

DONATE 

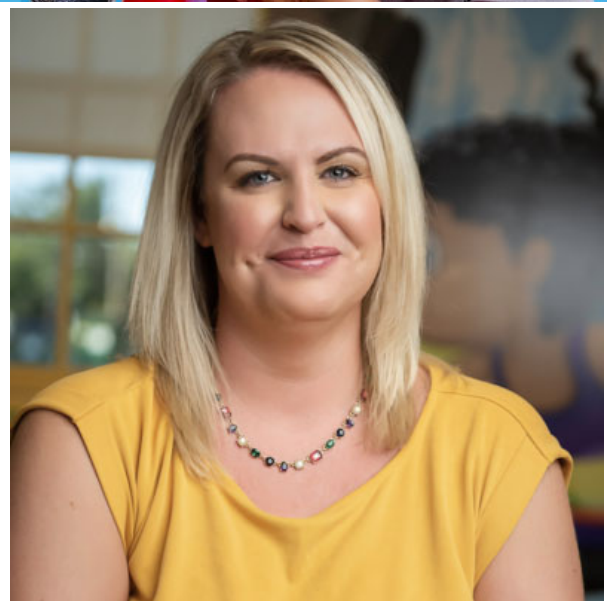
Bright Beginnings Newsletter Summer 2023



Dear Friend,

The late spring and summer months are always a whirlwind at BBI as one school year winds down, we say goodbye (but not farewell!) to our transitioning students, and look to the next year to begin. While regular programming goes on day in and day out, our teams are constantly innovating to provide our children and families with the services and tools they need to thrive. One example I'm proud to share is the BBI farmer's markets, launched by Shannon Robinson, our health and nutrition manager. The two markets we held in June and July were so successful that at least 6 more are planned for the 2023/2024 year. Another example is the summer fun activity kit, created by our education and health and therapeutics team to ensure learning never stops, while school might take a break for just a couple weeks! More details on both of these initiatives are shared below.

Speaking of new programming, I am beyond excited



to share that BBI has been honored with grants from two first-time funders for new initiatives! The Sharon Darling Fund at the [National Center for Families Learning](#) funded our pilot program for a BBI Alumni Network. We have spent years nurturing and building relationships with our children and families who are transitioning to kindergarten. We believe it is imperative to continue to provide our wraparound services and continuity of care so our children and their parents can thrive in elementary school and beyond! The [SunLife Foundation](#) also provided funding to incorporate Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes awareness, prevention, and education into our programming for children and families. I am proud of the BBI team for embracing new ideas and changes that support our community.

There is a lot to look forward to as our new school year gets underway, including a rock-climbing wall and foldable gym box in our multipurpose room to build fine and gross motor skills in our children. In addition, we constructed a sensory room - a quiet space for speech, occupational, and mental health consultants to meet with students and work on-site. The room provides much needed space for small group workshops, individual work, or family sessions. It also offers space for activities to help regulate children's nervous systems during the ups and downs of a school day.

I shared in our last newsletter that BBI's [FY22 annual report](#) and [audit](#) were being drafted. Both documents are now posted on our website. Last but not least - you may notice our newsletter looks slightly different. BBI transitioned to a new system for external communications to consolidate data and reduce costs. Data and software migrations are always challenging! If you wish to update your communications preferences with us, please reach out to [Rebecca Rorke](#), director of development. She will be happy to assist.

As we head into fall, we have a lot of events planned, including several that could use volunteer support. We are also welcoming volunteers back into the classroom as assistants. Please send a note to our [volunteer team](#) if you are interested in getting involved. Thank you for your continued support of BBI's children, parents, and staff. All these exciting updates would not be possible without you!

Sincerely,



Erin Fisher
Chief Executive Officer

2-Gen In Action

Our programming supports both children and their families. This creates a long-lasting impact and helps the family unit as a whole move along a spectrum that could range from crisis to self sufficiency.



BBI Farmers Markets

We are thrilled to launch our first ever farmer's markets this summer! Building on our spring programming for National Nutrition Month, BBI held a farmer's market on June 13. Parents received healthy and delicious smoothie recipes along with locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables. Some items included mangoes, apples, dragon fruit, brussel sprouts, peppers, broccoli and more! The market was so successful and well-attended by 58 BBI families that a second market was held on July 12. Shannon Robinson, BBI's health and nutrition manager, has additional farmers

markets planned throughout the new school year.

Summer Fun Activity Kits

Play is a win-win for both parent and child. Science has shown that when parents play with their child, the hormone, oxytocin, is released. Oxytocin is associated with trust and relationship building. Another benefit of oxytocin is that it counteracts the effects of stress, reducing blood pressure, anxiety, and fear (Dewar, 2019). For children, creative play builds fine and gross motor skills and, when done with parents, builds self-esteem and parent-child bonding.

