



**BRIGHT  
FUTURES**

# 2025 YEAR END REPORT



# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Partners, Families, and Supporters:

Reflecting on 2025, I'm energized by the incredible progress and collaboration across Jefferson, Clear Creek, and Gilpin counties, turning challenges into opportunities and building strong momentum for the future. This year, our local early childhood networks deepened collaboration, centered family voice, and delivered concrete results for children, parents, and the early childhood workforce.

Triad Bright Futures (TBF) celebrated our three-year anniversary in January, supported by our fiscal sponsor, Trailhead Institute who has helped us ensure a strong operational foundation and our capacity to serve. Across the Jeffco Bright Futures Roadmap Cornerstones, partners delivered tangible wins: employer-led solutions from the Talent Pipeline Management cohort to strengthen the child care workforce; new strategies in home visitation to improve collaboration and referrals; piloting of a local Infant & Early Childhood Mental Health landscape map to strengthen prevention and coordinated care; and exploration of ways to align community-level healthy development screening and referral practices.

I am extremely proud of the impact achieved through Year 1 of the Maternal Child Health Leaders for Equity Project in collaboration with Cuenta Conmigo Cooperative and Jefferson County Public Health. Twenty Latina community leaders grew their knowledge, skills and professional networks in maternal and child health alongside organizational partners who participated in co-mentorship with the leaders. The initiative and passion demonstrated by the leaders to co-develop community level solutions, projects, and culturally responsive practices in maternal child health has been extraordinary. I'm excited to see how these achievements support the leaders' career pathways and increased access for families in 2026.

TBF launched the Community Learning Network to ground our Jeffco Bright Futures Roadmap evaluation in shared learning and accountability. Fifteen representatives from across the Bright Futures Roadmap Cornerstones advanced systems alignment. Together, we developed a theory of change and evaluation plan, a huge milestone that will guide coordinated action across our local early childhood ecosystem.

TBF also welcomed a new Mountain Communities Coordinator and kept momentum in Gilpin and Clear Creek counties with community meetings tailored to local needs. Together with our partners in Clear Creek County - Expanding Early Care & Learning, Clear Creek Schools Foundation and Clear Creek Metropolitan Recreation District - we received vital funding from Comis Foundation to launch 2026 summer child care and 2026-27 after school care. In Gilpin, we celebrated with the staff and Board of Mountain Kids Early Learning Center as they opened their new facility, and we hosted parent connection events in partnership with the Recreation Center and Library.

Strong participation in the Colorado Universal Preschool Program (UPK) across the tri-county area continued in 2025 with 214 providers offering seats and 4,175 children enrolled with an average of \$6,000-\$10,000 in tuition assistance for families.

None of this is possible without our partners, advocates, and families. Thank you for your trust, your creativity, and your relentless focus on creating a bright future for families. Together, we're building a more aligned, equitable, and responsive early childhood system, one that meets families where they are and ensures every child has the opportunity to thrive.

With gratitude,



Jennifer Anton, Executive Director

# ABOUT TRIAD BRIGHT FUTURES

At Triad Bright Futures (TBF), we recognize that the challenges facing young children and their families are complex and interconnected, and no single organization can solve them alone. That's why partners came together to create the Bright Futures Roadmap (Roadmap), a community-wide strategy to support the health and well-being of families with young children in Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek counties. Our vision is that all families have the support they need to promote their child's health and well-being for sustained success in school and in life.

TBF supports local access and equitable delivery of early childhood and family support programs with focus on increasing social capital and economic opportunity through four strategic priorities outlined in the Roadmap. Triad Bright Futures coordinates with community partners to expand access to:

- Quality early care and education
- Family support and home visitation
- Mental health consultation and resources
- Child development screening, assessment, and referrals

Additionally, TBF facilitates early childhood workforce development efforts across these focus areas, with the Maternal Child Health Leaders for Equity project specifically designed to address culturally responsive workforce needs in maternal and child health.

