



Healthy Lifestyles

2019-2020 RESOURCE GUIDE

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Introduction

Establishing a healthy lifestyles committee on your board, recruiting a qualified chair, and providing access to training and resources is an important step towards addressing the critical health needs of Texas children and their families.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), schools are an ideal place for students to learn about and practice healthy behaviors, and establishing healthy behaviors during childhood is easier and more effective than trying to change unhealthy behaviors during adulthood. The education, public health, and school health sectors have each called for greater alignment, integration, and collaboration between education and health to improve each child's cognitive, physical, social, and emotional development. Schools play a critical role in promoting the health and safety of young people and helping them establish lifelong healthy behavior patterns. Additionally, more and more research shows a link between the health outcomes of young people and their academic success.

We challenge communities to redefine learning to focus on the whole person. We encourage schools and communities to put aside perennial battles for resources and instead align those resources in support of the whole child. Policy, practice, and resources must be aligned to support not only academic learning for each child, but also the experiences that encourage development of a whole child—one who is knowledgeable, healthy, motivated, and engaged.

- Whole Child Commission

About PTA

VISION Every child's potential is a reality.

MISSION To make every child's potential a reality by engaging and empowering families and communities to advocate for all children.

PURPOSES

- 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.

PTA 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.



Why Healthy Lifestyles?

In response to demand for greater collaboration, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) developed the expanded 10-component model - **The Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC)**, which replaces the old Coordinated School Health 8-component model. The CDC provides a framework for addressing school health policies, practices, and programs to ensure that students are healthy and ready to learn. The CDC states that this evolution meets the need for greater emphasis on both the psychosocial and physical environment as well as the ever-increasing and growing roles that community agencies and families must play. So, establishing a Healthy Lifestyles Chair at both the Council and Local PTA level benefits all members of the school and community.

Although the WSCC model encompasses all areas of health (physical, mental, and social/emotional), childhood obesity is one of the most serious health problems facing our country today. Over the past three decades, childhood obesity rates in the United States have tripled. Today nearly one third of U.S. children are overweight and almost 17 percent of children and adolescents are obese. Obesity has potentially devastating consequences for our youth and for our society as a whole. Studies show that as a result of diseases that are related to being overweight, children today may not live as long as their parents. Obesity is associated with diseases such as type 2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, depression, breast cancer and arthritis. In the past 20 years, annual obesity- associated hospital costs for children have tripled.

While childhood obesity remains a critical issue, the rise of social/emotional and mental health issues related bullying, cyberbullying, and other youth violence-related incidents is at an all time high. Creating a positive social and emotional climate increases academic achievement, reduces stress, and improves positive attitudes toward self and others.

Benefits of Establishing a Healthy Lifestyles Chair

- Creates relevance and awareness for healthy lifestyles
- Confers authority to work on health and wellness issues
- Improves accessibility to school board/administrators, principals, students, parents, community
- Establishes contact person for health and wellness information, resources, requirements
- Creates recruitment opportunities for new members/new leaders with wellness focus
- Provides assistance in communication/implementation of wellness policy
- Supports collaboration with campus administration, food service, parents, and staff on health and wellness goals

Duties at a Glance

Texas PTA is committed to building healthy schools, healthy families and healthy communities. We all have an important role to play in making sure parents, school staff, and community members have the knowledge and support they need. The PTA is an effective starting point for both education and action. Through local, district and statewide efforts, schools, families and communities can promote healthy lifestyles. Your duties at a glance are:

