



## Kristyn Peck Heads the West Michigan Partnership for Children as CEO

*A passion for children, demonstrated leadership of large organizations, and a dedication to improving communities comes with Ms. Peck as she relocates to Michigan to spearhead a transformational new organization.*

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
CONTACT: Dana Nyquist

July 24, 2017  
(517) 862-4171, [dana@yourppl.com](mailto:dana@yourppl.com)

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. -- The West Michigan Partnership for Children (WMPC), a brand-new organization serving Kent County, has recruited [Kristyn Peck](#) to serve as its Chief Executive Officer.

Ms. Peck has dedicated her career to serving children and families. Most recently, she served as the Associate Director of Children's Services for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops/Migration and Refugee Services (USCCB/MRS) in Washington, D.C. In that capacity, she oversaw national family reunification, shelter, and foster care services for unaccompanied children.

Ms. Peck is recognized internationally for her expertise in child welfare and migration. Her achievements include serving as the Chair of the Vulnerable Minors Working Group of Refugee Council USA; leading presentations on best practices for serving refugee and immigrant children at the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) annual meetings in Geneva, Switzerland; developing child protection policies for a program that served Burmese refugees in Malaysia; and participating in multiple international assessment trips to identify child protection needs in refugee flows and recommend solutions.

"Kristyn Peck is extraordinarily well-suited to lead WMPC," says Beth Englander Maida, Chief Operating Officer and Partner, J.K. Elder & Associates. "In her most recent role, Kristyn provided senior leadership for programs, policies, and performance outcomes for a team that managed a network of nearly 250 community-based child welfare agencies providing family reunification, foster care, and related



placement services to unaccompanied refugee children across the U.S. In fact, it remains the largest program of its kind for unaccompanied minors in the world.”

“She is highly-regarded for her collaborative approach, attention to detail, contracting acumen, ability to cultivate key partnerships, management skillset, and policy/practice expertise necessary to improve outcomes for at-risk, vulnerable children.” Maida adds. “As a former state executive with chief responsibility for a statewide performance-based, privatized legislative mandate, and as the former MRS Director of Special Programs, I believe that Ms. Peck's commitment to service will strengthen WMPC's ability to, in turn, serve its communities.”

Creating opportunities for youth voices to be heard is of principal importance to Ms. Peck, who is also a veteran of developing new programs. In 2016, Ms. Peck organized and facilitated the first U.S. Refugee Youth Consultation in Washington, D.C. One of the youth participants from this Consultation participated in a global youth consultation at the UNHCR 2016 annual meeting in Geneva. In 2014, Ms. Peck launched a national Legal Services and Child Advocacy program that provided legal services to 1,008 unaccompanied children.

“We are thrilled to welcome Kristyn to this leadership position,” says Steve Zwart, LMSW, VP Program Development for Wellspring Lutheran Services and WMPC Board Chair. “She is collaborative and a great communicator, super smart and a quick learner. Even better, she clearly understands that all work for WMPC is done in the context of community, and she is already involved in activities that help her gain a deeper understanding of Kent County.”

Ms. Peck played a crucial role in responding to the unprecedented influx of unaccompanied children from Central America in 2014 by coordinating with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) on the federal response. She also shepherded key, related USCCB/MRS public education initiatives, and helped build the capacity of U.S. communities to respond to the needs of Central American children and families. That same year, Ms. Peck testified before the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Immigration and Border Security.

“I am deeply passionate about strengthening families to create better futures for children,” says Ms. Peck. “I am inspired by this initiative to transform foster care in Kent County. This collaboration combines the best talent, expertise, and passion in foster care in the state of Michigan.”

Ms. Peck earned her M.S.W. from the University of Maryland-Baltimore and her B.A. from the University of Maryland-College Park.

## ABOUT WMPC



Launching October 1, 2017, WMPC will facilitate foster care services in Kent County, in partnership with Bethany Christian Services, Catholic Charities of West Michigan, D.A. Blodgett—St. Johns, Samaritas, and Wellspring Lutheran Services, through a contract with the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. WMPC is Michigan’s only private agency providing foster care services through a performance-based pilot contract, utilizing a case rate that incentivizes permanency and allows for flexibility and creativity in funds. WMPC seeks to empower and strengthen families to improve outcomes for children.

Learn more at [www.wmpc.care](http://www.wmpc.care).