



# in California

Volume 63, Number 6

Official Newsletter of the California State PTA

Winter/Spring 2001



## From the President...

Research has shown that fathers, no matter what their income or cultural background, can play a critical role in their children's education. When fathers are involved, their children learn more, perform better in school, and exhibit healthier behavior. Even when fathers do not share a home with their children, their active involvement can have a lasting and positive impact. These and many other findings are included in a U.S. Department of Education document that Vice President of Parenting Education Katherine Neilson graciously agreed to abstract for this issue of *PTA in California*. California State PTA is offering a conference on fathers' involvement at our 2001 convention.



Lavonne McBroom

## Fathers' Involvement in Children's Learning

Fathers' involvement has significant effects on children in modeling adult male behavior, making choices, problem solving abilities and providing financial and emotional support.

**Modeling adult male behavior:** Fathers demonstrate to their children that male adults can take responsibility, help to establish appropriate conduct, and provide a daily example of how to deal with life.

**Making choices:** Children learn from their fathers about everything from clothing to food to devotion to a great cause. This promotes positive moral values, conformity to rules and the development of conscience.

**Problem solving abilities:** Fathers' involvement encourages children's exploration of the world around them and confidence in their ability to solve problems. Even very young children show an increase in curiosity and in problem solving capacity.

**Providing financial and emotional support:** Economic support is a significant part of a father's influence on his children. Another is the emotional support he gives to the children's mother.

Highly involved fathers also contribute to increased mental dexterity in children, increased empathy, less stereotyped sex-role beliefs and greater self-control. These children are more likely to have solid marriages later in life. They benefit by achieving higher grades, have better attendance and homework completion, more positive attitudes toward school, higher graduation

rates and greater enrollment in college.

High involvement at the early childhood level refers to the frequency with which parents interact with their young children, such as how often they read, tell stories, and sing and play with their children. This contributes to children's language and literacy development and knowledge about people, places and things.

Why are fathers not more involved in their children's education? Lack of time remains the biggest problem, but others include a lack of family-friendly environments, language barriers, not knowing what to do to assist their children, unsafe neighborhoods and divorce.

Here are steps fathers can take at home, at school and in the community that make a positive difference for their children's education.

### At home fathers can:

- Read with their children.
- Establish a daily routine. Fathers can set a time for homework, chores, other activities and TV viewing.
- Make the most of bedtime. Bedtime is a terrific opportunity for a father to connect with his children, by recounting what he did during the day, discussing the day's events or reading a story.

### At school fathers can:

- Attend parent-teacher conferences and school or class events.
- Volunteer as tutors, as leaders of afternoon and evening clubs, as chaperones for field trips, social activities or athletic

events, or as classroom speakers.

- Visit their child's school or center.
- Meet their child's teachers.
- Pitch in to help meet school and program needs.
- Join the PTA or other parent groups at their child's school. At meetings, they can make their voices heard regarding their concerns and ideas for school improvement.

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## MANY VOICES

## ONE VISION

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## It is the Process, Not the Product

Children are born creative. They love to mix paints, draw with soap bubbles, play with clay, dance, make mud pies, and act out stories. It is through these types of expression that children develop physically, mentally, socially and emotionally. It is up to parents to see that a child's creativity is nurtured. Focus on the process, not the end product.

To encourage expression in art:

- Allow children the freedom to paint, draw and create.
- Provide time for art. Children know how long they wish to work on a project. Hurrying the child often destroys the process.
- Limit the number of coloring books. Encourage the child to draw his/her own picture, then color within the lines of their own drawing.
- Avoid art projects that focus on the end product and uniformity. Dot-to-dot drawings, color-by-number, and "follow the directions" projects give children limited opportunity to express their creativity.
- Do not ask, "What did you draw?" Instead, say, "Tell me about your picture." Praise the use of color, line, form, originality, and completion of the task.
- Display your child's work.
- Avoid making a pattern or a model of art projects. This encourages children to copy your work and live up to adult expectations and ability.

