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ABOUT US

We are BrightSpark!

Founded in 1990, BrightSpark Early Learning Services serves children, families, child care providers, and community partners across King and Pierce Counties. We believe that every child deserves access to a high quality early learning experience. We offer a wide range of services, resources, and supports to help every caregiver and educator create the best outcomes for the children in their care.

Our mission is to nurture and sustain child-centered, antiracist early learning communities. Our collective values are that we are stronger together; we honor community strengths; and we seek continuous learning and improvement.

Our Commitment to Antiracism

BrightSpark is dedicated to recognizing, disrupting, and addressing racial inequities both within our organization and in the work we do externally. Below are just some of the ways we ensure antiracism remains central to our work:



Employees are expected to have a deep understanding of antiracism, and we reguarly host in-depth trainings and learning opportunities for every staff member.



Our programs are designed to honor the cultures, values, and languages of the communities we served.



We follow the Community-Centric Fundraising model for external engagement, meaning the needs of our community are always our top priority, and all gifts are appreciated equally.



Hello Friends & Supporters of BrightSpark,

What a joy to be able to reflect on the past year, and what a year it was! At BrightSpark, our focus is on O-12 year old children, and we know that their early start will predict their future pathways, and we hope these pathways are filled with equity, opportunity, and a lot of joy. Considering the last year, we can confidently say that BrightSpark engaged in a variety of successful efforts to ensure all our learners had access to high quality early learning! Over the last year, we have homed in and focused on work in two key areas: Access and High Quality.

This work is the starting point for thousands of children and families in King and Pierce Counties. We could not be prouder of our agency!

An example of the critical work we do to ensure all families—especially those farthest from educational and economic opportunities—have access to early learning is raising funds to provide subsidy support that helps families pay for the high cost of child care. We do not do this alone! We have key partners in King and Pierce Counties' Human Services Departments; the cities of Auburn, Bellevue, Kent, Redmond, and Renton; and multiple private foundations and donors.

Ensuring access for all children only works when we know that the early learning experiences of children are high-quality. BrightSpark strives to achieve this through our expansive coaching and training of over 2,000 child care providers, and our partnership with child care providers to deliver both Early Head Start services as well as offer Seattle Preschool Program slots.

We also provide Infant Early Childhood Mental Health consultation and support to providers and families. This work creates strong relationships between families and providers so they can collaborate to meet the needs of the children in their care. The impact of providing these services is decreasing challenging behaviors at home and in care, decreasing expulsion of children from care, reducing teacher stress, and helping decrease staff turnover; all contributing to the quality of care each child receives.



This last fiscal year also marks the end of our 18-month Strategic Plan. We had aspirational, mission-aligned priorities, and it is gratifying to see how much progress we made!

We focused on developing infrastructure and the results were many, including our rebrand and moving the organization to a new financial system. Ultimately, we built the infrastructure to support the agency we have become, and we will continue to grow moving from an organization with an operating budget of \$14 million to \$38 million within the last five years.

In the last legislative session, the greatest legislative win was an additional investment in the state budget to expand the Infant Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Consultation work. This investment was spurred immensely by advocacy from our agency, community members, and our statewide partners. This win will result in 6 new IECMH Consultants to serve children across the state!

We also remain committed to building our investment in Pierce County through increased services and supports. It was 9 years ago that our agency became a King and Pierce County agency, and in that time, we have made great strides in increasing services, partnerships, and supports in Pierce County; and we want to do even more! In the last year, we received considerable investment from Pierce County Human Services for our subsidy work enabling us to increase access for hundreds of families. We want to continue to develop this work, ensuring access and high-quality early learning for every child in Pierce County.

As we look to this next year, words like "reflect, refine, and refocus" are top of mind as we develop our next 18-month plan. We have had an immense year and we want to live into the changes that have taken place, and we want to continue our agency-wide quality improvement cycle.

