

**Purpose:** Team building activities are used in APTT meetings to facilitate the development of strong, trusting relationships between the teacher and families that leads to collaboration and mutual support beyond the classroom. Teachers should always model and participate in the team building activity.

TIME	ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS	STRATEGIES FOR DELIVERY	EVIDENCE
15 Min.	<b>Welcome &amp; Team Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Communicate purpose and value of APTT meetings</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Express gratitude to families in attendance</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Model and explain Icebreaker activity</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Icebreaker is fun, engaging, and interactive</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Families get to know other families better</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Families share strategies that support learning</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Teacher participates with families</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Families are more relaxed and interactive</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Closure is provided by communicating the importance of building a strong team that works together to improve student learning outcomes</li> </ul>	<p><b>Teachers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explained purpose and value of APTT meetings</li> <li>• Explained and modeled activity</li> <li>• Explained importance of team</li> <li>• Expressed the value that each family brings to student learning</li> <li>• Emphasized the classroom as a safe space for sharing and learning</li> </ul> <p><b>Families:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All participated in activity</li> </ul>



**Title of Activity:** Classroom Web

**Materials:** Ball of yarn or string

**Instructions:**

1. Ask everyone to stand up and form a circle.
2. One person holds the ball of yarn/string to start.
3. The person holding the ball says his/her name and the name of his/her student in the class. The person then answers one question or interesting fact about themselves or their child.
4. While holding the end of the string, the person tosses the ball of string to someone they don't know.
5. Continue sharing and tossing of the yarn until everyone in the circle has had an opportunity to participate.
6. At the end of the icebreaker, the facilitator should explain how everyone played a part in creating the unique web and that through APTT and the building of a classroom community, all individuals are contributing to create a network of support for the students.





## Academic Parent-Teacher Team (APTT) Team Building Activities



**Title of Activity:** My Family's Favorite Food

**Materials:** Pictures of Different Types of Food

**Instructions:**

1. Place pictures of 4-5 different types of food around the room. Such as Italian, Mexican, Chinese etc. The number of pictures may vary depending on the size of the group.
2. Ask families to stand up and move to the picture of their favorite type of food.
3. Ask families to share within the small groups their names and the student they are representing along with different types of family meals they enjoy within the food group.

**Title of Activity:** Choose Your Side

**Materials:** None

**Instructions:**

1. Ask families if their child likes to play inside or outside? If the answer is outside, then please stand on the right side of the classroom. If the answer is inside, please stand on the left side of the classroom.
2. Parents talk in their groups about the types of activities their child prefers inside or outside, why they like inside or outside activities.
3. Ask families if their child prefers to read or work with numbers? If their child prefers to read, please stand on the right side of the room. If their child prefers to work with numbers, please stand on the left side of the room.
4. Parents talk in their groups about why their child prefers to read or work with numbers and they share strategies they use at home with their child.
5. Ask families if their child is a night owl or an early bird? If their child is a night owl, please stand on the right side of the room. If their child is an early bird please stand on the left side of the room.
6. Ask parents to talk in their groups and share stories about why their child is a night owl or an early bird. Then ask families to share strategies they use at home with their student to encourage an easy "bedtime routine" or a "quick get out the door" routine.





## Academic Parent-Teacher Team (APTT) Team Building Activities



**Title of Activity:** Trip/Name Game

**Materials:** None

**Instructions:**

1. Families get in a circle.
2. Parents take turns telling the group their first name and then they share a place they would like to go that begins with the same letter of their first name and they can also name something they will take with them that begins with that same letter. (For example: My name is Ms. Hill and I would like to go to Hawaii and I will take a hat.)
3. Teacher begins the game.
4. Each person in the circle will follow with participation.
5. If time permits, see if anyone in the group can recall individual names and the corresponding travel destinations.



## Academic Parent-Teacher Team (APTT) Team Building Activities



**Title of Activity:** Candy Confessions

**Materials:** Small individual packets of M&Ms, starbursts, or any other assorted candy

**Instructions:**

1. Pass out small packets of M&Ms (or any other type of candy).
2. Ask parents to open their bags and divide the candy by color.
3. Count the number of M&Ms for each color.
4. Ask parents to share the following information based on the color of M&M they have the most. Share both if there is a tie.

Green - favorite activity you and your child enjoy doing together

Yellow - favorite book and/or movie that you and your child enjoy together

Orange - most memorable moment you've had with your child

Blue - "wild card" anything you want related to your child

Brown – a moment when you have been most proud of your child

5. The activity can be modified using any type of candy. Use the same sample questions that were used for the M&Ms but assign the questions to different types of candy. Additional sample questions are listed below:
  - What is your child's favorite place to eat?
  - What is your child's favorite hobby?
  - What is your child's favorite sport?
  - Where is your child's favorite place to go?