*Deme Larson  
Parenting Education Commission*

## Life After High School: Helping Teens Who are College Bound

Most teens need help in the college admission process, especially if they are the first in their family to go to college. The process seems to be getting more complex every year, and there is a lot of misinformation around. The following four steps can help families avoid the pitfalls of college selection by keeping their options open and by focusing on the individual teen before beginning the search:

Ask your child if he or she believes any of the following myths:

- There is only one college that's exactly right for me.
- The colleges I like would never accept me.
- My first-choice college is too expensive or too selective.
- If I make the wrong choice, I'll be stuck in a college I don't like.

Keep your teen's needs and interests in mind. College selection is a two-sided process, so before you look at what colleges want, try to determine what your child needs and wants from a college.

Don't enter the college supermarket without a shopping list. Parents and teenagers have a dizzying selection of colleges from which to choose. To stay focused, have your son or daughter develop a list of personal traits and those he or she wants in a college.

Start shopping! There are countless ways to "window shop" for colleges that match your shopping list—guidebooks, catalogs, college view books, college fairs, Web sites, campus visits, and recent high school graduates who are often delighted to talk to younger students about their first year college experiences.

The above was excerpted from "Life After High School: Helping Teens Who are College Bound," which appeared in the December 2000 issue of *Our Children*.



(Continued from Page 1)

## Fathers' Involvement in Children's Learning

**In the community fathers can:**

- Play or coach a game or sport.
- Become involved in community activities.
- Take time for family outings.
- Use their community learning center to participate in after-school and evening educational and recreational activities.
- Advocate for their child. Fathers can address school boards, city planning councils or write, FAX or e-mail their legislators regarding children's issues.
- Vote!

To engage fathers more fully as partners in children's learning, schools and programs need to challenge the assumption that parent involvement means "mother's" involvement. The National PTAS standards for Parent/Family Involvement Program clearly outline six types of parent involvement in education. Use these standards to evaluate what your school is doing and to identify areas you would like to strengthen for working with families, especially fathers. These are:

1. **Communicating.** Communication between the home and school is regular, two-way and meaningful.
2. **Parenting.** Parenting skills are promoted and supported.
3. **Student Learning.** Parents play an integral role in assisting student learning.
4. **Volunteering.** Parents are welcome in the schools; their support and assistance are sought.
5. **School Decision Making and Advocacy.** Parents are full partners in the decisions that affect children and families.
6. **Collaborating with Community.** Community resources are used to strengthen schools, families, and student learning.

Watch for articles on how to implement the National PTA Standards for Parent/Family Involvement in future issues of *PTA in California*.

(Adapted from *A Call to Commitment: Fathers' Involvement in Children's Learning*, U.S. Department of Education, 2000)

*Katherine Neilson  
Vice President for Parenting Education*



## 'Tis The Season

Not *that* season—the holidays have come and gone. Now it's time to look to the future and next year's PTABoard. A strong board for next year means your PTA will keep growing—something you have worked so hard for as president.

Check your bylaws to determine when your nominating committee is to be elected. Encourage the newly elected committee to include everyone when considering nominees. You never know who may take the challenge. Keep an open mind. Remember that leadership styles differ; but that is wonderful because each new leader brings different ideas to your board.

Always be supportive of your new board. We are here for the same thing—the children of California.

Later, be sure the incoming PTA president attends convention for proper training. Have an up-to-date procedure book ready for your successor.

You are to be commended for your time and dedication to all children this year. Please continue to support our children by becoming a stronger part of your council or district board. Only by good leaders continually moving up will we keep PTA the number one organization for all children.

*Bonnie J Harp, Leadership Services Commission*



## State Theme Search Finalists National PTA Reflections Program Theme Search for 2002-2003

The California State PTA received over 160 theme suggestions for the 2002-2003 National PTA Reflections Program. National PTA accepts five (5) Theme Search submissions from each state. The National PTA's theme selection will be announced later this spring.

