



Mount Pleasant
Family Centre Society
welcoming families since 1976

Annual Report **2022/23**

Mount Pleasant Family Centre Society is located on the unceded, traditional, ancestral territory of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations.

Co-Chairs' Message

LESLIE MITTON
E. FARAH SAMLI



First and foremost, we would like to acknowledge our members, staff, volunteers, and community partners that make MPFCS an inclusive and supportive environment for children and families to connect and grow.

We are particularly proud of the talented staff at both the Family Drop-in Centre, and Circles of Care and Connection (CCC) Early Years Refugee Program that demonstrate the innovation, commitment, and expertise in providing programs and services that meet the unique needs of our diverse community. The team is led by Sanja, who recently celebrated her one-year anniversary as Executive Director. Sanja plays a critical role by overseeing the day-to-day operations of MPFCS.

The Board of Directors is responsible for governing MPFCS by ensuring the long-term sustainability of the society by addressing the financial, legal and people needs. Key achievements in the past year included:

- Elected Board Executives: Co-Chairs (Leslie Mitton, E. Farah Samli); Treasurer (Elizabeth Magai); Secretary (Lauren Florko).
- Recruited and onboarded 5 new Directors through collaboration with the ED and staff
- Held 10 board meetings and various committee meetings.
- Developed and implemented an employee survey to get feedback from employees about their experience and how this can be improved.
- Reviewed human resource policies and procedures.
- Finalized budget and financial reports.
- Board Committees developed 3-year plans aligned with the strategic plan.
- Co-developed with Executive Director and staff, and approved MPFCS's Strategic Plan (2023-2026).

As we move forward, MPFCS's strategic plan, including the updated vision, mission, values, and goals will not only help to guide the work the board and staff do in 2023-2024, but also how we communicate and work together to achieve our shared goals. There are 4 goals that are contained in the plan, including:

1. Provide Inclusive programs and services that meet the needs and fill the gaps of services in the community.
2. Enhance the awareness and promotion of MPFCS as 'hidden gem' in our community.
3. Build resilient staff, volunteer, and board team.
4. Develop consistent, reliable, and diverse funding streams for our programs and operations through sustainable partnerships.

Sanja will work with her team, on the goals that she is accountable for delivering. The board, through its 6 committees (fundraising, finance, human resources, communications, board development and strategic planning) will progress the goals assigned, as well as ensuring that the Strategic Plan and goals are achieved.

We are looking forward to our continued collaboration to build a strong and sustainable future together at MPFCS.

Executive Director

SANJA SLADOJEVIC



Last year was another year full of changes at the Mount Pleasant Family Centre Society. It began with a multitude of COVID-19 related restrictions, but gradually, we returned to a semblance of normality. We no longer needed to restrict the number of participants, masks became optional, our community events were back as well as snacks, playdough, and other fun activities. This journey showed how creative, resourceful, and resilient both our staff and the families we serve are.

The team and the board also underwent substantial changes. We now have a new leadership team, several new child and family settlement workers and administrative assistant as well as a new board co-chair, treasurer, secretary and several new board directors. Together with our long-serving staff, who have dedicated decades to the health and development of families and their children, everyone remains committed to providing inclusive programs and services that cater to the diverse needs of our communities.

We also successfully completed our strategic planning process, which helped us identify priorities and strategies for the next three years. We are confident that there will be much to report when our Society celebrates its 50th anniversary in 2026.

At the Family Centre, the Society's vision—a thriving, welcoming child and family community where we connect, share, learn, and grow—can really be seen in action.

It is always rewarding to hear from our participants how much they enjoy our programs where they can play, learn, find new friends, and get support when needed. Participants describe the family center as “their happy place,” “a hidden gem,” “a second family” or “a special place so welcoming, friendly, and fun”. One mother wrote “I have learnt a great deal from the parenting courses and definitely feel more confident in the way I parent”.

Our Circles of Care and Connection (CCC) Early Years Refugee Program has provided support to newly arrived families with young children for nearly 15 years. The CCC team starts working with families in the playroom at the Welcome Centre, where again our Society's vision and mission can be seen in action. After families move to their permanent housing, our child and family settlement workers play an imperative role in supporting them to connect to various resources, integrate, and settle in their new communities. Additionally, the CCC team is pleased to continue supporting their short-term clients who are finding permanent housing in other cities in the Lower Mainland, such as Surrey, Coquitlam, Richmond, and Langley.

Our Board of Directors brings a wealth of knowledge, experience, and skills, dedicating numerous hours to ensure the effective governance of MPFCS. We are grateful for the support from the Board, our funders, members and participants and we will do our best to continue providing a variety of quality programs and services for children and families.

Family Centre Drop-in HIGHLIGHTS

Last year, the number of participants gradually increased, there were no unexpected program interruptions, and our healthy snacks and other fun programming were back. At the end of the year, everyone was glad to see that our attendance returned to pre-COVID-19 numbers and that the families could enjoy various activities without wearing masks.

In 2022-23:

- 184 new families started using our programs & services
 - 146 families became members of our society
 - 6756 visits were recorded (3613 child visits and 3143 adult visits)
 - 290 adult visits & 308 child visits were recorded during our Dad's Drop-in on Saturday mornings.
- The average daily attendance, in the first half of the year, was 4 adults and 4 to 5 children, while in the second half, it was more than double – 11 adults and 11-12 children.

Special events:

- Canada Day Celebration was attended by 57 adults and 83 children
- 75 adults & 116 children joined our Picnic in the Park
- 32 adults & 37 children came to our Winter Wonderland
- ABC Graduation

Our Parent Groups/Education included:

- Circle of Security
- Nobody's Perfect
- Neufeld Making Sense of Preschoolers
- First Steps to Healthy Climate

Thanks to our partnerships with Vancouver Public Library and Vancouver Coastal Health, community health nurses, dental hygienists and librarians visited our Drop-in program. We also had music programs and Indigenous guest storytellers.

