

# CONTACT

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*Together*



## **MISSOURI PTA SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE T-SHIRT FUNDRAISING SALE**

Missouri PTA is excited to announce the sale of T-shirts to raise money for PTA Education Scholarships. Profits will be dedicated to funding scholarships.

We are pleased to offer two styles, available in sizes adult small (S) through 4XL. Styles and sizes that are out of stock in the office will be ordered when the minimum order requirement has been met.

T-shirts may be ordered from the PTA Office at 2101 Burlington Street, Columbia, MO 65202. The shirts are black with white and silver imprints and cost \$18.00 per shirt (all sizes). Checks should be made out to Missouri PTA Scholarships. We regret that we are unable to accept credit card orders at this time.



Questions may be directed to the PTA Office, by calling 1(573) 445-4161, or 1-800-328-7330 or by e-mail at [office@mopta.org](mailto:office@mopta.org), or to the Scholarship Chairperson, Sheryl Kaullen, at [Sherylk@mopta.org](mailto:Sherylk@mopta.org).

By purchasing these T-shirts, you will play an important role in shaping the future of Missouri Public School teachers.

## Cover photo:

The Missouri PTA Office Building, which we maintain thanks to Unit and Council support.

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Please notify the Publication Office in case of change of address or to purchase a subscription. It is important that we have accurate addresses so that we may provide the support and information to each local unit.

NOTE: Advertisements appearing in this publication do not constitute PTA's endorsement of the product or service.

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 Wendy Jackson, Missouri PTA President



A dictionary defines "family" as a group of relatives; a group of people who are closely related by birth, marriage, or adoption- people living together; a group of people living together and functioning as a single household, usually consisting of parents and their children.

Whatever your definition of family, we at Missouri PTA consider you a part of our family. Whether you are a local unit or a council, we are closely related. We have common goals, such as working to help our unit(s) or council(s) be successful. So what is success? Success is defined as achievement of intention; the achievement of something planned or attempted; attainment of a fame, wealth or power; something that turns out as planned or intended. So as we begin the new school year, what are your unit/council's goals? Is it more parental involvement? More male involvement? Or is it to improve communication between parents and the school? If you are in a thriving unit/council, what is the plan to go from good to great? No matter what you are doing there is always room for improvement. I, as president of Missouri PTA, know that all of us are doing a lot of things. Did you know that MOPTA is on Facebook? Check us out and become a fan. Have you checked out the webpage lately? How about the new online membership data reporting on Just Between Friends (JBF)? Are you taking advantage of these resources? Just like in a local unit or council, the state counterpart volunteers for a position, learn it and try to improve on it. We are you, only on a larger scale. We want the same things you do: parent involvement, better communication, leadership, and the tools to help us succeed. If you are ever in need of help, please do not hesitate to take advantage of our experienced Board of Managers – that's why they get paid the big bucks, to HELP you. Speaking of the big bucks I jokingly talk about – the Board of Managers are all volunteers, just like you. In other words, we are "YOU." However, Missouri PTA does employ one full-time staff member and a part-time bookkeeper/secretary at our office in Columbia to assist with the

day-to-day operations of running a large organization. We are committed to seeing you succeed.

One of the easiest ways to help your unit/council become successful is to take advantage of leadership opportunities. Have you registered for convention to be held at the Stoney Creek Inn in Columbia, Oct 15-17<sup>th</sup>? This convention is shaping up to be fabulous! Our speakers this year will include the "Missouri Teacher of the Year" who will talk about what a teacher wishes every parent would ask. Have you read and disseminated your tool kit from MOPTA and the Big Box of Possibilities from National PTA? That information will go a long way in helping your chairmen be successful. An advantage to being a part of PTA is the fact that we are here to help you to train your volunteers. All they have to do is take advantage of those resources already available.

Speaking of success, due to continued budget cuts and shortfalls on both state and local levels we continue to see ourselves in a difficult time for schools. PTAs continue to be asked to fill in the gaps left by budget cuts. Please remember to look at the mission and purposes of PTA and ask "How does this fulfill our mission?" It is possible to do more with less, so that you can make a difference for the students and families of the state of Missouri. Because in the words of a great friend "If not you, then who"? I have faith in what does, has, and will continue to make a difference in the lives of Missouri families. You are making a difference that will long outlive your child and your family. It is a legacy that you will leave to a generation that you may never see. So continue on this journey with us. I know that we can and will make a difference. We are, after all, the largest child advocacy organization in the world. So I'll end with my favorite Helen Keller quote "Alone we can do so little, but together we can do so much". I have faith that together we will do so much this school year. Please remember that we are here to help, all you have to do is ask.

**Would you like to become a part of the Missouri PTA Board of Managers? I became a member to help my own child but found that it was rewarding to help all families. If you would like to serve, please fill out a talent bank form at [mopta.org](http://mopta.org) or email the VP of Field Service, Pat Brune at [patb@mopta.org](mailto:patb@mopta.org).**

## 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



# Courage and Credit

By Charles J. "Chuck" Saylor, PTA National President

Former President Ronald Reagan had a sign on his desk that stated: "There's no limit to what a man can do or where he can go if he doesn't mind who gets the credit". That says a great deal about PTA Volunteers and more especially our Teachers. This year I was given the opportunity to participate in the selection of our National Teacher of the Year, and man we hit a home run!

Sarah Brown Wessling of Iowa was selected as the 2010 National Teacher of the Year and was recognized at a White House event. She represents one of the strongest and most talented classes of states Teachers of the Year in some time, all of which embody the words from President Reagan. Every day teachers work towards one goal, student success. They work to provide all of their students the best and at the end of the day they see their goal reached without a parade or White House ceremony.

