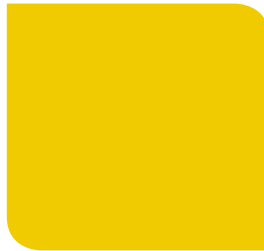




**SAFETY AT  
HOME  
AND AT  
PLAY**



**GUIDE**



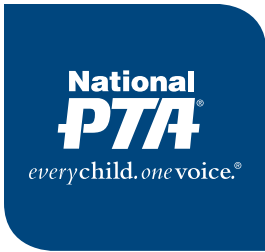


# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



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## PROMOTING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: PTA'S NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR FAMILY-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Research shows that family involvement supports student success. Students with involved parents are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and pass their classes
- Attend school regularly and have better social skills
- Go on to postsecondary education

PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships were developed with national experts and reflect the most recent research about how parents, schools and communities can work together to support student achievement. They include the following:

- **Standard 1 – Welcoming All Families Into the School Community.** Families are active participants in the life of the school and feel welcomed, valued and connected to each other, to school staff and to what students are learning and doing in class.
- **Standard 2 – Communicating Effectively.** Families and school staff engage in regular, two-way, meaningful communication about student learning.
- **Standard 3 – Supporting Student Success.** Families and school staff continuously collaborate to support students' learning and healthy development both at home and at school, and have regular opportunities to strengthen their knowledge and skills to do so effectively.
- **Standard 4 – Speaking Up for Every Child.** Families are empowered to be advocates for their own and other children, to ensure that students are treated fairly and have access to learning opportunities that will support their success.
- **Standard 5 – Sharing Power.** Families and school staff are equal partners in decisions that affect children and families and together inform, influence and create policies, practices and programs.
- **Standard 6 – Collaborating with Community.** Families and school staff collaborate with community members to connect students, families and staff to expanded learning opportunities, community services and civic participation.

For more information about PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, including an implementation guide and assessment forms, visit the National PTA website: [PTA.org](http://PTA.org)



# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



## CHILDHOOD INJURY RISKS

- *At Home:* Common injury risks in the home include fires, burns, scalds and poison. In 2008, 344 children ages 14 and under died from residential fires. Burn-related injuries and poisoning are *each* responsible for more than 300 child emergency room visits and two child deaths every day.
- *At Play:* Each year in the United States, emergency departments treat more than 200,000 children ages 14 and younger for playground-related injuries. On average, nearly 630 children are injured daily, and approximately 100 die each year, due to cycle-related crashes.
- *Statistics provided by Safe Kids Worldwide: [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org).*

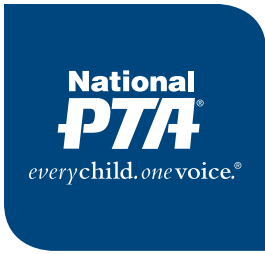
## PROGRAM GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Goals for National PTA *Safety at Home and at Play* events include the following:

- Foster family-school connections by focusing on an issue that both schools and families care deeply about safety at home and at play.
- Deliver safety information to families in a way that builds trust with schools and fosters a welcoming environment.
- Identify areas, equipment and behaviors within school and home environments that could be safer for children.

Child safety is of paramount concern for all parents. According to National PTA expert advisor Safe Kids Worldwide, unintentional injury is the leading killer of children between the ages of 1 and 14. Many injuries and deaths can be prevented by teaching parents and children simple ways to avoid the most common risks. Evidence has shown that both family education and school health programs can have a positive effect on a child's risk behaviors and injury rates.

To that end, National PTA, in collaboration with Safe Kids Worldwide, has developed easy-to-understand tools that teach and remind families about being safe at home and at play. These are referenced throughout the guide and can be found on [PTA.org/safetytoolkit](http://PTA.org/safetytoolkit).



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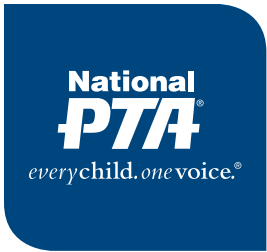
## RECRUITING YOUR TEAM

Recruiting a large and diverse team of parents/PTA members, students, faculty and community volunteers will make planning and running your events much easier! When building your team, keep the PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships in mind. Welcoming all families, communicating effectively, sharing power, and collaborating with the community are all strategies that will enhance your team interactions and help make your events a success.