In addition to incubating and implementing projects to meet needs across our focus areas, TBF supports local implementation of the Colorado Universal Preschool Program (UPK). UPK provides financial assistance with preschool tuition for children the year before they enter kindergarten. Focusing on targeted outreach to BIPOC and low-income communities across Jefferson, Clear Creek and Gilpin counties, Triad Bright Futures helps families and child care providers to navigate the program.

The Triad Bright Futures website further serves as a gateway to local resources and information for families:

- Connections to parenting support/home visiting
- Tips to promote learning, birth through age 8
- Information about child development
- Guidance and support to enroll in the CO Universal Preschool Program

Visit us online at [triadbrightfutures.org](https://triadbrightfutures.org)

# OUR WORK IN 2025

## COLORADO UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL (UPK)

- Enrolled 3,905 4-year-olds in Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek counties in UPK, a 1% increase from December of last year. We saw a more significant increase of 6.5% in enrollment in disproportionately impacted neighborhoods in Lakewood, Arvada, Edgewater, and Wheat Ridge, as compared to 2024. Additionally, 270 3-year-olds with IEPs were enrolled in the program. UPK provides between \$6,000 and \$10,000 in financial assistance with tuition for children the year before they enter kindergarten.
- TBF supported 214 childcare providers to participate in the UPK program, a 7% increase along with a 97% retention rate in providers from Year 2 (2024-25). These providers offer mixed-delivery preschool through community-based (for-profit, nonprofit, licensed in-home, faith-based) and school district options.
- TBF hosted 12 group and 82 individual UPK provider support sessions and responded to 3,072 help requests from families and providers through the Triad Bright Futures UPK Help Desk.
- Our LCO joined as a target champion with Rocky Mountain Partnership Cradle to Career Network, setting measurable targets around early childhood outcomes that contribute to broader cradle-to-career goals.

As a part of our 2025 strategic communications goals, TBF experimented with new modes of communication to extend our reach, gain insights into best practices, and share learnings with the broader community. We partnered again with Latinas Community Connections Services (LCCS), a grassroots navigation services organization, to provide targeted outreach in support of UPK and early childhood resources to Spanish-speaking families in the summer of 2025. LCCS allowed us to use their WhatsApp channel to push out UPK and family resource messaging with eight groups of 173 members; messages were reshared across their networks. They supported 264 families directly with 1:1 support in accessing UPK and early childhood resources on the TBF website.

TBF's Facebook retargeting campaign with Gary Community Ventures resulted in

- increased efficiency for Spanish-speaking audiences from Year 1 to Year 2 (lower cost per click, higher reach and higher conversion rate) and,
- very strong engagement from Spanish speaking retargeting audiences with messages spreading organically with ad dollars.

We worked with the Gary team to elevate this model to the Colorado Department of Early Childhood for potential scaling statewide.

*The UPK Overview and Calendar Tool with the dates, websites and standards is so helpful!! I always had to search for these. Great to have them in one place.*  
– UPK Provider

*Since the beginning of the Universal Pre-K (UPK) rollout, the journey has been filled with incredible vision, but also many unknowns and "twists and turns." I can say with 100% confidence that I am still standing—and sane—because of Cecy and the team at Triad Bright Futures.* –Tanya Wigham, Two Roads Preschool

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS & MILESTONES

## BRIGHT FUTURES ROADMAP

Representatives from 41 organizations across Jefferson, Gilpin & Clear Creek counties worked toward collective goals to streamline access to services, support early childhood workforce development, and strengthen connections among partners.