- Familiarize yourself with the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child Model (WSCC) and Texas Coordinated School Health (CSH) mandates
- Meet with the previous committee chair and review their procedure book for ideas and guidance
- Represent PTA Healthy Lifestyles on the school's wellness team or Site-Based Decision Making (SBDM) Team
- Be a healthy role model and support health initiatives on your campus
- Build your committee. Work with related committee chairs, such as Environmental, Parent Education Youth Protection, Legislative Action, Arts in Education and Fundraising to coordinate school wide efforts to support healthy children
- Assess your school's needs via surveys and feedback from school faculty, staff and administration, local PTA leaders, parents and students
- Review the *Effective Strategies* in the PTA Healthy Lifestyles Resource Guide
- Complete both components of FOUNDATIONS Leader Orientation before October 15. This course is initiated at txpta.org/training.
- Present a Plan of Work to the executive board for approval with budget needs
- Maintain a procedure book to include information on activities, programs, contacts, communications statistics and budget information to provide to your successor
- Track progress and continue to implement best practices
- Network with other Local PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs to collectively promote the importance of the committee and share best practices
- Attend training offered by National, Texas, and Council PTAs related to your chair position (webinars, conferences, etc.)



Plan of Work Plan de Trabajo

Officer/Chairman Name: _____
(Nombre de Oficial/Presidente de Junta)

Position: **Healthy Lifestyles Chair** _____ Year: _____
(Posición) (Año)

*Reproduce as needed for the appropriate number of goals.
(Se puede reproducir para metas adicionales.)*

Responsibilities / Duties: (Responsabilidades)	Assist with dissemination of Healthy Lifestyles information	Committee Members: (Miembros del Comité)	School PE teacher, nurse, principal, Kindergarten parent, 5th Grade parent
Goal: (Meta)	Help empower families to follow and practice behaviors that are aligned with healthy lifestyles.	Evaluation Process: (Proceso de Evaluación)	Feedback of president, executive board, staff, parents, and students

Specific Action Steps (Proceso Especifico de Acción)	Start Date (Fecha de Empiezo)	Completion Date (Fecha de Terminación)	Budget (Presupuesto)
Include a wellness tip in each newsletter (e.g., ideas for healthy classroom celebrations or ways a family can be active on school breaks)	September	May	
Assist in lunch time nutrition education support (e.g., provide stickers to students who drink their milk or eat their vegetables, create marketing materials)	September	May	\$50
Share success stories on social media or newsletters	September	May	
Meet with key school district personnel and/or school board members to develop a relationship and share health-related developments	September	As needed	

Resources: (Recursos)	Texas PTA Resource Guide and website, National PTA website
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Making a Difference

We know why we have a need for Healthy Lifestyles, but what is being done about it? The good news is... there is a lot of good news! From national, state, and local support, PTAs and parents have a myriad of tools and resources to help their voice be heard. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), public health and education serve the same children, often in the same settings. The **Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child (WSCC)** focuses on the child to align the common goals of both sectors. CSH programs have helped to establish policies and practices in states, districts, and schools across the nation, and will see continued success within the expanded WSCC model. This framework provides Healthy Lifestyles with a foundation from which to build programs and resources that support the WSCC focus on the whole child.

It is through the process of *intentional* coordination which brings a school community together to teach children to be healthy for a lifetime. Family Engagement is one of the identified components in the WSCC model, and PTAs can play a critical role in assisting in collaborative efforts. The ultimate goal is to coordinate all 10 components. This continued support provides leverage for PTAs and schools trying to make a difference!

WHOLE SCHOOL, WHOLE COMMUNITY, WHOLE CHILD

A collaborative approach to learning and health



Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

ESSA replaced No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and identifies school health and physical education as part of a student's "well-rounded education," along with other subjects such as art, music, civics, science and more. This new federal education legislation provides increased access to funds for health and PE programs (including professional development) and allows states and school districts to set their own priorities for funding and accountability.

Coordinated School Health/ Whole School, Whole Community Whole Child

Each district is required to adopt a state-approved Coordinated School Health program for all K-8 campuses. Each program must provide for coordinating: health education, physical education and activity, nutrition services and parental involvement.

Schools are also required to evaluate the Coordinated School Health Program in their Campus Improvement Plan.

