To promote the welfare of children and youth in home, school, places of worship, and throughout the community.

To raise the standards of home life.

To advocate for laws that further the education physical and mental health, welfare, and safety of children and youth.

To promote the collaboration and engagement of families and educators in the education of children and youth.

To engage the public in united efforts to secure the physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and social well-being of all children and youth; and

To advocate for fiscal responsibility regarding public tax dollars in public education funding.

Utah PTA will help every child realize his full potential and will:

Advocate:
Support and speak on behalf of children and youth, and

Involve:
Encourage positive involvement in all facets of a child’s life, and

Develop:
Assist in developing skills to raise and protect children and youth.

The Mission of PTA is three-fold:
To support and speak on behalf of children and youth in the schools, in the community, and before governmental bodies and other organizations that make decisions affecting children;

To assist parents in developing the skills they need to raise and protect their children; and

To encourage parent and public involvement in the public schools of this nation.
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## My Critical Information At-A-Glance

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Information on Commissions

How to Get Started

- Attend training at state, region and council levels.
- Become familiar with national, state and local commission-related issues.
- Gather resources from past commissioners.
- Organize your commission.
- Identify local needs or concerns:
  - Include current issues on needs assessments
  - Determine areas where teachers or school programs need assistance
- From the needs assessment:
  - Prioritize
  - Set goals
  - Develop a plan of action

Responsibilities of a Local PTA Commissioner

- Become knowledgeable about PTA policies and current issues.
- Know the key people and organizations that relate to your commission.
- Act as a resource on commission issues. Disseminate information and material pertaining to commission concerns to parents, teachers and community.
- Serve on council commission if one is organized.
- Be an active, participating member of the local PTA board of directors.
- Serve on PTA and community committees as assigned by the PTA president or board.
- Organize your commission with teachers, students, parents, and community members.
- Develop and implement programs that relate to commission concerns.
- Keep a record of number of hours spent in PTA work.
- Keep a procedure book to be passed on.
- Advocate for children on commission-related issues.
- Attend appropriate meetings, including:
  - Local PTA Board of Directors
  - Training sessions conducted by Utah PTA, Region PTA and Council PTA
  - All local PTA general membership meetings
  - Utah PTA Leadership Convention
  - Advocacy Conference
  - PTA Day at the Capitol

Responsibilities of a Council PTA Commissioner

- Provide training and leadership for local commission counterparts.
- Act as a resource and provide new ideas and approaches for commission concerns.
- Provide information to local PTA units on policies, goals and objectives.
- Organize council projects, conferences and workshops as needed.
- Conduct council commission meetings.
- Keep a record of number of hours spent in PTA work.
- Attend appropriate meetings.
- Maintain a resource file/procedure book to be passed on.
- Advocate for children on commission-related issues.
Responsibilities of a Region PTA Commissioner

- Provide training and leadership for council commission counterparts.
- Act as a resource and provide new ideas and approaches for commission concerns.
- Provide information to region PTA units on policies, goals and objectives.
- Organize region projects, conferences and workshops as needed.
- Conduct region commission meetings.
- Keep a record of number of hours spent in PTA work.
- Attend appropriate meetings including Utah PTA Commission meetings.
- Maintain a resource file/procedure book to be passed on.
- Advocate for children on commission-related issues.

Who can serve on a Commission Committee?

**Local**
- Elected or appointed Commissioner
- Teachers
- School Nurse
- Appointees as needed
- Specialists
- Local Officers
- Students (PTSA)
- Community Members

**Council**
- Elected or appointed Commissioner
- Local commissioners
- Council Officers
- Appointees as needed
- Specialists
- Local Presidents
- Student Members
- Community Members

**Region**
- Elected or appointed Commissioner
- Council Commissioners
- Region Officers
- Appointees as needed
- Specialists
- Council Presidents
- Student Members
- Community Members

**State**
- Elected Commissioner
- Region Directors
- Associate Region Directors
- State Officers (as appointed)
- Specialists
- Council Presidents
- Student Members
- Community Members
What is a Commission?

A Commission is a specific group that develops and implements programs and projects within related areas of concern.

Q  What is the purpose of a PTA Commission?
A  It is to resolve critical school and community issues and concerns identified by the PTA membership through a needs assessment.

Q  What is the role of a Commissioner?
A  It is to act as the presiding officer and facilitator of a commission and to report commission plans to the executive committee.

Q  Who selects a Commissioner?
A  Bylaws will indicate whether the commissioner is elected or appointed with board approval.

Q  Who selects Commission members?
A  Commissioners and/or officers appoint commission members as needed.

Q  When does a Commission meet?
A  The commissioner may determine a meeting schedule. These meetings are generally held outside of regular board meetings.
Organizing Your Commission / Committee

This page is to help you identify the plan for your Commissioners and the people on your commission/committee.