No two volunteers are alike—luckily, there are as many different roles to play as there are personalities! Whether volunteers would prefer to roll up their sleeves in a planning meeting, help promote the event from home, or simply lend a hand on event day, there is a job for everyone who wants to help. Use the following suggestions to expand your thinking about how team members can be involved.

### PLAN

- Be sure to announce the planning meetings widely, rather than relying on the same small circle of volunteers. Ask the principal to suggest parents who might be interested in getting more involved, and have your board members extend a personal invitation. You might be surprised who steps up!
- People who don't want to serve on the main planning committee might be willing to be on a subcommittee with a specific role, such as promoting the event or securing donations from local businesses.
- Invite a representative of the student council or student government to participate on the planning team—or ask the student council to take the lead in planning, with PTA support.
- Create a student “safety council,” or build on an existing group, such as student crossing guards or safety patrols.
- Consider recruiting school staff who have a natural interest in safety issues for your planning team. These might include health and physical education teachers, school nurses, kitchen staff, crossing guards and playground monitors.



# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE

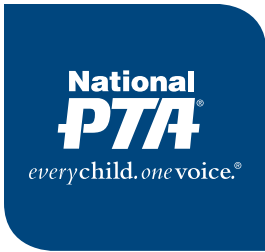


## PROMOTE

- PTA members who can't make it to planning meetings might be willing to help with promotion: writing press releases, creating a flier or banners, updating the school sign board, making phone calls to invite parents or community representatives, or spreading the word via social media strategies.
- Student volunteers might be willing to promote *Take Your Family to School Week* events during morning announcements or write an article about the event for their school newspaper.
- Teachers might agree to have their students make posters highlighting safety risks and prevention tips. Community volunteers can select a winning poster or classroom. Your PTA can provide any supplies needed.

## PARTICIPATE

- PTA members who are planning to attend events with their children might be willing to come a little early for set up; stay a few minutes after to help clean up; or give a half hour of their time to run a station, staff a membership table or collect event evaluation forms. If yours is a Title I school, the parent center is a great place to reach potential volunteers.
- If your event is in the afternoon or evening, consider contacting the local high school to identify older students who might need community service hours to meet graduation requirements.
- Many members of the community have an interest in promoting child safety at home and at play. Consider inviting some or all of the following community members to help make your event day a success:
  - Local Safe Kids coalitions. These typically include firefighters, police officers and EMTs among their members. Children are always excited to interact with these respected community servants. Find a coalition in your area: [www.safekids.org](http://www.safekids.org)
  - Local media
  - Representatives of local children's hospitals or pediatrician offices
  - School board and city council members
  - City or county parks and recreation departments
  - City or county health departments
  - Local United Way representatives
  - Service clubs (Kiwanis, Rotary, Lions, etc.)



# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



## PLANNING YOUR EVENTS

Keeping PTA's National Standards for Family-School Partnerships in mind when making your plans will support successful events that welcome all families, communicate effectively and support student success.

The first thing you must decide is what kind of events to offer. You could host one large event for the whole school, such as a schoolwide safety fair or carnival, or plan several smaller events for particular grades or classes throughout the week. In any case, focus on events that are fun, engaging, educational and interactive. Possible activities include:

- **FIRE, BURN AND SCALD PREVENTION:** Give lessons to individual grades or classes on what to do in case of a fire ("Get Low and Go"), fire preparedness (fire escape plans) or how to prevent burns ("Hot or Not?"). Invite your local fire department to come to the school and allow children to tour a fire truck.
- **POISON PREVENTION:** Create a look-alike display that demonstrates how difficult it can be to distinguish between safe and unsafe items. Invite a local physician or member of the health department to educate older students about medication safety.
- **PLAYGROUND SAFETY:** Plan a field trip to clean up a nearby playground, and help children identify important safety features. Older children might participate in a contest in which they design their "dream playground" and receive points for creativity and safety.
- **BIKE SAFETY:** Host a weekend "cycling skills clinic," with stations that teach children how to maintain their bikes and ride safely. Invite a local bike shop to set up a booth where they test children's helmets for proper fit.

