

SAP CONNECTION

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PNSAS INTERAGENCY UPDATE

2021-2022 SAP Infographics:

[Click here to view](#) the SAP Teams Infographic.

[Click here to view](#) the SAP Liaison Infographic.

PSA Contest Timeline: Contest submissions were due on December 14, 2022. Each year submissions are reviewed internally and then put out for public voting. Private voting will occur 01/16/2023 – 01/23/2023, School-Wide Voting 01/30/2023-02/20/2023, and Public voting 02/06/2023 – 02/20/2023. Winners are to be announced in early March 2023. Check the [Prevent Suicide PA website](#) for links when the voting is open.

SAP BACK TO BASICS

SAP Liaisons: Their Role and Assistance with SAP Teams

It's a fabulous fact that the Pennsylvania Student Assistant Program (SAP) began in 1984, with implementation in four school districts and is still going strong across the state today. The dedication of caring individuals across the state, and the support of local and state agencies, combine to ensure the success of SAP in PA. Liaisons are vital to the process.

Liaison's responsibilities are determined by the county agency as well as the needs and requests of local schools. These responsibilities often include attending team meetings, providing consultation services as requested (e.g., meetings with parents and school officials), facilitating and supporting the school-based aftercare plans for students who are returning to school from treatment, and facilitating or co-facilitating school-based support groups to name a few.

Professionally trained liaisons provide consultation to teams and families regarding community and/or school-based services and other services for drug and alcohol and/or mental health related concerns.

A letter of agreement (LOA) is drafted and signed each school year by both the chief administrator and liaison agency. These letters of agreements include: a designated contact person for the school and agency, the frequency of attendance for liaisons at SAP team meetings and their role of the liaisons in the school SAP process. The LOA outlines the liaison's scope of practice. For an example of a letter of agreement, see the [sample](#) on the PNSAS website.

In Pennsylvania, the SAP liaison is one of the single most used components that make PA's SAP program different than other states. The Cambridge dictionary defines liaison as: 1. Communication between people or groups who work with each other; and 2. Someone who helps groups to work effectively with each other.

It is this second definition, "someone who helps groups to work effectively with each other", that I think of each time I have contact with SAP liaisons across PA. They work with so many different SAP teams, screen or do assessments on so many students and continue to provide support not only to students and their families but to SAP teams and their individual members.

The role of the SAP liaison includes helping to educate and connect teams to local resources, assist in postvention services, provide interventions for students, help teams develop and implement a continuum of support services to assist students. They also assist in the identification of risk and protective factors for students and teams and help teams to add in school supports and interventions that will help develop these protective factors in students. All of which continue to be a vital part of the implementation of SAP in PA.

For additional information on the role and responsibilities of the SAP liaisons in PA, see the following resources:

- Best Practice Guidelines for Drug & Alcohol/Mental Health Liaison Services ([read more](#))
- SAP liaisons Frequently Asked Questions and Best Practice Responses ([read more](#))
- SAP Liaison Handbook ([read more](#))

RESOURCES AND NEWS

988 Suicide lifeline: If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call or text 988 or chat 988lifeline.org. **988 FAQ Update:** a new FAQ about specialized services for LGBTQI+ youth who reach out to 988. The FAQ is the last FAQ under [FAQS about 988 Basics](#).

JED Foundation releases PSA: The new Seize the Awkward PSA, "We Can Talk About It," features a powerful message for all youth- but especially Black and Hispanic/Latino youth that we all have the power to change the culture around mental health and be the person who listens when the rest of the world doesn't. [Check out the PSA here.](#)

Teaching Time Management Skills: With a better understanding of time, students can plan and prioritize their work in ways that support academic success. [Read more.](#)

How to Avoid Being Overwhelmed by Technology Options: To reduce confusion for teachers and students, school leaders can adopt digital tools that work together within a learning management system. [Read more.](#)

WELLNESS CORNER



Getting Back to Basics: As the pandemic wanes, teachers can prioritize attending to three essentials in the classroom: feedback, engagement, and well-being. [Read more.](#)

6 Simple, Low-Cost Ways to Promote Student Self-Care: From communal coloring to collaborative puzzles, these accessible activities offer moments in the school day for kids to pause and focus on their own well-being. [Read more.](#)

How to Make Students Feel Welcome Every Day. Read how High school teachers can use these strategies to keep students engaged in learning throughout the year. [Read more.](#)

Reimagine Wellbeing in the Workplace: Self-care in a professional setting gives an employee permission to feel good about the work they do. Empower your staff by fostering a culture of holistic wellness that attracts, retains, and supports top talent. [Browse episodes](#) of the life support Podcasts.