PTA would like to take this opportunity to congratulate our National Teacher of the Year as well as all of our states' Teachers of the Year for a well deserved recognition. Each and every day our teachers deserve positive support for their efforts so we would like to encourage our parents to get engaged in the school and classroom, remembering that when parents are involved, students are more successful.



From left: Joe Lowenthal (National School Public Relations Association); Sara Brown Wessling (National Teacher Of the Year); Chuck Saylor (National PTA)

## Missouri PTA thanks the following proud sponsors of 2010 "Peace, Love & PTA" Leadership Conference:

Friday All-Conference Workshop sponsor



Membership Lunch sponsor



**George K. Baum & Company**  
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*Thanks to all these fine companies for their support of PTA.*

## Welcome to New Units

Nixa SCORE High School PTSA  
Nixa Early Learning Center PTA

*We would like to extend a warm welcome to our newest units and wish them the best of luck in their premier school year.*

## DONATIONS

Thank you for your generous donations. With your continued support, we can do great things.

### Building Fund

Barry Middle School PTSA

### Scholarship Fund

Red Bridge Elementary PTA

Missouri  
**PTA**<sup>®</sup>



Together We Shape The Future

## 2010 Convention

Think your unit cannot afford to send officers to convention this year?

The truth is, now more than ever, PTA leaders cannot afford to miss convention. Why? Because most of the challenges your unit is currently facing are ones that other units have been or will be dealing with and Missouri PTA has the experience to assist you and offer solutions tailored just for you.

Conflict resolution, budget, membership, Reflections, and leadership are just a small representation of the topics that we will cover in workshops. If you have questions about a specific issue, there will be someone at convention who can answer it.

Plus, your ideas and input are valuable tools that other units as well as Missouri PTA need to hear! That is what makes convention so valuable—the exchange of ideas!

The members of your PTA deserve to have the most highly trained leaders possible and Missouri PTA's 2010 convention promises to give delegates that training as well as support and guidance.

Please plan to join us on October 15-17 in Columbia for our annual convention. If you have any questions, please call the state office or email [pattyv@mopta.org](mailto:pattyv@mopta.org).

***Convention Registrations must be postmarked on or before  
September 24th***

## Convention Keynote Speaker

Susanne Mitko, Missouri Teacher of the Year, is in her seventh year of teaching seventh-grade social studies at Bernard Campbell Middle School and has taught for a total of 20 years. She



works with a wide range of students, from those with special needs to those preparing for International Baccalaureate studies. She earned her masters degree at Avila University in Kansas City and has maintained her relationship with Avila as an adjunct instructor for both graduate and undergraduate students. Before joining the Lee's Summit School District, Ms. Mitko taught at Father Flanagan's Boys' Town in Omaha, Nebraska and Visitation School in Kansas City.

Ms. Mitko tutors students in after-school help sessions and mentors new and aspiring teachers. Mitko's colleagues describe her as a creative instructor who constantly finds imaginative ways to spark her students' interest in learning ancient history. And also, someone who takes time to learn each of her student's unique needs and strengths. She shares her personal travel experiences with students - including trips to schools in China, El Salvador and Japan- to help them gain perspective from other cultures. She uses current issues and world events to help students appreciate the impact of geography, culture and politics on history. Her principal, Dr. Vicki Porter, observed that Ms. Mitko "sets clear goals, communicates high expectations, employs positive reinforcement, demonstrates enthusiasm, personalizes instruction and encourages student response. Susanne turns routine classroom topics into exciting adventures."

## Don't Forget Your Membership Card!

You must present your PTA membership card when attending Convention, so don't forget to bring it!

**Susanne Mitko, 2010 Missouri Teacher of the Year, will be the keynote speaker at the Missouri PTA Convention.**

# Believe in What You Are Selling

By Susan Rupert, Membership Emphasis Chair

A long time ago, in the phase of my life I refer to as “B.C.....Before Children”, I worked in the corporate world for almost 10 years. I was an account representative for a worldwide known telecommunications corporation. I would take care of long-distance customers’ billing inquiries (hopefully to their satisfaction) then proceed to inform them about a variety of products and services that were available: long-distance calling plans, calling cards, typewriters, cordless phones, just to name a few. Little did I know that the training and experience I received taking 100+ phone calls each day would prepare me for my volunteer role in PTA.

Now, you are probably wondering how in the world did this prepare me for PTA? In customer service, you are not just a voice on the phone, you are the company. I learned early on that when you serve on the local PTA board, it was like being a customer service representative all over again. You are not just a member or officer – YOU ARE PTA.

I would like to share some of my “customer service & selling” tips for PTA:

**Listen:** You have to be ready and willing to be a listener in your school. It is important not to just hear parent, staff, or community concerns, but really listen, understand and validate. They are going to tell you what they really hated or loved about an activity. Take this opportunity to see if they are a member. If not, invite them to join and be a part of the decision-making

process to make the event better.

**Ask:** Take the time to get to know your prospective and current members by asking them open-ended questions, such as “What are you most concerned about regarding your child’s school year?” Surveys show that parents’ number one reason for joining PTA is to help their own children. The situation provides you the opportunity to show that PTA is a relevant resource. Maybe put together a program that will help inform and educate others or promote communication by encouraging a parent to go through the correct chain of command in the school. Sometimes just being an “ear” is the biggest help.