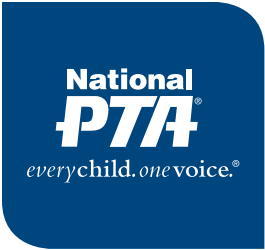
Local Safe Kids coalitions are experienced at presenting these and other educational, safety-related activities to a variety of age groups. Detailed lesson plans for specific activities also can be found on the National PTA website at [PTA.org/safetytoolkit](http://PTA.org/safetytoolkit).

## NATIONAL PTA EXPERT ADVISOR: SAFE KIDS WORLDWIDE



Safe Kids Worldwide is a global organization dedicated to preventing injuries in children, the number one killer of kids in the United States. Around the world, a child dies from an unintentional injury every 30 seconds. And millions of children are injured in ways that can affect them for a lifetime.

There are more than 600 Safe Kids coalitions and chapters throughout the United States.



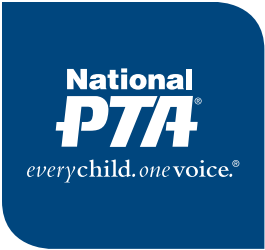
# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



The table below lists some common event-planning questions to consider.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	NATIONAL PTA SUGGESTIONS
<b>Who is your target audience?</b>	Plan events that welcome all families, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Parents and caregivers who work, as well as those who stay at home</li><li>• Students in all grades and classes</li><li>• All family members who might care for children, including grandparents</li><li>• Families whose first language may not be English</li></ul>
<b>When will your events be scheduled?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Be sure to consult your school administrators to avoid conflicts with other events (academic or extracurricular) that might be taking place that week (testing, in-service days, athletic events, etc.).</li></ul>
<b>What injury prevention topics will be covered?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• When making this decision, consider your target age groups as well as the risk areas parents in your community may be most concerned about.</li><li>• Risks addressed in the National PTA program materials are fire, burns and scalds, poison, playground and bicycle injuries. Others might include motor vehicle, drowning or other sports injuries.</li></ul>
<b>How large will your events be?</b>	Consider both space and volunteer availability when deciding whether to host a large event for the whole school or activities for smaller groups of students. Visit <a href="http://PTA.org/safetytoolkit">PTA.org/safetytoolkit</a> to download these materials.





# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	NATIONAL PTA SUGGESTIONS
<p><b>Where will your events be held?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be sure to coordinate early with administrators to identify a location within the school that can accommodate your events. They can help you avoid conflicts with other events, comply with fire codes and maximum occupancy limits and ensure that you follow district policies regarding the use of school facilities.</li> <li>• If an event is planned to take place outdoors, is there a backup location, such as a gymnasium or cafeteria, where the event may be moved in case of inclement weather?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Who will provide the educational component for your events?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local Safe Kids coalitions are an excellent resource for educating families about injury prevention.</li> <li>• Parents who work in health and safety-related fields also may be willing to help: for example, health care workers, law enforcement officers, firefighters or EMTs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>What educational materials will be distributed?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find take-home resources on the National PTA website at <a href="http://PTA.org/safetytoolkit">PTA.org/safetytoolkit</a>. The Safe Kids website also offers a number of excellent resources, organized by risk area: <a href="http://www.safekids.org">www.safekids.org</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Will refreshments be provided?</b></p>	<p>Refreshments can encourage family participation, especially when events are held during a busy time (around dinner time, for example).</p>
<p><b>Will you offer any incentives or prizes for participation?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prizes and incentives are a great addition to an event, but they are not always necessary.</li> <li>• Consider whether a local business might want to sponsor your event or provide prizes in the form of an in-kind donation.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Is any audio/visual equipment required?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If yes, check with the school as soon as possible to ensure they have the equipment available and are willing to let you use it.</li> <li>• Will school staff be required to run the equipment, or can a parent volunteer manage it?</li> </ul>

