



Brighter Beginnings ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Every Family Matters



A Note From Our Executive Team

This year, Brighter Beginnings has continued to advance our mission to ensure every family has the support, resources, and care they need to thrive. Across our clinics and community programs, we provide high-quality primary health care, mental health support, preventive dental services, early childhood development services, and essential wraparound resources that address the social and economic barriers our communities face.

Our Federally Qualified Health Center Look-Alike sites across Contra Costa County provide individuals and families with coordinated, person-centered care. In Oakland, our home-visiting programs, mental health counseling, and family support services continued to be a lifeline for young parents, children, and families navigating complex challenges. We also strengthened our food pantry efforts across multiple locations, ensuring that families facing food insecurity have reliable access to nutritious options.

We also celebrated new partnerships and continued investing in the staff who make this work possible. Thanks to their dedication, Brighter Beginnings remains a trusted resource for communities throughout Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. As we look ahead, we remain committed to our mission and vision to foster healthy births, support child development, and build strong, thriving communities. We are deeply grateful for the unwavering support of our staff, partners, funders, and community members who help make this work possible every day.



Jennifer Shallat
Chief Executive Officer



Claudia Karell
Chief Operations
Officer



Fei Huang
Chief Financial
Officer



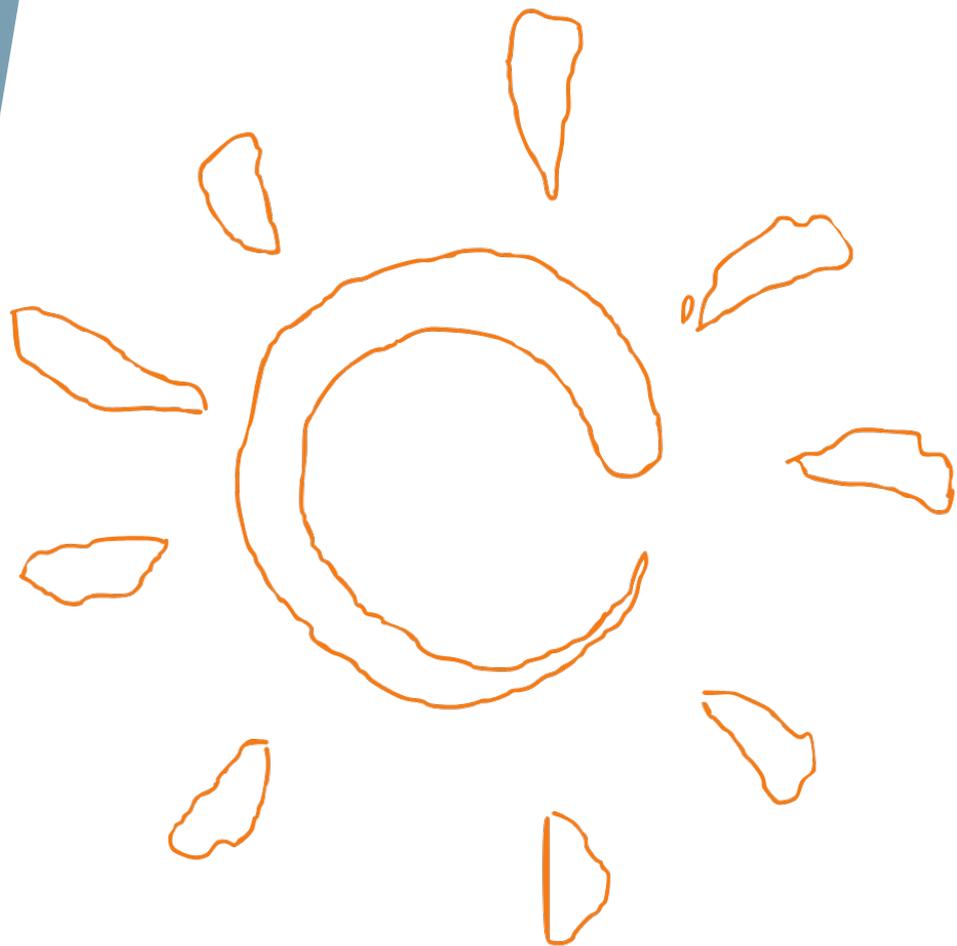
Maria Webster-Longin
Chief Medical Officer

