



**FAMILIES
FIRST**

IMPACT REPORT

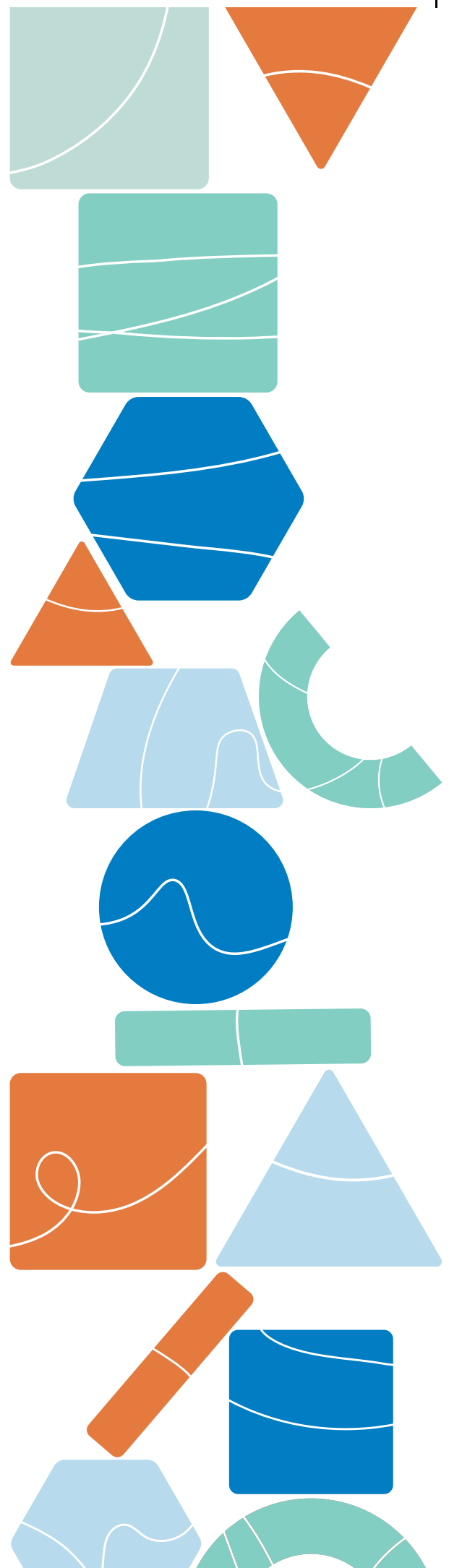
20 23

MISSION:

STRENGTHENING
FAMILIES
THROUGH
EDUCATION,
CONNECTION,
PLAY, AND
PARTNERSHIP

VISION:

TO CREATE A
COMMUNITY
WHERE FAMILIES
FEEL SUPPORTED,
EMPOWERED, AND
INSPIRED TO
LEARN AND PLAY
TOGETHER.



Overview

1 A Year of Unique Challenges

For 30 years, Families First has been providing life-altering parenting classes and opportunities for parents to connect with peers and professionals to build a strong support network! This last year, we've witnessed families in Western Montana being faced with challenges ranging from inflation, lack of childcare, unaffordable housing, and behavioral, academic, and social impacts on children.

2 A message from our Executive Director

Imagine the single mother who, with the help of our counseling services, finds the strength to overcome adversity and create a safe, loving environment for her children. Picture the teenager who, through our educational programs, discovers a love for learning and the confidence to pursue their dreams despite the challenges they face. Think about the dad who has been able to reunify with his kids and strengthen their parent/child relationships. These are the stories of compassion in action, stories possible thanks to the community that supports us.

It's hard to believe that this year, we have served a record number of families, but we would not have been able to do it without the help and support of the Department of Justice, who so generously awarded Families First a \$764,000 grant to strengthen community support and well-being in Western Montana

Thank you for being an integral part of our compassionate community.
With heartfelt gratitude,

- Hannah Zuraff



Meet The Team!



Hannah Zuraff
Executive Director



Marina Ferraris-Mercado
Development Manager



Katie Little
Child Enrichment Director



Hannah Wright
Family Education Director



Brie Shulman, LCPC
Clinical Director &
Inner Roads Program Director



Clay Veron
Inner Roads Expedition
Coordinator & Asst. Manager



Corrine Garrett
Teen Coordinator



Brittany Simonich
Family Education Coordinator -
Lake County



Jess Carrol
Child Enrichment Coordinator



Dylan Wright, NCC, PCLC
Wellness Education Coordinator



Jadd Davis
Clinical Intern





CHILD ENRICHMENT

FAMILIES FIRST

2,000+ VALENTINES DISTRIBUTED



These Valentine's were made by students throughout Western Montana at Title I schools, district partners, and childcare centers. They were distributed to Senior Living centers, Missoula Food Bank ROOTS participants, the Poverello Center & Johnson Street Shelter, and the VA Clinic.



13,575+ FAIRY KITS DISTRIBUTED

These kits follow themes of Cultural Expression, Dramatic & Imaginative Play, Empathy & Kindness, and Social-Emotional Development. Children are able to engage in a fun, new activity, and parents receive tips on how to continue the conversation by learning through play.