Gratitude: As we start a new year practicing gratitude can have positive effects on both your physical and mental health, such as stress reduction and a boosted immune system. Check out these suggestions for ways to practice gratitude:

- Start a daily or weekly gratitude journal to document the things you're grateful for, whether big or small.
- Strive to expand the list of things you're thankful for every day.
- Recognize the common themes or items that appear in your journal.
- Relish in the moment when you realize you're grateful for something.
- Share your gratitude with those who are important to you or "pay it forward" by showing kindness to someone you don't know.

Gratitude is a simple concept with far-reaching positive effects. Practice gratitude throughout the year. *Source: Optum*

Tips for a positive social media experience: social media puts direct digital connections to others at our fingertips. According to Pew Research Center, seventy percent of people are active on social media. While there are benefits, such as finding supportive communities and connecting with family, there are also negatives, such as cyberbullying. So how do we take advantage of social media in a healthy way? Follow these tips for a positive social media experience:

- **Block out the "noise"** – if there are certain social media accounts that leave you feeling down, overwhelmed or inadequate, block them.
- **Curate your connections** – avoid connecting with "just anybody," instead seek out social media content and connections related to your interests and passions.
- **Think about what you share** – is the content hurtful toward others? Is the article or news story from a reputable source?
- **Manage your time** – social media outlets like Facebook and Instagram have built-in features to help you monitor and control the amount of time you spend on their platforms.
- **Step away** – a complete break from social media might sound daunting, but it could be just what you need. Focus this time on hobbies, sports or in-person interactions with friends and family.

TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

SAP Trainings are available both in person and virtually in certain locations throughout the state. These trainings are delivered by PA Approved SAP Training Providers. For a complete listing click [here](#) to access the training calendar.

Trauma Training: The Offices of Children, Youth and Families, and Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services have partnered with PA Care Partnership to provide any child welfare professionals in Pennsylvania FREE Trauma Training provided by Lakeside Global until September 30, 2023, or while funding is available. For individuals looking for Trauma Training, there are multiple cohorts for courses and workshops scheduled on specific dates and times available through <https://lakesidelink.com/training/course-registration-2023/> Training available includes the following: Enhancing

Trauma Awareness, Deepening Trauma Awareness, Applying Trauma Principals, Train the Trainers, and Trauma 101 through 109 Workshops.

PaTTAN Training: Proactive Approaches to School Discipline Using Alternatives to Suspension and Expulsion. (Asynchronous from January 9, 2023– February 13, 2023, via Schoology online course).

This course will focus on using alternatives to suspensions and expulsions as well as the benefits of considering equitable disciplinary practice via a SW-PBIS framework. Learners will discuss the key responsibility areas for implementing a multi-tiered system of support for behavior with a specific focus on culturally sustaining practices.

Registration Information: You may register online by clicking on the name of the event on the Training Events Calendar at: <https://www.pattan.net/events/>

CADCA'S 33rd Annual National Leadership Forum & SAMHSA'S 19th Annual Prevention Day (January 30- February 2, 2023) For additional information and registration [click here](#).

PA Parent and Family Alliance: Upcoming and archived webinars, tip sheets, and resources are located on their [website](#).

The Pennsylvania Care Partnership: offers trainings and webinars throughout the year are listed on their [website](#). Three upcoming trainings include:

- Thursday, January 12, 2023, 2:30 to 4 pm- Belonging, the Flip Side of Adversity. Returning speaker Dr. Veirdre Jackson. [Register here](#).
- Tuesday, January 24, 2023, 12:00 to 2 pm -The State of Black and Brown Mental Health. What's working: Potential Solutions. [Register here](#).
- Thursday, January 26, 2023, 2:30 to 4 pm - Intentionality and Vulnerability. Returning speaker Dr. Esther Hio-Tong Castillo. [Register here](#).

2022-2023 Equity Speaker Series: [Click here for courses and registration](#) the speakers series is funded by PDE Statewide Systems of Support.

Topics of upcoming trainings include:

- 1/10/2023: Students with Specific Learning Disabilities
- 2/14/2023: Religious Diversity
- 3/14/2023: Black/African American
- 4/18/2023: Hispanic/ Latino
- 5/16/2023 Students with interrupted education

PASAP Conference: February 26 - 28, 2023. In person at the Penn Stater Hotel and Conference Center, State College, Pa. [Click here for Registration](#).

GRANTS

PA School Grants

The PA Department of Education administers several grants each year, including Safe Schools Targeted Grants and others. Keep checking to see if there are any new opportunities available. Click [here](#) for more information.

Federal Grants

The United States government offers several grants. Go to Grants.gov to check on availability. Click [here](#) for more information.