**Up Close & Personal:** Use every opportunity available to invite someone to join PTA. School events such as Back to School nights are a must. Be there with a PTA smile, handshake and invitation to join. What better way to welcome new parents into the school district? Sporting events are an outstanding venue to reach the community. Make sure your unit’s membership drive is ready for the home opener’s kick off or first pitch.

**Know the Benefits:** To “sell” a service or a product it is important to know its benefits. When speaking to prospective members, know the benefits and the importance of having PTA in your school, community and state. These talking points should include your local unit’s accomplishments and goals. Let them know how their child will benefit from the PTA presence. Don’t

forget to tell them about the national benefit providers, i.e. T-Mobile & Southwest Vacations (see back cover for more benefit providers).

**Believe in It:** Forty years ago, my mom was a “PTA mom.” She was a room parent and was there to help with class parties, field trips and carnivals. Ten years ago, I was asked to join our local PTA. I joined to be involved, meet other parents and make a difference in my children’s school. I had no idea about the history of PTA and the impact it has made in the lives of children in our nation. I know firsthand the influence PTA has in our school, community and in my own family. My children understand the importance of giving back and being involved. They seek out ways to make a difference and are PTSA members. You cannot put a price tag on the value of parent involvement and volunteerism. Parents need to realize that by being a PTA member they are making a difference. They don’t have to be at every meeting or event. They just need to join. Remind them that their membership makes them part of the big picture, the PTA Picture.

As you can see promoting PTA membership is like selling a product or service. Know your customer, think of all the benefits, remember why you joined and believe it. It is so much easier than selling a typewriter.

## The State Membership Theme for the 2010-2011 year:

Don’t Forget!  
Early Bird Award Deadline  
September 17, 2010  
Get those dues in and YOU MAY BE A WINNER!





# Growing PTA's Membership Through Innovative Thinking & Practices

By Shelly Throckmorton, Vice President & Director, Membership Services

Does it seem like every year it gets harder to elicit people to join your PTA? Does your unit struggle to stay relevant to the parents within your school? Do you find that your school community is becoming more diverse in family structures, cultures, race, economic status and more? If so, you are not alone. The majority of units across our state and across our nation are facing these same difficulties.

As National PTA begins to develop a 5-year strategic plan to boost membership numbers nationwide, they are looking at obstacles that units are increasingly facing. At this year's National Council of States (NCS) meetings on March 8 & 9, in Washington D.C., National PTA focused on membership issues. Each state, along with the U.S. Virgin Islands and the European and Pacific Congresses, sent one representative to these meetings to brainstorm and decide how to proceed in improving membership numbers as our organization moves toward 2015.

I was fortunate enough to be asked to attend the NCS meetings and found it quite eye opening, as well as a great privilege to be a part of this process. Listening to representatives from different states, it became very clear that while the issues that some states deal with are not necessarily the same as here in Missouri, the majority of us face the same problems. National PTA asked that we look at the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in the following areas along with key questions for each:

- **Developing Local Partnerships**  
Are these viable targets for local PTA membership?  
What are the barriers to these types of relationships?  
Do we promote inclusivity that ensures all PTAs are welcoming of the broader community?
- **Community and Specialized Units**  
Is there a need for unique structures and chartering of these PTAs?  
What is their relationship to local schools, school systems, educators and administrators?  
How should we position these unique opportunities with our state and local PTAs?
- **Communicating the Relevance and Value of PTA in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

Are we relevant?

What separates us from the others?

How do we best communicate this locally and nationally?

What are the gaps in our outreach and message?

- **Putting the "T" back in PTA**  
Should we work to re-engage teachers or work to rename the association?  
Have we defined the role of teachers in the PTA?  
How do we grow the number of teachers in our membership ranks?  
How do we encourage families to build better relationships with teachers?
- **Making PTA work in Urban Markets**  
How do states begin to engage cities, if we have no solid presence at this time?  
What roles can national play in the development of capacity in cities and in the efforts of states to engage and serve cities? Chartering? Training?  
Many national associates have urban councils and models. Should PTA explore a national council of urban PTAs, serviced by national PTA?
- **Male Engagement**  
Are fathers and significant males welcome in schools or PTAs?  
How do we increase the engagement of fathers and significant men in PTA and the lives of children?
- **Improving Communications between/among national, state and local PTAs**  
Where do we begin to build greater trust among all levels?  
Are the roles at each level clearly defined?  
What is the function of regions, districts and councils in the communication chain?  
What types of systems are needed?

Throughout our sessions, we broke into small groups for each of these areas and taking into consideration the key questions posed, we all worked to develop objectives to address each point. We also put together our top recommendations for National PTA to consider in their strategic plan to increase membership. One of our top priorities during this process was to "think out of the box" in brainstorming ideas. It is very clear that "that's the way we've always done it" is no longer working for most of us. New concepts and philosophies are required to move us in a positive direction if we are to meet our goals.

In the 1960's, PTA boasted over 12 million members. Can you imagine the voice we had to make our legislators listen and act on our concerns? Today, we have

fallen to half of that number and with that decrease; our voice becomes a little less loud. Membership is truly the heart of our organization and our greatest strength to fight on behalf of our children. We must find ways to appeal to the ever changing dynamics of our schools and communities, and show the relevance that PTA still has today in advocating for our children. If we are able to do this successfully, our membership will begin to grow again. If we fail, the biggest losers will be our children.

