

About Connecticut PTA

Frances Sheldon Bolton founded the Connecticut Congress of Parents and Teachers in 1900, three years after the National Congress was organized in Washington, D. C. in 1897. Utilizing the same Goals and Objects of the National Congress, Connecticut's mothers directed their efforts toward bringing the system of education closer to excellence and making the home environment a positive and healthy experience for children and youth.

The Connecticut PTA's record of accomplishments for the well-being of all children and youth is impressive. It has helped to secure child labor and school attendance laws; juvenile courts; maternal and child health services; public school kindergartens; school lunches; funds for enrichment education programs, libraries, and vocational education; juvenile delinquency research and control; and other legislation that benefits children and schools. Our members continue to identify the legislative issues at local, state, and national levels that are crucial to the interests of children and to take action to achieve the PTA's legislative objectives.

Since its founding, the threefold mission has formed the framework of the PTA and has given direction to all its efforts for children: advocacy, parent education and parent & public involvement in public schools. As children's needs have changed, Connecticut PTA's specific objectives have been redefined, but these three traits have remained constant.

Children need PTA as much today as they did in 1900, and their needs will be as great in five, ten, twenty years. To achieve the goals of our founder and our present leaders, our

organization is continuing work on projects begun and is reaching out into new areas of concern; problems of children and families in the urban setting; standardized testing and minimal competency standards; teacher preparation and in-service training; school finance; special needs of single-parent families and teenage parents; the energy crisis and the schools; hazardous materials in the environment; and utilizing technology in today's schools for tomorrow's workplace.

The Connecticut PTA is proud of its past and the traditions it has established; it deals with the conditions of the present with courage, and vigor; and it looks to the future with a strong commitment, knowing that children will always need friends and advocates who will speak out and act on their behalf.

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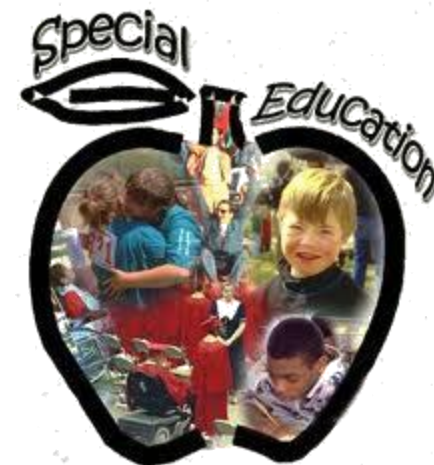
Website www.ctpta.org



Connecticut
PTA®
everychild.onevoice®

HOW TO START A SEPTA

**REPRESENTING CHILDREN
WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**



*The Connecticut Parent Teachers
Association, with over 22,000 members,
is the state's largest
child advocacy association.*



Start with like-minded people, i.e., other parents, guardians, grandparents, etc. with children with special/exceptional needs, school staff (teachers, therapists, special education directors and so on).

Schedule a meeting with these people and call the state office and ask for someone from the state PTA to come and answer questions on the benefits of SEPTAs.

What is SEPTA?

SEPTA are a PTA within a school district. SEPTA bring together people who are interested in special education and children with special needs.

SEPTA supports, strengthens and promotes the welfare of children with special needs.

SEPTA promotes an understanding of special education and strives to enrich the lives of children with special needs.

Who are SEPTA Members?

- Anyone that has an interest in the welfare of children with special needs.
- Parents, families, teachers, school administrators, students, friends.
- Membership is open to all.

What a SEPTA can offer



One major benefit is to offer support to other parents who have similar circumstances. Some SEPTA units have a business meeting then adjourn and offer parent support time off the record.

Sometimes parents like to speak on issues that concern their children and just listening to them can help other caretakers. Other things can happen during the support time, for instance, caretakers can learn about doctors and services that are a positive experience for their child such as a place to take your child for a haircut that is not stressful and a place of business that is understanding and patient.

Other benefits are that SEPTAs sponsor workshops and speakers on topics that can help better advocate for exceptional children and topics that can help parents better understand aspects of special needs and many diagnoses. Many SEPTAs start out with a general topic like understanding your child's IEP or 504plan, the rights of your special needs child, and the parent's rights under IDEA.

Many units offer family fun days for the whole family, such as a bowling day, a picnic and so on. This is a comfortable place for the whole family to go and be together.

When starting SEPTA, parents and caregivers should be encouraged to join their own parent groups in the child's typical school. This encourages inclusion and helps keep the lines of communication open to all parent groups.

A representative from the Board of Education and the school's district's Special Education Director should be encouraged to attend the meetings and report on what the district is doing. They should, of course, be encouraged to join the SEPTA. Communication and teamwork is the keys to success

How to start a SEPTA?

A SEPTA is formed exactly like any other PTA



unit. The SEPTA must follow all the same rules to receive their charter. They must fill out whatever paperwork is required by the state PTA. They must elect officers, establish bylaws, and collect dues. All established

PTA/SEPTA units must comply with the CT PTA Standards of Affiliation which grants them 501C-3 Status as a non-profit Association. To start a SEPTA in your community, contact CT PTA.