Jefferson County Roadmap partners achieved the following goals during 2025:

- With support from the Greater Arvada Chamber of Commerce, completed a Talent Pipeline Management cohort, which has identified local barriers to a strong pipeline of jobseekers entering and staying in the early childhood education field with the goal of increasing the number of childcare seats and improving regional retention. The [final report](#) provides 15 recommendations, grouped into shorter-term “Quick Wins” and longer-term “Heavy Lifts.” The ideas show that change will need to come from coordinated regional action at the state and local levels while also providing childcare center directors with changes they can make in their own facilities when they are ready.
- To support workforce retention and bridge the income and cost of living gap for early educators already in the field, partners developed a [wellness and support page](#) for early childhood educators with linkages to local resources on 211 Colorado including mental wellness, career advancement, health, legal and economic support.
- The Home Visitation Collaborative’s (HVC) “Spring Fling” brought together 78 professionals to build stronger referral networks and deepen cross-program trust. Members of the HVC formally adopted strategies suggested by the home visitors who attended the event including cross program training on behavioral health topics and parent connection events to promote social connectedness among parents and inform best practices in home visiting.
- Cornerstone 3 partners developed a landscape map of Jeffco-wide mental health and family wellbeing services that’s accessible to navigators and families, comprehensive (the full continuum of social emotional supports available to families), strengths-based, and responsive to community input. Partners are currently training navigators across the county in how to utilize the tool while promoting [public facing resources](#) on the TBF website.
- Launched a mental health consultant dashboard for professionals that includes local program and contact information, calendar of parenting group offerings, and resources and training.

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS & MILESTONES

## IMPACT ON EQUITY

The Maternal Child Health Leaders for Equity (MCHLE) project wrapped up its first year. Twenty Latina leaders completed 24 hours of educational sessions, over 1,000 practice hours in the field, and 220 reflective practice hours. Nineteen organizational co-mentors met with community leaders for at least 12 hours each. Jefferson County Public Health and TBF hosted five community of practice sessions for organizational co-mentors to support implementation of new learning and culturally responsive practices as a result of bi-directional learning with the community leaders. Community leaders began designing projects (and in some cases businesses and contract work) to address gaps in access to maternal and child health services in the areas of resource navigation and family support, nutrition, lactation, doula and birth services, community health (worker), and mental health services.



*“This experience has been deeply enriching for me. It has led me to reflect more clearly on maternal and child health in our community and on the ways in which I can contribute to a change in the area of health for individuals and their families. It has also allowed me to recognize and strengthen my leadership, teamwork, and perseverance skills, which have been instrumental in my community work.”*

– MCHLE Participant

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS & MILESTONES

## MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES

Clear Creek & Gilpin Roadmap partners achieved the following goals in 2025:

- Led by Expanding Early Care and Learning (EECL) and supported by Triad Bright Futures and Childcare Innovations, we conducted a series of community conversations designed to expand funding strategies for child care affordability, quality, usefulness, and access (AQUA) in Clear Creek County. There was strong engagement from local government, center directors, community-based organizations, and parents in efforts to expand child care in Clear Creek.
- Secured funding for 2026 preschool summer care at Carlson Elementary and 2026-27 toddler through preschool aftercare at Georgetown Community School in Clear Creek
- EECL and CCSF disbursed \$87,800 in Start Strong child care scholarship funding for families from county lodging and city taxes.
- Gilpin Mountain Kids Early Learning Center opened in December and can currently accommodate up to 24 infants, toddlers and preschoolers.
- Gilpin partners hosted a Child Care Resource Fair at the Gilpin County Library. Mountain Kids child care center staff, Childcare Innovations, families, county staff, and advocates explored strategies for expanding child care options, including Family Friend and Neighbor care (FFN) and pathways for residents to become providers
- In Gilpin County, TBF hosted two family engagement activities serving a total of 11 families. We also formed an active group of three parents to plan family engagement events and launch a Gilpin Early Childhood Facebook group for networking and parent connection.
- In November 2025, five Mountain area child care directors completed Circle of Security training through Jefferson Center to strengthen secure attachment practices in their early childhood classrooms.

*As a first-time mom to a one-year-old, it's been so exciting to see more opportunities for parents to connect and to have better access to local resources. Triad Bright Futures has made Gilpin feel more supportive and connected for families, and I was honored to play a small part in helping build that connection through the Facebook group. It really feels like we're just getting started, and I hope to see the programming continue to grow.*

*-Jeri, Gilpin County Parent*

# ACCOMPLISHMENTS & MILESTONES

## EVALUATION PROGRESS

Together with Butler Institute for Families, TBF and the Community Learning Network (CLN) completed the Jeffco Bright Futures Roadmap theory of change and evaluation plan. These important resources help guide us in setting strategic priorities across Cornerstones and in understanding the impact of our collective work on children, families, and professionals. They also help to keep our network accountable and identify opportunities for improvement.

