



One relationship, one child, and one strong brain at a time.



#### A LETTER FROM

# THE DIRECTOR OF BSB



As I reflect on this past year, I'm filled with gratitude for the people and partnerships that make Building Strong Brains (BSB) thrive. What began as a response to low kindergarten readiness has grown into a county-wide movement uniting more than 70 organizations and hundreds of partners around one vision: that every child in Elkhart County is born healthy and ready to learn.

In 2025, our coalition strengthened its focus on **connection**—across sectors, neighborhoods, and families. Action teams advanced initiatives in maternal and child health, early learning, and community supports. Parents and caregivers shared their lived experiences helping shape programs such as **Nurturing Care Groups**, the **Community Resource Navigator Cohort**, and the Head Start Boot Camp.

This year also marked a transformative milestone: a **\$7.5 million grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.** Through this investment, partners are expanding access to high-quality early childhood opportunities and creating sustainable systems of support for families across the county.

Together, we are building a culture of hope—one relationship, one child, and one strong brain at a time.

Kimberly Boynton, PhD.

Coalition Director





## KEY INITIATIVES



435

**Prenatal Care** 

Prenatal Voucher Program June - September 2025



**50** Children

in Head Start Bootcamp during Summer 2025



2,379

**Findhelp** Searches

on the BSB website July 1 - Sept 30, 2025



**Impacts** 

reported by Coalition Partners in 2024



Community **Partners** 

actively engaged across 70 cross-sector organizations



2,360

**Hours** Contributed

by BSB Coalition Members in 2024



664

Relationships Reported

between coalition partners in 2024



1,745

Collaborative

advancing BSB reported by partners in 2025



>\$10M

**Contributed** 

by community partners through time, dollars, and in-kind resources



Community

reported by partners in 2025, up from 69 in previous years







# THE PUZZLE PIECE FRAMEWORK

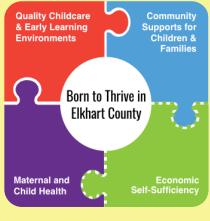
Building Strong Brains operates under a collective impact structure, bringing together partners from across the county to align efforts around key priorities:

- Maternal and child health
- High-quality childcare and early learning
- Community supports for children and families

By working collaboratively to strengthen systems, share data, and coordinate solutions, we can efficiently and effectively

improve outcomes for young children and their families.

Economic self-sufficiency is an intersecting community need which requires attention, but is not the primary work of Building Strong Brains.



## PARTNER STORIES

Through trusted partnerships with 11 community organizations across Elkhart County, the prenatal voucher program is helping uninsured mothers access prenatal care.

With support from the BSB Coalition, the Community Supports for Children and Families Action Team launched Findhelp as a one-stop hub for local resources—replacing scattered, outdated lists with an efficient way for families to find the help they need. The team is now gathering data on how the platform is being used and what people are searching for.

The Data Team's work around systems change is not focusing only on traditional measurements, but how organizations connect with one another—revealing both the strength of existing partnerships and where deeper collaboration is needed to guide resources and decisions across the coalition.





### **BSB TIMELINE**



2020

### **Early Efforts Begin**

Community leaders begin addressing low kindergarten readiness (40-45%) and exploring systemic early childhood solutions.

2021

#### **Kindergarten Readiness Design Team**

A new team forms to develop a shared vision and theory of change for improving early childhood outcomes.

### Shareholder Insights

Stakeholder listening sessions gather insights from parents and caregivers about barriers to children's success.

# 2022

2022

#### **Action Teams Launch**

Three action teams launch: Maternal & Child Health, Early Learning Environments, and Community Supports.

### 2022

#### **Coalition Launch**

BSB officially launches as a county-wide coalition for early childhood development.

# 2023

#### **Growing Capacity & Funding**

The Health System Alignment Team forms to improve maternal and infant health outcomes. Data and communications support teams launch, and BSB receives \$400,000 in Early Years Initiative funding to advance coalition work.

### 2024

#### **Major Expansion**

The Lilly Endowment GIFT VIII awards \$7.5 million to expand BSB's impact and strengthen early childhood systems. The coalition grows to 200 partners across 70 cross-sector organizations and begins a partnership with Visible Network Labs.

### 2025

#### **New Initiatives**

BSB launches Findhelp locally, bringing together 25 resource navigators from 11 organizations in a shared learning agenda. Programs begin for prenatal vouchers, Head Start Boot Camp, and Nurturing Care Groups.









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Connecting families, partners, and communities Resources