Commission/Committee:

Commissioner/Chairman:

Areas of Concern:

Commission/Committee Members:

Teachers:

Students:

Parents:

Community:

Specialists:

Consultants: (Resource people)
Family Life Commission Mission Statement

The mission statement for the Utah PTA Family Life Commission is “to strengthen the home and improve the quality of life for all Utah children.” This handbook will help you identify the areas of focus for your Family Life Commission and locate resources to help you implement effective programs that meet the needs of your local unit. To view this handbook online go to and go to Home > Programs > Utah PTA Resources > 2018-19 Utah PTA Handbooks.

Sometimes it is difficult for local PTAs to recruit all the commissioners needed. A local PTA can implement any of these programs using a program chair or other members of an existing board without a designated Family Life Commissioner. Local PTAs should carefully consider the needs of their members to determine which of these programs can help their families.

If a local PTA designates a Family Life Commissioner, there are great benefits. The Commissioner can recruit other members to sit on his or her commission or committee and to chair individual programs, thus increasing involvement by PTA members. The Commissioner would then oversee and assist the program chairs in accomplishing the work and running the programs, making specific assignments to others so that all stakeholders feel a part of the success of each program.

How to Get Started

- Gather materials, e.g., Family Life Handbook, Program Section of the President Handbook, and binder from the prior Family Life Commissioner.
- Review the PTA One Voice Blog at onevoice.pta.org
- Sign up for Our Children magazine at PTAourchildren.org. On the bottom right of this page click on “Subscribe to our Newsletter” for more information options.
- Attend leadership training at the annual Utah PTA Leadership Convention.
- Organize your commission or committee.
- Develop a survey/needs assessment to determine the needs of your PTA membership, parents, teachers, and students. This could be part of the annual PTA needs assessment.
- After conducting your survey/needs assessment, choose two or three areas of focus or subjects which are of high-ranking concern to your PTA Board, parents, teachers, and students.
- Ask yourself which areas of focus or subjects are already being addressed in your school.
- Clearly define reasonable goals and objectives you would like to establish for your commission.
- Budget for addressing your determined needs. Submit your budget to the budget committee for inclusion in the overall budget.
- If the areas of focus and/or subjects are currently built into the school’s system, determine if PTA help is needed.
- Know the law or school policy governing each area of focus or subject on the local, district, and state level.
- Obtain copies of laws and policies, and keep on file for future reference.
- Develop an action plan which specifies how PTA can work as a resource organization to the school and parents.
Meeting / Project Planning Assignment Sheet

This page is provided as a guide for setting up a plan of work for projects.

Officers in charge: (assignments)

Committee:

Business to be conducted:

1.
2.
3.
4.

Presentations:

Publicity:

- Fliers
- Community Newspaper (press release)
- Posters
- Websites
- Other (PTA newsletter, local radio or television stations)

Physical Facilities:

Handouts:

1.
2.
3.
4.
Other:

Costs:

Evaluation:

Subject:

Letters:

School Papers:

Calls:
Advocacy

National PTA’s motto is “every child, one voice.” Sometimes it is necessary for us to speak out on behalf of children. If one of the areas of concern in your school community indicates a need for a change in policy, it may be necessary for you to speak out – to parents, school faculty, the school board, the city council, or the Legislature. If you will be speaking on behalf of PTA, be sure to consult with your PTA leaders. They can help you refine your message and make sure that what you say is in harmony with the goals and mission of PTA. They may also be able to speak on your behalf, when feasible and appropriate.

If the area of concern affects children throughout the state, it may be advisable for your PTA to draft a resolution to submit to the Utah PTA Resolutions Committee for consideration at the annual Utah PTA Leadership Convention. If approved by the membership, the resolution will become one of the issues that the Utah PTA Commissioners will actively pursue at the Utah Legislature or the Utah State Board of Education. Information about the resolution process is found in the annual Utah PTA Handbook and Utah PTA Legislative Handbook.

Current Family Life Resolutions

PTA Resolutions help our organization to function with consistency and unity. It is important that we speak as one voice for the benefit of Utah’s children. Becoming aware of existing resolutions will help you to know what the official stand is on any given issue. If a needed resolution is not in place, you may be the one to bring it forward and help Utah PTA address an issue that will increase our ability to raise healthier, happier, safer children. You can find the full text for each resolution at www.utahpta.org/advocacy.

