



# 2020 *Impact Report*

**BUILDING BLOCKS FOR KIDS**



## *Dear BBK Family and Friends,*



As we reflect on our impact in 2020, there were bright spots during an incredibly arduous and unrelenting year with the COVID-19 pandemic, continued racial brutality, wildfires, and so many other things that tested our strength and resilience.

We are proud that we were able to demonstrate flexibility and quickly pivot to meet the needs of Richmond and West Contra Costa residents as well as to remain focused on our three core strategies of healing centered care, leadership development, and

parent-led advocacy.

I'm inspired by the opportunities in 2021 to continue with implementing our 5-year strategic plan and launching programs that will allow BBK to grow its presence throughout West Contra Costa County. We will launch a community-based doula program, establish male-centered activities, host our second Community Educational Leadership Institute (CELI) cohort, and partner with parents to activate their advocacy.

In Partnership,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sheryl Lane'.

**Sheryl Lane** EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

## *Sanctuary: Virtual Space for Community and Healing*



BBK engaged 96 women in 32 Black Women and Latina Sanctuaries in 2020! We started off the year with in-person gatherings but transitioned to hosting sessions via Zoom to keep everyone safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Although our in-person gatherings transitioned to virtual meetings and this was something new and different for everyone, women were grateful to continue to have this space for healing. The Sanctuary was a space for women to vent, cry, laugh, be heard, believe, love, heal, and inspire hope and positivity. A lot of women explored their natural gifts and talents and also had the opportunity to spend a lot of quality time with their loved ones.

The pandemic did facilitate the opportunity to bring guest speakers to Sanctuary, amongst them, professors, counselors, life coaches, Zumba instructors, therapists, and psychologists. They shared valuable topics with us regarding self-care, financial wellness, physical wellness, mental wellness, emotional wellness, and parenting support.

# COVID-19: *Rapid Relief During Difficult Times*

Through community conversations, BBK recognized that the everyday challenges families experienced to meet their basic needs was exacerbated by COVID-19. BBK formed several key partnerships with organizations to connect families with additional financial and food support. BBK partnered with Ed Fund West to provide \$500 each for a total of \$6500 to 13

families with children in the West Contra Costa Unified School District (WCCUSD).

As we saw a national hunger crisis reach new peaks, BBK answered the call in our community through a partnership with Urban Tilth who provided eight BBK families weekly deliveries of fresh produce from May - December 2020.



BBK partnered with and helped launch The Richmond Rapid Response Fund (R3F) to support and respond to the immediate and ongoing needs of Richmond residents and families during the COVID-19 pandemic and beyond. BBK disbursed a total of \$20,500 in R3F funds to 41 families who each received \$500 in financial assistance.

These partnerships allowed BBK to provide an added layer of financial support for our community throughout the pandemic. It is through the continued support of our partners and funders that we were able to achieve these accomplishments.

## **CELI:** *Elevating Women in Leadership*

Six women of color graduated from BBK's first Community Educational Leadership Institute (CELI) in 2020. CELI Fellows attended eight Saturday morning sessions that included training and skills development, interaction with guest speakers, and hands-on application of concepts for 60 hours of structured training. These women are now prepared to serve and lead on local and regional boards, commissions, and committees and to effectively advocate for health and education equity. Lauren McCollins, CELI alum was appointed to the Rodeo Municipal Advisory Council and ran for the John Swett Unified School District Board.



**Lauren McCollins**  
Parent Leader and  
CELI Graduate

*"It all started with BBK's CELI program. (CELI) is all about getting parents engaged and know how to advocate in their community, especially at their children's school. Before (participating in CELI) I had been looking for some advocacy work but I didn't know where I landed. I was appointed to the Rodeo Municipal Advisory Board. While I was there (CELI class) I was actually inspired to run for school board. I could not move forward without BBK."*



# *Summer Health and Wellness Exercise, Nutrition, Creativity*



BBK offered its annual Health & Wellness Summer Program online for the first time in 2020 and promoted the importance of exercise, nutrition, and creativity. A total of 313 people participated in 4 weeks of family activities from July 6th-July 31st. BBK held space for families and children to engage in emotional health and wellbeing activities. We uploaded pre-recorded videos (both in English and Spanish) to our social media pages making them accessible to all families.

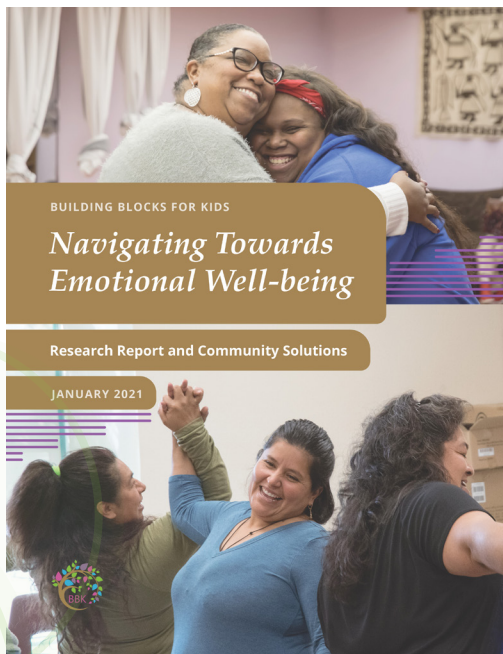
Activities included Family Zumba, Healthy Cooking, and Child Playgroups. Through online live sessions, families received access to free demonstrations of fun and easy Zumba workouts that they could practice at home. Families had access to free informational videos from Fresh Approach on healthy eating and healthy cooking demonstrations. Weekly bilingual child playgroups focused on building positive self-esteem, effective communication skills, inspiring creativity, and building overall wellbeing and resilience.



# Emotional Well-Being Community Research: Listen, Learn, Innovate

In our continued work to breakdown mental health stigma and create health & well-being community support systems, BBK invited community members to share what their emotional health needs are and their ideas for the type of resources they want. BBK listened and learned from 140 community members about emotional well-being through focus groups, interviews, and electronic surveys. Alongside community participants, we

utilized an equity-centered framework to enhance BBK's existing programming focused on emotional well-being and mental health for communities of color that are culturally competent, accessible, and transformative. We are excited to turn that community collaboration and feedback into action! In 2021, we look forward to launching male-centered programming, virtual mental/ emotional health supports, outdoor engagement opportunities, and wellness activities towards fostering healing & resiliency in our community.



**Shane McShane**  
Father and Health &  
Wellness Program  
Participant

*"Without BBK I would not have as good a relationship with my son. I don't think he would be able to express himself if he didn't get a push from gaining self-esteem."*

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*We are grateful and thank all of the organizations and individuals who donated and partnered with BBK in 2020.*

## **Advisory Board**

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