A **HUGE** thank you to all our partners and supporters for being alongside us through the last year! And we invite you to join us in this next year which is sure to be filled with impactful and gratifying work we are honored to be able to do.

Best,

Phoebe Sade
Executive Officer

Rebecca Benavides 23-24 Board Chair



Reflecting on our 2023-24 Strategic Plan Successes

The Strategic Plan is a framework developed by a team of BrightSpark staff and board members to shape the direction of our efforts over the last 18 months; from January 2023 to June 2024. We are so proud of the impact we've made in these areas, which is a testament to the collective passion and dedication of the BrightSpark community!

1. Co-create solutions.

We will continue to strengthen our grounding in community and antiracism, including programmatic and policy decision-making.

- The EHS Policy Council, composed of EHS families and BrightSpark staff, amplified families' voices through advocacy and guiding shaping program direction.
- We continued to grow our Advocacy Pods participation, and we also focused on organizing and mobilizing communities ahead of each Legislative Session.

2. Elevate and sustain Family, Friend, & Neighbor (FFN) care.

We will develop and execute a long-term strategy for growth and stability in FFN services.

- We worked with community partners to develop a new partnership program called Kent Learn Together which supports kids ages 9-12 caring for their siblings and other young children.
- * We continued to expand our Kaleidoscope Play & Learn (KPL) program which now serves over 179 unique groups across Washington and the United States.

3. Expand Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Services.

We will grow access to infant and early childhood behavioral health services to meet the growing needs of families and child care providers.

- We successfully advocated for an additional \$1.75 million in funding for the Holding Hope program, allowing us to hire an additional 10 IECMH Consultants in 2024.
- We offered new ways for early learning providers to receive support outside of formal consultation requests including monthly drop-in office hours and open group discussions with our IECMH specialists.

4. Build services and resources in Pierce County to meet the level of those in King County.

We will focus efforts in Pierce County to achieve the same quality and access to programs across our entire service area.

- We secured funding to expand the availability of BrightSpark's Child Care Subsidy Program to families in Pierce County.
- * We prioritized expanding our EHS programming into Pierce County with 4 sites across Tacoma, Spanaway, and Lakewood.

5. Position ourselves as a leading "go-to" resource and thought partner in community conversations regarding the revisioning of our child care system.

Lead the solution-making efforts to ensure the creation of an equitable and robust child care sector.

- During the 2023 and 2024 Legislative Sessions, our advocacy efforts contributed to increased funding for mental health care, child care subsidies for families, and higher wages for providers.
- We took a leading role in the King County Early Learning Commission as well as the statewide Child Care for Washington campaign and Living Wage Proviso.

6. Develop agency infrastructure to meet our current and future impact.

Target the areas within our organization which need revision, updating, expansion, and/or overhaul.

- We developed and launched a full rebrand including a new name, visual identity, and mission statement that better reflects our goals and values as an organization.
- We partnered with like-minded community consultants to identify and implement a new financial processing system to improve efficiency and ease-of-use for staff members.

We are so proud of how BrightSpark's staff, board, and community have gotten us closer to making our mission a reality.

Whether you have supported us throughout our journey or are just joining our community today, we thank you for your support and invite you to continue helping us advance our mission!

Give today at brightspark.org/donate

A Statewide Call Center for Families In Need of Support

Since 2012, BrightSpark has operated the Child Care Aware of Washington (CCA of WA) Family Center, which offers support to families needing support looking for and paying for early learning programs across the state. The Family Center helps families find care that fits their unique budget, schedule, values, and other needs. In addition to connecting families to the right care for them, we also help families pay for care by helping them apply for subsidies that are available to them.

Referral specialists are available by phone every weekday from 8:30 AM - 5 PM.

Last year, our Family Call Center Specialists:



Completed **4,195** over-the-phone referrals



Supported **105** active military and veteran families



Supported **498** families experiencing poverty



Supported **512** families experiencing homelessness





SUBSIDIES

Helping Families Afford Care

BrightSpark is committed to helping families find and pay for early learning programs that fit their schedule, lifestyle, values, and budget regardless of their employment and/or housing circumstances. This is why we partner with public entities and private funders to offer child care subsidy programs that help families across King and Pierce Counties overcome challenges and access the best child care for their family.