- Check with your school or district to see which CSH program they have adopted and how the PTA can support it (for example, some programs have a *parental involvement* component that they may need assistance implementing)
 - The four approved programs by the Texas Education Agency are: Bienestar, CATCH, SPARK, and The Greater Body.
- Assist the school in any data collection needed for evaluating the effectiveness of their adopted program

School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)

Every independent school district is required by law to have a SHAC of which the majority of members must be parents who are not employed by the school district. Parents have a very powerful voice, as they must report to the Board of Trustees annually.

SHACs provide advice to the district on coordinated school health programming and its impact on student health and learning. Additionally, SHACs recommend indicators for evaluating effectiveness of Coordinated School Health Programs and other policy related issues on health and wellness.

- It is recommended that local or council PTA Healthy Lifestyles Chairs seek to serve on their district SHAC
- Examples of stricter local policy revisions that district SHACs have recommended are:
 - Mandatory recess
 - Required middle school health
 - Human Growth, Development, and Sexuality curriculum
 - Non-food/healthy food fundraiser guidelines
 - Stipends for wellness leaders on a campus

Wellness Policy

Each district participating in a program authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, or the Child Nutrition Act, shall establish a local school wellness policy for schools in the district. At a minimum, the school wellness policy established for each school must:

- Involve parents, students, representatives of the school food authority, the school board, school administrators, and the public
- Include goals for nutrition education, physical activity, monitoring, and other school-based activities that are designed to promote student wellness
- Include nutrition guidelines for all foods available on each school campus during the school day with the objectives of promoting student health and reducing childhood obesity
- Establish a plan for measuring implementation, including the designation of a person at the local education agency or school charged with this responsibility

Nutrition

The Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act requires the USDA to establish nutrition standards for all foods and beverages sold to students outside of the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program meals on the school campus during the school day.

Additional mandates provide requirements for competitive foods, foods of minimal nutritional value (FMNV) and fundraisers. Check with your local wellness policy for any other guidelines specific to your district.

Smart Snacks

The Smart Snacks in School regulation applies to foods sold a la carte, in the school store, and vending machines. A number of tools and resources from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA) Square Meals program are available to help schools identify food items that meet Smart Snacks criteria.

- The Smart Snacks in School nutrition standards apply to any foods sold to students during the school day on the school campus, including foods sold as fundraisers.
- The School Day is defined as midnight the night before, until 30 minutes after the end of the regular or extended school day
- Competitive foods are defined as foods and beverages sold or made available to students that compete with the school's operation of the National School Lunch Program and/or School Breakfast Program.
- Tips for using the Smart Snack calculator:
 - Enter Product information for print out
 - Print out "Product is compliant" statement
 - Attach product label to statement
 - Keep on file for documentation

Fundraisers

Aligning fundraising practices with the larger goals of healthy children creates a holistic and positive message. Organizations planning fundraisers should work with their school administration before initiating a fundraiser to ensure compliance with the Local Wellness Policy, Smart Snacks standards and any other local policies.

- If the item being sold is a nonfood item or a food item that meets the Smart Snacks standards, it can be sold anytime
- Schools may sell “NON-Smart Snack” foods during the school day on 6 days (per campus) during the year. Principals should work with PTA, clubs and booster groups as needed to determine how the 6 days will be used
- Districts can create stricter policy for exemption days

While food-based fundraisers are still allowed, it is encouraged to identify non-food or healthy food fundraisers. Examples include:

- Non-food fundraisers: water bottles, auctions, magazine subscriptions, seed/flower sale
- Healthy food fundraisers: healthy cookbooks, herb garden kits, smoothies, fruit
- Active fundraisers: Walk-a-thons/bike-a-thons, school dances, teacher-student competition

Physical Activity

Play, both structured and unstructured, has been shown in an extensive body of research to have positive benefits for physical, social, emotional and cognitive domains of child development.

Physical Education

Texas school districts offer a planned, sequential K-12 curriculum that provides cognitive content and learning experiences in a variety of activity areas such as basic movement skills; physical fitness; rhythms and dance; games; team, dual, and individual sports; tumbling and gymnastics; and aquatics.

