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## Franklin County Pediatrics

East Fairfield, VT

**Dr. Laura Bellstrom, MD**  
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East Fairfield, VT 05448  
Tel. 802-827-3861

### The Practice

Dr. Bellstrom started her East Fairfield practice after spending almost 8 years practicing at other locations in Vermont, including Mousetrap Pediatrics in St. Albans. After leaving the state for a period of time where she worked on a Navajo Reservation for the Indian Health Services, Dr. Bellstrom returned because she loves Vermont for "...its beauty and widely held desire to preserve that beauty, for its change of seasons and the activities available, for its relative safety and community mindedness". The practice is unique because it is housed in a true community center that offers Head Start and preschool programs, and vacation programs for area children. Dr. Bellstrom admits "it is an ideal location for a pediatrician to be more involved in child-focused activities within the community".

The office is open four days a week (Mondays 1:00 pm – 8:30 pm, Tuesdays 1:00 pm – 7:30 pm, Thursdays & Fridays from 10:00 am – 4:00 pm). Patients can be seen during other hours as needed.

### The Community

Fairfield, with a population of fewer than 2,000 is a true rural community. Originally chartered in 1863, the town has many interesting stories in its history including the renaming of Fairfield Pond. It was once known as Dream Pond, recalling an 1842 incident in which a man was convicted of murder after a woman dreamed she saw him drowning a mother and her baby there. It is also home to the Chester A. Arthur State Historic Site, which is a 1953 recreation of the second house in which the 21st president lived as an infant.

### Hospital Affiliation

Dr. Bellstrom is affiliated with the [Northwestern Medical Center](#), a 70-bed, not-for-profit, primary care hospital located on Fairfield Street in St. Albans. The hospital is nine miles West of East Fairfield (Exit 19 on I-89). NMC is a high-tech facility that works hard to preserve the "family feel" of a rural hospital.



## **Staff**

The office staff consists of Dr. Bellstrom, one licensed practical nurse and one administrative staff member.

## **Typical Day**

A typical day often starts with seeing patients (especially newborns) or attending an early morning meeting at the hospital, then heading to the office for appointments that are a combination of well child visits, physicals, sick visits and follow ups. Patients may range in age from a few days old to those in their early twenties. Students may also accompany Dr. Bellstrom to area meetings related to pediatric care including school conferences, coordinated care meetings, and continuing education presentations.

## **Teaching Goals**

Dr. Bellstrom's primary goal for students is to expose them to comprehensive, holistic and family-centered pediatric care and to view the care of children as part of an intricately woven fabric that includes family, social, medical, educational and community issues. A secondary goal is to familiarize students with the satisfying as well as challenging aspects of rural health care.

## **Special Medical Interests**

Dr. Bellstrom's medical interests include asthma, adolescent medicine, breast feeding promotion, public health issues and caring for children with special needs.

## **Other Interests**

Dr. Bellstrom enjoys many activities with her two boys (ages 8 and 11) and her husband (John "Pat" Hartnett, who is principal of the Westford Elementary School) including traveling, swimming, hiking, camping, skiing, canoeing and kayaking. She also loves reading and gardening.

## **Student Housing**

Typically, housing is not needed for this practice site. If a student has a hardship or just wants to spend time in a rural community, housing can be arranged by calling Champlain Valley AHEC at (802) 527-1474.