Utah PTA Health Resolutions (Keep in mind that many Commissions overlap in their focus. If you do not see a resolution here, it may be listed under another Commission, such as Safety. For National PTA Resolutions see: https://www.pta.org/home/advocacy

- FAM 2018-1 Foster Care Standards
- FAM 2014-1 Intergenerational Poverty
- FAM 2014-2 Utah PTA Supports Military Families and Children
- FAM 2013-1 Family Engagement in Education
- FAM 2009-1 Early Childhood
- FAM 2009-2 Child Abuse and Neglect
- FAM 2008-1 Child Identity theft
- FAM 2007-1 Parenting
- FAM 2002-2 Early Childhood Representation in Utah
- FAM 1998-1 Television Media
- FAM 1998-2 Foster Care Standards
- FAM 1996-2 Checkout Lines in Retail Stores
- FAM 1996-3 Domestic Violence Education
- FAM 1995-1 Funding for Public Broadcasting Stations
- FAM 1995-2 Children and Youth with Disabilities, Birth Through Five
- FAM 1990-1 Child Care
- FAM 1990-2 Child Adoptions
- FAM 1981-2 Family Violence
Needs Assessment

There are many ways to do a needs assessment, and details on how to do this are in the Presidents Handbook. Ideally, your PTA will do one or more broad needs assessment surveys which will include Family Life issues. In this case, you will not need to do a separate assessment. Speak to your PTA President so that Family Life issues or questions are included. Needs assessments can be sent home in newsletters, setup as an online survey, sent with registration information, or distributed and collected at faculty meetings, parent/teacher conferences, or any gathering of parents. Students may also have valuable input. Respondents do not have to be PTA members.

Once you have collected and analyzed the results, your commission will be able to identify the Family Life areas of most concern in your school community. You may not be able to address every area of concern, but you should be able to identify the most important issues. Choose a few areas of focus for the year, or one for each semester, such as the following:

- Involving parents
- Preparing children for kindergarten
- Parenting classes
- Child abuse and neglect
- Media literacy
- Digital citizenship
- Foster care and adoption
- Domestic violence prevention
- Child identity theft
- Internet safety and pornography

Evaluating Results

It can be difficult to assess changes that come about as a result of your programs and activities. Social changes tend to come about very slowly and as a result of many different factors. Your commission can, however, look for positive results, as well as recording what was done, what went well, what you would change if you did the activity again, and whether the activity might be worth repeating. This information, if kept and passed on, may be very valuable for your own use and for those who plan future activities and programs.
Parental Involvement

PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships

Standard 1: Welcoming all families into the school community—Families are active participants in the life of the school, and feel welcomed, valued, and connected to each other, to school staff, and to what students are learning and doing in class.

Standard 2: Communicating effectively—Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.

Standard 3: Supporting student success—Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.

Standard 4: Speaking up for every child—Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

Standard 5: Sharing power—Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence, and create policies, practices, and programs.

Standard 6: Collaborating with community—Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families, and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services, and civic participation.

PTA.org/excellence
What PTAs Can Do?

PTAs can play a pivotal role in how the standards are put in place at the state and district levels. PTA leaders are encouraged to meet with their school, district and/or state administrators to discuss their plans to implement the standards and how their PTA can support that work.

The goal is that PTAs and education administrators will collaborate on how to share the guides with all of the parents and caregivers in their states or communities, once the Common Core Standards are fully implemented.

The goal is for PTA leaders to collaborate together with the education administrators to develop a strategy to share the Guide along with any other pertinent information with all of the parents and caregivers in your community, once the Standards are fully implemented. Ultimately, the aim is that the Guide will be a tool for parents to build relationships with their children’s teachers once the Standards are fully in place.

The guides include:

- Key items children should be learning in English language arts and mathematics in each grade, once Common Core Standards are fully implemented.
- Activities that parents can do at home to support their child’s learning.
- Methods for helping parents build stronger relationships with their child’s teacher.
- Tips for planning for college and career (high school only).

To access copies you may download them at: https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Parents-Guides-to-Student-Success
Help Your Child Succeed in Key Learning Areas

National PTA, in partnership with the National Education Association, is pleased to offer newly updated Family Guides. These guides can help parents and caretakers find valuable tips for helping their child succeed in key learning areas.

PTA leaders, teachers, parents and families should use these guides to engage families in education throughout a child’s academic career.

To access this information you may download them at

https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Family-Guides

Preschool

Preschools include children ages 3-5. It is important that a preschool is a quality establishment with a program to address all aspects of the child’s development, including physical, social, emotional, and academic needs. Preschool experiences can provide enrichment activities to promote literacy readiness and social skills.

Preschools offer the opportunity for young children to interact socially with other children their own age and to begin learning and experiencing many different activities which set their pattern for education. Preschools are often a form of child care; however, a quality preschool curriculum consists of the well-rounded components of emotional, social, and academic learning.

Suggestions for PTAs:
- Make information available on what constitutes a quality preschool.
- List preschools in your area.
- If a preschool is housed within a local school, involve those parents in PTA programs.
- Help form a Head Start PTA or partnership with Head Start parents and a neighboring school PTA.

