



Supporting Parents  
Connecting Families  
Building Community



# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT

  
[WWW.PEPS.ORG](http://WWW.PEPS.ORG)

## Dear PEPS Community,

This past year has reaffirmed something we've always known at PEPS: connection changes everything.

In 2024, the U.S. Surgeon General issued an Advisory, [Parents Under Pressure](#), highlighting the mounting stress, isolation, and mental health challenges parents face. The report underscored what PEPS has long understood — that strong social connections are critical to parental well-being and healthy child development. Too many parents feel alone, stressed, and overwhelmed. But when parents connect, loneliness becomes community, stress becomes shared understanding, and overwhelm transforms into shared wisdom.

That belief has guided us for decades, and this past year, we deepened our commitment to building a world where no parent navigates this journey alone. We created change through three key levers:

**Bringing Parents Together:** We expanded our in-person groups, recognizing the power of face-to-face connection in reducing isolation and building meaningful support networks. Through peer-led groups based on neighborhood, parenting stage, and shared experience, parents formed lasting bonds and grew their confidence. Many returned as Group Leaders, strengthening our community with each new group.

**Building Partnerships:** We collaborated with other community-based organizations to expand the reach of parent support networks. By sharing our model and learning from our partners' deep community expertise, we co-created spaces that reflect each community's culture and needs.

**Changing Systems:** We advocated for policies and workplaces that better support parents and families, ensuring they have what they need to thrive.

**Together, we are creating lasting change:** parents feel more confident and connected, parent networks are stronger, more accessible, and rooted in community, and families experience greater well-being as society shifts to better support parents.

This work is not just about parenting — it's about community, purpose, and well-being. As the former Surgeon General emphasized, parents need more than just resources — they need relationships and systems that support them.

We are deeply grateful to every parent, partner, volunteer, donor, and supporter who makes this vision a reality. Your commitment ensures that PEPS continues to grow, evolve, and reach more families each year.

Together, we're building a future where parents and children are connected, resilient, and thriving.

With gratitude,



Dana Guy, she/her  
PEPS Executive Director



### IN 2024...

We ran **345 PEPS Groups**, building community for parents during challenging transitional phases.

We **collaborated with 28 partners** who served over 1,000 parents.

We educated, informed, and activated our community around **6 important advocacy issues** impacting families.

*Pictured above: PEPS Executive Director Dana Guy with her children at the 2024 PEPS Benefit Luncheon.  
Pictured left: PEPS staff members at our annual staff volunteer day at [KidVantage](#).*



# PEPS Impact: 2024 At a Glance

**3,865** parents participated in **345** PEPS Groups facilitated by **221** Group Leaders who dedicated **10,116** volunteer hours to supporting families.

## 2024 PEPS Programs

**Connecting the Expecting**  
*For expectant parents*

**Newborn**  
*For parents with babies 2-20 weeks old*

**Second Time Around**  
*For parents with a newborn and one or more older children*

**Baby Peppers**  
*For parents with babies 5-12 months old*

**Parents of Adolescents & Teens (PAT)**  
*For parents with adolescents 10-19 years old*

**Affinity Program**  
*For parents with a shared identity who have children 0-3 years old:*

- LGBTQIA+ Parents
- Single Parents
- Working Moms

*"[PEPS] helped us feel way more normal and less alone. Lots of great resources, but more than that, just hearing others' experiences was super reassuring."*

PEPS Participant

## AFTER PARTICIPATING IN PEPS...

**97%** of respondents **gained confidence** as a parent

**98%** of respondents **felt more connected** to other parents

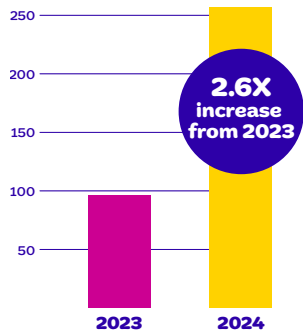
**99%** of respondents **found others who understand** what they're going through

# Gathering in Community

PEPS is all about gathering and sharing space with peers — connecting, laughing, crying, and building community. As we navigate the years following the pandemic and continue to broaden the scope of our programs, we've shifted the ways we gather to meet families where they are.

