



# County Connection

*Palm Beach County Council of PTA/PTSA*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE 1

MEET THE PTA/PTSA 2

CHILDHOOD OBESITY 3K

MAKING THE GRADE 4

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS 5

MATH ANXEITY 6

NATIONAL SAFE PLACE 7

GREEN MINUTE 8

AWARDS 9

GIVING THANKS 10-11

## Presidents Message

Hello Everyone –

**CELEBRATION** is the theme for December! It is a time that finds many people decorating their houses, spending time with family & friends, hosting and attending a variety of Holiday parties. Perhaps a bit of shopping will take place. Whatever it is you & yours do during the month and over winter break...I hope you will join me in welcoming the New Year and look forward to all the possibilities it has to offer.

**HOWEVER...**before we can get to winter break we still have much to accomplish:

PTA Forum's: Come out and share your thoughts about the changes in our district. We will be meeting on December 8 at Fulton-Holland Educational Services Center

3300 Forest Hill Boulevard  
West Palm Beach, FL 33406

Reflections are due December 9<sup>th</sup>. Submissions should be dropped off at Hidden Oaks Elementary. Contact Jennifer Mowell if you have any questions.

Sign up for the 5k Walk and ½ mile Fun Run. This will take place on January 16<sup>th</sup> at the FAU campus in Boca Raton. Be sure to see the details in this newsletter. We hope to see you, your family, friends & members out that day helping us to fight Childhood Obesity. Contact Robin De Lisser if you have any questions.

I hope you have a fun filled month and that you find time to share a little joy with someone who may have less. Remember a smile and a kind word doesn't cost you anything.

Thanks  
Kay

# 2009-2010 Palm Beach County Council PTA/PTSA Board Members

## OFFICERS

President—Kay Stagray  
 President Elect—Jen Martinez  
 1st VP Community Relations—Candace Rojas  
 2nd VP Communications—Jennifer Olson  
 3rd VP Leadership/Immediate Past President—Mindy Haas  
 Treasurer—Mary Beth Johnson  
 Recording Secretary—Wendy Corso-Ruud  
 Parliamentarian—OPEN

## COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Awards Chair—Robin De Lisser  
 Cultural Council Representative—OPEN  
 Environmental Chair—Tom Knoll  
 Historian Chair—OPEN  
 Legislation Chair—Carolyn Ehrilch  
 Membership Appreciation—OPEN  
 Reflections Chair—Jennifer Mowell  
 Scholarship Chair—Mary Beth Johnson

## SCHOOL DISTRICT COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Calendar Representative—Carolyn Ehrilch  
 ESE Advisory Committee—Karen Holme  
 Wellness Promotion Task Force Representative—Lynn Bloom Deutsch  
 Art of a Complete Education OPEN  
 Attendance Boundary Committee (ABC) OPEN  
 Charter School District Advisory Committee OPEN  
 Family Action Network OPEN  
 School Board Meeting Representative OPEN  
 School Health Advisory Council—OPEN

All of the members listed above can be contacted via email at  
[palmbeachcountyppta@yahoo.com](mailto:palmbeachcountyppta@yahoo.com)

# CoachRoudyFights ChildhoodObesity™

## Annual 5K & Fun Run to Fight Childhood Obesity

Announcing second annual 5K & Fun Run to fight childhood obesity and promote health & wellness. This event is being hosted by the Palm Beach County Council of PTA/PTSA & Coach Roudy Fights Childhood obesity. Our goal is to empower children to develop healthy lifestyle habits & a lifelong love of physical activity. Funds raised will be granted to PTAs for health and sport programs in our schools. The 5K & Fun Run will be held on the campus of Florida Atlantic University on Saturday, January 16, 2010 at 9:00am. The event will also offer nutritionists & other health experts, martial arts & yoga demonstrations and fun physical activities! Stay tuned for exciting news!

*STEP UP ~ JOIN THE WALK ~ LEAVE YOUR FOOTPRINT!*

### CHILDHOOD OBESITY EPIDEMIC

- According to the Department of Health and Human Services, 12.5 million children are obese today - that's more than 17%!
- The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reports that the prevalence of obesity among children age 6 to 11 more than doubled in the past 20 years.
- Children who are obese are at risk for heart disease, bone and joint problems, sleep apnea, as well as social and psychological problems.

