

# 2026 FINAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY



**BRIGHT  
FUTURES**

# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Partners, Families, and Supporters:

It is with mixed emotions that I share this final organizational report as we prepare for the closing of Triad Bright Futures on June 30, 2026. It has been an honor to serve as Executive Director of this small but mighty organization. Together, we have supported more than 15,000 children and 220 providers in accessing the Universal Preschool Program, provided backbone support for implementing the Bright Futures Roadmap community plan, and advanced the integration of grassroots organizations and community leaders into systems of maternal and child health. I am proud of the work our community has accomplished to improve conditions for families and children – strengthening economic supports, expanding family engagement, advancing equitable access to childcare and mental health resources, and investing in community leadership development. We are deeply grateful to Trailhead Institute, our fiscal sponsor, for helping us build a strong infrastructure, and promote our work.

This report summarizes the first two quarters of 2026 and highlights collective achievements, which lay the foundation for continued collaboration as our community transitions to a new regional infrastructure for early childhood coordination, collaboration, and continuous improvement. You have the tools needed to carry this work forward: a strong theory of change and evaluation plan, a steadfast commitment to equity, strengthened networks and coordination, and a shared vision: All families have the support they need to promote their child's health and well-being for sustained success in school and in life.

One of the most challenging aspects of community-centered work is recognizing when it's time to step aside for new leadership to carry the mission forward. While our staff feels a sense of loss with the closing of Triad Bright Futures, we are equally excited about what lies ahead for the community. Under the leadership of Jefferson County Public Health, this work will not only continue but will expand its capacity to serve children, families, and providers across our region.

I encourage each of you to remain curious, continue listening to each other and our community, and carry the work forward in joyful collaboration.

With gratitude,



Jennifer Anton, Executive Director



## COLORADO UNIVERSAL PRESCHOOL (UPK)

Enrollment in the 2026–27 UPK program is off to a strong start, with 3,389 family applications submitted and 3,113 students enrolled as of early June 2026. Across Jefferson, Gilpin, and Clear Creek counties, administrative units and school districts have enrolled 344 children with IEPs and 146 three-year-olds. Provider participation remains high, with a 97% retention rate (215 providers), alongside the addition of six new programs, including two licensed family child care homes (FCCHs).

Triad Bright Futures has continued to play a key role in supporting enrollment, managing more than 800 helpdesk tickets between January and early June 2026. In addition, the team hosted six monthly provider support sessions and conducted 68 individualized support sessions outside of the helpdesk. To further strengthen access to self-service assistance, Triad Bright Futures developed a [UPK Overview & Calendar tool](#), offering a single, user-friendly location for UPK links, tools, and key program timelines.

In partnership with Jefferson County Public Library and Jefferson County Head Start, TBF hosted 10 UPK outreach events at libraries and two family support events, reaching 195 families. We also partnered with Gary Community Ventures to run a two-week Facebook retargeting campaign focused on Spanish-speaking families in low-enrollment ZIP codes.



*“Going through preschool enrollment for the first time felt overwhelming, but having guidance made all the difference. With support to understand UPK options, eligibility, and funding, I felt confident choosing a preschool that works for our family and was able to complete everything needed to cover my child’s tuition.” -Parent*

*“Having such responsive and reliable support made a stressful process feel manageable.” -UPK Provider*

# BRIGHT FUTURES ROADMAP

Partner engagement in systems work remains strong in 2026, with 33 Cornerstone workgroup, strategy, and professional development convenings and 86 new participants. The Community Learning Network, which includes fifteen representatives from across the Jeffco Bright Futures Roadmap, met in February to identify strategies for working more effectively across Cornerstones. Priorities include cross-Cornerstone learning communities focused on workforce development, policy solutions, translating data into action, increasing visibility of systems collaboration, and addressing shared challenges in the early childhood field.

