



Parenting Communities

2021 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Funded by the Leelanau Early Childhood Millage

2021 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

We are thrilled to present this first Parenting Communities Annual Report to our neighbors and supporters in Leelanau County.

Parenting Communities is the result of advocacy, volunteerism, innovation, and commitment from early childhood professionals and Leelanau County residents who recognize that supporting families during the earliest years of a child's life sets the stage for social-emotional, physical and mental health, as well as academic success.

While COVID-19 inhibited the robust roll-out that was planned, the dedicated Parenting Communities team forged ahead to create an array of oppor-

tunities for our youngest residents and their parents/caregivers.

Our goal is for all Leelanau County families to be a part of the Parenting Communities network where they can receive information, support, opportunities to connect with other parents, and access professional advice from nurses, dietitians, community health workers, social workers and breastfeeding specialists.

Whenever I had any questions at all about breastfeeding, I always had someone to confide in. It was a HUGE Help!"

-PC Parent



Vision: Thriving Children and Families in Leelanau County.

Mission: A comprehensive, responsive system of opportunities for all families and children (birth to six years)

Key Values:

- Earlier is better
- Universal Access
- Family Focused
- Parents as leaders
- Evidence and Data
- Collaboration

Strengthening Families

The research-informed Strengthening Families Framework guides the work of Parenting Communities. The Framework defines five protective factors that, when supported and strengthened, achieve the best outcomes for kids.



Parental Resilience: Managing Stress and functioning well even when faced with challenges, adversity and trauma.

Social Connections: Constructive and supportive social connections help buffer parents from stressors and support nurturing parenting behaviors.

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development: The foundation for intellectual, social and emotional development are established in the first few years of life and are determined by the nature of the child's environment and experiences that shape early brain development.

Concrete Support in Times of Need: Families need the basic necessities as well as medical, mental health, social, educational and other services to build resilience and thrive.

Social and Emotional Competence of Children: There is a strong link between a young child's social-emotional competence and cognitive development, language skills, mental health, and school success.

The best thing about Parenting Communities is the many resources available to me. They help me navigate the many obstacles in my life.

-PC Parent



Parenting Communities

2021 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

PARENTING COMMUNITIES

Playgroups

Parenting Communities playgroups are an opportunity for parents/caregivers to connect with, learn from, and support each other. Each group is facilitated by a certified Community Health Worker with training in child development and community resources. Playgroups also provide a venue to share health information such as dental care, immunizations or nutrition, along with strategies for parenting challenges.

In 2021, playgroups were held in Greilickville, Maple City, Suttons Bay, Leland and Northport. While the goal was weekly playgroups in all locations, COVID adaptations were required. Virtual playgroups and special outdoor events were held during times when regular in person gatherings were not safe.

In 2021, 47 playgroups were held, with 79 parents and 138 children participating.



"Playgroups have been the best place I could bring my toddler for fun and social interactions after having my second baby. It's been a place I'm confident in bringing both kids to by myself and that's huge!"

-PC Parent

Community Events



August 2021. Miriam Pico led approximately 90 Leelanau County families and children in interactive music and dance.

Community Events are special occasions that provide an opportunity for parents and young children to experience a fun, family friendly activity with Leelanau families from all corners of the county.

"The best thing about Parenting Communities was watching my child interact with and play with kids his age and as a parent, meeting new parents!"

-PC Parent



In October, 2021, two fall festival events brought approximately 200 parents and young children out for pumpkin – painting, apple cider, costumes and fun.

Home Visits

Home Visits provide an opportunity for Leelanau County families with young children to receive individualized support that meets their unique needs. Nurses, Community Health Workers, Dieticians, Breastfeeding Specialists and Social Workers are available to visit families in their homes, and at the frequency needed to help parents achieve their goals.

Home Visitors help with:

- Child development screening and parent education
- Managing challenging behaviors
- Parenting to increase school readiness and success
- Nutrition education and support
- Breastfeeding support
- Managing stress, trauma, or mental health concerns
- Immunization information
- Referral and navigation assistance for basic needs, health care, dental care, etc.
- A non-judgmental listening ear during the ups and downs of parenting
- And more.....