## 10 Ways to Increase Your PTA Membership

Start your membership campaign in the PTA PICTURE

1. **PLACE** an ad in your local newspaper promoting PTA and membership. Ask a local business to sponsor the ad.
2. **TELL** your unit's PTA story in terms of definite goals and achievement rather than in bland, general statements.
3. **ASK** to speak for five or ten minutes at a teachers' meeting. Highlight your year's activities and encourage their participation & membership.
4. **PROMOTION** is vital to your membership campaign. Make sure your budget includes money to cover your expenses.
5. **INVITE** business members who have joined to come for special recognition and an opportunity to see inside the school.
6. **COMPETITION** is a great way to fire up your membership drive. Use grade level or building contests get everyone involved...even the principal!
7. **TRACK** your membership success for all to see. Use a giant thermometer in the hall, a large jar filled with jellybeans on the office counter or numbered happy faces in the windows, etc. Make it visible, don't give up and celebrate when you reach your goal.
8. **UTILIZE** your State & National resources like [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) or [www.mopta.org](http://www.mopta.org).
9. **REMEMBER** to promote the national PTA benefit providers' exclusive discounts for members.
10. **ENCOURAGE** your officers to attend any available training, i.e. State Convention in October.

# MOPTA Board Adopts Position Statement

By Angel Davis, Resolutions Chair

Is the neighborhood around your school looking run down? Have you noticed cracked sidewalks, a lack of crosswalks or insufficient lighting around your school? These safety issues can prevent you from allowing your children to walk to school. In order to address this issue, the Missouri PTA's Board of Managers adopted the position statement "Improved Infrastructures Around Schools" at their June meeting. This position statement supports city government efforts to work with the schools, parents and community in

seeking ways to improve the infrastructure around schools.

What does this mean for you and your PTA? Local units and councils can work with their school, community, and local government to identify problems and areas needing improvement. Items such as adding or replacing sidewalks, increasing the number of crosswalks, increasing the lighting around the school or even adding more crossing guards can make the walk to school safer for children.

Once areas of improvement are

identified, it's time to do something about it. Many cities have Capital Improvement Programs to work with the community and make improvements. The National Center for Safe Routes to School website ([www.saferoutesinfo.org](http://www.saferoutesinfo.org)) also provides resources, guides, links for funding, and more.

Helping improve the areas surrounding your school not only improves the aesthetics and safety of the neighborhood, it also encourages a healthier lifestyle for your students.

## The Non-Partisan Policy of Missouri PTA

By Denise McCarter, Vice-President of Legislation and Advocacy

With the upcoming fall elections and the current heightened interest in political activities, this is a good time to remind ourselves of the purposes and mission of Missouri PTA. One of the purposes of PTA is "to secure adequate laws for the care and protection of children and youth." To that end, PTA units may choose to be involved in legislative activities by supporting or opposing local issues. A Resolution may be adopted by a convention body at either a state or national convention. A Position Statement may be adopted by the state or national Board of Managers.

All PTAs are classified as 501(c)(3) organizations under the Internal Revenue Code. To retain tax-exempt status and continue to receive tax-deductible contributions, PTAs may only devote an insubstantial part of their activities to influence legislation. This is generally interpreted as not exceeding five percent of total expenditures. Nor may they participate in any political campaign on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for national, state, or local public office. A unit's failure to comply with these restrictions may endanger the council, district, state, and National PTA's 501(c)(3) status. Legislative activities must take place within the limitations of this tax code. Records should be kept as to the amount of money, time, and volunteer activity given to legislative efforts.

PTA must never support or oppose political parties or candidates, including those running for school boards on

nonpartisan slates. However, PTA may adopt a position expressing its support for or opposition to issues dealing with the health, safety, education, or general well-being of children and youth, but only those issues that have been previously addressed through a state or national Resolution or Position Statement, and to the extent permitted by the requirements of the 501(c)(3). Individual members of PTA may campaign for a candidate or issue, but never in conjunction with the PTA or use the PTA name, for example, during PTA events, programs, meetings, etc. The campaign must be clearly a personal pursuit. PTA members may run for political office; however, they may not portray that they are endorsed or backed by the PTA. All elections involving candidates are defined as partisan elections, even those for "nonpartisan" offices such as school board or city council. Any activity in support of a specific candidate on the part of any local parent-teacher unit, council, district, or state PTA branch is prohibited under the nonpartisan policy of the NPTA and the MOPTA.

Even though there are policies that place limitations on the political activities of PTA, there are still many ways in which we as PTA members can influence political decisions. When an issue comes up that PTA has a position on through a Resolution or Position Statement, PTA may speak to that issue on behalf of MOPTA and/or NPTA. If an issue concerning youth or children arises that has not been addressed by PTA, any member,

unit, or council may compose and submit a Resolution or Position Statement focused on the issue.

Educating others about current laws and pending legislation affecting youth and children is central to PTA's Public Policy. Encouraging others to become involved and interact with their personal representatives and senators can make a large difference in the outcome of current legislative issues.

Registering to vote, holding voter registration promotions, and voting are critical to having our voices heard. Voter registration tables can be set up at Back to School Nights, PTA Membership Drives, and other school-wide events.

With a current membership of 74,374, MOPTA can make a difference. We encourage you to take an active part in making our collective voice be heard.

**Encourage people to vote; Don't encourage people to vote for or against a specific candidate.**

**PTA members can support or oppose candidates as private citizens, of course, but they must not associate their political activity with PTA. Political campaign buttons or t-shirts should not be worn at PTA-sponsored events, as this can be seen as PTA endorsing a candidate. Remember, at school, you are the face of PTA.**





# “Substance Abuse” Resolution to be presented at 2010 Convention

By Angel Davis, Resolutions Chair

At the 2010 Missouri State PTA Convention, the resolution “Substance Abuse” will be presented for approval by the delegation.

