



**Family Tree
Clinic**
Be healthy. Be you.

Newsletter

Spring 2021



Family Tree Staff Get Vaccinated!

We're working hard to keep our communities safe during the pandemic.

Something was different in the mood around the clinic in late January. People were walking with a little extra spring in their steps. COVID-19 vaccines had become available for Family Tree Clinic staff, bringing a sense of hope with them. This spring, folks who work at Family Tree are relieved to be protecting themselves, advancing public health and creating an even safer environment for our patients.

Early this year, when larger health care systems received access to COVID-19 vaccines, Family Tree was frustrated — many of our patients hold identities in groups that are significantly impacted by the pandemic, but we still hadn't heard anything about vaccine access. In conversation with Marielle Mohs of WCCO, Medical Director Jen Demma said, "What causes our health disparities is showing up in who is getting vaccinated first."

Later that same month, vaccine access opened up and our staff moved quickly - many staff members are now fully vaccinated.

Family Tree has also applied to be a COVID-19 vaccine provider, and if we are able to provide vaccines, we will post that information on our website. In the meantime, to learn about Minnesota's vaccination program including when you might be eligible, please visit mn.gov/findmyvaccine or call 833-431-2053 between 9:00am and 7:00pm Monday - Friday.

As the vaccination effort continues throughout our community, Family Tree Clinic is committed to keeping each other safe by maintaining all safety measures, including the use of PPE, and following handwashing, sanitizing and distancing protocols. 🌿

Teaching Puberty Classes in a Pandemic

Family Tree educators create a safe virtual space for students to learn.

When COVID-19 closed down schools last year, our Health Education team went to work figuring out how to virtually teach sex ed with the same excellence and inclusivity that Family Tree Clinic is known for.

It wasn't easy. Sawyer Plotz, a Family Tree health educator, points out that you really lose something when you're not teaching in person. "When we're physically present in the classroom, there are always at least a few kids who hang back to ask questions after the presentation is officially over," he said. "So with distance learning, we had to find ways to make space for questions that we either ran out of time for, or that kids don't want to ask in front of everybody."

So Sawyer and other Family Tree educators quickly created a way for students to submit questions anonymously, which has helped build an inclusive environment in an online class.

In the virtual puberty classes that Sawyer teaches, students ask questions like *Does puberty hurt?* or *Why does my body change so much?* The visual content he uses to teach kids about puberty not only answers these questions, but does so with images of diverse bodies while using non-binary language to talk about bodies and gender in expansive, healthy ways.

"That's just one of the things that Family Tree does that I think is so cool and important," Sawyer notes.



A Slide from Sawyer's virtual Puberty Class reminding students that everybody is different, and that's ok.

"With distance learning, we had to find ways to make space for questions that we either ran out of time for, or that kids don't want to ask in front of everybody."

Sawyer Plotz, Family Tree Clinic
Health Educator

"We have a very gender inclusive way that we talk about bodies and puberty." As schools adapt to changing public health needs, we're grateful to Family Tree's educators for creating trusting environments that, whether in person or online, share the message that all bodies are good bodies. 🌍

Donate Today, Change Tomorrow

Your contributions help Family Tree Clinic provide programming to thousands of individuals in Minnesota and beyond! Thank you.

Donate today at familytreeclinic.org/donate or by mailing a check with "donation" in the memo line to Family Tree Clinic, 1619 Dayton Ave #205, St. Paul MN 55104.

Clinic Construction Update

We're so excited to be joining this vibrant Minneapolis neighborhood.

Last year we announced that we are building a new trauma-informed, community-powered medical clinic and education center at Franklin and Nicollet in Minneapolis.

This new building will have the capacity to reach an additional 10,000 people a year, intentionally grow our high-impact programs, expand our partnerships, and continue systems change as a national leader in inclusive and affirming sexual health care and education.

Steel has been delivered to the site and construction of the building's framing is underway. We are thrilled to say we're on track to open our doors at the new 1919 Nicollet Ave location in late fall.

Constructing a new clinic involves making hundreds of decisions that impact the look and feel of the new space, from where the power is located to the color of the grout between the bricks. We're proud to have incorporated input from staff, patients, and community throughout the process.

The building site will look dramatically different from week to week, so stop by anytime you're in the neighborhood to see it, take a picture and let us know by using the hashtag #NewFamilyTreeClinic when you share. We look forward to sharing more updates on our big move soon. 🌱



The construction site in February. To learn more about the new Family Tree Clinic or to donate, visit [PowerToBuild.org](https://www.powertobuild.org)



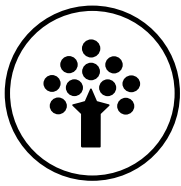
This digital painting by Alexis Wall was created during a workshop on altar building and making Florida Water.

Melenation of Art Cultivates Community

For four Tuesdays in February, Jacki Trelawny and our Community Engagement department celebrated Black history and Black futures by hosting the Melenation of Art series*. Participants were invited to meditate, stretch, dance, and envision healing practices. Many of the sessions had a visual artist creating work in response to the activities of the session as they happened.

Events were held virtually to keep folks safe during the pandemic, but the energy of the community shone through the screens. 🌱

*These activities are made possible by the voters of Minnesota through a grant from the Minnesota State Arts Board, thanks to a legislative appropriation from the arts and cultural heritage fund.



Family Tree Clinic

1619 Dayton Ave #205. St. Paul, MN 55104



Check out the poster inside this issue!

*Did you catch
the interpreters
at our virtual
groundbreaking?*

Family Tree officially broke ground on our new building in February, and our Deaf, DeafBlind, and Hard of Hearing department worked tirelessly to make the experience of watching the virtual groundbreaking in ASL unforgettable. Nearly all the interpreters for the event were Deaf!

If you missed it you can watch anytime on Facebook, Youtube or our website.



Nine of the interpreters who worked on the virtual groundbreaking event. Watch anytime on our website: familytreeclinic.org/groundbreak



It's OK to ask questions.

MN Family PLANNING
+STD Hotline

SexualHealthMN.org