## Increasing In-Person Services

IN-PERSON GROUPS  
YEAR-OVER-YEAR



After years of working our way back to in-person services following the pandemic, we heard loud and clear that most families wanted to gather in person in 2024.

In 2024, we hired a Leader Recruiter and restructured our Program and Operations teams to help meet the demand for more in-person Group Leaders.

We hosted 257 in-person Newborn, Baby Peppers, and Second Time Around Groups in 2024, compared to 97 in 2023.

## Connecting Families With Shared Identities

**PEPS Affinity Groups** bring together parents who share an identity to connect and learn in community. In 2024, we continued to offer virtual Affinity Groups for Single Parents and LGBTQIA+ families.

After running 18 pilot groups over two years, we officially launched our Working Moms Affinity Groups as a permanent program offering in 2024. These groups were developed with intentionality through a landscape analysis, surveys, and curriculum development, all informed by feedback from approximately 200 working mothers and several Human Resources professionals.

We heard from parents in our Affinity Program that they wanted spaces to continue connecting outside their group. In response, we hosted a single parents playdate and an LGBTQIA+ family picnic in 2024. We also offered a workshop for grandparents — bringing together another group that's eager to connect and learn!

*My LGBT+ PEPS group held me and my family with so much care and warmth. I'm forever grateful for the real talks, the space to process, the care we shared... We queer families need this sacred space so much.*

LGBTQIA+ Group Participant

## FEEDBACK FROM AFFINITY GROUPS

*I went from feeling very alone and disoriented in my experiences as a working mom to learning my experiences and feelings were very common among working moms. It helped me have more patience and compassion with myself as I navigated the transition back to work from parental leave.*

—Working Moms Group Participant

*That sense of community and that sense of care is especially needed for single parents... PEPS is something that provides that in such a supportive way.*

—Single Parents Group Participant

Pictured above left: Families gathered at the LGBTQIA+ family picnic in June.



In 2024, we served **172** parents in **17** Affinity Groups

# Refining How We Support Parents of Adolescents

Since launching our [PEPS Groups for Parents of Adolescents and Teens \(PAT\)](#) in 2022, we've continued to refine our program offerings, creating opportunities for parents to engage in a variety of ways. We know that parents of adolescents need support, but we've learned that our traditional PEPS model doesn't always work well for this community of parents who are busy and find it challenging to commit to a longer program.

## This year, we refined and grew our PAT Program by:

- **Hiring a Bilingual (English/Spanish) PAT Program Outreach Manager** to strengthen our outreach efforts and connect with new partner organizations.
- **Meeting parents in spaces they're already gathering** by partnering with community organizations and schools and offering custom PAT Groups for established peer groups.
- **Offering a variety of ways for parents to access support**, including workshops, events, 4-week and 9-week PAT Groups, and both virtual and in-person options.



## Community Partnerships Expand Reach of PAT Program

2024 was an eventful year for PEPS partnerships. We provided curriculum support and training to 11 organizations interested in offering the PAT Program. Eight partner organizations successfully ran PAT Groups in 2024, including four new partners! Our partners delivered 4-week PAT Groups to their communities, adapting the program as needed to be culturally relevant.

NAMI Eastside, The Circle, and Mercy Housing Northwest offered in-person PAT Groups for Spanish-speaking families and Sistema Escolar offered Spanish PAT Groups virtually. We partnered with Hamlin Robinson School to provide a PAT Group for parents of students with dyslexia and other language-based learning differences. Each of our partners worked closely with PEPS to adapt the program to meet the specific needs of their community, allowing members of these PAT Groups to connect more deeply through shared language and life experiences.

