

Bright Beginnings Newsletter Summer 2021



Dear Friend of BBI,

We are excited to share what has been happening at BBI over the past few months. As we march forward in our longstanding mission to better serve our children and families experiencing housing instability, we have decided to focus on infant and maternal wellness, which has become a real crisis in Washington, DC.

The infant mortality rates in DC, especially East of the River, are staggeringly high: in Ward 8 alone, for every 1,000 live births, more than a dozen infants die within their first year of life. This is largely due to late or no prenatal care, lack of prenatal education, and limited knowledge of or access to resources. **Most of these deaths are entirely preventable.**



BBI will be doing our part to decrease infant mortality rates by supporting pregnant moms throughout their pregnancy journey. Through our Home-Based Program, we will be providing access to essential resources, especially to those who need it most: teen moms, moms experiencing domestic violence, first time moms, and moms over 40.

As part of this program, our Home Visitors will conduct weekly visits and monthly scheduled programming to connect mothers with much-needed resources including doulas, lactation supports, birthing classes, safe sleep practices, mindfulness and wellness practices, and therapeutic services that span the entire prenatal, perinatal, and post-partum periods for mother and child. It is our intention to be on the forefront as a leader in infant and maternal wellness programming here in the Nation's Capital. I hope you will join our efforts.

As we look forward to starting this program, we are also feeling enthusiastic about our staff vaccination efforts that have been ongoing and successful. You can hear me talk about why I got vaccinated [here](#).

As we emerged from the worst of COVID-19, we thought it was important to celebrate our parents who have endured so much. Our Mother's Day week of celebration included a spa day, self-care gift bags, and more. Women have borne the brunt of the recession caused by the pandemic, so much so that it has been named a SHE-cession. This brings the total number of **women** who have left the **labor force since** February 2020 to more than 2.3 million, and it puts **women's labor force** participation **rate** at 57%, the **lowest** it's been **since** 1988, according to National Women's Law Center.

We also wanted to celebrate our fathers. BBI's Fatherhood Initiative is a model for engaging fathers of color. Our Father's Day week of celebration included events such as a healthy cooking demonstration, access to the COVID-19 vaccine, and a photo booth for fathers and their children.

Finally, thank you to everyone who makes the work we do possible, especially our wonderful teachers. Recently, we celebrated Ms. Natalie Fleming's **20th anniversary** teaching at BBI! We are honored to have wonderful role models like her taking care of our children.

It's been a delightful summer so far, filled with excitement. Please enjoy our updates on the goings on at

BBI this quarter.

Sincerely,
Dr. Marla M. Dean



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.

BBI works with [Measure4Change](#), an Urban Institute program that offers support to organizations using data to design more equitable programs and improve communities. As a program participant, we had the opportunity to showcase our 2-Gen work in the DC community. [Culture Coffee Too](#) in Riggs Park is a BBI Workforce Development partner who works with parent interns to teach them about the ins and outs of the food industry. Mr. Furard K. Tate, business consultant for Culture Coffee Too, shared his thoughts on 2-Gen and why it is important to his work.



Celebrating Parents

June is a month to honor our fathers and the valuable role they play in the lives of our families. BBI began in early June with a ceremony to celebrate more than 30 fathers who completed or participated in the 2020-2021 school year Fatherhood Initiative. They were given ceremonial boxes that included memorabilia, a certificate, and a plaque (picture right). On June 16, BBI kicked off Fatherhood Week with distribution of self-care kits, a yoga meditation session, and access to the COVID-19 vaccine. We would like to thank United Medical Center, United Planning Organization, and the Department of Human Services for their support of BBI's Fatherhood Week activities! We also celebrated Mother's Day with a week of activities, self-care gift bags, meals, and a spa day with yoga and a free massage for BBI mothers. **They deserve it!**



COMBATTING VACCINE HESITANCY

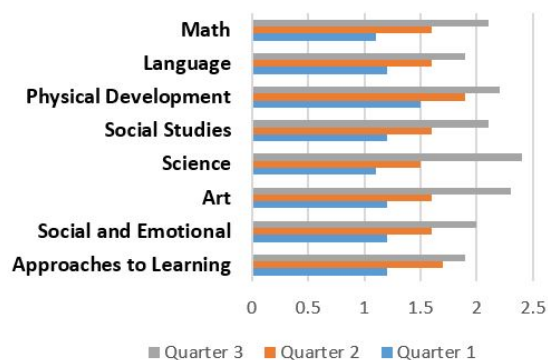
To combat vaccine hesitancy in the DC community, BBI was awarded a grant from the Urban Institute with seed funding from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. We will be working with BBI's own trusted messengers and our community partners on a 10-month campaign to increase vaccine confidence and uptake. Our first on-site vaccine clinic will be held on August 6 in conjunction with our Parent Orientation Day. Vaccine clinic hours for the community are 10:00am - 1:00pm on August 6th. Sign up for your



DATA STORYTELLING

Bright Beginnings records and evaluates each child's growth and development in order to plan activities that meet their individual needs. Assessment results are compared against our school readiness goals and objectives, then used to make data-driven decisions at various levels of the program. There are eight COR Advantage content areas that inform this data: Approaches to Learning, Social and Emotional Development, Physical Development and Health, Language, Literacy and Communication, Mathematics, Creative Arts, Science and Technology, and Social Studies. The chart shows positive progress of Early Head Start children from Quarter 1 to Quarter 3 this school year across all eight content areas.

Early Head Start COR Advantage Assessments



MS. FLEMING'S 20 YEARS

This spring marked Ms. Natalie Fleming's 20th anniversary teaching at BBI. We admire her for the care, dedication, and commitment to early learning she has shown over the years. Ms. Natalie (photo left, seated front) is an inspiration to all of us and we're lucky to have her as part of our team. Not only has she spent 20 years motivating students, she has also inspired two of her daughters to follow in her footsteps to work in the field of Early Education. Both daughters worked at BBI, one serving as our Early Care Coordinator.

Thank you, Ms. Natalie!

SUMMER FUN AT BBI

Late summer is a special time at BBI when several events occur to close out the school year and welcome in the new one:

Transition Ceremony - PreK
July 23 from 10:00 - 11:30am

Parent Empowerment Celebration
July 24 11:00am - 2:00pm

Parent Orientation
August 6 from 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Be sure to follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for photos and videos!



BBI presented at the Summer Institute

sponsored by the Office of the State Superintendent of Education.

Angela Hamilton, Multi-Disciplinary Coordinator, and Keenan Woods, Data Management Analyst, presented:

Care Team: A Data-Driven Process for Effective Decision Making

Ebony Tuzon, Home Based Services Manager presented on Infant and Maternal Wellness

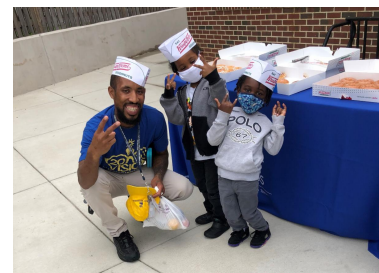
The one-day institute informed administrators, teachers, and staff of licensed child development centers on promising practices in the field.



The **Children's National Hospital Mobile Unit** came to BBI to conduct full health visits for the children we serve. This included full routine physicals, immunizations, asthma action plans, 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!



The Fatherhood Initiative at BBI celebrated National Donut Day on June 6! All BBI parents were greeted with sweets and smiles in an effort to promote the value of community.

[Donate Now!](#)