- Elementary students are required to have 30 minutes a day or 135 minutes a week
- Middle school students are required to have four semesters
- High school students are required to complete one credit (two semesters)

Participation must be in a TEKS-based physical education class or a TEKS-based structured activity.

Recess/Movement Breaks

The benefits of unstructured recess have also been demonstrated in the areas of academic achievement, problem-solving skills, social skills, student engagement and physical health. Currently, there are no state level requirements on recess, but your local SHAC may recommend policy regarding recess or movement breaks (which can include short classroom “brain breaks”, classroom learning that incorporates physical activity, or before/after school activities).

Bullying

According to legal policy, “bullying” means engaging in written or verbal expression, expression through electronic means, or physical conduct that occurs on school property, at a school-sponsored or school-related activity, or in a vehicle operated by the District.

Parents play a key role in preventing and responding to bullying, and policy is now in place to help protect students, including any necessary procedures, concerning bullying. As the role of Healthy Lifestyles expands to encompass the WSCC model, bullying and mental health are a leading issue of concern.

Current policy requires districts act on specific areas including, but not limited to:

- Prohibits retaliation against any person, including a victim, a witness, or another person, who in good faith provides information concerning an incident of bullying;
- Establishes a procedure for providing notice of an incident of bullying
- Establishes the actions a student should take to obtain assistance and intervention in response to bullying
- Sets out the available counseling options for a student who is a victim of or a witness to bullying or who engages in bullying
- Establishes procedures for reporting an incident of bullying, investigating a reported incident of bullying, and determining whether the reported incident of bullying occurred
- Prohibits the imposition of a disciplinary measure on a student who, after an investigation, is found to be a victim of bullying

Healthy Kids = Better Learners

More and more research is linking healthier students to higher academic scores, increased attendance, and decreased discipline issues. For more information, check out recent publications such as:

- Health and Academic Achievement - released by Centers for Disease Control
- The Learning Connection: What You Need to Know to Ensure Your Kids Are Healthy and Ready to Learn - released by Action for Healthy Kids
- The Wellness Impact - released by GENYOUth, National Dairy Council, American College of Sports Medicine and the American School Health Association

PTA Advocacy

National PTA and Texas PTA seek to address problems, situations or concerns which relate to coordinated school health efforts. From school recess to safe and civil climates, PTA is dedicated to supporting Healthy Lifestyles.

For more information on Texas PTA advocacy support, visit txpta.org/advocacy. Each legislative session, Texas PTA weighs in on bills covering a variety of topics. The goal is for numerous bills to be filed on Texas PTA health and safety priorities.

Effective Strategies

There are a variety of ways a Healthy Lifestyles Chair can assist the PTA in creating and sustaining a framework for health and wellness. By enlisting the support of parents, community members, faculty, and administration, intentional coordination is more likely to take place and ultimately achieve sustainability of developed partnerships and initiatives. Texas PTA has identified five effective strategies that can assist local PTAs in creating a productive and sustainable Healthy Lifestyles program.

Identified Strategies

- Communication
- Programs and Services
- Partnerships
- Rewards and Recognition
- Advocacy

What Texas PTA Provides

While the above five strategies have been identified to help organize best practices, Texas PTA is also dedicated to supporting Healthy Lifestyles Chairs and their initiatives through numerous modes of communication. In addition to this Resource Guide, Texas PTA also provides the following support to schools and PTAs:

- BASICS training at LAUNCH
- Monthly newsletters
- Featured webinars
- Access to program providers
- Collaboration with other state organizations
- Publicized special initiatives (grants, free registrations, etc.)
- Social media sharing
- Recognition for successful initiatives

National PTA offers additional support for Healthy Lifestyles, as well:

- Healthy Lifestyles Month resources
- Connect for Respect Toolkit
- PTA Guide to Smart Snacks in School
- School Meals Leader's Guide
- Parents for Healthy Kids Partnership
- Webinars on Emotional Health
- Links to additional resources

Effective Strategies - Communication

Sharing information is often the first step to creating awareness. Once parents are aware of the healthy initiatives your PTA is trying to establish, the more likely they are to support you. Health and wellness can be a sensitive subject for some, so try to provide only factual information from reputable sources.