The guest speakers during our Baby Drop-in, offered every Thursday afternoon, included:

- Pelvic health physiotherapist
- Sleep consultant
- Mom and baby yoga specialist
- Librarian
- Community health nurses
- Dental hygienist
- Baby Wearing Expert

Our Canada Summer Jobs student ran a summer outdoor physical literacy program for almost two months.

To improve our indoor space:

- Air filters were purchased (helping with smoke and viruses).
- A special grant was used to replace our very old carpet.



Circles of Care & Connection

Early Years Refugee Program HIGHLIGHTS

Home Visiting Program:

- 127 families served
- 460 clients (237 adults/223 children)
- 270 bridging supports to community resources
- 643 referrals to settlement and community services
- 187 food bags delivered to address food security
- 10 Parent Orientation sessions serving 152 clients (66 adults/86 children)

Special events:

- 5 Farmer's Market outings serving 41 families with \$39,015 worth of coupons
- 45 families attended our special events: Canada Day, Picnic in the Park, Science World field trip and Winter Wonderland

Playroom:

- 55 families with 185 children attended the playroom
- Sarah School of Music added a fun addition on Tuesday afternoons
- Welcomed families from Syria, Congo, Afghanistan, Sudan, Nigeria, Eritrea, Somalia and Pakistan

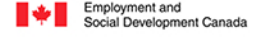
Partnerships with Watari food program, Farmer's Market Nutrition Coupon Program, Salvation Army

Donations from Giving Truck, Quilting Group at Trout Lake, Ted Baker

13 interpreters on the CCC team serving 11 different languages



Our Funders



Our Resources & Community Partners

Mount Pleasant Family Centre Society would like to give a heartfelt thanks to the following supporters:



...and for the unwavering support from our volunteers and donors, our sincerest gratitude.

Board

E. Farah Samli
Co-Chair

Leslie Mitton
Co-Chair

Lauren Florko
Secretary

Elizabeth Magai
Treasurer

Sarah Chu
Director

Tom Linklater
Director

Jessica Kim
Director

Aldea Pallard
Director



Staff

Sanja Sladojevic
Executive Director

Manjit Garcha
Program Manager, CCC

Karen Robles
Administrative Assistant

Maria Luz Fernandez
Playroom Coordinator

Flora Purcell
Adult Program Coordinator

Ewa Paciorek
Family Support Worker

Alma Tuliao
Family Support Worker

Hafsah Zeyan
Family Support Worker

Nasmeen Sahim
Senior CFSW

Cheryl Mixon
Case Manager

Farnaz Karimizadeh
Lead ECE

Rashida Samar
ECE Assistant

Nadiya Shirazi
Child & Family Settlement Worker

Gracie Van Cer Hluan
Child & Family Support Worker

Jehan Yousif
Child & Family Support Worker

Razia Waziri
Family Support Worker

Testimonials

FROM OUR CCC PARTICIPANTS



"Thank you so much, everything is getting better day by day with your help and support"



"I remember you came to my home and brought me so much hope while I was so hopeless. I did not have enough food to feed my five children as a single mother. I also did not know where I should go and who I should ask for help. I was terrified and confused that how I can survive. I remember you book appointments for food bank and salvation army and came with me to guide me and interpret through registration process and food pick up time. I went home with food and I could see my children's eyes are shining with happiness. you also guided me for BC housing process, doctor appointment and etc.

With best wishes and blessings for you"

"I am the mother of Rahil and shahzad. First of all I would like to say thank you to the play room staff who offer fun and educational programs to our kids. My kids are really excited to get ready and go to the playroom every morning and afternoon. My youngest, Shahzad (2 years old), especially loves the playroom. Shahzad has always been at home with us and has never been to child care before, he still feels very comfortable and looks forward to the playroom everyday and has no problem being away from us. I feel very happy because my kids are happy in the playroom.

I appreciate all your support."
Mom

"I like how we play UNO every day together. I love to paint and play with my friend S-----." - Rahil



Testimonials

FROM OUR DROP-IN PARTICIPANTS



This family place is so special. The staff prioritizes and cares for the whole family! Its not just a place for kids to play. This is what true community care looks like. It feels like home here. A safe space to be held, heard, supported and for the whole family to thrive and find connection. We love you family centre!!!

Ariel, Kajsia, Moeve

I keep meaning to ask you to pass on a note to the folks who run the facepainting at the Robson Park events. This activity has made such an impact on William, he often plays face painter at home and carefully selects invisible paint and sparkles before gently "painting" my face. The soft hand out to hold my chin still just melts my heart. Clearly his experiences getting his face painted are important to him and I can see the care and love the staff use reflected back in his play.

This place has been an oasis for Henry & I during the early bleary days of motherhood. Thank you for the warmth and support.

Jessie



Here, we feel so seen and cared for. Thank you for the warmth, affection, compassion, and wisdom.

This playground is the most favorite of the small group of children I have. We almost come here to play, socialize, and have fun everyday. Its perfect for the group. We have all the toys that the children love besides of feeling secured because of the fence. I would like to thank the staff for providing us amazing outdoor environment, helping us whenever we need assistance.

Active little angels FC

The family centre is like a second home. Theres so much fr the little ones to enjoy and play with. Even though the centre is for the little ones, its just as rewarding for the adults who can connect, feel supported and nurture each other. There's no other place like this and the loving staff.

Paul, Kaja & Kara





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