

February / March, 2011 CT PTSA Newsletter

CONVENTION AND EXHIBITION

APRIL 1 & 2, 2011

Southbury, CT

www.ctpta.org

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Great Workshops planned this year
Comfortable settings,
Register today for the CT PTSA Annual Convention

*FROM YOUR STATE PRESIDENT,
MARNE USHER*



Greetings,

I know it is hard to believe but as you read this we are heading into Spring! And while spring means Easter eggs and daffodils and warmer weather it also means budget time. The news is full of budget concerns at the federal, state and local level. Now, more than ever, our voice has to be heard in support of our children. PTA is the largest volunteer child advocacy group in the nation and staunchly nonpartisan. Our collective mission is all about the kids. Whether you attend local Board of Education meetings or write you state representatives or call your Senators or Congressman, your voice matters and our children need us.

PTA will have representatives from every state in Washington in March to talk to our legislators about those issues affecting our children.

Our statewide PTA Day on the Hill is March 9th. Come to Hartford and meet face to face with your state legislators and let them know what matters to you.

As a voter your voice is more powerful than you might think and as a member of the PTA family you have the strength of 50,000 members in CT and almost 6 million across the nation behind you.

Make your voice heard!

“This is **NO ORDINARY** parent group, this **PTA** of ours. This is a national movement to represent all **CHILDREN**. This is millions of members speaking with one voice for children, **EDUCATION**, and families. This is how the school **COMMUNITY** comes together before school, in school, after school with programs to help every **SCHOOL** partner with **FAMILIES**, to help every child achieve their **POTENTIAL**. This is school spirit. This is an **EXTRAORDINARY** group of moms, dads, teachers, principals, aunts, uncles, grandparents, caregivers, businesspeople, advocates. **THIS IS ALL OF THE ABOVE, ALL AT THE SAME TIME. THIS IS PTA.**”

Membership is Important

How is your membership going?

Even though the state of the economy is still rough, people should be able to see the value of being a PTA member. It is the job of every Membership Chair, and everyone in your unit to impress the benefits and value of utilizing PTA resources to help parents in a downturn economy. At every event, there should be a table where anyone can, and is encouraged to, sign up to be a member, even in February or March. It does not matter, membership is available 365 days a year! Please make sure you give every member their membership card so they can access member only sites on the National and Connecticut PTSA websites.

Local units should get into the habit of sending in membership dues monthly to the state office. Unit Treasurer reports are available on our website.

Do not forget your outside Community members: your hairdresser, your favorite waitress/waiter, your bank teller, and do not forget the push for MALE involvement— Get all your dads, uncles, brothers!!!

Discounts for PTA Members



Get great discounts from these companies:

- MetLife Auto & Home
- *Parenting* magazine
- Sharp Electronics Corporation
- Southwest Airlines Vacations
 - T-Mobile

To learn more visit: www.pta.org



A very Important PTA Committee? The nominating committee!!!

The nominating committee shapes the future of your PTA by seeking out qualified nominees for the elected leadership of your association.

PTA is often asked how many members should serve on the nominating committee. Your bylaws indicate the number of members and the number of alternates. If the committee is too small, the members:

- Will not adequately represent your school population.
- Won't have sufficient time to effectively search for qualified, potential board members.
- Will have limited knowledge of your school's potential volunteer pool, resulting in cliques and recycling of the same leaders.

It is important to have enough members on the nominating committee so that the committee is not only diverse but also so that the committee has the capacity to search for and recruit willing candidates for your PTA board.

Anytime is the right time to review your PTA bylaws and assure this guidance tool meets your PTA's needs. Take five minutes at your next executive board meeting to consider whether your bylaws include enough members and alternates on the nominating committee.

If change is necessary, now is the time to take action. Remember, the nominating committee is one of your most important PTA committees. Take the time to ensure it is working for your PTA, then elect your nominating committee wisely!

THE CT PTSA STORE IS NOW OPEN!

Visit our website at www.ctpta.org

Then go to : About ctptsa and click our store!



Marina



Singing and dancing to the "Jonas brothers," eating Taco Bell and being outside are fun activities 12 year old Marina would like to share with a family. A two parent, experienced family; in which Marina could be the youngest child, would provide Marina with the individualized time and attention she will need to transition into a home.