*Being part of the Parents of Adolescents and Teens Group made me feel so supported and markedly reduced my parental stress.*

*PAT Participant*

## THE PAT PROGRAM IN 2024

**98 parents**  
participated in  
14 PEPS-run PAT Groups

**110 parents**  
learned together at PAT  
community events and  
workshops hosted by PEPS  
and other community  
organizations

**8 partners**  
offered PAT Groups in their  
communities

*Pictured above: Teenager hugging his mom.  
Pictured left: PEPS Bilingual PAT Program Outreach Manager Gloria Martinez tabling at a community event.*



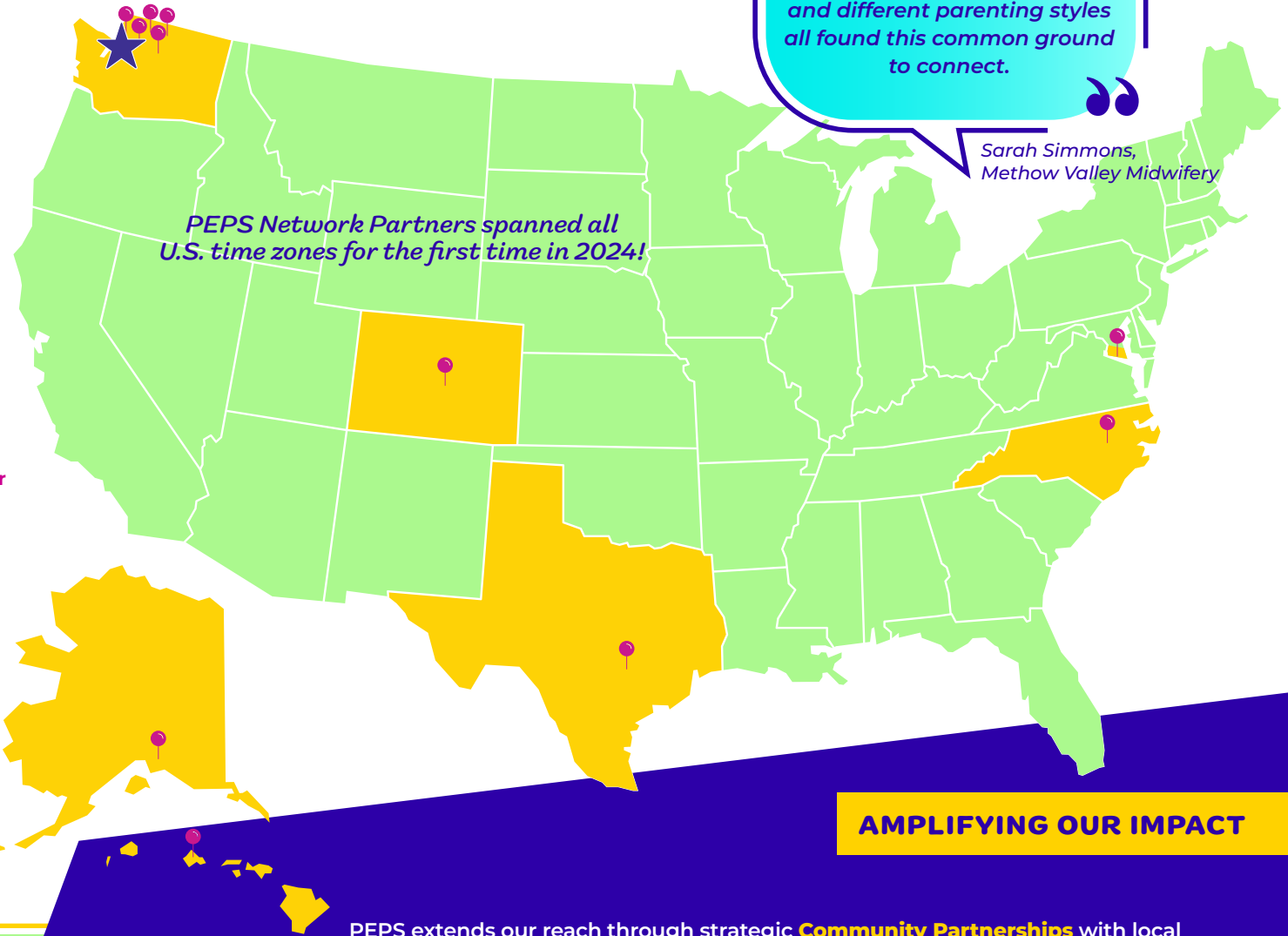
# Partnerships at PEPS

## ★ 17 Community-Based Organization Partners

- Actitud Latina\*
- Africans on the Eastside\*
- Being the Village\*
- ChildStrive
- Denise Louie Education Center
- Empower Youth Network\*
- Friends of the Children\*
- Hamlin Robinson School\*
- Hearing, Speech & Deaf Center
- Launch
- Mercy Housing Northwest
- NAMI Eastside\*
- NISO Programs
- Northwest Center\*
- Open Arms Perinatal Services
- Sistema Escolar USA
- The Circle\*

