



# 2022 Impact Report

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR KIDS - RICHMOND



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RICHMOND

# Dear BBK Family and Friends,

What a year it was for BBK in 2022. It represented us delving deeper into the intersection of well-being as a pathway to social change. We focused on emotional well-being with Sanctuary peer support groups and life coaching for Black and Latinx women and men. BBK's CoCo Doulas expanded maternal wellness throughout Contra Costa County. We were inspired as we began rebuilding parent-led organizing as co-convenors of the Black Village Network (BVN) and the Bay Area Coalition for Education Justice (BACEJ).

We were excited to rebuild what makes BBK special, parent-and-youth-led advocacy, which meant a lot of listening and learning to community members. Our five parent fellows connected to their peers about transforming family engagement in our schools, and BVN parents and youth created a dynamic space to elevate ideas for Black excellence.



As we closed out 2022, we celebrated the nearly 50 babies born in the CoCo Doulas program thus far. Our five CoCo Doula graduates provided emotional and physical support during the pregnancy and birthing journey. The first baby with CoCo Doulas turned one, and Black moms had healthy births, most delivering at full-term.

We were excited to return to in-person family wellness activities after a long hiatus caused by the pandemic. Families enjoyed fun activities like Zumba at Pogo Park and salsa dancing and cooking classes at our center.

I appreciate the deep and valuable collaborations and partnerships we continue to develop to provide family wellness activities throughout our communities, deliver a county-wide community-based doula program, and center parent and youth voices in advocacy.

In partnership,

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

Sheryl Lane | Executive Director

# Health & Wellness

In 2022, hundreds of community members benefited from BBK’s focus of connecting both physical and mental wellbeing. BBK offered regular family wellness events, one-on-one coaching, and peer Sanctuary groups.



## WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

By collaborating with community organizations, BBK facilitated events allowing families to learn to live healthy, fulfilling lifestyles and to prioritize their healing and well-being.

### What activities did BBK facilitate?

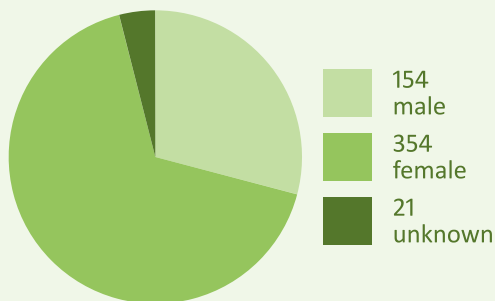
- Fitness classes, Zumba and salsa, to demonstrate the impact of aerobic exercise on improving mental wellness
- Holiday cooking courses for low-income families to make chocolate candies gifts
- Community hiking at Richmond’s Point Pinole Regional Park taught families about the role of aerobic exercise in reducing symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Peace, Love, and Unity events for park beautification: picking up trash, weeding the community garden, sweeping walk ways, helping with recycling and disposal
- Events to educate families about anxiety coping techniques
- Community game day event where parents had the opportunity to teach kids about practicing healthy communication and good sportsmanship among peers

### What was the impact?

Parents and caregivers developed a network of emotional support and had the opportunity to teach their children about the benefits of exercise in a fun and safe environment. Families developed healthier relationships and communication skills and increased their engagement in the community.

## By the Numbers

**516** community members served



**10** Black Women Sanctuary meetings

**10** Men Sanctuary meetings

**10** Latina Sanctuary meetings

**16** Life Coaching participants

# Health & Wellness

## SANCTUARY PROGRAMS

### *What is this?*

Monthly peer wellness group sessions to adopt a holistic (physical, mental, social) approach to health and healing. These included: Black Women’s Sanctuary, Latina Sanctuary, and Men’s Sanctuary. Leadership development workshops were held and guest speakers were invited to share their knowledge with participants.



## LATINA SANCTUARY

### *Who was served?*

Latina mothers and caregivers

### *What was the impact?*

Latina Sanctuary participants were spurred into action. They hosted events to educate other moms about incorporating inclusive practices for their children in our local schools and conducted community service like Unity Park clean up events. Their growing interest in leadership roles and mentorship of other women and families was truly inspiring.

## BLACK WOMEN’S SANCTUARY

### *Who was served?*

Black women, mothers, and caregivers

### *What was the impact?*

Participants were inspired to facilitate parent workshop presentations in schools across Richmond, run classes about topics they’re passionate about, write and share their journeys in leadership development and advocacy, and encouraged to make a real change in their communities by continuing to persevere and remain resilient.



# Health & Wellness



## MEN'S SANCTUARY

*Who was served?*

Men, many formerly incarcerated

*What is this?*

Holding Space is a free program open to all Black men and other men of color to support each other through the journey of navigating life. On weekday evenings, men of all ages come together to provide a safe haven from the outside world, where they are free to be themselves and discuss issues on their minds in order to create positive changes for each other.

*What was the impact?*

Men of all ages tackle goal setting, accountability and leadership development. Men have found that this safe space has helped them better handle stress as they receive peer support, learn self-care methods, and greatly boost their confidence for caring for themselves and their families. The sessions are held during the evening and so it also becomes a diversion to the other less healthy activities that might be happening in neighborhoods.



