



Dear PEPS Community

This summer feels different at PEPS. More families are ready to meet in hybrid and in-person groups. As we respond to this need, it's becoming clear just how deeply the pandemic has shifted the ground beneath us. Securing enough Group Leaders for PEPS Groups right now is a challenge. Our amazing staff and Group Leaders are getting creative, stepping up to lead more groups and shifting gears to support leader recruitment, training and more.

I'm co-leading a hybrid group, which is a new format where groups meet in-person for a few meetings and virtually for the rest. From commiserating about the diaper blow out that went through every layer of a car seat to understanding how others are dealing with sleep deprivation, these parents need each other.

It's an honor to hold space for them as they navigate new parenthood and powerful to witness them as they connect, learn alongside one another and gain confidence. The intentional meeting structure, facilitation training and topic guides provided by PEPS make it easy for me to show up each week for these parents.

PEPS Group Leaders give their time and gain community, connection, and skills along the way. One leader shared this about his experience: *"Being a PEPS Leader has made me a better facilitator, a more empathetic listener and a more inclusive leader."*

We deeply appreciate everyone who has already stepped up to lead groups, and we need more help! If you can show up for new parents by leading or co-leading a hybrid or in-person group starting in August or September, please email our Leader Recruitment and Support Specialist Elizabeth Dawson (elizabethd@peps.org). She'll match you with a group and get you set up with all the training and support you need.

With gratitude,

Dana Guy
PEPS Executive Director
danag@peps.org

PEPS Updates

Learn in Community With Our Parents of Adolescents and Teens (PAT) Program

Calling all parents of adolescents ages 10-19! Our PAT Program brings parents together for empowering support, research-driven information and resources, and community during a challenging phase of parenting. **In addition to our traditional 9-week PAT Groups, we now have a NEW offering — 4-week PAT Groups focused on specific themes.** Whether you're preparing for what middle school or high school will bring, hoping to improve communication with your adolescent, or looking to connect with other parents over a longer period of time, there's a group for you!

We have groups starting throughout the summer and fall — grab your spot today! Don't miss this opportunity to connect, learn in community, and find support.

[Register for a PAT Group](#)

Reflecting on 2022: PEPS Annual Report

"[My] PEPS Group really supported me in allowing me to have a community. A community of people that I could share my fears with, share my good moments with, share my questions with. And just really feel like I belong to a group that understands me and that's going through the same thing that I'm going through." — 2022 PEPS Participant

Thanks to the support of our community, we were able to achieve great impact like this last year while continuing to center our organizational values of equity, innovation, inclusion, community, and authenticity.

[Read Our 2022 Annual Report](#)

As we move forward in our work, we're planting seeds for the future of PEPS by investing in partnerships, developing new programs to best serve families in our community, and advocating for systems-level change.

[Send a gift to plant a seed for the future of PEPS.](#)

PEPS Affinity Program Connects Parents With Shared Identities

"I came out of that first single-parent meeting and burst into tears. I had no idea that I needed that as much as I needed that. It was the first time in this journey as a parent that I was in a group of like-minded parents who understood the uniqueness of being a single parent by choice." — Meghan Wagner, PEPS Single Parents pilot group participant

ParentMap recently published an article featuring PEPS affinity programs for families with shared identities, including our groups for LGBTQIA+ parents, single parents, and working moms. Affinity groups are one of many ways that we've been moving away from a one-size-fits-all approach to offering multiple ways for parents to engage and connect. Read about the [power of building community in PEPS affinity groups](#) on ParentMap.

Advisors & Ambassadors Highlight: Dima Kfour

Dima Kfour is an accomplished strategist, manager, brand builder, product developer and startup founder with 15 years of experience leading marketing initiatives across industries, countries, and channels. She's supporting PEPS as a Strategic Marketing Advisor through the PEPS Advisors & Ambassadors Network.

Dima and her family moved from Ireland to the Seattle area in 2021. Dima joined a PEPS Newborn Group and Working Moms Group where she built strong connections with like-minded, diverse families. She was inspired to help other families find support systems by leading a Newborn Group and supporting PEPS as an advisor. Thank you, Dima!

Interested in sharing your lived experience, perspective, subject matter expertise or passion for the PEPS mission? Learn more about our [Advisors & Ambassadors Network](#).

National Make-A-Will Month

Next month is National Make-A-Will Month! For parents, the idea of making a will can be overwhelming. We're all busy, and planning for the unthinkable may be the last thing on your mind when there are bottles to be washed, lunches to be made, and schedules to orchestrate. Creating an estate plan, however, is one of the most important things you can do to make certain your child will be cared for if anything were to happen to you. [Today is a great time to get started.](#)

Local Partners and Sponsors

Promoting a more inclusive definition of motherhood through a non-traditional parental leave policy

We're excited to share with you a company that, through its parental leave policy, strives to provide better outcomes for every family — a value near and dear to the PEPS community. For those who don't know Armoire, it's a clothing rental company (and one of our newest PEPS sponsors!) that likes to live what they preach. Proudly POC-woman led, LGBTQIA+ friendly, pro-work-life balance, and sustainability obsessed, they believe that a happy employee makes for a happy Armoire.

Almost two years ago now, Armoire's CEO and founder, Ambika Singh, was expecting her first baby which spurred her to rethink their parental leave policy to align with who they are as a company. Read about [Armoire's non-traditional parental leave policy](#) and their ongoing quest to support the professional woman.

The benefits of play for a child's development

For thousands of years, play has been a childhood tradition. Unregulated and unstructured, it has passed from generation to generation. Even during periods of immense challenge, children found ways to be playful. However, in the face of too many structured activities, loss of outdoor areas, excessive screen time, and increased academic pressure, this age-old tradition is fading. [Read about the benefits of unstructured play](#) from PEPS Sponsor Bright Horizons.

Raising kids in an increasingly digital world

Sometimes parenting recommendations from experts feel nearly impossible to implement in daily life. Screen-time is one of those challenges for many parents. For parents looking for a solution to screen-time woes, PEPS Sponsor Kidovo offers a personalized, interactive app that helps children engage with tech in a healthy and educational way. [Learn more about Kidovo](#) and how it can keep both kids and parents happy on our blog.

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