What does building bridges in PTA look like??

National PTA was founded over 120 years ago. This is how long PTAs have been doing work in our communities. Today, the work continues. PTAs are alive and active in over 21,000 units. PTAs continue the work our founders started to ensure every child reaches their potential.

The PTA structure is uniquely designed, while each PTA is built and situated around their community’s needs and strengths, each PTA member is also a member of their State PTA and the National association. This allows each PTA the ability to zero in on the issues, funding and policies that most effect the families and students in their school communities, while also working collectively on state and national funding and policies – knowing that they all are tied together.

National PTA is the only advocacy organization structured this way. “PT-others” don’t have this ability to mobilize all units, to bring together national funders, disseminate funding and resources across the country and to use collective voices to speak on issues – because there are no state or national collective organizations.

PTA’s remain a connector between necessary resources and the communities most in need. There is a long history of fighting for the most vulnerable. Not only are our PTAs able to do this quickly, they can also unleash an army of wildly passionate advocates to ensure those in need are cared for and have a voice.

PTA leaders are worried and concerned about the unknown, but they don’t give up. They are fighting to be a voice for the voiceless. They are creative and we are seeing the most innovative programs happening in our schools, for the children. The work must continue, please go join a PTA if you haven’t already!!

During the 2020-2021 school year, the Commissioners and Specialists of Utah PTA are committed to help “BUILD BRIDGES OF UNDERSTANDING” throughout the state of Utah. Over the year, we will use this newsletter to offer ideas, suggestions, resources, trainings and programs to help your PTA, Community and Family with issues such as: Bullying, Preschool and School Readiness, Parent Engagement, Student Leadership Opportunities, School Safety, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention, Student Achievement and High Expectations for All Students.

Each Commission is focused to help your PTA strengthen families in your school community and around Utah by offering programs, resources and tips. We are here to help!! Please reach out to us for any of your needs.

Connect with Commissioners... and Other Leaders of Utah PTA

www.utahpta.org

Facebook - Utah PTA Page, Utah PTA Excellent Elementary Group, Utah PTA Super Secondary Group, Utah PTA Advocacy Group

Instagram Utah PTA

Twitter @UtahPTAOneVoice

Pinterest Utah PTA

YouTube Utah PTA One Voice
**Community Engagement Commission**

**Census 2020**
We want to thank everyone that helped and reported with the Census. We had great participation.

**UPLIFT FAMILIES**
Since the beginning of the pandemic, Uplift Families has provided increased information and resources for parents and families. Thanks to the feedback from Utah’s prevention/mental health, education and health networks, we have been able to address many of the issues that families are facing. The TIPS Conference was held virtually and was a great success.

If you missed it or would like to listen to the speakers visit the link below.
TIPS Teaching important parenting skills
[https://www.uplifftfamilies.org/conference](https://www.uplifftfamilies.org/conference)

We have a new sport team added to our “Come Play with PTA.”
Utah PTA and Families... Come join the Utah Warriors, Utah’s premiere Major League Rugby team, at select Fall matches! ALL TICKETS ARE JUST $5!
Matches will be held the following dates and times:
- Sat. Nov. 7 at 7:00 P.M.
- Sat. Nov. 14 at 1:00 P.M.
- Sat. Nov. 21 at 1:00 P.M.
All matches will be held at Zions Bank Stadium: 14787 Academy Pkwy, Herriman, UT 84096
To purchase tickets please call or text Jesse Sanchez at 801.953.5537 or email with questions at [jesse.sanchez@warriorsrugby.com](mailto:jesse.sanchez@warriorsrugby.com)
For more info on the Utah Warriors please visit: [https://www.warriorsrugby.com/](https://www.warriorsrugby.com/)

“COME PLAY WITH PTA”
Check the Utah PTA website for upcoming events. Limited activities because of COVID-19
[https://www.utahpta.org/come-play](https://www.utahpta.org/come-play)