Substance abuse is a national problem that affects youth in many negative ways. Physical side effects ranging from anxiety to death are connected with substance abuse. Addiction and behavioral consequences can occur when drugs are abused. School dropout rates are very high among drug users, as well as criminal behavior and remediation. Drug paraphernalia and synthetic “look alike” drugs may encourage drug experimentation and abuse. Because of these issues that are affecting our nation’s youth, Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers encourage all PTA councils and

units to provide and strengthen drug prevention programs to parents, teachers and students. There are many programs available that have proven to be effective against the abuse of drugs in school age youth. The Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers will also encourage legislators to create and promote enforcement laws that prohibit the manufacture, sale and abuse of drug paraphernalia and “look alike” drugs.

This resolution would replace the following resolutions: Club Drugs, Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, and Prohibition of “Look-Alike” Drugs; and if adopted, these resolutions would be retired by the Board of Managers.

The Resolutions Committee duties

include ensuring Active Resolutions reflect the current Legislative Priorities of the Missouri PTA. As a continuation of this process, the Resolutions Committee has recommended and the Missouri PTA Board of Managers approved to retire 89 resolutions. The resolutions were retired because they are no longer of a current, active focus, they have been encompassed in another Resolution, or because their intent has been accomplished.

Questions about active resolutions, position statements or retired resolutions may be directed to the Resolutions Chairman, Angel Davis at [angeld@mopta.org](mailto:angeld@mopta.org).

## SUBSTANCE ABUSE

(This resolution would replace the following resolutions: Club Drugs, Drugs, Drug Paraphernalia, and Prohibition of “Look-Alike” Drugs, and if adopted, these resolutions would be retired by the Board of Managers.)

WHEREAS, Abuse of prescription medications, illegal drugs and synthetic “look-alike” drugs is a national problem among youth and adults; and

WHEREAS, Abuse of these substances can cause anxiety, agitation, muscle tension and damage, nausea, depression, memory loss, hyperthermia, heart, brain and kidney damage, seizures and death; and

WHEREAS, Abuse of these substances leads to substance use disorders and social, behavioral, and health consequences; and

WHEREAS, Abuse of these substances is a strong predictor of school dropout occurrence; and

WHEREAS, Abuse of these substances is a major contribution to crime and remediation in the United States; and

WHEREAS, The legal sale of drug paraphernalia and synthetic “look-alike” drugs encourages drug experimentation and abuse; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers urge all PTA councils and units to provide and strengthen drug education and prevention programs to parents, teachers and students, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers encourage legislators to create and promote enforcement of laws that prohibit the manufacture, sale and abuse of illegal and “look-alike” synthetic drugs.

# Reflections Theme Search for 2012-2013

By Michele Reed, Reflections Chair

Have you ever wondered where National PTA gets the ideas for the Reflections Program Theme? Well the answer to this question is simple. The theme idea is submitted by a student who is from a PTA Unit from one of the many PTA units across the nation. The theme is actually chosen two years in advance for the Reflections Program. The theme chosen for the 2011-12 Reflections Program year was submitted by a student in southern Missouri!

Now, your curiosity must be piqued at how your students can get involved in this part of the Reflections program. Here's how it works:

1. Take the theme search entry form (the last 2 pages of the Reflections tool kit you received in July)
2. White out the date - the date printed on the form is the date the theme search entry forms are due to the state office; change it to the date the your unit's Reflections chair wants the form returned to them.
3. Copy for all students (copy the front and back of the form).
4. Verify the theme has not been used before. The previous themes are on the last page of the Reflections tool kit, which is why the forms should be copied front and back.
5. Make a photo copy of all the entries

submitted for the unit Reflections chair's records.

6. Mail your original forms to Missouri PTA by October 12, 2010
7. The state Reflections committee will pick the top five submissions and forward them to national PTA.

What's next in this process?

National PTA will notify the winning student, and their state's President and Reflections chair. The student will receive \$100 from National PTA for their theme idea. Their winning theme idea will be announced at the National PTA Convention next summer.



## Back to School

By Amanda Rupert, Youth Representative

It's that time of year, I can hear the school bells ringing, lockers closing, teachers yelling at students to get to class. I see many students running down the halls to their rooms. On the walls I see signs that say, "Join today! Be a part of PTSA!"

Many people don't understand what PTSA does for the school, which makes them not want to be apart of it. But truth be told, it is a great way for parents to get involved in their child's school. It lets them know what things are going on at the school and what they can do to help.

Many parents don't think there is a reason it get involved in the school. But there is a good reason. By getting involved, and knowing what is going on, their child's grades will improve and they will do better in school and will be more active.

Many parents ask "what's in it for me?" PTSA helps parents just as much as it helps the children in the community. The parents can learn so many new things and get to know so many new people. They can go to different places and learn new things and they can even teach people things too.

Like adults students ask "what's in it for me?" Students have just as much opportunity as adults do. Students can get lots of community service hours, and meet new friends from all over the state of Missouri and the United states.

## School Bus Safety

Share these safety tips from "About School.com" with your bus rider!



### AT THE BUS STOP:

- Always walk to the bus stop. Never run.
- Walk on the sidewalk. If there is no sidewalk, walk on the left facing traffic.
- While at the bus stop, wait in a safe place away from the road. Do not run and play while waiting.
- Never speak to strangers at the bus stop and never get into the car with a stranger. Always go straight home and tell you parents if a stranger tries to talk to you or pick you up.
- Wait for the bus to arrive, watch for red flashing lights and the stop sign to be extended, and cross only when all traffic has stopped. Look left, right, and left again before crossing.