Last fiscal year, BrightSpark offered four unique subsidy and Child Care Financial Assistance (CCFA) programs.

King & Pierce Counties Homeless Child Care Subsidy Program

BrightSpark assists families experiencing homelessness, as well as families threatened with eviction notices, with both navigating and paying for child care. The Homeless Child Care Subsidy Program covers the full costs of a child's care and assists parents with accessing diapers, clothing, and other services for their family.

This subsidy connects families to longterm, sustainable support. Families receive initial authorizations of 3-6 months depending on funding availability and the family's situation. The family will also receive assistance navigating eligibility and applying for longterm funding sources.



\$350,238 dispersed



59 families supported



80 children supported



\$69,694 dispersed



26 families supported



14 children supported

Pierce County Student CCFA Program

The Pierce County Student CCFA Program provides support for parents who are in a post-secondary education or work training program and struggling to pay for child care.

This program typically pays a portion of the families' child care expenses with monthly scholarship rates determined by the family's size, income, their child(ren)'s age, and the amount of care needed. Families remain eligible for the subsidy for the duration of the parent's educational program as long as the family resides in Pierce County.

King County Veteran Student CCFA Program

In partnership with the King County Veterans, Seniors, and Human Services Levy, BrightSpark administered the King County Veteran Student CCFA program. In order to be eligible for the program, families were required to reside in King County, have previously served in the armed forces, and be enrolled in a post-secondary education or work training program.

This program was unique as it allowed enrolled families to have FFN caregivers provide care for their children as well as licensed providers. The Veteran Student Program paid a predetermined rate based on the family's size, income, child(ren)'s age, and the amount of care needed.

The funding for this program ended on December 31, 2023.



\$76,780 dispersed

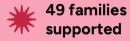


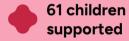
10 families supported



16 children supported







King County Suburban Cities CCFA Program

The Suburban Cities CCFA Program is funded by the Human Services Funding Collaborative and assists low to moderate income families in Auburn, Bellevue, Redmond, and Kent. Families are not required to be employed or enrolled in post secondary education and/or job training but must be using child care to meet their family's basic needs (housing, food, education, employment, immigration, etc.).

The Suburban Cities program pays a monthly scholarship directly to child care providers. The rate is determined by the family's size, income, their child(ren)'s age, and the amount of care needed.







SUBSIDIES

King County Best Starts for Kids Child Care Subsidy Program

The King County Best Starts for Kids Child Care Subsidy Program is a voter-approved initiative launched in 2022. The goal of this initiative is to help children in King County access high-quality early learning opportunities and is intended to ease the cost of care for families ineligible for existing subsidy programs.

In December 2023, BrightSpark expanded our partnership with Best Starts for Kids by becoming the Child Care Subsidy Program Administrator. This means that BrightSpark is now responsible for issuing subsidy payments to child care providers, program day-to-day administration, and the family authorization and reauthorization processes.

BrightSpark has also expanded our team of Family Access and Support Specialists and Billing Specialists to support families and providers enrolled in the program. Together, these teams strive to provide access to timely, accurate subsidy supports to families, child care providers, and communities throughout King County. We are grateful to be involved in administering and implementing the Best Starts for Kids Child Care Subsidy Program.

Since December 2023, our Best Starts for Kids Child Care Subsidy Team:



Supported over **900** families and **1,400** children in King County



Distributed over \$14.5 million to families to cover the costs of care

FAMILY, FRIEND, & NEIGHBOR CARE

Kaleidoscope Play & Learn

BrightSpark's Family, Friend, & Neighbor (FFN) Team offers support and resources to facilitators and groups through the Kaleidoscope Play & Learn (KPL) program. By providing training and curriculum guidance to KPL Facilitators, we help ensure that caregivers learn important information about child safety, development, and school readiness in a fun culturally-relevant environment where both adults and children are invited to learn through play.