## 📍 11 Network Partners

- Early Childhood Partners\***  
Eagle County, CO
- Early Parent Support Anchorage**  
Anchorage, AK
- Greater Maple Valley Community Center**  
Maple Valley, WA
- Healthy Mothers Healthy Babies**  
Coalition of Hawai'i  
Honolulu, HI
- Martha's Table**  
Washington, D.C.
- Mercer Island Healthy Youth Initiative**  
Mercer Island, WA
- Methow Valley Midwifery**  
Methow Valley, WA
- Partners in Parenting**  
Austin, TX
- Room One**  
Twisp, WA
- Seattle Families of Multiples**  
Seattle, WA
- Triangle Area Parenting Support**  
Triangle Area, NC



“It’s great to see how people from different backgrounds and different parenting styles all found this common ground to connect.”

Sarah Simmons,  
Methow Valley Midwifery

PEPS Network Partners spanned all U.S. time zones for the first time in 2024!

## AMPLIFYING OUR IMPACT

In 2024, we established **10 new partnerships**. In total, **28 partners** served **1,031 parents** across the country.

PEPS extends our reach through strategic **Community Partnerships** with local organizations serving diverse families, including Spanish-speaking communities, Black mothers, parents of children with learning differences, and more. The **PEPS Network** enables organizations beyond Seattle to license and implement the PEPS model, bringing our research-backed curriculum to more communities.

\*New partners in 2024

# Caregivers Need Care, Too

In 2024, former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy released [Parents Under Pressure: An Advisory on the Mental Health and Well-Being of Parents](#). The findings of the report were alarming, though not surprising. Today's parents are under an immense amount of pressure, dealing with the traditional stressors of parenthood in addition to newer challenges like social media, an epidemic of loneliness, a youth mental health crisis, and more.

**48% of parents say that most days their stress is completely overwhelming<sup>1</sup>.**

The Advisory stresses the importance of fostering supportive social connections among parents — something PEPS has been doing for over 40 years. Parenting is far more difficult when done in isolation. We all play a role in creating a culture where parents can truly thrive.

**65% of parents/guardians, and 77% of single parents, experience loneliness<sup>1</sup>.**

As a society, we need to invest in and value parenting and caregiving. When parents and caregivers are well, their children thrive — building a brighter future for all of us.

*As technological and economic forces have reshaped the world at a rapid pace, parents may find it more difficult to prepare children for a future that is uncertain.*

*Former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy*



*Pictured left: PEPS staff members meeting former U.S. Surgeon General Dr. Vivek Murthy.  
<sup>1</sup>Parents Under Pressure: The U.S. Surgeon General's Advisory on the Mental Health and Well-Being of Parents*

## How can we address parental stress?

### ON AN INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

- ☑ Prioritize social connection for yourself
- ☑ Check in with parents and caregivers you know consistently — listen with empathy and be a steady, supportive presence
- ☑ Offer concrete support by bringing a meal, providing childcare, or helping with errands

### ON A COMMUNITY LEVEL

- ☑ Invest in community spaces that help parents feel less alone
- ☑ Support organizations like PEPS that bring parents together for mutual support — **volunteer as a Group Leader** or **donate** to fuel our programs

After participating in PEPS, **94%** of respondents said they **felt less isolated** as a parent.

### ON A SYSTEMS LEVEL

- ☑ Advocate for more supportive structures for parents — in your workplace and other institutions
- ☑ **Sign up for PEPS advocacy alerts** to support policies that provide a foundation of stability for families in Washington State

## ADVOCATING FOR WORKING PARENTS

In late 2024, PEPS surveyed our community about their experiences using Washington State's Paid Family and Medical Leave (PFML) Program and returning to work after bringing home a child. Nearly 300 parents responded to the survey, helping inform our advocacy work and policy recommendations for PFML program enhancements and postpartum worker protections.

