

## The Impact of PEPS

"Dear PEPS, first of all, I'm so sorry that it has taken me so long to pay my fee. Money is tight right now as I am sure you are aware. The reason for this not isn't to complain about the economy, it is to thank each and every one affiliated with PEPS for the wonderful service you provide. **PEPS has been an invaluable resource for us in the new stage of our lives.** We have made lifelong friends out of the other moms as well as our group leaders. I don't know how I would have made it through these last few months without my PEPS momma's. Thank you once again from the bottom of my heart."

~ Jordan, PEPS parent

**"PEPS has played such a special role in our lives.** Being a twin parent is more than twice as challenging. By gathering with other parents dealing with the same struggles - who were just as sleep deprived and who you knew would never judge you for showing up frazzled and in your pajamas - we were able to share many laughs and come to see that twin parenthood can also be more than twice as fun. And our group leader Kate played a critical role in building this supportive community. Thank You!"

~ Carolyn, PEPS parent

"I'm a member of Peps and can't tell you how much it's done for me. I had my daughter Cole 9 months ago and our Peps group still continues to meet twice a month and sometimes more. **I recommend Peps to every pregnant person I know,** and sometimes to those I don't know. I tell them if there is just one piece of advice I can give them as a new parent, it's to join Peps."

~ Carrie, PEPS parent

"I just wanted to drop you a quick note to let you know **how awesome the leader for my Peps Group was.** It was Shannon and she was fantastic.

I had heard that the Peps experience depends a lot on the quality of your leader and I thought Shannon was phenomenal. She was educated, informative, caring, so helpful and really took a personal interest in each and every one of the mom's (and babies) in the group. She also was super proactive in providing resources to us and in bringing in guest speakers. She was also a fantastic listener. She was very genuine and you could tell she really put time and preparation into her role as our leader. She cultivated a great dynamic with the group as well. I couldn't have been happier.

So often great work goes unrecognized and thus I wanted to take a minute to let you know about my experience. So there you go...that's my 'shout out' for Shannon!"

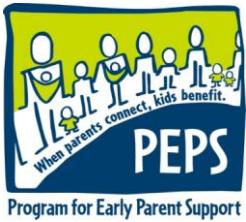
~ Megan, PEPS parent

**"Just wanted you to know how much we appreciate PEPS.** My daughter, Kenadi, Aiko and Julia are pictured in the photos and are PEPS alumni. We (the moms of these kids) all met in a drop-in PEPS group in Skyway in Renton, 11 years ago. We so appreciate the value that PEPS gave to us then and has given us even after we've gone. Thank you!"

~ Stephanie, PEPS parent

**"We had a great experience with PEPS.** The facilitated PEPS sessions were great and our PEPS plus activities have been frequent and diverse – meeting at the park, swimming, a babysitting co-op and birthday parties. **PEPS has given us a wonderful community of families which provides us with a lot of fun and support.** My out of town friends with kids all wish they had PEPS when they hear about it."

~ Tom, PEPS parent



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**"PEPS provided me with a place to feel normal and sane.** Everyone was tired, delirious and feeling helpless at various times and it felt good to know that that is OK. I also enjoyed knowing I had a place to go once a week. It gave me good practice at getting somewhere by a certain time. I also learned of so many helpful resources and "baby gadgets" that ended up being major problem solvers. **PEPS is a safe place to share your struggles and joys of parenting.** It is so necessary to know that no one has it figured out and there is never just one way to do something. **As a new mom, PEPS gave me energy and a renewed spirit every week.**"

~ Kari, PEPS parent

"I think I have transformed from a "scared out of her mind" mom to one that is confident, happy and overall well rounded. I have made friendships that will probably last a lifetime. It means so much to us to have this resource available, I had very few friends with children before I joined PEPS and now most of my friends do have kids. Just to know that other moms are going through what you are going through and that you are not crazy is wonderful. **I always tell my pregnant friends about PEPS because I honestly think it would have been ten times harder without it.**"