Last year, our KPL Team:

Supported a total of **7,417** parents and caregivers who attended **179** unique KPL groups across the country with **77** taking place within Washington.



Learn Together

This past fiscal year, BrightSpark partnered with the Puget Sound Educational Services District and Kent Community Schools to pilot a new program called the Kent Learn Together program. Learn Together launched in September of 2024, with the goal of supporting upper elementary school kids who care for their younger siblings, family members, and community members. The program offers resources and education regarding child development, health, and safety; as well as opportunities for academic development and peer connection for the young caregivers themselves.

In addition to supporting the development of the curriculum and family engagement strategies, BrightSpark also hired a full-time, on-site program leader to recruit participants, connect with families, plan lessons and activities, and facilitate class discussions.



Supported a cohort of **24** kids ages 9-12 between East Hill and Springbrook Elementary Elementary Schools.

COACHING

Introducing the THRIVE Coaching Model

This year, BrightSpark's Coaching Team unveiled a new model for offering early learning professionals the level of support they need: THRIVE!

Developed and implemented over the last couple of years by leaders within the Coaching Department, THRIVE expands on BrightSpark's previous 1:1 coaching model by introducing drop-in office hours, group learning experiences, and both in-person and virtual meeting options.

This way, providers can choose the level of engagement that is best for their individual quality-improvement journey. There are 11 THRIVE groups available to providers focused on these topics:

- Behavioral Guidance
- * Curriculum
 Development
- ExpulsionPreventionPartnership
- ✓ Infant/Toddler✓ Supports

- Immediate
 Compliance
 Supports
- # Marketing
- Policy Development

Provider
Partnerships
(EHS & SPP)

- Screenings & Assessments
- Technology
- TraumaInformed Care

Last year, our Coaching Team supported:



King County Providers



Pierce County Providers



Coaching Success Story: Goddard School of Bellevue

This past year, the Goddard School of Bellevue became the first program in both King and Pierce Counties to achieve a score of 5 - the highest rating available from the Early Achievers Quality Recognition System!

Cheryl Madsen, a BrightSpark Coach, has partnered with the program for the past 7 years to create safe and appropriate learning environments based on what's best for the children enrolled. Congratulations to all who contributed to this success!



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Trainings for Every Provider

Our Professional Development Team supports providers in elevating the quality of their care by offering training opportunities that are culturally-responsive, rooted in equity, and based on relationships. These classes cover critical early learning topics such as children's social, emotional, and behavioral development; self-care for providers and families; business leadership and staff management; and so much more!

Each year, providers enrolled in Washington's Early Achievers Quality Improvement and Recognition Program are required to complete a minimum amount of ten professional development (STARS) training hours.

BrightSpark's Professional Development Team partners with Child Care Aware of Washington's Professional Development Academy to provide a variety of opportunities for providers to fulfill their STARS hours and advance their understanding of how to best support the children in their care.

Last year, our Professional Development Team:



Provided training to a total of **1,453** early learning professionals



Created **58** customized trainings for **45** unique early learning sites



Offered **154** classes and trainings, totaling over **380** hours of instruction



Led **25** trainings in **3** different languages; 20 in Spanish, 3 in Somali, and 2 in Arabic

BrightSpark's 2024 Professional Development Institute

In May 2024, Brightspark hosted our annual Spring Professional Development Institute (PDI), during which over 200 providers participated in 27 virtual classes and 7 in-person classes over the course of just six days. This opportunity was created to foster connection among our communities' providers through collaborative learning.

On last day of trainings, we hosted our first all-day, in-person conference in over 5 years! 44 early learning professionals from across King and Pierce Counties joined us at our new Renton office for 7 unique learning sessions led by BrightSpark staff members.