The many supports needed in her educational setting, such as occupational, physical, speech and language therapies; combined with consistent routine and expectations, have created an environment where Marina has made progress. Marina's diagnosis prevent her from knowing how to fully read or write at this time and occasionally she expresses her emotions with impulsive or inappropriate behaviors. Despite her many challenges, she does not intend to be mischievous and she longs for a family. Many of her behaviors are directly linked to her significant cognitive delays and she will do well in a tolerant and nurturing family; who is very calm and organized with a consistent routine.

Due to many significant losses, some due to death, Marina needs a family who will assist her in learning to trust and have patience while she becomes secure in her home. On-going grief counseling will benefit her ability to process her losses. Marina appreciates consistent expectations and a direct approach. She does well when provided extra time to process what she needs to accomplish and dependable prompts help her move on to the next task. Marina's family will be provided extra training and supportive services to maintain and assist in her placement. Teamwork and cooperation from her family, in tandem with all her service providers, will create just the right situation for Marina to reach her highest potential.

For more information about Marina, please contact:

Kathy DePasquale

Office of Foster Care and Adoption Services

The CT Department of Children & Families

1-800-842-6348 or 860-550-6511

Kathy.Depasquale@CT.GOV



Congratulations to all of our Reflections Chairs for a job well done!

Judges are busy checking in and evaluating students works. It's your time to sit back and relax knowing that you have completed all the necessary steps. Connecticut PTSA winners will be notified by mail along with the PTA

presidents and reflection chairs. All will be then be invited to our Annual Reflections Celebration on Thursday, May 19th at Hamden Middle School.

On behalf of CT PTSA we would like to thank you for all you did to make this year's event a success and hope everyone will participate next year. If you have any suggestions for our program please email them to ab_connecticut.pta@snet.net. If there is something we can do to make the process better, we would like to do just that.

Again our thanks!

2011-2012 REFLECTIONS THEME:

DIVERSITY MEANS.....



Just Between Friends and Revenue Share – Still Time to Earn for Spring Semester!

In the beginning of February, Just Between Friends distributed revenue share checks to units that met the revenue share criteria for the Fall semester. Units who met the criteria earned \$122 to \$245 each for the semester.

There's still time to earn revenue for the Spring 2011 semester. To be eligible, your unit must have one parent in at least 20% of the households in your community go through the Just Between Friends household start-up wizard. Then, they'll have a Just Between Friends household account and this gets the into your unit's communications group. Communicate with them at least 10 times during the semester to enjoy revenue share. If you communicate at least 10 times in the semester to 50% of the households in your community, you double your revenue share. The number of dollars depends on how much revenue is derived from companies that advertise on the Just Between Friends system. Eligible units will receive their checks for the Spring 2011 semester in August.

If your unit isn't using Just Between Friends yet, get started by going to www.JustBetweenFriends.com/PTAquickstart and entering your unit. It's provided free by National PTA to all PTA units. You can use the system for membership management; communications; volunteer management; and revenue share/fundraising. If you have any questions, please visit www.JustBetweenFriends.com and click on the "Contact Us" button, or contact Eric Dickerson, your Just Between Friends PTA liaison at edickerson@mailjbf.com. Eric can also be reached at 412-561-0500 x 1010.



Parents Information Education Workshop

Annual Convention April 1/2, 2011– Crowne Plaza Hotel, Southbury, CT

Friday, April 1, 2011

A1 – School Governance Councils (PI) – Find out how these councils can provide a remarkable opportunity for Connecticut schools to engage with families and community members in the essential dialogue about student achievement and preparing all students for success.

A2 – PTAs and Boards of Education: Developing the Best Relationships – (RA) – Boards of Education are the governing bodies in all of Connecticut school districts. Learn how boards and their members operate and how to develop relationships with your board that will enable you to be most effective in helping students in your district.

A3 – Afterschool Alliance & Afterschool programs – (MB) If your PTA is thinking of or already sponsoring after school programs this information workshop is for you. Come hear about the successful programming that Greenwich PTAs have and share your ideas with others.

A4 - Your Kids Know ...Do you? Emerging Alcohol & Drug Trends – (MB) This hands-on training will explore new & unusual methods of using legal & illegal substances among Connecticut's youth. Participants will learn how to identify specific dangers that threaten today's youth. Tips on how to prevent substance use at home and in the classroom will be provided. Attendees will walk away with the newest information, techniques and resources available to help address youth substance abuse within the state.