Congratulations to the following students whose theme suggestions were forwarded to the National PTA for consideration:

*Welcome to my dream*, Julianne Brechtel (grade 6),

Laguna Road Elementary PTA, District 4

*If Dreams Came True*, Heather Cottrell (grade 1),

Morning Creek Elementary PTA, District 9

*When I dream, I see...*, Paul Davin Patterson (grade 3),

Walnut Canyon PTA, District 12

*Hmm...I wonder...*, Risha Bera (grade 7),

Corona Fundamental Intermediate PTSA, District 23

*I woke up one morning and...*, Megan Linderman

(grade 8), Matthew Gage Middle PTSA, District 23

The California State PTA thanks all the students who participated in the National PTA Reflections Program Theme Search. Your creativity and imagination has inspired us all.

*Jan Cossette, Reflections Program Chairman*



## Annual Reports! Who, When, Why?

Historians and presidents will soon be seeking the "count and the amount" of PTA volunteer hours in order to complete the **Annual Historian Report** for this PTA year. Many questions arise related to this report. The most frequent one is "Why do we tally volunteer hours?"

The answers assist the California State PTA in evaluating and planning future program and leadership development.

Some school site councils and administrators use the volunteer hour counts to apply for special grants, programs and recognition. PTAs might use the sign-in sheets with the hours tally to evaluate and plan future parent involvement activities.

There may be a misconception about school funding being related to the total reported hours. When legislators and school board members learn of the hours spent in classrooms by volunteers, it makes them aware of potential areas needing improvement—classroom, curriculum, facilities. (Translated=more funding!)

Each PTA district usually receives the current **Annual Historian Report** forms in January and distributes them to units and councils. According to the bylaws, the historian and president complete their form together, but the president is ultimately responsible for submitting it to the next level by the deadline.

Because the California State PTA figures must be computed **before** June 30th, volunteer hours need to be projected (estimated hours) through the month of June.

This may seem inaccurate, but it is better to estimate what will probably occur than not to report at all. Every year many units, councils and districts only report a fraction of the true amount of time PTA volunteers give to enrich the lives of children.

So, when you hear that it's time to submit the **Annual Historian Report**, make certain your unit, council and district count as part of the amazing year-end California State PTA total. Complete the simple, two-sided report and submit to your council or district by the deadline, and keep a copy. It's part of your PTA history!

*Gale DeVetter, Historian*

## Celebrating PTA's Birthday!

PTA is once again celebrating its founding and the vision of three women whose goals were to improve the lives of children and youth. This vision is as important today as it was 104 years ago.

Your PTA's accomplishments and concerns should be brought to the attention of our schools, communities, state agencies and our legislators. We need to make them aware that as the result of the millions of volunteer hours donated by its members, PTA is still one of the most effective child advocacy groups in the nation.

It is not too late to hold a Founders Day event. *The Founders Day Handbook* included in the Winter Service Mailing offers great ideas and guidelines for showing recognition of yesterday's AND today's PTA to your school and community. Be proud of what you do and those who do it! You have reason to celebrate!

**You Are Today's PTA!**

*Gale DeVetter, Founders Day Chairman*



## Helping Working Parents Juggle It All

In a National PTA survey, parents cited specific barriers to greater involvement in their children's schools, including not having enough time in the day and not being available during the times when the school wants them to participate.

Take a look at how you accommodate working parents. For example, does your PTA/school do the following?

- Give sufficient notice (one month, not one week, or worse, one day) when scheduling activities. Working parents may need to arrange for time off.
- Host events for parents and educators to interact informally.
- Help develop a handbook to meet parents' needs and encourage their participation.
- Distribute parenting information at parent-teacher conferences.
- Come up with ways parents can volunteer without needing to be at school.
- Use e-mail to let parents know of upcoming projects/meetings or to ask for their input.
- Contribute to your school's Web site or host your own PTA site, providing up-to-date information.
- Vary the times and days, such as before and after school, of volunteer opportunities.
- Distribute school and event news through community bulletin boards, your local cable access channel, and/or local radio stations.
- Provide forms parents can turn in with their questions if they cannot attend a specific school meeting.
- Publicize "want ads" of volunteer opportunities and details, including responsibilities, times, etc.
- Provide after-school programs for children who are home alone in the afternoon.
- Ask ALL parents how to make volunteer opportunities more accessible. Try new ideas.

