



Para Los Niños De Highline



**Fostering academic success for every Latino student
through parent and community involvement**

2023 Annual Report

We Are Involved in Our Children's Education



When a courageous group of South King County Latino immigrant parents came together in 2003 to be more involved in their children's education, Para Los Niños de Highline was formed.

20 years later, we carry on this vision:

To bolster the education of our children, we lead from the heart, bring the whole family along, center our Spanish language and cultural traditions, and foster community leadership from within.

About Para Los Niños De Highline

Fostering academic success for every Latino student through parent and community involvement.

From birth and beyond, we support and encourage the entire Latino family through early learning, literacy and other academic skills development, summer enrichment, as well as social justice parent leadership programs.



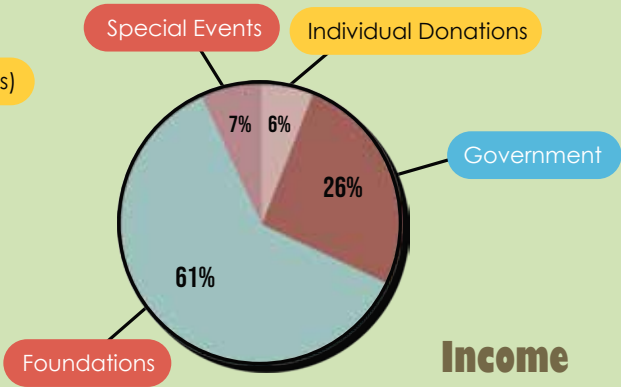
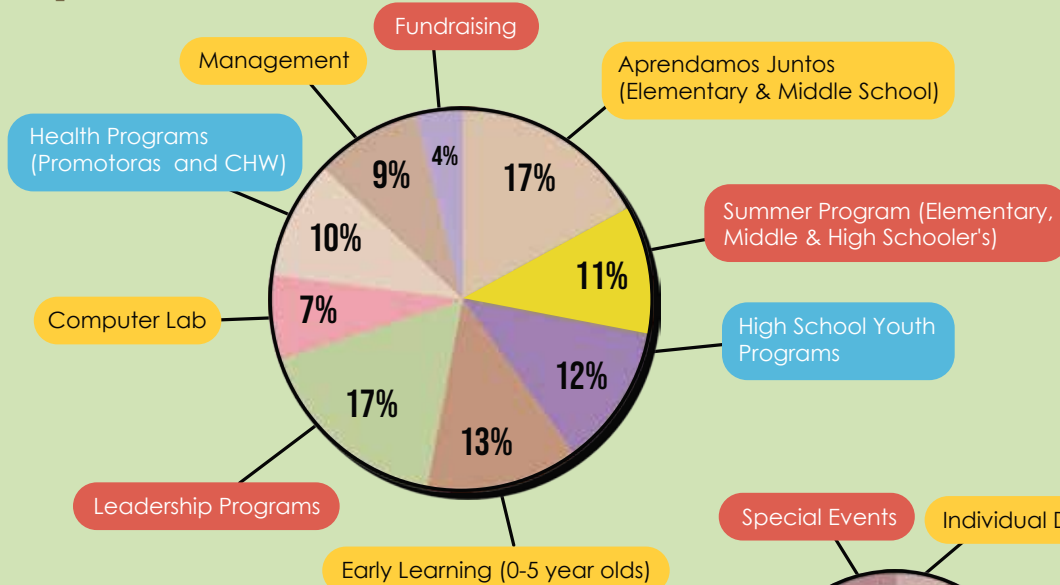
We believe that all Latino children are capable of excellence, and we achieve that goal by building culturally relevant programs upon a foundation of love and respect, supported by a community leadership model that recognizes the talents and skills of each individual person.

We believe in the inherent value of all Latino children, and help create a world that celebrates the beauty and brilliance of our community.



We serve the growing community of Latino immigrant and refugee families from Mexico, Central, and South America who speak Spanish and Indigenous Latin American languages. Our families live in South King County, with concentrations in the Highline Public School District (Burien, SeaTac, DesMoines, Normandy Park).

