

The National PTA and California State PTA consider health education to be of major importance. Local units can promote health education.

Some ways to promote Physical, Mental and Emotional Health Education are to:

- Help parents recognize and respond to the health and nutrition needs of their families.
- Encourage compliance with health education directives in the curriculum.
- Work for improvement in health care services, particularly in the school nurse-to-student ratios, in school and community.
- Work for better health facilities in school and community.
- Stress the concepts of wellness and prevention.
- Update and implement school wellness policies.
- Emphasize the importance of healthy lifestyles and modeling these lifestyles for children.
- Promote a school environment that is consistent with health education being taught in the classroom.
- Make parents cognizant of and responsive to environmental issues and hazards that may jeopardize the health of children and families.
- Establish a comprehensive school health program that integrates activities and services designed to promote the optimal physical, emotional, social and educational development of children and youth.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- Work with program chairman to facilitate at least one PTA meeting about health issues.
- Arrange to have a health display table at PTA meetings. Selected health pamphlets should be available for distribution.
- Submit health-related articles for unit newsletter. Ask the school nurse for articles and suggestions or use articles on health issues from State PTA publications, *PTA in California* or *The Communicator*.
- Participate in ongoing health projects of the National PTA and California State PTA.
- Support health-related events, such as Red Ribbon Week, National Immunization Month, School Nurse Day, Children's Health Month, National Nutrition Month, Dental Health Month, World AIDS Day, and the Great American Smoke Out.
- Encourage volunteerism in the areas of student screening for hearing, vision, scoliosis, etc.

- Request a line item in the PTA budget for student health and welfare needs.
- Support the teaching of comprehensive health education at all grade levels, in compliance with the California Standards for Health Education.
- Work with classroom teachers in encouraging alternatives to food as rewards given in classrooms.
- Promote hand washing in classrooms, especially prior to eating and after using the restroom.
- Promote physical education programs in schools and communities.
- Work with local school districts and statewide policymakers to ensure policies are enacted to provide appropriate health leadership by credentialed school nurses, including adoption of the recommended nurse-to-student ratio of 1-to-750.
- Educate school staff and families on the importance of healthy indoor air quality and its relationship to student and staff health, academic achievement and absenteeism.
- Educate students, parents, school personnel and the community about the high incidence of skin cancer and recommended strategies for reducing risk for this disease.
- Educate school staff and families on the importance of comprehensive school health programs.

ADDITIONAL PROJECTS MIGHT INCLUDE

- Plan a community and wellness fair including speakers, health-related demonstrations, displays and video materials provided by local agencies (Community and Wellness Fairs 7.10).
- Represent PTA on allied agency committees and school district committees or task forces.
- Invite school district nutrition services director to discuss changes in nutritional guidelines for food provided at the school.
- Establish a School Health Council.
- Encourage participation in first aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) classes.
- Prepare and distribute a list of community health agencies, hotlines for drug/alcohol abuse, child abuse, and crisis intervention.
- Support school-based immunization programs and parent education related to the benefits of immunization.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Alliance Working Antibiotic Resistance Education (AWARE) (www.aware.md)

American Academy of Pediatrics (www.aap.org)

American Cancer Society School Health Programs
(www.cancer.org/schoolhealth)
American Heart Association (www.americanheart.org)
American Lung Association (www.lungusa.org)
(www.californialung.com)
Natural Resources Defense Council (Environmental)
(www.nrdc.org)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

American Diabetes Association (www.diabetes.org)
American Dental Association (www.ada.org)
California State PTA, Council or District PTA Health
Chairman
California Department of Education (www.cde.ca.gov)
California Department of Public Health (www.cdph.ca.gov)
California Dietetic Association (www.dietitian.org)
California Environmental Protection Agency
(www.calepa.ca.gov/education)
California School Nurses Organization (www.csno.org)
California School Nutrition Association (www.csna.org)
Community Hospitals
County Health Department Health Educator
County Health and Mental Health Departments
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov)
Dairy Council of California (www.dairycouncilofca.org)
Environmental Protection Agency (www.epa.gov)
Healthy Kids Resource Center (www.hkresources.org)
Institute of Medicine of the National Academies
(www.iom.edu/)

Local county or city health department bulletins
Mental Health America (formerly National Mental Health
Association) (www.nmha.org)
National Association of School Nurses (www.nasn.org)
National Association of State School Nurse Consultants
(www.nassnc.org)
National Center for Health Education (www.nche.org)
National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA)
(www.drugabuse.gov)
National Institutes of Health (www.nih.gov)
National Resources Defense Council Children's
Environmental Initiative & Children Environmental Health
(www.cehn.org)
School Nutrition Association (formerly American School Food
Service Association) (www.schoolnutrition.org)
The Center for Health and Health Care in Schools
(www.healthinschools.org/home.asp)

OTHER RESOURCES

PTA in California (official newsletter of the California State
PTA)
California State PTA website (www.capta.org)
Insurance and Loss Prevention Guide (English and Spanish)
mailed annually to PTA presidents
Our Children (National PTA magazine)
Quick-Reference Guide (National PTA)
National PTA website (www.pta.org)
California State PTA Vice President for Health
(health@capta.org) or 916.440.1985 ext. 306

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