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**Education Commission**

The education commission is in the process of restructuring the way that we meet the needs of our members. We have received feedback that many individuals have contacted our local and region leaders with specific questions related to the education their children are receiving during the pandemic, pros and cons of on-line learning, and a variety of other topics. We are seeking your assistance in identifying the areas/topics that you are being asked questions about or concerns that your members are sharing. Please share your thoughts related to areas that we should be addressing based on the feedback and questions that you are receiving or based on personal questions that you may have. Please share that information with steve@utahpta.org
Special Needs Specialist

Resources for Families of Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Special Needs

Utah Parent Center
The Utah Parent Center is an important resource that everyone should be aware of. It is a training and information center that serves the entire state of Utah and offers information, resources, support, advocacy, and training for families of people with disabilities. Most services are free of charge. Advocates can even attend IEP or 504 meetings with parents, if requested. The mission of the UPC is to help parents help their children, youth, and young adults with all disabilities to live included, productive lives as members of the community. They accomplish this mission by providing accurate information, empathetic peer support, valuable training, and effective advocacy based on the concept of parents helping parents.

The Utah Parent Center offers free:
- Parent-to-parent support through individual consultations
- Trainings, workshops, conferences
- Materials, handbooks, and newsletters
- Online resources, videos, and webinars

Utah Family Voices
Utah Family Voices provides information, resource coordination and support to families and professionals to assist in navigating the systems of care for children and youth with special health care needs and disabilities.

- Provide accurate information about the Affordable Care Act and how it may help
- Provide emotional and peer support through direct contact by phone, email and/or in person to families
- Assist with navigation of credible information and referrals so families can access the appropriate public and private resources and services.
- Provide information and education so families can make informed decisions and advocate effectively for the needs of their child and family.
- Provide information and training to professional partners and health care providers on family-centered care and family involvement.

Family to Family Network (FtoFN)
The Family to Family Network is a statewide parent support network run by volunteers. It is designed to educate, strengthen, and support families of persons with disabilities, especially those on the waiting list or receiving services with the Division of Services for People with Disabilities (DSPD). Network leaders are parents of individuals with special needs and link families to local resources, services, and disability-friendly events. The FtoFN is a project of the Utah Parent Center.

Local Networks provide:
- One-on-one consultations with families
- Meetings for families with presenters on a wide range of topics
- Information and referrals
- Assistance navigating DSPD services
**Family Life Commission**

**Teaming Up for Families**

In today’s fast-paced world, parents face new challenges that leave many wondering how to keep up and keep their kids safe — especially during a school year in a pandemic.

National PTA and Life360 are bringing families closer with a wide range of smart features, like real-time location notifications and advanced driving safety features, designed to protect and connect the people who matter most.

Life360 began this collaboration by surveying 2,000 parents nationwide with kids ages 6-25 to uncover key insights around family milestones, communication habits, and modern parenting challenges.

The results have been compiled into a downloadable Go-Guide. This digital toolkit is filled with discussion starters and best practices for healthy family connectivity. For easy viewing and sharing, the Go-Guide is available in English, Spanish, color, black & white, in a summarized one-sheeter, and for Facebook.

Together, conversations will be lead around the issues that face modern parents, and connecting them with tools and research in the downloadable Go-Guide to help parents make the best decisions for their kids.

There is a ton of great information here and I encourage you take a look. Find it here: [https://www.pta.org/home/programs/connected/go-guide](https://www.pta.org/home/programs/connected/go-guide)

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**Digital Citizenship Specialist**

**Earn It Act:**

Utah PTA is deeply concerned with the problem of online child exploitation. We are troubled with the prevalence of child pornography, also known as child sexual abuse material, or CSAM. We are also worried about the access predators have to children using social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Messenger, and Instagram.