Head Start

Launched in 1965, Head Start has proven to be one of the nation’s most successful social and educational investments. Reaching far beyond the scope of school readiness, Head Start provides comprehensive education, health, nutrition, and family services to poverty-level children and their families. Local grantees receive federal funding for Head Start (HS), Migrant/Seasonal Head Start (MSHS), and Early Head Start (EHS) programs, the latter serving children from birth to age three and expectant mothers. For more information on Head Start programs please visit: www.uhsa.org

Suggestions for PTAs:
- Help form a Head Start PTA or partnership with Head Start parents and a neighboring school PTA.
- Invite Head Start families to your school activities.
- Be aware of Head Start activities and attend if appropriate.
- Consider having a Head Start or Preschool liaison on your board.
National PTA Take Your Family to School Week

For over 120 years, National PTA has been encouraging families to get more involved in their child’s education. Help us celebrate PTA’s long legacy of family engagement during National PTA’s Take Your Family to School Week by hosting an event at your school. Research shows when parents and families are involved, students achieve. Your PTA can use the week to give new life to family engagement at the beginning of the year. PTA units should coordinate activities and events for this week in collaboration with the school principal, teachers, and staff.

National PTA generally offers a grant for schools who are interested in holding Take Your Family to School activities. Check National PTA’s website explaining the grant process at [https://www.pta.org/home/events/PTA-Take-Your-Family-to-School-Week](https://www.pta.org/home/events/PTA-Take-Your-Family-to-School-Week)

Media Literacy and Digital Wellness

White Ribbon Week

White Ribbon Week is a positive school program presented by PTA volunteers that helps students make safe and healthy choices in media and technology. White Ribbon Week is age appropriate and fun! Every day, kids learn a new principle of online behavior—reinforced through engaging classroom discussions and fun activities. The program is endorsed by national experts and kid tested. Each of the four themes contains a step-by-step guide so that any volunteer can organize a successful white ribbon week in their neighborhood elementary school or middle school. White Ribbon Week, Salt Lake City, Utah, [www.whiteribbonweek.org](http://www.whiteribbonweek.org)

NetSmartz

The NetSmartz program as provided by the Utah Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs provides free digital citizenship trainings to Utah students in grades K-12. Trained presenters provide age-appropriate instruction to students about topics including cyberbullying, sexting, Internet predators, social media use and more. Trainings are interactive and motivational in nature. The program’s goal is to inspire positive change and positive digital behavior among the students. The program provides students with empowering ways to address Internet safety digital citizenship at school and at home. NetSmartz Workshop and Disney have teamed up to offer a self-paced, online training program to help you teach Internet Safety and prepare kids to be better digital citizens. This information can be found at [https://www.netsmartz.org/Training](https://www.netsmartz.org/Training)
Digital Wellness

Helping families use screen time wisely has many components: moderating the amount of time children spend watching digital entertainment, setting family standards with the children about what is appropriate to watch, teaching children how to think critically and determine which information online is accurate, teaching children and youth how to stay safe online (from bullying, online predators, pornography, etc.), and brainstorming with the children all the endless ways they can serve and put positive messages online.

Parenting in the digital age is complex. PTA Connected strives to help children act safely, responsibly and thoughtfully online. National PTA has been a partner to parents on digital parenting topics for over 5 years, exploring in-depth the issues that are on the minds of today’s families, and connecting parents with tools, research and supports to make the best decisions for their children.

Digital Safety Resources, including possible grant opportunities, for families and PTA’s can be found online at https://www.pta.org/home/programs/connected

Digital Citizenship Utah

This website is a resource center for whatever needs your school, teachers, and parents have as you teach kids to be smart users of technology? The information found here is focused on facilitating conversation and collaboration around the opportunities and challenges of raising children in a digital world. This website can help you find ways to promote the positive things students can do to use technology in a deliberate ways while learning to handle the inherent risks. http://digcitutah.com

Fight the New Drug

Fight the New Drug exists to provide individuals the opportunity to make an informed decision regarding pornography by raising awareness of its harmful effects using only science, facts, and personal accounts. With an all-inclusive approach, we carry our anti-pornography message across borders of religious beliefs, political agenda, and social backgrounds by presenting it as a public health issue, rather than as a moral, political or religious argument.
Health

Underage Drinking

January is Parents Empowered.org Month

Parents Empowered.org is a Utah program that aims to eliminate underage drinking in Utah. ParentsEmpowered.org is a media and education campaign funded by the Utah Legislature and designed to prevent and reduce underage drinking in Utah by providing parents and guardians with information about the harmful effects of alcohol on the developing teen brain, along with proven skills for preventing underage alcohol use. There is a wealth of information that can be found at [http://parentsempowered.org](http://parentsempowered.org) to help in schools and families.

