

- Encouraging parents and community members to inform themselves about education issues in order to understand and support necessary changes in the schools.
- Helping schools connect with the home, providing family and community information, and networking with other local organizations.

Because PTA volunteers are part of a national network (unlike other parent organizations), they have extensive resources to use when advocating for education in your community. These include partnerships with national teachers' associations and offices in Chicago and Washington, DC.

## PTA support of teachers

The National PTA continually monitors children's well-being so that it can respond to their needs through programs that may be used by parents and teachers.

## Teacher appreciation and awards

Each year, the National PTA recognizes excellence in teaching through Programs such as Teacher Appreciation Week and the Phoebe Apperson Hearst Outstanding Educator Award.

## Publications

The National PTA produces numerous publications useful for its teacher members. Among them is the *Our Children* magazine, focusing on concerns of both parents and teachers, which is the enrichment of children's lives, excellence in education, children's health, and strengthening the family.

**Get Connected  
with PTA!**

## About the Illinois PTA

The Illinois PTA, with over 140,000 members state-wide, is a volunteer organization dedicated solely to the welfare of children in their schools and communities. Illinois PTA was organized on May 30, 1900, and has since worked diligently to support public schools and to ensure that all children have equal opportunities and access to education. The Illinois PTA is a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.



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**Illinois  
PTA®**

**And  
Teachers**



**Working Together  
For All Children!**

# Teamwork in Education

**T — for teacher** — is the PTA's middle name. Teachers are the crucial link in the partnership between school and parents. Every major study of education has shown the importance of parent involvement. Parent involvement is enhanced by a positive parent-teacher relationship, and the PTA is an effective means of bringing parents and teachers together.

Although PTAs and PTSAs (Parent-Teacher-Student Associations), parents and teachers work together to achieve the **PTA Objectives**:

- *Promote the education, health, and well-being of children in the home, school, and community.*
- *Offer parent education programs to improve parenting skills and enrich the quality of home life.*
- *Secure passage of adequate laws for the protection of children and youth.*
- *Strengthen home-school cooperation and communication.*
- *Improve the schools that children attend.*

Teachers' knowledge and leadership help the PTA serve children well. In turn, teachers look to the PTA for help and support in their important work of educating children and youth.

## Building a partnership — the teacher's role

Parent involvement becomes a reality when strong support from the principal and teachers build effective partnerships with parents to strengthen their participation in the school community. Some proven ways teachers encourage parent involvement include:

- Setting a friendly tone with parents in notes and phone calls. This encourages parents to see themselves as equal partners in the job of educating their children.

- Establishing a regular means of communicating with parents throughout the school year — weekly classroom newsletter, teacher-parent journals, good news phone calls, or Friday folders.
- Setting a clear policy on homework — its purpose, how much time it should take, how parents can help.
- Making sure parents understand classroom programs and policies, and the importance of parent support.
- Supporting parent and community volunteers in the school.
- Attending PTA meetings, serving on committees and in leadership positions and joining in PTA programs and projects.
- Discussing PTA programs at teachers' meetings, and gathering tips about successful programs at other schools to share with the PTA.
- Alerting the PTA to parents' needs. Working with the PTA to provide parent involvement opportunities in school and at home.
- Sharing with the PTA, issues of concern to teachers, current topics in education, and the need for changes to meet future goals.



## Building a partnership — the PTA's role

Educating children is a shared responsibility. Teachers need the understanding and support of parents and community members — their partners in education. The PTA builds this partnership in two main ways.

### 1. The PTA encourages parents to be involved in their children's education:

- Making parents aware of school policies and programs.
- Helping parents understand the importance of their support of school rules and procedures.
- Educating parents in parenting skills and ways to support children's learning at home.
- Strengthening parent-teacher communication and understanding through newsletters, workshops, events, and activities.
- Providing informal occasions for teachers and parents to get to know one another as individuals and as partners in education.
- Conducting volunteer programs in schools.
- Assisting parents through outreach programs and referrals to community resources.
- Encouraging parents and community members to unite to improve the lives of children and youth through programs that address social problems.

### 2. The PTA fosters community support of education in the following ways:

- Working to maintain a strong public school system with quality education for all children and youth.
- Supporting training for teachers, principals, parents, administrators, and community members in their roles as shared decision-makers at local schools.
- Working for school budgets that include items such as adequate funding for teachers' salaries.
- Urging communities to support teachers' continuing professional education and helping explain the importance of such programs.
- Making opportunities for parents to focus on school and student successes in exhibits, open houses, awards ceremonies, performances, and other events.