

201 Ways to Increase Your PTA Membership

1. Use the energy and enthusiasm of others — involve parents, teachers and students on your membership committee.
2. With membership enrollment, include a questionnaire to be returned to your PTA. Ask their feelings on programs and activities; explain PTA's efforts on behalf of children; ask for their membership and participation. People who feel a part, take part!
3. If you have a real need in your community, identify it. A cause around which people can rally is likely to increase membership.
4. Visit the senior citizen's centers in your community. Tell them about today's PTA and welcome their membership. They have wisdom and time to offer — and you have chores and activities in which they can participate.
5. Have a "Grandparents' Day" where students bring real or adopted grandparents to school for lunch or a tour of the building. Ask them to join your PTA.
6. Sponsor a PTA "open house" before school opens in the fall to visit classrooms, meet teachers, and join PTA.
7. Always subscribe to the State PTA full mailings for all members of your board of directors and let your general membership know they, too, may subscribe.
8. Display copies of *Our Children* and subscription blanks. Your PTA could subscribe for copies in the parent waiting area, teacher's lounge, and doctors' offices. Put a sticker on them to let readers know how they can reach you to join PTA.
9. Give a free subscription to *Our Children* by drawing a name from those members who join at your first meeting.
10. Urge local TV and radio stations to use state or national "Join PTA" membership promotion spots.
11. Prepare your own TV and radio spots about your PTA. Some high schools will help you as a class project.
12. Contact your educational TV channel and inquire about time during their programming to tell about the PTA. Many stations give up to 30 minutes each month.
13. Display membership posters in appropriate places in your school and community.

14. Ask TV and radio stations' program directors to include PTA in any interview or "talk" shows appropriate for parent involvement or views. Be sure to have articulate and well-informed PTA representatives.

15. Hang a banner outside the school or in a prominent place on a building in your community that is highly visible. Consider investing in a weatherproof banner that can be displayed year after year.

16. Send invitations to join PTA throughout the entire PTA year. Don't stop because your major membership enrollment is over!

17. Ask to speak for five or ten minutes at a teachers' meeting. Publicize your year's activities and encourage their participation and membership.

18. Councils: A request to the superintendent may get you a spot on the agenda of a principals' meeting. Emphasize membership and strength in numbers district wide.

19. Request a space for a PTA bulletin board or showcase, then keep it up to date. Post your latest newsletter and other PTA promotional materials.

20. Hold a poster or slogan contest for students with PTA membership as a theme. Plan the contest with cooperation of the teachers at the end of the year for next August or September.

21. The potential membership will be made up of several different groups. Give membership information to different committee members with instructions and deadlines to contact the various groups — individual classroom parents, teachers, community groups, retirement homes, etc. Be persistent with follow-up.

22. Approach community businesses to join PTA. You may establish a "special" membership just for businesses. Remind them with a smile that it is the PTA of their community and their customers.

23. An award or certificate may be presented to businesses that support the PTA.

24. Ask for a "Membership Minute" on the agenda of every PTA meeting all year. Keep the message before them!

25. Develop an information sheet to be distributed to members and prospective members telling them what they get for their service fees — local, state and national.

26. See that your PTA has a budget with copies available to all members to see how their \$ are spent to benefit children.

27. Make sure money has been allotted within the budget for the promotion of membership.

28. Explain that service fees are not a fundraiser. Use newsletters to keep members informed when funds are raised and how they are used.
29. Have a “Membership Kick-Off” event — make it festive and fun!
30. Start your membership enrollment with a neighborhood parade. Let children participate. They love it!
31. Councils: Ask a well-known personality in your town to be Honorary Membership Chairman. Publicize.
32. Councils: Ask the mayor to proclaim a PTA Membership Enrollment Day, Week, or Month. Publicize.
33. Consult with local dairies, bakeries, groceries, or other stores about the possibility of printing “Join PTA” on cartons or bags.
34. Ask smaller businesses to allow you to take bags and return them with colorful drawings individually colored by children to promote PTA!
35. Don't forget to contact new families as they move into your community and school. Welcome them with a personal call and invitation to join PTA.
36. A letter of welcome, PTA materials and a membership envelope could be in the principal's office for distribution when a new family comes to register their children.
37. If you have a “Welcome Wagon” in your town, ask the representative to distribute the above materials.
38. Ask businesses to put publicity on their marquees or reader boards.
39. When you submit an article to the newspaper promoting PTA membership for everyone, be sure to include a person or place where memberships can be obtained.
40. Set up a PTA membership table at kindergarten round-ups and secondary school orientations — encourage parents to become members from the very first opportunity.
41. Give special considerations to non-English speaking families. Make translated materials available and be conscious of different customs.
42. Provide different colored nametags to denote your members at meetings.
43. Meet early with your committee to set a membership goal. Make it realistic and don't give up until you pass the goal!

