



Contact

MAY 2021

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End of the Year Like No Other

BY CARLA WIESE

FROM MOPTA PRESIDENT

I know when the school closures began last March, none of us imagined we would still be dealing with COVID and many schools just beginning to reopen. *PTA* does not take a break and *you* have not taken a break. Think of all the things you and your team have done over the past year for your PTA as leaders during a year like no other. Now is the time to take a deep breath and celebrate your success! However, before you celebrate too much there are several things you can do before the school year ends to make sure your PTA continues its success next year. Here are six important things to do before your PTA year ends:

1. **Register your new officers.** If Missouri PTA doesn't have a new officer list, then we are not able to send them timely updates and so much more. Be sure to register your new local unit or council officers as soon as they are elected so they can get the materials and information they need. Even if you have the same officers as last year, you still need to register them and confirm their contact information.
2. **Thank your volunteers.** Most people don't volunteer for recognition, but recognizing and thanking them for their service keeps them coming back and encourages others to step up and start volunteering. Thanking your volunteers is essential to keeping your PTA running well.
3. **Prepare for your audit.** Your bylaws spell out how your audit should be conducted. Remember, nobody authorized to sign checks can be on the audit committee, though it is helpful for the treasurer to be accessible to the committee when they are conducting the audit. Make sure the committee has all of the financial records, including treasurer's reports, checkbook registers, the ledger (or spreadsheet or wherever you record income and expenses against your budget lines), deposit and expense vouchers, and last year's audit report. Missouri PTA has documents to help guide you through his process.
4. **Make sure procedure books are up to date.** A procedure book helps preserve your PTA's knowledge and makes it easier for a new volunteer to learn their position. Make sure your officers and committee chairs have written up what they've done, how they did it, and what they would do differently the next time.
5. **Get your new officers (and anyone else) trained.** New jobs require training and volunteer positions should be no different! No one wants to simply be shown to their new office and told, "Get started. Good luck!" Give your new officers training to do their best PTA work! Missouri PTA offers regional training and MOPTA Convention is coming soon (October 1-3, 2021 in Columbia, MO). Both of these great opportunities bring officer-specific training to our units and councils. The expenses of convention and/or training can be a line item in your budget. Contact Missouri PTA to find out when training is scheduled in your area or to host a training. Be sure to take a look at National PTA's E-learning Library of online courses, many of which are available in both English and Spanish.
6. **Pass on materials.** It seems so obvious, however often, Missouri PTA hears from new PTA officers that they didn't get any materials to help them do their jobs. If you're an outgoing president: make sure your officers and committee chairs are passing on their procedure books and other materials to their successors. If you're an incoming president: keep in touch with both your new officers, new chairs, and the outgoing officers to make sure your board has the tools they need to be successful next year. Consider outgoing officers as a resource! A great way to keep track of these necessary documents and files is by utilizing Google Drive so any officer can view these important documents. Don't stop there! Create folders for fliers, agendas, minutes, financial reports by year. Please make sure you are not just creating the documents but sharing them with your new officers!

Again, thank you for being PTA leaders, and have a wonderful summer!

SAVE THE DATE

WHEN:

October 1-3, 2021

WHERE:

Hilton Garden Inn,
Columbia, MO

WHO:

Any Missouri PTA member!
Unit and council officers are strongly
encouraged to attend

WHY:

Check out June's CONTACT for a full article on
WHY Convention is so important!

Registration & Pricing Information coming soon!

**MISSOURI PTA
CONVENTION**

talking about mental health

MAY IS MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH

While mental health awareness is extremely important every day, May is a month that is set aside to put the topic at the forefront of every person's mind. The following pages will feature videos, articles, resources and tips for keeping the conversation going and finding help for yourself or loved ones. The first step in taking mental health seriously is just to have a conversation about it. Start talking and don't stop!



Episodes 40-44 cover a variety of mental health topics for the whole family

Ep. 40 - Is my teen having a mental health crisis?

Ep. 41 - How can we prioritize wellness at school?

Ep. 42 - How can I help my teen manage stress?

Ep. 43 - How can we normalize talking about mental health?