### ON THE BUS:

- Go directly to a seat. Remain seated and facing forward for the entire ride.
- Talk quietly (so the driver will not be distracted).
- If you need to talk to the bus driver: wait for the bus to stop, raise your hand, and call the driver's name.
- Never throw things on the bus or out the windows. Never play with the emergency exits.
- Keep the aisles clear at all times.
- If there is an emergency, listen to the driver and follow instructions.

### EXIT THE BUS:

- When getting off the bus make sure you walk (not run) three more steps away from the door. This is the best place to be around a bus. Stay away from the bus wheels and watch out for moving cars!
- Once you get off the bus, go straight home so an adult will know where you are.
- Only get on and off the bus at your designated stop. If you need to get off the bus somewhere else, you will need to have a note from your parents.
- If you leave something on the bus, never return to the bus to get it. The driver may not see you come back and they may begin moving the bus. Also, if you drop something near the bus, tell the bus driver before you attempt to pick it up, so they will know where you are.

# Are You an ALL PRO DAD?

By Jeff Rogers, Male Involvement Chair

Does your school have a program to increase male involvement? Do you have a male involvement program like "Watch D.O.G.S." and need an additional program to attract more men? Do you have what it takes to be an All Pro Dad? If you answered yes to any of these questions you need to look into All Pro Dads.

The program is simple. First, you will need to find a male that likes to spend time working with kids and parents. I am sure you already have the perfect person in mind. Second, have your new Team Captain review the training found on the All Pro Dads' website ([www.allprodad.com/teamcaptain](http://www.allprodad.com/teamcaptain)). All Pro Dads is free to any PTA by entering the promo code "PTAFREE" to waive the \$25 activation fee.

The commitment to this program is just as simple and only asks you to commit to

1 min a day, 1 hour a month and 1 day a year.

**1 min a day** – Commit to reading the "Play of the Day" which is a short daily e-mail from All Pro Dads. For example, a recent e-mail encouraged kids to take a few minutes today to write mom a thank you note

**1 hour a month** – Commit to having breakfast once a month with your child at school. Chick-fil-A is a national partner with All Pro Dad's and may be a great partner for this event.

**1 day a year** – Commit to a bonding event. All Pro Dads' has partnered with many NFL teams for this event. Let start enough chapters to have our bonding event at either Arrowhead Stadium in Kansas City or the Edward Jones Dome in St. Louis.

This is just one of many ways to increase your male involvement. This is also a great way to grow your PTA memberships. Did you know in 2009 only 10% of the National PTA memberships across the nation were men? Men want to be involved but many don't know how to get involved or just need a little encouragement. You will not know until you ask them to be involved!



# iMOM® Mothers

By Deann Jepson, Parent Ed. & Involvement Chair

Busy mothers are creatively utilizing online tools, such as iMOM®, to arm themselves with information and ideas to positively impact their children's lives. iMOM® is a Family First project complementing the organization's popular All Pro Dad fatherhood program. "iMOM gives us a new way to encourage parents to join the PTA, get involved with their local schools, and take a more active role in their children's education," said Chuck Saylor, National PTA President. Mothers have access to an online library of information and ideas. These resources are from noted experts representing a variety of specialties concerning childhood development and parenting. The Website's resources are arranged by relevancy to age of child and topic. It is referred to as a mother's "technological cup of coffee," a place to go for daily encouragement and refreshment. Resources include the following:

- iMOM.com - An inviting Web site offering a library of parenting

information, an iMOM blog and chat room, and RSS feed services.

- EspressoMinute - A FREE daily e-mail service delivering parenting advice Monday through Friday. These messages offer encouragement to focus on the role of motherhood and a call to action which helps build parenting skills.
- Drive-Time CDs - A parenting tool for the busy mother who is often driving from one place to the next. Each CD includes a topic which is segmented into five to ten minute segments for easy listening while in the car.
- Pillow Talk - A journal guiding a mother through the process of how to initiate an open dialogue with her child. The journal is intended to be an interactive activity for both the parent and the child.

- Pillow Talk Tonight - An e-mail service providing additional bedtime discussion topics.
- iMom® Mornings - A school-based breakfast created to bring mothers and children together. You can order your FREE starter kit at [iMOM.com](http://iMOM.com) and click on the School Breakfast tab.

The iMOM® program is led by a team of moms who understand and relate to the challenges mothers face every day. For more information, contact iMOM @FamilyFirst.net or visit [www.iMOM.com](http://www.iMOM.com).





# 2010 NPTA Convention

By Donna Petiford, President-Elect

Thousands of parents, educators, students and other child advocates gathered for National PTA's biggest meeting of the year—the 114th Annual National PTA Convention and Exhibition in Memphis, TN, June 10-13, 2010.

A series of featured speakers took center stage at general sessions and that were webcast live. U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan keynoted the event, along with Coach Tony Dungy and wife Lauren, Tichina Arnold, actress, mom and National PTA Advisory Board Member; Vicki Phillips, director of education for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; and Sarah Brown Wessling, 2010 National Teacher of the Year, were also featured speakers. National PTA offers archived webcasts of these speakers and other selected events and meetings of this year's convention at [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) under the "Conferences and Events" tab.

