children's and family nonprofit literacy organization in the United States. Information about holding a fundraiser is provided at www.pta.org/books, as is the form for the donation of funds. All PTA leaders who would like to share their stories with us may do so

by sending an e-mail to books@pta.org <<mailto:HealthyLifestyles@pta.org>>.



10 WAYS TO INCREASE YOUR PTA MEMBERSHIP

1. *START* your membership drive early. Set a realistic goal and don't give up until you pass the goal!
2. *APPROACH* community businesses to join PTA as a business member. Remind them with a smile that it is the PTA in their community **and** their customers.
3. *USE* the energy and enthusiasm of others – involve your parents, teachers and students in your membership drive.
4. *SPONSOR* a PTA "open house" before school opens in the fall to visit classrooms, meet teachers and join PTA.
5. *DEVELOP* an information sheet to distribute to members and prospective members telling them what they get for their dues – local, state and national.
6. *GIVE* a small flower or welcome back gift and handwritten invitation to join PTA on each teacher's desk on the first day of school. Don't forget all other staff members.
7. *PLACE* a membership table at every entrance. Place tables strategically so people must pass by to enter activity.
8. *CHALLENGE* each board member to recruit at least one new member who has never been a PTA member.
9. *PRODUCE* a calendar for members with PTA and school activities clearly displayed.
10. *COUNCILS*: Ask a well-known personality in your town to be an Honorary Membership Chairman and then publicize.

Why YOU Should Attend Convention!

By Peggy Richey, 2008 Convention Chair

October 18-19 are the dates for the 2008 Missouri PTA Convention, to be held at the KCI Expo Center, Kansas City, and there will be something for everyone at this event!

PTA the People's Choice is the theme. Join us on the red carpet for a weekend of fun, information, motivation, and inspiration.

Pre-convention activities will begin on Friday evening with a resolutions briefing, followed by leadership training workshops. These workshops will also be repeated later in the weekend. The evening will be capped off by a fun-filled PTA Idol talent show! Put an act together and join in the fun!

Convention will officially begin on Saturday with a continental breakfast / first-timers' orientation, workshops, a general meeting, exhibit hall, regional networking, council roundtable, and more workshops.

Awards will be presented at dinner Saturday evening and lunch on Sunday. Price for these meals and others is included in your registration.

Sunday will bring another workshop session and another general meeting.

You won't want to miss this acclaimed author and speaker. Dr. Bowen F. White of Stress Technologies, Inc. will conclude convention on Sunday with an entertaining and inspiring all-conference workshop titled, "Why Normal Isn't Healthy".

A Student Leadership track will also be available for the PTSA students.

Registration packets will be mailed to all PTA presidents in July, but you do not have to be an officer to attend. All PTA members are invited.

PTA is the People's Choice, for student achievement, parent involvement, and advocacy. Join us for a People's Choice convention to remember!



Dr. Bowen F. White, M.D.

"Why Normal Isn't Healthy" is the title of Dr. Bowen White's entertaining and enlightening all-conference presentation on Sunday, October 19, at the 2008 Missouri PTA convention.

After seeing thousands of people as a physician, Dr. White discovered that what we consider normal isn't necessarily healthy. Funny, incisive, and persuasive, Dr. White's prescription is as easy to swallow, as it is effective: Laugh, misbehave, make mistakes and through it all discover your very own potential for health, healing, and wholeness.

Join us at convention for this captivating, entertaining program.

Missouri PTA Leaders Project

By Jennifer Casey, VP Membership Services

The Leaders Project is a program established in 1995 by Missouri PTA to encourage and recognize leadership accomplishment of PTA members. As a PTA leader you are already attending training events throughout the year at the local, state and national level, so why not be recognized for your efforts? In order to obtain the status of Certified PTA Leader you will need to attend ten of the twenty different approved training activities, programs and opportunities. The trainings must be completed in a two year time period. Once you have completed an approved training, you will want to have a Missouri PTA Board of Managers member sign your tracking card. When you have received ten different signatures during the two year period you may apply to become a Certified PTA Leader. Signatures can be earned in a variety of ways such as serving in an elected position, attending a legislative rally or regional conference, volunteering at convention, attending workshops such as president, treasurer or bylaws. And, just added to our list of approved workshops is membership. It's a win – win! By attending a membership workshop you can find out how to improve your unit membership and services to your PTA members and earn a signature on your tracking card!

The deadline to be recognized with this year's Class of 2008 during the Missouri PTA convention in Kansas City is September 15, 2008. For more information about the Missouri PTA Leaders Project check the Tool Kit mailed to presidents in July, contact the Missouri PTA VP of Membership Services or visit the website www.mopta.org.

