

# ME & MY BABY BUILDING BAG

Working together to equip parents, invest in children, and support our communities



**“Infants and toddlers learn about themselves and their world during interactions with others. Brain connections that lead to later success grow out of nurturant, supportive and predictable care.” -Sara Gable, Human Development Specialist**

In their first three years of life, a child’s brain is hard at work, developing synapses that become the foundation for future brain activity. Synapses that are used more often are cemented in the brain’s structure, and unused synapses are eliminated. This process dramatically slows from ages 3 to 10, and it is estimated that a child’s brain is 85% developed before they reach age 3.

The importance of this early brain development cannot be overstated. Healthy Start and the Early Learning Coalition have the unique and exciting opportunity to equip parents for this important stage in their children’s lives. **Making the most out of a child’s first years has a life-forming impact on the child, the family, and the community.**

## What’s Included?

Inside each Me & My Baby Building Bag is 40 activities for parents and caregivers to do with their young children. These activities, chosen by licensed professionals, are specifically designed to incorporate and develop skills that are foundational for the young developing minds.

Highlights include:

- Flashcards for language and communication development
- Toys that encourage fine and large motor skills
- 26 affirmation cards to assist with family interconnectedness and relation-forming

## The Science Behind the Bag

The Building Bag is one of several learning kits created by the organization Let’s Talk Kids. The mission of Let’s Talk Kids is to support caregivers in being the first and most important teachers in a child’s life.

Caregiver-to-infant talk is critical for strengthening the child’s cognitive development, linguistic skills and problem-solving abilities. But not all talk is created equal. Research demonstrates that the *content* and *style* of the language used with infants has a huge effect on their brain’s development.

## Our Role

A monumental part of Healthy Start’s mission is to equip and support parents and caregivers in being the first and most important teachers in a child’s life. **Last year, our coalition provided parenting education and support to 629 clients!** We will be using Healthy Start home visiting workers, the T.E.A.M. Dad coaches, and community outreach events to get these bags to hundreds of families.

The Early Learning Coalition has a vision to equip children to enter the school system prepared and ready to thrive! Together, our coalitions can achieve incredible results for our community.

## Looking Ahead

We have partnered with the Early Learning Coalition of the Emerald Coast, who contributed \$34,500 to launch the program. With this partnership, we can get Building Bags into the hands of hundreds of parents in our community!

It’s time to get excited! How would our community be transformed if every child started their development on the right foot?