During the convention, PTA members held debate and voted on the adoption of five national resolutions: Social Host Accountability for Underage Drinking; Teen Driving Safety; Dangers of Novelty Lighters; Educational Opportunity for Military Children; and Mentoring of Youth in Quality Programs. These resolutions were proposed by PTA members and approved by the National PTA Board of Directors prior to convention. (To view

these resolutions in their entirety, visit [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)).

Convention attendees were able to choose from over 50 workshop topics. In addition to providing PTA basics, this year National PTA developed specialized workshop tracks which focused on male engagement, Parental Involvement Resource Centers (PIRC), and engaging Emerging Minority Leaders and youth.

Other highlights included the announcement of National PTA's new partnership with Facebook, a collaboration which will work to promote responsible and safe internet usage for kids; a nationwide call-in day to federal elected officials urging them to support the Family Engagement in Education Act (HR 5211); witnessing the chartering of Puerto Rico as a state PTA; and a celebration commemorating the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the National Congress of Colored Parents and Teachers (NCCPT) with the National Congress of Mothers to form what we now call the National PTA.

Missouri PTA was well represented at this year's convention by a number of Board of Managers members including Wendy Jackson (President), Donna Petiford (President-Elect), Denise McCarter (Vice President), Patty Voss (2010 Convention Chair), Joanne Schwartz (Regional Director) and Lou Hibdon (Regional

Director). Several others from Missouri were also in attendance representing their local unit or council or Parent Information Resource centers throughout the state.

This was a golden opportunity for me to network with other state and local PTA leaders and to focus on issues and information that will help me be a better state PTA leader. I try to learn as much as I can from all the workshop and keynote speakers, but one of the highlights for me was Mark Levin's practical advice on growing our PTA memberships. I would encourage all PTA leaders who were not able to attend Convention to view this and other webcasts provided by National PTA

"First of all I'd like to say thank you to the Board of Managers for electing me to represent Missouri PTA at the 114<sup>th</sup> Annual National PTA Convention. It was a pleasure for me to attend and represent the Show Me State. Derrick Byrd (Chairperson, Membership Committee, National PTA) said this, 'We are an advocacy association and we do fundraising to support that advocacy.' I really liked this quote even though I have heard it and said it before. It was a good reminder and I plan on using it often." – Joanne Schwartz, Three Trails Regional Director, Missouri PTA.



From left: Linda Thiele, Wendy Jackson, Lou Hibdon, Donna "Elvis" Petiford, Joanne Schwartz, and Shelly Throckmorton. In front: Patty Voss



# Hazelwood PTA Council's Fundraising Run

By Rennee Benjamin, Gateway Regional Director

For many years the Hazelwood PTA Council has been working to collect monies for the Hazelwood Scholarship Foundation. This foundation awards scholarships to selected graduating seniors who will be attending college. The events have varied over the years and have included trivia nights, sales of Six Flags tickets and since 1981, a Run/Walk event. The Run/Walk is held each year at Hazelwood Central High School. Children and adults of all ages from all district schools and the community participated. Even though the weather did not cooperate, the event has held on May 15 and was a success. In addition to the Run/Walk, a Health fair was held in the gym. Community businesses had donated supplies and gifts for this event each year. Bands performed, there were Step Dancers and fun was had by all. After the completion of all the runs, trophies and ribbons were awarded to the winners in each category.



## Insurance and PTAs

By Ava Payne, CONTACT Editor

As much as we hope to avoid or prevent it, sometimes bad things happen in PTA. Someone falls at Muffins with Moms or gets hurt in the bounce house at your carnival. PTA merchandise or property is stolen. A trusted PTA officer embezzles from the unit's bank account. A parent decides to sue your PTA unit, but also the officers personally. Are you prepared? Just like any business, a PTA is exposed to risks. No one can guarantee that things are going to run smoothly all the time, but there are ways to protect yourselves.

Does your unit or council have insurance? Many companies offer policies that cover against general liability (for example, if someone is injured at a PTA event), medical accident (i.e., injuries that may occur). Companies also offer bonding insurance that covers anyone that your PTA trusts with money, whether it's an officer, board member, volunteer, or even a courier. Property insurance is available which protects items such as raffle items or fundraising supplies, as well as PTA property, such as popcorn machines, school store supplies, and more.

Also offered is Directors and Officers Liability insurance that protects officers for any decision-making they do. If someone sues the officers for mismanaging or misrepresenting your group, this policy would pay the legal bills and provide protection for such allegations.

Coverage amounts can vary, depending on your unit/council's needs. While neither National PTA or Missouri PTA requires units or councils to buy insurance, it's something to consider.

## What is Show Me PTA?

By Mary Oyler, Immediate Past President, MOPTA

Are you looking for a way to promote PTA to Superintendents, Board of Education members or those not connected to a specific local PTA? Show Me PTA is the answer. Show Me PTA was organized in 1997 as a statewide PTA unit for those persons who support the Purposes and Mission of PTA, but do not have a local unit to join. We invite all who care about the health and welfare of children and support public education to join Show Me PTA.

As with any PTA, each member of the Show Me PTA is a member of National PTA and Missouri PTA and entitled to all membership benefits and privileges. Members are entitled to attend all PTA events sponsored by Missouri PTA, including the Missouri PTA convention, at which time the annual meeting of Show Me PTA is held. Annual dues are \$8.75 for the 2010-2011 membership year. Checks, made payable to "Show Me PTA" may be sent to the MOPTA office at 2101 Burlington St., Columbia, MO 65202.

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## It's Time to Brag!

By Ava Payne, CONTACT Editor

The councils and units of Missouri all do great things. Let everyone who receives Contact know by sending information and photos about your events to me at [avap@mopta.org](mailto:avap@mopta.org).