Safety

Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention

Prevent Child Abuse Utah is a non-profit, education agency. Their goal is to educate students, parents, and community members about child abuse in all its forms. Their prevention specialists have a minimum of a bachelor level education. Their prevention programs are available to the schools, and all the programs are free of charge. The programs follow the Core Health Curriculum, and the State Office of Education has reviewed and approved all of the programs. Contact PCAU at 1-800-CHILDREN or [www.preventchildabuseutah.org](http://www.preventchildabuseutah.org) Child Abuse Hotline: 1-855-323-3237.

Bullying

Parents play a key role in preventing and responding to bullying. If you know or suspect that your child is involved in bullying, there are several resources that may help.

Recognize the warning signs that your child is involved in bullying. They could be being bullied, bullying others, or witnessing bullying. Although these signs could signal other issues, you should talk to your child if they display any sort of behavioral or emotional changes. Many times kids won’t ask for help, so it is important to know what to look for. If your child is at immediate risk of harming himself or others, get help right away.

Learn what bullying is and what it is not. Understanding what bullying is, IS the first step in forming a plan to prevent or respond to bullying with your child. Many behaviors that look like bullying may be just as serious, but may require different response strategies. For resources visit: [https://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/index.html](https://www.stopbullying.gov/what-is-bullying/index.html)
Connect for Respect

Connect for Respect (C4R) is National PTA’s initiative to help students, parents and educators to create school climates full of safe and supportive peer relationships. For a leaders guide and more information on this program visit [https://www.pta.org/home/programs/Healthy-Lifestyles/Connect-for-RespectBullying](https://www.pta.org/home/programs/Healthy-Lifestyles/Connect-for-RespectBullying)

Foster Care and Adoption

Utah has an ongoing need for foster and adoptive families. If you would like to help educate the families in your school community about foster care, or if there are interested families who need more information, contact:

Utah Foster Care Foundation
Phone: 801-994-5205
Toll-free: 877-505-KIDS (5437)
Website: www.utahfostercare.org

Utah Adoption Council
P.O. Box 2069
Salt Lake City, UT 84110

Our Childrens Magazine

Our Children Magazine is the unique voice for parents, published by National PTA, created for the parent who’s always on the go and looking for the best info to help their child excel at school and in life.

Topics in Our Children Magazine include:

- Parenting
- Wellness
- Education
- PTA Community

Sign up to receive the Our Children e-newsletter at [https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Our-Children-Magazine](https://www.pta.org/home/family-resources/Our-Children-Magazine)
Help Me Grow Utah (HMGU) is a statewide information and resource line, designed to support expectant parents and families with young children, from birth to early childhood. Services are provided at no cost and are available to anyone interested (no eligibility requirements) in English and Spanish. Other languages can be helped through phone translation only.

**Help Me Grow Utah services include:**

- Personal Care Coordination
- Free Child Development and Perinatal screenings
- Answers to pregnancy, parenting and child development questions
- Connection to community resources

To connect with Help Me Grow, visit their website: [www.helpmegrowutah.org](http://www.helpmegrowutah.org)

Help Me Grow Utah is an initiative program of United Way of Utah County, and acts as a coordinator of resources and information - thus providing no direct services.
Military Families & Military Children

The life of military families and children has always had challenges. Foremost among them being frequent relocations and separations. Every time military families move, children have to adapt, make new friends, get used to new schools, and find new clubs and teams to join. It is hard for kids to rebuild their world every time they move and find their place in it. Having a PTA board member as a Military Family Appointee or Specialist provides a powerful opportunity to raise awareness and build support to help these children meet the unique challenges they face. It is an opportunity to recognize military children and youth for their heroism, character, courage, sacrifices and resilience.

Did You Know?

- Two million military children have experienced a parental deployment since 2001.
- There are currently 1.7 million military children of active duty members worldwide.
- Nearly 80 percent of military children attend public schools throughout the United States.
- The average military family moves three times more often than their civilian counterpart.
- The repeated and extended separations and increased hazards of deployment compound stressors in military children's lives.
- One third of school-age military children show psychosocial behaviors such as being anxious, worrying often, crying more, and/or acting out.
- The U.S. military consists of approximately 1.4 million active duty service members and 810,000 National Guard and Selected Reserve. Usually Active Duty military families live on or near military installations. National Guard and Reserve families might never live near a military installation, and look within their community for educational services, friendship and support.
- A positive school environment, built upon caring relationships among all participants—students, teachers, staff, administrators, parents and community members—has been shown to impact not only academic performance but also positively influence emotions and behaviors of military-connected students.
- Supporting the military child takes a school-wide and community-wide effort, and professional development opportunities to inform school staff of the academic and social-emotional challenges military children face.