Beginner

- Recruit additional PTA members to serve on the Healthy Lifestyles Committee
- Include a wellness tip or idea in existing newsletters (e.g., *ideas for healthy classroom celebrations, non-food reward ideas, ways for a family to be active on school breaks*)
- Thank your school leaders for adopting nutritional or physical activity standards on social media, in newsletters and at PTA meetings
- Distribute pertinent information from the campus wellness team meetings or the district SHAC meetings at PTA meetings
- Promote Healthy Lifestyles Month in November

Intermediate

- Incorporate wellness ideas into existing events (e.g., *promote Healthy Lifestyles at Meet the Teacher night, coordinate with the PE teacher to incorporate movement-based stories into a Family Reading night, distribute tip sheets at PTA meetings*)
- Coordinate with the school wellness team to promote CSH/WSCC information on a dedicated bulletin board (e.g., *change out messaging tied to the monthly National Observances highlighted in the Texas PTA Healthy Lifestyles Newsletter, hang a folder with take-away tip sheets, coordinate with classroom teachers to feature student health projects*)

Advanced

- Coordinate with the cafeteria manager or district dietician to create an annual healthy recipe cookbook with submissions from parents or students. If possible, get a local merchant to underwrite the cost of printing/duplication, and sell it at a nominal price.
- Utilize free resources to create an activity-a-day summer calendar
- Host an annual wellness event or health fair

*TIP - A wellness event can be as simple as you want it. Sometimes high schools, feeder patterns, or PTA Councils will have a greater chance of coordinating a highly attended health fair where vendors or sponsors are more likely to return each year. A suggestion for elementary or middle school is to consider hosting a smaller “family wellness night” where there could be fun parent-child obstacles courses in the gym, taste testing in the cafeteria, healthy foods vs. less healthy foods collage made from grocery store ads in the art room, student jump rope performances, a guest speaker on a specific health topic - the options are endless. Then, the group hosting a larger health fair could provide vendors, screenings, free samples, additional literature, etc. Starting small can still have great effects!

Don't forget to visit other websites for additional information on Coordinated School Health/Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child:

- Centers For Disease Control (CDC)
- The Association for Curriculum and Development (ASCD)
- Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS)
- Texas Action For Healthy Kids (TAHK)
- Texas Education Agency (TEA)
- Education Service Centers (ESC)
- Texas Department of Agriculture - Square Meals
- United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Effective Strategies - Programs and Services

Programs and services are part of the foundation of what PTAs can provide. Even the smallest step in the right direction can help create healthier environments. Try to enlist the help of school staff and other parents to ensure the programs are a success.

Beginner

- Survey the needs of your school community
- Increase school relationships by offering to assist the principal or school wellness team in evaluation (e.g., utilizing resources such as the *School Health Index (SHI)*, *Health Education Curriculum Analysis Tool (HECAT)*, or other local evaluation tools)
- Consider incorporating healthy fundraisers (e.g., *non-food fundraisers*, *healthy food fundraisers*, and *active fundraisers*)

Intermediate

- Start a fitness club—aerobics, jogging, walking, etc. Any type of exercise will do. Invite other school neighbors to take part as well.
- Assist in lunch time nutrition education support (e.g., *provide stickers to students who drink their milk or eat their vegetables*, *assist the cafeteria staff in providing taste tests of new menu items*, *create marketing materials to promote school meals*)
- Utilize the Ready. Set. Achieve programs offered by the Texas PTA. Visit txpta.org/programs.

Advanced

- Coordinate with the school to host an annual wellness program (e.g. take advantage of free programs from local or state organizations such as Marathon Kids, Walk Across Texas, or the IT'S TIME TEXAS Community Challenge.)
- Provide incentives for staff, students, and families for engaging in healthy activities year round. Monthly logs with various activities are collected and awards given based on random drawing or reaching specific goals.
- Host a healthy fundraiser fair (e.g. organize at the Council level or invite other Local PTAs to share information including contact information, program identity and information, percent profitability, as well as other examples, samples, photos, or testimonies.)