Get started today and earn the distinction of a *Certified PTA Leader!*

Membership has its Benefits

By Shelly Throckmorton,
Membership Emphasis Chair

Developing benefits for a PTA membership is the best marketing tool you can use. Everyone wants something in return for giving you their money and while a PTA membership has many intangible benefits – an organization dedicated to creating a healthy & safe educational atmosphere for our children – most people also need that concrete, in the hand, in front in my face, tell me what I'll get, incentive. That's where recruiting PTA business members and local businesses come into play.

Working with local businesses, you can create "Show your PTA card" or "PTA Night" incentives for your members. Depending on your board's intrepidity, try getting enough businesses that you can offer something every month or every other month to your members. Maybe one month the local pizza place will give a percentage off to anyone showing their PTA card and another, the fast food restaurant, will give a free cone or drink. You can try a "PTA Night" and have one night every month where a local business will offer a discount or a free item to all card carrying PTA members. This really creates a win-win situation for your members AND the business – your members get something and the business gets customers. Get these same businesses to join your unit as PTA members and give them even more recognition with a year-round listing in your newsletters, student directories, websites, etc.

Recruiting PTA local business members also provides a two-fold advantage for your unit, an increase in membership numbers and a possible resource for activity donations. Creating special recognitions for business members by widely advertising their membership, they are more likely to join. Remember - your parents and families are their target customer. Asking them if they are also willing to give a one-time donation at some point during the year, you are also creating a valuable resource for your PTA. While the possibility is there, they might say "No", it's more likely they will agree especially if they know they will only be asked one time and they are the ones to set the limit of what they're willing to donate. This is also a better way of increasing dues revenue for your unit. Let's face it; it's much easier to sell a business

Soaring to New Heights... JOIN PTA TODAY!

By Shelly Throckmorton, Membership Emphasis Chair

Our 2008-2009 State Membership Theme was revealed in April at the Leadership Conference. Missouri PTA will be "Soaring to New Heights" this next year because of all the great PTA units, leaders and volunteers we have statewide.

It was my pleasure to recognize several of last year's outstanding units at the Conference. Our Outstanding Membership Campaign Grant winner was Liberty Junior High School PTSA, located in the Pony Express Region. Liberty JHS did a remarkable job last year and increased their membership over 48% from the previous year. Jerri Griffith, President, came forward to receive their \$100.00 Grant, Recognition Certificate and a \$25.00 Wal-Mart gift card as reward for their hard work.

We also had many units that took the membership challenge to "Leap into New Opportunities" and turned in at least 20 memberships between January 2, 2008 and March 1, 2008. Kickapoo High School PTSA was the drawing winner for the challenge, receiving a free 2008 Leadership Conference registration, but for the rest of the units that qualified for this membership challenge we had three more drawings held during the Conference Luncheon. A Royals baseball basket, with 4 game tickets, 2 Royals t-shirts and 2 Royals baseball hats; a \$40.00 Wal-Mart gift card and \$35.00 dollar "On the Border" restaurant gift certificate were given out. The winning units were Chapel Lakes Elementary PTA, Cambridge Elementary PTA and Fleetridge Elementary PTA.

Congratulations to these winning units! Help your unit in "Soaring to New Heights" and hopefully your unit will be part of next year's celebrations.

membership at a far higher price with lots of exposure than to raise an individual membership \$.50 - \$1.00.

National PTA has also developed several benefit providers for PTA members. Listed below are each provider and details of what they offer:

- 1. BARNES & NOBLE.com** – PTA members will save 5% from this discounted online bookstore on books, music, DVD's and more - Visit: www.pta.org/barnesandnoble
- 2. KIDZ-IDZ** - This program is free to all PTA-affiliated schools. Simply visit http://www.kidzidz.com/id_cards/index.html to enroll your school or individual child.
- 1. LIBERTY MUTUAL INSURANCE** – Group discount on auto, home & renters insurance for PTA members Call 1-800-341-5247 for more information or visit www.libertymutual.com/lm/nationalpta. Be sure to identify yourself at a PTA member.
- 2. MEDICALERT** - For more information and to sign up for the MedicAlert Kid Smart® program visit www.medicalert.org/pta or call

1-800-ID-ALERT.

- 3. SHARP ELECTRONICS** - All of the products on the Sharp Electronics/PTA Member Store site are being offered to PTA members at reduced pricing. Visit the PTA/Sharp Electronics member store at <http://www.sharp-cart.com/ecom/affinity.htm?passCode=PTA>
- 4. SOUTHWEST AIRLINES VACATIONS** – 5% discount on vacation packages of two nights or longer to any Southwest Airlines destination. The promotion code PTATRAVEL should be used to receive discount when booking online, southwestvacations.com or phoning (800) 423-5683.

Did you know about these benefit providers? It's a sure bet that your members don't, so include a postcard listing all these benefits with their membership card. Provide this information in your newsletters, websites and membership tables, wherever you offer PTA information.

