

Request for Information



State of Alaska
Department of Health
Division of Public Health

Date Issued: April 4, 2023
Deadline: April 13, 2023, 3:00PM AKST

Developmental Monitoring and Screening and Early Childhood Network – Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five

Introduction:

The Alaska Department of Health, 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:

The Preschool Development Birth through Five (PDG B-5) Grant was recently awarded to the State of Alaska, Department of Health. Alaska received the initial Preschool Development Grant in 2018, and this new funding opportunity allows the State to both continue and update the work that was started. The primary purpose of this PDG B-5 Renewal Grant is to:

1. Strengthen the state's integrated early childhood care and education system to prepare low-income and disadvantaged children to enter kindergarten by investing in the early childhood workforce;
2. Expand access to high-quality early care and education programs and supports provided through a comprehensive mixed delivery system; and
3. Improve coordination, collaboration, and meaningful partnerships across all state agencies and with all early childhood stakeholders in the state.

As part of the PDG B-5 grant, there are two activities that will support PDG B-5 goals. The first is to support the activities of the statewide Universal Developmental Screening Advisory Committee (UDSAC). 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 as well as developmental monitoring activities. 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.

The second activity is to strengthen and expand the Alaska Early Childhood Network (ECN). The purpose of the ECN is to elevate early childhood in Alaska by supporting a culturally diverse network of local early childhood coalitions and collaboratives harnessing their power and expertise to foster peer learning, networking, and resource sharing, and providing training and technical assistance to increase their influence and effectiveness.

Early childhood is a pivotal time of child development that begins in the prenatal period and continues through age eight. The experiences and opportunities that children and families have during these early years set a strong foundation for later in life. Building stronger local and statewide early childhood systems is a long-term effort that requires local leadership and statewide voice. Early childhood professionals and community members throughout Alaskan communities are identifying opportunities to better support families with young children with culturally relevant, family-centered services and supports. These include access to early learning opportunities, high quality early care and education, family services and supports including social connections and safety net programs, as well as early interventions and health care.

The Early Childhood Network (ECN) was formed to provide a space for community collaboratives to learn from and support each other's efforts to elevate early childhood in their communities, as well as to use their collective voice to inform statewide action. The ECN welcomes community groups who are focused on any aspect of early childhood and values the unique and diverse perspectives that each member community brings.

Scope of Work:

The scope of work for this project will support activities of the PDG B-5 by supporting activities of the UDSAC and the ECN.

1. UDSAC

- Work with UDSAC partners to strengthen systems around developmental monitoring and screening, including (but not limited to) medical providers, early care and learning professionals, Early Intervention/Infant Learning Program, and community coalitions.
- Promote knowledge of developmental monitoring and screening to families through the expansion of the CDC Learn the Signs Act Early Materials that have been adapted to be more culturally functional for Alaska families. This includes the children's books, milestone moments booklets, ASQ companion documents, and the creation of events that support the use of these materials.
- Promote the shared developmental screening public service announcements from the State of Alaska and Help Me Grow Alaska.
- Provide ongoing training opportunities for multiple types of professionals related to developmental monitoring and screening. This includes obtaining accreditation of trainings to offer continuing education credits.

2. ECN

- Provide a centralized hub for local and regional early childhood coalitions and collaboratives to learn, connect, network, and access resources.
- Host regular meetings for representatives of local early childhood coalitions and collaboratives to network and learn.
- Host an in-person retreat annually for ECN members.
- Foster shared learning about local, state, and federal impacts on early childhood policies, projects, and programs.
- Elevate collective/united community voice on early childhood priorities among State and Tribal programs and policymakers.

- Create mentorship opportunities for local early childhood leaders.
- Increase capacity for targeted advocacy on early childhood priorities at a local and state level.
- Share early childhood resources.
- Assist interested communities in developing local early childhood coalitions or collaboratives.
- Provide a stipend program for ECN members to host town halls for community feedback on PDG B-5 activities.

Budget:

The Department of Health, Division of Public Health has a maximum budget of \$1,200,000 between July 1, 2023 and December 31, 2025 based on project needs and available budget.

Deliverables:

3. UDSAC

- Assist the Division of Public Health in planning and attending all UDSAC meetings, including the work groups.
- Promote knowledge of developmental monitoring and screening to families through the expansion of the CDC Learn the Signs Act Early Materials that have been adapted to be more culturally functional for Alaska families. This includes:
 - Print and provide the Alaska versions of the CDC Amazing Me! books free to all providers serving families with young children. This includes translating the books into other relevant languages used in Alaska.
 - Print and provide the Alaska version of the milestone moments booklets free to all providers serving families with young children. This includes providing relevant updates to the content as recommended by the CDC.
 - Partnering with communities in the creation of ASQ companion documents to assist in providing cultural relevance and guidance to families when they are completing the developmental screening tool.
 - Creating and promoting events that support the use of the above listed materials.
- Promote the shared developmental screening public service announcements from the State of Alaska and Help Me Grow Alaska. This includes printing of materials, statewide radio ads, and social media videos to promote developmental screening through the Help Me Grow Alaska website.
- Provide ongoing training opportunities for multiple types of professionals related to developmental monitoring and screening. This includes obtaining accreditation of trainings to offer continuing education credits. Training offerings must include providing ASQ Developmental Screening to medical providers statewide and must be accessible through the State of Alaska Learning Management System.

4. ECN

- Provide a centralized hub for local and regional early childhood coalitions and collaboratives to learn, connect, network, and access resources.
- Host regular meetings for representatives of local early childhood coalitions and collaboratives to network and learn.
- Host an in-person retreat annually for ECN members.
- Foster shared learning about local, state, and federal impacts on early childhood policies, projects, and programs.
- Elevate collective/united community voice on early childhood priorities among State and Tribal programs and policymakers.
- Create mentorship opportunities for local early childhood leaders.

- Increase capacity for targeted advocacy on early childhood priorities at a local and state level.
- Share early childhood resources.
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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. Respondents must own the rights to original artwork to the Alaska versions of the CDC Amazing Me! children's books series.
3. Respondents must have the Alaska Ambassador for CDC Learn Signs Act Early on staff and available to the Division of Public Health to inform material development.
4. Respondents must have at least two years of experience in facilitating or partnering with the ECN.

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 DOH 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 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 13, 2023, at 3:00PM. 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

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.