BBI's Health and Therapeutics Services Team created a summer activity booklet and supply kit so parents could continue to support their child's development and creative play during the two-week summer break. Included were all the necessary supplies and step-by-step instructions for completing each activity. Each activity also offered suggested questions the parent could ask their child to boost communication skills and social emotional stability. Making and playing with playdough was a favorite, as was the nature scavenger hunt, creating a monster puppet, and sidewalk chalk. Our Health and Therapeutics Team received positive feedback and plans to offer similar kits during every BBI break.



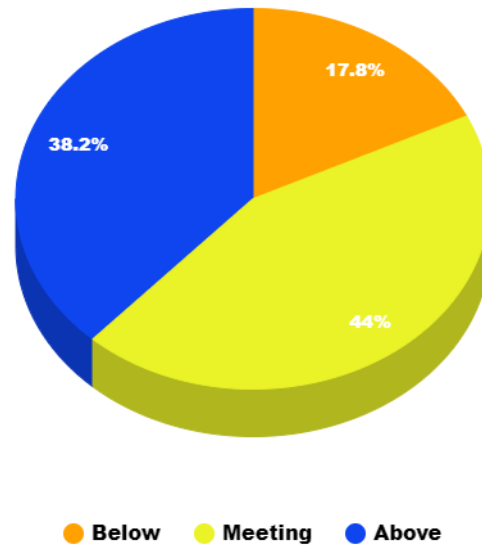
TRANSITION CEREMONY



BBI's 2022/2023 program year culminated in a graduation and transition ceremony for seven students in its Pre-K 4 class on July 20. The students performed songs of goodbyes, gratitude, and hope for their future. During this time of transition, BBI helps parents with the My School DC Lottery process and partners with them to find a good school for their child. We also provide uniforms, backpacks, and supplies for each child as they enter kindergarten. Preparing our children to start kindergarten ready to learn is a key piece of our mission.

DATA STORYTELLING

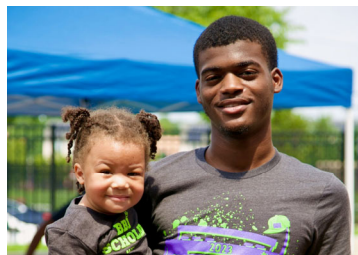
During the 2022/2023 program year Bright Beginnings provided year-round Early Head Start and Head Start education to 260 children (taking into account student turnover and mid-year enrollments) at no cost to their parents. All children advanced in each of the eight content areas defined by the (COR) Advantage: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language, Literacy and Communication, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology and Social Studies. Considering the overall average for each content area, 82.2% of Bright Beginnings' Early Head Start and Head Start students met or exceeded the national average at the end of the school year.



ARTS PROGRAMMING



After a several-year hiatus due to the pandemic, BBI resumed its partnership with Wolf Trap Foundation for the Performing Arts! During the spring semester, students had the opportunity to participate in a 5-week residency with Wolf Trap Education, a program of the Wolf Trap Foundation. During this unique residency, BBI students were introduced to art integration by singing, making music, dancing, role-playing, and storytelling. This integration bridges subjects like math, science, and reading. BBI is continuing its partnership with Wolf Trap for the 2023/2024 program year, with 13 sessions of arts programming during the school year, collaboration between artists and teachers on lessons, and two field trips to performances at Wolf Trap Performing Arts Center.



PARENT EMPOWERMENT

Bright Beginnings held its annual Parent Empowerment Celebration on July 8 to celebrate all the accomplishments of the past year. As always the event featured food, games, and fun for the whole family. The foam machine made another appearance, as well as music, basketball, two bounce houses, face painting, balloon animals, popcorn, and a delicious BBQ.



Our week-long Father's Day celebration included a backpack filled with self-care items, a Grab & Go breakfast, and haircuts by Mobile Grooming Concepts. We ended the week with a Fatherhood Cookout.



It's Workout Wednesday! As part of BBI's health and wellness programming, staff members enjoyed a midday strength training or workout session with fitness instructor Angela Madden every other Wednesday.



Our Mother's Day celebration featured breakfast, chair massages, a sip and paint class, and was topped off with a dance-off at our first Mother and Son Sneaker Ball!

[Donate Now](#)

Bright Beginnings, Inc.



[Privacy Policy](#) | [Unsubscribe](#)

[Bright Beginnings, Inc.](#)
3418 4th Street SE, Washington, DC 20032