B1–Communicating Effectively with your Child – (MB) Explore parent/child communication and the effectiveness/ineffectiveness of the communication

B2 - Transition process from Birth to Three through Adulthood with your Special Needs Child – (MB) Participate in discussion and receive tips and advice to navigate the process of transitions for families & children. Learn to navigate each level – elementary to high school and out. Learn your rights & your child's rights in IDEA.

B3 - The One Job They Never Train You For – (MB) More than 80% of people become parents, yet schools give little instruction about raising children, especially birth to five, when the child's brain is developing rapidly. The Ct Coalition for Child Development will discuss the need for schools to provide education in child development, child safety and parenting skills for all students. Curriculum and research on the subject will be provided.

C1 – Invention for Kids – STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Math) in Play! – (PI) Children are natural “tinkerers” and we want to keep them that way. Connecticut has a heritage of Yankee Ingenuity supported by the CT Invention Convention for 128 years. Have fun with us as we learn to invent together!

C2 - Perception is Reality – (RR, LD) Have you ever walked into a room where you felt like an outcast or not welcomed? Did you feel like the group was an “exclusive group”? Did you feel uncomfortable? Have you ever stopped and thought about your actions and/or behaviors could affect your PTA? Many PTA officers inadvertently set up a dynamic which is perceived as “Us vs. Them” without even recognizing it. In this workshop, you will learn what type of leaders you are and how important it is to have several different types of leadership styles to run an affective PTA. We will also brainstorm how to avoid these negative perceptions and how to positively welcome all individuals that share our common theme- Children

C3 – Survive the Drive (MB) – This workshop will present facts, science and behavior on preventing childhood injury in our communities. With this information and change in attitude, young people will approach the task of driving with reasoning and concern.

Saturday, April 2, 2011

D1 – Being a Sibling of a Special Needs Child – Hear from the “Real” Professional! – (MB) A panel discussion with question & answer period learning from and listening to siblings with special needs brothers and/or sisters. How it affects their lives. The good/positive and how it can be challenging. How they cope and how they benefit.

D2 - Navigating the Monkey Bars: Tips on getting a playground built at your school – (MB, FR, LD) Join three parents of the Spring Glen PTA to hear what the toughest hurdles were and what worked best.

D3 – The Importance of Parent Leadership in Education – (PI, LD) In this session, participants will focus on parent leadership within the continuum of opportunities for parent involvement in schools and communities on behalf of improved outcomes for students. The session will explore why parent leadership is important, opportunities for parents to lead and partner in schools as well as the skills and understanding necessary to become effective leaders, partners and active participants in education. Information about programs in Connecticut that provide leadership training for parents will be provided.

E1 – MADD Power of Parents, It’s Your Influence – This national program is supported by the National PTA and is available for CT chapters to share with their parents. Parents will receive a handbook on talking to children about alcohol. Learn how you can bring this program to your local PTA.

E2 - How and why does your PTA work? Going beyond the bylaws – (RR, LD, EM, BO) Did you get elected to a position, might want to run

E3 - Bribery, Blackmail and Guilt: The New Way to Find Volunteers – (RR, LD, SP) Work together to come up with ideas to get more members and volunteers. In this hands-on session you will share ideas that have worked and ideas that have not worked to get more members/volunteers.

F1 - 2011 Legislative Issues – (LD, MB) This session will provide a review of CT PTSA’s 2011 Legislative Platform, learn what issues the new Governor and the legislature are considering and what is happening in Washington. Updates will be provided on the different task forces CT PTSA is serving on.

F2 – Mine, Yours, Ours: Teen Dating Violence – (MB) Through education, training, activism and exposure to the arts, MYO engages students, middle school through high school, to address teen dating violence and domestic abuse.

Student Workshop – Saturday, April 2, 2011 – 10:45 – 11:45 am

Don’t Quit (Student Workshop) – (MB, LD) Students will perform a skit on why it is important to not only stay in school, but to participate in what the school has to offer. Hear from students themselves!

