

PROGRAM IDEAS FOR PTA

Involve and Strengthen Your School Community

Our school families and communities can offer a wealth of support and expertise for PTA event planning, whether you're planning a night of fun or an educational event.

Involve your families as partners to stretch your financial and volunteer budget. Ask attendees to RSVP and encourage them to help with any clean-up. Be sure to thank them for their part in the event.

Family Game Night: Ask families to bring their favorite board games. You might also ask local toy stores to donate games for school events or have families volunteer to teach new ones.

Brain Power: Let students show off what they've learned with a spelling, math or geography bee. Surprise everyone and quiz parents to find out whether they're smarter than their students!

Local History Storytelling: Invite residents of retirement homes, senior citizen groups or members of the local historical society to tell stories of the way it was in the "olden' days" of your community.

Multi-Cultural Picnic: Have a picnic on school grounds and invite each family to bring a traditional family food. Plan activities for the children that allow time for the adults to get to know each other.

Read-a-Thon: Involve the local library in a family reading event. All attendees can sign up for library cards and pick out a favorite book to borrow and read to family members.

Swap and trade items that your kids need for school and recreation. Plan a community "flea-trade market" to help families recycle usable items and get the supplies their kids need. Have a check-in area where families get tickets for each item they bring. They can use the tickets to "pay" for the items they want to take home. Any items left over can be taken to a local donation center.

Books: Promote reading! Plan a book swap in conjunction with a school literacy program. Provide an array of materials for children to make their own bookmarks.

Halloween Costumes: Each fall, invite kids to trade last year's super hero or fairy costume for something different. This would be a great time to recruit volunteers for the fall festival!

School Uniforms: Children grow fast! Let families trade outgrown school uniforms in good condition at the beginning or end of the school year.



Sports Equipment: Promote sports and exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle by hosting a sports equipment exchange. Families can bring balls, outgrown soccer cleats, baseball mitts and bats, football gear, cheer equipment, bicycles and inline skates.

Ask the professionals to bring a night of fun, entertainment and information. Show your appreciation with special thanks on event flyers and in your PTA or school newsletter. Many local businesses will offer discounts or donate their services in exchange for acknowledgement of their good deed.

Family Dance Lessons: Invite a local dance instructor to teach families how to waltz, two-step, salsa, line dance, or do the latest hip-hop moves. Follow up the lessons with a family dance night.

Fitness Night: Invite a fitness coach to teach students and parents fun exercises they can do at home. Teach attendees to take their own pulse before and after activities. Ask the school nurse to take blood pressure readings or measure body mass index, and offer healthy snacks.

Parent Information Night: Ask local professionals to speak to parents about drug abuse prevention, bullying, suicide, Internet safety, or other issues. Specify that the programs are for adults only and arrange on-site child care for the event.

Bike Rodeo: Invite local law enforcement or insurance company representatives to sponsor a bike rodeo for the students and their families. Bikes can be safety checked and the children can demonstrate their riding skills and receive certificates for achieving specific safety standards.