



Greetings!

It's hard to believe it's the end of July! This summer at PEPS, we're in the midst of planning for what re-emerging from the pandemic looks like. While the State of Washington is re-opening for many activities and folks may be eager to return to gathering in person, [families with young children face unique and complicated challenges](#) as children under age 12 are ineligible for vaccinations. We've appreciated getting input and guidance from advisors such as physicians, King County Public Health and more, to help us navigate this time. With the safety of the babies and families, and our values of equity and inclusion at the center, we have made the decision to keep our programs virtual through to the end of this year. As we plan for what in-person services will look like when it is safe to gather again, we would love to hear from you.

In the meantime, we're hearing from parents and learning from our program evaluations that despite uncertainty, parents are finding a big benefit from PEPS in the virtual format.

"I didn't think the virtual meetings would be as great as they are and didn't anticipate getting as much out of them as I have. I appreciate PEPS finding a way to make this happen!"

As we plan for the future, we have been reflecting on what we've lost and gained in this time. Participants and facilitators of virtual PEPS Groups have shared that they really miss the organic conversations and moments that can happen with in-person groups — when you're walking in the door or settling in next to someone. We know gathering outdoors is the safest option at the moment, and we encourage families to make plans for getting together outdoors, for a walk or visit to a local park, outside of their formal PEPS gatherings.

We have also discovered so many benefits of operating virtually. Virtual groups are more accessible and easier to make work for many parents and Leaders who appreciate not having to travel between locations, juggle bedtime, and more. Parents and Leaders are finding ways to make it work — from breakout rooms to WhatsApp text threads for around-the-clock support to outdoor meet-ups. We are in awe of the creativity and resilience that families and facilitators have shown. We've been so grateful for the opportunity to engage more with Group Leaders and for them to engage with and learn from one another through our Monthly Leader Chats. As an organization, we've also learned to be more nimble, to get things up and running quickly, to adapt, and to take care of ourselves and each other.

We are so thankful for each and every one of you who support PEPS and families in our community — by giving your time, energy, and financial resources to fuel our work, always, and especially over the last 18 months as we've navigated so much together.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dana". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Dana Guy
PEPS Executive Director
danag@peps.org

Resources & Inspiration

Take Time to Pause and Reflect with PEPS

It's been a jam-packed first 6 months in 2021! Learn more about what we are learning, celebrating, and excited to work on in the coming months.

[Read more.](#)

Paving the Way for Connection

2020 was full of surprises and change. In 2020, NISO Programs and PEPS partnered to offer their first collaborative Spanish-speaking parent peer-support group to families on the Eastside. Learn about their challenges and triumphs!

[Read more.](#)

Support for PEPS Group Leaders

Last month, we were thrilled to host an Advanced Facilitation workshop for PEPS Group Leaders on 'Recognizing, Interrupting, and Resolving Microaggressions'. Facilitators from [Families of Color Seattle](#) (FOCS) led the workshop and guided us through the vocabulary, conversations, and practice on identifying and thwarting microaggressions. A heartfelt thank you to FOCS for leading the discussion and learning and to all our dedicated PEPS Group Leaders for continuing to grow, learn, and lead with us!

Support the Renewal of Best Starts for Kids

Best Starts for Kids was approved by voters in 2015 and has successfully reached nearly half a million of King County's youngest children and their families. The program addresses issue areas that PEPS, our partner organizations, and many PEPS participants care the most about: maternal and child health, early learning, and basic needs. Much of their work focuses on early investments; reaching pregnant people, babies, very young children and caregivers, with an emphasis on reaching communities that historically lacked access to health and early learning services.

Additionally, Best Starts invests in culturally-rooted and place-based partnerships and organizations, building on community-driven policy and systems changes, and funding new programs such as the development of the pilot program for parents of adolescents and teens at PEPS.

The average homeowner in King County will pay \$114 per year to support this program, which will go towards continuing to help families thrive. In addition to the good work Best Starts for Kids already does, the renewal will focus more on expanding childcare affordability and addressing low-wage childcare workers.

King County voters will receive their ballots by July 19 for the primary election on August 3. Join PEPS in supporting the renewal of Best Starts for Kids! Vote to renew Best Starts for Kids by mailing in your ballot or drop it off at a King County [ballot box](#) by August 3rd.

PEPS is Hiring!

We are searching for a Data and Evaluation Specialist to oversee, monitor, and evaluate data throughout the organization and make strategic and programmatic recommendations to ensure the quality of PEPS programming. This position will work with all teams to collect and analyze fundraising, operations, and program data and ensure sound data collection standards and analysis throughout the organization.

[Read the full job description and apply today!](#)

Welcome, Sarah!

Sarah Bahn (she/her) is the newest addition to PEPS, joining us as our Communications and Marketing Coordinator! With several years of experience in the nonprofit sector, Sarah is looking forward to working with our entire team to amplify the PEPS families, partners, and community. [Get to know Sarah.](#)

From our Sponsors

Setting and Keeping Boundaries

What are boundaries? And how can we go about setting limits that will last? Learn more from our friends at UW Medicine on ways to create, communicate, and maintain boundaries. *(Estimated reading time: 8 mins)*

[Read more.](#)

What if...

You've opened a 529 for your child and likely still have questions. What if my child goes to a school outside of Washington state? What if we move? You've got questions and Washington 529 College Savings Plans (WA529) is here to help. *(Estimated reading time: 3 mins)*

[Read more.](#)

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