



As we navigate the uncertainty and anxiety that many of us are feeling during the presidential transition, we also want to acknowledge the important progress that has been made in recent years. During Dr. Vivek Murthy's two terms as U.S. Surgeon General, he brought awareness to issues close to our hearts at PEPS, like the loneliness epidemic and parental mental health and well-being (see [Parents Under Pressure: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Mental Health & Well-Being of Parents](#)). We're deeply grateful for everything Dr. Murthy has done to call attention to these issues that are so often experienced behind closed doors without adequate support.

While the findings of the Surgeon General's Advisory were heavy — 48% of parents say their stress is completely overwhelming most days — they also weren't surprising. In conversations about the Advisory with PEPS staff, our board, and members of our community, I keep hearing one thing: they feel seen. Today's parents are facing new challenges on top of the traditional stressors of parenthood: social media, the epidemic of loneliness, a youth mental health crisis. Parents need more support, and they need it now.

The good news? We're addressing this issue every day at PEPS. The advisory highlights the importance of creating spaces for parents to have an open dialogue about the challenges of parenting. We strive to make every PEPS Group a safe space for parents to talk openly about their highs and lows, their struggles and stressors. So much is built from that foundation of families sitting in a circle together — community, care, mutual support and reciprocity, celebration, joy, laughter and more. Social connection and community are an antidote to stress.

While the state of parental mental health is cause for major concern, there's still hope. In my recent blog post, I highlight what each of us can do to help build a culture of care for parents — individually, as a community, and systemically. If you're ready to turn despair into action, [read my reflections on the Surgeon General's Advisory](#).

In community,

Dana Guy
Executive Director

PEPS Updates

New Year, New Advocacy Opportunities

The 2025 legislative session began on January 13 and will last for 105 days. And these 105 days could make a big difference in the lives of our families, friends, and neighbors!

In 2025, we're focusing on policy issues that will help create a foundation of stability for families in our state, including:

- Investing in child care to make it more affordable and maintain a sustainable workforce
- Improving Washington's Paid Family & Medical Leave program
- Keeping families in their homes through rent stabilization
- Expanding protections for pregnant and postpartum workers

[Learn more](#) about our priority issues and [sign up for our advocacy e-list](#) to receive updates and timely action alerts.

Reflecting on Our 2024 Impact

As we launch into exciting projects and goals for 2025, we also want to take time to reflect on all the accomplishments of 2024.

Here are a few highlights of 2024:

- We launched our Working Moms Affinity Groups as a permanent program offering.
- We drastically increased our in-person PEPS Groups in response to what we heard from families.
- We collaborated with members of our Advisors & Ambassadors Network on several exciting projects.

We're so grateful to each one of you who supports our mission by donating, volunteering, telling your neighbors and friends about PEPS, joining us to advocate for equitable policies, and so much more.

Read our [2024 Impact Report](#) for more highlights from the past year.

Parents of Adolescents & Teens: Find Support This Winter!

[Sign up for a PAT Group](#): We have several Parents of Adolescents & Teens (PAT) Groups starting soon, and there's still time to register!

We have a variety of options available, including:

- 4-week and 9-week groups
- Groups for tweens, teens, and in-betweens
- In-person and virtual options
- Topics like mental health, communication, and more
- Morning and evening meeting times

Parents who have participated in PAT tell us it was completely worth the time commitment and they wish they had joined sooner. Invest in yourself as a caregiver by joining a PAT Group today.

[Join us for a workshop](#): PEPS is collaborating with PNW Parent Education to offer two virtual events for parents with children ages 10-19: *Have the Best Semester Yet*, hosted by PNW Parent Education, will explore time management, communicating with teachers, and preparing for tests and projects. *Tools for Effective Communication with Adolescents*, hosted by PEPS, will dive into the art of effective communication with adolescents and how to use positive reinforcement to boost self-esteem.

Save the Date and Join Us for the Biggest PEPS Event of the Year!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: The **PEPS Benefit Luncheon is happening on Tuesday, May 6** at Seattle Center Fisher Pavilion! Come connect with the PEPS community while raising important funds to support the crucial programs PEPS provides for parents.

BECOME A TABLE CAPTAIN: We're looking for enthusiastic PEPS fans to support the Luncheon as Table Captains! Invite your friends and fill your table, then enjoy an inspiring event together - there's no ticket fee and PEPS helps each step of the way.

Join us to learn more:

[Table Captain Virtual Info Sessions](#)

Friday, January 24 from 12-1pm, or
Thursday, February 13 from 12-1pm

Supporting Families from Hawaii to North Carolina: Interview with PEPS Partnership Manager Polly Jirkovsky

What is the PEPS Network, and how does it help PEPS reach more communities of parents across the country? We interviewed PEPS Partnership Manager Polly Jirkovsky to share more insights about this impactful program and how it expands the reach of PEPS.

Learn about how the PEPS Network fits into the broader mission of PEPS, how our partners adjust the PEPS model to fit their community's needs, and how YOU can support us in growing this program. [Read more on our blog.](#)

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