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## Bright Beginnings Newsletter Winter 2023-2024



# The BBI Briefing

Dear Friend,

Bright Beginnings was abuzz in November and December with holiday cheer. Our families and our leadership team were filled with gratitude for the Wish List and essentials donated this year to ensure the season was joyful and complete with presents under the tree for their children. I'd like to offer my own gratitude to everyone who contributed to this year's Wish List campaign.

I am very excited to announce that after a 5-year hiatus, Bright Beginnings is reviving its annual 5K race in partnership with The Junior League of Washington! This year's 5K will be on April 27 at Anacostia Park, SE with a 9:00am start time. The event supports BBI's goal to promote health and wellness for our staff and families and will include a fun run, walk, and stroller brigade! It's free to register (with a \$25 suggestion donation to cover the cost of your t-shirt and swag) and suitable for all ages and levels of fitness. There will be music, games, food, and fun for the whole family. To register for the race



and your T-shirt, or just donate to support the event, please [visit our website](#). I hope to see you there!

Since becoming CEO in September of 2022, investing in our staff through professional development has been a priority of mine. The benefits to staff are evident by increased retention rates, increased job satisfaction, enhanced productivity, and development of leadership skills, all of which benefit our children. We are seeing results of this initiative in our ITERS-3 scores, which are highlighted below in the Data Storytelling section. Due to the pandemic, our last ITERS-3 scores are from 2019. We are especially excited to see our growth in the domain of interaction, as we know that talking and communicating with our children is how they will grow the most. Again, I am so proud of our teachers, instructional coaches, and education director for their enthusiasm for continuing education and leadership development, and excited to see where ongoing investment takes them and our children!

Lastly, we are thrilled that our Alumni Program kicked off events in January with a goal setting vision boarding session! Over the years that children and families are at BBI we build strong and meaningful relationships with them, and we believe that those relationships are important to continue for both the growth of the child and the families. We are excited to continue to support our children and their families as they move to elementary school and to track their data and the long-lasting impact of BBI in our community!

Sincerely,



Erin Fisher  
Chief Executive Officer

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## 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.

## Cold and Flu Kits

Cold and flu season this year has been particularly active. BBI's classroom routines help reduce the transmission of viruses, through practices like frequent hand-washing, wearing masks, and covering mouths and noses when sneezing. Despite best practices, BBI saw its share of colds. Making matters worse for our families was the scarcity of over-the-counter medicines and cold and flu supplies available in Ward 8. In response, BBI's Health Services Department compiled kits for all families in need that contained a Covid-19 test kit, disinfectant spray and wipes, masks, hand sanitizer, a thermometer, gloves, and Children's Tylenol and Motrin. Responsive programming and supplies like these kits support both children and the caretakers in their lives.



## Looking Forward to Spring

BBI's HighScope curriculum fosters creativity, curiosity, collaboration, and critical thinking. You can see it in action as Ms. Asia teaches a lesson to Classroom 2 on how plants grow in preparation for spring gardening. BBI's back yard area is being redeveloped into an outdoor garden oasis, complete with walking trails and a multi-level deck. It will serve as a safe green space for staff to take breaks, eat lunch, and hold workshops, as well as an interactive garden and teaching space for teachers and children. Ms. Asia will continue this lesson in the spring when the children plant their seedlings and watch them grow and fruit all season.



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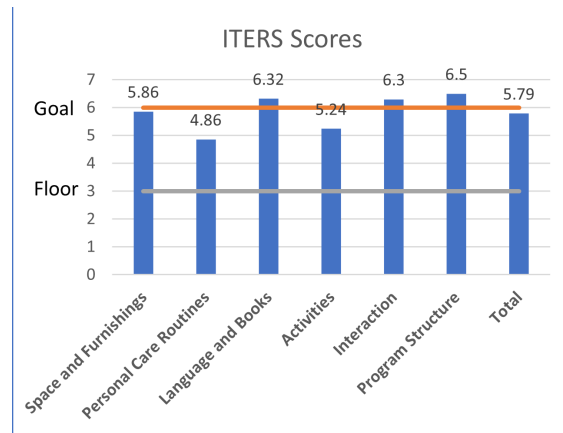
## HOLIDAY WISH LIST



Each year BBI families are asked for a holiday "Wish List" for their child(ren). The list always includes a winter coat, shoes, clothing, as well as toys. Generous donors - individuals, schools, corporations, businesses, and volunteer groups - in turn donate items from the list. This year, we also asked for diapers and other essentials, such as wipes and formula to help alleviate the financial burden on our families during the holiday season. Our community came together and donated nearly \$13,000 in toys and essentials which were distributed in December. A special thanks to [The Junior League of Washington](#) for ensuring every child has a coat, shoes, hat, and gloves, as well as all supporters who ensured our children had toys under the holiday tree.

## DATA STORYTELLING

DC's Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) conducts an annual observation of infant and toddler classrooms in child development centers. The Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale-Third Edition (ITERS-3) is used to measure the quality of the spatial, programmatic and interpersonal characteristics of infant and toddler classrooms, and focuses on the classroom space, children's safety and health, language use, and stimulation in activities and teacher-child interactions that occur in the program environment. We are pleased to report that our 2023 evaluation is strong and shows significant growth in the domain of interaction compared to our 2019 observation.



## SCHOLASTIC BOOK FAIR

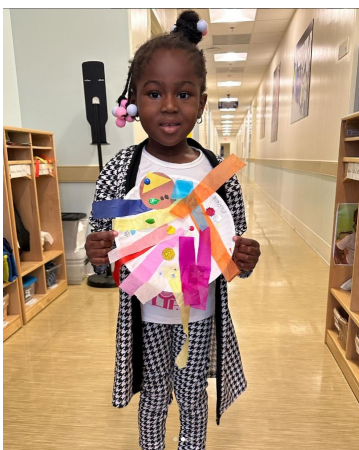




BBI held its first annual Book Fair on December 12 in partnership with [Scholastic](#) - the worlds largest publisher and distributor of children's books. Families were welcomed into the BBI library to browse from a variety of available books. Each child was able to pick a book to take home, while teachers were able to select books for their classrooms. Fostering a love for books and reading is a priority at BBI, as evidenced by events like the Scholastic book fair, spring and fall literacy nights, and daily book reads in the classroom.

## ALUMNI SUPPORT PROGRAM

Our Alumni Support Program launched last fall and is off to a strong start. One of the goals of the program is to build relationships with counselors at the elementary schools where BBI alums are enrolled. This allows BBI to collaborate with the parents and schools on the students' educational goals and play a role in the plans to support each child. Another goal of the program is to foster a community amongst alumni families to build their social capital and support network. Five alumni families came together in January for brunch and camaraderie. At the event, parents and children created vision boards to bring motivation and visual clarity to their personal goals.



Our children celebrated Thanksgiving in their classrooms



Construction on our garden is well underway! Garden beds will



Pictures with Santa at our Winter Wonderland are always a favorite

by making their own arts and  
crafts turkey.

be ready for spring planting by  
April.

(or dreaded!) event for our  
children.

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