

# Request for Information 0622-074



State of Alaska  
Department of Health & Social Services  
Division of Public Health

**Date Issued:** March 31, 2022  
**Deadline:** April 10, 2022, 2:30PM

## Help Me Grow - Coordinated Intake and Referral Service (CIRS)

### **Introduction:**

The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health (DPH), Section of Women's, Children's & Family Health (WCFH) is requesting information from qualified parties representing a statewide coordinated intake and referral service (CIRS) for families, that is rooted in the national evidence-based model of Help Me Grow and operating in fidelity. In addition to providing required services of the Help Me Grow National model, WCFH is seeking to partner in supporting Alaska families through developmental monitoring and screening promotion and providing early childhood community coalition support.

### **Background Information:**

In 2016, Alaska was one of 12 states awarded an Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) Impact Grant. The purpose of the ECCS grant was to support states and communities in their efforts to build integrated early childhood (EC) systems. During the last year of the ECCS project, COVID-19 continued to have significant impacts, including temporary closures for services to young children and their families and staff offices, halted in-state travel and in-person events/meetings, and disrupted general workflow. COVID-19 has created challenges throughout the EC system, with the full impacts on families, providers and the workforce not yet understood. The EC system in Alaska still needs greater alignment, which inhibits a coordinated statewide response to these systems-level issues, although much progress has been made. A statewide CIRS is needed to continue the sustained activities of the ECCS grant, including participation and leadership in the statewide Universal Developmental Screening Advisory Committee (UDSAC) and co-facilitation with WCFH staff to support the Alaska Early Childhood Network (ECN).

The UDSAC originated in direct response from the efforts of the Governor's Council on Disabilities and Special Education Universal Developmental Screening Task Force. This task force was convened in 2017 to move forward the vision for all children to receive age appropriate and timely developmental screenings in Alaska. The Governor's Council Universal Developmental Screening Task Force partners include WCFH, Help Me Grow Alaska, ECCS place-based community leads, physicians, public health nurses, nurse home visitors, the Child Care Program Office, behavioral health, the University of Alaska Anchorage, Senior and Disability Services, Part C/ILP, FASD diagnostic clinics, the All Alaska Pediatric Partnership, Tribal Health, and family representatives.

The purpose of the UDSAC is to bring key stakeholders together to ensure that all Alaska children and their caregivers have access to developmental screening. The committee will accomplish this through streamlining efforts to maximize efficiency; coordinating data sharing; ensuring access to training of developmental screening and screening tools for all voluntary or mandated screeners, including early care and learning, home visitors and health care providers; providing stakeholder input on the statewide Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ) online system; and increasing family-focused education on developmental screening. Members include parents (who are compensated), multiple State agencies, direct providers from rural and urban communities, and the leadership of community early childhood coalitions from the ECN.

The ECN is also a sustained effort of the ECCS grant. Through ECCS, it was recognized that there are numerous statewide efforts dedicated to the health and well-being of young children. Several communities have formalized early childhood coalitions, while several others have informal alliances and efforts dedicated to this age group. These groups operate with various levels of funding or no funding at all. A CIRS was a partner agency, promoting healthy child development statewide by providing support and information to individuals and organizations who care for and are dedicated to children and young adults. Staff from each agency joined together to form an Alaska Early Childhood Network, to offer an opportunity for all communities in Alaska to support each other to elevate the focus on early childhood health and well-being in their individual areas and the state. The current purpose and scope of the ECN is to bring together the leads of statewide early childhood coalitions and child-focused groups for the purpose of networking, resource sharing and specific didactic training. WCFH and a CIRS will continue to offer monthly virtual meetings during the school year to foster deeper connection and communication amongst those working in the field of early childhood and provide opportunities to develop and share ideas for this work.

**Scope of Work:**

The scope of work for this project will be two-fold. The first section will be the continued participation in and support of the sustained activities of the Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems (ECCS) federal grant program. The second will be the continued provision of Help Me Grow model implementation, including continued program expansion on a statewide level.