The CDC estimated that obesity is fast approaching tobacco as the top underlying preventable cause of death in the USA.

One of the best strategies to combat excess weight in a child is to improve the diet and exercise levels of the entire family. This helps protect the health of your child now and in the future.

*Will you STEP UP for Childhood Obesity?*



*KIDS: ENTER OUR VIDEO CONTEST & WIN AN iPod!*

Show us why it's important to be healthy! <http://www.youtube.com/group/5KforChildHoodObesit>

INFO & REGISTRATION: [www.coachroudy.org](http://www.coachroudy.org)

CONTACT: Robin deLisser PALM BEACH COUNTY COUNCIL OF PTA,  
5K Walk Director & Awards Chair  
(754) 246-3954 or via email at [rdelisser@empowerresources.com](mailto:rdelisser@empowerresources.com)

*Follow Us:*



MAKING THE GRADE-  
KAREN HOLME, ESE CHAIR

For **students with disabilities**, school can be a constant struggle. Regardless of the kind of disability, many of us have in common that it is difficult for our children to learn because of their disability. Furthermore, some children may be making the grade, or "proficient" in a particular course or grade, yet you may feel that there is "something more" or "something missing" in their education.

This "something" may be functional performance goals.



**Functional means nonacademic “routine activities of everyday living”** according to the Federal Regulations. The purpose of an IEP is to prepare children for further education, employment and independent living (U.S.C. 1400 (d)(1)(A)). Functioning in school, employment and "the real world" is just as important as academics are. Functioning and academics both are important to a child's development.

The requirements of the Individual with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 (IDEA) set new requirements for functional goals. All IEPs must have a functional performance statement of a child's present level of performance and a measurable annual goal. Section 1414(d)(1)(A)(i)(I-II).

The commentary in the Federal Regulations clarifies "functional":

"It is not necessary to include a definition of "functional" in these regulations because we believe it is a term that is generally understood to refer to skills or activities that are not considered academic or related to a child's academic achievement. Instead, "functional" is often used in the context of routine activities of everyday living."

It is also important to know that "specially designed instruction," which is what is provided by special education, is defined in two distinct parts. "Specially designed instruction" is "to address the unique needs of the child that result from the child's disability; and to ensure access of the child to the general curriculum..." (IDEA 2004 Regulations, 34 CFR Part 300.39 (b)(3)(i-ii).

"Functional performance," "functional skills," and "functional goals" are terms used numerous times in the IDEA and the Federal Regulations.

So numerous are these terms, I felt it was quite worthy of mention.

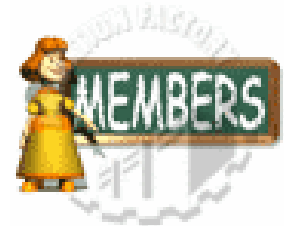
I am always willing to help with the advocacy of our children with disabilities. Please do not hesitate to call

*Karen Holme*

Palm Beach County Council PTA-ESE Chair  
561-718-1884

# Membership Matters

PTA is the largest child advocacy group! Membership dollars help us to provide services and materials to all levels of our organization. It helps us build interest in our community, start new units and bring in new members. Membership dollars help keep us STRONG!



Did you know your local unit should submit dues to the Florida PTA Monthly?  
Just as your board counts on everyone joining your PTA and paying their dues on time...both National & Florida PTA count on you forwarding the \$3.00 from each membership sold to them on a monthly basis.

When that happens they can budget better and insure there is no disruption in services or materials to all our local units. If you need a State & National Monthly Dues Form...please let us know and we will get one out to you ASAP!



Did you know County Council dues should be paid by October 15th?  
...It's true! Just as the Local, State & National levels depend on dues to insure services and materials are provided to members in a timely manner...so does the council.

If your unit has not sent in your council dues yet...please do so today! The 2009-2010 Membership form can be found on our website.

## **YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD WITH MATH ANXIETY**

### **Talk about math with your kids**

Math is not a four-letter word. Discuss the importance of math with your kids and let them know that you are interested in their successes and their stumbling blocks.

When parents keep math in mind and engage children in the process, children will keep math in mind, too.