PTA Membership does have its benefits. What kind and the amount are only limited by each unit's creativity and willingness to develop them.

Exciting News!!!

Five of our Missouri Reflections winners have gone on and placed at the National level. Each of the winners was present during the Reflections Showcase and presented their hard work to a captive audience. These individuals are:

Brooklyn Wattenbarger for Dance Choreography from St. Joseph
Intermediate division

Erin Bachus for Film/Video Production from Springfield
Intermediate division

Jesse Caylor for Literature from Gladstone
Senior division

Micayla Miles for Photography from Logan-Rogersville
Middle/Junior division

Katelyn Low for Photography from Blue Springs
Primary division



Aaron introduces his video production.



Jesse reads his award winning story.

The Reflections program is a great way to encourage our children to put on their thinking caps and express themselves in a manner that is truly unique. Next year's theme is - **WOW!** It's not too early to start planning the Reflections program in your own school. As we've seen from the hundreds of extraordinary Reflections entries, the children have it in them to create something fascinating, but as with most things, everyone needs a little encouragement. Get both your parents and teachers on board to make this year's Reflections program the best one ever.

Something for Students

Quite often we forget there is an S in PTSA. During leadership training, students worked hard during workshops participating in everything from team building to the resolution process. Even more training and workshops geared toward students will be offered during Convention in October.

Don't forget your students and their skills when formulating committees in your own units. What the students bring to the table in a PTSA is priceless. Remember to give them the opportunity to spread their wings and lead.



James Lewis Elementary CONDUCTS BOOK DRIVE

By Michele Reed, Three Trails Regional Director

The students of James Lewis Elementary School in Blue Springs, were recently asked to bring in new or gently used books to help an inner city school in need. The book drive was held March 10th through March 13th. The 500 + students surprised the PTA, who sponsored the event, by bringing in 1,220 books in just five days time. The PTA was also given a donation of 1,010 books by Heart to Heart International, bringing the total of books donated to 2,230 books.

These books were donated to the Santa Fe Elementary School and to the Hickman Mills School District's early childhood education center. These books were picked up by the librarian of Santa Fe Elementary School, Mrs. Lea Ann Rothmier. She delivered them to the library and each of the teacher's in-classroom libraries. All of the students were even given books to take home. Mrs. Rothmier and the students and teachers of Santa Fe Elementary school would like to thank the students and families of James Lewis Elementary School for their kindness and generosity.

"On behalf of the staff and students of Santa Fe Elementary, I would like to thank the students of James Lewis Elementary for the large donation of books to our school. This generous act of kindness will give our children many hours of reading enjoyment... for many years to come," Mrs. Rothmier said. "These books are now part of our library collection and in reading centers throughout our building where each of our students can share the same stories that James Lewis students found interesting, exciting, and moving in their personal lives. I can truly think of no better gift than to encourage and spread the joy of reading."



What is Field Service?

By Kim Weber, VP of Field Service

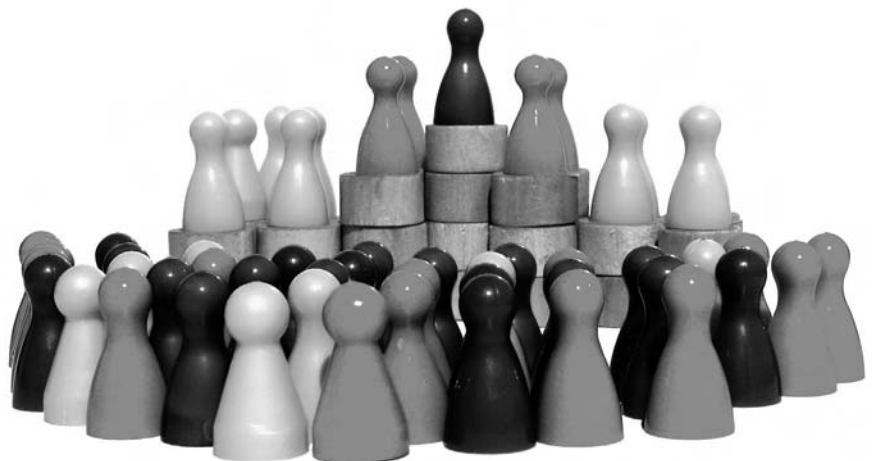
Field Service is the department that is comprised of regional directors that live, work and volunteer in our eight regions of the state. Those eight regions are Gateway, Foothills, Mark Twain, Pony Express, Heritage, Three Trails, Ozark and Meramec. Each region is served by a regional team of four regional directors and each director is assigned to specific units and councils, generally which are close to their home address, school or unit.

As a member of field service and thus the Missouri PTA Board of Managers, each regional director coordinates the work of PTA in their region. They sometimes are the second link after a council for help and or guidance from a unit.