We kicked off Roadmap evaluation at the end of 2025 with 14 CLN and Cornerstone partners participating in a process evaluation called ripple effects mapping or REM. The REM (English/Spanish) captured experiences and stories of impact from working on the Bright Futures Roadmap. Thematic results indicate that Bright Futures Roadmap partners have maintained their commitment to putting the needs of children and families first by partnering with families and professionals in the community to create accessible services and resources. The Roadmap initiative has promoted inclusivity across partners and families, so those who need services and those who deliver them are working together to support the health and well-being of children and families. Finally, the Roadmap initiative created opportunities for professionals to build relationships and share expertise that improves their practice.



## ORGANIZATIONAL MILESTONES

- Developed a theory of change and evaluation plan for the Bright Futures Roadmap and completed first process evaluation for the Bright Futures Roadmap.
- Onboarded three new Advisory Board members.
- Hired Mountain Communities Coordinator.
- Implemented fundraising strategies resulting in over \$325,000 in single and multi-year funding from new foundations and individual donors. Additionally, Triad Bright Futures received continued funding from the Buell Foundation, Colorado Gives Foundation, Gary Community Ventures and Colorado Department of Early Childhood, allowing us to end 2025 in a strong financial position and ready to scale work in 2026.

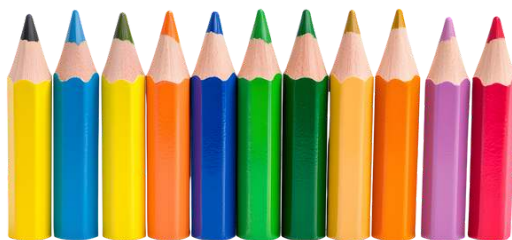
# REFLECTIONS & LOOKING AHEAD

## WHAT WE LEARNED IN 2025

- Family-centered navigation works. When referral hubs and partnerships are trusted and responsive, families get to the right services faster.
- Workforce challenges demand employer-led, system-level solutions. Our TPM approach showed how data-informed coordination can reveal solutions when they're needed most.
- Community voice drives responsive policy and funding. The engagement from government officials to organizations to families is creating pathways for durable child care investments in Clear Creek and Gilpin counties.
- Co-mentorship between grassroots community leaders and organizational partners is crucial in shaping participants' understanding of community health issues and in changing long-held institutional practices that are not serving Latino families and young children.

## WHAT'S AHEAD IN 2026

- Implement our Roadmap evaluation plan to track outcomes for children, families, and providers, and to inform continuous improvement.
- Expand family navigation and home visitation coordination, focusing on behavioral health integration and culturally responsive supports.
- Advance workforce stabilization, partnering with employers, chambers, and training providers to build talent pipelines and improve retention.
- Support EPIC Colorado's child care pilot focused on regional investments to stabilize existing or grow new child care capacity.
- Further develop career pathways, training and apprenticeship opportunities for MCHLE community leaders and strengthen data infrastructures for organizational partners.
- Strengthen UPK quality and access, with special attention to equity, multilingual outreach, and healthy development screening. Participation in the statewide geo mapping project will provide guidance for data informed outreach strategies both for families and for building child care capacity in specific neighborhoods.



# OUR PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS

By working together, partners in Jefferson, Gilpin and Clear Creek Counties are leveraging combined expertise, networks, resources, and relationships to address the root causes of inequities in early childhood development and education. With continued collaboration, we can amplify this collective effort and build a system where all children, regardless of their background, are given the best possible chance to thrive. The Triad Bright Futures staff are deeply grateful to our funders, Advisory Board and Community Learning Network leaders, Butler Institute for Families at University of Denver, donors, and partners for their leadership and support of our work.

