



April 2024 Request for Proposals: Birth to Five Child Health and Development

Background

[Boston Children's Collaboration for Community Health](#) aims to improve the health and well-being of children and families disproportionately impacted by systemic injustices and inequities in health and the social determinants of health. Our goal is to help promote and support safe, stable, nurturing, healthy relationships and environments for infants, children, youth, and young adults so they can thrive.

Funding Opportunity

Healthy early childhood development is critical for young children's lifelong success. Promoting positive physical and psychological outcomes for young children includes enhancing parenting skills and promoting caregivers' health and well-being. In educational settings, programs that promote access to services, foster young children's social and emotional skills, and promote a positive environment foster their physical and emotional health and development. The Covid-19 pandemic and the ongoing opioid crisis have negatively impacted young children's social emotional development and strained families' ability to meet basic needs. As a result, significant numbers of young children are at risk of negative physical and psychological conditions.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) will aim to set a high trajectory for success in school and life among children from birth to five years of age by strengthening family engagement and promoting the health and well-being of young children and their caregivers in home, school, and community settings. Applicants can choose to focus on Family Engagement and/or Health and Well-being. Family and educator participation should be a key aspect of any effort.

Projects will advance the goals through one of three ways: **Creating or expanding programs and services**, **Policy advocacy**, or **Systems change and coordination**. Projects with a focus on **Creating or expanding services** will aim to create or expand access to culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate high-quality programming and resources in school, home, and community settings, and should link to broader advocacy or coalition efforts. Projects emphasizing **Policy advocacy** will aim to equip, empower, and mobilize families, providers, and/or educators through organizing, building knowledge, and providing support to engage with elected officials, public officials, and other key decision makers on issues that advance healthy early childhood development. Projects emphasizing **Systems change and coordination** will aim to strengthen linkages among the early childhood and other systems including but not limited to healthcare, food, and housing.

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Examples of **Family Engagement** projects include but are not limited to:

- Group-based and peer-to-peer approaches that support parents' knowledge, emotional stability and responsiveness, and direct caregiving skills
- Community-based play groups for families with young children that meet cultural and linguistic preferences and provide connections to resources
- Tailored information and culturally responsive support for parents of young children with and without special needs and newcomer parents with young children
- Screening and support for parents during pre and postnatal periods
- Advocacy opportunities in city, state, and federal government (e.g., ask elected officials to co-sponsor or vote on legislation, provide testimony, attend advocacy days or briefings)
- Referral and navigation support within center and family childcare environments to increase enrollment and utilization of services that meet basic needs (housing, food, etc.)

Examples of **Health and Well-being** projects include but are not limited to:

- Free or subsidized training and education for early childhood educators, providers, and parents
- Health and well-being promotion for early childhood educators and providers
- Practice or policy changes to promote health and well-being for early childhood educators, other early childhood providers, students, and families
- New or expanded educational programming or community resources to promote mental and behavioral health and healthy growth and nutrition for young children and families in school, home, and community settings
- Advocacy opportunities in city, state, and federal government related to early childhood health and well-being
- Local partnerships and enhanced systems infrastructure to screen, refer, and connect families with developmental, mental and behavioral health, physical activity and nutrition education, support, and resources

Total Funding

- A total of \$6.3 million will be available for this funding opportunity.
- Funding will support projects for 4 years from October 1, 2024 to September 30, 2028.
- Applicants may apply for one of three tiers:
 - Tier 1: Up to \$50,000/year (\$200,000 total) for individual organizations serving families with children ages birth to five years
 - Tier 2: Up to \$100,000/year (\$400,000 total) for two or more organizations working together in a partnership

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- Tier 3: Up to \$200,000/year (\$800,000 total) for two or more organizations working together in a partnership with an emphasis on Policy Advocacy or Systems Change
- We anticipate funding 12 to 15 organizations through this competitive RFP process.
- Current funded partners may apply for either a continuation or new grant. Please note that continued funding is not guaranteed.
- Organizations that are not current funded partners may only apply for a new grant.
- All applications will be competitively reviewed.