# Short Takes

## PLEASE WELCOME OUR NEW EMPLOYEE

Jill Swarengin has joined the office staff at Missouri PTA.



## NATIONAL PTA PARTNERS WITH FACEBOOK

National PTA and Facebook announced a formal collaboration to promote responsible and safe Internet use to kids, parents and teachers. Together, National PTA and Facebook will establish a comprehensive program that will provide information, support and news to encourage citizenship online, reduce cyberbullying and advance Internet safety and security.

The partnership is founded on the belief that awareness is essential to supporting safe and responsible Internet use. Thus, in addition to creating comprehensive and engaging resources, PTA and Facebook are committing to aggressively promoting Internet safety information to their respective audiences. National PTA will use its Website ([www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)), and actively reach out to the 24,000 local PTAs across the country with a goal of reaching every American public school. Facebook will raise awareness of the resources among the hundreds of millions of parents, teachers and children using its service through an in-kind Facebook commitment equivalent to \$1 million and promotion on other parts of the site, including the safety center.

As part of the agreement, both PTA and Facebook are committed to working to shrink the digital divide, by reaching families, regardless of income or race and providing them with tools and resources to keep them digitally smart on-line.

To stay up to date on the initiative visit the PTA's Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/ParentTeacherAssociation> and the Facebook in Education page at <http://www.facebook.com/education>.

## CREDIT CARD CHANGE

MO PTA is unable to accept credit card payments at this time. We hope to offer this form of payment again in the future.

## THREE FOR ME

Learn more about National PTA's Three for Me program to involve parents and families in support of their children's education at [three4me.com](http://three4me.com).

## NATIONAL PTA HAS MOVED!

Please update your address book with the following contact information: National PTA Headquarters, 1250 N. Pitt St., Alexandria, VA 22314. Phone (800) 307-4PTA (4782), e-mail: [info@pta.org](mailto:info@pta.org).

# Mark Your Calendar

## September

- National Preparedness Month
- Baby Safety Month
- 1 Dues to State Office
- Deadline for Advocacy Through Leadership Awards (Individual/Unit/Council)
- 7 Labor Day
- Missouri PTA Office Closed
- 13 Grandparents Day
- 15 Deadline for Certified PTA Leader Application
- 17 Constitution Day
- 17 Deadline for Early Bird Membership
- 22 Fall Begins

## October

- Breast Cancer Awareness Month
- 1 Dues to State Office
- 15-17 Missouri PTA State Convention in Columbia

## November

- PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month
- 1 Dues to State Office
- 2 Election Day
- 11 Veteran's Day
- 18 National Parent Involvement Day
- 25 Thanksgiving

## FUND YOUR HEALTHY LIFESTYLES PROGRAM

Looking for a way to fund a program at your school that will help ensure that all students stay healthy and ready to learn? With the PTA Healthy Lifestyles Grants from National PTA, your unit could receive up to \$1,000 to support activities planned for November's PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month. Grant applications are due by 5:00 p.m. EDT, Friday, September 10—giving you time this summer to work with your leadership team to put together a program and submit your application. The application form, event ideas, and other planning resources are available online at [PTA.org/HealthyLifestyles](http://PTA.org/HealthyLifestyles).

Check your [Official PTA Kit](#) for another copy of the brand-new PTA Healthy Lifestyles family activities poster for your school. English- and Spanish-language versions of the poster are also now available online at [PTA.org/GoodChoices](http://PTA.org/GoodChoices).



Missouri Congress of Parents & Teachers  
Missouri PTA  
2101 Burlington St.  
Columbia, MO 65202



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## NPTA Member Benefits

- THE HP ACADEMY STORE – HP Academy offers exclusive education discounts & savings on HP’s consumer computing and printing products. PTA members get an exclusive 10% off, plus free next day shipping on printing supplies.
- MEDICALERT – PTA members receive discounted memberships to the MedicAlert Kid Smart® program, a 24-hour child emergency ID and caregiver notification services. Emergency responders can access your child’s medical history and records with one easy phone call.
- METLIFE - MetLife Auto & Home has special group discounts now available to PTA members.
- SHARP ELECTRONICS - All of the products on the Sharp Electronics/PTA Member Store site are being offered to PTA members at reduced pricing.
- SOUTHWEST VACATIONS – 5% discount on vacation packages of two nights or longer to any Southwest destination.
- T-MOBILE – 14% discount off your monthly service charges for new and existing T-Mobile subscribers, plus additional savings for new subscribers.
- OneCause VISA – OneCause, National PTA, and Capital One have joined together to bring you this free credit card fundraising program which allows you to contribute 1% of every purchase to PTA.
- PARENTING SCHOOL YEARS – The NEW edition of Parenting that focuses on the day-to-day needs and interests of moms with school-age kids. Filled with real, mom-tested advice that’s relevant to you as you navigate through the joys and challenges of the grade-school years. PTA members receive an exclusive subscription offer which includes:
  - 1 year (11 issues) for only \$9.97 – less than \$1 an issue
  - 77% savings off the cover price – that’s like getting 8 issues FREE!
  - Special Bonus - \$1 of your subscription price will be given to the PTA
- PTA REWARDS CARD – The world’s largest discount program! Loyalty Access Solutions has partnered with PTA to offer all PTA members an opportunity to save money by receiving discounts on more than 250,000 retail offers including over 400 of the world’s most recognizable brand names.

Check out the National PTA, [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org) website for further information on how your members access these benefits. Make sure the details on benefit access are provided only to your PTA members.