Parents Information Education Workshops

2011 Convention Timeline

8:00 – 10:00 am	Registration	Main Foyer
8:00 am – 4:00 pm	Exhibit Hall	Southford Ballrooms C,D,E,
10:00 am – 12:00pm	Welcome and Brunch Election of officers Guest Speaker on School Climate National Representative	Southford Ballrooms A,B
12:00 – 1:00 pm	Exhibit Hall	Southford Ballrooms C,D,E,
1:00 –1:45	Workshops	Great Hill A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A1 – School Governance Councils 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A2 – PTSAs and Boards of Education: Developing the Best Relationships 	Woodruff Hill A
	A3 – Afterschool Alliance & Afterschool programs	Woodruff Hill B
	A4 - Your Kids Know ...Do you? Emerging Alcohol & Drug Trends	
1:45 – 1:50	Fitness Break	Hallway
	B1 – Communicating Effectively with your child	
1:50 – 2:35	B2 - Transition process from Birth to Three through Adulthood	Great Hill B
	B3 – The One Job they Never Train you For	Woodruff Hill A
2:40 – 3:25	C1 – Invention for Kids – STEM in Play	Woodruff Hill B
	C2 - Perception is Reality	Great Hill A
	C3 – Survive The Drive	Southbury Board Room
3:30 – 4:00 pm	Council of Presidents Annual Meeting	Woodruff Hill A
5:00 – 6:00 pm	Nutmeg Statewide PTA Annual Meeting	Great Hill A
7:00 – 9:00 pm	Leadership Dinner Welcome from National Representative Installation of new officers Speaker - Deb Faye Membership Awards Presentation Leadership Awards Scholarships Nutmeg Awards	Nutmeg Ballroom

Saturday 2011 Convention Timeline— Saturday		
8:00 – 9:00 am	Registration	Main Foyer
9:00 am – 10:30 pm	Welcome	Southford Ballrooms A,B
10:45 – 11:30	Workshops	Woodruff Hill A
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● D1 – Being a Sibling of a Special Needs Child – Hear from the “Real” Professional! 	Woodruff Hill B
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● D2 - Navigating the Monkey Bars: Tips on getting a playground built at your school. 	Great Hill A
	D3 – The Importance of Parent Leadership in Education	Great Hill A
10:45 – 11:45	Student Workshop	Great Hill B
11:30 – 11:35	Break	
11:35 – 12:20	E1 – MADD Power of Parents, It’s Your Influence	Southbury Board Room
	E2 - How and why does your PTA work? Going beyond the bylaws	Great Hill A
	E3 - Bribery, Blackmail and Guilt: The New Way to Find Volunteers	Great Hill B
12:25 – 1:10	F1 - 2011 Legislative Issues	Woodruff Hill A
	F2 – Mine, Yours, Ours: Teen Dating Violence	Woodruff Hill B
	F3 - PIRC	

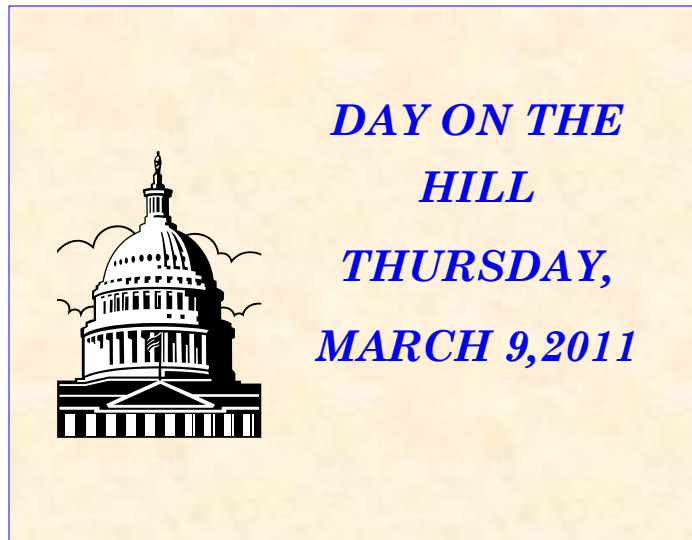


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We are on Face Book!
CTPTSA



About PTA

The Best Resource for Parents

As the largest volunteer child advocacy association in the nation, The Parent Teacher Association (PTA) reminds our country of its obligations to children and provides parents and families with a powerful voice to speak on behalf of every child while providing the best tools for parents to help their children be successful students.

PTA does not act alone. Working in cooperation with many national education, health, safety, and child advocacy groups and federal agencies, the national PTA organization collaborates on projects that benefit children and that bring valuable resources to its members.