## 2025-2026 FUNDERS

- Buell Foundation
- Colorado Department of Early Childhood
- Colorado Gives Foundation
- Comis Foundation
- Early Milestones Colorado
- Gary Community Ventures
- LatinasGive!
- The Anschutz Foundation
- ZOMA Foundation

## 2025 ADVISORY BOARD

- Kami Welch, Greater Arvada Chamber of Commerce, Chair
- Leigh Pytlinski, Jeffco Schools, Secretary
- Jessica Simmons, Sunlight Peak Advisory, Treasurer
- Kelly Dunkin, Colorado Gives Foundation
- Alix Hopkins, Jefferson County Public Health
- Rachel Meixner, Jefferson County Head Start
- Susan Berumen, Gilpin County
- George Marlin, Clear Creek County

## 2025 COMMUNITY LEARNING NETWORK LEADERS

- Kat Douglas, Jefferson County Human Services
- Paulina Erices, Cuenta Conmigo Cooperative
- Naomi Esquibel, The Goddard School- Arvada
- Sierra Dinges, Red Rocks Community College
- Mary Margaret Fouse-Bishop, Jefferson County Public Health
- Briana Francis, Jefferson County Public Library
- Jess Fuller, Arvada Chamber of Commerce
- Alethea Gomez, EPIC Colorado
- Leigh Kallechey, Jefferson Center
- Sarah Kinzer, Mountain Resource Center
- Carrie Kennedy, Jefferson County Child Care Association
- Maria Martinez, Edgewater Collective
- Laurie Walowitz, The Action Center
- Miriam Wilch, Benefits in Action



# BRIGHT FUTURES ROADMAP PARTNERS

- Benefits in Action
- Child Care Innovations
- Clear Creek County Human Services
- Clear Creek Parks & Recreation
- Clear Creek School District R-1
- Clear Creek Schools Foundation
- Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition
- Cuenta Conmigo Cooperative
- Developmental Disabilities Resource Center
- Edgewater Collective
- Expanding Early Care & Learning in Clear Creek
- Gilpin County Library
- Gilpin County Parks & Recreation
- Gilpin County School District RE-1
- Greater Arvada Chamber of Commerce
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health
- Jefferson County Child Care Association
- Jefferson County Head Start
- Jefferson County Human Services
- Jefferson County Public Health
- Jefferson County Public Library
- Jefferson County Public Schools
- La Cocina
- Latinas Community Connections Services
- Lifespan Local
- Mountain Resource Center
- TRIAD Early Childhood Council



## IN THE WORDS OF OUR PARTNERS

### WHAT INSPIRES YOU MOST ABOUT THE WORK YOU ARE DOING WITH THE BRIGHT FUTURES ROADMAP?

*I'm excited about finding a way to keep talented people, and the right people. It's so important to obtain and keep qualified staff who are the best fit.*

*Putting our heads together and doing our best to create better programs, quality of the programs, availability of staff, whether licensed, center, FFN, and centering families. I am inspired by how children are at the center of what we do.*

*I look forward to diving deeper into the meaningful work and learning from one another and how we can work together – and working with the community to do that. There is a disconnect that needs to be addressed.*

*The potential for innovation inspires me. As we come together and share needs and wants and resources, this is a way to co-design. We each know what we need, and now we have help from partners to build it. I love seeing the connections and interconnections.*

*I am inspired by efforts to build a quality early childhood education workforce and finding ways to bring people into the field.*

*The passion and dedication of the people working on this issue are what inspire me the most.*

*We started our preschool and as we were learning about Colorado Shines and everything else, and not having a background in early childhood myself, [The Roadmap workgroup] was a great place to learn and understand how everything is connected, how we can get involved and what that meant for our work.*

*The Roadmap produces tangible outcomes. TBF puts out communication that is useful and helpful to programs and families. After 26 years in the field, I am learning the state moves slowly. Some of these smaller organizations can move faster and make an impact.*