Providers attending BrightSpark's in-person PDI share a laugh during the morning networking hour.

Spotlight Training: Bringing us "Back-to-Basics!"

In 2023, a BrightSpark trainer recognized an emerging need among providers to offer education around the basics of child care and developed a class focused on providing just that. Launched in 2024, providers learned about topics such as Environmental Design, Classroom Organization, Curriculum Development, and Children/Family Relationships.

The "Back-to-Basics" class lasted 8 weeks and alternated between traditional instructor-led classes and open-ended reflection sessions. One student had this to say upon completing the class: "Amazing coach and people... They make you feel human about what you go through."







How We're Working to Keep Children of Color in Care

Why Does Expulsion Prevention Matter?

For many providers, expelling a child from an early learning program feels like a last resort. However, data collected both nationally and locally shows that when it comes to expulsions, implicit biases play a major role in these decisions, as Black children (especially boys) are disproportionately impacted. Studies show that:

80% of children expelled from child care programs are boys.

Black boys are **twice** as likely to be expelled as their white counterparts.

Black girls are **six** times as likely to be expelled as their white counterparts.







How BrightSpark is Addressing this Inequity

In response to this troubling trend, BrightSpark staff members created the Expulsion Prevention Partnership (EPP) workgroup to work on disrupting this harmful practice. EPP's objectives are to support providers in:

- Ending expulsions of children from early learning programs through education
- Centering child development basics considering the context of childrens' home culture
- Understanding the language of behavior
- Practicing self-awareness and reflection to challenge implicit biases
- Creating strong partnerships with families

Through educational opportunities such as trainings, reflective practices, and designated coaching support, BrightSpark is working to give providers both the resolve and the tools to react to challenging behavioral and mental health issues that emerge in a way that is intentional, compassionate, and reflective.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT HIGHLIGHT: EXPULSION PREVENTION

A Timeline of our Expulsion Prevention Efforts

2018

5 BrightSpark staff members submitted an internal request for funding to begin a workgroup focusing on expulsion prevention. This group was later named the Expulsion Prevention Partnership (EPP).

The EPP Workgroup was officially formed and sent out a survey completed by over 300 providers across King and Pierce Counties to collect both quantitative and qualitative data surrounding expulsions.

2019

The EPP presented their findings at CCA of WA's Elevate conference.

2021

EPP Workgroup members hosted numerous trainings and reflective practices for child care providers.

2023

The EPP Workgroup teamed up with the CCA of WA Family Center to offer educational resources and mental health support for both expulsion intervention and prevention.

2024

The EPP workgroup teamed up with BrightSpark's Professional Development Team to host an all-day, in-person conference for 44 providers focused entirely around expulsion prevention.



MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT



Holding Hope

Over the past five years, the Washington State Legislature and the Washington Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DYCF) have partnered with Child Care Aware of Washington (CCA of WA) to implement the Holding Hope Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Consultation program across the state.

BrightSpark oversees this program across Washington State, and directly serves Early Achievers child care providers in King and Pierce Counties with:



Preventing, identifying, and reducing the impact of mental health challenges among children and families



Supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of children and adult caregivers



Building, supporting, and strengthening caregivers' capacity to promote optimal social and emotional development for the children they serve

Services provided by Holding Hope Consultants are relationship-based, collaborative, and individualized to meet the needs of children, families, and providers in ways that are respectful and responsive.

SERVICES OFFERED

Child/Family Consultations

During Child/Family Consultations, IECMH Consultants collaborate with providers, families, and caregivers to assess, understand, and address needs and develop individualized plans. Consultants help assist with children who display challenging behaviors; have specific developmental concerns, are close to expulsion; have difficulty with transition; are dealing with grief and loss; or are witnessing or experiencing violence at home or traumatic events in their community.

Classroom Consultations

Classroom Consultations create opportunities for caregivers, providers, and Early Learning Coaches to address practices, conditions, and stressors affecting relationships between adults and children.