Ep. 44 - Are you practicing parent self-care?

talking about mental health

Child Mind Institute's Getting Better Together



**Emma Stone
talking on the
pandemic and
mental health
effects**

How teens can talk to parents about getting help

When teens think they need help with an emotional or mental health issue, they often aren't sure how to tell their parents, or are afraid to bring it up. It's understandable -- telling parents that you're facing something that feels really big, like anxiety or depression, can be tough. You might feel embarrassed to say you need help, or you might just worry they won't understand or will be disappointed in you. But it's a parent's job to help you out, and they are almost always more sympathetic, and less judgmental, than you imagine.



**14 year old Lily
talking about
anxiety and her
personal mental
health struggles**



talking about mental health

Child Mind Institute's Getting Better Together (cont...)

Supporting mental health in young children

The coronavirus pandemic has taken a toll on kids of all ages, but even little kids can learn how to cope with mental health challenges. Here are some tips on helping young children manage big emotions and build confidence.

HELPING KIDS COPE

- **Validate and name feelings.** It's important for little kids to know that big emotions are normal and manageable. When they're upset, let them know that you hear them: "It sounds like you're really angry right now. I feel that way sometimes too."
- **Solve problems together.** Talk over what's bothering them and brainstorm solutions, instead of just telling them what you think they should do. To get kids talking, lead with curiosity and ask open-ended questions: "What was the most fun you had today? What was the toughest part?"
- **Model managing difficult feelings.** If your child sees you angry, nervous or scared, bring them into the conversation. Tell them what you're feeling, why, and how you're going to handle it. This helps them learn to do the same.
- **Use positive attention.** When your child takes a step (even a small one!) to cope with a hard emotion, praise them right away. For instance, if you see your child take a deep breath in the middle of a tantrum, jump in: "I like that you took a deep breath! Let's take another one together."
- **Set aside special time together.** Pick a time each day when your child will get your undivided attention for whatever activity they choose. Knowing they have that to look forward to will strengthen your bond and help them handle stress. Even five minutes makes a big difference!

“

Let your child know that you think they're great, whether or not they do great things.

”

[Tips for Building Confidence and Self-Esteem](#)

ST. JOSEPH PTA COUNCIL CELEBRATES 100 YEARS

BY LORI PRUSSMAN, St. Joe Council Founders Day Chair

Thursday, April 15, 2021 -- Our PTA Council was founded in the 1920-21 school term. That is an accomplishment that few volunteer organizations reach. We had a wonderful evening and celebrated so many amazing people. We would like to thank Mayor Bill McMurray for stopping by and presenting us with a Proclamation to start our evening and for Dr. Doug Van Zyl for his opening remarks. A big thank you to Mr. Sones for helping with the invocation and for Raeann Williams for the thought for the night. A special thank you to Susan Rupert, MOPTA Immediate Past President for being our guest speaker.

We started off the evening with the Outstanding volunteers;

George Clinton, Samantha Jones, Edison PTA, Melissa Bratton, Susanne Eichenmueller, Jacqi Kiger, Hyde PTA, Pastor Tom Wilson & The Strong Tower Baptist Church, Sara Clark, Ruthie Seitz, Parkway PTA, Mindy Paden, Pickett PTA, Skaith PTA Executive Board, Bode PTSA, Robidoux PTSA, In memory of Dr. Luke McCoy, Lynn Jenkins, Bobbie Cronk and Liz Payne.

Once again, that you to all those volunteers and their dedication to their schools and units.

Our other award honorees were...

Davis-Langamach, Carrie Leslie; MOPTA Building Fund Honoree, Emily Sumner; Caroline B. Ullmann Honoree, Colin Pettegrew; Carpenter Board honoree, Lori Prussman; Lifetime PTA Leadership honoree, Bekka Matthews; Distinguished Service award, Laura Henderson; Outstanding PTA Unit, Oak Grove PTA; Outstanding Principal was Justin McCarthy. President Erica Caples was also presented the National PTA Life Achievement Award.

Congratulations, all well-deserved honors. Thank you for your service and dedication.