Utah PTA has a Military Family Specialist and we encourage all local PTAs to have one. On our website, [www.utahpta.org](http://www.utahpta.org), under Commissions/Committees then Military Families, you will find numerous ideas and resources to help all school personnel, teachers, administrators and PTA leaders and members understand, identify and recognize these military families and children. There are over 18,000 children in Utah who have one or more parents, step-parents, siblings, or extended family members on full-time duty status in military service of the United States, including members of the National Guard and Reserves on active duty. Help us to help them!
Utah PTA Supports Our Military Families

What are the challenges our Military Families face? They face frequent relocations, educational inconsistencies—different school systems, adjusting to new neighbors and communities, leaving friends and making new friends, family separations, grandparents as care givers, disability or loss of family member and many other challenges.

What can PTA do? Communicate with military families, educate the community, advocate to eliminate nation-wide educational inconsistencies, and be a source of information and support.

How do we reach and include them? Identify them, and find out who they are. Invite them, welcome them, and ask them to participate. Inform them of events and programs and communicate with them. Involve them, because volunteering is what they do. Include them, because no job is too small to use their skills.

How does PTA benefit Military Families? PTA supports them by reaching out to them. PTA sustains them by being there for them. PTA leaders and members recognize and honor their sacrifice and acknowledge their service.

Ideas to Celebrate and Recognize Military Families and Children

1. Have a patriotic program in a School Assembly (See Planning Assembly on website: www.utahpta.org) and wear a camouflage ribbon or article of clothing on Assembly Day, or on Veteran’s Day, President’s Day or any patriotic day.
2. Have the students wear red, white and blue to school and have each child describe what each color means to them. Then discuss the real meaning of the colors.
3. Have students create artwork that promotes patriotism and display it in the classroom and/or school. This could be done anytime during the school year but throughout November, Military Family Month or April, the Month of the Military Child, or around any patriotic holiday it would be especially meaningful.
5. Present a patriotic play or story in class prior to Armed Forces Day, Veteran’s Day, Flag Day or Memorial Day.
6. Have a “Take Your Veteran to School Day” (See ideas on website: www.utahpta.org) Suggest veteran wear his/her military uniform to the assembly, or a program or to the child’s classroom. The child could introduce him/her.
7. Have students write a paper on “Serving our Nation” by interviewing a former or current member of the military.
8. Sing a patriotic song, or learn a dance or memorize a patriotic poem as a class.
9. Have students write a paragraph, poem or short story about, “Why I am Grateful to Those in Military Service.”
10. Invite a student’s military family member to the class to explain what their military service meant/means to them.
11. Have the students write a letter, as a class or individually, to a soldier. (Mailing addresses can be provided)
Celebrate the Military Family Month in November and the Month of the Military Child in April (See ideas, planning time lines and suggested patriotic program on website: www.utahpta.org)

National PTA supports our Military Families by creating and continuing the National PTA® Military Alliance for Parents and Partners. This is a group of organizations that work together to provide resources to and advocate for military-connected families. MAPP develops collaborative strategy to create awareness of military families and their needs. It serves military families by providing and developing resources that will help and support them.

The participants include:

AUSA: Association of the United States Army,
DoDEA: U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity,
MCEC: Military Children Education Coalition,
MISA: Military Impacted Schools Association, and the
NMFA: National Military Family Association

Resources on the Internet:

Utah PTA: www.utahpta.org
National PTA: www.pta.org
Military Children Education Coalition: www.militarychild.org
National Military Family Association: www.militaryfamily.org
Military Impacted Schools Association: www.militaryimpactedschoolsassociation.org
U.S. Department of Defense Education Activity: www.dodea.edu.org

Special Needs

Children with special needs and their parents and teachers are an important part of PTA. This group faces a unique set of challenges and they deserve our support and recognition. All special needs are not the same. Some are purely physical and others are cognitive or behavioral or a mixture. What is appropriate for one person with a special need may not be appropriate for another. Different children may need different accommodations to fully participate. Visit www.utahpta.org/special-needs for more information and resources.
What are the National Standards?

The National Standards for Family-School Partnerships are voluntary guidelines to strengthen parent and family involvement on behalf of children in schools and other programs. The six standards and their quality indicators provide PTAs, schools, and communities with the components that are needed for highly effective family-school involvement programs.

PTA leaders and all those interested in more effective family/school/community connections will find the National Standards for Family-School Partnerships to be a valuable resource and catalyst for action.

1. **Welcoming All Families Into the School Community**
   Families are active participants in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued and connected to each other, to school staff and to what students are learning and doing in class.

2. **Communicating Effectively**
   Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way and meaningful communication about student learning.

3. **Supporting Student Success**
   Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students’ learning and healthy development, both at home and at school and have regular opportunities that will support their success.

4. **Speaking Up For Every Child**
   Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.

5. **Sharing Power**
   Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence and create policies, practices and programs.

6. **Collaborating with Community**
   Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families and staff to expand learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

**Background**

Our nation acknowledged the important role of parent involvement through its enactment of the 8th National Education Goal:

> Every school will promote partnerships that will increase parental involvement and participation in promoting the social, emotional and academic growth of children.