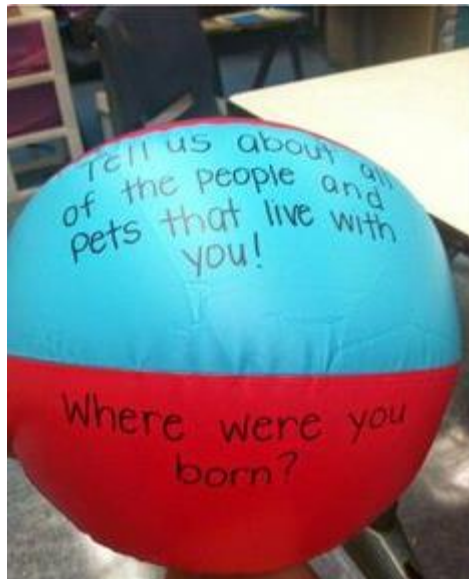
**Title of Activity:** Classroom Ball

**Materials:** Ball

**Instructions:**

1. Ask everyone to stand up and form a circle.
2. Toss the ball to someone.
3. Person who catches the ball says their name and something about their child, such as what their child likes about school.
4. Toss the ball to someone different.

**Variation:** Write several open ended questions on the ball that families can answer about their student. Each time a new person catches the ball, they introduce themselves and answer the question that is closest to their thumbs.



**Title of Activity:** Never Ending Story

**Materials:** Chart paper and markers

**Instructions:**

1. Divide families into work groups.
2. Provide each work group with chart paper, markers, and a story starter.
3. Each person on the team has one minute to write. Each teammate that follows has to read what was previously written, then add to the story for their minute, relating what they are writing to what has already been written. This is SO MUCH FUN.
4. Have each team present their stories to the entire group for many laughs.
5. It would be fun to share the stories created by the parents with the students the next day. You could also have students perform this activity prior to the APTT meeting and share some student examples with the parents the night of the APTT meeting.

**Recommendation:** If working with families who do not speak English or with low literacy levels, ask one person in each group to serve as the scribe and write the dictated sentences for each team member. The teacher could also participate in the icebreaker by volunteering to be a scribe for a group.

**Variation:** In a situation where the group of participants are too small to divide into separate work groups, perform the activity whole group. Pass out randomized numbers to parents and the teacher will serve as the scribe for the story. Each parent will contribute their sentence to the story in the order of the number they received.





## Academic Parent-Teacher Team (APTT) Team Building Activities



**Title of Activity:** Failure Is Not an Option

**Materials:** Balloons

**Instructions:**

1. Each parent in attendance will receive a balloon.
2. Parents will blow up their balloons and stand with their balloons throughout the classroom.
3. The teacher will explain to families that the balloons represent the SMART goals that each family set for their student at the previous APTT meeting.
4. The object of the game is to work together and support one another to keep the balloons from falling and hitting the ground.
5. Everyone will work as a team to keep the balloons (goals) from falling and hitting the floor.



## Academic Parent-Teacher Team (APTT) Team Building Activities



**Title of Activity:** What's In a Name?

**Materials:** None

**Instructions:**

1. Ask parents to form small groups of 3-4 people.
2. Parents should introduce themselves to the other parents in the group.
3. Ask the members of each group to share with each other why they chose their child's name. If the participating teacher does not have children of his/her own, they can share about the origin and history of their own name.

**Title of Activity:** Penny for Your Thoughts

**Materials:** Enough pennies for everyone. Choose pennies with different dates within the past 15 years

**Instructions:**

1. Place a penny at every seat or pass around a bowl of pennies for everyone to choose one.
2. Ask people to look at the date on their penny.
3. Instruct people to choose an event that happened in their life during the year the penny was minted.
4. Find someone in the room with the same year (or within a few years) and share your event.
5. Go around the room, and have each partner introduce each other to the whole group and sharing their events with the group.

**Variation:**

1. Upon entering the classroom, each parent receives a penny and a question to answer about their child.
2. When the icebreaker begins, the teacher will call out the different years on the pennies so that parents can form small groups based on the common year identified on their penny. Parents with similar years will form a group and share their answers to the questions.
3. After about two to three minutes of sharing time, the teacher will call out a year and parents from that group will have an opportunity to share their answers to the whole group by saying their name and answering the question they selected about their child.



