

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

PARENTING COMMUNITIES

funded by the 2019 Leelanau County Early Childhood Millage

2022 Report to the Community



Hello community members and thank you for reading our 2022 annual report!

2022 was a year of growth for Parenting Communities as we returned to face-to-face gatherings in the springtime after providing virtual and hybrid program options for the past two years due to the ongoing pandemic. We were so happy to see everyone in person again and we found that families were eager to have face-to-face connections with each other as well. Seeing the revitalization of in-person connections, we were thrilled to host a variety of events that brought Leelanau families together.

New to 2022 was our inaugural Family Street Fair. We envisioned a fun community event geared toward Leelanau families with young children that also built awareness and connections with community resources. With nearly 300 people in attendance in four hours, our first street fair was a great success! Mark your calendars for our Second Annual Family Street Fair: Saturday, July 15th, 2023.

Parenting Communities is dedicated to serving the families of Leelanau County with children birth-6 years. We understand how important this period of time is in a developing child's life, and that parents/caregivers need support and community to thrive. That is why we continue to provide home visits, playgroups, and community events to help all families feel connected, supported, and flourish. Our goal is to connect with every family in any way they chose - whether through reading our monthly newsletters, attending playgroups, community events, or having home visits. Our vision is that through these offerings, every child in Leelanau County will thrive.



Vision: Thriving children and families in Leelanau County
Mission: Comprehensive and responsive opportunities for all families and children (birth-6 years)

Key Values:

- Earlier is better
- Universal access
- Family-focused
- Parents as leaders
- Evidence & data
- Community collaboration



Strengthening Families

Our work is rooted in the Protective Factors framework - a research-informed approach that defines the qualities and resources that help children and families thrive. Every family has Protective Factors, and we seek to enhance these inherent strengths through sensitive and responsive support on both a family and community level. The six Protective Factors that serve as the foundation behind all the work we do are:

Nurturing & Attachment - Being sensitive, responsive, & attuned to our children's needs, providing a sense of safety & trust

Concrete Support in Times of Need - the resources & services that provide a family's basic needs & reduce stress during challenging times

Social Connections - Positive relationships with friends, family, neighbors, & community help reduce stress by having trusted people we can rely on for support, helping us feel less alone

Parental Resilience - The ability to cope with stress, trauma, & the challenges we face as parents/caregivers & ask for help when we need it

Social-Emotional Competence of Children - Helping our children understand & regulate their emotions, form & maintain relationships with others

Knowledge of Parenting & Child Development - Understanding child development & parenting strategies that best support our children's unique needs helps support their healthy growth



2022 Snapshot

- Playgroups held: 129
- Special Events held: 11
- Home Visits provided: 281
- Increase of 182 new children enrolled from previous year, totaling 325 children enrolled at year-end
- 338 children enrolled in Dolly Parton Imagination Library

Playgroups



Parenting Communities playgroups support child-led play and interactions between children and help families connect with one another so that we build a community of support for parents/caregivers with young children. Playgroups are typically one hour long and include play, snack, and story time. Parents/caregivers can connect and share experiences together, interact with their children in play, and children can meet and play with their peers, providing the social connections we all need.



In 2022, we held 129 playgroups, with 101 families and 127 children participating

We offered hybrid social opportunities due to Covid in the beginning of 2022 with virtual and outdoor playgroups when in-person gatherings indoors were not safe, and returned to regular, weekly playgroups throughout the county in March, 2022. Playgroups were held in Maple City, Suttons Bay, Leland, Northport, and Greilickville.



Community Events

Community Events are special opportunities to gather as a community with activities centered around young children and their families. We held 11 stand-alone community events and 2 series of events for a total of 26 community events held in 2022. It was a year full of fun and we were very grateful to all the families and community members who attended and made our events possible.

Virtual & Winter-Fun Playgroups

Early in 2022, we offered virtual and outdoors-only playgroups when meeting indoors was not safe due to Covid. We held two virtual meet-ups and two outdoor Winter-Fun playgroups.



Mom Power & Fraternity of Fathers

In collaboration with 5toONE, we held Mom Power for the second time and for the first time, offered Fraternity of Fathers - a 10-week series that supports parents in exploring their strengths and growth as parents.

