

## A How-To Guide on Promoting Father Involvement



Involving fathers in schools requires sending a clear message that fathers are welcome and valued. Unfortunately, PTA - and parent involvement in general - is frequently associated with just moms. Change this mindset by making a deliberate effort to reach out and connect with men. Add to the current communications messaging tailored specifically to fathers and father figures.

### Emphasize that getting involved in PTA doesn't necessarily involve a large time commitment

Men may indicate that time is a barrier to their joining PTA. Let them know there are no volunteer requirements when joining, but that their membership will help maximize and support their involvement in their children's lives. As they discover the value of PTA and their involvement, men will be more likely to volunteer.

### Publicize men's involvement in your PTA

Men don't want to be the only men at events, so make sure your communications advertise the fact that dads are involved in your activities. Talk about the great turnout of fathers and mothers at the most recent family fun night. Make sure dads are represented in the pictures you hang on school walls and post on the PTA website. Reinforcing men's contributions, while being mindful of what all members do for PTA, creates a positive atmosphere. Recognize members, thank them often, and celebrate your PTA's accomplishments and success!

### Men and Meetings

Men want fewer meetings, and they want the meetings PTAs do have to be at more convenient times, such as before or after work. In addition, men want meetings to have a clear agenda and be results-oriented, rather than exploratory sessions on an issue or topic. Here are a few more tips:

- Keep meetings on track, move them along at a good pace, and keep people on topic. Start and end on time.
- Have a printed agenda, and give a copy to each attendee. Try to send the agenda out ahead of time.
- Ask PTA board members to stand at the entrance and welcome parents to meetings.
- Have men invite other men to PTA meetings. Dads are more willing to attend with other men or if invited by other men.

*For additional ideas and guides for male involvement, visit [www.pta/dadsandschools](http://www.pta/dadsandschools)*

*Source: [www.pta.org](http://www.pta.org)*