For more ideas, refer to National PTA online at <<[www.pta.org/programs/piideas.htm](http://www.pta.org/programs/piideas.htm)>> or to "Building Successful Partnerships: A Guide for Developing Parent/Family Involvement Programs." Contact your state PTA to request a parent involvement presentation or National PTA at <<[info@pta.org](mailto:info@pta.org)>> or telephone: (800) 307-4PTA (4782), to request a presentation at a national conference or meeting.

*Ginny Markell, National PTA President*



## Read Across America

In its fourth annual observation of **Read Across America**, the National Education Association (NEA) is calling America's children to celebrate reading on the anniversary of Dr. Seuss's 97th birthday, March 2, 2001. This year's theme is "Oh, the Places You'll Go!" National PTA has signed on for its fourth year as an official national partner, along with 36 successful literacy and service organizations, to encourage every child in every community to read with a caring adult.

Heading Dr. Seuss's birthday bash is Read Across America Chairman Morgan Freeman—three-time Academy Award nominee known for his popular character Easy Reader on "The Electric Company." NFL players will join Freeman, trading their helmets for "Cat in the Hat" hats, issuing reading challenges, and reading to children at local events. Plus hundreds of thousands of educators, librarians, parents, and service club members are planning celebrations in their own communities.

For ideas on activities, or to pledge to participate, visit the Web site of **Read Across America** at <<<http://www.nea.org/readacross>>>.

Materials, including "Cat in the Hat" hats, costumes, ties, buttons, posters, stickers, and bookmarks can also be ordered through the Web site. For further information about **Read Across America**, including Spanish language materials, contact:

Read Across America,  
c/o National Education  
Association,  
1201 16th Street, NW,  
Washington DC 20036.

### For Parents: 10 Ways to Become Involved in Your Child's School

1. Share your family's culture, values, and parenting practices with your child's school.
2. Let school staff know your availability to volunteer (days, times, and how often) and indicate the best way to give you information (phone, e-mail, notes, etc.).
3. Provide volunteer consulting services to school staff or educators in your areas of expertise.
4. Supervise and coordinate evening and weekend volunteer activities at school.
5. Work with school staff and teachers to develop volunteer activities you can do from home.
6. Help your school develop a directory of social and community services, and/or a directory of volunteers that can be distributed to parents, school staff, and administrators.
7. Share your child's strengths, talents, and interests with your child's teachers.
8. Attend parent-teacher conferences with specific questions you want to ask.
9. Address concerns or questions honestly, openly, and early on.
10. Attend PTA or parent meetings regularly.

Excerpted from "100 Ways for Parents to Be Involved in Their Child's Education." Contact National PTA to request a copy.

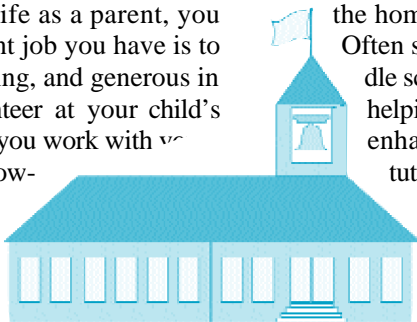
# Service Learning in Your Child's Education:

## Learning to Serve...Serving to Learn

Of all the things you do in your busy life as a parent, you know, in your heart, that the most important job you have is to raise a child that is responsible, hard working, and generous in thought and deed. Often when you volunteer at your child's school, your church or synagogue, or when you work with your group and community activities, you are showing your child how important you believe it is to give of your time to help others. By your actions, your child is well on the way toward learning the value of community service and helping others.

