**Building Relationships and Strengthening Families through the Strengthening Families Model**

Parenting Communities of Leelanau County

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**Our Home…**

Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council

“Doing business differently to help Leelanau families achieve better things”

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**Parenting Communities**

Is a relationship-based outreach program for ALL Leelanau County families with children prenatal through kindergarten with extended supports available through age eight.
Parenting Communities strives to serve ALL Leelanau families

- Universal Service
- Regardless of preschool affiliation
- pregnant moms, teens, grandparents, young parents, old parents, adoptive parents, migrant parents, anyone and everyone parent-y, incarcerated parents, people with homes, homeless folks, genius parents, parents with special needs, wealthy, poor, NO BARRIERS!

Parenting Communities seeks to promote healthy children living in stable, nurturing families, supported by strong communities that provide comprehensive, supportive services.

There is no such thing as “THOSE PEOPLE” when it comes to child abuse and neglect.

Anyone under enough stress can snap and hurt a child or just check out/be consumed by meeting needs of family resulting in neglect.
Parenting Communities is guided by the

**Five Protective Factors**

- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
- Concrete Supports in Times of Need
- Social and Emotional Competence of Children
- Knowledge of Child Development and Parenting

Parenting Communities offers

- Monthly Newsletter
- Parental Education
- Weekly Playgroups
- Home Visits to support the hopes of the family
- Developmental Screenings
- Resources and referrals
- Wrap Around
- Advocacy
Monthly Newsletter

- Many families’ first touch with PC
  (Currently 600+ families)
- Supports all five protective factors

Education article
Local news
All playgroups
Baby Pantry, WIC, Food Pantries, etc.
Contact info

It’s all about
CONNECTION

- Parent Education
- Weekly Playgroups
- Home Visits
- Developmental Screenings

Parental Education

Informal Parent Education includes:
- Newsletter articles
- Conversations with PC coordinators anywhere, anytime.
- Conversations and observations with peers at PC events
- Lending library
Parent Education Evenings
based on current research & current interests of families

Parents Together
Education Series
• Temperaments
• Parenting Styles
• Coping with Grief & Loss
• Movement & Development
• Conscious Discipline

Conscious Discipline
Dr. Becky Bailey
• Brain Development: Connections with others on the outside build neural connections on the inside.
• Composure: Becoming the person you want your children to be
• Encouragement: Building a connected family
• Assertiveness: Saying “no” and being heard
• Choices: Building self-esteem and willpower
• Positive Intent: Seeing the best in yourself & others
• Empathy: Handling the fussing and the fits
• Consequences: Helping children learn from their mistakes

Meet families where they are

Provide dinner and childcare. Meet at a convenient location. These strategies help to support all five protective factors.
Weekly Playgroups
A neutral space to support the five protective factors

Weekly Playgroups include
- Kindergym
- Pool Pals
- Beach & park outings
- Library story hours
- Intergenerational Creative Movement
- Infant massage
- Music with Doug Hansen
- Family Hikes & Potlucks
- Paint and Playdough
- Puppet Theater

The Protective Factors at Playgroups
- Playgroups connect families with others for concrete supports
- Social interaction for parents and children
- Parents ask other parents and PC coordinators questions about their challenges or concerns.
- Parents observing other parents-the biggest teacher!
- Playgroups connect families with other families-modeling alternative strategies for how to respond to different situations.
Home Visits
To support the hopes of the family
What is this type of Home Visit?
What does it look like?

a “Home Visit” is not always a visit to someone’s home.

Home visits and personal visits are meaningful conversations that happen anywhere, anytime to support the protective factors. HV’s and PV’s require planning and/or follow up. Usually around two hours time goes into each HV/PV, even if the interaction with the family lasts a short time.

Parallell Process
support the parent so the parent can support the child
Parenting Communities Home Visits support the

**Five Protective Factors**

- Parental Resilience
- Social Connections
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- Social and Emotional Competence of Children
- Knowledge of Child Development and Parenting

**Initial Visit**

Is ALWAYS building rapport. Listen, feel, meet families where they are.

**Tools for early home visits:**

- Initial visit forms-hopes, concerns, strengths
- Intake form-when families want to share more about themselves

Some options for families who want to focus on **Child Development:**

- Ounce Scale-albums & developmental screenings
- Parents as Teachers
- Conscious Discipline
Some options for families who need to focus on **Concrete Supports**:

- Family goals sheets
- Resource support
- Referrals
- Wrap Around

**Infant Mental Health Principles**

- Do for, do with, stand beside and admire
- Being therapeutic without being a therapist
- Observe
- Listen
- Wonder
- Respond

[www.mi-aimh.org](http://www.mi-aimh.org)

**Developmental Screenings**

- Ounce Scale
- ASQ
- Developmental Wheels
- Parents as Teachers
- IEP
- DECA
- Hearing/Vision
- Early On
It’s all about

CONNECTION

• Resources/Referrals
• Wrap Around
• Advocacy

Resources and Referrals

• Begins with collaboration
• All about connection
• No wrong door
• No blind dates

Parenting Communities Partners

• Health Department
• Family Support Team
• Leelanau Public Schools
• Department of Human Services
• Traverse Bay Area Intermediate Public Schools
• Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians
  • 4 C’s/Great Start
  • Leelanau Preschools
• Leelanau Christian Neighbors
• Northwest Michigan Human Services Association
  • Doula
Collaborative Concrete Supports

- Laundry Project
- Baby Pantry

Wrap Around
Family Support System “wraps around” as families identify values and pursue short-term and long-term goals

- Education/child care
- Employment
- Social
- Family
- Financial
- Transportation
- Cultural/Spiritual
- Emotional/Psychological
- Housing
- Legal
- Physical Health/Medical
- Crisis/Safety
- Calming Strategies

Advocacy-Navigating
Helping a family to connect with resources and effectively navigate complex systems.

- Family Support Team
- Department of Human Services
- Continuing Education
- Healthcare
Advocacy
Connecting local values and concerns, family and early childhood issues with the greater community and law makers

• Candidate forum
• Early Childhood Initiative Community Forum
• Month of the Young Child Awareness and Advocacy Campaign
• Great Start Collaborative

How do families connect with Parenting Communities?

• Word of mouth
• “Can my cousin call you?”
• Referrals from PC partners
• No wrong door
• All are welcome

Connecting

Parenting Communities seeks to promote healthy children living in stable, nurturing families supported by strong communities that provide comprehensive, supportive services.
For further information about the Strengthening Families Model and the Five Protective Factors …

http://www.strengtheningfamilies.net