

You're Never too Young to Make a Difference

Eliminating Food Insecurity

Food insecurity is a condition that leads to hunger, often as a result of poverty, unemployment, chronic health conditions, and racial discrimination. With more than 147,430 individuals experiencing food insecurity, Milwaukee County has the second highest rate of food insecurity in Wisconsin.

The Bay View Community Center's emergency food pantry and fresh food initiatives strive to tackle food insecurity. "We want to help serve as many people in the community as possible," says Chad VanDierendonck, Food Pantry Director. With help from the Bay View community, this dream is becoming a reality.



Stella, Age 6

Bay View resident and just-turned-six-year-old, Stella, is an amazing example of how you are never too young to make a difference in your community. "Stella came home from school one day saying that some older kids were going into the classrooms asking for food donations. Being her age and growing up through the pandemic, we had been having conversations about food insecurity," says Lisa, Stella's mother. "Bringing it down to her level – we really just tried to give some basic examples and talk about what it's like to be hungry and let her understand in a way that resonated with her."

"People don't have enough food and I want them to come here to get some."

On behalf of her birthday month, February, Stella decided to do something most six-year-olds don't do – ask for food donations for her local food pantry instead of presents for herself. "People don't have enough food and I want them to come here to get some," says Stella. With a goal of collecting 60 items to donate to BVCC, Stella was able to collect 105 thanks to her friends and family. "We were so proud! She really rallied her friends and it was a really great moment for her to connect that her abilities to lead can make a big difference," says Lisa.

References

Hunger in Milwaukee. Hunger in Milwaukee // Neighborhood Kitchen // Marquette University. (n.d.). Retrieved March 27, 2023, from <https://www.marquette.edu/neighborhood-kitchen/hunger-in-milwaukee.php>

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

☒ Supporting Our Children and Families

☒ Paving the Way

☒ Nurturing Essential Components

Supporting Our Children and Families

Wisconsin Needs to Include FRCs in its Budget

Family Resource Centers (FRCs) offer nurturing environments where parents can develop and enhance their parental strengths and children can learn new developmental skills. They are the hub that promotes child, family, and community strengths and have been connected to monumental positive impacts within their communities. Including the reduction of child maltreatment and increase of economic self-sufficiency, children's academic achievements, proper nurturing and healthy attachments, and economic and social returns.

This summer, our elected officials will adopt the 2023–2025 Wisconsin Biennial Budget. This budget will determine the funding for our children and families for the next two years. Wisconsin currently hosts around 35 FRCs that unfortunately operate without stable and sufficient funding. If FRCs are not included in the Wisconsin Biennial Budget, more energy will be put towards preparing fundraisers and writing grants instead of directly serving the needs of the community.

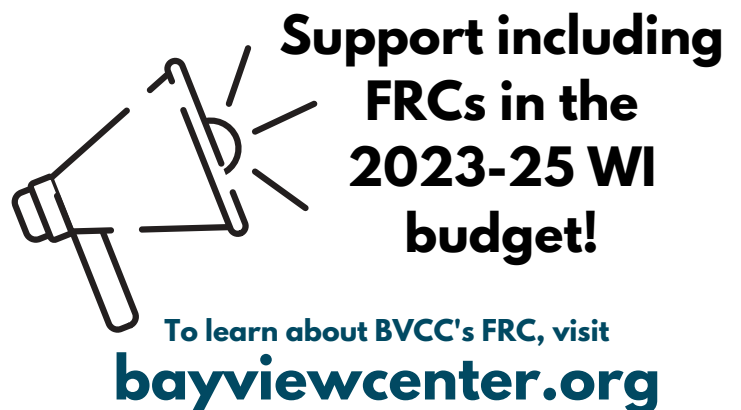
Tailored for each community, FRC services are designed to respond to the specific needs, cultures, and interests of the community's families, while also promoting child maltreatment prevention services grounded in the five protective factors.

5 Protective Factors

1. Social and Emotional Competence in Children
2. Building Social Connections
3. Concrete Support in Times of Need
4. Building Parental Resilience
5. Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

All parents can benefit from Family Resource Centers' support and assistance. It is important to normalize the commonality of seeking support and additional services while on your parenting journey. FRCs offer free and or low-cost relationship and strength-based programming that aim to promote and nurture individual and community-level partnerships.