**1 in 4 respondents** shared that someone in their household was at least somewhat worried about having a job to return to after using PFML. **Nearly 30%** of working parents experienced challenges with their workplaces supporting their lactation needs. Read more results and recommendations from our [Working Parents survey](#).

Collecting and sharing these insights from parents with policymakers is one of many ways we're engaging in advocacy work to support Washington families.

# Many Ways to Engage with PEPS

One of the best ways to reduce loneliness and isolation? Using your skills for a meaningful purpose and investing in your community! PEPS relies on a network of incredible supporters who make our work possible. Thank you to the volunteers and donors who are doing their part to reduce loneliness and isolation among parents — we appreciate you!

## PEPS Group Leader: Brigita Rumung

Brigita (pictured right), a University of Washington master's student from Indonesia, spent her first summer in Seattle volunteering as a PEPS Group Leader. Initially, she was nervous about the prospect of facilitating conversations in English. But with support from the PEPS team, Brigita bonded with her group, gained confidence through facilitating ice-breakers, and conquered her fears.

[Read more about Brigita's experience on our blog.](#)



*This experience has been totally beneficial for me as a learner seeking to hone my skills and competencies... it has significantly contributed to my personal growth. I learned how to believe in myself and be brave enough to try something new.*  
— Brigita Rumung

## PEPS Advisor: Jeff Hignite

Jeff (pictured right) serves as a PEPS Advisor on finance and strategic partnerships. As an Associate Vice President of Operations at Providence Swedish, Jeff has been an incredible advocate for PEPS, helping us build deeper and more strategic partnerships with local healthcare and hospital systems. Jeff has also brought a forward-looking, strategic lens to the PEPS Finance Committee, contributing his expertise to inform our flexible pricing model, cash-flow monitoring, and more.



*I enjoy my time working with PEPS leadership and efforts to ensure the ongoing sustainability of PEPS as an organization and benefit to our community. Recently, a lot of our focus has been in the exploration of opportunities for growth to serve more families which benefits the health and wellbeing of parents and children alike.*  
— Jeff Hignite

## PEPS Donor: Beth Rosapepe

After participating in PEPS Groups when her children were born, Beth (pictured right) became a dedicated PEPS supporter. As a Group Leader, Beth has led over 10 Expectant Parents, Newborn, and Second Time Around PEPS Groups. She and her husband also joined our Sustainer Circle (a commitment to donate \$1,500 each year for three years), helping to ensure the health and vitality of PEPS for years to come.




*I support PEPS as a donor and a Group Leader because parenting in community is vital to our wellbeing as parents and as families. Hearing 'oh, thank goodness it's not just me!' in a group never gets old. Personally, PEPS gave me the gift of a wonderful group of friends that I'm still closely connected with almost 13 years later, and the gift of 'it's not just me' keeps on giving.*  
— Beth Rosapepe

## GET INVOLVED

 **Join** or **Lead** a PEPS Group

 **Invest** in PEPS

 **Share your expertise** as a Guest Speaker

 **Join** our Advisors & Ambassadors Network or Board

 **Advocate** for equitable policies for families

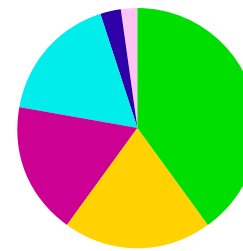
There are many ways to engage with PEPS. Interested in helping families find support and build community? Get involved today — it takes the whole community to build community!

# Collective Giving: Sustaining PEPS With Your Support

At PEPS, building community is at the heart of everything we do. In 2024, the Surgeon General's call to address loneliness, isolation, and parental mental health underscored just how vital our work is. Parents and caregivers need support, and society needs more community-building spaces.

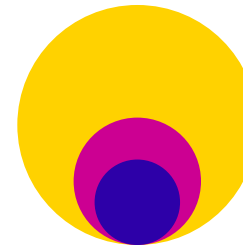
Our work wouldn't be possible without you — the connectors, investors, and catalysts who believe in creating a more supportive world for parents.

