



**EPPEL**  
Enriching Partnerships for Early Learning

## Meet Our Family Partners

### FAMILY PARTNERS



**Abigail Bautista**



**Ana Cienfuegos**



**Avita Odom**



**Bere Castillo**



**Maryam Chohan**  
Volunteer



**Mehak Jabbar**



**Raquel Robelo**



**Veronica Dominguez**

## From Parent to Partner

Dear Community,

At EPEL, we believe families are not just participants in our work—we believe they are leaders, educators, and trusted voices in our community.

Thanks to the generous support of Elgin Township and Hanover Township, EPEL launched our Family Partner Program to train parents and caregivers to become trusted community leaders. Through this initiative, Family Partners help saturate our community with The Basics principles while connecting families to wraparound supports, resources, and early learning opportunities that help children thrive.

Today, we are proud to have eight Family Partners who are making a meaningful impact throughout the Greater Elgin area. Their lived experiences, cultural and linguistic knowledge, and authentic relationships with families make them invaluable members of our team.

One of the things that makes this program especially meaningful is that four of our Family Partners first connected with EPEL simply by attending our free family engagement events with their own young children. As we got to know them, we recognized the incredible strengths, leadership, and passion they brought to every interaction. They also taught us through their own experiences as parents. After completing our Family Partner training, they have become trusted community leaders who are now supporting and empowering other families.

It is an honor to walk alongside them. Congratulations to Ana, Avita, Mehak, and Victoria for being part of this journey—from parent to partner.

Our team reflects the diversity of the families we serve. Five of our Family Partners are bilingual in English and Spanish, and two are bilingual in English and Urdu, helping ensure families can both receive and share information in the language they are most comfortable using. This strengthens trust, increases access to resources, and creates meaningful two-way communication between families and community organizations.

This summer, we are also honored to welcome a volunteer from Pakistan who is serving alongside our team. As an experienced early childhood headmistress and one of our English-Urdu bilingual Family Partners, she brings a global perspective and a deep commitment to supporting young children and families. We have loved her enthusiasm, and she became the first Family Partner to learn The Basics principles by heart in two languages.

Our Family Partners remind us that some of the greatest leaders are already in our community. By investing in parents and caregivers, we are strengthening not only individual families but our entire early childhood system. We are deeply grateful to Elgin Township and Hanover Township for

making this program possible and to each of our Family Partners for the lasting impact they make every day.

Together We Can,



Amber Peters  
Executive Director  
EPEL & Basics of Greater Elgin

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