

# La Plata Family Centers Coalition

## 2022-2023 Annual Report



Email: [contact@lpfcc.org](mailto:contact@lpfcc.org)

Phone: 970-3854747

Website: [www.lpfcc.org](http://www.lpfcc.org)

495 Florida Road, Durango Co 81301





We find ourselves reflecting on another year of challenges, successes, and new opportunities. We reflect on some of the lessons We have learned that are applicable to both the world outside our office and the world inside our office. In collaborating with others, remaining flexible and transparent has proven effective in addressing complex situations and helps us adapt to new realities. Being open to change and new ideas are fundamental concepts to evolve, advance and better oneself as a person. Creating connected systems and partnerships advance collective social well-being. Being directly informed by those who access services in our communities is crucial to ensure the leadership of the organization is addressing pressing issues identified by the community.

What we have learned as a guiding hand for the staff and clients of the Center is the value of harvesting the strengths and skills from team members and providing them the means to grow in their areas of interest. Providing mental health and self-care is crucial to the work in social services. Sharing a meal often brings people together. Food is the universal language. We have found that humor provides a balm, a buffer, and a release for stress. Implementing a participatory process in grant writing, budgeting or new initiatives helps us remain truthful to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) principles. One aspect of leadership that we have come to love is being the invisible force behind the scenes securing the tools and providing encouragement for others to achieve their potential.

We are grateful for the opportunity to work with an incredibly group of people at the Family Center. Thank you so much for your ongoing support and investment in our work. Your contributions positively impact the lives of many people in rural Southwest Colorado. Thank you for being part of a bigger body of change and support. We are looking forward to another successful year offering programs, emergency assistance, early childhood education, entrepreneurship opportunities, farming/gardening, and community leadership development.

*Maribel Balbuena*

Executive Director

*Amber Turley*

Deputy Director

# YOUR SUPPORT IS MAKING AN IMPACT

Here's a quick look at the number of services provided along with the count of unduplicated individuals and families reached in 2022 -2023

LPFCC provided **22,019** services to **561** unduplicated families and **1,365** unduplicated individuals.

**16,915** People Served Through Food Distribution (Parent Leader Network, LPFCC Food Pantry and Mobile Food Pantry events)

**10,697** Pounds of Fresh Produce Distributed

**82** Approved Energy Assistance Applications (\$ 27,000)

**122 New** Program Enrollments (FSS, CCR, PAT, CFP)

Clothing/Shoe/Sanitary/Toiletries	<b>403</b>
School Supply Drive	<b>540</b>
Vaccination Clinics	<b>65</b>
Resource & Health Fairs	<b>140</b>
VITA - Tax assistance (Hosted 5 filing events)	<b>54</b>
Family Pumpkin Patch Event/Dia De Los Muertos	<b>71</b>
Holiday Food Boxes	<b>339</b>
Toy Drive	<b>561</b>
Wellness Events/Yoga Workshops	<b>113</b>
Coffee Break with Dads	<b>8</b>
Free Art Classes for Kids	<b>40</b>
Referrals/Resource Navigation	<b>764</b>

**The Family Centers programs supporting education, economic mobility and self-reliance include:**

**The Colorado Community Response Program (CCR)** delivers brief intervention services and support to families and children that have been screened-out for child abuse and neglect stemming from referrals to the Department of Human Services. **29** families were served last year. This program offers flex funding for rent, car repair and childcare among other financial needs. It also has key components to address financial literacy and workforce development. Last fiscal year we distributed **\$18,000** in flex funding.

With **Family Support Services (FSS)**, Family Advocates partner with families to set SMART goals, address immediate crisis situations with concrete supports, work on financial literacy, obtain parenting education, access resources, follow up on referrals, and provide interpretation services. LPFCC served **50** families last year.



The Early Childhood and Parent Education Program features **Parents as Teachers (PAT)**, a research-based home visiting program for families with children prenatal to five. LPFCC is currently the only PAT Blue Ribbon Affiliate site in La Plata County. Evaluations for the Parents as Teachers home visiting model shows the following national results: children’s developmental delays and health problems are detected earlier, children transition to kindergarten ready to learn, achievement gaps are narrowed, children experience success as they move through the elementary grades, reduced parental stress and stronger bonds with their children, families are more likely to promote early literacy/children’s language development, and parents are more involved in their children’s schooling.