Consultants establish effective transition routines in the classroom; build better classroom environments to support children's individual needs and development; implement routines and curriculums to foster positive interactions in the classroom; and develop strategies with providers to foster children's self and co-regulation.

Program Consultations

Consultants collaborate with providers and coaches and others to support changes in practice and policy to benefit all children, families, and adults in the early learning setting. Consultants support staff with navigating stress and compassion fatigue; build staff morale and support effective workforce development; and create program supports to reduce children's likelihood of expulsion and build awareness and understanding of anti-bias education.

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

Last year, our Holding Hope Team:



Completed 226 Refferals to Date

Over the years, our Holding Hope Team - part of the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health program - has been dedicated to serving providers across both King and Pierce County. During this time, we have received 226 referrals requesting support for a variety of needs, including behavioral and programmatic challenges. These referrals highlight the essential role we play in assisting those who work closely with young children. They also ensure they have the tools and knowledge necessary to foster healthy development.



Added 10 New IECMH Consultants to Our Team

We are thrilled to witness the growth of this program made possible through additional statewide funding allocated during the 2024 Legislative Session. This expansion will allow us to increase our team from 5 to 11 consultants who will be equipped to meet the growing and increasingly complex needs of the community. With this added capacity, we are confident in our ability to provide more personalized and effective support helping to address the diverse challenges faced by both providers and the children they serve.



Offered 4 Cohort-Based Trainings Based on the "Circle of Security"

The Circle of Security is an evidence-based, trauma-informed model for addressing mental health challenges in children under the age of 12. BrightSpark's trainings are designed to deepen providers' understanding of the critical role that the caregiver-child relationship plays in a child's development, and we were able to serve 56 additional providers. We aim to enhance the ability of educators and caregivers to create inclusive classroom environments that recognize and support the unique needs of every child.



Early Head Start

The Early Head Start (EHS) Program provides family-centered early learning services for low-income families with children ages 0 to 4 as well as support for the entire family. EHS partners with family child care centers to implement best practices that promote the development of the children while also enabling families to move toward self-sufficiency.

The EHS program prioritizes affordability and flexibility by offering subsidized - and often free - care for qualifying families. Many partner providers start earlier than 6:00 am and may even offer 24 hour care which allows families to both benefit from EHS services while also continuing to work non-standard hours. Families work with EHS Specialists in addition to their providers to help them determine their long-term goals and direct them to community resources to help with their overall physical, mental, and financial well-being.

EHS offers families support in the following areas:

- Physical and mental health
- ♦ Special needs and early intervention
- Long-term/sustainable housing
- Substance abuse intervention

- Domestic violence prevention and intervention
- Job training, higher education, and work placement
- Financial stability education



Last year, our EHS Team:

Worked with 12 Family Child Care Centers and served 100 children and 3 pregnant people.

Seattle Preschool Program

The Seattle Preschool Program (SPP) was created in partnership with the City of Seattle for the purpose of offering high-quality, affordable, and accessible child care for Seattle families.

The program helps prepare children ages 3 to 4 for kindergarten and beyond while offering resources such as tuition assistance, family financial assistance, and health screenings. The accredited and evidence-based curriculum offered by SPP was designed with the goal of eliminating the racially disproportionate kindergarten readiness gap.

Early Learning Coaches help SPP teachers provide a culturally responsive, engaging, and nurturing learning environment for all students along with dual language instruction in some classrooms.



Worked with **100** different providers to

support **55** children in preschool classrooms.

In June of 2024, **23** children graduated from SPP and entered kindergarten.

