

# Presentation to the Vermont House of Representatives Committee on Human Services

Friday, January 24, 2025, 2:00pm



Carol Lang-Godin, Executive Director,  
Lamoille Family Center and VPCCN  
Chair

Lindsey Trombley, Executive Director,  
Orange County Parent Child Center and  
VPCNN Vice Chair

Ellen Amstutz, Director, Vermont Parent  
Child Center Network



## The Network is comprised of 15 Parent Child Centers serving all of Vermont

- FY25 is our first year as a professional Network **authorized by Act 150 in 2022** and funded by the **Department for Children and Families**.
- The Network was established in 1988 as a volunteer board. Leaders from each PCC serve as board members.
- The Network's first full time **Director** was hired in August 2024.
- The Network administers the **Integrated Grant, \$7.1 Million in FY25**
- The Network ensures high-quality programming, accountability and collaboration and provides technical assistance and support.

# Serving Families Statewide

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In FY 24 Parent Child Centers collectively Served:

**18,754 Parents**

**21,381 Children**

This includes **1,320** children with developmental, physical or health related special needs.





# Parent Child Centers Provide Eight Core Services:

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Parent Support

Parent Education

Concrete Supports

Home Visits

Playgroups

Information and Referral

Early Childhood Services

Community Development





## Parent Support

- 93% of parents reported feeling stronger and more confident as a parent after participating in PCC programs.

## Parent Education

- 1,220 parents participated in learning opportunities to support effective parenting.

## Concrete Supports

- Over 3,300 families received short-term financial assistance and concrete supports.

## Home Visits

- 18,000 home visits were made to over 1,500 families.





## Play Groups

- 1,756 playgroups were offered this year throughout the State.

## Information and Referral

- Welcome Baby visits and packages reached 1,157 new families.

## Early Childhood Services

- 11 PCCs have licensed childcare onsite, 4 work with childcare partner organizations.

## Community Development

- PCCs are active participants and leaders in over 20 coalitions and convenings in their communities and Statewide.

# Maintaining Quality Through Research-Informed Standards

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VPCCN is part of the **National Family Support Network**, a membership organization of 41 States.

PCCs follow the **Standards of Quality for Family Strengthening** which operationalizes a research-informed approach to building **five key protective factors**:

1. **Parental resilience**
2. **Social connections**
3. **Knowledge of parenting and child development**
4. **Concrete support in times of need**
5. **Social and emotional competence of children**



## PCC's Build Protective Factors

Protective Factors Statement (n= 1,230)	BEFORE working with PCCs	AFTER working with PCCs
I have relationships with people who provide me with support when I need it.	57%	91%
I feel strong and confident as a parent.	66%	93%
I feel able to handle stressful events.	60%	89%
When I am worried about my child, I have someone to talk with.	64%	93%
I take good care of my child(ren) even when I have personal problems.	89%	98%
I manage the daily responsibilities of being a parent/caregiver.	86%	97%
I understand my child(ren)'s development.	77%	96%
I know where I can get helpful information about parenting and taking care of children.	67%	97%



## **Community Development and Partnership:** PCCs are leaders in their communities on issues that affect parents and young children.

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### **PCCs are represented on:**

- Building Bright Futures Councils
- Children's Integrated Services
- Family Supported Housing
- Homelessness and Housing organizations
- Hunger Free Vermont/Hunger Council
- Domestic Violence Task Force
- Interagency Coordination Council
- Let's Grow Kids Work Group
- Parents As Teachers (PAT) Advisory Group
- Pediatric Community Care Team
- Vermont Early Childhood Action Alliance
- Maternal Child Health Regional Meetings
- Perinatal Grief/Loss Coalition
- Blueprint Accountable Communities
- Empty Arms Vermont
- And others



The Network brings staff together for Collaboration, Learning, and Sharing Innovations



# The VPCCN Network Leadership!

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# Vermont Parent Child Center Network requests \$500,000 from **Tobacco Settlement funds**

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Tobacco Settlement funds to be distributed to **the 15 Parent Child Centers** through the **Integrated Grant** to implement a range of smoking and vaping cessation, health education and prevention activities to:

- **Reduce** the number of pregnant and parenting adults who use tobacco products,
- **Prevent** parents and other household members from future smoking and vaping, and
- **Protect** children from the detrimental effects of secondhand smoke in the home, and places where they learn and play.

# Tobacco use continues to be high in Vermont

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- Vermont ranks 6<sup>th</sup> worst in the country in rates of smoking in Pregnancy. (About average rates nationally for adults in general.)
- 13.1% of all births were affected by cigarette use (PQC-VT Perinatal Health report).
- Smoking during pregnancy causes serious and long-lasting health problems.
- Secondhand smoke is dangerous for small children.
- Vaping is not a safe alternative. (Despite what some believe.)

# Vermont's 15 Parent Child Centers are well-positioned to do this work

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- **PCC's Wide Reach:**
  - PCCs serve over 18,000 adults and 21,000 children each year, across all geographic areas. With smoking rates for adults in Vermont at 13% and vaping at 6%, PCCs can potentially reach 3,000+ Adults.
- **Capacity, staff and structure**
  - PCCs have professional staff who are skilled in communicating with parents and building trusting relationships. Additional funds would strengthen and increase capacity to do this work within **PCC's 8 Core Services**.
- **Serve parents facing challenges**
  - PCCs serve families with economic challenges, lower household incomes, covered by Medicaid or uninsured, and more often having a child with a developmental, physical disability or health condition—all are variables correlated with higher rates of tobacco and substance use.





# PCC Strategies for Tobacco Cessation and Prevention are Research Informed

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- Referral to smoking cessation programs alone is not enough. Participants **who have social support and encouragement** are more successful in quitting long term.
  - Parents who participate in PCCs reported a **34% increase** in “relationships with people who provide me with **support** when I need it. “
- Parents who learn about and **adopt healthy living habits** and have **alternative activities** to reduce the stress in their lives are more likely to quit or remain tobacco free.
  - PCCs offer programs to learn about nutrition, enjoy outdoor activities with their kids, meet other parents, and build social connections. Parents reported a **29% increase** in “feeling able to **handle stressful events**”.

# Tobacco Settlement Fund Strategies will be embedded in all PCC 8 Core Services

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## Strategies Include;

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**Educating parents** on the detrimental effects of secondhand smoke and vaping.

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**Screening and referring** parents to smoking cessation resources and supporting them along the way.

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**Concrete supports** to keep environments smoke free including cleaning carpets, replacing car seats and detailing cars, etc.

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**Supporting and training** to parents communicate with other household members to smoke safe distances from children.

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**Reducing stress and isolation** in parents with opportunities for social connections and introducing new activities.





# Thank You!

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For questions or further information contact:

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