## CORNERSTONE 1 - ACCESS TO HIGH QUALITY EARLY CARE & EDUCATION

Cornerstone 1, ECE partners convened in June to refocus efforts on local implementation of SB24-002, working toward designating child care as a specific area of concern related to use of real property. If passed by county commissioners, it could offer limited property tax credits or rebates to child care providers. Clear Creek and Gilpin partners will join Jeffco in a July informational session to learn from Douglas and Adams counties about their implementation successes.



*"One of the things that I enjoyed about us coming together was that it really helped me partner with people outside of my physical building. Which I don't often get the opportunity to do ... so working with the Cornerstone and Triad Bright Futures really helped me to collaborate with others outside of my own organization." – Cornerstone Partner*

EPIC Colorado is completing Phase 1 of their regional child care solutions pilot to advance one prioritized child care strategy (wage enhancement, co-location/mixed-use, or repurposed land/building) toward implementation readiness by moving a defined approach or identified site from concept to feasibility-ready. This work also strengthens cross-jurisdiction coordination to support more effective child care supply planning in Jefferson and Clear Creek counties.

# BRIGHT FUTURES ROADMAP

## CORNERSTONE 2 - HOME VISITATION AND FAMILY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

The third annual Jeffco Home Visitation “Spring Fling” brought together 76 home visitors for a day of professional development, connection and learning. The event featured a keynote on communities of practice and breakout sessions led by Porchlight Family Justice Center, Developmental Disabilities Resource Center, Jefferson County Public Health, El Grupo Vida, and other Cornerstone 3 mental health partners. Sessions covered topics such as unsafe relationships in the home, infant development, co-regulation, and culturally responsive approaches to mental health stigma.

Participant feedback highlighted strong interest in continued cross-organizational collaboration: 70% of respondents expressed a desire for ongoing joint training, communities of practice, and cross-Cornerstone work. Additionally, 66% reported making two or more new professional connections during the event.



*Home Visitation Collaborative Spring Fling attendees*

“The Spring Fling is designed to be a place that fosters collaboration. Yesterday’s event accomplished that goal. I noticed how engaged folks from different agencies were with each other.” – Event Attendee

## CORNERSTONE 3 - MENTAL HEALTH CONSULTATION

Cornerstone 3 mental health partners have been training navigators across the county to use a comprehensive map of Jeffco-wide mental health and family well-being services. These [resources](#) will be transitioned to the new Gateway Partnership for Early Childhood website.

A local “hub” of contact information, calendar of parenting group offerings, social-emotional resources and trainings has improved coordination among organizations serving families and providers. We are grateful to Nebula Early Learning Collaborative for creating and maintaining this hub for partners. Healthy Child Care Colorado has been active in both Cornerstones 1 and 3, offering no-cost Colorado Pyramid Model Training and Positive Solutions for Families to Jefferson County providers and families.

# BRIGHT FUTURES ROADMAP

## CORNERSTONE 4 – SCREENING, ASSESSMENT & REFERRAL

In 2026, Cornerstone 4 entered a discovery phase to better understand and strengthen access to developmental screening and navigation systems. This effort included a comprehensive desk review, drawing on existing data and insights from a wide range of stakeholders and community interviews with families, community organizations, early childhood providers, pediatricians, and early intervention practitioners.

The process identified key strengths and gaps, leading to actionable recommendations: strengthening families and frontline providers with educational campaigns and an up-to-date screening and referral directory; innovating to meet families where they are with increased on-site screenings; reinforcing provider knowledge with targeted training and tools; optimizing the referral ecosystem by increasing use of the E-Referral system, and standardizing communication protocols between providers and practitioners. Looking ahead, the Cornerstone 4 working group will build on insights from the discovery phase by addressing outstanding questions and convening stakeholders to translate recommendations into an actionable pilot project, including defined priorities, roles, and an implementation timeline.

## MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES – CLEAR CREEK COUNTY

In fall of 2025, Triad Bright Futures and Expanding Early Care and Learning (EECL) secured Comis Foundation funding to support a new summer preschool program in Clear Creek County which launched on June 8, 2026. The program addresses a longstanding gap in care along the I-70 corridor. The summer program is a collaboration among Clear Creek Metropolitan Recreation District (CCMRD), The Clear Creek Schools Foundation, Childcare Innovations, and Clear Creek School District RE-1, with CCMRD overseeing implementation at Carlson Elementary under a newly hired early childhood director. Set to run alongside the district’s school-age summer camp, the program will provide continuity of care until the Mountain Trails Early Childhood Education Center opens next year. Currently the program has 18 3–5-year-olds enrolled. The program was awarded additional funding from Freeport McMoRan Foundation – Henderson Site in 2026. Additionally, this funding will enable the early childhood education program at Georgetown Community School to extend afterschool hours and increase staffing capacity to better meet family needs starting in fall of 2026.



*Left to Right: Commissioner Jodie Hartman-Ball; CCMRD Summer PreK Director, Bobbi Korthuis; Commissioner Rebecca Lloyd; Georgetown Police Judge, Georgia Kofoed; Commissioner George Marlin; Triad Bright Futures, Mountain Communities Coordinator, Amber Troutman.*

# BRIGHT FUTURES ROADMAP

## MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES – GILPIN COUNTY

In April 2026, TBF launched Gilpin Early Childhood Connects, a bi-monthly convening that brings together early childhood stakeholders to share resources, highlight programs, and collaborate on solutions that support young families. In addition, TBF hosted “Crafts at the Rec” in May, which brought together 14 residents for a community playdate that fostered connection through conversation and creative activities.

Building on this momentum, another playdate, “Bubbles in the Park,” is scheduled for June 20. These gatherings are intended to become regular opportunities for young families to connect, helping meet a clear and growing need for community in this rural county.

“Triad Bright Futures’ support made our inaugural Summer Pre-K Childcare Program possible, allowing us to pilot a critical new service and take a meaningful step toward expanding childcare options, which is essential to supporting working families, economic vitality, and the long-term health of our community. “  
-Cameron Marlin, Clear Creek Metropolitan Recreation District

## MOUNTAIN COMMUNITIES – CROSS COUNTY COLLABORATION

Alongside EECL and EPIC, TBF convened a multi-sector childcare solutions workshop in April 2026 with 25 participants representing government, businesses, nonprofits and early childhood providers to identify challenges and prioritize actionable strategies in Clear Creek and Gilpin Counties. Strong support surfaced around childcare as essential community infrastructure with sustainable funding, workforce stability and regional collaboration emerging as critical needs. The Clear Creek Economic Development Corp Child Care Resilience Team will continue this work focusing on conducting targeted employer outreach and workforce surveys as well as evaluating existing and potential childcare funding streams to identify investment gaps and measure economic impact.



Clear Creek & Gilpin Workshop with EPIC Colorado



Clear Creek & Gilpin Child Care Strategy Workshop participants

# BRIGHT FUTURES ROADMAP

## MATERNAL CHILD HEALTH LEADERS FOR EQUITY

**Closing Out Year 1** - Following a period of Year 1 data analysis and program evaluation from January to March 2026, the Maternal Child Health Leaders (MCHLE) for Equity project launched Year 2 in April with 15 returning Latina community health leaders. MCHLE is a collaboration between Cuenta Conmigo Cooperative, Triad Bright Futures and Jefferson County Public Health that paired Latina community members who have lived experience in finding solutions to health and mental health challenges with change agents within organizations committed to supporting maternal and child health. Leader surveys from Year 1 reflect a transformative experience in addressing maternal and child health within community contexts, with clear progress toward reducing inequities. Most participants identified career pathways before the end of Year 1. One success that stands out is the many certifications achieved by MCHLE community leaders: Eight community leaders completed doula training, and five completed Community Health Worker certification through the State of Colorado. In addition, we are very pleased with the strengthened professional networks evidenced through our pre- and post-Year 1 Social Network Analysis.