Services offered to families:

- Vision, hearing, and developmental screenings
- Evidence-based curriculum and assessments
- Behavioral and mental health support
- Tuition and payment assistance
- Family engagement events

Support for SPP providers:

- Trauma-informed,

 antiracist professional
 development opportunities
- Intensive, intentional, and reflective coaching
- Funding for classroom supplies and materials
- Compensation for providers

Our 2024 Legislative Priorities

Last year, BrightSpark issued its own standalone legislative agenda. Our team made an intentional choice to truly focus on priorities that will benefit our communities. During this session, we prioritized support for policy and budget proposals to:



Increase mental health consultation investments



Make child care available to more families



Increase ECEAP entitlement capacity

Our Engagement

Results that come from advocating for change with the legislature can be attributed to many factors and actions. The BrightSpark team was proud to take action with state lawmakers and their staff in a variety of ways, including:



5 public testimonials made by Logan Endres, Policy & Advocacy Director, and Mica Slater, Comprehensive Services Dept. Manager



23 "sign in" actions during public hearings



6 recurring meetings that legislators held with Advocacy Director



7 written communications to explain detailed thoughts about various policy proposals

Highlights & Successes

Throughout the legislative session, the BrightSpark team worked on a number of policy proposals in support of our priorities as well as others that relate and support our overall goals.

Our work contributed to collective advocacy that led to the legislature:



Bolstering infant and early childhood mental health consultation



Making critical improvements to early learning subsidy programs



Expanding programs and benefits for child care providers



Increasing opportunity for statewide engagement



Funding various early learning facility projects

Direct wins tied to our legislative priorities include:

√

The Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health (IECMH) Consultation program received an additional \$1.75 million to increase staffing and address the growing waitlist.



ECEAP rates grew by 5% for full day and 9% for extended care.

The Infant Rate Enhancement increased from \$90 to \$180 per child, per month effective July 1, 2024.



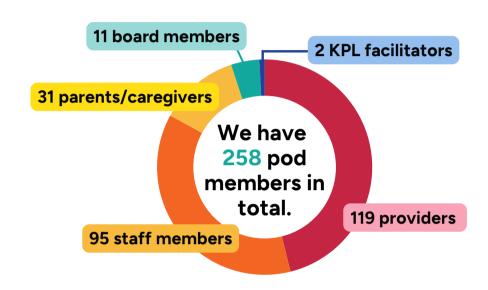
The Non-Standard Hour Bonus increased from \$135 to \$150 per child, per month effective July 1, 2024.

ADVOCACY

Advocacy Pods

2023 marked the third year of our Advocacy Pods. Advocacy Pods are built on the belief that the stronger the local relationships are amongst advocates and their elected officials, the more powerful our advocacy will be on a larger geographic scale. Advocacy Pods bring together community members from across the early learning spectrum living in the same legislative district. This includes child care providers, parents; Family, Friend, & Neighbor caregivers; BrightSpark staff and board members; and community partners.

Each Pod meets with their elected officials to share the realities of what it's like to navigate finding, paying for, and offering care in their neighborhoods. Some meetings are straight to the point while in the others we share stories of deep experiences and babies sometimes pop up on the screen! Ultimately, they are a space for our community to share stories, hard truths, insights, and concerns.





Advocacy Pod Fun Facts:



In the 2023-24 fiscal year, we met virtually and in-person with 40 elected state legislators and sent community members to Washington DC to meet with federal representatives.



The BrightSpark Advocacy Pods include 23 pods representing each of the legislative districts in King and Pierce Counties.



We aim to meet during nap time in the early afternoon so that child care providers can easily join as well as parents and other caregivers. Kids set the schedule!



FAST FACTS & FIGURES



Board of Directors



CHAIR

Rebecca Benavides

- Executive Committee Chair
- Finance Committee

VICE CHAIR

Dr. Tafona Ervin

- Executive Committee
- Strategic Plan Committee Chair

SECRETARY

Roshini Durand Mootoosamy

- Executive Committee
- EO Review Committee
- Finance Committee

TREASURER

Kathryn Flores*

Soleil Boyd

EHS Governance Committee

Christina Chan

- Executive Committee
- Finance Committee Chair

Jessica Cole

Richard De Sam Lazaro

• Executive Committee

Laura Kneedler

• EHS Governance Committee

Carter Osborne

• Executive Committee - Board Lead

Jill Pavlus

- EHS Governance Committee Chair
- Fund Development Committee Chair
- Executive Committee