### **Check for Number Sense**

Can they visualize math concepts and do everyday problems mentally without writing them down? When you are paying the check in a restaurant, see if they can tell you what a 15% tip should be. If something in a store is buy one, get one free, or buy one and get the second for 50%, can they tell you the cost of each (percents)? If they get a weekly allowance, ask them how much that would be per day (division). Can they divide an odd number in half? Ask the reverse, as well: how much would their weekly allowance be for a month (multiplication)?

### **Monitor your kid's attitude toward math**

If they tell you they hate math, they are probably frustrated or confused in class. Make sure they know that they can get help whenever they need it. Kids don't hate math, they hate being frustrated, confused and embarrassed. Kids desperately need to understand the fundamental concepts of math in order to defeat their confusion and intimidation.



### **Be sure they understand the concepts they are working on in school**

Effective math instruction involves more than rote memorization of tables and drills. They need to develop *thinking and* reasoning skills in order to succeed in the future. Try to avoid the temptation to just “get them through” today’s homework or tomorrow’s quiz.

It is far better to fill in the gaps in their knowledge and build a sound foundation of math concepts and skills before they move on. Kids cannot do algebra until they can multiply fractions and understand equality.

Check that they can do 2 and 3-digit multiplication and division on paper by themselves before they rely on calculators to do it for them. Calculators can help complete math quickly yet, they limit learning and the “number sense” gained when kids experience applying fundamental math concepts.

### **Talk to your child's teacher frequently**

Monitor any changing patterns in your child’s test scores. Ask the teacher if your child seems to be struggling or falling behind and needs help. Just as importantly, is a child becoming bored and inattentive in class? Additional challenge would benefit this child and renew his or her interest. Both these types of students can be provided with the help and support they need.

*By Marsha Rimokh*

MATHNASIUM, The Math Learning Center

## NATIONAL SAFE PLACE-JOHN C SHERMAN

The reality is that we are not going to prevent every child from running away. Obviously some kids are going to run no matter what we do. National Safe Place was founded based upon the fact that 3000 kids run away every day in the United States and they need a safe place to go. In the early 80's a YMCA in Kentucky started seeing more and more kids show up at the YMCA homeless and as run-aways. They decided they needed to do something about the problem. National Safe Place was born.

***"Until our streets are safe...  
Until families can understand each other...  
Until drugs and violence disappear...  
Until no young person needs to run away or feel afraid...  
There must be Safe Place."***



### MISSION

Safe Place provides access to immediate help and supportive resources for all young people in crisis through a network of sites sustained by qualified agencies, trained volunteers and businesses.

### VISION

Safe Place will be universally recognized and used by youth across America as the place to go for immediate help and safety.

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#### **Young people are valued and...**

are capable of initiating the helping process and taking an active role in creating a healthier living situation.

are more likely to seek help in places that are familiar, safe and identified by a standard, recognizable logo

have access to services on a nondiscriminatory basis

#### **Service to Young People...**

focus on immediate interventions to address issues at the earliest possible stage of a crisis

include advocacy and access to safe, supportive resources

are evaluated on an ongoing basis

#### **The Community**

takes an active, cooperative role in assisting young people in crisis

benefits when a young person can access safe, supportive assistance rather than dangerous alternatives

must be educated concerning issues relating to young people in order to improve the quality of services.

As Safe Place Coordinator for Palm Beach County, I teach over 1000 youth in our Middle and High schools every year about the dangers of running away or trying to resolve difficult, threatening situations on their own. Here in Palm Beach County we have 136 official Safe Place sites. Every Palm Beach County Fire Rescue Station is a Safe Place. They display the distinctive yellow and black Safe Place sign. If a kid comes in looking for help they call us and we transport them to our shelter and immediately start working on their issues.

*John C. Sherman*

*Street Outreach and Project Safe Place Coordinator,  
Children's Home Society of FL,  
West Palm Beach, FL*

GREEN MINUTE  
ERIC GEHRING



## Americans Using Less Water than 35 Years Ago

The United States is using less water than during the peak years of 1975 and 1980, according to water use estimates for 2005. Despite a 30 percent population increase during the past 25 years, overall water use has remained fairly stable, according to a new U.S. Geological Survey report.

The report, "Estimated Use of Water in the United States in 2005," shows that in 2005 Americans used 410 billion gallons per day, slightly less than in 2000.

The declines are attributed to the increased use of more efficient irrigation systems and alternative technologies at power plants. Water withdrawals for public supply have increased steadily since 1950 along with the population that depends on these supplies.