44. Set up booths at sporting events, music events and other community activities.
45. Either mail or send home with students an invitational letter with a return membership envelope attached to make return of membership fees more convenient.
46. Councils: Plan for a Council Membership Contest. Base awards on a criterion established at the planning meeting.
47. Challenge each board member to recruit at least one new member who has never been a PTA member.
48. Offer a door prize to members only at your PTA meetings — must be present to win!
49. Place an ad in your local newspaper promoting PTA and membership. Ask a local business to sponsor the ad.
50. Ask local businesses to make a “pitch” for PTA membership in their regular ads during your membership enrollment month.
51. Consider distributing one special issue of your PTA newsletter to all residents in your school area. This is excellent public relations, and can realize memberships and participation from those with no children in school.
52. Important! Always tell your PTA story in terms of definite goals and achievement rather than in bland, general statements.
53. Use every talent available to promote membership. Ask a journalist to help with letters and articles, an artist for posters, sketches and logos, businesses for access to a copy machine, etc. Put a “Help Wanted” ad for talent in your newsletter.
54. Remind meeting attendees that only members make motions and vote — have them sign a separate sign-in sheet or column. Request that members show their cards when voting.
55. Designate a place on forms for PTA membership # for anyone applying for reimbursement or grants from PTA funds.
56. Keep members involved. Mail a letter to all members (following the major enrollment) addressed to them by name. Welcome them to the _____ PTA, reminding them of the next meeting. Put in a survey sheet asking what hours they could assist the PTA, their areas of interest or expertise, etc. Include a return envelope.
57. Give away a token with each membership, such as a sticker, button, pin, pen, or pencil inscribed with your PTA’s name.

58. Place a membership table at every entrance. Place tables strategically so people must pass by to enter meeting.
59. At open house, place a table manned by a member of the committee or parent with a child in that classroom at each classroom door.
60. Give special coupon incentives with membership — one free popcorn, one book at the Used Book Fair, 25 cents off movie night admission, etc.
61. Councils: Approach local businesses for discount coupons for goods and services and provide reproducible pages for local units to give as a membership special privilege.
62. Put PTA stickers on mailboxes of all staff members who join PTA.
63. On the first day of school, place a small flower or welcome back gift and hand written invitation to join PTA on each teacher's desk. Don't forget all other staff members.
64. After the big enrollment period, place a basket with apples in the staff room or school office. Add a large card thanking the staff for supporting PTA and note date for next meeting. Leave envelopes for those who may have overlooked the opportunity to join PTA.
65. Many PTAs have a teacher's luncheon or appreciation activity sometime during the year. Use this opportunity to give special recognition to staff members who serve on your board of directors or have contributed to your PTA in some way beyond the call of duty.
66. Try a fun theme for a change — maybe "Gathering Nuts for the PTA", use acorns on everything all year. Plant a tree!
67. Have t-shirts, bumper stickers, or other items printed with your membership slogan or PTA name printed on them. This may encourage using a theme more than one year.
68. Provide baby-sitting free or at reduced rates at meetings. Make sure you have responsible sitters and liability insurance in case of accidents.
69. Provide a quiet homework room for children of members during meetings.
70. Request PTA exhibit space in store windows, library showcases, banks, etc.
71. Ask your local teachers' association to put up a display promoting PTA membership in their building during the year, preferably at the beginning of school.

72. Have a telephone committee to remind members of PTA meetings and other functions. This is a great activity for senior citizens.
73. Prepare a phone directory of students (with parent permission). Distribute free or at a reduced price to PTA members.
74. Plant a daffodil or other flower bulb for each membership in school or community park flower gardens. It's a great visual reminder of the beauty and strength of your PTA in the spring. Consider a theme like "Children blossom from seeds planted today — Join PTA!"
75. Arrange for a PTA float if your community has a seasonal parade.
76. Consider a special "members only" event — perhaps a dinner dessert with the featured speaker prior to your PTA meeting!
77. Ask for a few minutes at local government or service club (Rotary, Kiwanis, Elks, American Legion, Chamber of Commerce, etc.) to explain what your PTA is accomplishing. Invite their members to join PTA.
78. Feature a randomly drawn "mystery" PTA number in each newsletter. Present the owner who identifies their number with a small gift.
79. Make sure notices arrive home by mailing PTA information to parents of junior and senior high school students.
80. Recognize new members by name — introduce them at your PTA meetings.
81. Thank your members and list their names in your newsletter. Add their names as new members join.
82. Don't forget to ask the superintendent and others in central administration departments to join PTA. Many education employees don't work at a specific school site.
83. Councils: Provide local units with a "traveling" membership exhibit illustrating what the PTA does — local, council, state and national.
84. A local unit membership board can be displayed at all PTA and school events and "travel" to local businesses, city offices, or libraries to promote your PTA's accomplishments.
85. Set up a membership table during adult education classes.
86. Contact every parent of a Cub Scout, Girl Scout, Campfire Girl or Boy Scout about membership.