Again, thank you for those who attended and enjoyed the evening with us and those who joined via Zoom. I would like to especially thank the Oak Grove moms who came and helped me set up, I literally could not have done it without them! They were so amazing and so very helpful and helped with breaking everything down after the event! I am so thankful for you!!!

I would like to thank Stoney Creek Inn and Spanky and Buckwheat's as well. Thank you John Davison for helping with the books, setting up the Zoom meeting and recording the event so we could share it to those who were unable to attend! Thank you Ashley Coats for coming and taking pictures for us!



CONTACT INFO

Carla Wiese
Missouri PTA President
Columbia, MO
president@mopta.org

RELEASE DATE

May 7, 2021

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE **VETO HB 349 FOR MISSOURI CHILDREN**

JEFFERSON CITY, MO -- Missouri PTA is extremely disappointed with the passage of HB 349. This bill allows the creation of tax credits/vouchers. Missouri taxpayer dollars will be able to be used in certain private schools and home schools.

Missouri PTA opposes vouchers in any form because:

!Schools receiving the funds are not held accountable for delivering an education.

!Teachers are not required to be certified or even have a college degree.

!Schools accepting these scholarships are not required to enroll all students.

!Schools receiving the funds are not held financially accountable for taxpayer dollars.

Tax breaks already exist for donations to scholarship funds. Our students deserve better, our taxpayers deserve better!

Missouri PTA encourages our members to contact Governor Mike Parson to VETO this legislation for all students.

VETO HB349!

**CONTACT GOVERNOR MIKE PARSON
AND TELL HIM TO VETO THIS
LEGISLATION FOR ALL STUDENTS!
OUR STUDENTS DESERVE BETTER,
OUR TAXPAYERS DESERVE BETTER!**



**#VETOHB349
#SupportPublicSchools**



I have a knot in the pit of my stomach. That knot is there because I know, without a doubt, that the passing of Missouri HB 349 is horrible news for our state's foster and adoptive children. May is National Foster Care Awareness Month. It's the time that we celebrate resilient children and post heart-tugging statistics and infographics with witty hashtags to remind us all to support foster care in our communities. But there is one way we can all advocate for foster children (and ALL Missouri children) and that is by demanding that our lawmakers support public schools that are held accountable and accept all children. Vouchers and tax credit programs like those proposed by HB 349 are created with barriers in place that set up failures for kiddos with special needs and it's the same for students from inequitable situations. Many children that are part of the foster care system have experienced trauma, instability, and/or lack of parental/guardian involvement in their education and that is due to no fault of their own. As a foster, adoptive, and birth mom, I can give personal testimony that this is the case for many children in my home. It takes time, energy, and social capital to collect enough knowledge to advocate for each of my children in the public educational setting. HB 349 adds the ability for these entities to decline children's education for any reason and does not require teachers to have college degrees to teach. Our children (and Missouri's foster children are OUR children) deserve better!

Join me and ask our Governor to do the right thing. Support Missouri's foster children and VETO HB 349!

--Kristina Wilmoth, Mom of 8 kids educated in Missouri public schools, Mom of 3 kids who would be rejected from voucher programs because of special needs, Advocate for ALL children, and Missouri PTA VP of Communication

SOME COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT Foster Care

How many children are awaiting adoption in the United States?

Of the 400,000 children in foster care, approximately 120,000 are waiting to be adopted.

I have heard that many children in foster care have “special needs.” What does that mean?

The term “special needs” simply refers to children who qualify for adoption assistance—ongoing governmental medical and/or financial support after adoption occurs—due to specific factors or conditions such as:

- Being an older child
- Having a particular racial or ethnic background
- Being part of a sibling group needing to be placed together as one unit
- Medical conditions
- Physical, mental, or emotional disabilities

A child with special needs should not be confused with a child who requires special education.

I see a lot of older children in photo listings. Why would I want to adopt an older child?

Imagine being a teenager grappling with the transition into adolescence and independence all alone. That is the situation facing thousands of young people who face aging out of foster care alone every year. These teens need support, guidance, and family now and for the rest of their lives. [Read more about why teens need families.](#)

Find more common questions and information by clicking the photo.



WE NEED YOU!

Missouri PTA is looking for new additions to the Board of Managers! We are actively seeking to fill these roles, but we are always in need of more volunteers in a variety of areas.