Our History



Brighter Beginnings was founded in **1984** as the *East Bay Perinatal Council* in response to significant disparities in infant mortality and inequitable birth outcomes affecting families in the East Bay, particularly within African American communities. Initially focused on perinatal education and support for pregnant teens and families facing systemic barriers, the organization evolved as community needs became more complex and interconnected. Over time, Brighter Beginnings expanded its scope beyond perinatal care to adopt a comprehensive, family-centered approach that addresses health, early childhood development, parenting support, housing stability, and economic security. Today, Brighter Beginnings operates multiple family resource centers across Alameda and Contra Costa counties, remaining steadfast in its commitment to strengthening families and advancing health equity so that every child has the opportunity for a healthy and thriving start in life.

Our Mission and Vision



Since its inception Brighter Beginnings' driving purpose has been to empower families and communities by nurturing children's development. We approach patient care comprehensively and with cultural responsiveness to help our communities navigate the challenges they face. Our work is grounded in the belief that **Every Family Matters** and that **every child deserves a joyful, healthy life, regardless of their background.**

Brighter Beginnings focuses on the following success factors: resilience, strong community bonds, parenting, child development, and financial stability. Each of them is an essential part of our work. Our vision is of a future where our neighborhoods are not defined by their challenges but by the strength, hope, and health of their children.

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Social Services

The Family Partnership Program supports CalWORKs families in Alameda County with children ages 9 weeks to 36 months. Using the evidence-based Parents as Teachers model, the program strengthens parent-child relationships, promotes healthy child development, and empowers parents as their child's first teacher. Families receive individualized home visits, developmental screenings, and opportunities for group learning and connection to help children thrive and prepare for school.

The Family Support Program empowers pregnant and parenting teens and young adults in Alameda County to build stable, nurturing homes. Through home visits, parenting education, and connections to community resources, participants strengthen parenting skills, pursue education and employment, and work toward long-term self-sufficiency.

The Early Head Start / Head Start program serves pregnant individuals and children ages 0–5 in Alameda County, providing home-based visits, group activities, individualized family planning, and connections to health, developmental and social services. Through these comprehensive supports, the program promotes positive birth outcomes, strengthens early learning and development, and builds stronger family relationships.

The Brilliant Babies program supports low-income families in Oakland with children ages 0-4 by providing a \$500 college savings account, free personalized financial coaching, and financial literacy resources. Through this initiative, parents build economic stability while fostering their child's academic and socio-emotional growth.

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Clinic Services



Brighter Beginnings' Health Centers are built on a commitment to equity, dignity, and whole-family well-being. Through culturally responsive, relationship-based care, we partner with families to support their health goals across every stage of life. Our model integrates primary medical care with mental and behavioral health services, financial coaching, and care coordination, recognizing that health is deeply connected to economic stability and access to basic needs. As part of our commitment to comprehensive, wraparound services, we have expanded care to include dental services, an essential yet often overlooked component of overall health. By addressing physical health, oral health, mental and behavioral health, and the broader social factors that shape health outcomes, Brighter Beginnings helps families strengthen resilience, improve long-term wellness, and create more stable, hopeful futures. This integrated approach allows us to respond to the unique strengths and challenges of each family while building trust and continuity of care within the communities we serve.