Utah PTA supports this goal. The standards were designed to raise the level of expectation about how family-school involvement programs can improve student achievement and life success by engaging families in true partnership with educators and community leaders.
How Were the Standards Developed?
The standards were developed by the National PTA in collaboration with parent involvement researchers and other national leaders. They are endorsed by more than 30 professional education and family-school involvement organizations. The standards clearly delineate those practices that have been shown to lead to success and high-quality parent involvement programs. The standards were developed to be a practical tool for meeting the threefold purpose of the national standards which is:

1. To promote meaningful parent and family participation
2. To raise awareness regarding the components of effective programs
3. To provide guidelines for schools that wish to improve their programs

How Can My PTA Use These Standards?
Before you begin to develop new or improve on existing family-school involvement programs, form a committee or action team including all of the stakeholders—parents, teachers, administrators, support staff and community leaders. Be sure everyone involved understands the group’s purpose: to recognize the importance of parent and family involvement, review the standards, look broadly at current programs or practices at your school and make recommendations about what steps are needed to initiate positive change.

Developing genuine collaboration is critical. The views of all stakeholders should be considered and valued and no one group should control the outcomes. Establishing trust and a true partnership will take time, but the extra effort is well worth the lasting benefits that can be gained. Meaningful change requires thoughtful, incremental steps. Laying a solid foundation can make all the difference in the final outcomes and success of your programs.

Creating an Action Plan
When parents, educators and community leaders make parent involvement a mutual goal, they can begin to work together as a team to create an action plan for reaching and maintaining the standards. Give each step adequate attention to ensure the overall effectiveness of your plan. Set realistic and achievable goals. Remember: Success Breeds Success. Accomplishing obtainable goals and then setting additional ones works better than reaching too high and trying to achieve too much in the beginning.

When implementing your action plan, consider local needs, priorities and the demographics of your school and community. Involve those who will be instrumental in carrying out the plan to help develop the steps or procedures to implement it. This uses a bottom-up rather than top-down team approach which allows for greater support and cooperation from everyone involved.

Family involvement should not be seen as an “add-on” program feature, but rather as an essential component in the ongoing goal of improved student success. In order to be most effective, the family-school involvement plan should be fully integrated into the overall school or program improvement process.

Making Progress
Once the groundwork is laid and all stakeholders understand the value of the partnership, then redefining, reshaping and “scaling up” planned activities and goals maintains the momentum of program change. As noted, family involvement is a process, not merely a series of “one shot” activities or plans carried out and then retired. It is crucial that the standards be implemented in an ongoing pattern of planning, action and evaluation on a consistent basis. Each measurable success fosters a pattern of continual, meaningful partnership.
Key Points To Remember

Positive Approach

Take a positive approach and build on the commendable practices that already exist in your school or programs. Accommodate diverse populations. Consider the needs of all families and plan meetings and structure activities to best involve everyone.

Involve All

Involve all the stakeholders—parents, teachers, administrators, support staff and community members. Enlist the full participation of those who will implement the program or activity to help design the action plan prior to launching the program.

Provide Training

Involve school or program support staff, as well as educators and administrators, in the process. Provide program training for parents, staff and administrators as needed to implement the action plan.

Offer Assistance

Offer PTA assistance. Encourage your PTA members to work closely with the school or program administrators to be an effective team model for implementing the action plan and facilitating family-school involvement.

Reinforce

Reinforce the truth that family and community involvement is more than fundraising or collecting donations for projects and activities.
The backbone is the organization of diverse volunteer members who donated millions of hours to benefit the children in local public schools.

Advocates for all children in schools and districts, and by following bills that are supported by Utah PTA resolutions that originate from the grass roots—their members.

Is the watchdog for Trust Lands’ money, making sure the monies keep flowing to the local schools and that all uses of the land benefit the children of Utah.

Supports all public schools, including public charter schools.

When a school forms a PTA, it becomes a member of the largest child advocacy group in Utah and the United States, and will:

- Be under the umbrella of the Utah PTA’s 501(c)(3). They will be issued an EIN for banking purposes and IRS filings and a PTA Unit ID Number from National PTA.
- Have bylaws that govern them.
- Have only one agenda—the children.
- Have the support of Utah PTA and National PTA.
- Have researched resources and handbooks from Utah PTA.
- Have the opportunity for their children to participate in the Reflections program.
- Have the opportunity to participate in PTA Awards and any PTA programs.
- Have leadership trainings.
- Receive regular communication from council, region, and Utah PTA.
- Have a member-to-member parent information base with National PTA.
- Have a larger voice on issues that face their school—every child one vote.
- Have regular information about upcoming events, conferences, and legislative issues, education, health, and safety issues through emails, and Utah PTA website: www.utahpta.org.