## Academic Parent-Teacher Team (APTT) Team Building Activities



**Title of Activity:** True or False?

**Materials:** Piece of paper or Index Card

**Instructions:**

1. Classroom teachers will hand different symbols and an index card to parents as they arrive.
2. Ask everyone to write down one statement that is true about them and one statement that is false.
3. Parents will then be asked to look at their symbol and find the other parent that has the match.
4. Once they find their match, each parent will introduce themselves and read the two statements so the partner can guess which one is true and which one is false.
5. At the culmination of the activity, ask if any pair of partners would like to share with the whole group any interesting fact they learned about their partner.

**Title of Activity:** People BINGO

**Materials:** People BINGO board, pens or pencils

**Instructions:**

1. Create your own People BINGO cards or use the template provided.
2. Give each parent a BINGO card and a pen/pencil. Parents will mingle, introducing themselves, and finding people who match the traits on the card. The person must sign their name in the corresponding square.
3. The first person to fill consecutive boxes across or down yells BINGO!

<h3 style="margin: 0;">People Bingo</h3> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">Find someone who fits the description in one of your squares. Have that person write their name across the square. Continue to fill the board until time is up.</p>			
Find someone who came to the last APTT meeting.	Find someone who was not born in Georgia.	Find someone who can tell you why APTT is important.	Find someone who has lived in another city.
Find someone who can touch their toes without bending their knees.	Find someone who can tell you what APTT stands for.	Find someone who is younger than you.	Find someone you knew before coming to the APTT meeting.
Find someone who doesn't like chocolate.	Find someone who has a pet.	Find someone who came to the first APTT meeting.	Find someone who is an only child.
Find someone who came to the first and second APTT meetings.	Find someone who likes math.	Find someone who has used the APTT games with their child(ren).	Find someone who has not been to a previous APTT meeting.



Academic Parent-Teacher Team (APTT)  
Team Building Activities



**Title of Activity:** Mingle, Mingle, Mingle

**Materials:** Question cards & music

**Instructions:**

1. Mix cards up and give each family member one card.
2. Play some music and have everyone mingle, mingle, mingle to the music. Stop the music and have everyone find a partner.
3. Each person takes a turn reading their card and sharing their response with the other person.
4. Repeat steps 4 and 5 three to four times.

**Sample questions for cards:**

- What do you do before, during and after reading a story with your child?
- Discuss a challenge you have encountered when helping your child with his/her homework.
- Think about a time when you were most proud of your child. When was it and why were you so proud?
- Share a successful tip for motivating your child to complete his/her homework.
- How do help your child develop good study habits?
- What kind of profession do you think your child will go into when they grow up?

**Title of Activity:** Celebration

**Materials:** None

**Instructions:**

1. Begin with a quick discussion of how important it is to celebrate both big and small successes. Ask participants, "What kinds of things count as big successes? What small successes also need to be celebrated, so that they are not overlooked?"
2. Next, invite everyone to find a partner and to create a unique handshake. Let them know that this handshake has to include at least three "elements." These elements can be spins, head nods or any other movements. Encourage creativity! After about 2 minutes (or when you notice most people are done), call time and invite a few partners to demonstrate their handshakes.
3. Then, ask them to do their handshake one more time and, as quickly as they can, find a new partner. Once they are with their new partner, tell them to create a three element high five. After about 2 minutes (or when you notice most people are done), call time and ask for a few volunteers to demonstrate their technique.
4. Next, ask them to do their high five one more time and, as quickly as they can, find a third partner. Once they are with their new partner, explain that this time, they will be creating a celebration dance with at least three elements. Share that this dance is the dance they'll do when they score the winning touchdown, get the "A" they've been working toward or receive a college scholarship.
5. Now, explain that the REAL fun begins – and that for the next several minutes whenever you shout, "Handshake!" everybody finds their "handshake" partner and does their handshake, when you shout "high five!" everybody finds their "high five" partner and does their high five and when you shout "Celebrate!" everybody finds their "celebration" partner and does their celebration dance. If you're so inclined, throughout the rest of your training session, a well-timed celebration can quickly transform uninspired individuals back into a laughing, energized team.



## Academic Parent-Teacher Team (APTT) Team Building Activities



**Title of Activity:** Concentric Circles

**Materials:** Open Ended Questions

**Instructions:**

1. Have families arrange themselves in an inside circle and an outside circle, then inside facing out, forming pairs.
2. Pairs introduce themselves to one another and then discuss their answers to a getting-to-know-you question, then rotate for the next question, forming a new partnership.
3. This activity give parents the chance to have lots of one-on-one conversations with many other parents.
4. The possibilities for questions in this kind of configuration are endless, but be sure to ask more open-ended questions that can get families talking rather than those that simply ask for a yes or no answer. Here are some sample questions:
  - What does your child like to do for fun? Do you and your child have any hobbies you like to do together?
  - Do you consider your child shy or outgoing and why?
  - Describe the perfect family dinner.
  - Tell your partner one thing your student is good at doing.





