PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 1, 2025

PANDASAwarenessTX.org

PANS/PANDAS Awareness Day 2025 - Texas Families & Experts Partner

Thursday, October 9,2025 | 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Texas State Capitol, Room E1.016, 1100 Congress Ave, Austin, TX 78701

AUSTIN, TEXAS – On Thursday, October 9, Texas families, healthcare professionals, and advocates will gather at the Texas State Capitol to raise awareness about **PANS (Pediatric Acute-Onset Neuropsychiatric Syndrome)** and **PANDAS (Pediatric Autoimmune Neuropsychiatric Disorder Associated with Streptococcal Infection)**. The day's events will include the presentation of a **proclamation from the office of Governor Greg Abbott** in recognition of National PANS PANDAS Awareness Day, conversations with legislators, opportunities to hear testimonies from families and healthcare providers, as well as Parent-Practitioner Q&A panels.

PANS and PANDAS are autoimmune disorders affecting the nervous system that can severely affect a child's mental and physical health, behavior, and daily functioning. **PANS** may be triggered by infections, viruses and microbes such as Lyme disease and its co-infections, Mycoplasma, Influenza, Epstein-Barr, parasites, or environmental triggers like mold. **PANDAS** is specifically associated with streptococcal infection.

Neurological and behavioral symptoms can be extreme and may include:

- Anxiety, depression, mood swings, or suicidal ideation
- Restricted eating and eating disorders, such as anorexia and bulimia
- Obsessions and compulsions (OCD)
- Behavioral/developmental regression
- Motor and vocal tics
- Severe oppositional behaviors
- Aggression, hyperactivity
- Sudden academic decline, handwriting deterioration
- Motor abnormalities
- Sensory sensitivities
- Sleep disturbances
- Enuresis (bedwetting), urinary frequency

According to the PANDAS Network, **1 in 200 children in the U.S. may be affected**. **In Texas**, an estimated **11,000 children develop this illness each year**. When properly identified, treatment often includes addressing underlying infections, targeting immune system dysfunction, and providing emotional and developmental support — offering many children the chance for full recovery. Tragically, children are very often misdiagnosed due to the lack of awareness and acceptance from the mainstream medical community in Texas. When left untreated, lifelong disability can result.

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October 9th Event Agenda Highlights

9:00 AM	**Capitol rotunda** to personally invite media, onsite legislators and staff to attend
10:00	**Room E1.016** Governor's Proclamation, healthcare provider and parent testimonies, conversations with legislators
11:00	Family testimonies
11:45	Healthcare provider panel + presentations
12:15 PM	Parent-Practitioner Q&A session
12:45	PANDAS Awareness TX updates
1:00	Group photo

Featured Guest Speakers

Barry Smeltzer, MPAS, PA-C – Physician Assistant specializing in biomedical and environmental interventions focusing on the Texas autism community; serves on Texas PANS Advisory Council .

Jana Roso, PNP-C, APRN, FMAPS – Pediatric Nurse Practitioner providing holistic, integrative care for children with complex conditions; Co-author The Parent's Roadmap to Autism.

Kara Chasteen, MEd – Pivotal role in establishing and serves on Texas PANS Advisory Council ; mother of a son with PANS and became an advocate by ensuring voices are heard in the legislative process; advises the Texas Health and Human Services Commission on all things PANS.

Lizzie Martinez, MA, DHOM, CCH – Board-Certified Homeopath specializing in complex pediatric cases, including PANS/PANDAS, autism, and autoimmune dysfunction; Homeopathy Hive.

Courtney Dillon, MS, LPC – Licensed Professional Counselor offering therapies for children, teens, and adults with OCD, anxiety, trauma, and PANS/PANDAS.

Erin Paige – Intuitive Homeopath and host of the Remedy Revolution Podcast; mother of a child with PANS; advocate for natural therapies and family support.

Kelley Siliven – Advocate and mother who recovered her son from severe PANS/PANDAS; published story on BetterHealthGuy.com/rooftops; contributor to *Somewhere in There: Families Living with PANS & PANDAS*; Vice President PANDAS Awareness TX; frequent P/P podcast guest.

Leslie Anderson – President of PANDAS Awareness TX; Co-director of PANS/PANDAS Awareness Day at the Capitol; Co-host of Homeopathy is Changing Lives Podcast*;* former Chemical Engineer.

Call to Action

Texas families, advocates, and media are encouraged to attend and help amplify the voices of children living with PANS/PANDAS. Together, we can ensure legislators hear directly from families and practitioners about the urgent need for awareness, resources, and treatment. Details: **https://pandasawarenesstx.org/p%2Fp-awareness-day**

About PANDAS Awareness TX

PANDAS Awareness TX is a nonprofit advocacy group of passionate P/P parents dedicated to raising awareness of PANS/PANDAS. We empower families through education, community, and legislative advocacy, working toward a future where every child can access proper and swift diagnosis and treatment. **https://pandasawarenesstx.org/**

Contact / Interviews / Info

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