They are responsible for keeping communication between Missouri PTA and the unit or council that they are responsible for. That communication comes by keeping and making monthly

contact with each unit or council president and keeping up to date with officer name changes. They conduct trainings through out the year in schools of information, regional conferences or one-on-one training with a unit or council officer.

Not sure who is your Regional Director? Contact the state office and we will be happy to pass on that information.



The Budget

By Pat Brune, MO PTA Treasurer

Your budget is an outline of estimated income and expenses for the year. You usually form a committee that is responsible for developing the budget. The treasurer would act as the chairman and check your bylaws and standing rules to see who else would serve on this committee. Outgoing treasurer, fund raising chairs, president, outgoing president, membership chair are all good people to serve if your bylaws don't state who's to serve on this committee.

The committee should study last year's budget and treasurer's reports to determine how well the budget met your needs last year. Next, determine the projected funds needed for approved programs, projects, and leadership development. (Ex: Field trips, carnival, executive board expenses, committee chair expenses and committee expenses, reflections, programs, training at state meetings, insurance, newsletter, council dues, carry over for next year, etc.) Next decide how you are going to fund these expenditures through Membership, Fund raising, Sponsorship etc. Expenditures should equal receipts.

After the budget is done, the budget chair presents the budget to the executive board/committee for consideration. Then the budget is presented for approval at a GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, where a quorum is present and the general membership vote to approve, not just the board. A majority vote of the members present and voting is required for adoption. Funds should not be spent until the budget is approved. So, you should present the budget at a back-to-school function or as early in the school year so you can start writing checks as needed.

Since the budget is only an estimate of the planned expenditures for the year, it may be necessary to amend from time to time. When there are additional expenses or a change in an allocated expenditure, the budget may be amended by a vote of the general membership at a regular meeting or a special called meeting.

The treasurer's monthly report should include the budgeted line item, what was spent out of each budgeted line item and what is left in that budget line item. If you set your report up this way (in a spreadsheet) you can have a complete idea of what has been spent and how much money you have each month. You have your beginning balance and what was brought in and spent so you can easily keep track of everything.

Where can I find???

By Wendy Jackson, President Elect

- PTA structure
- Regional Map
- Master Calendar
- Procedure Book information
- Officer descriptions
- Tax information
- Bylaws procedures
- Awards and grant applications
- Unit in Good standing definition
- Officer's form
- Reflections information
- *Contact* subscription information

You can find all of these things and more in the **Tool Kit**. Presidents' should receive the Tool Kit in July. Now that I have it, what do I do with it? (Presidents remember that you are the only one that receives this information, please share it with the rest of your unit.) This information is sent to the Presidents' so that they can help their unit to better understand their duties and obligations. The pages are made for you to disseminate to the individual that is the officer or chairman. These are overall descriptions or duties. This is not meant to take the place of a procedure book, but to add to the procedure book. As a unit president it is helpful to have this information, it is suggested to make a copy and keep a complete one with your files. If you would like to order another copy, contact the state office at 1-800-328-7330 or office@mopta.org.

Coming Soon to a Mailbox Near You



THE BACK-TO-SCHOOL KIT

This resource packed kit is to help you energize your Back-to-School efforts as well as plan and implement your 2008-09 membership efforts. The Kit contains 3 different types of resources:

- Membership recruitment tools such as: templates and tools CD-ROM, marketing information, brochures, posters.
- Unit Management tools such as: Calendar, PTA Program planner kit CD-ROM, Quick reference guides: Money Matters, Programs, Membership.
- Specialty items: Campbell's soup labels for education, member benefits information and promotions.

The Back-to-School Kit should reach Presidents' in early August. Presidents' should use these resources to better help their chairman plan and implement the year's activities. If you do not receive this kit, please contact the state office at 1-800-328-7330 or office@mopta.org. Please remember that this is a National resource and Missouri PTA does not have extra kits.

990 Reminder

Just a reminder that at the end of this fiscal year (2007-2008) EVERY UNIT and COUNCIL will have to file some form of the 990. Previously if your unit's gross receipts were under \$25,000 you didn't need to file but this has changed. Now if your gross receipts are under \$25,000 you can file the new 990-N (e-postcard) electronic version. Or you can file a 990-EZ. Please remember this and have the current treasurer file these forms. You still have until the 15th day of the 5 month after your fiscal year ends to file, but it's a lot easier for the current treasurer to file than a new treasurer.

If your gross receipts are OVER \$25,000 you still need to file the 990-EZ or 990 with the correct schedules.

If have any questions about the new 990-N please check out the IRS website at www.irs.gov and click on the non-profit/charities section. They have a lot of questions and answerers for you.

The "IT" Factor By Melissa Randol, MSBA Associate Executive Director, Law

IT comes in various shapes and forms. We all have IT. We just use IT in different ways -- depending on the person and the occasion. What is IT?

