REQUESTS FOR PROPOSALS
on behalf of the
North Dakota Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group

Purpose

Research shows that involvement in systems for low-risk youth does more harm than good. The North Dakota Juvenile Justice State Advisory Group (SAG) is committed to increasing community-based services for youth at-risk of involvement in the juvenile justice and/or child welfare systems, and thus allocating funding to support community-based organizations in developing a youth and family engagement services model that will connect youth and families to individualized services and supports. Due to the over-representation of minority youth in North Dakota’s juvenile justice system, particular emphasis is being placed on creating greater access to services for minority youth and families. The funding allocation will address SAG priorities as well as recommendations from recent state reform efforts.

Background

The SAG was established pursuant to the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JJDP) Act, one of the most successful standard-setting statutes that recognizes the value of citizen-driven efforts to prevent delinquency. Membership of the SAG is appointed by the Governor based on composition requirements set by the Act. The SAG is responsible for advocating for delinquency prevention and compliance with the standards of the Act. North Dakota’s SAG has established two main goals for funding allocations: 1. Reduce incarceration and out-of-home placement through community-based alternatives; and 2. Reduce juvenile justice system involvement through positive youth development opportunities, with a particular focus on minority youth.

Eligibility of Grantee

The SAG is seeking grantee(s) with demonstrated organizational capacity and relevant expertise to carry out this project. Due to the collaboration needed to effectively meet the needs of youth and families, the SAG will consider applications under which two or more entities would carry out the award, however, only one entity may be the applicant and legal grant recipient. Budgets can include subgrants or contracts with partner agencies.
Description of Project

The primary goal of a youth and family engagement services model is to prevent and/or divert youth from juvenile justice and child welfare systems by identifying and addressing the underlying issues contributing to concerning behavior. Ideally, this would be done with screening tools that identify needs, evidenced-based services or promising practices through referral and/or direct delivery of services, and continuous evaluation and quality improvement. The model should allow for providers to work with youth and families as partners in order to access individualized services and/or resources needed to create a stable environment. Services could occur at the request of parents/caregivers, CHINS workers, or the human service zone, pursuant to an intervention in schools, contact with law enforcement or youth bureaus, referral from other community service providers, and/or early diversion efforts by the juvenile court.

The following services should be included, as applicable, as part of the model:

- **Youth Screening** – screening using tools to understand the issues youth are experiencing, and connect them to applicable services.
- **Family Engagement Services** – studies show that meaningful family engagement is a necessary component in improving outcomes for youth, and thus should play a central role in collaboratively developing solutions with the family.
- **Family Intervention and Counseling Services** – family mediation services for situations involving family conflict or violence, with consideration given to using restorative practices to work towards family reunification and prevention of out-of-home placement. Ideally these services would be provided within days of an incident occurring. Family counseling services should be available and/or referrals made as applicable.
- **24/7 Emergency Shelter Services** – short term placement options in order to provide for safety during and/or following a crisis situation, or as an alternative to secure detention.
- **Day/Evening Programming** – programming for youth in the shelter, those needing structured time after school, and possibly those suspended from school.
- **Mentoring** – one-on-one mentoring services, utilizing credible messengers with lived experience when possible. Youth and family members with lived experience are vital resources for understanding and reaching youth at risk of involvement with youth-serving systems.
- **Cultural Services** – services should be culturally appropriate, and connections made to culturally specific organizations.
- **Transportation** – transportation when possible to allow youth who need to connect to services or activities.
Community Collaboration

Community collaboration is a necessary component of the service model. Working collaboratively increases the likelihood of identifying a youth and family’s unique needs and developing relevant and culturally appropriate service plans that address needs, build on family strengths, draw from community supports, and use resources more effectively. Applicant organizations will need to be able to connect to culturally specific services, outreach to the community about available services, partner with public agencies, and engage youth and families in helping to guide programming. It will be important to connect with faith-based leaders, elders, and people with lived experience. In addition, providers should collaborate with law enforcement to offer diversion services without the need for a citation when applicable.

Letters of intent and/or letters of support with key stakeholders and those agencies supporting the service model should be included with the application to demonstrate an established, collaborative relationship between the applicant agency and public agencies and other community-based providers.

