



**Solicitation Information
March 23, 2017**

RFI# 7551494

TITLE: Strategies to identify and prevent at-risk families from DCYF involvement

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: April 25, 2017 at 10:00 AM Eastern Time (ET)

Questions concerning this solicitation must be received by the Division of Purchases at david.francis@purchasing.ri.gov no later than **April 4, 2017 at 10:00 AM (ET)**. Questions should be submitted in a Microsoft Word attachment. Please reference the RFI # on all correspondence. Questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this solicitation. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information.

SURETY REQUIRED: No

BOND REQUIRED: No

**David J. Francis
Interdepartmental Project Manager**

Applicants must register online at the State Purchasing Website at www.purchasing.ri.gov

NOTE TO APPLICANTS:

Offers received without the entire completed three-page R.I.V.I.P. Generated Bidder Certification Form attached may result in disqualification.

THIS PAGE IS NOT A BIDDER CERTIFICATION FORM

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1 INTRODUCTION

The State wishes to prevent the occurrence of neglect and abuse, and decrease the need for children and families to be open to DCYF for care. The State of Rhode Island is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to seek input on strategies to:

- a) Identify and prevent at-risk families from DCYF involvement.
- b) Prevent families that have had time-limited involvement with DCYF from subsequent DCYF involvement.

This is a Request for Information (RFI). No award will be made as a result of this solicitation.

1.1 INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTIFICATIONS TO OFFERORS

1. Potential vendors are advised to review all sections of this RFI carefully and to follow instructions completely, as failure to make a complete submission as described elsewhere herein may result in rejection of the proposal.
2. The State invites feedback from the community on any questions posed in this RFI. Please note it is not a requirement to answer all questions.
3. Alternative approaches and/or methodologies to accomplish the desired or intended results of this RFI are solicited.
4. This is a Request for Information (RFI), and as such no award will be made as a result of this solicitation.
5. All costs associated with developing or submitting responses to this RFI, or to provide oral or written clarification of its content shall be borne by the vendor. The State assumes no responsibility for any costs.
6. Responses misdirected to other state locations, or which are otherwise not present in the Division at the time of opening for any cause, will be determined to be late and will not be considered. For the purposes of this requirement, the official time and date shall be that of the time clock in the reception area of the Division.
7. Respondents are advised that all materials submitted to the State for consideration in response to this RFI will not be considered to be Public Records as defined in Title 38, Chapter 2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island. The responses may only be released for inspection upon RFI once an award of a subsequent procurement has been made, as long as the release will not place the State at a competitive disadvantage in its sole discretion.
8. Interested parties are instructed to peruse the Division of Purchases website on a regular basis, as additional information relating to this solicitation may be released in the form of an addendum to this RFI.

9. Equal Employment Opportunity (G.L. 1956 § 28-5.1-1, et seq.) – § 28-5.1-1 Declaration of policy – (a) Equal opportunity and affirmative action toward its achievement is the policy of all units of Rhode Island state government, including all public and quasi-public agencies, commissions, boards and authorities, and in the classified, unclassified, and non-classified services of state employment. This policy applies to all areas where State dollars are spent, in employment, public services, grants and financial assistance, and in state licensing and regulation. For further information, contact the Rhode Island Equal Opportunity Office at (401) 222-3090.

10. In accordance with Title 7, Chapter 1.2 of the General Laws of Rhode Island, no foreign corporation, a corporation without a Rhode Island business address, shall have the right to transact business in the State until it shall have procured a Certificate of Authority to do so from the Rhode Island Secretary of State (401-222-3040). This is a requirement only of the successful vendor(s).

11. The vendor should be aware of the State’s Minority Business Enterprise (MBE) requirements, which address the State’s goal of ten percent (10%) participation by MBEs in all State procurements. For further information, contact the MBE Administrator at (401) 574-8253 or visit the website www.mbe.ri.gov or contact charles.newton@doa.ri.gov.

2 REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

This RFI outlines the type of information being solicited from potential respondents and includes guidelines for content and format of responses.