Eligibility and Priorities

- Applicants must be 501(c)3 tax-exempt organizations that serve Boston children and families. If the organization is not a 501(c)3 nonprofit, they can apply with a tax-exempt fiscal sponsor. Public agencies, including schools, are eligible to apply in partnership with at least one community-based partner.
- Priority will be given to the following Boston neighborhoods: Allston/Brighton, Dorchester, East Boston, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, Mattapan, Mission Hill, and Roxbury.
- Private foundations are not eligible.
- Practices or entities owned by Boston Children's are not eligible to apply or receive funds but may serve as collaborators.

Support for Applicants

Boston Children's will hold an optional information session on **April 30, 2024 from 12:00 - 1:00pm** via Zoom (register [here](#)). There will be an opportunity to have your questions answered during this session. Applicants can also sign up for office hours with Boston Children's (register [here](#)) and Boston Children's evaluation partner Mathematica (register [here](#)). Applicants can also email questions to Debbie.Lay@childrens.harvard.edu at any point in the application process.

Use of Grant Funds

Grant funds may be used for project staff salaries, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, supplies, project-related travel, and other direct expenses, including a limited amount of equipment deemed essential to the project. Indirect expenses may not exceed 10% of total request. Grant funds may not be used to provide medical services, support clinical trials, construct or renovate healthcare facilities, or substitute funds currently being used to support similar activities. Current funded partners may use grant funds for continuation activities and are expected to allocate some grant funds to build on current activities.

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Evaluation

A report evaluating the project and sharing progress and results is required at the midpoint and end of each grant year. Boston Children's evaluation partner, Mathematica, will work with successful applicants to design and finalize an evaluation plan and identify indicators.

Sharing and Learning

Selected projects will be expected to participate in at least two sharing and learning activities annually hosted by Boston Children's. Organizational leadership and project staff can attend.

Key Dates

Item	Date
Request for Proposals released	Monday, April 22, 2024
Virtual information session	Tuesday, April 30, 2024 from 12:00-1:00pm. Register here .
Office hours	April 23 to May 28, 2024 Boston Children's Hospital Office Hours, register here . Mathematica Office Hours, register here .
Proposals due	Friday, May 31, 2024 by 5:00 p.m.
Awardees notified	By Wednesday, July 31, 2024
Grant period	October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2028
Funded partner kick off meeting	October or November 2024
Year 1 reports due	February 2025/August 2025
Year 2 reports due	February 2026/August 2026
Year 3 reports due	February 2027/August 2027
Year 4 reports due	February 2028/August 2028

Contact name and email:

Debbie Lay, Senior Project Manager, Office of Community Health, Debbie.Lay@childrens.harvard.edu



Application Instructions

Deadline

The deadline to submit applications is **Friday, May 31, 2024 by 5 p.m.** All applications must be submitted online at <https://bostonchildrens.smapply.io/>. All applicants will be notified of funding decisions via email by July 31, 2024.

Submission Instructions

Applications will be accepted using our [online application portal](#). Sign up for an account if you are a new user of the [Survey Monkey Apply portal](#). Once you have logged in, select the initiative you are applying for to start your application. If you are a grant writer, please register using the name and email address for the primary contact of the application. Once you have completed the application, you must click 'Submit' to formally submit your application. You will receive notification by email that the submission was received. Use Google Chrome for the best experience. See Survey Monkey Apply frequently asked questions for applicants [here](#).