Perhaps your son or daughter is required to perform community service as a requirement for high school graduation. Many students find these experiences to be personally rewarding but unfortunately, most do not. Stuffing hundreds of envelopes, collating documents, or collecting trash do little to foster a sense of civic pride and often produce a converse effect by fostering a negative association with volunteerism.

Service learning is a program that supports high school students in meeting their community service requirement. It combines the opportunity for young people to experience the value of community service and, at the same time, supports the academic curriculum and the educational goals of the classroom. If students are learning about the ecosystem of the marine habitat in class, why not visit a beach or wetland and spend a few hours restoring the area to its natural state? If the class is learning about nutrition, economics, or the historic effects of poverty and social issues, what an experience it would be to organize a collection drive for



the homeless or work in a neighborhood soup kitchen. Often students who are struggling with reading in middle school or high school benefit greatly themselves by helping a younger student learn to read, actually enhancing the reading abilities of both tutee or any tutor!

High quality service learning programs in many schools throughout America use service learning as an instructional strategy to increase academic achievement, meet academic content standards, and raise test scores because the hands-on service activities are engaging, interesting, and make the learning come alive. These programs also help students get excited about volunteering in the community because the experiences have meaning and purpose, inspired and supported by the classroom instructor.

By working as partners, parents, schools, and community members can provide young people with service learning opportunities that enhance academic learning, help support positive change in the community, foster civic pride, and instill a life long commitment to making the world a better place. To find out more about service learning in California schools, contact your local school or the Service Learning Regional Lead in your area by accessing the California Department of Education CalServe Office Web site at

<<[www.cde.ca.gov/calserve](http://www.cde.ca.gov/calserve)>>.

*Sophia Waugh, Education Commission*

## Accreditation, Standards, Assessment and Accountability

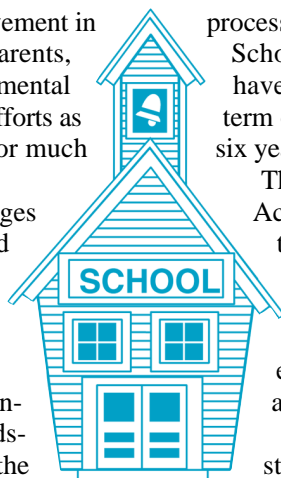
At the present time, student learning and improvement in schools are a high priority for almost everyone: parents, teachers, students, the community at large, governmental leaders and particularly the media. Long-standing efforts as well as recent legislative measures are the basis for much attention.

The Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC) has been accrediting schools, public and private, for many years in California and throughout the Pacific Islands. Most of the public schools in California that seek accreditation are at the high school level.

In recent years, California has adopted K-12 standards in certain subjects, and a mandated standards-based student assessment system including the Statewide Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program. The State Board of Education adopted the Standard Achievement Test (Stanford 9) which is now given yearly in certain grades.

Known as the Public Schools Accountability Act of 1999 (PSAA), the test is to measure the academic performance (API-index) and set growth targets for future improvement.

Schools that desire WASC accreditation have to apply, become candidates, go through a year or two of a self study



process "Focus On Learning," develop "Expected Schoolwide Learning Results," an action plan and then have a visitation by a team trained in accreditation. The term of accreditation granted can be for one, two, three or six years depending on several factors.

There are times when results of the WASC Accreditation Process involving multiple measures and the Statewide Assessment system, currently based more narrowly on tests, may vary. For example, a school may be performing poorly on tests yet have good action plans for student learning, have ample evidence of improving in many areas and therefore, be accredited for a certain period of time.

There is an enormous amount of work underway to strengthen teaching and learning in California through a standards based educational system. Governmental and non-governmental agencies will need to work together. Just as PTAs represented on the WASC Commission, the California State PTA Education Commission and Legislative Advocates state and local, play significant roles in helping others to understand accreditation, standards, assessment and accountability in education.

