

Parent Encouragement Program

Annual Report

July 2024 - June 2025





Our Vision

A world where every child grows up in a nurturing and supportive home, prepared to make positive contributions to their families, their communities and the world at large.

Our Mission

To help children become confident, capable, and resilient by providing guidance and support to their parents and caregivers.

Letter from the Board Chair and Executive Director

Dear Friends,

FY25 was a year of both challenge and triumph for the families we serve — and for all who walk alongside them. Across our communities, parents faced new pressures and transitions, yet continued to show remarkable strength, compassion, and commitment to their children's well-being.

That same spirit of resilience was reflected in PEP's work and partnerships. We were deeply honored to be named the Montgomery County Public Schools Community Partner of the Year, recognizing our collaboration with schools to help families build stronger connections at home and support students' success in the classroom. This award celebrates not just PEP, but the countless parents and caregivers who inspire our work every day.

Even as we celebrated this milestone, the year brought real challenges. Sudden losses in federal and state funding — including the closure of our USAID contract — created uncertainty for many families and for our organization. In response, our community rallied in extraordinary ways. Through the *PEP Together* Campaign, hundreds of supporters came forward to ensure that PEP could continue providing encouragement, guidance, and hope during uncertain times.

PEP also continued to grow and innovate. We successfully piloted the new PEP Family Resiliency Program – The Preschool Years. This new curriculum expands our reach to families with younger children and will officially launch in FY26.

Across four Maryland counties — Montgomery, Frederick, Dorchester, and Howard — PEP delivered its Family Resiliency Program in English, Spanish, and Amharic, helping parents navigate stress, strengthen communication, and build confidence in their parenting.

Through it all, our mission remained steadfast: to help children become confident, capable, and resilient by supporting their parents and caregivers. Each class, conversation, and act of encouragement created ripples of strength that extended into homes, schools, and communities.

As we look ahead, we are filled with gratitude — for every parent who showed up to learn, every facilitator who guided with heart, and every supporter who made this work possible. Together, we are lifting families and building brighter futures.

With heartfelt thanks,



Kelly Van Orden
Board President



Kathy Hedge
Executive Director

PEP Family Resiliency Program Expands to Four Maryland Counties

In FY25, PEP's Family Resiliency Program (PEP-FRP) continued to expand its reach and deepen its impact. PEP facilitated 120 small-group programs for 1,259 parents and caregivers representing 2,278 children in 288 schools across four Maryland counties — Montgomery, Frederick, Dorchester, and Howard — in English, Spanish, and Amharic. Parents learned practical strategies to strengthen communication, cooperation, and connection within their families, replacing stress with confidence and calm.

What Parents Are Saying:



I learned to be a little bit more flexible because I now see that I was too strict. (PEP) helped me realize I needed to make a change, a change in me. Because if I wanted to make a change with my kids, I am the one who needs to change first, otherwise I can't help my kids."

"(Because of the PEP-FRP), I can identify the emotions beneath my son's anger. I am better able to approach him and have conversations without overreacting... This makes it much easier to turn the situation into one of calm, peace, and harmony"



PEP Launches Preschool Resiliency Program

In FY25, PEP adapted the PEP-FRP to serve parents of preschoolers. The PEP Family Resiliency Program: The Preschool Years is now being offered in partnership with Judy Centers and other Pre-K programs throughout Maryland.

“The (PEP-FRP) helped me to control my anger [and] helped me to learn to listen. What helped me a lot was listening to other moms and knowing that it was not only me who was having certain kinds of problems, that there were other moms dealing with the same issues. The program helped me realize that I was not alone.”



NORC Evaluates FRP

For the third consecutive year, NORC at the University of Chicago conducted an independent evaluation of the PEP-FRP. The FY25 results reaffirmed those from previous years, indicating that participants who engage in the PEP-FRP experience significant improvements, including benefits to themselves, their children, and their relationships with their children. [Read NORC's article about the study and its findings here.](#)

PEP Honored as MCPS Community Partner of the Year

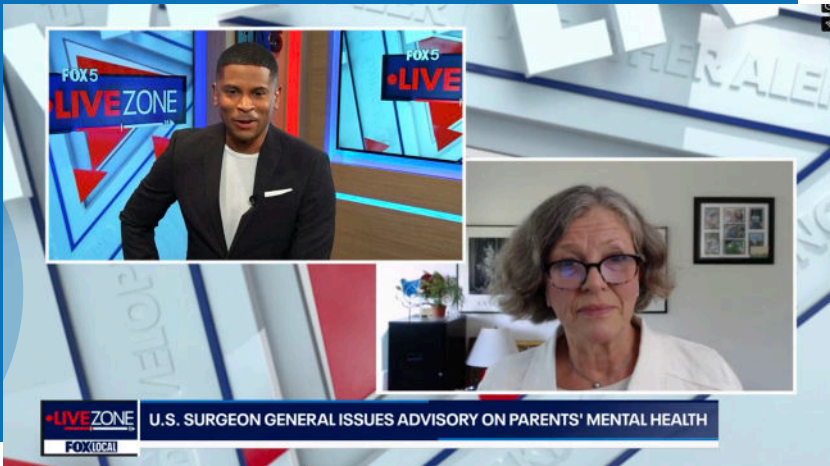
PEP received the 2025 MCPS Community Partnership of the Year award, recognizing more than 35 years of collaboration with hundreds of MCPS schools, PTAs, and programs such as Linkages to Learning to deliver parent education and support. Since Fall 2022, the PEP Family Resiliency Program (PEP-FRP) has further strengthened this partnership, offering 8-week programs in English, Spanish, and Amharic — especially in Community Schools — completed by 1,344 parents and caregivers of 2,542 children across 155 MCPS schools.