Expenses



Income

We Centered Latino Culture in Our Community's Learning



“Having intergenerational classes reflects our Latin culture of shared, inherited knowledge.”

- Virginia Herrera-Páramo, Executive Director



Family unity is at the core of our Aprendamos Juntos (We Learn Together) and Kaleidoscope Play and Learn multi-literate and multicultural learning programs. Family unity is an important value at PLN.

This is precisely why our flagship education programs worked hard in 2023 to expand and create in-person learning opportunities for each and every member of the more than 100 families who participated in weekly classes. In June when we celebrated the graduation of 700 individuals from all of our education programs, we took pride in knowing they would apply their learning to advance the well-being of their families and our whole community.

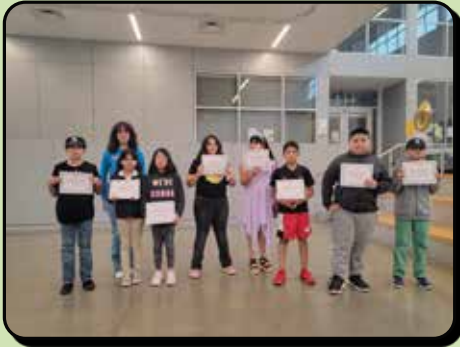
"Family unity is an important value at PLN."

Throughout 2023 whether we were sharing traditions together for Día de Reyes, organizing community performances of Latina American folkloric dancers and musicians, teaching South American heritage arts and crafts to children in our summer programs, or lovingly building Ofrendas (altars) in our Burien office storefront to remember our ancestors on Día de los Muertos, we infused our education, community healthcare, celebrations and leadership programs with Latino cultural pride and joy.



2023 kicked off with a celebration of the Latin American Día de Reyes, or Three Kings Day tradition within the classrooms of the Aprendamos Juntos Program. Our children shared a traditional Mexican Rosca de Reyes (kings' crown bread) with Xocolatl (hot chocolate) to honor our dual Spanish and MesoAmerican roots. In some traditions, whoever ends up eating the piece of bread with a prize baked inside will have to make tamales for the same group on Feb 2nd, Candlemas Day. One of our students displayed Central American pride when he promised his classmates, "I'll bring pupusas, instead!"

We Strengthened Community Leadership



“Para Los Niños is not only concerned about our children; they also give us, the parents, opportunities to grow.”

- Anonymous recipient of Family Resource Support services

“The Leadership Academy allowed me to understand the school system and get involved in my children’s education in a deeper way.”

- Leadership Academy participant, Jesús Rafael Dávila



It is almost unimaginable that in 2003, Para Los Niños’ founding parent leaders had to campaign the Highline Public Schools to provide basic information in families’ native Spanish language. Fast forward 20 years, and as a result of PLN’s long history of civic engagement, graduates of our Leadership Academy sat on the hiring committee for a new Superintendent of Schools and proudly helped hire the first Latino superintendent in the Highline School district’s history!

In 2023, we supported Latino family members to lead their schools' Parent Teacher Associations (PTA's), helped parent leaders fight to rebuild aging and dilapidated school buildings through their seats on the school district's Capital Facilities Advisory Committee (CFAC), and helped more than a dozen high school students hone their leadership skills through our non-profit Youth Internship Program. Once a voice in the wilderness, PLN can now ensure that Latino families are at the center of critical decisions impacting our schools.

Beyond the education system, PLN parent leaders testified in favor of a higher Burien minimum wage, led phone banks to educate and mobilize the Latino/ community to vote, and helped win transit justice through the adoption of free youth transit passes.



Gloria Ramirez-Santiago is a Leadership Academy graduate who wasted no time putting her new knowledge and skills to work. First, she aced a personal goal by finishing a high school completion program and earning her diploma. Next, she took a seat on the Metro Transit Cabinet where she amplified the experiences and concerns of Latino community transit riders. Finally, she helped secure new buses for 108 South King routes and reversed a decades-old policy that made it a crime to fall asleep on public transit!