350+ EVENTS



64% increase in Child Enrichment Program Participants since 2022

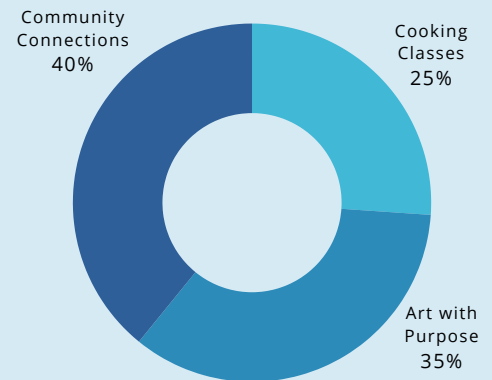
2,100+ HALLOWEEN BASH PARTICIPANTS

18th annual event, the biggest event of the year!

2,000+ SPECIAL EVENT PARTICIPANTS

Ice Cream for Breakfast, Teddy Bear Sleepover & Other Community Events

830+ families participating in monthly programs at the Missoula Public Library



EATING & READING

In partnership with the Missoula Food Bank and Community Center, we offered free lunches and books to children during the summer with special readings by guest readers.



KINDERGARTEN READINESS CAMP

Summer camps work with children 4-6 years old to enhance their social and emotional skills in preparation for kindergarten!

1,575+ BOOKS DISTRIBUTED

To Missoula's neighborhoods most in need



35+ SUMMER CAMP PARTICIPANTS

Throughout 5 different themed camps



FAMILY EDUCATION

FAMILIES FIRST

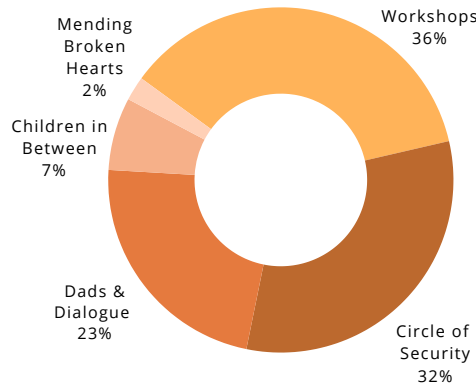
In our Family Education programs, parents and guardians have the opportunity to **network** and **exchange** ideas and advice. All programs are **free** and **open to the public** with childcare provided or have a **reduced fee option**. Our core curriculum emphasizes **positive parenting**, communication, and self-esteem in families.

150+ PARENTS

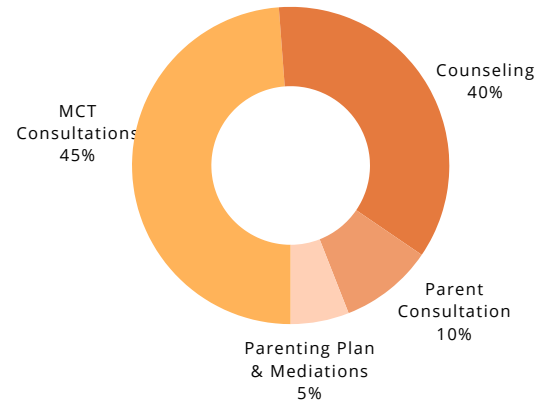
sought 1:1 support through consults & counseling child development, parenting skills, divorce/separation navigation & more

700+ PARTICIPANTS

275+ families participating in our Family Education Programs



450+ families participating in our Clinical Support Programs



67% increase in 2023 on Family Education & Clinical Support Program Participants



"It really helps to hear other parents open up and be vulnerable with their struggles and successes. It motivated me to do better for my kids and to be more compassionate to myself."

- Circle Of Security Class Participant



LAKE COUNTY PROGRAMS

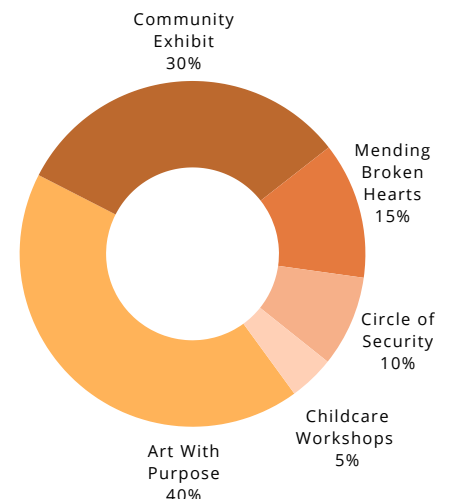
PROUDLY PARTNERED



250+ PARTICIPANTS

in different programs throughout the Flathead Indian Reservation

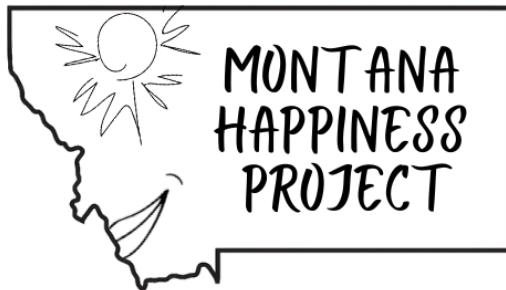
32% increase in 2023 on participants from the Flathead Indian Reservation