Utah PTA’s resolution, “Sexual Exploitation of a Minor” states, “Utah PTA and its constituent associations promote and support the adoption and enforcement of laws, at all levels of government, to end the recruitment, force or involvement of a minor in conduct or violence of a sexual nature and all forms of sexual exploitation;”

Utah PTA voted in July to advocate for the Earn It Act - S 3398, Eliminating Abusive and Rampant Neglect of Interactive Technologies Act of 2020. This bill was unanimously approved by the Senate Judiciary Committee Thursday, July 2, 2020. Senator Mike Lee helped to move this bill out of committee.

The Earn It Act mandates that interactive online service providers must be held accountable for screening out despicable child abuse on these platforms. The internet has been likened to the “wild wild west,” with children too often the victims. As long as companies cannot be sued for the harm they cause, they will look the other way regarding abusive, exploitative, and illegal behavior. The bill also creates a new commission to establish best practices to prevent online sexual exploitation.

We encourage our PTA members to write or call our Senators, Mitt Romney ([https://www.romney.senate.gov/](https://www.romney.senate.gov/)) and ([https://www.lee.senate.gov/public/](https://www.lee.senate.gov/public/)) Mike Lee to support this bill in the U.S. Senate when it comes for a vote in November. This is the only bill designed to protect children online that the U.S. Congress will have the opportunity to pass this year.
Parent Tips to Help Keep Children and Teens Safe Online:

Below is a list of ideas. Don’t let the list overwhelm you. Review the list. Figure out what you’re already doing. Choose one new thing to work on that sounds like a good idea to you. You’re the parent, you will know instinctively what sounds like a good idea for your child.

- All of us have more willpower when we are well rested. Help your children or teens get 8+ hours of sleep
- All of us have more willpower when we eat a higher protein, lower carb diet. Help your children eat healthy and get plenty of fruits and vegetables too. (Find out more about willpower in a book called, “Willpower” by Roy Baumeister & John Tierney. Willpower is not the same as self-control. Willpower gives you motivation to have self-control)
- Spend at least fifteen minutes every day bonding with your child without interruptions from devices or other people. Do an activity, play a game, go for a walk, etc.
- Have frequent discussions with your child about feelings and temptations.
- Set boundaries: No devices connecting with Wi-Fi or data in the bedroom / bathroom
- Set a good example, show how you set boundaries for yourself on your devices.
- Talk to your children about what you’re doing on your device when they want your attention and tell them when you’ll be able to give them your full attention.
- Avoid discussing hard topics when your child is tired. They will not listen in this state. Avoid after 7 p.m. and before 7 a.m.? You know your child.
- Be supportive and calm when your child is irrational
- Tell stories of your own failures and later successes

Military Family Specialist

Ideas to Celebrate November, month of the Military Family

Military Family Month was first celebrated in 1993. In 1994 President Clinton issued a presidential proclamation establishing National Military Families Recognition Day. Later presidents have issued proclamations, and Congress has passed resolutions designating November as Military Family Month. Utah PTA has proclaimed November as the Month of the Military Family.

1. Wear a ribbon or an article of clothing that is camouflage or red, white or blue during November.
2. Have students create artwork that promotes patriotism and display it in the room and school.
4. Present a Patriotic story in the classroom during week prior to Veteran’s Day or any day in November.
5. Invite a student’s family member to the class to explain what their military service meant/means to them.
6. Have students write a paper on “Serving our Nation” by interviewing a former member of the military.
7. Sing a patriotic song at the beginning of class.
8. Have students write a paragraph, poem or short story of “Why I am Grateful to Those in Military Service”.
9. Have the students write a letter to a soldier as a class or individually.

See Utah PTA’s Military Family Proclamation at https://www.utahpta.org/military-family-proclamation

Note: For ideas, timelines, and information contact Kathy Allred at kathy@utahpta.org or militaryfamilies@utahpta.org, 801-372-1274
Family Engagement Specialist

Tips to Engage Families during CoVid

Thank you for your continued service to PTA during this challenging time. Now more than ever we as PTA members must work together in order to give to Every Child One Voice.