PEP Executive Director Kathy Hedge (pictured with Superintendent Thomas Taylor and Board of Education President Julie Yang) accepted the award, recognizing PEP's lasting impact on the educational experience within Montgomery County.

PEP in the News

PEP Responds to U.S. Surgeon General Advisory on Fox5 Live Zone



PEP Board Member and Parent Educator Pascale Brady appeared on Fox5 Live Zone to discuss the U.S. Surgeon General Advisory on the Mental Health and Well-Being of Parents.

Brady highlighted insights PEP has applied for years, particularly the understanding that caring for and supporting parents has a powerful, positive impact on their children.

PEP Featured in Local Cambridge, MD Media

PEP hosted an introductory parenting talk at Mace's Lane Middle School in Cambridge, which was featured in The Cambridge Spy, a local media outlet. One parent at the event said, "Tonight's session really gives me a different perspective. There's no question that raising children isn't easy. And I want my kids to grow up to be the best adults they can be. I think I'll sign up for the full course." [Read the full article here.](#)

Shay Lewis-Sisco and Tenishia Tillery (standing) check in with parents during a PEP talk in Cambridge.



Building Supportive Communities Through Collaboration

Partnerships help PEP reach more parents where they are — at work, at school, and in their communities.

Our collaborations with organizations such as GitHub, Linkages to Learning, Identity, Rainbow Families, the Greater Washington Community Foundation's Brilliant Futures program and Moving Dorchester Forward opened doors to parents who might not otherwise have access to the guidance and connection PEP provides.

One of our most meaningful collaborations continued with USAID. For five years, PEP supported thousands of USAID parents through master classes, live webinars, and "Ask PEP" office hours — helping families navigate stress, transitions, and the unique challenges of global service. Although USAID's restructuring brought this long-standing partnership to a close in spring 2025, its impact lives on. The voices, stories, and cultural richness of USAID families have shaped PEP's work in lasting and profound ways.

Across every partnership, the theme is the same: when organizations come together, families grow stronger. These collaborations help PEP extend its reach, remove barriers to access, and ensure that more parents — especially those in under-resourced communities — receive the support they need to help their children thrive.



PEP staff Patti Cancellier, Colleen Reed, and Nicoletta Pichardo with USAID staff, our valued partners until 2025.

"These PEP classes are the best thing that has happened in my life... they have truly changed the way I think and behave with my family. This has been an incredibly edifying experience and I'm very grateful to USAID for this opportunity." — USAID Parent

Brilliant Futures Partnership

FY25 marked the launch of PEP's partnership with the Greater Washington Community Foundation and its Brilliant Futures program, a pioneering children's savings pilot program that is providing two consecutive kindergarten cohorts at 2 local schools with up to \$1,000 in savings per year through 12th grade. PEP's role includes enrolling families, delivering parenting education, and connecting them to community resources.



A young girl got her face painted at a Brilliant Futures event.

Critical Topics in Parenting Series

In FY25, PEP's Critical Topics in Parenting Series continued to spotlight the most pressing issues facing families today. Our featured free webinar, *Nurturing the Nurturers: Prioritizing Parent Well-Being for Stronger Families*, explored the growing connection between parental mental health and positive child outcomes. PEP parent educators led a hopeful conversation about reducing parental stress, rebuilding support networks, and strengthening confidence in everyday parenting. Hundreds of families tuned in to connect, reflect, and feel less alone.

Many Thanks to Our Sponsors



Support at Every Stage, Anytime

In FY25, thousands of parents and caregivers turned to PEP's 24/7 online resources for immediate, practical guidance. From master classes and monthly live webinars to podcasts, blog posts, and an on-demand video library with 70 offerings, PEP provided families with accessible support whenever they needed it. New this year — our Parenting Neurodivergent Children two-part webinar series.

Where Community Begins: The PEP Program Team

In a year defined by coming together, our PEP Program Team exemplified the PEP core belief that connection to others and contributing to something larger than ourselves is the foundation of mental health – that real change happens in community. For more than 40 years, PEP's peer-led approach has helped parents feel understood, supported, and empowered. Our program leaders — parents and caregivers themselves — bring compassion, relatability, and deep commitment to every class and cohort. They create safe, judgment-free environments where families can open up, connect, and learn new tools that bring more calm, cooperation, and confidence into their homes.