The best thing about Parenting Communities is the basic concept of being and feeling supported.
-PC Parent

In 2021, 281 home visits were conducted to support 44 families and 58 children.

17 Breastfeeding visits supported 12 Leelanau County moms.

Mom Power

Children need strong roots to grow, branch out and thrive. Mom Power is a strength-based 10 week journey for mothers to better nurture and support their children through understanding, while also being nurtured and supported themselves.

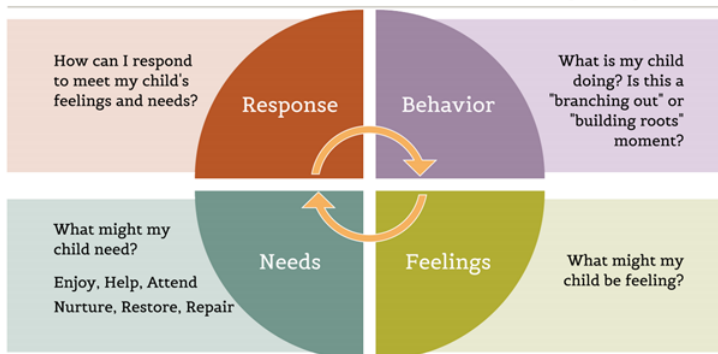
The Leelanau Early Childhood millage created an opportunity to not only bring Mom Power to the community, but also to facilitate on-going connections between the participating parents, further maximizing the support network.



We are so thankful for the committed volunteers who made Mom Power 2021 a success!

zero TO THRIVE

MOM POWER
The Wondering and Response Wheel



"I walk away from class each week feeling empowered. I feel so proud of myself and my kiddo and the work we are doing."

"Being able to be with other moms in a safe space and be real is so needed."

"Hearing other Mom's experiences make me feel less alone."



Parenting Communities

2021 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

PARENTING COMMUNITIES

Collaboration

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

A **Mental Health Work Group** has also been established to focus on improving access to mental health care for Leelanau County families.

Collaborative Partners Include:

- Schools
- Mental Health Providers
- Grand Traverse Band
- NMCAA
- Great Start to Quality/5ToOne
- Child care providers
- United Way
- Parents
- Power Book Bags
- Dolly Parton Imagination Library

Budget

2021 Expenditures: \$323,008

Salaries/Benefits: \$226,723

Program Expenses: \$51,959

Indirect Costs: \$44,326



As a Dolly Parton Imagination Library partner, Leelanau County children can have a book mailed to their home every month from birth to age 5. To enroll a child, visit our webpage at www.bldhd.org/Parenting-Communities.

EVALUATION

Parenting Communities has contracted with Avenue ISR to lead our evaluation efforts and conduct data analysis. The goal for evaluation is two-fold: 1) To ensure we are meeting the needs of families in our community, and 2) To evaluate the short- and long-term impact of Parenting Communities on the health and well-being of parents/caregivers and children. Data collected since September 2021 does not yet enable us to evaluate long term trends and outcomes. However, preliminary information is encouraging and demonstrates:

- Based on self-assessments by parents/caregivers participating in home visiting, many of these Leelanau County parents are experiencing stress, anxiety and depression.
- A strong majority of participants agree that Parenting Communities helps them in diverse ways, e.g. being better parents/caregivers, increasing confidence in managing children’s behaviors, and decreasing feelings of isolation.
- For the most part, participants express a great deal of appreciation for the program. There were a handful of small suggestions for expansion and change.
- 20% more children enrolled in Parenting Communities were up to date on immunizations vs those not enrolled.
- We feel confident that the evaluation plan in place will be effective at showing impact over time.

Stay informed about Parenting Communities opportunities—Sign up for our **monthly newsletter** at www.bldhd.org/Parenting-Communities!

www.bldhd.org/Parenting-Communities

@ParentingCommunities

@PCLeelanau

231-256-0227