- Enroll your school in the National PTA School of Excellence program. Now is a great time to hone up on best practices for family school partnerships. If you are unable to enroll in SOE this year, make plans for your PTA to apply next year.

- Other ways to help your PTA to adopt best practices include applying for the Utah PTA Gold Star and LEAP awards. This award is due at the end of March. If your PTA is unable to participate in the SOE you can still work on taking your PTA, as well as your own volunteer service, to the next level by executing the programs listed in the Gold Star and LEAP award criteria.

- Support families which may be affected by COVID related illness or job loss. Prioritize and focus the efforts of your PTA to maximize to support what children at your school need most.

- Make special effort to support teachers during this challenging time. Kind words go a long way. In addition to or in lieu of a large teacher appreciation celebration in May consider smaller, monthly observances to help to keep spirits up.

- Make plans for when times might be more typical or at least for when there might be a new normal. Some programs take more than one year to plan. Make this time count for something!

- Write down, digitize and file share "folkloric" procedures of your PTA so that future volunteers need not reinvent the wheel. This is an important best practice of well-run organizations. Update or create your handbooks now!

- Remotely attend Utah PTA webinars or watch archived videos on matters of importance to children, education, schools on the Utah PTA’s university page.

- Join the Utah PTA Excellent Elementary and Utah PTA Super Secondary Facebook groups to stay up to date on events, best practices and ideas for your PTA.

- Serve PTA in a legislative advocacy capacity (i.e., remotely attending committee meetings, etc.)

- Consider and plan to apply for volunteer service at the council, region, state and national levels of PTA. Each level of PTA performs its own unique service and all need caring and creative people in order to help children the most.

- Plan to attend Utah PTA leadership convention in May. Convention is for more than PTA presidents. Convention is for anyone wanting to advance his or her PTA or his or her own PTA service; for anyone who cares about children; and for anyone who wants to have FUN!

Thank you to Eastwood Elementary PTA for their ideas! Thank you most of all to the PTA volunteers who give their time, effort and resources to help children. Go PTA! Go kids!

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Health Commission

Suicide is the leading cause of death for Utah’s youth, ages 11-17. In 2019, the membership of Utah PTA passed a resolution, Youth Suicide Prevention. Among the actions called for by the resolution was “That Utah PTA and its constituent associations support evidence-based suicide prevention programs focused on improving mental health including, but not limited to, teaching students, teachers, and parents mindfulness skills, coping skills, decision making skills, and helping them to build connections and improve dispositions.” We are now excited to share with parents, teachers, and PTA leaders an evidence-based resource, the Utah PTA Suicide Prevention Toolkit. The Toolkit, which was designed by suicide prevention specialists, is full of resources and ideas for activities that can be used throughout the year. You can find the Toolkit on the Health Commissioner page on the Utah PTA website under “Related Pages.” https://www.utahpta.org/suicide-prevention-toolkit
Individual Development Commission

Utah PTA is proud to announce the Arts Education Grant Winners 2019 – 2020. These grants are to be used during the 2020-2021 school year.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Bonneville Elementary PTA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Central Elementary PTA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Silver Mesa PTA</td>
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<td>Calvin Smith Elementary PTA</td>
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<td>Horizon Elementary PTA</td>
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<tr>
<td>South Weber Elementary PTA</td>
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<tr>
<td>Valley View Elementary PTA</td>
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We thank all of the PTA/PTSA’s who applied! This year’s applications are currently being accepted now through February 1, 2021. The application and grant guidelines can be found online at https://www.utahpta.org/information-arts-education-grant. Reach out to Lori Harding with any questions. We would love to receive applications from each Region!

We have added a new page under the Individual Development Commissioner page at https://www.utahpta.org/art-competitions this highlights Art Competitions in the State of Utah. Highlighted competitions now include the following:

* My BeUTAHful Community Student Art Competition
* Poetry Out Loud
* Utah State Senate Visual Arts Scholarship Competition

Safety Commission

I would like to highlight some resources that are available to parents to engage with their children to keep them safe during these uncertain times.