*Margaret Philipps, Consultant  
Education Commission, Member of WASC*



## CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

### Visual and Performing Arts News • January 2001

CDE Arts Education Web site: <<[www.cde.ca.gov/shsd/arts](http://www.cde.ca.gov/shsd/arts)>> Education Resource Center: <<[www.TeachingArts.org](http://www.TeachingArts.org)>>

A new focus on teaching the arts in California public schools began with the publication of ARTS WORK, the report of the arts task force formed in 1997 by Delaine Eastin, State Superintendent of Public Instruction. This focus on the arts has resulted in many advances for the arts for most of which is the adoption of Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards by the State Board of Education at their January 10, 2001 meeting. The recommendations in the report are guiding statewide and local activities and initiatives among all stakeholders as they plan, implement and improve visual and performing arts programs for all students.

Visual and Performing Arts Standards: Standards in dance, music, theatre, and visual arts were adopted by the State Board of Education at their January 2001 meeting. The standards will guide school districts in developing comprehensive arts education programs at all grade levels. A prepublication copy of the arts standards can be downloaded on the California Department of Education Web site.

The visual and performing arts standards are specified by grade level and were developed through a collaboration among school district curriculum specialists, teachers in each of the arts representing the California professional arts educator associations, artists, instructors from institutes of higher education, parents and California Department of Education staff.

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### Current CDE ARTS WORK Activities

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**On-line Arts Resource Center:** The ARTS WORK grant program for the 2000-2001 year included a grant for the development of a "state of the arts" on-line arts resource center available for statewide use. The two recipients of the grant are the Kern County Superintendent of Schools and the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools. The site will include extensive resources for teachers, students, administrators, parents, and the community as well as networking opportunities. Go to [www.TeachingArts.org](http://www.TeachingArts.org) now to sign on and to find information on how you can be involved. The first phase of the site will be launched in February 2001.

**Model Arts Program Network (M.A.P. Network):** A Model Arts Program Network involving 22 school districts has developed a self-study "toolkit" for school districts to use to evaluate their visual and performing arts program. The pre-publication materials are available through the California Alliance for Arts Education. The CDE will publish the toolkit by May 2001. The project is a collaboration between the school districts, the CDE, California Alliance for Arts Education, the California Arts Council, and The California Arts Project. For more information please contact the CAEE by e-mail at <<[beth@artsed411.org](mailto:beth@artsed411.org)>>.

**ARTS WORK Conference:** The Model Arts Program Network will present a statewide conference May 17-19, 2001 at the Pasadena Hilton in Pasadena, CA. The conference will focus on arts content standards, assessment, program implementation, and the process the MAP Network developed for a school district team to evaluate their visual and performing arts program. For more information see the California Alliance for Arts Education Web site at <<[artsed411.org](http://artsed411.org)>> or e-mail <<[caae@artsed411.org](mailto:caae@artsed411.org)>>.

**The California Arts Assessment Network (CAAN):** Now in its third year of work, the arts assessment network is developing appropriate models for district level arts assessment. This year the work will include a collection of test items that can be used for baseline arts program assessment and sample assessment formats. Any district may join the network. CAAN is also producing a set of overheads and a video to use for professional development demonstrating the use of scoring guides to establish performance levels for student work in the arts.

For information, e-mail your name, address, phone, and fax number to <<[pataylor@cde.ca.gov](mailto:pataylor@cde.ca.gov)>>.

**The California Arts Project:** TCAP provides a variety of outstanding professional development institutes and workshops in the visual and performing arts and implementing standards-based arts instruction. Please see their Web site information on their full range of professional development activities at <<[www.ucop.edu/tca](http://www.ucop.edu/tca)>>.

**Distinguished Schools in the Arts:** The California Distinguished Schools Program included the visual and performing arts as an area for special recognition at the elementary level for the first time last year. Out of the 600 applicants to the program, 241 included descriptions of their arts programs. Sixteen districts receive special awards. This year the Distinguished Schools Program will focus on middle and high schools and will again include recognition for arts programs.