IT is leadership!

There are three basic styles of leadership: authoritative, democratic, and hands off. All three styles have strengths and all three have weaknesses. The trick is to know what style of leadership to "wear" for each occasion. The National PTA has developed excellent materials exploring these leadership ideas -- following is a short summary.

The authoritative style of leadership is sort of bossy -- one who tells others what to do and often gives direction, assigning duties and actions and reserving most of the decision-making power for him- or herself. Often, an authoritative leader has a very clear vision of his or her direction or the direction of the organization. You want an authoritative leader when time is limited and tasks need to be decided or acted upon quickly or when group members do not know each other and are not familiar with each other's skill sets. On the other hand, authoritative leadership is not so good when the goal of the meeting or organization is a strong sense of teamwork. This style is also ineffective when group members have knowledge of the organization, know what decisions need to be made and what tasks need to be done, and have skills and knowledge to make those decisions and accomplish those tasks.

The democratic leader seeks others' input and participation and gives group members some control over the decision making process. The democratic leader is willing to change his or her plans for an activity or event according to the input and ideas provided by the group. Democratic leaders are great when there is time available and when an issue needs to be discussed. These leaders encourage participation and teamwork. These leaders are not so great when the group is unmotivated. When participants are not inspired or motivated to volunteer, add input, or participate in the decision-making process, group decision-making is difficult. Also, if there is a high degree of conflict already present,

this leadership style may create more conflict and factions, along with competing loyalties. Like the saying goes, "You can't cook with too many chefs in the kitchen!"

The hands-off leadership style offers little or no direction to the group or individuals. Often, with a hands-off leader, the group discusses and decides on the priorities and direction by themselves. When would you want this type of leadership style? When participants feel like they are in a rut with their meetings or when the routine is familiar. This leadership style can breathe new life into the organization and its decision-making process. This style is also effective when group members possess a very high degree of skill and knowledge and can accomplish tasks autonomously, with little or no oversight. The hands-off style fails when the group expects to be told what to do. If group members are looking for direction, rather than wanting to create their own, this leadership style will not work. This style also does not work well with volunteers who have little experience and organizational knowledge.

Regardless of your style of leadership -- you are needed. There will be a time for you to step up and show off your skills as a leader. It may be that you are a democratic leader and you have a group of experienced members willing to work -- a perfect combination for success. Or you may be hands off and your group needs some spicing up -- encourage new ideas and new leaders to step forward. If your authoritative -- you know who you are -- use your skills to manage projects on a short deadline. Know when and how to use IT!

Leadership development -- learning when and how to use leadership styles and skills -- is offered through PTA. To learn more about cultivating leadership in your PTA unit, consider hosting a leadership workshop presented by Missouri PTA. Or you may be interested in a workshop on ways to improve membership -- if so, give Missouri PTA a call. We're here to help -- our children's future depends on the leadership we exhibit today.



Melissa Randol, MSBA Associate Executive Director, Law, gives her all conference workshop during Leadership training.

The Parents Role in Athletics

By Bruce E. Brown, Pro Active Coaching

The involvement of parents in the athletic experience of their children is a given. Without question, all parents should be part of this area of potential growth. But it is often a larger responsibility than realized. Their involvement affects their own child, the coach, the rest of the team, the other parents and the officials. How they choose to be involved often will become the reflective memories their son or daughter have of the whole athletic experience.

This message of the parent's role, in its entirety, has evolved from 35 years of coaching in junior high, high school, community college and college. It focuses on the parent's role from the perspective of the athlete. For more than three decades I frequently asked the players on my teams a series of questions about the role of the adults (both coaches and parents) in their experience. In this process, I learned many things that helped me as a coach. I also learned many things that young people would like to tell their parents, but probably never will. This information is one of my gifts back to three decades of great young people on my teams. It is how we can show respect, help performance and enjoyment from their perspective. The longer I am in this profession the more I become an advocate of the athlete.

When parenting and coaching are done correctly, they are traveling the same path. Coaches and parents need to understand that when closely examined we are both attempting to teach the same lessons. We are hoping that the young person will learn something from the athletic experience that will help them become a better adult. Sport can provide the opportunity to teach many important lessons of life; work habits, selflessness, confidence, perseverance, accountability, courage, discipline, teamwork etc. Too many households and too many coaches place an overemphasis on sports at the expense of sportsmanship and learning these lessons. If we listen to the responses of athletes on what they really need from us before, during and after competition, it will help the adults keep our focus where it should be – on the needs of the athlete and the life lessons sport can teach.