"Para Los Niños eliminates the barriers to be able to occupy a place in such spaces and allows us to offer our voice and share from our own experiences." - Gloria Ramirez-Santiago, Leadership Academy Graduate

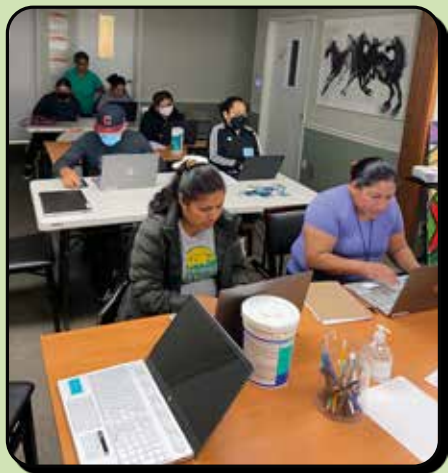
We Bridged the Digital Divide

“Many times, I had been offered a supervisor position at work, but I always declined because I didn’t know anything about computers. But after starting computer classes at Para Los Niños, I was encouraged, so I accepted the supervisor position, and now I’m motivated to learn more and get better at my job.”

- Cristina Lopez, Adult Computer Class graduate



During the COVID-19 pandemic, school districts learned that so many immigrant families had neither internet service nor a home computer. At Para Los Niños, we were sadly not surprised. The digital divide was just another racial disparity that the pandemic revealed. Similar to our Community Health Workers and Promotoras Programs, we initiated our Adult Technology Access Program in direct response to pandemic-related requests from our parent leaders.



In 2023, we differentiated our technology access offerings to meet our communities where they are at. For our youth, this meant ramping up our after school Programming Program to learn the Python coding language; and for their parents, we expanded basic computer class offerings in which our first lesson is how to turn the computer on! We also offer a second more advanced course for parents.

María Luz Sánchez was a seasoned early childhood educator with twenty years of teaching experience and professional certifications. However, when she landed a new job at a well-known and reputable school, she was completely unprepared for new tasks that assumed digital literacy. She recalls the shame she felt when faced with a rapidly changing workplace, "I did not even know how to turn on a computer, and part of my job was to make daily reports about the children at our center. I only lasted a month. I experienced depression and stress because (despite my training and experience), I felt like I couldn't do my job."

Thanks to the slow-paced and supportive learning environment she found at Para Los Niños ("paciencia" was a word repeated in nearly all adult learners' class evaluations), Maria Luz was able to gain digital literacy and confidence using computer systems in her workplace. "I'm thankful with all of my heart for PLN's adult computer program and their patience in teaching us, so we could change our lives."

We Built Friendships and Nourished Social Connections



"It was an excellent experience and unique in that my daughter was able to socialize with other kids. It helped to relieve some of her fear of going outside and let her relax and be active. She left with beautiful memories and lived experiences. As a parent, I'm so grateful for everything."

- Anonymous parent evaluation of the Summer Programs

For years when we applied for grants to support our culturally-relevant and bilingual free Summer Program, funders asked for hard evidence that the camps decreased "summer learning loss." When we pushed back and said our Latino children, like all children, just needed a place to unwind, exercise, have fun, and make friends if fell on deaf ears. Then the pandemic changed everything.



In 2023, we were thankfully able to bring back a 3-week-long, in-person free Summer Program for our children ages 5-13, as well as a summer camp for our Latino Youth Program teen participants. Children learned yoga, played soccer, basketball and volleyball, made art, studied South American culture, went swimming, and took field trips to the Seattle Aquarium and Pacific Science Center. Teens took "EPIC hiking trips and awesome field trips,"(their words) to the MoPOP Museum and a go-kart track. They did what kids should do in the summer - they had fun!

When Sara Olmos and Ashley Galmadez enrolled in the Latinx Youth Coding Class, they hoped to beef up their technology skills and have a good STEM activity to add to their college applications. What they didn't anticipate was that in Coding Class they would find their besties. "At first I was like, 'I don't know anyone,' and I felt awkward," Ashley recalls, "But eventually through one of the activities we were doing, I became friends with two girls, and now we go out and we are pretty close. We tend to joke around a lot and work on the projects together and now I enjoy the program even more!"

