

Door County Partnership for Children and Families

Staff:

Rebecca Paulsen – Community Connector	(920) 421-3145	rebecca@unitedwaydc.com
Chad Welch – Impact Coordinator Education	(920) 421-3146	chad@unitedwaydc.com
Bob Shogren – Triple P Facilitator	(920) 421-2177	bob@unitedwaydc.com

Mission:

The mission of the Door County Partnership for Children and Families (DCPCF) is to promote resilience, strength, and social-emotional well-being for the families in our community.

Vision:

The DCPCF strives to achieve its mission by:

- Working collaboratively with partner organizations
- Working to reduce stigma, increase awareness, and improve access to mental health resources
- Providing inclusive educational opportunities within the community
- Connecting people to resources using a family-centered approach
- Promoting family strength and self-advocacy
- Promoting safety, social well-being, and school success

History:

The Door County Partnership for Children and Families (DCPCF) began with a community conversation on May 9, 2015. Seventy-three individuals, from over 30 community agencies and local schools, came together to address concerns regarding many Door County children not being socially or emotionally ready to participate in school.

Studies show that well-defined social and emotional skills (SEL) are critical to being a good student, citizen, and worker. Studies have shown that SEL skills taught in early childhood decrease the likelihood of living in or being on a waiting list for public housing, receiving public assistance, police involvement before adulthood, and ever spending time in a detention facility.

Round table discussions were held on the topics of Health and Nutrition, Mental Health, Community Strengths, Parenting, Law Enforcement, Child Abuse, and Juvenile Justice. It was this community conversation that identified the need for and led to the creation of the DCPCF.

Our Work:

Since these initial conversations, DCPCF has continued to grow and expand the number of programs and resources offered. Our programs are driven by evidence-based, reliable research. Such research has shown that approximately 90% of a child's brain is developed in

www.doorcountyparents.com



the first five years of life (Center on the Developing Child, Harvard University). Science has also shown that brains are built, not born. Brains are built based on the experiences we have in our lives. Clearly, early adult interactions will have a critical effect on the foundations for all future learning and behavior. If a child's needs are met, and they have caring adults in their lives who help them learn, brain architecture builds and further develops more executive function and self-regulation skills. If a child's needs are not met and they experience toxic stress in their life, they are less likely to develop these skills and face deficits in life.

The Center on the Developing Child outlines three principles, grounded in science, that can help to improve outcomes for children and families. DCPCF works to build off these principles in the resources, programs, and opportunities offered. The three principles are:

1. Support responsive relationships for children and adults.
2. Strengthen core life skills.
3. Reduce sources of stress in the lives of children and families.

In 2025, DCPCF became a member of Thriving Wisconsin. Thriving Wisconsin is a statewide nonprofit that partners with the State of Wisconsin to administer two Networks of community-embedded agencies that form the backbone of Wisconsin's early childhood services. The Child Care Resource & Referral Network and the Family Resource Center Network. These Networks are part of the State's critical infrastructure, designated in federal and state law to ensure families and early care and education providers have the support they need so that both they and the children they nurture can thrive.

DCPCF is part of the Thriving Wisconsin Family Resource Center Network. It was established in State statute to support strong families and prevent child maltreatment. These centers provide positive parenting programs, resource navigation, and services that promote healthy child development.

Description of Services Offered:

1. **Community Connections** – FREE and confidential support for anyone pregnant, raising a child or any individual enrolled in K-12. The Community Connector (Rebecca Paulsen) receives a referral to connect with a family or individual in need of resources. Rebecca connects the family / individual with appropriate resources based on current needs. Rebecca can also complete a soft hand off to resources with the family / individual if they so desire. Referrals to Rebecca can be made by going to doorcountyparents.com and clicking on **Community Connections** under the "Our Work" menu.
2. **Parent Cafes**-FREE and usually includes childcare and a meal. Parent Cafes are gatherings where parents can come together to discuss topics related to the 5 Protective Factors for healthy families. The five protective factors are:
 - a. Feelings Matter – social & emotional competence of children
 - b. Thoughtful Parenting – knowledge of parenting & child development
 - c. Strong Connections – social connections
 - d. Inner Strength – parental resilience
 - e. Practical Help – concrete support in times of need

3. **WoW Cafes** - WOW cafés are FREE, open to youth, and include some type of food or snacks. These cafes generate powerful conversations that empower, inform, and energize youth about their journeys to adulthood.
 - a. Give youth and young adults information about the Youth Thrive™ Protective and Promotive Factors that empower, inform, and energize them about their journey to adulthood
 - b. Build Protective and Promotive Factors
 - c. Promote strong, lasting relationships among youth and young adults
4. **Triple P** - Triple P (Positive Parenting Program) is an evidence-based parenting program developed upon research that is ongoing and built on 35 years of data. Triple P gives parents strategies to support strengthening their families and adjusting their children's current behaviors while preventing problem behaviors from developing. There are also topics related to children/teen anxiety, depression, substance use, screen time, transitions for parents who are separating or divorcing, and more. These are offered for FREE and are sometimes held in person and virtually over Zoom. In-person classes offer childcare and a meal.
5. **Block Parties**- FREE - Block parties are set up as stations of different kinds of blocks. They promote screen-free, intentional play between parents and children. At traditional block parties, each block station has a play assistant who provides prompts to the parent and child, encouraging skill development. There are events where the blocks are present as a self-serve activity.
6. **Dolly Parton's Imagination Library**-a FREE book program for children residing in Door County. Children receive a free, high-quality, age-appropriate book in the mail each month from birth until the month of their 5th birthday.

How to get involved in our work:

Every quarter, the DCPCF holds a meeting open to all DCPCF partners and Door County community members to share data and provide networking opportunities. This is an in-person meeting with the option to attend virtually via Zoom. Information about upcoming meetings can be found on the "Community Partnership" page under the "About Us" menu.

Volunteer for us. We are always looking to build our pool of volunteers to help with childcare for Triple P classes and Play Assistants for Block Parties. For more information, email Rebecca at rebecca@unitedwaydc.com or call/text her at 920-421-3145.