Priority Consideration

Priority consideration when making award decisions will be given to applications that promote racial equity, remove barriers to accessing services, and increase community connection for minority youth and families. To receive priority consideration, the applicant must describe how the proposed model will address potential racial inequities and contribute to greater access to opportunities for minority youth and families. Community-based organizations that are not culturally specific are encouraged to collaborate with those organizations whose primary purpose as a whole is to provide culturally specific services.

Priority consideration will also be provided to those organizations that incorporate the planning and delivery of prevention programming identified in North Dakota’s Title IV-E Prevention Services Plan (https://www.hhs.nd.gov/cfs/title-iv-e-prevention-services), or identify services that are available through the clearinghouse (https://preventionservices.acf.hhs.gov/) for possible implementation (i.e. Strong African American Families).
Funding and Project Period

Approximately $500,000 in grant funding is available for planning and implementation of a youth and family engagement services model in several communities. The proposed timeline and budget should be based on a 24-month project period, October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2025, and include a 3-6 month planning period. Grant continuations are possible and will be considered based on project progress and outcome data.

Proposal Specifications

A complete proposal should consist of the following documents. The SAG will score applications using the percentage allocations indicated.

1. Application Cover Page

   Applicants should complete and submit the application cover page found at: www.ndaco.org/jjfunding. All applicants must have an active registration in the System for Award Management (Sam.gov). Registration must be renewed and validated every 12 months. Applicants will need to confirm their authorized organization representative and confirm the organization’s unique entity identifier, legal name, and address. The page must be signed by a person duly authorized to execute and legally bind the organization to contractual obligations.

2. Program Narrative (60%)

   The program narrative should be submitted as an attachment. The attached document should be single-spaced, using a 12-point Arial font, have no more than 1-inch margins, and not exceed seven pages. The document should include the following items numbered correspondingly.

   a. Description of the Project (5%)

      Applicants should provide a comprehensive but concise description of the services to be provided and anticipated number of youth and families to be served, including minority youth and families. Data should be provided to support the extent of the issues to be addressed (with sources included). If previous efforts have been made to address the issues, the applicant should describe the efforts and resulting outcome measures.

   b. Project Planning, Design and Implementation (17%)

      Applicants should detail a 3-6 month planning process for the project, including how they will work with public agencies and other service providers, outreach to the community about available services, and...
involve youth and families in feedback about programming. Collaboration with key stakeholders, public agencies and other community-based providers, including their role in the project, should be discussed.

Services that will be implemented as part of the model should be detailed, including efforts to include culturally specific services to minority youth and families. Strategies used to achieve the goals and objectives should be outlined.

This section should include details regarding other sources of funding to support the project if applicable.

Information regarding the screening tools that will be used to identify needs should be discussed and whether or not they are validated. In addition, information regarding services to be provided and whether they are considered evidenced-based or promising practices should be detailed, with sources included. While it is the goal to fund programs that are using evidence-based practices, the SAG will also support promising strategies that may be based on practice-based evidence and/or lived experiences of communities of color and American Indians. These approaches are often embedded in the culture and supported from a cultural framework.

**Timeline.** Applicants should submit a timeline (as a separate attachment) that indicates major tasks associated with the goals and objectives of the project, assigns responsibility for each, and plots completion of each task by month or quarter, using “Year 1,” “Month 1,” “Quarter 1,” etc., not calendar dates. Sample project timelines can be found at [https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/funding/ojjdp-sample-timelines](https://ojjdp.ojp.gov/funding/ojjdp-sample-timelines).

c. **Priority Consideration (10%)**

Applicants should address how they will remove barriers to accessing services and increase community connections for minority youth and families. Community-based organizations that are not culturally specific are encouraged to collaborate with those organizations whose primary purpose as a whole is to provide culturally-specific services.

In addition, those applicants that are considering specific Title IV-E prevention services should detail their planning process for implementation.
d. Capabilities and Competencies (8%)
This section should describe the experience and capability of the applicant organization and how the proposed service model fits within their mission. Grant management experience should be discussed, as well as the capacity to manage subawards, if applicable. Details on the applicant agency’s fiscal accountability should be included. Applicants should describe the roles and responsibilities of project staff and explain the program’s organizational structure and operations.

e. Plan for Collecting Performance Data and How it will be Used for Continuous Quality Improvement (10%)
Describe the process for measuring project performance. Identify how the data will be collected and how the information will be used to evaluate the impact of the project and guide changes if necessary. Continuous tracking and monitoring of data is important to know if goals are being met and to identify changes that need to be made.