**Local Arts Education Partnership Program (LAEP):** The LAEP program provides matching grants of \$20,000 (from the sale of the California arts license plate) to local arts agencies in partnership with a school district or a county office of education. The grants are for planning and implementing comprehensive arts programs based on the Visual and Performing Arts Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve. The program is a partnership between the California Arts Council and the CDE and provides an effective model of collaboration. Grant applications and guidelines for 2001-2002 are on the CDE Web site. Applications are due March 2, 2001.

**ARTS WORK Grant Program:** This multi-layered competitive grant program provides additional funds to those in the LAEP program and provides funds to any school district or county office of education to develop arts standards, develop student assessment in the arts, join a model arts program network, or develop a special project in arts education. Grant applications and guidelines for 2001-2002 are on the CDE Web site and can be downloaded. Applications are due March 2, 2001. This year 208 grants were awarded. The LAEP Assistance grants are for \$30,000, the LAEP Expansion grants are for \$60,000, and the Arts Implementation grants are for \$25,000.

**March 2001 Arts Education Month:** The State Board of Education has once again proclaimed March as Arts Education Month encouraging all school districts to focus on the value of the arts for all students and to give recognition to the state's outstanding young artists. The Board reaffirms their policy that each student should receive a high quality, comprehensive arts education program. See the CDE Web site for a copy of the proclamation.

**Arts Education Survey Report:** A report on a survey of California school districts regarding the implementation of arts education programs will be published by March 2001. The report indicates that districts who report having a high quality arts education program agree there are three key factors to successful program implementation: supportive administration, community support, and professional development. The report will be available through the CDE Press at (916) 445-1260.

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## Does Your Child Need Occupational Therapy?

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Does your child have difficulty paying attention in school, relating to other children, writing, or tying his/her shoes? Or has your child already been professionally assessed and diagnosed with a condition such as attention deficit disorder, learning disorder, birth injury, mental retardation, autism, brain injury, or anxiety disorder? If the answer to any of these questions is "yes," your child may be a candidate for Occupational Therapy services.

### What is Occupational Therapy?

Occupational Therapy (OT) is a health and rehabilitation profession that helps people of all ages attain or regain the ability to participate in daily life tasks, or "occupations." Occupations are the activities individuals do that give their life meaning. A child's occupations may include self care (brushing teeth, dressing, eating), going to school, homework, playing with friends, and some chores. Children with physical, mental, emotional, or developmental problems that cause impaired functioning in school, play, or other daily activities may benefit from the specialized assistance provided by OT.

### How Can Occupational Therapy Services Help Your Child?

School-based OT treatment may focus on areas such as motor development or daily living skills development, and may utilize therapeutic approaches such as sensory integration. This is appropriate for some children who, for example, have trouble learning or behaving in school because they have difficulty processing information they receive through their senses (vision, hearing, touch, smell, taste, body movement). OT practitioners help these children learn to use this sensory information through age-appropriate therapeutic activities. The goal is to help the child master the skills necessary to perform a daily task in the school setting.

### Who Provides OT Services?

While not every school employs its own OT practitioner, Occupational Therapy services must be available to children with disabilities due to federal funding regulations. OT practitioners, whether they work in a school, hospital, or rehabilitation setting are part of a health care team. OTs work closely with teachers, speech therapists, physical therapists and other health care providers such as doctors and nurses and social workers.

Because Occupational Therapy is a unique profession, it is important to receive OT services from specially qualified OT practitioners. Registered Occupational Therapists (OTRs) must have a bachelors or masters degree, and Certified Occupational Therapy Assistants (COTAs) must have an associate of science degree, both from an accredited Occupational Therapy education program. OTRs and COTAs are also required to complete a period of supervised clinical experience and pass a national certification exam.

### Where Can I Find Out More?

Parents can get more information about Occupational Therapy for their child by contacting their school administration office, or the state or national Occupational Therapy Associations.