Application Requirements

Application Components:

- Cover Letter (please include amount of funding requested and key contact information)
- Proposal Narrative (see application questions below)
- Scope of Services (template provided [here](#))
- Project Budget (template provided [here](#))
- W-9 Tax Form for organization or fiscal sponsor (must include the address where payment should be mailed)
- Two Letters of Support (from someone outside of your organization)
- Partnership Letter stating commitment and role of partner organization (for Tier 2 and 3 requests only)

Application Questions:

Section 1: Applicant contact information and overview

1. Organizational information.
2. Describe your organization, mission, and connection to the community you serve. (500 words)



3. Describe a recent project where you engaged families or educators in a significant and meaningful way. (200 words)

Section 2: Project overview

1. Project Title
2. Identify the funding tier and total funding request for this project.
3. Describe the population of children and families you work with. For this project, please include demographic (race/ethnicity, income) and geographic information as well as estimated reach. (200 words)
4. Identify which area(s) you will focus on for this project (Family Engagement, Health & Well-being). Be sure to address how inequities for young children, families, or educators factor into the area of focus. (300 words)
5. Identify which approach(es) you will use for this project (Creating or expanding programs and services, Policy and advocacy, Systems change and coordination). Discuss how your organization is equipped for success with this project. (300 words)

Section 3: Project description

Please select whether your organization is applying for a Continuation or New grant.

- Continuation Grant (Only current funded partners may apply)
- New Grant (Available to new applicants and current funded partners proposing a new project)

Continuation application – Project description (Current funded partners only)

1. Reflect on the successes and challenges of your original proposed project and provide an overall assessment of progress towards your goals to date. Please include details on any ways you had to pivot or change your goals due to COVID-19 or other unforeseen challenges. (300 words)
2. Describe your proposed continuation project and what you hope to achieve over the next 4 years. Be sure to include updated goals and describe which aspects of the current project will continue and which aspects will build on the current project. For creating or expanding programs and services, be sure to address how the project will link to advocacy or coalition efforts. (500 words)



New applications – Project description

1. Describe your proposed project and what you hope to achieve over the next 4 years. If you are creating or expanding programs and services, be sure to address how the project will link to advocacy efforts. (500 words)

Section 4: Outcomes, partners, and budget

1. Reflect on what success looks like for this project. Please list anticipated outcomes for Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, and Year 4 and how you plan to measure those outcomes. (250 words)
2. Describe your plans to share the data that you collect from the proposed project. (200 words)
3. Describe your key partners for the project, your connection to one another, and their role on the project. (300 words)
4. Describe the skills and capabilities of the staff who will implement and evaluate your project's activities. If there are new staff roles to be filled, describe your plans for hiring, including how you will make progress on your project should there be a hiring delay (i.e. if new staff are not able to be hired within 3 months of the grant award). (200 words)
5. Describe the racial/ethnic, gender and geographic identities of your organization's leadership and how this diversity might inform or benefit the project. (200 words)
6. Describe how funds from Boston Children's will continue to support the project's overall success and any ways it will help to leverage other funding sources. (200 words)
7. Please share any other information you would like us to know about your organization or your proposed project. (150 words)

Required Documents (for all applicants):

Submit the following documents with your completed application. If you need assistance, contact debbie.lay@childrens.harvard.edu.

1. Cover Letter (please include amount of funding requested and key contact information)
2. Scope of Services (Use template provided [here](#))
3. Project Budget (Use template provided [here](#))

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4. Organizational Budget (Use own format.)
5. Completed W-9 tax form for organization or from fiscal sponsor (W-9 submitted must include the specific address where payment should be mailed.)
6. Two Letters of Support (One page, single spaced. Must be from someone outside of your organization such as a community partner or program participant.)
7. Partnership Letters (Tier 2 or 3 only. One-page, single spaced. May be a single jointly signed letter or an individual letter from each key partner.)

Selection Criteria:

All applications will be evaluated using the criteria below.

- Track record of meaningful family or educator engagement and connection to the community
- Alignment with the initiative's strategy and priority populations
- Clear and comprehensive description of the issue, including equity focus, and how the proposed project will address it
- Strong family or educator engagement component to the project
- Potential for positive impact on the health and well-being of infants, young children, and their families
- Outcome metrics that are relevant, measurable, and achievable
- Sufficient staff capacity to successfully implement project
- Budget that accurately reflects the level of project effort (uploaded Project Budget)