2.1 REQUIREMENTS AND DEADLINES FOR QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

2.1.1 QUESTIONS

Questions concerning this RFI may be e-mailed to the Division of Purchases at david.francis@purchasing.ri.gov no later than the date and time indicated on page one of this RFI. Please reference **RFI # 7551494** on all correspondence. Questions should be submitted in a Microsoft Word attachment. Answers to questions received, if any, will be posted on the Internet as an addendum to this RFI. It is the responsibility of all interested parties to download this information. If technical assistance is required call the Help Desk at (401) 462-4357.

Offerors are encouraged to submit written questions to the Division of Purchases. **No other contact with State parties regarding this RFI should be attempted.** Responses to this RFI should be submitted on or before the date listed on the cover page. Responses received after this date and time, as registered by the official time clock in the reception area of the Division of Purchases, may not be considered.

2.1.2 RESPONSES

Submit one (1) original proposal, along with six (6) copies, and one (1) electronic copy of responses by the date and time stated on page one of this RFI. Submissions should be single spaced on 8 ½ " by 11" pages with 1" margins using size 12 font. Responses should be limited to no more than eight (8) pages in total. Please precede responses to each question with the number and sentence of that question.

In addition to the proposal, applicants are required to submit one completed and signed three-page R.I.V.I.P generated bidder certification cover sheet (included in the original copy only) downloaded from the RI Division of Purchases Internet home page at www.purchasing.ri.gov.

Responses to this RFI (an original plus six (6) copies and one (1) electronic copy) must be mailed or hand delivered in a sealed envelope marked "**RFI 7551494 Strategies to identify and prevent at-risk families from DCYF involvement**" to:

RI Department of Administration
Division of Purchases, 2nd Floor
One Capitol Hill
Providence, RI 02908-5855

NOTE: Responses received after the above-referenced due date and time will not be considered. Responses misdirected to other State locations or those not presented to the Division of

Purchases by the scheduled due date and time will be determined to be late and will not be considered. Responses faxed, or emailed, to the Division of Purchases will not be considered. The official time clock is in the reception area of the Division of Purchases.

Based on their responses, Rhode Island may invite a vendor to present their approach and demonstrate their technical solution.

2.1.3 CONFIDENTIALITY

Please do not include personally identifiable information specific to any child, individual, or family in responses. DCYF shall not be liable for any personal information that is disclosed in the process of managing responses to this RFI.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

The Rhode Island Division of Purchases (“Division”) on behalf of the State of Rhode Island (“state”, “Rhode Island” or “RI”) is issuing this Request for Information (“RFI”) to solicit specific information about designing and developing Family Care Community Partnership agencies with the goal of supporting children, youth and families. A wide range of organizations and individuals are welcome to respond to this RFI, including but not limited to families, current FCCPs, other nonprofit and private service providers, community based organizations, schools, hospitals and mental health providers.

2.3 PURPOSE OF THIS REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The State of Rhode Island wishes to prevent the occurrence of neglect and abuse, and decrease the need for children and families to be open to DCYF for care. The state is issuing this Request for Information (RFI) to seek input on strategies to:

- a) Identify and prevent at-risk families from DCYF involvement.
- b) Prevent families that have had time-limited involvement with DCYF from subsequent DCYF involvement.

Currently DCYF contracts with four Family Care Community Partnerships (FCCPs) to achieve these outcomes. These contracts are due to expire in June 2017, and responses to this RFI will inform the State’s subsequent procurement of prevention services.

Promoting activities at the community level designed to strengthen and support families who are at risk of becoming involved or have had time-limited involvement with the Department is vital to the work of DCYF. In Fiscal Year 2016, DCYF received 14,832 maltreatment reports, of which 6,678 required investigation leading to 1,157 removals of children from their homes. Preventative work aims to stop maltreatment before it occurs and redirect families that have come to the attention of DCYF to appropriate supports in the community, instead of opening them to DCYF. Successful prevention work ensures that more children remain safe in their homes and fewer families require DCYF intervention.

The US Department for Health and Human Services Child Welfare Information Gateway (<https://www.childwelfare.gov>) describes a framework of three levels of child welfare preventative programming. These levels are best thought of as a continuum. A comprehensive system of care requires prevention services across the whole continuum.