2025 Recap

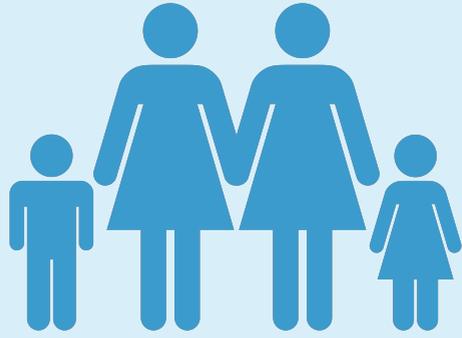


41
Years in
Operation



3 Clinic Sites

135



Families served through
our Family Support
Program

142



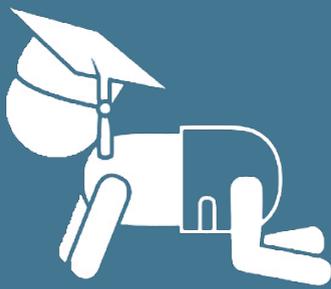
Families served through
Adopt-A-Family

120



EHS
Participants

290



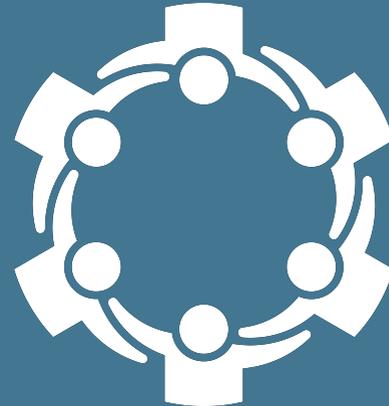
Brilliant Baby Program
Participants

1000+



Financial coaching
sessions through
Sparkpoint Financial

86



Family Partnership
Program Participants



Health Center Program
**ADVANCING HIT
FOR QUALITY**
2025
Awardee

7 Impact Through Care

Brighter Beginnings operates three community health centers in Contra Costa County, including one in Richmond and two in Antioch, and has expanded services to better support families in Oakland. Rooted in the communities we serve, our health centers are designed to be trusted, accessible spaces where families can receive coordinated care close to home. By expanding behavioral health services and introducing dental care, we are responding directly to community-identified needs and strengthening access to comprehensive care that supports the health, stability, and well-being of families across our service areas.



11,371 medical visits provided this year

4,865 behavioral health sessions delivered

300+ dental screenings provided



Brighter Beginnings embeds SparkPoint principles and services into its financial health programming to support families in gaining control of their finances and planning for long-term stability. Through this collaboration, families served by Brighter Beginnings are connected to SparkPoint Centers where they receive holistic, one-on-one financial coaching and personalized resource navigation tailored to their unique needs. Financial coaches from both organizations work with participants through individual sessions and workshops that address budgeting, banking basics, goal setting, and financial action planning. This partnership expands access to trusted financial resources for families who may otherwise face barriers to engaging with multiple service providers, while reinforcing Brighter Beginnings' commitment to family stability as a critical factor in children's long-term health and success. In practice, the collaboration helps families move beyond short-term financial survival toward long-term economic well-being by building the skills and confidence needed to manage money, strengthen credit, and plan for future goals such as education, employment, and homeownership.

Client Success Stories

Tamicha began financial coaching in July 2025 with a clear goal of improving her credit. Together, we created personalized goals, a realistic budget, and a structured credit improvement plan, and she remained fully committed throughout the process. When we reviewed her credit report and found \$17,882 in total debts (including a \$4,221 collection that appeared disputable) I provided her with the tools she needed, such as dispute and debt verification letters.

Tamicha took immediate action, and by September, she successfully had the \$4,221 collection removed from her credit report, lowering her total debt to \$13,661 and increasing her credit score by 33 points. She expressed deep gratitude for the guidance she received and is now more motivated than ever to continue reducing her debt and strengthening her credit.



Olga, a single mother of five, came to Brighter Beginnings seeking support for her younger children's development and guidance in strengthening relationships with her older children. Determined to meet each child's unique needs despite limited resources, she enrolled in parenting classes and embraced new tools and support.

Through regular home visits and personalized coaching, Olga gained confidence and deepened her connection with her children, who thrived in the supportive environment and eagerly anticipated visits. She shared deep gratitude for the care her family received, describing her experience with Brighter Beginnings as transformative helping her better understand both her children's needs and her own.

Olga's journey reflects the experiences of many families we serve and highlights the lasting impact of our family programs. Looking ahead, she hopes to support her family by turning her passion for cooking into a small business.

When Tajae Harris, a single mother, first joined the Family Partnership Program, she was balancing part-time work in an afterschool program while striving to complete her Child Development apprenticeship. Early on, she shared how overwhelming it felt to manage school, work, and parenting on her own, especially after falling behind on enrollment for her final semester. The uncertainty of whether she could continue weighed heavily on her.

In the weeks that followed, Tajae partnered closely with her family advocate to set clear, realistic goals and map out a path forward. Driven by a deep determination to create stability for herself and her child, she committed to weekly check-ins that provided accountability, encouragement, and consistent support. With a plan in place and someone walking alongside her, Tajae enrolled in her final semester and persevered through the challenges ahead.