Family Resource Centers need to be included in the Wisconsin's next budget. This includes Bay View Community Center's Family Resource Center. "The FRC is like a second home to us," says frequent FRC guest and Parent Committee Member, Amanda Marconi. Open Monday through Friday, 8:30AM to 12PM, parents and caregivers with children 0 to 6 can utilize our FRC for individual conferences with our qualified staff, guided activities, and unique programs that help foster stronger community relationships. Dedicated to building on parental strengths and providing a plethora of opportunities and resources for our community's families.



References

DCF 2023–25 biennial budget. Wisconsin Department of Children and Families. (n.d.). Retrieved March 20, 2023, from <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/budget>

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Prevention Board. Child Abuse and Neglect Prevention Board. (n.d.). Retrieved March 23, 2023, from <https://preventionboard.wi.gov/Pages/OurWork/CoreCompetencies.aspx>

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Paving the Way

STM's Community Committee

St. Thomas More (STM) High School is paving the way for our future community leaders. In recognition of Catholic Schools Week, STM's Student Council demonstrated their commitment to the Catholic tradition of providing service to others in their community.

At the start of the new year, STM's Student Council decided to create the Community Committee which is dedicated to encouraging and empowering others to give back in whichever ways they can. One of the first community acts on their list was to help Bay View Community Center.

"We like to encourage our kids at St. Thomas More to give back to the community in any way they can to help them feel the joy that often comes with lending a helping hand to those in need. We wanted students to help the Bay View community especially so they could see that hard times due to inflation and the effects of COVID-19 hit everyone differently," says Food and Hygiene Drive Adult Leader, Katyln Putney.

To collect as many items as possible, the food and hygiene drive organized by the Community Committee accepted donations across a 3-week time frame from every grade level homeroom. In order to drive up involvement and excitement, each homeroom competed with one another. Five points for each food item and 10 points for every hygiene item donated. Congrats to the winning Junior class earning 6,730 points!

Because of their hard work and dedication to serving their community, on February 24, 2023, St. Thomas More donated a whopping 1,738.5 pounds of food and hygiene products to Bay View Community Center's Emergency Food Pantry!

Thank you, St. Thomas More!



Chad VanDierendonck (Left) & STM Community Committee



BVCC Emergency Food Pantry Needs

- Peanut Butter
- Jam/Jelly
- Pasta & Pasta Sauce
- Macaroni & Cheese
- Canned Chicken/Tuna
- Individually wrapped, single serving snacks
- Toilet Paper
- Dish Soap
- Laundry Detergent

Proudly serving those living in 53207, 53221, 53235, and 53215

Food Pantry Service Hours

Tuesdays, 4-6PM
Wednesdays, 10AM-12PM
Fridays, 1:30-4PM

Nurturing Essential Components

Family Resource Center Parent Committee

Since October 2022, the Center's Family Resource Center (FRC) has grown tremendously! Bay View Community Center's Family Resource Center Associate, Julie Edington, and Director of Family Learning and Community Engagement, Diana Billstrom, have transformed the Center's playroom into a nurturing environment for our community's parents/caregivers and their children.

As the FRC grows, we are ecstatic to announce the new and official FRC Parent Committee! A committee dedicated to upholding the mission, values, and principles of the FRC. "Parents know their needs and we recognize the valuable insights and perspectives that parents can provide, therefore parental involvement is a key component in strengthening families," states Diana.

We are pleased to welcome Rachel, Amanda, Arati, and Emily to BVCC's FRC Parent Committee!



Amanda Marconi (Left), Arati Hernandez (Middle Left), Julie Edington (Middle Right), & Rachel Vogedes (Right)

"Deciding to join the committee was an easy choice. I wanted to give back. The FRC was the solution I was looking for. The environment that Ms. Julie fosters plus the guidance and expertise she shares is exactly what I was seeking for my son and myself. I am so thankful for all of Julie's support."

Rachel Vogedes, FRC Parent Committee Member

Scan the QR Code
to learn more
about BVCC's FRC



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UPCOMING FREE PROGRAMS

Untitled Teen Group

Mondays, 4pm-5pm
*For ages 14-18

Family Mindfulness Time

4/12 & 4/26, 11am-12pm

Language Exchange

4/13 & 4/27, 5:30pm-7pm

Storytime with Ms. Megan

April 18th, 11am-12pm
*For ages 0-5

First Year(s) Circle

Fridays, 10am-12pm