## Academic Parent-Teacher Team (APTT) Team Building Activities



**Title of Activity:** Six Degrees of Separation

**Materials:** Paper and Pencils

**Instructions:**

It happens all of the time: we meet someone who knows someone we know. It's a small world, that's for sure. The object of this activity is to see how small the world really is.

1. Each parent should find a partner and introduce themselves and find something they have in common. Examples could be: month and/or year your student was born, food likes, sports likes, etc.
2. Once you have introduced yourselves and found something in common, find another group in the room and discover what the 4 of you have in common.
3. Repeat step two until you find something in common with every person in the room.

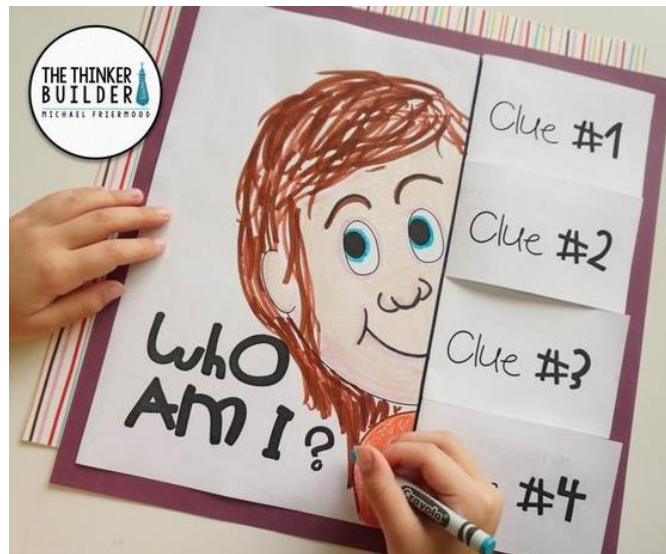
**Title of Activity:** Who Am I

**Materials:** Student created “Who Am I” posters with clues

**Instructions:**

1. Have students create a “Who Am I” poster that lists only clues about themselves. Hang the “Who Am I” posters around the classroom to form a walking gallery.
2. Give parents a sticky note with their child’s name on it. Have parents spend a few minutes to move throughout the room reading the “Who Am I” posters to try to identify their child. As parents are walking through the gallery, encourage them to discuss with other families why they think the poster belongs to their child. Parents will identify their child by placing the sticky note on the poster they think belongs to their student.
3. The families will gather together again as a group and the teacher will read through each poster and see if the parents correctly identified their child. When a student is correctly identified, the poster will be given to the parents and the parents will introduce themselves to the group and share the clue that helped them identify their child. The teacher will make the correct poster identifications for any parent who was unable to correctly identify their student so that all families have an opportunity to introduce themselves.

*The “Who Am I” poster kit can be purchased from Teachers Pay Teachers using the following link:*  
<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/Back-to-School-Get-To-Know-You-Activities-Fun-Fresh-1348248?pp=0>



**Title of Activity:** Parent Wishes

**Materials:** Wish Slips and Pencils/Pens

**Instructions:**

1. Provide each family with a “wish slip.” Ask them to take a minute to think about what they would like to wish for their student to accomplish in this upcoming school year.
2. Ask parents to complete a “wish slip” for their child and have each family introduce themselves and share their wish for their student with the other families in the classroom.
3. If parents do not feel comfortable sharing their wish, the teacher could still ask the family to introduce themselves and then the teacher can share her wish for that student.
4. Parent wishes can be collected and saved for reference at the end of the year APTT celebration meeting to highlight that when families and schools partner together – dreams do come true! 😊

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_

As a parent, what is your wish for your child this year?

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**Title of Activity:** Word Makers

**Materials:** Letter tiles for each student name, word makers recording sheet, pencils

**Instructions:**

1. Prior to the APTT meeting create individual letter tiles for each student's first name in the class. Place these letter tiles in a Ziploc bag or envelope at each student desk with the family folder.
2. Have parents work in groups of 4 to 5 people and use the combined letter tiles from their children's names to see how many new words they can create together as a group.
3. After about 5 minutes of group work time, have each group introduce themselves to the rest of the families in the room and share how many total new words they were able to create, the number of letters in the longest word they created, and in their opinion the most creative word they constructed. Recognize the team with the most new words created, the team who created the longest word, and the team who had the most creative new word.