Her dedication paid off. Tajae successfully completed her coursework and graduated from her apprenticeship program, and just one month later, she was offered a full-time position in the education field. Today, she is not only employed but thriving in a role she finds meaningful.

Tajae's journey with Brighter Beginnings highlights the power of timely, compassionate support during pivotal moments. By helping her navigate uncertainty and build confidence, the Family Partnership Program empowered Tajae to move from challenge to achievement demonstrating how Brighter Beginnings supports families not only in setting goals, but in reaching them.



Pictured Here: *Our Family Partnership Program Coordinator Claudia Rivera during a home visit*

11 Adopt-A-Family



For many years, Adopt-a-Family has been a cornerstone program at Brighter Beginnings, reflecting our deep commitment to supporting families across all of our sites. This program is especially meaningful because it brings our community together each year to uplift families during a critical time, offering thoughtful and personalized support that promotes stability, dignity, and care. We are grateful to continue this tradition annually and to the community members, partners, and donors whose generosity and compassion make the program possible.

This year, the Adopt-a-Family program supported *142 families*, helping ensure they experienced the joy they deserve during the holiday season. Through the collective efforts of our donors and volunteers, families received meaningful assistance that helped ease financial stress, meet essential needs, and create moments of comfort and celebration. The impact of this support extends beyond the holidays, strengthening family well-being and reinforcing the sense of care and connection that defines our community. We extend our sincere appreciation to everyone who contributed to this year's Adopt-a-Family program and helped make the season brighter for the families we serve.



Pictured here: *Elizabeth Perez, Senior Program Manager, Pam Burford, Program Manager and Adopt-a-Family donor.*

Our Partners



Our Board



Mary Rocha
Board President, Consumer
Representative



Helena Singlestad
Vice President



Vivian Tejada
Secretary/Treasurer



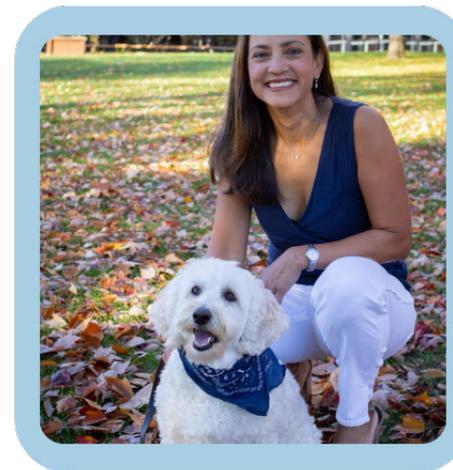
Regina Brown
Board Member



Deana Balinton
Board Member



Clyde Wayne
Board Member



Trupti Haldar
Consumer Representative



Vincent Perry Ronquillo
Consumer Representative

Thank You to Our Donors

Your generosity makes our work possible. Every gift large or small helps strengthen families, promote healthy births, and create brighter futures for children. We are deeply grateful for your partnership and belief that *every family matters*.

East Bay Community Foundation

Essential Access

Contra Costa County CAER Group

Kaiser Permanente

Keller Canyon Mitigation Fund

Richard W. Goldman Foundation

Richmond Community Foundation

Sutter Health

We gratefully acknowledge the many individuals and community members whose collective generosity made our work possible throughout 2025. We have made every effort to ensure the accuracy of this list. Please contact us if your name has been omitted or incorrectly listed.

Making a Difference



Scan the QR code to Donate!



Ways you can donate to Brighter Beginnings

1 Online Contributions
Make a secure donation directly through the Brighter Beginnings website

2 Donate by Mail
Send a check made payable to:
Brighter Beginnings
2727 Macdonald Ave
Richmond, CA 94804
(Include “Attention: Fundraising”)

3 Workplace Matching Gifts
Many employers will match employee donations, increasing the impact of your gift. Contact your HR office to see if your company participates.

4 Gifts of Stock
Donate appreciated securities, which may offer tax advantages including the potential elimination of capital gains tax.

5 In-Kind Donations (Baby/Family Items)
For inquiries about donating items such as toys, diapers, or cribs, contact info@brighter-beginnings.org

6 Planned Giving / Estate Support
Include Brighter Beginnings in your will or estate planning to leave a lasting legacy.