A Local PTA organization is a viable, involved association within every community that seeks to benefit the education, safety, and welfare of children and youth. Local businesses, organizations, school community, and community leaders work together with PTA to develop common bonds that further local values and goals that strengthen family, school, and community.
Utah PTA Facts

**History:** Utah PTA joined National PTA in 1925. Utah PTA is the largest child advocacy and volunteer association in the state. National PTA was established more than 100 years ago to address children’s issues.

**Membership:** Being the largest advocacy association in Utah, more than 100,000 individuals volunteer and participate in 685 Local and Council PTAs within the state.

**Organization:** Utah is divided into 21 geographic PTA regions, each served by a Region Director. In large districts, the Region Director works with area Councils. The Council President then works with the local school PTA President. In rural areas, two or more school districts are under one Region Director. Local PTA Presidents meet on a regular basis throughout the school year with Council Presidents/Region Directors. Presidents-elect and Principals may also be included in these meetings. Local PTAs also meet on a regular basis throughout the year in Executive Committee and Board meetings and work with administrators, teachers, staff, parents, and students.

**Affiliation:** Utah PTA is an affiliate of the National PTA. National PTA is composed of 54 state congresses and more than 20,000 local units in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico and the Department of Defense Schools in Europe. State PTAs are the liaison between the local PTA and National PTA, helping each to function effectively and to support and sustain the other. PTAs at the local level are valuable assets to their school communities by providing educational and parent involvement information, resources, events, and activities.

**Parental Involvement:** In 2017, Utah PTA volunteers gave over 1,336,948 hours of service to Utah’s children in their local public schools. If this volunteer service were translated into monetary value, it would be worth $32,273,910.35.

**Important Information**

Utah PTA also has an exemption from sales tax from the Utah State Tax Commission. State law requires every PTA to pay sales tax on purchases under $1,000 and then request a refund. Utah PTA has established a procedure for applying for the refund. See the Financial section. Contact the Utah PTA Treasurer for more information.

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**National and Utah PTA Programs**
- Reflections
- Bullying: Connect for Respect
- School of Excellence
- Take Your Family to School Week
- Teacher Appreciation

**Utah PTA Programs**
- Battle of the Bands (PTSA)
- Ribbon Weeks
- Hope for Tomorrow, with NAMI Utah
- Healthy Relationships (PTSA)

**Conferences and Trainings**
- Advocacy Conference (October)
- PTA Day at the Capitol (February)
- Leadership Convention (May)
- PTSA Student Leadership Conference (June)

**Utah PTA Awards and Grants**
- Utah PTA Awards
- LEAP Award
- Membership Awards
- Arts Grant

**Special PTA State Committees**
- Special Needs
Bylaws must be renewed every three years. Check the red stamp at the top right of the first page of your bylaws. This date will show if your bylaws are current or need to be renewed.

Found on the front page of your local PTA bylaws:

- Your PTA Unit ID Number needs to go on your membership remittance form and cards and Reflections entries. It is your PTA identification number, as assigned by National PTA.

- Your EIN (Employer Identification Number) is needed for all IRS filings and the PTA’s bank account. It is your IRS identification number.

Be A PTA Professional

According to the PTA bylaws, all meetings shall be governed by Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised. In addition, all Board members shall:

- Abide by all PTA rules and meet all PTA deadlines.
- Ensure that the PTA database information (names, addresses, etc.) be for use of PTA Board members only. The confidentiality of hard copies and electronic copies shall be protected.
- Attend all Board meetings and applicable Executive Committee meetings.
- Notify the President as soon as possible if an emergency occurs and they are unable to attend a scheduled PTA meeting.
- Arrive on time and remain to the conclusion of the meeting except in cases of individual emergencies.
- Begin all meetings on time.
- Be allowed a 10-minute break every two hours, returning promptly.
- Remain in a meeting while in session.
- Hold all but emergency calls. Leave the room to answer a call.
- Turn all cell phones to off or vibrate.
- Complete preparation before or after meetings, not during meetings.
- Refrain from holding side conversations.
- Direct all comments and questions through the chair.
- Maintain professional courtesy at all times, including being supportive rather than judgmental, respecting differences of opinion, and listening to others’ ideas without prejudice.
- Give feedback directly and openly in a timely fashion.
- Acknowledge problems and deal with them as they arise.
- Be prepared to present agenda items in a concise manner and focus on tasks and the process and not on personalities or hidden agendas.
- Obtain missed information during breaks out of consideration of others.
- Adjourn at the scheduled time, as per the printed agenda.
- Dress to match the dress of those also attending a meeting when representing PTA.
- Wear name badges when representing PTA.
- Notify President of address, phone number, and email changes as soon as possible.
- Stay at home out of consideration for the health of others if ill and possibly contagious.
Utah Regions Map