*TIP - Don't forget to check with your school administration and staff for events they may already be planning or doing. For example, they might participate in Walk Across Texas, but programs such as Marathon Kids offer home programs if a school is not participating. The idea to coordinate these events so that they don't overlap, but also provide opportunities for families throughout the school year.

Don't forget to visit other websites that support health and wellness for additional information or resources such as free tip sheets, online activities, or recipes

- Centers For Disease Control
- MyPlate
- It's Time Texas
- Texas Action for Healthy Kids
- Texas A&M Agrilife Extension
- Gonoodle
- Marathon Kids
- Safe Routes to School
- Walk Across Texas

Partnerships

The emphasis in Coordinated School Health is “coordination”. Ideally, establishing partnerships within your campus and school district are just as important as identifying community partners to support your efforts.

Beginner

- Approach your school’s cafeteria manager, PE teacher, nurse, or counselor about ways the PTA can support wellness efforts.
- Establish partnerships with other parents who have a similar vested interest in health and wellness.
- Check out the Parents for Healthy Kids website (a partnership with National PTA and Action for Healthy Kids).

Intermediate

- Approach your local district departments (*e.g., Child Nutrition, Health and Physical Education Department, Health Services, or Counseling Services*) to see how they can partner on various parental involvement/family engagement opportunities.
- Check with your city to see if the local pool might be available for a welcome back to school or end of school celebration hosted by your PTA.
- See if your city has a Mayor’s Health and Fitness Council - if not, check out organizations such as It’s Time Texas, which has a free toolkit to establish or enhance one.

Advanced

- Partner with a local chef or registered dietician to host a nutrition night with healthy cooking demonstration or food tasting event.
- Identify local garden partners for funding or support (*e.g., Junior Master Gardeners, Keep Texas Beautiful, Farm to School*) to add or improve existing school gardens
- Assist in coordination of joint-use agreements for school facilities (*joint use refers to two or more groups, usually a school and a city or private organization, sharing indoor and outdoor spaces like gymnasiums, athletic fields and playgrounds*)
- Offer to coordinate farm-to-school programs offering locally grown items

*TIP - Partnerships can vastly differ from school to school. It doesn’t matter how close your campus is to a specific partner, but rather the relationships that can be built with partners who have a viable interest in your school. Seek out partners who have a vested interest in health and wellness, as well as those who are invested in your school community.

Don’t forget to visit other websites for additional ideas on partners and partnerships

- Texas Action For Healthy Kids (TAHK)
- It’s Time Texas (ITT)
- Texas Agrilife Extension Service
- Mayor’s Health and Fitness Councils
- YMCAs or Parks and Recreation Departments
- Local partners such as grocery stores, restaurants, hardware stores, etc.

Effective Strategies - Rewards and Recognition

All the hard work you put in shouldn't go unnoticed! A simple pat on the back always feels good, so remember to thank those who assist you in your efforts throughout the year. Then, as your program grows, don't forget to give yourself a pat on the back. Local awards and recognition opportunities are usually easy to complete, and some are even tied to a monetary prize. Check with your school and administration to see if they are already applying for these types of awards. If they are, offer to assist in completing the application or garner any documentation they might need on parental involvement.

Beginner

- Share success stories on social media or newsletters
- Recognize PTA members or parents who helped with various Healthy Lifestyles initiatives during the school year
- Inquire if the campus or district has any competitions that the PTA can be a part of

Intermediate

- Seek out small, local grants to help fund projects
- Share your success stories with Texas PTA via Talk of Texas and be recognized for your PTA's excellent work!

Advanced

- Increase school relationships by offering to assist the principal or school wellness team in applying for state and national grants identified in the Healthy Lifestyles newsletter or listed below

*TIP - If at first you don't succeed - try, try again. Many award-based programs may not be attainable the first year, but most programs provide examples or webinars to help create viable applications. Try to have the support of the SHAC or other campus administration when applying for various recognition programs.