As we pored over the overwhelmingly positive parent evaluations at the end of summer, we noted strong themes of gratitude and relief that our summer programs gave their children the chance to regroup and socialize after the pandemic, “My daughter was able to interact with and build new friendships with children her own age,” one mom told us. “My children learned a lot of lessons within lessons... such as how to get along with friends,” another wrote.

Latino culture is a highly relational one, so when the pandemic disrupted our children's ability to form strong social relationships, it hit our families extra hard. In 2023, we doubled down in all our programs on building opportunities for our children and young people to take pride in our culture, nourish connections, and make friends. As Executive Director, Virginia Herrera-Paramo told the Seattle Times, “Proud multi-lingual and multi-cultural happy children make great students.”



Gala Celebration

Para Los Niños de Highline was very excited to have our annual fundraiser gala in November in person with the theme "Mi Tierra". It was very special to bring together our PLN families, supporters, community partners and volunteers for a celebration of our work and impact of the year.



Our Keynote speaker was the director of Providence Sound Hospice and founder of Seattle's first LGBTQ+ Mexican folk dance troupe Danza Monarcas, Carlos Alanis. Together, we raised \$75,849 to support our programs and services to continue assisting over 1700 Latino households with health information and vaccines, school, sports, and art supplies, and cultural educational activities through our seven different programs.



MADRINAS Y PADRINOS

Special thanks to our Madrinás, Padrinos, and our anonymous donors
for their support to sustain our vibrant community



Jan Noora



Lolita O'Donnell



Cyndi Upthegrove



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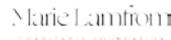
Kelly Sutter

Anna Woods Wanser

We Built Relationships of Mutual Support

When a sister community organization, government agency, or funder partners with Para Los Niños, we see it as the beginning of a lasting relationship in which we each contribute our own strengths, knowledge, and resources. In 2023, we would like to say “Gracias” to the organizations, agencies, and funders who began a new relationship with us, and “mil gracias” to those who recommitted to the relationship that we started one, three, five, or even twenty years ago. We are stronger together!

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[Mapping Your School and Community Partnership Ecosystem!](#)

Que Es La Comisión De Asuntos Hispanos

Families Learning Conference [Aprendizaje socioemocional para la comunidad hispanohablante](#) Sanando en Comunidad

El acceso a la salud y las barreras que enfrenta nuestra comunidad [Centering Racial Equity and Cultural Responsiveness](#)

Building on Parenting Interactions [Trauma & Healing Workshop](#) Kinderlab Robotics [Storytelling/Narrative Reporting Workshop](#)

[Cuestiones Ambientales](#) [Community Health Worker Trainings](#)

Getting Voters Interested in Local Elections

Trauma and Social Roots of Migration [K-12 Mental and Behavioral Health](#) [Team Building Day](#) [Simposio de Mujeres Latinas](#)

[Burnout and Fatigue](#) Domestic Violence Training ["Who is in the room?"](#) Organizing For Justice CRMT Multilingual Validation

Tenant Rights Workshop [Tools for Running an Effective Nonprofit Series](#) [Families Learning Conference](#) [Diversity Lecture Series](#)

[Centering Racial Equity and Cultural Responsiveness](#)

[Brain Development and Attachment in The Early Years](#)

[Spanish Language Access Mapping](#)

Let's Talk About Babies: An Introduction to Infant Mental Health and Relationship-Based Work

Entering Racial Equity and Cultural Responsiveness [Continuous Quality Improvement Data](#) [Overdose Prevention](#)

Public Health Inclusive Communications

Honoring our Bodies and Collective Healing: Moving from Burnout to Sustainability

[Elevating Youth Voice](#) [Healthy Democracy Healthy People](#) [Mental Health First Aid Training](#) [Culturally Responsive Instruction](#)

The Evolving Role of the Father During Early Childhood

Celebrating Child Growth with Developmental Screening: Training Series

[Quarterly Overdose Prevention and Drug Trend](#) [Differentiate Elementary Math Instruction](#) Engagement and Flexibility

Teaching Planning and Time Management

Resilience Training for Professionals Serving Youth and Families

[Best Practices for Fiscal Management: Documentation and Reporting](#)



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