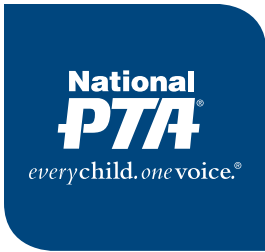


# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER	NATIONAL PTA SUGGESTIONS
<p><b>Do activities and materials need to be available in multiple languages?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If students and families in your school community speak another language, National PTA strongly recommends providing interpreters to make your activities accessible to all.</li> <li>• Consider having take-home materials translated, as well, with help from school personnel or a bilingual PTA member.</li> </ul>
<p><b>How many volunteers will you need for each event?</b></p>	<p>Consider the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many volunteers will you need for set up and clean up?</li> <li>• How many people are needed to run each education or food/beverage station?</li> <li>• Will you need volunteers to greet people at the door or to staff a PTA membership table?</li> <li>• How will you distribute and collect event evaluations?</li> <li>• Who will enter the evaluation data after your event?</li> </ul>
<p><b>Do you have signed photo releases for participants?</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• You will need to obtain parental consent if you want to include photos from your event on promotion materials for next year.</li> <li>• If your PTA has not already obtained releases from parents, consider having a consent form available as families sign in for your event. Find a sample form on the National PTA website, <a href="http://PTA.org/tyftsw">PTA.org/tyftsw</a>.</li> </ul>

Find detailed sample activity plans for each risk area (fire, burns and scalds, poison, playground, bike) on the National PTA website: [PTA.org/safetytoolkit](http://PTA.org/safetytoolkit).



# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



## GATHERING RESOURCES

Most PTAs have a limited budget and must plan carefully to achieve their family engagement goals. Many events can be achieved on a low budget, with the help of volunteers and by collaborating with the community.

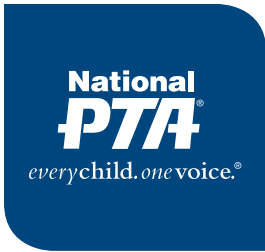
The resources you need will depend on your specific objectives and events. Depending on what you have planned, you might need to gather some or all of the following items:

- Refreshments
- Incentives/prizes
- Facility use fees
- Small gifts to recognize volunteers
- Stationery, printing and postage for solicitation letters to local businesses and other promotion activities

You may be able to secure donations (monetary or in-kind) to support your event. Don't hesitate to ask for sponsorship and support from local businesses. Make sure you have a letter ready to acknowledge their donation for tax purposes. The letter should include the school or PTA's tax identification number and a description of what was donated. If the donor provides goods (anything other than cash), keep in mind that IRS guidelines prohibit you from determining the items' value—provide a description instead. Your letter also should say something along the lines of, "No goods or services were provided in exchange for this donation" (or an estimated value of any goods or services provided to the donor, if applicable).

Family-friendly businesses, or those with a natural interest in safety issues, are good places to start when looking for donations. Some possibilities include:

- Restaurants, coffee shops, ice cream or frozen yogurt shops, bakeries
- Grocery stores
- Children's toy or book stores
- Sporting-goods stores (may be willing to donate protective gear for a door prize)
- Hardware stores (that sell smoke alarms or other home safety equipment)
- Insurance companies
- Local professional or semiprofessional sports teams



# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



## PROMOTING YOUR EVENTS

Once you have recruited your team and planned your events, it's important to communicate effectively with families and your community to let them know what's happening.

### IDEAS FOR PROMOTING YOUR EVENTS

Use the following suggestions to kick-start your plan to promote *Safety at Home and at Play* events.

#### AT SCHOOL:

- Host a schoolwide assembly or ask students on the planning team to give brief presentations to their classes about *Safety at Home and at Play*.
- Include a message in students' morning announcements.
- Transform your PTA meeting into a family-centered safety event. Bring in experts to talk with families about ways to keep their children safe.
- Request that a student write an article for the school newspaper.
- Hang posters and fliers in visible locations, and send copies of fliers home to parents.
- Post the date and reminders on outdoor signs near student drop-off and pickup locations.