Don't forget to visit other websites for additional information on various awards, recognition, and grant funding.

- It's Time Texas - School Health Advisory Council Awards
- Texas Action for Healthy Kids - Healthy School Hero Awards
- Department of State Health Services - Awards for Excellence in Texas School Health
- Fuel Up to Play 60
- HealthierUS School Challenge

Effective Strategies - Advocacy

Through its legislative program, PTA focuses attention on the health, safety and well-being of all children. PTA, at the local level, can bring influence to bear on elected officials and school administrators to ensure compliance through the monitoring and implementation of school health laws and policies. Texas PTA works to support healthy lifestyles priorities.

Beginner

- Familiarize yourself with Texas PTA and National PTA Positions and Resolutions
- Review state laws and district procedures relating to School Health Advisory Councils
- Meet with key school district personnel and/or school board members to develop a collaborative relationship and share health-related local and state developments

Intermediate

- Join your district's School Health Advisory Council (SHAC)
- Send your legislators or school chief a letter requesting that they support wellness efforts
- During the legislative session, support federal and state healthy lifestyles-related legislation and share information and action alerts with PTA membership

Advanced

- Approach your school wellness team and administration about creating stricter campus policies - *(e.g., not allowing parents to bring in outside food when they eat lunch with their child in the cafeteria, birthday celebration guidelines, non-food fundraisers)*
- Assist in biennial revisions of the district's wellness policy - offer to review suggested revisions even in you aren't a member of the SHAC

**TIP - Look for tools and resources to assist in your advocacy efforts (e.g., series of video clips from National PTA on "How to Lobby the PTA Way", fact sheets from SHAPE America that can be given to decision makers and school stakeholders that outlines the benefits and importance of school health and physical education, or SHAC meeting topics ideas from the Texas School Health Advisory Council)*

Don't forget to visit other websites for additional information on various programs that support health and wellness

- National and Texas PTA
- Texas School Health Advisory Council (TSHAC)
- It's Time Texas (ITT)
- Texas Action for Healthy Kids (TAHK)
- Partnership for a Healthy Texas
- Society of Health and Physical Educators (SHAPE) America
- StopBullying

Suggested Monthly Focus

The identified National Observances below are intended to help coordinate efforts around identified themes throughout the year. You may wish to have a theme per month or only try 2-3 themes per year. The best PTA programs are created by people who are responding to the needs and interests of their own PTA members. This may be accomplished by using a simple survey or identifying them with your Healthy Lifestyles committee at the beginning of the year. Always check with your principal before sending anything home to all the parents.

Also check the Healthy Lifestyles newsletter for coordination tips on National Observances throughout the year. Whether you are coordinating with the school nurse to help students “rethink their drink” during National Dental Month or collaborating with the school wellness team to host a healthy pot luck during National PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month, having a central idea to rally around is key!

September

National Childhood Obesity Awareness Month
National Preparedness Month
National Fruits and Veggies Month
Texas Obesity Awareness Week

October

National Farm to School Month
Safe Schools Week
National Fire Prevention Week
Child Health Day
National Walk to School Day
National School Lunch Week
National Red Ribbon Week

November

National PTA Healthy Lifestyles Month
American Diabetes Month
Lung Cancer Awareness Month

December

National Handwashing Week
National Influenza Vaccination Week
National Safe Toys and Gifts Month

January

Family Fit Lifestyle Month
National Take the Stairs Day

February

American Heart Month
National Children’s Dental Health Month
Random Acts of Kindness Week
National Teen Dating Violence Month

March

National Nutrition Month
National School Breakfast Week
National Brain Awareness Week
National Sleep Awareness Week
Great American Cleanup

April

National Stress Awareness Month
Distracted Driving Awareness Month
Earth Day
Every Kid Healthy Week

May

National Fitness Month
Mental Health Month
Screen Free Week
World Asthma Day
National Bike to School Day
ACES Day
Healthy Texas Week

Keeping Records

Compiling and maintaining a complete record your activities can be a huge help to those PTA Leaders who follow behind you. Passing along important information to your successor shouldn't be viewed as micromanaging the future – quite the opposite! New Leaders that have access to previous PTA practices can more easily adjust or make needed changes.