~ Tara, PEPS parent

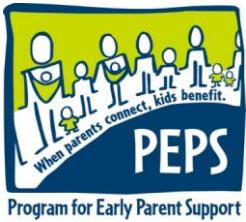
"My PEPS adventure began when my first son Jameson was 2 1/2 months old. I remember meeting at Caroline's house for the first time and being very nervous. I was even more nervous after we all introduced ourselves and realized I was the youngest one there! Over the course of our meetings I realized that it didn't matter and that these women and I had a lot in common simply because we were moms. I took away their life experiences and their suggestions and treasure them. Now my son is 4 and we still try to hang on to each other. We are the ones that we turn to for parenting support and encouragement and to celebrate the triumphs with. That is my PEPS adventure to date. I say it like that because I don't think its over. As long as these women are in my life I will call it my PEPS adventure and be grateful to you for bringing these strangers together. **PEPS Saved Me!!** We were the first ones of our family and friends to have children. I had no idea what I was doing and my Doctor recommended I join a group. **PEPS enabled me to learn how to be a mom and gave me something to look forward to every week.** Going from the workforce to a stay at home mom is not an easy transition to make and then adding the stress of being a new parent. **PEPS gave me support, encouragement, a shoulder to cry on and people to share the little tiny wonders of my son that only another mom could enjoy.** Most importantly though, **PEPS gave me a place to feel safe when I was questioning everything I was doing and friends that, no matter how old my kids get, I will remember forever.**"

~ Allison, PEPS Group parent

**"PEPS was such a life saver for me.** I had absolutely no idea what to do with a newborn baby! It was great to come to the meeting each week and see other mothers who were as confused and exhausted as I was. I had a great leader who went above and beyond. Our group still keeps in touch even though the kids are 7 now. **I made friendship in my PEPS group that I know will last a lifetime.** It helped me through a very difficult period in my life (and my husbands). I feel blessed that such a group existed for me. Thanks." ~ Kim, PEPS parent

**What does PEPS mean to you and your family?** Sanity, joy, comfort, understanding, support, friendship, opportunities, education. One word: Everything."

~ Lexie, PEPS parent



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**"We are grateful to PEPS for allowing us to keep our sanity through the birth of 2 children.** We were the first of our friends to have kids, so having a group of people who could relate to every sleepless night, and every milestone was fantastic. We still see our friends from PEPS and all but one couple has a 2<sup>nd</sup> child – and they are all within 8 months of each other! We are celebrating 4<sup>th</sup> birthdays this summer, and it's wonderful seeing the growth and development of all kids. **PEPS is invaluable!** I always tell people, particularly expectant or new parents, that **PEPS is one of the best things they can do for their babies and themselves.**"

~ Katie, PEPS parent

**"I am SO grateful for the PEPS scholarship we received last year.** PEPS has become such an integral part of my life and has afforded me so many opportunities. I heard about PEPS through a friend who highly recommended joining the group. My pregnancy was a surprise (albeit *wonderful*) and we were not financially ready to take on everything that would entail. I was working as a pre-school teacher and would be taking an unknown, unpaid leave of absence to be home with our baby. It also turned out that my husband lost one of his jobs just after our baby was born. I knew I would need something to help me through all these changes! I was saddened at first because the PEPS registration fee seemed so high compared to what we could afford at the time. I wrote in hoping I could join at a reduced rate. I was SO appreciative when they granted me a scholarship! Now I hope to contribute so another woman can benefit as I have."

~ Michelle, PEPS parent

"My son Ben (3 yrs.) was diagnosed with hypotonia (low muscle tone) as an infant. **I can honestly say that I would not have been able to deal with the situation with Ben if it wasn't for my PEPS group.** They knew about Ben's issues from day one. It was such a great outlet for me and such a relief to not have to explain why he wasn't walking at 20 mos. and why he has trouble with his speech. Ben and I could just be ourselves – no stares, no questions – and I could complain and whine and laugh and cry all I wanted because they knew it all and were there for me every step of the way. I still feel this way – to this day."

~ Shawn, PEPS parent

"Thank you. I had a wonderful experience with PEPS. It saved me.... I also met my one of my best friends there. It isn't easy to meet a "new" best friend at 33! We feel passionate about it and I always recommend it to people when they are going to have a new-born. So, you are welcome, but, **"I" am in debt to PEPS actually.** I hope to be able to always contribute in some way."

~ Elana, PEPS parent