1. **Primary Prevention.** A primary prevention program targets the whole community. It might take the form of a public education campaign or a parent education program that is open to all parents and caregivers.
2. **Secondary Prevention.** These programs direct services at all families with factors that indicate a family is at higher risk for child maltreatment, such as substance abuse, children with special needs, teen parenting or poverty. Examples of secondary prevention programs are home-visiting for new parents with certain risk factors, family support centers in low-income neighborhoods and parenting education for high-risk families.
3. **Tertiary Prevention.** Tertiary Prevention is directed at families that have a substantiated or unsubstantiated allegation of abuse or neglect. These programs aim to reduce the adverse consequences of abuse or neglect and stop it from recurring. Programs include family preservation services, parent mentoring, and mental health services for children.

Section 2.4 herein describes the preventative programming that FCCPs currently deliver in Rhode Island. The State is interested in suggestions for innovation and improvement. This includes but is not limited to: suggestions for new programming, adjustments to current programming, adaptations for specific populations or circumstances, and suggestions for financial, operational and organizational refinements.

2.4 BACKGROUND

Since 2009 DCYF has contracted with four lead FCCP providers, some of which sub-contract with partner providers, to deliver prevention programming. Currently the FCCPs implement the Wraparound model with families. Each FCCP serves families in one of four regions of Rhode Island: Urban Core, Northern Rhode Island, East Bay and South Counties.

FCCPs serve:

- (1) Families referred by DCYF. Some families that DCYF refer have a substantiated allegation of abuse or neglect (indicated investigation). Some have an unsubstantiated allegation but the family is identified as suitable for FCCP services.
- (2) Families referred to FCCP by community organizations.
- (3) Families who self-refer to FCCP.

Families must have children who meet one of the following criteria to be eligible for FCCP:

- (1) At risk for child abuse, neglect, and/or dependency and DCYF involvement.
- (2) Have a serious emotional disturbance (SED).
- (3) Concluding sentence at the Rhode Island Training School (RITS).

FCCPs currently deliver the Wraparound model, which is youth guided, family driven, culturally and linguistically competent and community based. A team that includes the family and youth develops a care plan. The plan addresses family-prioritized needs and builds on the family's strengths, culture and their support system. The Wraparound team helps families develop a support network, acquire new skills to ensure the safety, manage the special needs of their children, and have timely access to the supportive resources they need. Through the team process FCCPs can help families access clinical services when needed, but FCCPs do not provide clinical interventions to families. For more information on Wraparound please see: <http://nwi.pdx.edu>.

In 2016 1,124 families were referred to FCCP services. 538 of these were referred from the community (including self-referrals), and 586 were referred from DCYF. 4.6% of families that were referred to the FCCPs between January and June 2016 experienced a substantiated allegation of maltreatment or removal in the 6 months following their referral date; 95.4% remained out of DCYF involvement. Data on the population and outcomes of the FCCPs before 2016 is available on the DCYF website: <http://www.dcyf.ri.gov/rifis.php>.

DCYF also funds the youth diversion program, a community-based program providing outreach and advocacy services to youth at risk of involvement with the juvenile justice system.

DCYF is in the midst of significant reforms aimed at improving services to and outcomes of children and families through data-driven decision-making and innovation, streamlining and improving day-to-day agency efficiency, and implementing stronger financial controls. Recent initiatives include implementing structured decision making to ensure that families referred to and investigated by the Department are consistently assessed and triaged, and developing a new central placement and referral unit (CRU) at DCYF to match children, youth and families to the most appropriate services, supports and resources.

2.5 INFORMATION SOLICITED

The State recognizes the importance of stakeholder input and welcomes responses to the questions below. *Respondents may choose to reply to all or a subset of questions, based on interest and/or relevance.* Although these questions have been designed as a guide, respondents are encouraged to provide additional feedback that may be helpful. Any assumptions that respondents are making with respect to comments or recommendations should be included. It is hoped that clear, innovative, and concrete ideas will be provided.