How to Compile Your Records

Ask yourself, "If I knew nothing about the job, could I do it with this information?" Depending on your position, you may need hard copy materials at your fingertips. If so, using a loose-leaf folder or binder with tabbed dividers may be needed, while other positions could easily keep their records electronically via a shared or USB drive.

SUGGESTED CONTENTS

BYLAWS/STANDING RULES

- A current, date-stamped copy of the PTA Bylaws and Standing Rules. It's suggested that a member of the executive board request a copy each year (after August 1) from Texas PTA and distribute it to all executive board members. Visit www.txpta.org/bylaws for more information.

ROSTERS

- Current roster of executive board members with their contact information
- Current roster of PTA members
- Contact information for Texas PTA Field Service Representative, Council PTAs (if applicable), Texas PTA board members with comparable responsibilities, the Texas PTA State Office
- Resources, and related agencies and organizations in the community relevant to your position

ITEMS RELATED TO YOUR POSITION (as applicable)

- Description and responsibilities of your position
- Current Texas PTA BASICS Resource Guide(s) relevant to your position
- Plan of Work approved by the executive board
- Reports prepared for meetings (executive board, membership and committee)
- Financial records including approved budgets, expense reports with copies of your receipts, or a copy of any deposit forms that you may have signed
- Promotional material, newsletter articles, evaluations, etc.
- Awards applications submitted to Council, Texas, or National PTA
- Summary of your term including recommendations for the following year

PTA MEETINGS

- Agendas and approved minutes from each meeting
- Financial reports
- Relevant committee reports
- Information on upcoming events and programs sponsored by PTA at all levels
- Record of volunteer hours to be reported to the volunteer coordinator (if applicable)

Resources

Texas PTA is committed to providing our volunteer leaders across the state with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful in their role within PTA. Access to quality educational resources is a key component in supporting this success, as well as continuing to build strong Local and Council PTAs.

TRAINING

FOUNDATIONS Leader Orientation has two components that must be completed. There is a \$10 course fee payable with the first component, and this fee is reimbursable by your PTA.

Welcome to PTA is a high-level orientation to PTAs that can only be taken online via the Texas PTA website at www.txpta.org/training.

Serving on a Local Board is the nuts and bolts of leading your PTA. This portion of the course is taken in person and is provided by Field Service Representatives or Council PTAs (if applicable).

BASICS contain detailed information to support PTA Leaders in their specific board position. Every executive board member is strongly encouraged to attend a BASICS course for their own position, as well as any other related positions.

BASICS include a workshop and companion Resource Guide, along with other supporting resources. These training sessions are available on-demand via the Texas PTA website. Visit us online at www.txpta.org/training to register for free! Field Service Representatives and Council PTAs may also offer these courses as in-person training.

PTA Leaders can access the Resource Guides via the Texas PTA website or online store. Visit www.txpta.org/local-pta-leaders to download free PDFs or www.txpta.org/shop to purchase hard copies.

SPOTLIGHTS offer a short, in-depth review of some of the specific yet important topics and recurring PTA functions such as Bylaws and Standing Rules, Financial Reconciliations, Conducting a Meeting, and Nominations and Elections.

These training sessions are also available on-demand via the Texas PTA website at no charge. Visit www.txpta.org/training to get started today!

NEWSLETTERS AND ALERTS

Texas PTA provides content-specific newsletters based on your PTA position. Please be certain you have submitted your own information to let Texas PTA know you are serving as a PTA Leader each year. Registering as a Local PTA Leader will help ensure you receive these important updates! Visit www.txpta.org/officer-intake to access the form.



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