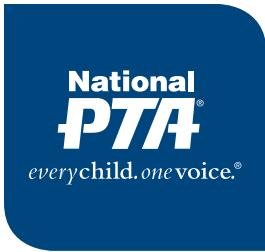
#### AT HOME:

- Nothing beats a personal invitation! Ask volunteers to make individual phone calls to parents of all students or targeted groups.
- Alternatively, use the school's automated parent call system, if available. If your school does not have a system in place, consider establishing a "phone tree" among PTA members.
- Use social media (Facebook, Twitter) to provide frequent updates about upcoming events. Consider a message for each day.
- Post an announcement on the school and/or PTA website.
- Write an article about unintentional injury risks for a PTA or school newsletter that is sent home to parents.

#### IN THE COMMUNITY:

- Work with school officials to customize media releases to invite local coverage. Don't forget smaller, local media outlets such as neighborhood association blogs and newsletters.
- Send invitations to local celebrities (consider sports team mascots, for example) or public officials.
- Ask a local radio station to be a media partner: announcing safety-related Public Service Announcements during that week.

Sample recruitment and outreach templates, including a letter of invitation, event poster, social media messages, a press release and a proclamation, can be found on the National PTA website: [PTA.org/tyftsw](http://PTA.org/tyftsw)



# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



## EVENT DAY

In the final days leading up to your event, consider the following ideas to help your program run smoothly and achieve its goals:

### WELCOME ALL FAMILIES

- Post welcome and directional signs in multiple languages to fully represent your school community.
- Ask the school principal and/or PTA president to greet families and thank them for coming.
- Consider accessibility for family members with disabilities. Is your event location accessible to those with mobility challenges? Would any of your families benefit from sign-language interpreters or other accommodations?
- Make sure parking is available for families; ask teachers and staff to park elsewhere during the event, if onsite parking is limited.

### MAKE SAFETY A PRIORITY

- Review event safety guidelines and emergency procedures with school/facility staff and PTA volunteers.
- Have a backup plan for inclement weather, including how you will let families know in a timely manner if the event must be canceled or rescheduled.

### MANAGE VOLUNTEERS

- Be sure all volunteers know their roles, when to arrive and where to report.
- Consider assigning dedicated, trusted volunteers to critical roles, such as:
  - Setting up and testing any audiovisual equipment
  - Serving as the single point-of-contact for media
  - Acting as “host” to attending officials, celebrities or a local AXA representative
  - Responding to vendor questions and facilitating prompt payment
- Track all volunteer hours for recognition and planning purposes.
- If volunteers are students who need community service hours, complete and sign their required forms promptly.



# SAFETY AT HOME AND AT PLAY GUIDE



## WRAPPING UP

With so much to do, it may be tempting to skip the wrap up and jump right in to your next program or event. Keep in mind that the time you spend on these final tasks will pay off when next year rolls around, supporting stronger relationships, smoother planning and more successful events!

### RECOGNIZE PARTNERS AND VOLUNTEERS

After your event, one of the last (and arguably most important) tasks is to thank those who helped make it a success.

Be sure to include all of the following groups in your recognition plan:

- Family member volunteers
- Students
- School personnel
- Safe Kids coalition members
- Businesses that provided donations (send an acknowledgment letter for tax purposes)
- Other community partners

### EVALUATE YOUR EVENTS

Evaluation is a critical part of wrapping up this year’s event and learning what worked and what didn’t. It’s also the first step toward planning a successful event next year.

One evaluation approach is to hold a debriefing meeting with your planning team to consider how well your PTA applied the PTA’s National Standards for Family-School Partnerships in implementing events. How might this be improved for next year?

Also consider collecting some or all of the following data:

- Participation counts for events
- Money raised (if a fundraising event)
- A recap of program information (collect samples of all materials used, along with the number of volunteers and hours needed, budget, etc., in a folder or binder for next year’s chair)
- Participant satisfaction (consider a brief survey that families can complete before they leave)
- Pre- and post-event surveys to assess knowledge about common safety risks
- Local media hits promoting your program and resources (if applicable)
- Social media and website tracking