Nearly half of the 410 billion gallons per day used by Americans in 2005 was for producing electricity at thermoelectric power plants. Irrigation accounted for 31 percent and public supply 11 percent of the total. The remaining nine percent of the water was for self-supplied industrial, livestock, aquaculture, mining and rural domestic uses.

<http://www.ens-newswire.com/ens/nov2009/2009-11-03-092.asp>



## Sesame Street Going Green

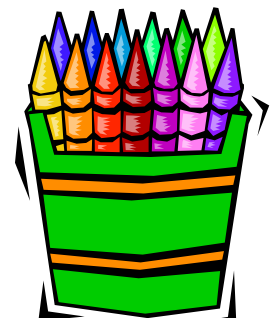
Recently, Sesame Street celebrated it's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the new season kicked off a two-year curriculum focusing on the environment. "My World Is Green and Growing" follows previous seasons that addressed literacy and healthy eating. The producers hope that by teaching children to love and respect nature—they will grow up to become advocates for the environment as adults. Topics this season will include habitat, hibernation, and growing vegetables, taught using classic Sesame Street methods. For example--the concept of migration will be introduced as Big Bird debates whether he should fly south for the winter or stay on chilly Sesame Street.

<http://news.nationalgeographic.com/news/2009/11/091109-sesame-street-google-images-michelle-obama-40.html>

## Recycle Your Old Crayons

Everyday more than 12 million crayons are made in the United States—roughly 60 tons of crayons. A large amount of those crayons (made from a petroleum based wax) ends up in our landfills. A company called Crazy Crayons is attempting to change that. You can ship them your unwanted crayons which they sort, and recycle into new crayons. So far, more than 47,000 pounds of crayons have been recycled and kept out of landfills. Visit their website to learn more about the National Crayon Recycling Program and for shipping information.

<http://www.crazycrayons.com>



# AWARDS

Congratulations to all our Palm Beach County PTA/PTSA schools award winners! The Florida PTA recognized these hard-working local units for 2008-09 from the following schools....

## 2008-09 FPTA President's Achievement Award

Hidden Oaks Elementary PTA

## 2008-09 PTSA Student Involvement Award

Spanish River High PTSA

## Friends of the Environment Award - Elementary Level

Morikami Park Elementary PTA

## Cartoon Network's 'Rescuing Recess' \$1000 Award

Morikami Park Elementary PTA, with an award of about \$350 going to all the applicant schools including Hidden Oaks Elementary PTA

## 25% Membership Increase

Calusa Elementary PTA, Christa McAuliffe Middle PTSA, Coral Reef Elementary PTA, Don Estridge High Tech Middle PTSA, Elbridge Gale Elementary PTA, Grove Park Elementary PTA, Melaleuca Elementary PTA, Palm Beach Gardens Elementary PTA, and Timber Trace Elementary PTA;

## Golden Early Bird Award

Bright Futures International PTA, Hidden Oaks Elementary PTA, Omni Middle PTSA, Spanish River High PTSA, and Sunrise Park Elementary PTA

## Programs Award

Hidden Oaks Elementary PTA, Omni Middle PTSA, Spanish River High PTSA, and Sunrise Park Elementary PTA

## Promoting Communication Excellence Award

Hidden Oaks Elementary PTA and Morikami Park Elementary PTA

## 100% Membership For 3 or More Consecutive Years

Del Prado Elementary PTA and Morikami Park Elementary PTA



## GIVING THANKS-JACK LEVINE

As we celebrate Thanksgiving, let's remember that the holiday's name is a compound word - Thanks and Giving. Please take a few moments to consider these ideas for enhancing the celebration of Thanksgiving and the entire holiday season ahead.

Despite obvious challenges, each of us has much to be thankful for - our lives, families, friendships, and work. While there is no perfection in life, I hope you consider the glass more than half full for most of us most of the time. Thanking those whom we love, admire, depend upon, and have positive relationships with is an important, but too infrequently practiced an activity. Please say "Thank You" more than a few times in the next few weeks.

Please share these Ten Thanks-Giving Thoughts with your family, friends and colleagues as a gift from you to them....