Page Perey

- EHS Governance Committee
- Fund Development Committee

Mary Red Crow

• EHS Governance Committee

Alicia Teel

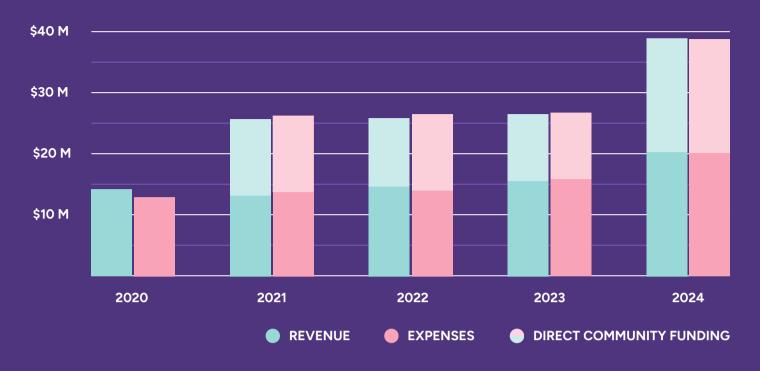
- Finance Committee
- Fund Development Committee

Derek Young

• Finance Committee

^{*}Kathryn Flores is BrightSpark's Finance Officer, and does not serve on the Board of Directors in an official capacity. However, she assumed the Treasurer role during the 2023-24 fiscal year to support the Board's efforts in advancing BrightSpark's mission.

2023-24 Finances







Government Grants& Contracts

\$1,007,259

Foundation & Corporate Grants & Funds

\$176,927

Individual Giving, Special Events, &

 Special Events, & In-Kind Donations

\$501,999

Earned Income



\$37,021,427

 Early Learning Services (Family & Provider Services)

\$549,157

Fundraising

\$3,056,116

Management & General

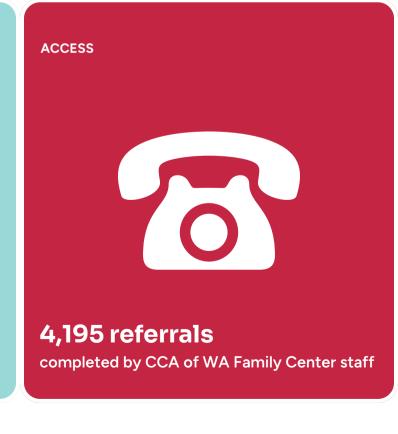
By the Numbers





QUALITY





FY 23-24









ACCESS



\$14,471,937 in subsidies distributed to families

ADVOCACY



45 small group meetings scheduled with WA legislators

QUALITY



380 training hours offered to providers

ADVOCACY



246 community members joined an Advocacy Pod to date



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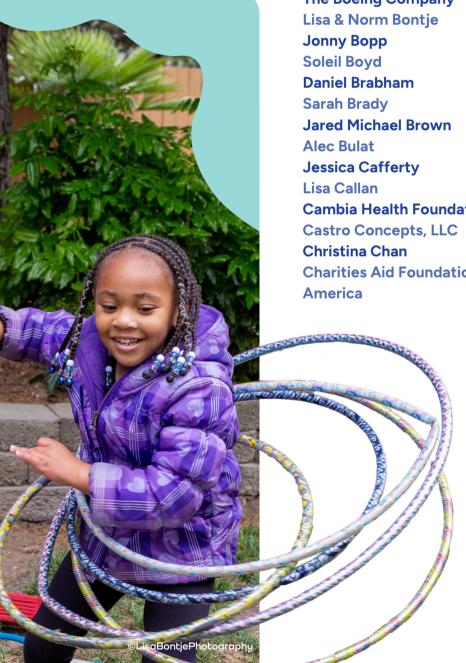
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