Parent Café

Parent Café was a monthly get-together for parents/caregivers to connect, unwind, and chat about parenting topics in a nonjudgmental space while children participated in a supervised playgroup nearby. It ran monthly from May-September, 2022.



Clothing & Toy Swaps

We held two clothing & toy swaps for families to share & exchange gently used or outgrown children's items with other families for free!



Family Street Fair

The Family Street Fair was our biggest event of 2022 - with nearly 300 people in attendance in four hours. Community partners from all around the county joined us and shared activities for families to do while learning about valuable resources in our community. We had face painting, live music, bubbles, yard games, Antojitos food truck, Forever Yum ice cream truck, the Leland Twp. fire truck, schools, libraries, and more! Join us on Saturday, July 15th 10am-2pm for our 2023 Family Street Fair!



Mindful & Musical - with Miriam Pico

Miriam Pico returned for a Mindful & Musical evening of interactive music, singing, dancing, and family fun. Nearly 200 people attended this community-favorite musical event!



Seasonal Celebrations

We love to celebrate each of our beautiful Leelanau seasons, and in the end of 2022 we celebrated the fall with a special Harvest Playgroup, and the holiday season with a Family Holiday Gathering.



PC team (left to right): Hollie, Courtney, Santa, Sue, Autumn, & Adriana (not pictured: Kathy)

Home Visits



Home visits give families the opportunity to get individualized support to meet their family's needs. Families may meet with one of our Community Health Workers, nurses, social workers, registered dietitians, or lactation specialists to get the individualized support they need at the frequency they choose. Home visits are completely free & voluntary - our goal is simply to help us all be the parents we dream of being.

Home visits may provide:

- Support with the ups & downs of raising children
- A nonjudgmental listening ear
- Information & activities to support child development
- Developmental screenings
- Nutrition education & support
- Breastfeeding support with IBCLC lactation specialist
- Immunization information
- Referrals & information on community resources
- Mental health support
- Social connections



Evaluation

Parenting Communities is working with Avenue ISR, an independent research and strategy consultancy, to evaluate both the short term and long term impact of these early childhood initiatives.

- Many Leelanau County parents/caregivers are experiencing anxiety and depression. A significant decrease in anxiety and depression were noted for parents who completed multiple rounds of assessments (e.g. longer term participation in Parenting Communities).
- Of parents surveyed, almost 100% stated that involvement in Parenting Communities helps them feel less isolated, helps them navigate the ups and downs of life, helps them learn about resources and supports to help them as parents/caregivers, and helps them be better parents.

"In the first two years of full implementation, Parenting Communities appears to be having a dramatic and positive impact on families in Leelanau County, providing knowledge, connections and community support to help them navigate challenging times."

**The full Parenting Communities evaluation report will be available on the Parenting Communities webpage.*

Partners

The **Parenting Communities Advisory Council (PCAC)** is a collaborative of local early childhood professionals, advocates, and parents that helps guide the network of services provided through the Leelanau Early Childhood millage.

The **Mental Health Work Group** continues to focus on improving access to mental health care for Leelanau County families.

Community Partners:

- Schools
- Mental health providers
- Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians
- NMCAA
- Great Start to Quality/5toONE
- Child care providers
- United Way
- Power Book Bags
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library
- Parents & advocates

Budget

- 2022 Expenditures: \$522,552
- Salary & Benefits: \$370,346
- Program Expenses: \$76,618
- Indirect Costs: \$75,588



From our Families: What about Parenting Communities has been most helpful to you?

Always knowing I have a great support team behind my family & me... I know I will be able to get the help & support I need

The community energy & knowing support is there if I might need it

Playgroups have provided a great opportunity for my child to interact with other children in the area. It would otherwise be challenging to make acquaintances & form playgroups with other parents without this program

It has been so wonderful to connect with someone who gets it & encourages me to be the best version of myself - both as an individual & as a parent

In-home support feels so much more personal & stressless

I love that we have been able to meet new people. Since Covid, it's been difficult for my kids to socialize with others their age & this gives them the opportunity to do so

Inclusive atmosphere, creating community

It has helped me the most to connect with other Spanish-speaking families to continue the legacy for my son, which is so important to me

That it is a community & we all try to help each other in some way

Walking alongside me in everything



@PCLeelanau



@parentingcommunities



www.bldhd.org/Parenting-communities