87. Give prizes to “sales people” who sell the most memberships during the first month of your membership drive.
88. On registration days — election, kindergarten, secondary school, others — be there!
89. Stage an Election Day bake sale for voters and have a membership display and application to join your PTA prominently displayed.
90. You might give an award to the media in your community that publishes news about your PTA regularly — this can be a great council activity too!
91. Ask local realtors to promote PTA with an ad in their publications or mailings to local homeowners.
92. Slip a little “note of thanks!” in with the PTA membership card when you return it to the new member.
93. Check last year’s membership list against this year’s. Call or send a reminder note to members who have not renewed their membership. Maybe they’ve been too busy, overlooked your request, or have a problem that needs to be heard.
94. Video or audio tape speakers (with their permission) and make tapes available for checkout to PTA members who couldn’t attend the meeting.
95. Produce a calendar for members with PTA and school activities clearly displayed.
96. Develop programs and activities that foster inclusion. Consider forming a single parent or senior citizen network to bring together people with special circumstances. For instance, single parents could form a support network; senior citizens could tutor students in reading. Work at providing programs that are appropriate to individual members’ needs.
97. List a month-by-month “show your PTA membership card” privilege in your newsletter. For example, local merchants could give 10% off purchases, free soft drink with burger and fries, or free line of bowling when you purchase two. Or, PTA could give a discount on t-shirt purchases this month, free popcorn at movie night the next month, etc. Make your members check the newsletter for this month’s good deal!
98. Provide plastic badge holders for members to “wear” their PTA card at meetings.
99. Put your button machine to work — proudly wear an “I joined _____ PTA” button.
100. Show your goal and 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.

101. Get creative; get energized; just get out there and do it!

102. Why do people join the PTA? Probably to be better parents or teachers or grandparents. Or to help children do better in school. So tell how the PTA can help in your promotional literature. For instance, "The PTA brings you together with others who share your concerns and experiences. The PTA can keep you informed about your child's school even if you can't be there. The PTA conducts programs to teach children to stay safe. The PTA can help you know how to talk to your kids about drugs or HIV/AIDS."

103. Use familiar street signs as an attention getter. PTA membership "yields" results (draw a yield sign). "Stop" (draw a stop sign) and consider the benefits of PTA. There's only "one way" to get all the support you need. "Do not pass" this opportunity to be a member of an organization as strong as PTA!

104. Determine exactly what you're "selling" and know who you're selling to. You may need to use different approaches for different audiences.

105. Encourage current members to take advantage of the *Our Children* magazine. The more familiar they become with PTA, the more likely they are to remain members.

106. Use big, bold graphics to attract attention. A big checkmark might highlight the line, "Check the things PTA is doing for you in the coming year!" Use smaller checks to make each point.

107. Use a chess board graphic with the headline, "To win with today's kids...You have to make all the right moves." Then tell how PTA can help.

108. Get straight A's from the PTA...Action, Activities, Answers, Acquaintances, Advice, Accomplishments!

109. Help new members become acquainted with each other with triads. Put members in groups of three and tell each to learn at least five interesting things about one another. Write the items on 3 x 5 cards and take instant photos of everyone and display them. Help your members know each other and feel part of the team!

110. Personal calls are the most effective and productive way to win new members. A call shows sincere interest in the individual. And it provides you with a chance to learn how that individual feels about your PTA.