No matter how well intended, most parents may not be aware of how they can meaningfully help the athletes reach their

goals and improve performance. If handled correctly, with both parent and coach working together for the benefit of the athlete, the athletic experience can provide a tremendous positive developmental encounter for all the participants. In order to ensure that the athletic experience is, indeed, positive, everyone in the process must always remember that the kids needs come first. What I am going to suggest, works, benefits them, and most of all, has credibility because it comes from them.

As a rule, when parents start a young child out athletically, it is a "joint venture". The general feeling among most parents is that they are experiencing their child's athletic experience with them. In turn they have a requirement to be involved. In the process, athletics becomes a link with their children...an enhanced level of communication... something that is shared. Another factor that impacts the situation is the fact that when children are under the age of ten, their main goal is usually to please their parents. The parent is a credible source of knowledge. Everything the parent say is right, a scenario most parents like. To the dismay and shock of many parents, a number of things change as the athlete enters adolescence. As such, learning when and how to diminish the parent's involvement becomes an issue for both parties.

As kids grow older and more independent, parents need to realize that they need to stay close, but focus on the kids' needs and choices. If nowhere else but athletics, this is their time. Parents and coaches constantly send powerful messages to athletes, and although no two adults can completely agree on how to raise each child, as much as possible, those messages should not conflict.

Since 70% of all young people in the United States are done competing in a team sport activity by the age of twelve, it becomes even more important that a child's parents, as early as possible, do what they can to facilitate growth, help performance and keep their own perspective. With regard to the role of parents in athletics, the following are some of the things that I learned from having my athletes write answers to questions I posed to them. In over thirty years of coaching, I have heard the same responses, regardless of age,

gender or sport.

These suggestions reflect the athlete's point of view. The issues covered in the book, booklet and video focus on three important times – before, during and after the game.

In this article, I will give you one example of the responsibilities we have during the game:

Question – What do your parents do that make you feel good during the game?

- Cheer for everyone on our team, not just certain players
- Just having them there tells me it was worth my time
- I love it when people cheer for me and tell me I'm doing a good job
- Show up for every game you can, cheer for us and get excited
- Cheer positively and support us win or lose
- Cheering me on even when I do not have a good game
- When parents cheer and encourage at appropriate times in a civilized manner
- I can accept correction for bad behavior, but not for mistakes on the field
- Cheering pleasantly and not getting on the refs, players or coaches
- It is great to see them sit by people they know and catch up on old times
- Cheer for me and give me support even when I am not playing much
- Cheer for us, but not too much
- When we go home from practice or a game, letting me show them what I have learned without trying to teach me more and more.
- Playing catch or shooting baskets when we get home
- Just being there whenever possible

To order booklet or CD or DVD on this topic or other character related books, booklets and videos by Bruce E. Brown – www.proactivecoaching.info

If you would like to have a parent's presentation for you PTA or other presentations for students and/or coaches, please contact Rob Miller at 816-415-8181 or rmiller710@yahoo.com or Bruce at bbrown8164@aol.com

What Are Social Norms?

By Amy Tusso, Liberty School District Prevention Coordinator

Social Norming comes from the philosophy that behaviors try to keep up with perceptions. During the transition years, from elementary to middle school, middle to high and so forth, students attempt to achieve what they perceive as the norm in behaviors. Students make choices in order to be accepted. If a student's choice is based on a misconception or an inflated perception of unhealthy choices, their behavior changes to mirror the unhealthy choice. Social Norming has been used in schools, elementary through college level, as a means of health promotion and prevention. Topics have included alcohol and other drug use, seatbelt use, hand washing and a variety of other healthy lifestyle choices.

Students are provided messages about their behavior and their peer's behaviors from a variety of sources. One way is through experience, or their perceptions of their experiences. When a student hears

about a party they focus on their peers who got "drunk" or "high" and they give less attention to the majority who did not drink or use other drugs. When a student hears a handful of peers talking in the halls about a party they believe they were the only student not at the party or not using. It is this "vocal minority" that changes the perceptions of the other 300 students overhearing the conversation. This experience creates a misconception that all or most of their peers drink or use other drugs at parties. Another place students get messages about behavior is from the media. Popular media seems to glorify many unhealthy choices, from alcohol and other drug use, to promiscuous behaviors, to deviant and illegal activities. Even media in opposition to such behaviors can be counter-productive creating the misperception that the majority of students are participating in the unhealthy activities.

Social Norming collects accurate data about the population of focus. If working with upper elementary students the data would either be from students of the same

age or from student's one developmental stage above (middle school). If targeting elementary students about tobacco prevention, the data would be the percent of middle school students who do not use tobacco. This data is then provided to the students through various media and communication strategies; for example posters, bracelets, school announcements or news programs, etc. Repetitive contact with the data through creative messaging related to the behavior, the misconceptions held by the students begin to change and the students behave in a way more constant with the accurate norms. In the earlier example, the elementary students striving to fit in with their older peers would be less likely to use tobacco knowing the majority of their older peers are not smoking. This "positive promotion" changes the attitudes and beliefs of students which, in turn, change behavior. It is cost effective and impacts the entire population in a short amount of time. This form of prevention and health promotion creates evidence-based change.

