

Little Seeds: supporting growing families

By Diane Claytor



Photo provided

Kat Neill (left) and Lauren Locke, owners of Little Seeds, are passionate about supporting families and building community in their Lafayette storefront.

Anyone who's ever had a newborn baby knows how challenging those first few months can be. As a parent, you're exhausted. You worry about everything and have so many questions: why does my baby cry all the time? why won't she go to sleep? why isn't he gaining weight? why does my body look and feel like this? And you can feel so isolated, staying home with your baby day in and day out, often not even having time to take a shower.

Little Seeds, a new business that will help every new parent - from prenatal to postpartum and beyond - opened in Lafayette last month, and already owners Lauren Locke and Katlynn (Kat) Neill have been thanked repeatedly for offering this very much needed service.

Locke, a sleep consultant, maternal health occupational therapist, and facilitator for mommy and me groups, grew up near Fresno, moving to Lamorinda to attend Saint Mary's College. Neill grew up in Lafayette, was an au pair while studying in Amsterdam, and has spent the last ten years teaching CPR and infant massage.

The two women met through social media, quickly bonding over their shared passion for supporting and connecting families with invaluable resources and local

professionals offering expert advice.

With five children between them, Locke and Neill are no strangers to the many challenges new parents face. "It's no secret that new parents need a lot of support," Locke says, and Little Seeds is devoted to helping them "navigate the huge transition into having a tiny human in their lives."

Little Seeds began as resource fair for growing families. "Our area is rich with very knowledgeable people in their respective fields," Neill notes, "and our goal has always been to connect these experts with our local families." With this objective, Locke and Neill created the first annual Little Seeds Fair in 2023, a one-of-a-kind event that connected families with local professionals dedicated to supporting them.

The Fair was a huge success - and from that, Locke explains, this concept of a brick and mortar offering more of the same came to life. She continues, noting that their goal in the large airy and bright Lafayette storefront, "is to offer a local space where families can come in person and gather in community to learn, educate, and find resources. We're an in-person parent hub for growing families," she says.

Little Seeds provides everything families need

to navigate the journey into parenthood with confidence and support. There are currently more than 10 classes available; weekly sessions include infant massage; three different playgroups; mom and baby yoga, as well as toddler and kids yoga; music and movement. There are also monthly prenatal classes, including labor 101; breastfeeding basics; newborn care and prenatal partners yoga; postpartum support and postpartum body; and infant and child CPR.

Additionally, there is a six week series on postpartum depression and anxiety, facilitated by a licensed therapist; a series on baby sign language and one on hypnobirthing, as well as a mom and baby group covering topics relevant to both in those early postpartum months. More classes and workshops will definitely be coming.

"Wanting to build a community amongst new parents, Locke and Neill have created a Monthly Coffee and Chat where parents can relax and talk with a group of rotating experts, including sleep and lactation consultants. Additionally, several times a year, moms will have the opportunity to make new friends at the Little Seeds Moms Mingle."

Dads certainly haven't been forgotten. Locke and Neill are in the process of creating some dad-specific groups, "where they can come and be with other dads," Neill says.

Having only been open a month, Little Seeds' offerings will no doubt evolve over time. Locke and Neill are committed to serving the community, promising that if there's something needed but not currently available, they'll try to figure out a way to fill the need.

"We want everyone to feel welcome here," Neill notes. "We want you to come in and feel like this is a place where you belong, where you can find your community. We just want to support families, wherever they are in their parenting journey."

For more information or to register for a class, please go to www.littleseedsfamily.com

Connecting Lafayette plans

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Vice Mayor Kwok suggested that they request a four foot wide path, then five feet wide if that is rejected, and then return to six feet wide if

necessary.

The council passed a motion that the Connecting Lafayette designs be approved but that the staff submit a request to change to an ADA four or five foot

wide pathway to MTC. Another motion was then passed that when the Topper Lane pathway is constructed that the staff try to preserve and then plant as many trees as possible.



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