The following performance measures are required to be reported on if an award is made:

- Number of youth and families served (referral sources, length of involvement, services provided, etc.);
- Number of youth served by an evidenced-based program or promising practices;
- Number and percent of youth receiving culturally specific services;
- Number of MOU’s/stakeholder agreements developed;
- Number and percent of youth that offend/re-offend;
- Number and percent of youth with successful completion from diversion programming with no system involvement;
- Number and percent of families satisfied with services; and
- Number and percent of youth with improved family relationships.

f. Goal, Objectives, and Activities (10%)
The applicant should detail the project's goals, objectives, and activities, and ensure they are directly related to the required performance measures. The applicant should explain how the service model would accomplish its goal of preventing systems involvement. Objectives should be specific, quantifiable statements of the project’s desired results. They should be measurable and clearly linked to the goal. Primary project activities that will be conducted to complete the objectives should be outlined.
3. **Budget Worksheet and Narrative (25%)**

Applicants are required to provide a budget breakdown and budget narrative using the Excel template found at [www.ndaco.org/jjfunding](http://www.ndaco.org/jjfunding). The project budget should detail all expenses to be covered by grant funds and be complete, allowable, and cost effective (reasonable, allocable, and necessary for project activities) in relation to the proposed activities. A narrative should be included for each budget item explaining the purpose for the item. *Funds must be used to supplement existing funds for program activities and cannot replace or supplant funds that have been appropriated for the same purpose.* Matching funds are not required but applicants should document other funds to be used. Detailed cost calculations should be shown to demonstrate how the applicant arrived at the amounts being requested.

Below are a number of key things to note completing the budget:

- Expenses need to be allowable (refer to the OJP Financial Guide found at: [https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedoj/overview](https://www.ojp.gov/funding/financialguidedoj/overview)). Note that ND’s SAG has made it a practice not to fund equipment.
- Budgeted staff are in both the budget narrative and program narrative
- Funding budgeted for organizations or individuals that will be carrying out the purposes of the grant are considered subawards not contracts
- Salary/wage amounts and % of time charged to the grant are included
- The benefits are named in the fringe detail narrative
- Travel expenses (mileage/meals/hotel) are based on state per diem rates
- Do not include “other”, “etc.” or “miscellaneous” in the description

4. **Letters of Intent/Letters of Support (15%)**

Applicants should attach a list of key stakeholders that are essential to meeting the goals of the service model, along with a letter of intent for each. The list should include the name of the organization, including contact person, and their role and responsibilities as it relates to accomplishing the goals and objectives laid out. A letter of intent should demonstrate an established collaborative relationship between the applicant agency and the stakeholder, and outline the stakeholder’s involvement and specific contributions to ensuring the success of the service model.

Letters of support should be included from those agencies and organizations that are providing general support for the service model but not making a specific contribution to the goals and objectives outlined.
Submission Process and Award Information

Those agencies intending to submit an application should send an email notification of their intent to do so, including population and geographic area to be served, to jjsag@ndaco.org no later than August 25, 2023.

Proposals should be emailed no later than 5:00 pm on September 15, 2023 to: jjsag@ndaco.org, and include the following attachments:

- Application Cover Page (Word form)
- Program Narrative (Word doc)
- Timeline
- Budget Detail Worksheet and Narrative (Excel workbook)
- Letters of Intent/Letters of Support

Late submissions will not be considered. The SAG will score proposals using the criteria specified above.

Notification of awards or denials of funding will be made by September 29, 2023. If selected for funding, staff will work with the applicant to formalize a grant agreement.

Applicants that are awarded funding will be required to submit financial and progress reports within fifteen days following the end of each quarterly period. In addition, reporting on required performance measures must be submitted semi-annually.

Any questions regarding this request should be directed to Lisa Jahner at (701) 328-7320 or via email at ljahner@ndaco.org.

Proposal Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>RFP Schedule</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RFP Issue Date</td>
<td>8/1/23</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification of Intent to Apply</td>
<td>8/25/23</td>
<td>5:00 pm (CT)</td>
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<td>Deadline for Receipt of Proposals</td>
<td>9/15/23</td>
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<td>Notice of Intent to Award</td>
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<td>Approximate Contract Start Date</td>
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