We are deeply grateful to our giving community for making our work possible. Thank you to our **2024 donors, funders, and sponsors** — those who gave for the first time or continued investing in PEPS, friends who hosted tables or joined us at our Benefit Luncheon, and the funders and sponsors who believe in our mission. Thank you to our **2024 volunteers** — your support allows us to build community for thousands of families each year. Together, we're helping parents and families thrive.



**Revenue \$2,580,306**

- 40% Individual Gifts
- 20% Grants
- 18% In-Kind
- 17% Program Fees
- 3% Corporate Giving
- 2% Investment Earnings



**Expenses \$2,802,126**

- 71% Programs\*
- 20% Core Mission Support: Fundraising
- 9% Core Mission Support: Administrative

**Net assets as of December 31, 2024: \$1,493,711**

*Note: Pre-audited 2024 financials. Numbers subject to change.*

*\*Program expenses include: new program development, curriculum development and support, Group Leader recruitment, training and support, program evaluations, partnership development and support, community engagement, group registrations and systems, customer service, and parenting resources.*

## DID YOU KNOW?

*"I'm so pleased to see the many ways that [PEPS] has expanded to meet the needs of today's parents and grandparents. I'm happy to donate in order to make sure that this program will be here for parents and children yet to come.*

*— Judy, 1984 PEPS Participant, Grandparent, Group Leader, and Donor*

**Only 17% of the PEPS budget is covered by our program fees.**

PEPS does not receive government support.

**40% of our funding comes from individual donors who understand the value of PEPS.**

**PEPS accepts cash and non-cash gifts of stock and cryptocurrency.** You can even name PEPS as a beneficiary in your will!

*Pictured above: A 2024 PEPS Newborn Group family*

## 2024 PEPS Board of Directors

**Sahar Arbab**

**Christine Chang**, President

**Erika Dowd**, Treasurer (part-year)

**Rebecca Koladycz**

**Christine Leber**, Secretary

**Stephanie Sharkey**, Vice-President

**Kathryn Zetzer**, Treasurer (part-year)

## 2024 PEPS Staff

**Patricia Andre-Edgar**, Communications and Marketing Director

**Swarnima Aswinkumar**, Innovation and Expansion Manager

**Sarah Bahn**, Communications and Marketing Manager

**Jennie Capron**, Leader Training and Support Manager

**Anushree Dasgupta\***, Leader Recruiter

**Elizabeth Dawson**, Program Support Specialist

**Magill Dickerson-Lange**, Donor Relations Manager

**Kayla Eddy\***, Development Manager

**Michelle Geller\***, Finance and Administrative Manager

**Dana Guy**, Executive Director

**Polly Jirkovsky**, Partnership Manager

**Gloria Martinez\***, Bilingual Program for Parents of Adolescents and Teens (PAT) Outreach Manager

**Marion Mohrlok**, Development Director

**Cari Morales**, Operations Director

**Samantha Novak\***, Development Manager

**Beth Peery**, Impact and Evaluation Specialist

**Allanah Raas-Bergquist**, Operations Manager

**Melanie Roper**, Program Director

**Elaine Walsh**, Operations Coordinator

\*Part-year

*Pictured bottom right: PEPS Staff at the 2024 Benefit Luncheon*



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**Our Mission:** PEPS connects parents to strengthen families and build community.

### Our Vision:

- Resilient Families
- Connected Communities
- Equitable Outcomes

### Our Values:

- Equity
- Innovation
- Inclusion
- Community
- Authenticity

**Building a Culture of Care:** At PEPS, we invest in a culture of care for our team. Our holistic approach integrates trust, flexibility, and a strengths-based approach into our organizational environment. We strive to create a workplace where employees feel valued, engaged, and motivated to contribute their best work. This helps us attract, nurture, and retain talent while driving overall organizational success.

In 2024, four out of 17 PEPS staff members took a one-month paid sabbatical. This unique benefit allows staff who have been with PEPS for seven years to enjoy rest, quality time with loved ones, and time to reflect. [Read about their sabbatical experiences.](#)