FAMILIES FIRST

TEENS & COMMUNITY



MONTANA HAPPINESS PROJECT

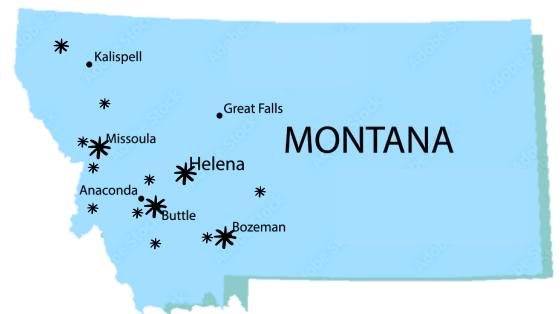


100+ PARTNERING SCHOOLS

Throughout the state of Montana

The Montana Happiness Project is dedicated to supporting mental health, promoting well-being, and reducing suicide rates through professional education, consultation, and supervision.

Ceci is getting her BA in Psychology and BFA in Acting from Pennsylvania State University. She is currently an intern with Families First, and the Montana Happiness Project where she develops positive psychology workshops for students K-12.



15+ PARTICIPANTS

95% Graduated the 20-session teen program

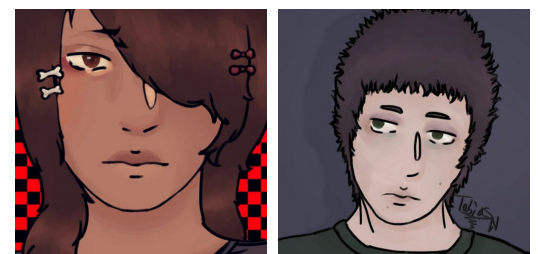


100% OF DREAM BIGGER PARTICIPANTS

Reported a greater understanding about career paths and budgeting

Dream Bigger is a dynamic program focused on making our communities stronger. We work across boundaries and stigmas to connect teens and young adults with a supportive network of mentors who are equally committed to their success.

T.N. is a young artist in Missoula. Their work, shown below, is a result of their participation in the Summer 2023 program session. T.N. won the stipend offered by the program to financially assist them with the materials needed to pursue art as a profession.



A Look Into 2024



01

30th Anniversary of Families First



02

Implementation of the Moms Making Meaning Program in Lake County

03

Developing Evaluation Strategies for ALL Families First Programs

04

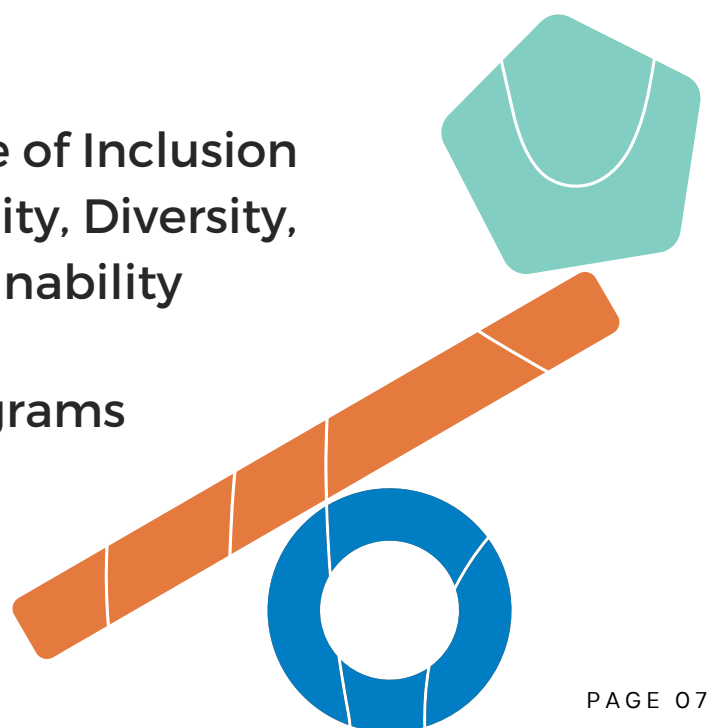
First Inner Roads Expedition via Families First

05

Building Upon a Culture of Inclusion that Values Justice, Equity, Diversity, Accessibility, and Sustainability

06

Expanding of Teen Programs



Special thanks to all our partners for making our work possible!

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Bonner Property Development LLC
- Leading Edge Aviation Services Inc.

FAMILY SERVICE PARTNERS

SUPPORTING FOUNDATIONS

- Merlin Foundation
- Brian Weiss Memorial Fund
- George & Shirley Jensen Foundation
- William H. and Margaret M. Wallace Foundation

406.721.7690

info@familiesfirstmt.org

www.familiesfirstmt.org

455 E. Main St, Missoula, Montana, 59808

Printing Sponsored by

MIKE'S PRINT & COPY
728-3363 • 1605 South Avenue West