



Recently, I had the privilege of attending a panel moderated by U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy, whose office has declared a [loneliness epidemic](#) and highlighted its profound impact on our well-being. His insights resonated deeply, reminding me of the essential role that connection to others plays in our lives. Strong communities foster a sense of belonging, support, and shared purpose. They provide safe spaces to share challenges, celebrate successes, and learn from one another. Dr. Murthy also emphasized the importance of “being the inviter” – taking the initiative to create the community we yearn for.

At PEPS, we're passionate about being that "inviter" for you. In June, we hosted an LGBTQIA+ Family Picnic at a local park, where families gathered and connected for food and fun. Looking ahead, we're excited to offer a [Single Parents Affinity Group](#) starting on September 9 as well as a community playdate for single parents (more details to come!). We're also thrilled to introduce [in-person PEPS Groups for Parents of Adolescents and Teens \(PAT\)](#) at locations in North Seattle, West Seattle and Bellevue this fall.

Building community looks different for everyone. Some of us thrive in the energy of large gatherings, while others find solace in smaller, more intimate settings. The good news is that there are countless ways to connect with others who share your interests or experiences. Whether it's hosting a casual playdate at the park, joining our [Advisors and Ambassadors Network](#), or stepping up to lead a PEPS Group yourself, we hope you'll find a way to connect through PEPS!

With gratitude,

Melanie Roper
Program Director

Stay Involved With PEPS: Upcoming Events

PEPS Group Leader Info Session

Wednesday, Aug 7 | 12-1pm | Virtual (Zoom)

Join us for a virtual info session to learn and ask questions about volunteering as a PEPS Group Leader. Group Leaders give their time and gain community, connections, and skills along the way with in-depth training and support from PEPS.

In 2023, volunteer PEPS Group Leaders donated over 8,000 hours of their time to support parents. Group Leaders create a welcoming space for parents to share, connect, and support one another. Volunteers are an essential element in making PEPS programs so effective and meaningful. We'd love to see you there!

Raising Resilient Teens: Practical Skills for Parents

Wednesday, Oct 23 | 6:30-8:30pm | Hans Rosling Center for Population Health, University of Washington

Parents of teens – join us for an in-person presentation led by Dr. Kira Mauseth on strategies for handling stress and anxiety as parents of teens (and helping your teen do the same!).

This event is designed for parents and caregivers raising children aged 13- 19. Attendees will have the opportunity to learn together, share experiences, and gain practical tips using the "Cope, Calm, and Care" method.

Space is limited, with only 80 spots available. Register to reserve your spot today!

PEPS Updates

Now Available: In-Person Groups for Parents of Adolescents & Teens (PAT)

We're thrilled to launch in-person Parents of Adolescents & Teens (PAT) groups this fall at select community sites in North Seattle, West Seattle, and Bellevue! This will be the first time our PAT Groups are being offered in-person. Participants in our Newborn PEPS Groups say in-person groups help them build deeper connections with their group members more quickly. Know a parent of an adolescent ages 10-19 who could use a supportive community of peers, research-backed tools and resources, and a space to work through parenting challenges? Send them to our [PAT webpage](#) to learn more and register for a group this fall!

Looking to find community and support with the convenience of joining a group from your phone or computer? We're still offering virtual PAT Groups, too! We have several 4-week and 9-week PAT Groups scheduled throughout the summer and fall. Explore groups for different age groups, on topics ranging from communication to mental health, at a variety of meeting times – we've got something for you!

You have kids – YES, you need a will!

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 ensure your child will be cared for if anything were to happen to you.

Here are some resources to help you get started:

- Read these [6 tips to begin your estate planning process](#).
- Dive into the details on [Estate Planning: Who, What, and Why](#).
- Learn about some [common mistakes](#) when putting together a will.
- Bookmark this website by [End of Life Washington](#).
- Get started today and visit [Free Will](#) to create a basic will for free.
- Consider a [Legacy Giving Pledge](#) to PEPS.

Ready to kick-start your estate planning? Join us at our community event, [6 Steps to Create Your Will](#), on October 9!

PEPS Highs & Lows

Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML)

Five Years In Policy Advances Quickly; Society Advances Slowly

Washington State's Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) program is 5 years old. We asked local parents how the program worked for them – what's going well, and what could be going better? [Read real families' experiences with PFML](#), how the program has been improved in recent years, and how PEPS is advocating for better policies for families.

Parenthood: The Ultimate Masterclass in Leadership

In so many ways, our society doesn't do enough to support working parents. Being a parent is often framed as an obstacle to reaching your full potential in the workplace. But what if we reframed this mindset to recognize and celebrate the ways that parenting can make us better leaders and assets to our teams and organizations? PEPS Advisor and alum Priyanka Sahni shares her [reflections on how skills she's learned through parenting have helped her thrive at work](#) on our blog.

Local Partners and Sponsors

Gates Foundation Discovery Center | Wed – Sat 10am-5pm

Looking for an inspiring, welcoming, and free activity for all ages in Seattle? Stop by the Gates Foundation Discovery Center, next to Seattle Center! Explore interactive exhibitions, innovations, and powerful stories of progress in solving some of the world's challenges. <https://www.discovergates.org/>

Traveling With Kids

Are you getting ready for a family trip? Join PEPS Sponsor [Bright Horizons](#)' education experts as they share their own travel adventures and provide a practical list of tips you can implement right away as you plan your next family getaway. Listen to the [Teach. Play. Love. podcast](#).

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