

The Bessler Center Mary Bridge Children's

Helping Children in Our Community Become
the Healthiest in the Nation



The Bessler Center at Mary Bridge Children's was founded in 2023 to advance health access and outcomes that achieve its vision that children in our community will be the healthiest in the nation. It is a partnership between two physician leaders in the community and MultiCare Mary Bridge Children's Hospital and Health Network. The Bessler Center at Mary Bridge is grounded in the understanding that broad and diverse partnerships are critical to achieving sustainable health solutions. Because of this, partnering for impact is fundamental to how the Center engages in its work.



Our Approach

- **Engage** individuals and organizations to develop collaborative solutions, resources and programs that allow children to thrive.
- **Accelerate** existing initiatives with community partners who are promoting positive child health outcomes.
- **Innovate** for new solutions.
- **Generate** philanthropic, grant, and government funding to sustain programs and resources.
- **Advocate** for effective policy and funding.

Our three early strategies are based on community data and feedback:

- *Improving Prenatal and Infant Health Access and Care* – So that all parents have healthy pregnancies and postpartum health, and infants are healthy.
- *Promoting Early Childhood Wellness* – So that preventable and treatable health concerns are addressed quickly.
- *Supporting & Expanding Places Where Children Can Access Healthcare* – So that children are never without options for health services and support where they live, learn, and play.



The Bessler Center at Mary Bridge Children’s engages partners across Pierce County to gain insights about strengths and challenges. These insights, along with the [County Health Rankings and Roadmaps](#) framework¹ and other research, inform our approach to improving the conditions that influence children’s health.

- **Socioeconomic factors:** Safety, income, family & social support, and other concerns.
- **Health behaviors:** Physical activity, access to healthy and culturally relevant foods, quality sleep and avoidance of substances.
- **Health care:** Support for developmental & emotional needs, access to quality medical care.
- **Physical environments:** Access to basic needs, parenting support, and safe spaces.

¹University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. County Health Rankings & Roadmaps 2024. www.countyhealthrankings.org



To learn more or connect

Chris Ladish, PhD, (she/her)
Center Director & Assistant Vice President
Chris.ladish@multicare.org

Michele Cannon Bessler, MD, (she/her)
Center Co-founder and Pediatrician Lead
michelebessler@hsph.harvard.edu

“Every child is an inspiration – for now in their special uniqueness, and in the future, for their limitless potential. There is no greater work than to support and nurture our children.”

Michele Cannon Bessler, MD & Robert Bessler, MD