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A Year of Challenge – And Remarkable Support

PEP's mission continues to grow because of the generosity of our donors. Donor support allows us to offer more programs free of charge — especially in under-resourced communities — so parents and caregivers can access the tools they need to raise confident, resilient children.

In early 2025, PEP faced a sudden funding crisis after the dismantling of USAID and major state budget cuts. Our community rallied through the *PEPTogether* campaign, with loyal supporters and nearly 50 new donors stepping up to keep PEP's programs strong. To every donor who gave, advocated, and stood with PEP: thank you for making this work possible.

**Denotes PEPTogether Donors*

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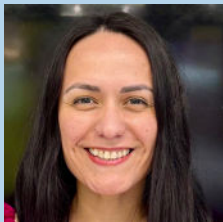
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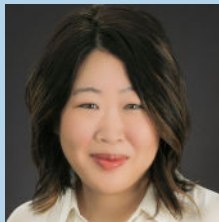
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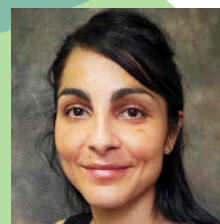
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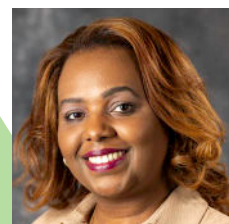
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FY25 by the Numbers

65

Partner &
Workplace
Programs

91

Free PEP Videos,
Podcasts and
Blog Posts

40

Online PEP Classes
and Webinars

70

PEP Videos
On-Demand

120

Free PEP Family
Resilience
Programs

**5,651 Unique PEP
Program Participants**

PEP Statement of Financial Position

as of June 30, 2025

ASSETS

CURRENT ASSETS

Cash	\$ 533,729
Accounts receivable	506,576
Current portion of unconditional promises to give	133,333
Prepaid expenses	<u>24,244</u>
Total current assets	1,197,882

EQUIPMENT

Equipment	28,277
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(11,935)</u>
Equipment, net	16,342

OTHER ASSETS

Unconditional promises to give less current portion, net	124,347
Cash restricted for endowment	<u>52,262</u>
Total other assets	176,609

Total Assets **\$ 1,390,833**

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

CURRENT LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$ 91,086
Deferred revenue	<u>1,923</u>
Total current liabilities	93,009

NET ASSETS

Without donor restrictions	851,539
With donor restrictions	<u>446,285</u>
Total net assets	1,297,824

Total Liabilities and Net Assets **\$ 1,390,833**

PEP Statement of Activities

as of June 30, 2025

	Without Donor Restrictions	With Donor Restrictions	Total
SUPPORT AND REVENUE			
Grants and contributions	\$ 591,296	\$ 465,680	\$ 1,056,976
Government contracts	1,217,788	00.00	1,217,788
Fee for service programs	384,554	00.00	384,554
Interest income	<u>17,598</u>	<u>00.00</u>	<u>17,598</u>
Total support and revenue	2,211,236	465,680	2,676,916
EXPENSES			
Program Services			
Workplace Program	143,157	00.00	143,157
Organizational Programs	13,109	00.00	13,109
Family Resiliency Program	1,277,300	00.00	1,277,300
Public Programs / Online	22,655	00.00	22,655
Other Programs	73,936	00.00	73,936
Supporting Activities			
Management and General	271,670	00.00	271,670
Fundraising	<u>121,070</u>	<u>00.00</u>	<u>121,070</u>
Total expenses	1,922,897	00.00	1,922,897
NET ASSETS RELEASED FROM RESTRICTIONS			
Satisfaction of purpose restrictions	<u>103,357</u>	<u>(103,357)</u>	<u>00.00</u>
Change in net assets	391,696	362,323	754,019
Net assets at beginning of year	<u>459,843</u>	<u>83,962</u>	<u>543,805</u>
Net assets at end of year	\$ 851,539	\$ 446,285	\$ 1,297,824



At PEP we live by these values:

Encouragement

We believe in the power of encouragement to inspire growth, resilience, and positive change. Through our words and actions, we foster an environment that instills courage, builds confidence, and nurtures motivation and hope.

Community

We support one another and work together to make a positive impact on future generations, creating a shared sense of purpose through meaningful contribution.

Inclusion

We believe that everyone deserves to feel valued, included, and accepted. We foster an environment where all individuals — of all backgrounds and circumstances — feel seen, heard, and connected.

Mutual Respect

We are non-judgmental in our interactions with people of different viewpoints, life experiences and backgrounds. We recognize the inherent worth and humanity of all people, affirming that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and kindness.

Adaptability

We believe growth and progress require flexibility and a willingness to evolve, especially in a fast-changing world. We nimbly adjust to the needs of the situation, ensuring our efforts support the communities we serve while staying aligned with our organization's mission.

Parent Encouragement Program
10100 Connecticut Ave.
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