

PREPARES

An Initiative of Washington State Catholic Bishops

Annual Report 2021



Building a Life Nurturing Ministry

In 2014 PREPARES, short for Pregnancy and Parenting Support, was launched by the four Bishops of Washington State. PREPARES was established at the state's three Catholic Charities agencies, with the hope that by building a collective network of local, parishioner-led ministries and working in conjunction with Catholic Charities we could meaningfully assist vulnerable pregnant and parenting families. After 8 years, and through one of the most challenging times our state has faced, PREPARES continues to meet the goal of providing compassionate local and sustainable support to Washington mothers, fathers, and families as they nurture their children through pregnancy and early childhood.

PREPARES Statewide 2021

9,633
moms, dads
& children
served

580
Trained
Volunteers

48k
Essential needs
Items distributed

180
Parishes
Engaged

7.5
Staff

- ♥ PREPARES has a team of equivalent 7.5 full time staff who have engaged and supported over 180 parishes. These parishes span 3 dioceses and 3 Catholic Charities regions. They consist of rural, suburban, and urban areas and are serving pregnant women and families in 34 of 39 counties.
- ♥ In 2021, 48,000 essentials like formula, diapers, clothing and other necessities were distributed to nearly 10,000 families by PREPARES programs in Washington state.
- ♥ PREPARES has created sustainable relationships with over 180 parishes, pastors and Catholic organizations such as Knights of Columbus, St. Vincent de Paul, Catholic Daughters, and more.



In Colville, a healthy boy was born on a Monday afternoon in July. Despite limitations caused by the pandemic, his birth mom was paired with and supported by a PREPARES companion who **journeyed with her through pregnancy**, the eventual adoption of her son, and continues to act as a loving presence for the journey ahead.



Sacred Heart Parish in Bellevue and Holy Family Parish in Kirkland started PREPARES ministries and developed relationships **with two local hospitals**, providing "PREPARES Bags" filled with supplies for bringing home baby. Hospital social workers share them with parents in need of support.



Light a Candle for PREPARES in Central Washington is a new campaign of prayer. *"We pray the Rosary every week for the intentions of PREPARES...we are 8 and we feel very blessed for this group. We are small, but I know we are making a difference by praying."* –Ann, Holy Angels, Coulee City



Cataldo Catholic School sends a group of 5-10 students once a month to the PREPARES offices in Spokane to bundle diapers for distribution. When students come they are oriented to the mission of PREPARES and how what they are doing is celebrating Life!



A new **Kid's Closet** was added through borrowed space from the Yakima Diocese. *"It has been so rewarding and encouraging to our ministry to see families walk into this space and feel loved."*–Janet R.



After 7 years of coordinating PREPARES at 5 parishes in Whatcom County, **Parish Coordinator Kathy Kelso** is retiring from active ministry. Because of Kathy's leadership, PREPARES has served thousands of families in Bellingham, Deming and Ferndale.