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26th Annual National Parent Involvement Day, November 21, 2019
Appleseed Features 35 Weeks of Family Engagement Activities

ST. LOUIS, MO - Project Appleseed’s 26th Annual National Parental Involvement Day, November 21, 2019, provides a yearly opportunity for schools and families to honor and highlight the powerful contributions parents and caregivers provide at school and home to support student success. However, parental involvement shouldn’t be confined to just one day – it should be emphasized all year long.

What: National Parental Involvement Day is a chance to demonstrate what parents can do to support our children in school. Schools host a new event on (or move an existing event to) National Parent Involvement Day, Thursday, November 21, 2019, to honor the powerful contributions that parents and caregivers make to support the success of students.

Where: Approximately 2,500 pre-k to grade 12 schools in the United States.

Who: We expect participation of one million family members - parents, caregivers, community members, business partners, volunteers and school staff.

Why: To reinforce awareness of the invaluable role that parents/caregivers and community play in supporting student learning and public education, and honor their contributions to student success.

Get Involved: Call the news media and use this press release as your own and access our About Project Appleseed web page. Reach out to Project Appleseed on social media. Take pictures and post your event. Use the hashtag #NationalParentalInvolvementDay:

• Facebook
• Twitter @pledgenow
• LinkedIn

35 Weeks of Family Engagement Activities Begins
There are 35-40 weeks in a school year with 180 days of instruction. Project Appleseed has family engagement activities for every week of the school year - with a focus on the 150 days between National Parental Involvement Day in November and Public School Volunteer Week in April. Project Appleseed is working with schools, families, employers and community organizations to develop local partnerships that support a safe school environment where students learn to challenging standards. To get the best results from your parental involvement efforts we want you and your schools to join our...
movement to plant the seeds of school improvement in your local schools with National Parental Involvement Day and Public School Volunteer Week and activities for your schools every week of the school year.

Activity Ideas
In past years the San Diego Unified School District and the San Diego Council of PTA’s partnered to implement National Parent Involvement Day at district schools. Together they developed local ideas that range from “Come to School With Your Student Day,”; coffee/breakfast with parents; a week-long open house style celebration in which parents are invited on campus all week; or something as simple as the PTSA handing out chocolate kisses to parents as a way to say “thanks.”

Their other ideas included:

• **Host a Breakfast or Coffee & Pastries event** to announce a new PTA/PTO or to boost membership in your PTA/PTO. The PTA/PTO is a key organization to connect parents, especially new parents to your school with other parents and community members. o Set up tables to welcome families and community members to your school. Make available membership forms to enroll new PTA/PTO members. o Make special nametags for members that say, “Ask me about the PTA/PTO” or “Join the PTA/PTO Today.”
  
  o Provide “Welcome Bags” with school information, PTA/PTO brochures, and goodies gathered from local businesses or organizations. Include a bookmark with the dates of PTA/PTO meetings and special PTA/PTO sponsored school events. o Have a chart with a list of volunteer opportunities so parents can sign up to help. Man the table with a volunteer to encourage sign-ups!

• **Come to School With Your Student Day**: This event is similar to one that many secondary schools organize every year where parents and caregivers "shadow" their student at school, spend time in the classrooms observing actual instruction time and join their child for lunch in the cafeteria.

• **Celebrate Dads’ Involvement**: Fathers want to be involved, but they aren't necessarily going to respond to traditional parent group roles. Use this day to engage more fathers in their children’s education and make sure to welcome any male role models who are involved with a child, such as uncles, older brothers, grandfathers, coaches, and stepfathers.”

• **Shine-A-Light Night**: Create an event to showcase all of the extracurricular programs at your school (and in your community) such as clubs, athletics and honor groups that enrich classroom learning and provide students new ways to develop their interests and talents. Shine a light on all of the opportunities for students and families to get involved. Examples include sport team demos, cheer groups, band, chorus, clubs, robotics, dance, drama, afterschool programs, and community partnership services and resources.

• **Reaching Out to Parents Over Brown-Bag Lunches**: Administrators invite parents and community members to chat and build partnerships while bringing their own brownbag lunch, and to help keep everyone informed about the school and student learning. Topic ideas: Making families feel welcome by conducting a fun teambuilding activity.
• **Theme-based Student Essays:** Students may participate by writing an essay, poem, or thank you letter sharing how their parent(s) or caregiver(s) have supported them in National Parent Involvement Day is sponsored by the San Diego Unified School District and the San Diego Unified Council of PTA/PTOs. These can be shared/showcased with families in a variety of ways on the day of the event.

• **Launch the Me2 Program.** The Me2 Program asks every parent to donate two hours to the school during the school year. Parents receive a checklist of possible volunteer activities, including “Attend an awards assembly,” “Join your student for lunch at school on their birthday,” and many others. Include audience attendance in your definition of “volunteers” who contribute their time to support student activities at school. Throughout the year, teachers and administrators highlight the Me2 program at all school functions that parents attend. A large thermometer-type display at the school tracks the volunteers’ progress toward the goal of hours. On a monthly basis, parents are provided various volunteer opportunities to inspire their parents’ involvement.

• **Family Fitness Night a Popular School-Wide Event:** Reaching students with the message about the importance of fitness isn’t enough. Go for the gold with events designed to bring in students and their families too. Involve the Physical Education teachers to plan physical activities in the gym like karate, kick-boxing, aerobics, dance, yoga, Pilates, hip hop, Zumba, and body sculpting. In the main hallways provide information tables work with a local community clinic to bring their bus and provide free health screenings for families. Especially popular with students are the opportunities to try physical activities.

• **Sports Math Night:** Elementary students and parents work through a series of math stations, playing dice and money games, working problems on calculators, stamping, graphing and going on a math scavenger hunt—all designed to support core skills in adding, subtracting, estimating, finding patterns and employing logic.

• **Family Math Night:** This middle school event invites parents and students to visit various interactive stations to work and play together (sometimes competing) to solve mathematics-based problems aligned to state math standards. Students help the teachers to set up each rotation with games or activities, such as: practicing math facts using Pringles cans, playing bingo, arranging tangrams and many others.

• **Game Night:** Ask families to bring their favorite board games to play together. You might also call local stores to donate games for this event. Provide a light dinner or dessert night. Some easy and fun ideas are any type of card games ( Uno, Go Fish, War, etc.), Pictionary, Charades, Dominoes, Connect 4, etc.

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**Project Appleseed,** a St. Louis Missouri-based nonprofit, first launched National Parent Involvement Day, 26 years ago. Since then, districts across the nation have designated the third Thursday in November to celebrate parent involvement and hold events of various types to mark the occasion.

Project Appleseed engages parent involvement in schools. During the past two decades, Project Appleseed has provided families and schools throughout the country with two widely celebrated events – National Parental Involvement Day and Public School Volunteer Week. These are the celebrations in which schools recruit, engage, count and recognize the services of America’s dedicated school
volunteers. We celebrate those who have offered their time, encouragement, and meaningful contact with students.

Over three million family members participate in our celebrations at over 20,000 schools in all 50 states each school year. We estimate that nearly every public school in America has recognized or celebrated these grass roots occasions, at least once, over the last two decades. Each year parents and family members, state departments of education, nonprofits, businesses and thousands of school districts are involved. There are currently over 300,000 links to our signature events Public School Volunteer Week & National Parental Involvement Day in the Google search engine. Save the dates and join us!

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