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Reflections Showcase APRIL 26, 2008

Madeline Chambers, of Woodland Elementary PTA grade 4, inspiration was her dance teacher teaching her the moves. And just what did she enjoy best about the reflection program, the experience.

Alissa Stott, Line Creek Elementary PTA age 11, found her inspiration one day when she "saw the sky and it was amazing." The best part of participating in the Reflections program for Alissa was getting a chance to see all the projects that other students have created.

Sam Engelmyer, Logan-Rogersville Elementary PTA age 6, found inspiration in his neighbor who he says is "really old." Sam's favorite part of the Reflections program was being able to use his Dad's camera and take pictures.

For Katelyn Low, James Lewis Elementary PTA age 8, the choice of her subject matter was simple. She "thought it was cute." And the best part of her experience - "winning!"

Kaylee Osborne, Brittany Hill Middle School PTSA age 12, found her inspiration in an unexpected place. While at Price Chopper, Kaylee saw an elderly man on a bench and smiled at him. This small gesture made the man "all happy." What Kaylee enjoys most is meeting the other people and getting better each time.

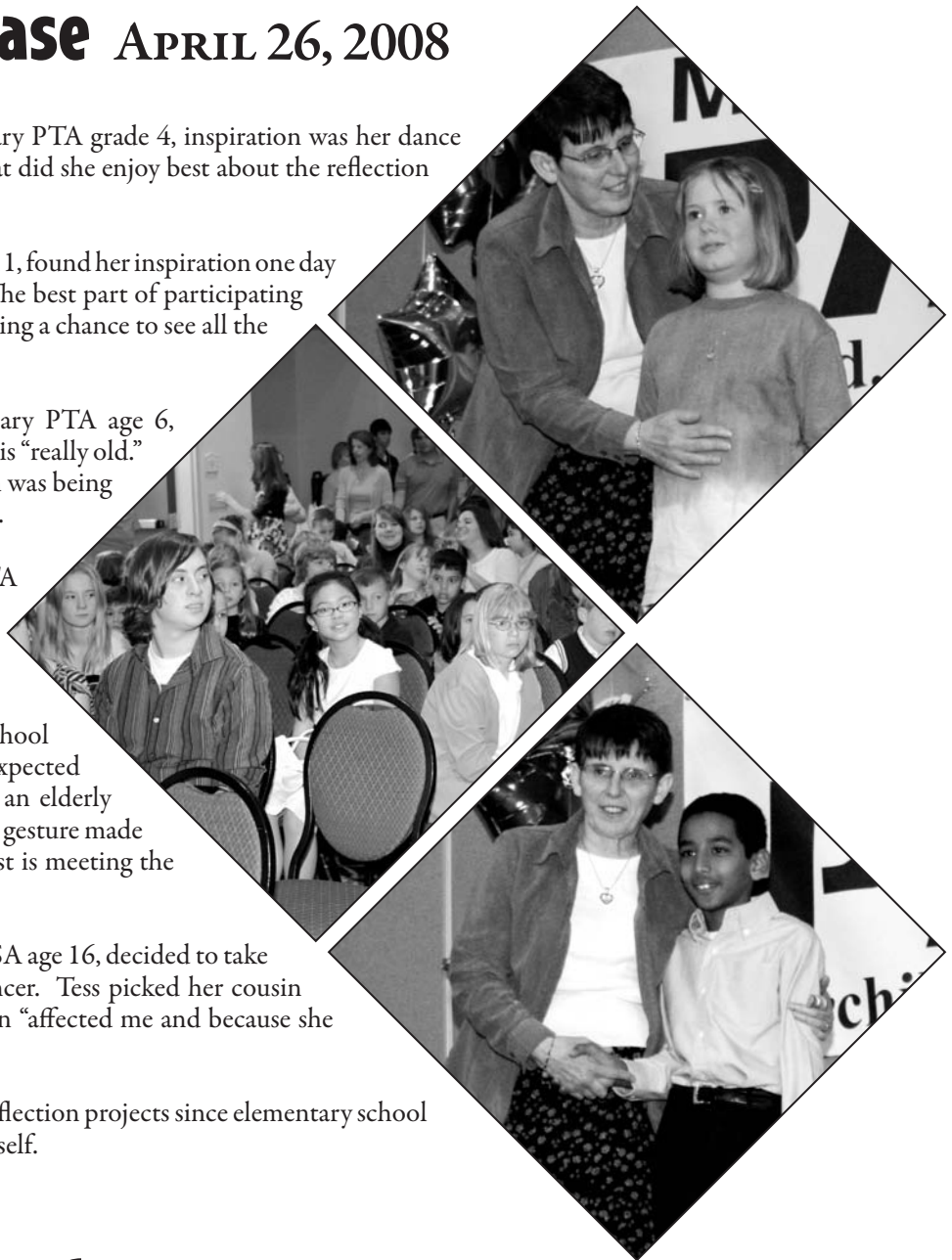
Tess Spalty, Park Hill South High School PTSA age 16, decided to take a heartfelt picture of her cousin who has cancer. Tess picked her cousin as the topic of her project because this person "affected me and because she made a difference in my life."