1. Share with those with less. Consider the gift of one week's grocery bill donated to a community food bank, domestic violence or homeless shelter, foster parent or elder services association, or your United Way as a gesture of appreciation for what we have, and what others do for the less fortunate.
2. Express your gratitude in word and deed to those who care for others as a profession or as volunteers. Give compliment the good works of caregivers for our children and frail elders. Those caring individuals who clean the bottoms of babies and the bed-ridden, and help nurture and stimulate their minds, deserve the kindnesses of family members and neighbors all though the year, but especially at holiday time.
3. Give time to a worthy cause. Our volunteer investments in "Time Philanthropy" for the benefit of others builds community and creates a great example for our children. Spectatorism is relaxing, but our community's needs can be addressed, in part, by sharing our energy. Whether we choose to sing in a chorus, read to a toddler, mentor a youth, or visit a lonely elder, our time is a priceless gift which appreciates in value.
4. Conserve energy resources by consuming less fuel, reusing, and recycling. Native American culture considered our planet as a parent, worthy of respect and protection. Our throw away culture is feeding our landfills with trash, and our air and water absorb the residue of pollutants. Preserving our environment is self-preservation, as well as a life-saving gift to wildlife, plant life, and our children's children.
5. Slow down. Whether behind the steering wheel or in conversation with others, speed is not a good thing. Being in a perpetual hurry endangers our lives on the road, and cuts short our relationships with others. Give yourself a few extra minutes in transit to be a safe driver.....and listen a bit longer to the words in conversation with loved ones and co-workers. Actively listen and show others that positive attention is a gift worth giving.
6. Put technology in its place. We live in a high-tech, low-touch culture, governed by the beeps, buzzes, and blinking lights of technology. As time is compressed, stress grows. Immediate response raises expectations, reduces careful consideration, and makes us more prone to error. Take a breather from all the numbing numbers, and ask others to be considerate in public and private spaces by turning the "on" switch "off." Our children need to know that our eye contact and voices are focused on their needs, too. The cell phone, pager, and e-mail should not keep our loved ones on hold.

7. Advocate with assertion, not aggression. Free speech is not an invitation to be offensive. Responsible advocacy requires thoughtful purpose, practical solutions, and open conversation. Clear and consistent communication with allies and adversaries alike sets the stage for progress. Advocacy is the heart-felt expression of a wrong to be righted, with composure and grace. An advocate's power is in persuasive and persistent articulation, and the recruitment of others to the cause.
8. Respect our elected officials for their service. While we say we believe in representative democracy, who among us is brave enough to run for public office? We don't have to agree with all of their actions, but we should respect their service, and hold them accountable for their actions....or lack of action. Silence is the antithesis of effectiveness in a democracy.
9. Health is a form of wealth. Making sure we eat right, exercise, and take time to rest and relax are the keys to clear thinking and long-term effectiveness. Our bodies cannot support us unless our minds resolve to take care and be careful. Being healthy examples to our children in nutrition and behavior sends positive signals for their attitude and future actions.
10. Take optimism pills every morning....the time-release kind. Negativity is contagious. Those who believe they will make a difference can achieve their goals. Pessimism is the mind's way of giving up before the first step is taken. Those who want to make change for the better in their lives, neighborhood, and the world around them, should stop whining and start winning. The power of one, multiplied and magnified, is the only proof positive formula for success.

Holidays remind us that bridges across the generations are built upon the stanchions of memory. Those among us who recall the glow of candlelight reflecting the faces at our grandparents' table understand how vital heritage is for finding ourselves. For those whose childhoods were less than ideal, we have the opportunity to assist others to have a more joyous future.

As we plan for the holiday season, we should recognize that there are neighbors, young and elder, whose weeks ahead are not brimming with joy. For whatever reason, in whatever circumstance, we well know that there are people in need who can be helped if we choose to do so.

In honor and remembrance a family member or neighbor who was there for you when you needed them most, please thank those who illuminate our paths, exemplify kindness, teach justice, and nurture our futures. What a fitting tribute to the legacy of our ancestors and what a positive example for our children and grandchildren.

Your work, the gifts you share, and the example you set is an inspiration.

I welcome your response and hope you'll choose to share this message with others. Never hesitate to call on me.....

Thank you!

*Jack Levine, Founder*

4Generations Institute

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<http://www.4Gen.org>



# Palm Beach County Council of PTA/PTSA

EMPOWERING FAMILIES

Palm Beach County Council PTA/PTSA

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