1. Support the sustained work of the former Early Childhood Comprehensive System federal grant program
  - Co-facilitate the ECN with monthly meetings, ongoing technical assistance to members and continued outreach and recruitment of new Alaska communities to the ECN
  - Work with UDSAC partners to strengthen systems around developmental monitoring and screening, including (but not limited to) Prentice Consulting, medical providers, early care and learning professionals, Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program, and community coalitions
  - Lead the Alaska Act Early Team in developmental monitoring promotion activities, as outlined by the CDC
  
2. Expand and continue the services of the Help Me Grow National model
  - Implement the evidence-based Help Me Grow model in Alaska with fidelity as evidenced by an annual fidelity assessment
  - Continue an annual program evaluation, contracted by a third party
  - Follow or create relevant goals and objectives outlined by a strategic plan
  - Help Me Grow CIRS strengthens the system of care by promoting developmental health and supporting families in connection to relevant, timely services
  - Help Me Grow CIRS generates data that is accurate, detailed, and readily available to inform and support communities, partners, and advocacy
  - Help Me Grow CIRS has a broad statewide presence through highly engaged partnerships
  - Help Me Grow CIRS has the capacity to achieve its core purpose

**Budget:**

The Department of Health and Social Services, Division of Public Health has a maximum budget of \$95,000 for one year with up to two optional one-year renewals, based on project needs and available budget. Total overall project costs NTE \$285,000.00 over entire three-year contract performance.

**Deliverables:**

ECCS Support Deliverables:

1. Support the sustained work of the Early Childhood Comprehensive System federal grant program
  - Co-facilitate the ECN with monthly meetings, ongoing technical assistance to members and continued outreach and recruitment of new Alaska communities to the ECN
  - Work with UDSAC partners to strengthen systems around developmental monitoring and screening, including (but not limited to) Prentice Consulting, medical providers, early care and learning professionals, Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program, and community coalitions
  - Lead the Alaska Act Early Team in developmental monitoring promotion activities, as outlined by the CDC

Services of Help Me Grow National Model Deliverables:

1. Implement the evidence-based model in Alaska with fidelity as evidenced by the annual fidelity assessment.
2. Maintain Help Me Grow National model affiliation
3. Continue an annual program evaluation, contracted by a third party
4. Follow or create relevant goals and objectives outlined by a strategic plan
5. Strengthen the system of care by promoting developmental health and supporting families in connection to relevant, timely services
6. Generate data that is accurate, detailed, and readily available to inform and support communities, partners, and advocacy
7. Present CIRS outcomes annually to the Alaska Early Childhood Coordinating Council and relevant conferences, meetings, and webinars as requested by WCFH
8. Maintain a broad statewide presence through highly engaged partnerships
9. Maintain the capacity to achieve the core purpose of the Help Me Grow National Model

**Preferred Minimum Experience:**

For offers to be considered responsive, respondents must meet the following minimum prior experience requirements. Please ensure start and end dates (month and year) are indicated, and that experience is detailed sufficiently to ensure verification of all aspects of minimums below.

1. Respondents must be a statewide Help Me Grow affiliate, dedicated to promoting healthy child development statewide, by providing support and information to individuals and organizations who care for and about children and young adults
2. The Help Me Grow affiliate must be representative of a national evidence-based model and operate the model to fidelity
3. The Help Me Grow affiliate must have at least 3 years' experience in operation
4. The Help Me Grow affiliate must have at least 3 years' experience in providing and promoting developmental screening, specifically the Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 (ASQ-3)
5. The Help Me Grow affiliate must be an established member of the statewide Act Early Team, for developmental monitoring and health promotion

**Response Information:**

**How to Participate**

Interested applicants/firms who believe they can provide the services described above should indicate their interest by submitting an electronic response (.pdf format is preferable) with the following information:

- Company name
- Contact information (email) for the individual(s) who should be notified if DHSS releases a solicitation
- A summary that clearly describes your company's capabilities and experience related to providing the services described in this RFI.
- A summary that clearly describes how the applicant/firm meets or exceeds the *preferred minimum experience* shown in 1.A and B above.
- A statement confirming that the company anticipates the project deliverables, as shown in the budget above, are reasonably within the estimated budget provided. Or, if not, why not?
- A summary of any concerns regarding the project as described. What potential obstacles should be anticipated?

**Submission Instructions:**

Applicants/firms must submit their response as a PDF file, sent via email, by April 10, 2022, at 2:30PM. Responses should be attached and sent via email to the following:

**Annalisa Haynie**

Procurement Specialist

Alaska Department of Health and Social Services

[Annalisa.Haynie@alaska.gov](mailto:Annalisa.Haynie@alaska.gov)

It is the responsibility of the interested party to follow up with the procurement specialist listed above to ensure your response was received prior to the time and date specified at the top of this RFI.

**Important Notice:**

This Request for Information does not constitute a formal solicitation. The purpose of the RFI is to determine if there are qualified offerors out there who would be interested in bidding on these services. The State will use this information to potentially develop a future solicitation.

The State of Alaska is not responsible for any costs associated with the preparation of responses. The issuance of the Request for Information does not obligate the state to purchase any goods or services, extend any rights to prospective vendors nor guarantee that the State of Alaska will proceed with a formal solicitation.