The state association for California is:

Occupational Therapy Association of California (OTAC)

4600 Northgate, Ste. 135, Sacramento, CA 95834

Web site: <http://www.otac.org>

The national association is:

American Occupational Therapy Association (AOTA)

1-800-668-8255 or TDD 1-800-377-8555

Web site: [www.aota.org](http://www.aota.org)

*Health Commission*

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## New Independent Contractor Reporting Requirements



Effective January 1, 2001, businesses must begin reporting individuals who are independent contractors who provide services to them to the Employment Development Department (EDD) using Form DE 542, Report of Independent Contractor(s).

If a PTA files a Form 1099-MISC, it must also report the independent contractor to EDD regardless of where the independent contractor lives or works. PTA must file the report within 20 days of making payments of or entering into contract for \$600 or more within any calendar year. If it cannot be determined when the independent contractor will reach the \$600 dollar amount, "check the box."

PTAs report the following information about the independent contractor: first, middle, and last name, Social Security number, home address, contract start date, amount of contract, contract expiration date, and indication of ongoing contract.

The EDD may assess a penalty of \$24 for each failure to comply with the required time frames. A penalty of \$490 per instance may be assessed for failure to report independent contractor information.

To obtain Form DE 542 visit the EDD Web site at

[www.edd.ca.gov](http://www.edd.ca.gov).

*Finance Commission*

## PTA Use of School Sites for Parking Lots

Many PTA units are being encouraged and granted permission by their schools to use the school grounds for a parking lot when a special event is being conducted in the area. The PTA may lease the space to a parking company or it may personally collect the parking fees and direct the customer where to park. In either situation, PTA volunteers do not park the cars.

In whatever manner it is done, the liability insurance program of the California State PTA has never provided coverage for operating a parking lot. If a unit is going to operate a parking lot, it must obtain separate insurance for this exposure. This coverage is not offered as part of the California State PTA general insurance package since only a few units participate in this type of fund raising activity.

The coverage that is available through the California State PTA Insurance Broker provides liability only for slip and fall type of incidents. No coverage is provided for damage to any vehicles. While this coverage can be obtained, it is very costly.

If your PTA plans to operate a parking lot, contact the California State PTA Insurance Broker (800-733-3036) and discuss the details of the event. Do not sign any agreements until the Insurance Broker has reviewed and approved it.

*Finance Commission*

## Calling All Students It's Time for Convention!

Convention means students too! As the time for California State PTA convention draws near, it is time to remember that it is necessary and important to include students when planning to send delegates from your PTSA.

PTA, through its "Objects," is designed to help youth in almost every aspect of their lives. It is one of the few youth-focused organizations that actually gives its youth members equal authority, equal responsibility and an equal vote. At convention it is very apparent that the students' voices are heard.

Students are welcomed with their own special orientation, followed by a welcome from the Student Involvement Chairman, Cory Sanfilippo. There are special student focused conferences. During the General Sessions, students listen, discuss and vote on resolutions, bylaws changes, legislative issues and—this year—the election of the California State PTA board of directors.

Student members bring different levels of input, motivation and enthusiasm to convention. Spread the word; include students in your delegation to California State PTA convention.

*Deme Larson, Student Involvement Committee*



**If you are no longer a PTA president, please forward this and all mailings immediately to your successor.**

Articles appearing in this newsletter may be reprinted in PTA unit, council and district newsletters only. Please credit the California State PTA.

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Winter/Spring 2001. Official newsletter of the California State PTA, Volume 63, No. 6. Eight issues published annually: Summer, Summer/Fall, Fall, Fall/Winter, Winter, Winter/Spring, Spring, Spring/Summer. 2000-2001. Subscription rate \$5.00. Circulation 6,800. ©2001 California Congress of Parents, Teachers, and Students, Inc. All rights reserved. PTA® is a registered service mark of the National Congress of Parents and Teachers.

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