The **21** families and **18** children served by LPFCC’s PAT program last year had the following characteristics: **70%** were low income, **40%** had at least one high-needs indicator, **60%** had two or more high-needs indicators, **35%** were single parent households, 15% had multiple children under the age of 5 and **15 %** had a child with disabilities.



**The Colorado Fatherhood Program (CFP)** provided connections to community-based services and supports in the areas of healthy relationships, responsible parenting, economic stability and building social capital. Participants include **18** fathers (biological, expectant, adoptive, stepfathers, foster, kinship and grandfathers) caring for children up to age 21 years. This program offered two 13-week educational workshops where participants followed the Nurturing Dads and Partners curriculum. In addition, it offered peer-led gatherings to address self-identified topics/needs and to build social capital. Please note LPFCC is one of seven sites in

the State of Colorado facilitating this program. All programs, service provision, workshops, projects, and community-led activities were offered in both Spanish and English.



**Service provisions and initiatives that support health equity, food justice, entrepreneurship and community -identified need/solutions include:**

The LPFCC Parent Leader Network, the Pond Farm, MISABEL Tamales y Mas and satellite community gardens.

As a result of learning how to cultivate, process and preserve fresh produce, three parent leaders started their own catering/food business under the branding of MISABEL Tamales y Mas. They recently secured a large order of salsas (\$ 11,000) made with produce from the Pond Farm. Two youth have become producers/vendors of fresh eggs supplying LPFCC weekly. There are more entrepreneurship projects undergoing development at the Pond Farm including Wild at Heart Farm. In addition, by strengthening Community Response to COVID-19 through its Parent Leader Network, LPFCC is supporting coordination of food distribution, concrete resources and outreach since COVID-19 outbreak. The target population is residents of five mobile home parks/neighborhoods containing **122** families in La Plata County.

This community-led project enables underrepresented community members to come together to address their concerns about inequities, health, and wellbeing in a safe, trusted environment where all voices are welcome.



# Together We Grow Juntos Creceamos

Together, with our diverse community of parent leaders, involved youth, and family advocates we set out to identify principal health concerns, inequalities, and challenges in our communities.



# Community Gardening

The Giving Garden was the starting point for the La Plata Family Center's gardening operation. It was started in 2011 in partnership with the Methodist Church (now known as the Summit Church).

This garden became an incubator for future food equity projects facilitated by the La Plata Family Center including the Peace Garden, the Sunnyside Garden and the Pond Farm.



# Sunnyside Garden



# Community Farming

The Sunnyside Pond Farm is the newest form of our community farming. Taking the knowledge and experience gained from the first two gardens and input from the network of Parent Leaders Network and community members, the Pond Farm was cultivated.

The inclusion of a diverse group of community members allow a collaboration of growth, not only within the types of produce that is grown, but between the relationships and integration of our community. The farm offers a holistic approach to health and wellbeing.



# Testimonials



## ***Jamie, Parent Leader***

Being dialed -in as a Parent Leader has allowed me to grow roots in our community. I see the direct benefits of the network in my own family and in the families that I serve.

## ***Cierra, Youth Volunteer***

I love working in the gardens, It is so peaceful and calm; it is just you and Mother Earth. You learn about how the food you eat grows and what it is before you see it

in the grocery store. I never knew I would be in a garden taking care of it and helping it. I am really thankful that I am part of something so beautiful.

*Amber, LPFCC Staff*

There is something special about putting your hands in the soil and knowing that you are not only growing food but a deeper connection with your community.

## **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

LPFCC Annual Holly Jolly Toy Distribution event.



# Holiday Food Boxes



# Community Conversations



## Back to School Fair



**We are grateful for your continued support, contribution, and kindness.**

**Together we are building community and a better future for the generations to come!**

**Thank you- Gracias!**