

fast **FACTS**

New York State PTA

January 2012

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New York State
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Upcoming Events:

March 2012

17-18 Legislation/Education
Conference, Albany, NY

July 2012

27-29 Summer Leadership
Conference, Utica, NY

November 2012

9-11 NYS PTA Annual Convention,
Saratoga Springs, NY

New Year, New Members!

Jeanette Meoli, Membership/Marketing Coordinator

Did you know ...

- PTA units that run a January membership campaign have an average of 20% more members?
- Nationwide, approximately 18% of PTA members join in January and February?
- Your unit can qualify for an award if you sign up new members after the first of the year?

January is not too late for parents to make a real impact in the current school year – especially as we add more voices to our call for sufficient school funding during school budget season. Running a campaign now plays on people’s optimism that the new year brings new opportunities to improve ourselves, our lives, and the world around us and PTA makes it easy for parents to be more involved in their children’s success for 2012.

Stretched too thin to plan a new membership drive? We’ve done it for you! Here are six easy steps to adding new members to your unit for 2012.

1. Pick one group that is currently underrepresented in your PTA – Teachers? Students? Males? Community Members?
2. Zero in on what that group wants. For example, are fathers looking for ways to become more involved in their children’s lives? Are local merchants looking for an inexpensive way to show their support for families in their community?
3. Demonstrate one way that your PTA is meeting that need. Tell the dads about your Saturday morning breakfast program, and provide local merchants that purchase a PTA membership with a “Proud Sponsor” certificate that they can display prominently in their shop windows.
4. Now shout it from the rooftops! Get the information out there that you have these programs/events that your group is looking for! Use Facebook, twitter, your website, your school and PTA newsletters, fliers, posters, radio, newspapers, banners... You get the idea!
5. Be available! Place membership forms everywhere (including online!) so that potential members can sign up wherever they are. Ask current members to help so the work doesn’t fall on only one person.

Members (contd on p. 2)

Members (contd from p. 1)

6. Celebrate your success! Everyone wants to be part of a success story, so keep track visually and prominently of your additional members. (Welcome pictures on the school bulletin board, or names listed in the next newsletter are two good ways!)

Membership growth is not only a sign that your PTA is the go-to group if people want to make a difference in your community, but it is also an additional source of revenue for your PTA. So encourage parents to make supporting your PTA their number one resolution for 2012. It's a resolution they'll want to keep.

For recruitment posters, stickers, cards and more that can be customized for your PTA, visit the [National PTA website](#).

Position Paper on Prescription and Over the Counter Drug Abuse Approved

Susanne Smoller, Health Specialist

At the Annual Convention in November, the New York State PTA Board of Directors approved a position paper on prescription and over the counter drug abuse. The paper, written in response to the rise in prescription and over the counter drug abuse, will be unveiled at the Legislation/Education Conference in March 2012. According to the Centers for Disease Control, "nearly 15,000 people die from overdoses involving these drugs – more than those who die from heroin or cocaine combined."

In the position paper, New York State PTA has included actions and programs PTAs can undertake to help prevent and combat prescription and over-the-counter drug abuse. These include: education of members, safeguarding medications, medication disposal initiatives, coordination of efforts with educators/health providers/pharmacies; and work with legislators.

There are a number of National and New York State resources PTAs can use to educate members about this rising epidemic. These include: the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#); the [National Institute on Drug Abuse](#); the [New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services](#); and the [New York State Department of Health](#).

Important Health and Wellness Information

Susanne Smoller, Health Specialist

Updates:

[The New York State 2012 Viral Hepatitis Conference](#) is scheduled for March 20, 2012 at City University of New York Graduate Center.

Impact of Good Samaritan Law: There is currently a study being conducted to determine the effectiveness of the Good Samaritan Law. NYS has just passed this law in September 2011. [For more information, click here.](#)

Rise in Prescription Drug Abuse at Colleges: College officials have concerns about the rise of prescription drug abuse on their campuses. [For more information, click here.](#)

Save the Dates for 2012!