Now in high school, Tess has been creating Reflection projects since elementary school and feels it is a really good way to express oneself.

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Founders Day Gift

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- Mason Elementary PTA
- Blue Sprgs Early Childhood Preschool PT
- Hazelwood Central High PTA
- Hickman Mills Council of PTA's
- Kentucky Trail Elementary PTA
- Lucy Franklin Elementary PTA



Legislative Report

By Stephanie Miller, State Legislative Chair

Advocacy for the children of Missouri has been brought to many people's attention these past few months. With five legislative rallies, a statewide Child Advocacy Day and a trip to Washington D.C., we have been able to reach a wide group of people.

The New Year started out strong with a legislative rally being held in Springfield on January 2nd. Fifty-six attendees and one legislator spent over an hour discussing four Missouri PTA priority topics. The Heritage regional rally held in Columbia on January 14th at Rock Bridge High School drew 75 people and one representative. Donna Petiford, VP of Legislation and Advocacy for Missouri PTA, presented Representative Judy Baker with the Missouri PTA's "A Better Missouri for Children" Award. Local newspaper coverage helped inform others in the area of the information discussed. The last week of January proved to be a very busy time for legislation with two rallies being held. The Stansbury Leadership Center in Lee's Summit played host to four representatives

and 25 attendees on January 24th for the Three Trails region. Two articles in local newspapers once again helped educate others about some of our issues. The Grain Valley Middle School presented a legislative rally along with a student program on January 31 and reached even more people in the Three Trails region.

Two elected officials and 30 people discussed the four MOPTA issues. Nixa High School provided a new location for another Ozark regional rally. Two elected officials and 30 people spent over an hour discussing issues on February 7th. Unfortunately, weather proved a problem for our Pony Express rally, with cancellations on the original and make-up date, the decision was made to cancel this rally altogether. Undaunted by a lack of state legislator participation, local PTA leaders in the Foothills region saved the evening by hosting a school board candidates forum and discussing local issues.

Missouri PTA was well represented at the annual Advocacy Day at the Capitol on January 29. Mary Oyler, Wendy Jackson, Donna Petiford, Stephanie Miller and Teddy Tatum joined hundreds of people to attend training sessions, visits to senators and representatives and a "Walk to the Capitol." MOPTA Legislative Priority brochures were left in many offices with encouragement to attend rallies in each of their respective regions.

A trip to Washington D.C. the end of February for the National Legislative Conference topped off a successful first quarter for MOPTA. Mary Oyler, Donna Petiford and Stephanie Miller were able to spend two days in training seminars and a day "walking the hill" talking with Senator Claire McCaskill, Representative Roy

Blunt and visiting with the aides for Senator Christopher Bond and Representative Emanuel Cleaver. A highlight for our three MOPTA delegates was having the National PTA President Jan Harp Domene, Secretary-Treasurer Betsy Landers and Deputy Executive

Director of Programs and Public Policy Kimberly Barnes-O'Connor, sit in on the meeting with Representative Blunt. Stephanie Miller was also allowed to attend the National Council of States meeting in Wendy Jackson's absence. A full day was spent working on recommendations for the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB).



Mark Your Calendar

JULY

- 4 Independence Day (State office closed)
- 27 Parents' Day

AUGUST

- National Immunization Awareness Month
- 1 Parent Education & Involvement Grant Deadline

SEPTEMBER

- PTA Membership Month
- National Preparedness Month
- Hispanic Heritage Month
- 1 Labor Day
- 22 Autumn begins

OCTOBER

- 13 Columbus Day
- 18-19 Missouri PTA Convention (Kansas City)
- 20 State office closed
- 26 State office closed
- 31 Halloween

Looking Ahead

NOVEMBER

- American Indian Heritage Month
- 2 Daylight Saving time
- 4 Election Day
- 11 Veterans Day
- 27 Thanksgiving Day

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- Hazelwood Central High PTSA
- Cameron PTA
- Liberty Oaks Elementary PTA
- Lucy Franklin Elementary PTA
- Luff (John W.) Elementary PTA
- Independence Council of PTA's

Building Fund

- Mason Elementary PTA
- Blue Sprgs Early Childhood Preschool PTA
- Hazelwood Central High PTSA
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