

Bright Beginnings Newsletter March 2021



Dear Friend of BBI,

Greetings and welcome to BBI's first quarterly newsletter, **The BBI Briefing!**

We are elated to keep in touch about all the exciting things happening here at BBI. Our **2-Generation approach** is the thread weaving BBI's programming together. Not only do we provide childcare, but we also support each family as a whole in order to have a lasting impact and tackle poverty and homelessness at its root. In addition to early childhood education, we've centered our holistic programming around connecting our parents with post-secondary education and employment pathways in order for them to build economic assets and accrue social capital. At the same time, we provide programming to inspire each family's health and well-being. Every program we offer is necessary in aiding children and parents in transitioning from crisis to self-sufficiency. We will be sharing our **2-Gen impact** across social media, so please be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#).



We are proud that this year, **BBI's 30th Anniversary**, we did not falter in the face of the global pandemic, and continued offering our services in a variety of creative ways. Because we were able to remain flexible during these trying times, we have learned many valuable lessons and will carry them with us in the years to come. BBI has become even more responsive to the needs of our families, improved how we support one another physically, mentally, and emotionally, and reinforced our belief in the importance of trying new things.

When BBI shut down on March 13, 2020 we transferred all of our programming and operations to a virtual space within just a few days. Parents were almost immediately able to participate with their children in our at-home learning programming and also engage online with the Parent Intern Program, socializations, and fatherhood activities. By July 6, 2020 we reopened and implemented a phased reopening plan that offered a combination of both virtual and onsite programming.

In order to be more responsive to the needs of our families, BBI launched Project **#BrighterTogether**. This entailed building an at-home learning section into our website to assist parents as they continued to teach their children virtually. We also created a parent newsletter that proliferated important updates and resources to consistently assist families throughout the pandemic. BBI was flexible and responsive, each month developing new ways to help our families. We distributed educational resources, food, diapers, and baby formula. We made sure families had proper PPE and cleaning supplies to keep them as safe as possible. **We also distributed hotspot-equipped tablets to address the issue of the digital divide and remain in close contact with our children and families.** Distribution of these necessary materials has been ongoing and will continue to be into the future.

We are very proud of the ways the staff at BBI quickly adapted to better support one another in every way. Whether it was dancing at a Zoom party with a guest DJ, celebrating together over a Virtual Holiday Dinner, or participating in wellness and self-care groups, staff worked together to keep everyone's spirits up and remain healthy. Teachers were also provided with additional economic support to help them balance the new responsibilities brought about by the pandemic.

After a devastating year, with staff-vaccination efforts taking place along with strict COVID-19 protocols and electrostatic cleaning procedures, we anticipate returning to full capacity on July 6, 2021. Stay tuned!

Thank you for your continued encouragement and support.

Sincerely,



Marla M. Dean, Ed. D
Executive Director

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 from crisis to self-sufficiency.

Regina was referred to BBI in the summer of 2016 when she was pregnant with her son Noah. She was homeless and lost. Regina recently detailed her BBI journey, including the education and support she received from both staff and fellow program participants. The foundation and "village" BBI helped build for Regina enabled her to maintain stable housing for the last three years, enter an associate nursing program, and support Noah as he entered preschool. We are happy to share her story with you. Congrats, Regina!



On March 9, BBI's Fatherhood Program served hot meals and gave the book *Daddy's Arms* by Fabian Ferguson to our fathers. The book is a fun story of how a young boy's imagination runs wild when he spends time with his dad. Every interaction feels like a magical adventure when they're together whether it's playtime, bath time, or bed time. Fathers had healthy choice meals which included a fresh vegetable medley and smoked salmon. This event supports the Fatherhood Program's ongoing efforts to create intentional father/child engagement at home. Hopefully all the fathers that participated had dinner and a great read with their children.



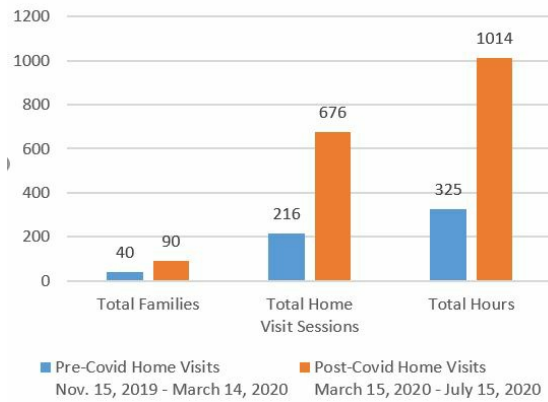
NEW MOTHERHOOD PROGRAM TO LAUNCH

The inaugural Motherhood Collective will bring BBI mothers together for empowerment, support, and connection. Fun, engaging events that foster community with the mothers in our program will occur every other Monday through Zoom. The first event was held virtually on March 22nd and centered around the importance of self-care. Two small business owners attended to chat with our mothers. We can't wait to see what's next!

DATA STORYTELLING

BBI is a data-driven organization that increasingly relies on data in decision-making and to share our story. Despite the devastating effect COVID has had on BBI, our ability to adapt and respond to the needs of our families turned into a positive for the organization. An example is the data we collected from our Home Visiting program in the four months prior to the onset of COVID-19 (November 14, 2019 - March 14, 2020) as compared to the four months after (March 14, 2020 - July 14, 2020). Conducting virtual home visits allowed BBI to reach more families, hold more home visit sessions, and dedicate more total hours to our home visiting program. Based on this data, BBI plans to continue to utilize a virtual environment to expand our reach and serve more DC residents.

Home Visitors Pre- and Post-Covid-19 Contacts



BRIGHTER TOGETHER

When Bright Beginnings went virtual for four months, we established the Brighter Together Program which allowed families to stay connected with our programming virtually. Each family was able to use the tablet we provided to them in order to access our online learning tools, community resources, important announcements, and staff-created videos such as storybook readings for parents to enjoy with their children. The program continues to engage our families with new content via [YouTube](#) and Zoom every month.

April 10 - 16 is the Week of the Young Child

Join the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) for a fun-filled week celebrating early learning, young children, their teachers, families, and communities. #WOYC21

Visit the [NAEYC Website](#) for a list of activities and resources!



Bright Beginnings had a food-filled St. Patrick's Day holiday celebration with staff! Our breakfast feast included waffles, bacon, and more.



Doing some Shopping? Shop at [smile.amazon.com](#), select Bright Beginnings as your favorite charity, and 0.5% of your eligible purchases will be donated to BBI!



Happy Women's History Month from BBI! Our students are the history-makers of tomorrow. Thank you for supporting us and making our work possible.

[Donate Now!](#)