1. Describe the capacity in which you are responding to this RFI, your interest in DCYF prevention services, knowledge and expertise you or your organization have in child welfare programming and any involvement you or your organization have had with the current FCCP program.
2. Which elements of DCYF's current prevention programming are most important to be maintained?
3. Which elements of DCYF's current prevention programming are most in need of improvements?
4. Currently, many families that become involved with DCYF have not previously received FCCP services. How can DCYF, FCCPs and others be more successful in identifying families at high risk for maltreatment earlier and enrolling them in preventative services?
5. Should all children and families eligible for preventative services receive the same interventions and programming, or should alternative or additional programming exist for distinct subgroups of children and families? If interventions and programming should be different for some subgroups, please explain how. Subgroups may include:
 - a. Children and families referred by DCYF.
 - b. Children and families referred by community organizations or themselves.
 - c. Families with children determined to be at high risk for maltreatment.
 - d. Children with behavioral needs, including serious emotional disturbances.
 - e. Children and families in crisis.
 - f. Children and families with certain needs, such as housing or substance abuse.
 - g. Children with juvenile justice involvement.
 - h. Other relevant sub-populations.
6. Currently FCCPs do not provide direct services to families. Instead they help families identify and direct themselves to resources in the community, with the aim of supporting families to become self-sufficient. Should certain subgroups of families in need of preventative services be able to access support services currently offered to children and families open to DCYF? If so, please describe the most appropriate services and the subgroups of families that should have access to them.

7. The goal of the FCCPs is to promote activities at the community level designed to strengthen and support families so maltreatment does not occur and the family does not need to become involved with the Department. FCCPs also report that participation of DCYF Intake/Monitoring staff can increase the likelihood of successful engagement with families. For how long and in what circumstances should DCYF and preventative programs work together to successfully engage families?
8. DCYF is considering re-structuring the FCCP regions. What are the advantages and disadvantages of re-structuring the regional delivery of prevention programming in the ways described below? Is there a structure that most suitable? Options for restructuring include:
 - a. Align the FCCP regions with DCYF's four FSU regions.
 - b. Structure the regions so that each region serves a similar number of families.
 - c. Structure the FCCPs to serve distinct sub-populations, instead of geographic regions.
 - d. Other options.
9. How can the FCCPs and DCYF use data and other methods to track the implementation and effectiveness of prevention efforts?
 - a. What are the most appropriate measures to track FCCP implementation and effectiveness?
 - b. How can FCCPs determine whether they are successful in identifying high risk families not known to DCYF?
 - c. In what other ways should DCYF monitor the FCCPs' performance, ensure model fidelity (if appropriate) and hold FCCPs accountable for results?
10. FCCPs currently have access to flexible funds, which are intended for the purchase of goods and services that are not reimbursed through existing insurance or other programs to help meet specific child, youth and/or family needs. What is the most effective use of flexible funds, and what guidance and parameters should be provided around flexible fund spending?
11. Currently FCCPs are funded by cost-reimbursement up to a cap. DCYF is considering using a unit rate – such as per diem, weekly, or case rate - to fund prevention programming. What are the advantages and disadvantages of different rate structure options in this context? Should other funding structure or adjustments to the current funding structure be considered? On what measures should DCYF consider offering incentive fees, in which a portion of payment is contingent upon results?
12. Describe any other issues or considerations not otherwise covered in this RFI that can assist in informing the implementation of a program that aims to identify at-risk families in the community and prevent those families, and families that have had time-limited involvement with DCYF, from experiencing maltreatment and subsequent DCYF involvement.

RI is requesting information about the most effective strategy to deliver preventative services for children at risk of DCYF involvement. RI appreciates the effort that is required for this response and looks forward to successful implementation of future strategies.

DISCLAIMER

This Request for Information is solely for information and planning purposes and does not constitute a Request for Proposal. All information received in response to the RFI and marked as “Proprietary” will be handled accordingly. Responses to the RFI cannot be accepted by the Government to form a binding contract. No award will be made as a result of this solicitation, and because no award will be made, proposals WILL NOT be in the public domain. Responses to the RFI will not be returned. Respondents are solely responsible for all expenses associated with replying to this RFI.