Upward Reach Foundation
The Upward Reach Foundation delivers evidence-based prevention discussions digitally to parents. These discussions guide parents in teaching their children refusal skills to use when they encounter sexual material. Using this approach, parents can help prevent underage viewing of pornography and other sexually explicit material. They have three digital-texting courses addressing Appropriate, Inappropriate, and Unacceptable sexual content.

To subscribe to these courses Text: PREVENT to 385.881.2748

White Ribbon Week/Power Up for Families
With kids being online more than ever we need to help kids make healthy choices in media and technology. White Ribbon Week has resources to help implement this in our schools. They also are offering an at home version called Power Up. They cover six topics: Power to Choose, Be Kind, Be Safe Online, Turn it Off!, Talk to Someone, and Empathy. Power Up makes it easy for families to have supportive conversations about media and technology and has appropriate material for young children as well as teenagers. Some schools are choosing to use these resources for their White Ribbon Week programs since there are many schools having online as well as in person learning this year. Contact them at info@whiteribbonweek.org for a discount of their materials. Watch for a #TechTuesday post on Utah PTAs Facebook page for a free download of Power to Choose mini-magazine.

PROTECT Utah/3Strands Global Foundation
PROTECT stands for PRevention Organized To Educate Children on Trafficking. Although slavery is commonly thought to be a thing of the past, human traffickers generate hundreds of billions of dollars in profits by trapping millions of people in horrific situations around the world, including here in Utah. Traffickers use violence, threats, deception, debt bondage, and other manipulative tactics to force people to engage in commercial sex or to provide labor or services against their will. Parents can receive a free training on Human Trafficking through the following link: https://www.3strandsglobalfoundation.org/protect-login
Student Leadership Commission

PTSA Student Days at the Capitol will be Feb 9th, 16th & 18th, with the 16th being high school only. A big thank you to all of you who are helping our students at our PTSA schools. A lot of us are having to look at ways to do activities differently this year, and that includes us at the state level as well. We recently had a Zoom meeting with a number of our Battle of the Bands coordinators across the state to brainstorm ideas on what we need to do to make sure everything happens this year, recognizing that some of us may not be able to have assemblies or performances at our schools. I believe we came up with a number of viable alternatives, so please reach out to me if you need some ideas.

We are also looking at options for Student Days at the Capitol for those who can’t come in person. We have 3 days this year, Feb 9, 16 & 18. We will be sending out ways to prepare online for the mock debates, and we are putting together an online scavenger hunt as well. We will also be putting together some videos on topics important to our students that you can watch as part of your student meetings. We expect our first one in November, and it will be on PROTECT UTAH dealing with human trafficking.

Advocacy VP

My name is LeAnn Wood and I am the Utah PTA Advocacy Vice President. I am part of an incredible programs and advocacy team comprised of commissioners and specialists. Our team can help connect your PTAs to the resources you need to be successful. Contact me at leann@utahpta.org and I can connect you with the right Board member to help your unit accomplish your goals.
Advocacy Resources:
- Legislative VP and Advocacy Training
- Conducting Meet the Candidate Nights
- Fall Advocacy Conference and PTA Day at the Capitol

Committees:
- Chair of Legislative Advocacy Committee (LAC)
- Chair of Commissioners and Resolutions Committee
- Member of Utahans for Public Schools (UTPS)

Any PTA member can join LAC! It is the 4th Wed from 12-2 at the PTA Office. (Aug-Nov, Apr) It is every Wed at 12 (Jan-March) at the capital during session.

Interested in a commission or have questions? Wondering about outside resources or partnerships that could help your PTA?
If Yes, contact one of the commissioners! We are happy to help, offer ideas and share resources. We are here to support you!