Reflections Chair

– Promotes the Reflections program at the state level. Serves as a liaison between the local PTA unit and the national PTA Reflections Department. Is responsible for updating the state Reflections information annually, organizing the judging of state Reflections entries and hosting the state Reflections Student Showcase.

Regional Director

– Proactively interacts with Regional Units and Councils by monthly phone calls, emails, or newsletters. Coordinates the work in the Regions and assists in the organization of new units and councils. Assist with Regional training in areas where there are no Councils and assist Councils with their Schools of Information. Attends Council meetings. Attends Unit meetings as necessary.

Advocacy Chair

– Promotes and encourages advocacy efforts related to general health, wellness, and safety. Works with outside agencies to connect PTA with education health-related opportunities.

If you are interested, please click below to fill out a Talent Bank Interest Form. Share with your units and other PTA members who may be interested!



A Mindful Minute

BY JESSICA BROADWAY

Programs & Resource Development

a monthly reminder to take a minute

Life is busy!! How do we create time, *intentional time*-to connect, to savor life? I have a deep connection to growing up while gathering around the table at the end of the day for dinner with my family-- I wanted this for my kids, too. In my search to find moments of connection, making space to see each other at the end of each day -- to share a meal together -- sounds great! Family dinner at the table seven nights a week? It's also near impossible. On days we couldn't achieve this due to schedules, I noticed I felt as though I had failed. While exploring this, I understood what I really wanted was the moment of connection.

But in a busy life when we often only have a few minutes, how can we create a meaningful connection in just one of those minutes?

EYE CONTACT.

I decided to take one minute and divided it into sections of time for each family member. In our family, everyone gets fifteen seconds. Try this. There is no way you can hide the impact and emotions of the day when you look someone in the eyes. This builds trust. It releases oxytocin, and it stimulates the joy center in the brain.

Fifteen seconds of gathering around the table. It fosters connection, which is really what we crave. Then the nights when you can come together, it is so much more enjoyable. You've fostered connection all week and been intentional. When we are missing a connection, reconnection can feel difficult - maybe even a bit awkward. This is a great way to keep connected, and a bonus: it also works if you're not the touchy, feely, huggy type.

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE

MOPTA STEM GRANT WINNERS!

Missouri PTA is very excited to award \$500 to each of the following units who applied and met our requirements.

**CROSSROADS
ELEMENTARY PTA**
O'Fallon

**LEWIS AND CLARK
ELEMENTARY PTA**
Liberty

**Missouri
PTA[®]**
everychild. onevoice.

 **Bayer Fund**

**STEM
+FAMILIES** 

CATCH THE CORGI

STEM CHALLENGE HOSTED BY CROSSROADS ELEMENTARY PTA

Crossroad Elementary PTA was awarded a \$500 STEM grant from Bayer through their partnership with Missouri PTA. Their “Catch the Corgi Challenge” event spanned 5 days and included a variety of challenges using the GooseChase app. Each challenge was assigned a point value and difficulty level with some bonus point opportunities available. New challenges were released daily with some activities needing to be completed in a single day, like eating

a grilled cheese on National Grilled Cheese Day. Majority of the activities had a family element or an educational component. The main focus for the activities followed a STEM theme, many using the [Bayer](#)

[Science at Home](#) (these awarded the most points). Participation was amazing and several families completed the majority or all of the challenges. The winning family completed every single challenge and earned several bonus points. Everyone who participated really seemed to enjoy the activities and it was a great way to conduct a community activity while still following COVID-19 safety guidelines.



FUN STEM ACTIVITIES AT HOME

Use this page of links to find some STEM activities that your family can do at home during the summer. Bayer and National PTA have compiled tons of amazing resources for families. Each logo will take you to a page with a variety of activities to make your summer fun and engaging.



Bayer Fund



Figure This!
Math Challenges for Families



Climate Kids
SpacePlace



Make:
Community

TECHNOVATION
Families



Avoid Distractions When Driving

Keep focused and never put yourself and others in danger for the sake of a call, text, or other activity.



They Can Wait!



#wellnesswednesday
#justdrive