111. Some neighborhood newspapers accept free ads. Why not run an ad to encourage joining your PTA?

112. Never let a meeting go by without making an appeal for membership. Set up a table for selling memberships in your library, the bank, or local supermarket. Have a membership table at all PTA and school functions.
113. Keep informed with what's happening in PTA on district, state and national levels as well as on the local level. To sell your product well, you must know it.
114. Display membership awards received at meetings or hang them in the school.
115. Use an enclosure to catch attention. If you're sending an envelope, enclose a piece of string to tie on a finger as a reminder to join PTA.
116. To find out what your members are thinking, paste a penny to the top of your member survey. Offer them "A penny for your thoughts".
117. Pat your PTA on the back for a job well done. Develop a line art ad that may be placed in school papers, shopper newspapers, and other newsletters. Use a headline like "We're Bragging!" followed by, "We wanted to be subtle, but decided that we are really doing too many good things for kids to be low key..."
118. "Everyone will be a star for 15 minutes" according to one saying. Consider profiling a different PTA member in each issue of the PTA newsletter or ask the school newspaper to do so.
119. Try this headline on your next recruiting letter. "More than 6 million people can't be wrong!" Go on to tell that the PTA is the 7th largest association in America and the largest volunteer association in the state of Washington.
120. Outline pieces of a puzzle with a headline such as, "The PTA helps the pieces fit together." Your copy can then follow with, "Does being a parent sometimes have you puzzled? We can help you put the whole picture together."
121. For those who say they don't have time, ask them to sign a "CALL ME ONCE" sheet. Ask parents to volunteer just once during the year. They can relax about the time commitment and still be part of PTA. Being called for help for only a few hours one time seems manageable for even the busiest person.
122. Have a PTA membership "regatta". Use a nautical theme and have the crewmembers — students, parents, teachers — sail for the "School Cup". Invite classes with 100% participation to the Captain's Table for special chow!
123. Challenge each existing member to sell just one additional membership. The result is a 100% membership increase.
124. When a member sells a membership, enter their membership card number in a drawing for door prizes at selected meetings.

125. Councils: Arrange for local businesses to donate funding for a President's Award to each PTA with 100% membership or to each PTA with a significant increase from the previous year.

126. Ask stores to place membership brochures or envelopes in their school supply aisle.

127. Attract attention to your second request letter by crumpling it up, then flattening it out and writing in red across the top, "I'm sure this got lost in the pile of paperwork that comes with the start of school!"

128. Demonstrate how much of a bargain PTA is. Compare membership fees to those of other local associations. Or, figure out how much your fees are each day. For instance, if membership fees are \$5, that comes to only a little over a penny per day.

129. Councils: Print tray liners and place mats and ask local restaurants and fast food chains to use them. Include a number or address where people can write for PTA membership or program information.

130. We've all heard of Murphy's Law...try this approach — "Everything takes longer than you think". *Murphy never joined PTA.* "Everything costs more than you can afford". *Murphy never joined the PTA.* "If something can go wrong, it will". *Murphy never joined a PTA.*

131. Arrange for discounts to athletic events to those who have PTA membership cards. Have PTA pay the difference so there is no lost revenue for the athletic event.

132. Sponsor academic events, spelling bees, math competitions, etc., and admit spectators with their PTA membership card.

133. Have an art fair and decorate the school with children's artwork. This will draw a big crowd and provide a great opportunity for membership promotion.

134. Focus on instrumental and vocal students. Sponsor a concert with a big PTA membership night.

135. Remember to use existing billboards to promote your membership drive. Perhaps a business might donate or provide funding to rent a portable signboard.

136. Train a "speaker's bureau" group to go to various groups and speak about the benefits of PTA. Perhaps a parent, teacher and student could speak together.

137. Give an award to PTA members who don't miss a meeting all year.

138. Have a PTA sponsored craft fair — only members can exhibit and sell their wares. If you charge admission, give a discount to PTA members.

139. Have a “new parent coffee get-together” — for parents of kindergarten and first graders to deal with first day trauma and an opportunity to join PTA.

140. Place a star beside the names of parents and staff that are PTA members in your PTA sponsored phone directory.

141. Establish a special grandparents award — for the grandparents most actively involved in your PTA.

142. If you give Golden Acorn, Honorary Life Membership or other PTA awards, submit a write -up to your local newspaper.

143. Use the State PTA membership reporting forms to your advantage. Distribute one sheet and matching cards to each board member to sign up new members.

144. Ask your school superintendent to encourage PTA membership to the district school employees in a letter or district newsletter.

145. Encourage friendly challenges or competitions between schools of similar size. They could split the cost of a “traveling” trophy.

146. Have a prize drawing at each PTA meeting for anyone bringing two additional people to the meeting. First timers may like what they see and wish to join!

147. Budget money and encourage your membership chair to attend state and district leadership conferences.

148. Establish a special grandparent program. Retired community members can share their talents and learn how schools and their needs have changed.

149. Ask the drama class to present a short membership skit about what PTA does for kids at a PTA meeting or school activity.