**Year 2 Progress** - In the second year, participants continue with 18 hours of educational sessions focused on development of projects aligned with professional interest areas (Doulas, Lactation Counselors, Community Health Workers, Nutrition specialists). They have begun to implement project development cycles and are meeting several times a month to advance the work. In phase 1, they are conducting community assessments to inform their project design and are out in the community gathering data while providing direct service in their discipline through paid practice. Recently four participants were certified as lactation specialists and one of the doulas submitted her documentation to be able to bill Medicaid. As an example of the ongoing learning and development, the nutrition group is doing home visits with pregnant moms. When asked what they have learned from their families this month, one participant responded:

*“They remind me of when I first arrived. The moms are alone—they are first-time mothers, alone, very much alone—and yet, they place their trust in me! I try to support them, and I reach out to others to help support them as well. It gives me strength and joy to see them making headway, and whenever I feel like I can’t go on, I think of them and remind myself that I can do it, too.”*



*April 2026 MCHLE Educational Session: Developing Program Evaluations*

## WHAT COMES NEXT

In order to comply with new legislation (SB25-019) all standalone LCOs must consolidate with their early childhood council to streamline services and funding for families and providers. Effective July 1, 2026, Bright Futures Roadmap workplans and UPK support will be absorbed by Gateway Partnership for Early Childhood, overseen by the Community Health Partnerships Division at Jefferson County Public Health. This transition ensures continued, coordinated support for families and providers. The Triad Bright Futures website will redirect to the Gateway Partnership website, where you will continue to find the resources you rely on. In addition, the Colorado Department of Early Childhood will centralize all UPK enrollment support through its expanded [UPK Contact Center](#), while family and provider navigation support will continue through Gateway Partnership.

### A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR PARTNERS AND SUPPORTERS:

#### 2026 FUNDERS

- Buell Foundation
- Colorado Department of Early Childhood
- Colorado Gives Foundation
- Comis Foundation
- Early Milestones Colorado
- Freeport-McMoRan-Henderson Mine
- Gary Community Ventures
- Gilpin County
- LatinasGive!
- The Anschutz Foundation
- ZOMA Foundation

#### 2026 ADVISORY BOARD

- Kami Welch, Greater Arvada Chamber of Commerce, Chair
- Leigh Pytlinski, Jeffco Schools, Secretary
- 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

#### 2026 COMMUNITY LEARNING NETWORK LEADERS

- 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
- Laurie Walowitz, The Action Center
- Miriam Wilch, Benefits in Action

# 2026 BRIGHT FUTURES ROADMAP PARTNERS

- Bell Policy Center
- Benefits in Action
- Blue Channel Therapy
- Child Care Innovations
- Clear Creek County Human Services
- Clear Creek Metropolitan Recreation District
- Clear Creek School District R-1
- Clear Creek Schools Foundation
- Colorado Statewide Parent Coalition
- Cuenta Conmigo Cooperative
- Developmental Disabilities Resource Center
- Earthstar Coaching
- Edgewater Collective
- EPIC Colorado
- Expanding Early Care & Learning in Clear Creek
- Gilpin County Human Services
- Gilpin County Library
- Gilpin County Parks & Recreation
- Gilpin County Public Health
- Gilpin County School District RE-1
- Gilpin Mountain Kids
- Greater Arvada Chamber of Commerce
- Healthy Child Care Colorado
- Jefferson Center for Mental Health
- Jefferson County Child Care Association
- Jefferson County Head Start
- Jefferson County Home Visitation Collaborative
- Jefferson County Human Services
- Jefferson County Public Health
- Jefferson County Public Library
- Jefferson County Public Schools
- La Cocina
- Lifespan Local
- Mountain Resource Center
- Nebula Early Learning Collaborative
- Red Rocks Community College
- The Action Center
- TRIAD Early Childhood Council



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