Legislation/Education Conference

Albany, NY
March 17-18, 2012

Summer Leadership Conference

Utica, NY
July 27-29, 2012

116th Annual Convention

Saratoga Springs, NY
November 9-11, 2012

The logo for 'fastFACTS' features the word 'fast' in a red, cursive font and 'FACTS' in a bold, blue, sans-serif font, all underlined with a blue horizontal line.

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One Wembley Court
Albany, NY 12205-3830

518-452-8808 * 518-452-8105 FAX
Toll-free: 1-877-5NYSPTA (1-877-569-7782)
<http://www.nyspta.org>

wwwWhat's Happening at nyspta.org

This website is maintained and updated almost daily. Be sure to check it often for new, up-to-date information.

Information Box: (Table of Contents)

Contains detailed information that defines the NYS PTA and our website.

News Headlines:

- Legislation/Education Conference - Information and Registration
- Let us know what you want - Take the survey!
- IRS Reinstatement Information is Now Available
- The 2012 *Celebrating the Arts and Awards* Calendar Available for Purchase

News Briefs:

- Hydrofracking Guidelines are Being Developed
- Early Bird Membership Winners are Announced
- Information About NYS PTA Dues
- The "Click, Check and Protect" email newsletter has been launched!
- NYS PTA Guidance on PTA and School Budgets in Difficult Financial Times

Health (contd from p. 2)

The SED has issued a letter to Superintendents of Schools and BOCES, regarding certain fluorescent light fixtures. [It is recommending an inventory of all lighting fixtures in schools built or renovated before 1980 due to concerns of PCBs.](#)

From SmartBrief for Nutritionists:

Obesity rate will hit record high by 2020, study says - 83% percent of men and 72% of women in the U.S. are expected to become overweight or obese by 2020, a study found. Researchers said women's cases of diabetes and pre-diabetes are set to increase, from 6.3% to 8.3% and 37% to 44%, respectively. The findings were presented at an annual meeting of the American Heart Association: NPR.org/Shots blog.

Shopper cards are used to track sources of foodborne illnesses - Public health officials are increasingly turning to customer-loyalty cards to quickly and precisely determine food causing illness during an outbreak. Grocery cards "provide an accurate picture of a customer's food history," said Jeffrey Hammond of the New York State Department of Health: [USA TODAY](#).

Price and packaging might influence food intake - Food that is inexpensive and comes in a big package or large portion tends to negatively affect

Members Only: (A work in progress)

Use the username and password from your Membership Card for access to this section

- Brochures
- Bylaws Patterns, Instructions and Sample Procedures
- Guide to PTA Terms, Punctuation and Abbreviations
- NYS PTA Bylaws
- The NYS PTA Resource Guide
- *New York Parent Teacher* periodical
- Summer Leadership Conference '11 Workshop Materials

Quick Links: (One click access)

- Sign Up for Capwiz
- Take Action with Capwiz
- Virtual Exhibit Hall
- Sponsorship Opportunities
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Bylaws EZ
- Annual (Form A) Unit/Council Updates
- Membership Card Update

a person's willpower to control appetite, according to an analysis published in Public Health Nutrition. Social factors, such as seeing others eat, also appear to heavily influence food consumption, said co-author David Levitsky: [United Press International](#).

Teens fail to meet most ideal-heart-health requirements - Data from the CDC's National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey revealed a poor overall performance among those age 12 to 19 on the American Heart Association's criteria for ideal cardiovascular health. None of the adolescents met recommended targets in all five nutrition categories, and only 20% did for two or three of the nutrition factors. A majority also failed to meet the optimal target of more than 60 minutes a day of exercise, researchers reported at an AHA meeting: [The Wall Street Journal \(tiered subscription model\)](#).

Resources:

The [Hunger Solutions of New York](#) (formerly the Nutrition Consortium of NYS) has a website that provides resources for emergency food, nutrition and legislative action.

New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services has released the [2011 Scorecards for](#)

Health (contd on p. 4)

Substance Use Disorder Programs.

The Alliance for a Healthier Generation has a free publication entitled, Be Well. This book contains examples of how parents from across the country have adopted behaviors recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention to prevent and control childhood obesity. You can access the entire book or components of it here.

The Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity has released a report entitled, Sugary Drink FACTS. (Food Advertising to Children Teens Score). They also have additional information regarding food marketing to youth.

January Monthly Health Dates:

- National Birth Defects Prevention Month
- Cervical Health Awareness Month
- National Glaucoma Awareness Month
- Thyroid Awareness Month
- National Radon Action Month
- National Blood Donor Month
- January 4: World Braille Day. Celebrates the birth of Louis Braille, the inventor of the Braille Language.
- January 8 - 14: National Folic Acid Awareness Week

Special Education Updates

Joyce Cattani, Special Education Specialist

There are some important issues coming forward with regard to Special Education. The New York State Board of Regents looking to provide school districts with mandate relief have proposed two additional areas that will put New York in line with Federal Standards. These regulations if adopted would relate to preschool and individual evaluations. The proposed amendments will be brought for action at the March 2012 meeting for adoption after a period of public comment. The proposed amendments will include the following:

“Amend section 200.4(b) to clarify that the 60-day timeline to complete an evaluation pertains to an initial evaluation of a student suspected of having a disability and to repeal the requirement that a school psychologist prepare a written report of his/her determination of the need to administer an

individual psychological evaluation for a re-evaluation of a student with a disability.”

“Amend section 200.16 to align the preschool initial evaluation timeline (i.e., 30 school days from receipt of consent) to the federal timeline for initial evaluations and the timeline established in New York for school-age evaluations (i.e., 60 calendar days), to allow school districts additional time to complete preschool initial evaluations, while continuing to ensure the timely provision of programs and services within 60 school days from receipt of consent to evaluate.”

Transition to life after high school can represent an area of difficulty for many students with disabilities. In order to provide school districts with additional guidance and support, New York State Education Department has released a memo entitled “Transition Planning and Services for Students with Disabilities.” The purpose and goal is to provide students with the necessary information while they are in school that will help them succeed after they leave school. You can read the memo here.

The United States Department of the Census has released a report about the number of school age children (53.9 million) in the United States (between the ages of 5 – 17) are reported to have a disability (2.8 million or 5.2 percent). This report can be viewed here.

2012 Youth Summit:

Working Together to Support New York's Youth Prevention, Treatment, Recovery: A Better Tomorrow

This summit will address challenges faced by adolescents and young adults with mental health and substance use disorders who may be involved with the justice system, child welfare, or other service delivery systems.

This important summit has been organized by a broad range of public and private organizations with input from young persons. They include: *Alcohol and Substance Abuse Providers of New York State; Daytop Village; Dynamic Youth Community, Inc.; Families Together; Hope House, Inc.; Horizon Health Services; New York State Council on Children and Families; New York State Office of Children & Family Services; New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services; New York State Office of*

Summit (contd from p. 4)

Mental Health; NYC Administration for Children's Services; Outreach Project; and Youth Power!

The summit goal is to build stronger cross-systems collaboration, improve access to services, and to achieve positive outcomes for adolescents, young adults, and their families.

2012 Youth Summit:

Working Together To Support New York's Youth

March 22-23, 2012, Albany Marriott
Albany, New York

[Click Here to Register Today!](#)

Graduated Licensing

In conjunction with the National Safety Council, the Allstate Foundation National Safety Council has released a report about the lives and dollars that can be saved with strong Graduated Drivers Licensing (GDL) laws. New York has one of the best GDL laws in the country, but it is important that we ensure that teen drivers and their families know and follow the law. [For a copy of the report and the parent-teen agreement, click here.](#)

Testing Dates Changed

The State Education Department moved to quiet objections from school districts throughout the state by cutting more than an hour's time from extended English tests that will be administered this spring in grades 3 to 8. Under a revised schedule, estimated completion times for English Language Arts tests will be about three hours, and testing will be spread over three days. The state's original schedule, prematurely issued, called for English tests of up to four hours and 15 minutes, compressed into two days. For information on the Commissioner's memo and revised schedule, go to: www.oms.nysed.gov/press/Assessment.2012.FINAL.html.