150. Have a parents’ day out once a month or on an early release day. PTA members may leave children for a free afternoon — staffed by other members -- on a volunteer, rotating basis.

151. Ask the Chamber of Commerce to encourage local businesses to display posters for joining PTA as school begins in the fall.

152. Make a PTA “Honor Roll” and display it in the hall listing every member’s name.

153. Set your membership goal and then cut that number of puzzle pieces from a picture of the school. Keep adding a piece for each member until the puzzle is completed.
154. Have the faculty only, challenge faculty from another school of similar size to a membership contest.
155. Publish the statistics on crime in your community or school. Hold a meeting for all PTA members with experts addressing the causes of violence and how they can fight crime.
156. Ask a local self-defense expert to conduct a special workshop for PTA moms and teenage girls.
157. Hold aerobics or exercise classes for PTA members.
158. Check with your local hospital for CPR or First Aid Classes for members only.
159. Each meeting, focus on different staff — such as lunchroom, custodial, office, etc., and encourage them to be members.
160. Ask your principal to challenge the parents or staff to 100% participation by promising something fun. We know one moved his desk to the roof for the day, and another who shaved his beard off! Both were so outrageous that even the local press arrived!
161. Strong PTAs invite local parent organization or booster groups to attend PTA meetings and help see the value of belonging.
162. Give someone you love a PTA membership on Valentine's Day!
163. Send Sunshine Grams to those who join your PTA.
164. During the first of the year PTA orientation, tell attendees what they get for their membership fee.
165. Invite PTA members of yesteryear to a fancy dessert. Encourage them to again join your PTA.
166. Have a tear-off application to join PTA in every PTA newsletter.
167. Send a note home in a brown lunch sack that says, "Remember your child needs a healthy lunch tomorrow and we need you as a member for a healthy and growing PTA!"
168. Set up a parent notification program staffed by PTA members to tell parents if their child does not arrive at school.

169. Hold an orientation for students and parents who'll be going to Jr. High or Middle School. Invite their president or membership chair to attend and get membership started for the new school.

170. Include information that goes home to parents at the beginning of school that includes last year's PTA accomplishments along with this year's goals and plans.

171. Business Leaders Day — invite those business leaders who have joined to come for special recognition and an opportunity to see inside the school.

172. High school PTAs could sponsor a financial aid workshop for parents and seniors, and make seniors aware of the scholarship opportunities.

173. Recognize new families at each meeting. Get this information from the principal and invite them to join PTA with a phone call and note immediately.

174. Send your PTA announcements home to be colored by children and brought back for display at meetings.

175. Keep a record of PTA volunteer hours and publish them in your newsletter, local newspaper or on a sign.

176. Divide your board into membership teams and give them specific assignments for getting new members.

177. Councils: Ask your region director to send a note of encouragement to local units who are struggling or congratulations to a local unit who you know is achieving great membership growth.

178. When you leave a PTA school, make sure you take PTA to the next school.

179. Give children stickers that say "PTA Meeting Tonight" to remind parents when the kids get home.

180. Sponsor a contest — Have students write a sentence or paragraph "My family joined PTA because..."

181. Try a "30 Day Wonder" — Can you get 30 new members in 30 days?

182. Ask others to celebrate Thanksgiving for all PTA does for children by joining PTA so the harvest may be even more bountiful.

183. Make a list of some of the things members get with their PTA membership and use as a handout or poster.

184. Send birthday greetings to PTA members.
185. Sell memberships at the PTA-sponsored concession stand or school store.
186. Submit news about your PTA activities to the media regularly.
187. Promote Reflections in high school.
188. Attend the Retired Teachers Association meeting and ask them to join PTA.
189. Contact your local elected officials about membership.
190. Make sure each of your school board members is a card carrying PTA member.
191. Have a PTA booth at local festivals or fairs.
192. Give 10% discount to members at your bake sale.
193. Send graduates and alumni parents a letter inviting them to join PTA.
194. Have a special door prize drawing for PTA student members at their dances.
195. Set up a PTA sponsored homework hotline.
196. Ask local realtors to include welcome from PTA to new buyers with children.
197. Set your membership goal early and announce it to everyone.
198. Plan an all-school reward -- ice cream, a free movie, etc. — when you reach your membership goal.
199. Offer a discount if both parents join PTA (make sure council, state and national fees are fully covered.)
200. Ask local preschool parents to join. They are full of energy and anxious to be involved.
201. Don't overlook any potential member. All members of the community have a stake in the future of all children. Tell them how they can help by joining PTA!