# Health & Wellness

## 1:1 LIFE COACHING

### *What is this?*

BBK offered six free, individualized sessions of life coaching. Participants met one-on-one with a life coach once or twice a week to progress towards personal and professional goals.

### *Who was served?*

Black women

### *What was the impact?*

Participants embraced the challenges that came with the process of growth. This helped them clearly articulate goals they began working towards by the end of the sessions.

## *From the participants of life coaching sessions*

“I **celebrate** small wins!”

“I have more of a sense of **inner peace.**”

“You let me figure out **what I needed** to do for myself.”

“I can **communicate** or even not speak on some things when interacting with the business community, and I feel so much **freer.**”

“Gave me a sense of **who I am** and **who I desire to be.**”

“I’m more mindful of how I utilize my time and **accomplish goals** without being overwhelmed.”



# CoCo Doulas



## DOULA PROGRAM

### *What is this?*

The program trains women to become community-based doulas: labor assistants who provide physical and emotional support during pregnancy, childbirth, and postpartum. Black birthing families receive doula services at no cost to support them with healthy pregnancies and deliveries and supportive post-partum experiences.

### *Who was served?*

Five doula fellows supported pregnant Black women in Contra Costa and their partners.

### *What was the impact?*

Healthy Black babies and with the majority of moms delivering at full-term; reducing premature births and risks of mother or infant mortality. Doctors and medical providers reported happy and healthy clients and continued referring patients to BBK doula fellows for support. BBK developed effective collaborations with local medical and social service providers including Kaiser, Lifelong Medical Care and Black Infant Health. Doulas received professional development on an array of topics including prenatal nutrition and maternal mental health.

## *By the Numbers*

- 58** total babies birthed
- 52** babies born 37 weeks or more
- 6** babies born under 37 weeks
- 90%** percent or more participants initiated breastfeeding

## *CoCo Doula Goals*

1. Train and create more Black doulas in our community
2. Provide doula care at no-cost to support Black birthing families during their pregnancy journey to parenthood and help reduce the birth disparities in our community
3. Provide Black doulas with professional development in maternal health and direct experience with clients and prepare them for opening their own practice while receiving a monthly stipend.

# Policy Advocacy & Organizing (PAO)

## BAY AREA COALITION FOR EDUCATION JUSTICE (BACEJ) PARENT FELLOWSHIP

Five moms joined BBK as BACEJ Fellows. These moms hosted meetings and community chats in their neighborhoods, at schools, and other community spaces in Richmond and West Contra Costa County to listen and learn about what is needed to build and strengthen supportive communities for families and youth in our local educational systems.

### *Who was served?*

Black and Latinx families

### *What was the impact?*

Community input helped fellows understand what is and isn't working to effectively engage families in our schools and educational systems so that ultimately students thrive. This created a good start for future parent-led organizing efforts and campaigns in Richmond and West Contra Costa.

### *What's next?*

Family Focused Organizing trainings to continue the leadership, organizing, and advocacy work ahead to elevate education and health equity.

*Fellows engaged with over 37 families*



## BLACK VILLAGE NETWORK

The Black Village Network (BVN) represented the passion of emerging Black youth and parent leaders to imagine and build joyful futures for Black communities. Twenty BVN adults and youth as young as nine worked in design teams to envision solutions that addressed what's most important to them. BVN leaders discussed among themselves and with community members the importance of multigenerational mental health, dedicated spaces for building Black joy and co-learning, educational resources that support Black youth and their genius, and policies and practices to address gun violence.

Moving forward, BVN seeks to activate ideas that genuinely transform and expand the Village to those ready to build healthy communities where Black students and families flourish and prosper.



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*We are grateful and thank all of the organizations and individuals who donated and partnered with BBK in 2022.*

## *Advisory Board*

Gabino Arredondo   Tejal Desai   Rosemary Healy   Payal Patel   Jasmine Jones   Talia Rubin

## *Staff*

### **ADMIN TEAM**

Sheryl E. Lane, Executive Director  
Saray Rios-Hacegaba, Deputy Director  
Teresa Jenkins, Administrative Data & Evaluations Coordinator

### **COMMUNITY BASED DOULA TEAM**

Lauren McCollins, Program Coordinator  
Jillian Adams, CoCo Doula Fellow  
Aiysha Davis, CoCo Doula Fellow  
Jacqueline Gonzales, CoCo Doula Fellow  
Savaneh Martinez, CoCo Doula Fellow  
Yvonne Pope, CoCo Doula Fellow  
Savaneh Martinez, CoCo Doula Fellow

### **HEALTH AND WELLNESS TEAM**

Treschanna Green, Program Coordinator  
Marisol Romero-Frias, Assistant Coordinator  
LeJon Fahim Reese, Holding Space Sanctuary Facilitator  
Patrick Scott, Holding Space Sanctuary Co-Facilitator  
Paula Taylor, Black Woman's Sanctuary Facilitator and Life Coach  
Maria Lupita Ortega de Villalobos Health & Wellness Team Member and Life Coach  
Irma Urizar, Team Member  
Guadalupe Villalobos, Team Member  
Natalie Villalobos, Team Member

### **POLICY ADVOCACY ORGANIZING**

Joy Diana Diaz-Noreiga, Policy Advocacy Organizer



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