

RFP: Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grant Program

OVERVIEW

On April 27th, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS) released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Grant Program. Approximately \$4.7 million in total funding will be awarded over five years to eligible organizations who will improve health outcomes for infants and children by developing, maintaining, or enhancing infant and early childhood mental health promotion, intervention, and treatment services.

The full RFP is available [here](#). Applications are due on June 29th.

FUNDING

Up to \$500,000 will be awarded annually through this RFP to up to nine organizations. Funding awarded must be used for new expenses related to the program and should not be used to supplant any funding available for carrying out existing services and activities. Additional funding limitations include:

- No more than 15 percent of the award may be used for developing the infrastructure necessary for expansion of services; and
- No more than 15 percent of the award may be used for data collection, performance measurement, and performance assessment, including incentives for participating in the required data collection follow-up.

A 10% match of the annual grant award is required by the 21st Century Cures Act. Matching resources may be cash or in-kind, including facilities, equipment, or services, and must be derived from non-federal sources, such as state revenues or foundation grants. Awarded organizations are expected to utilize third party and other revenue realized from the provision of services to the extent possible and use grant funds through this RFP only for services to individuals who are not covered by public or commercial health insurance, individuals for whom coverage has been formally determined to be otherwise unavailable, or for services that are not sufficiently covered by an individual's health insurance plan.

Contracts are expected to last for five years beginning on September 30th.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

In order to qualify for funding under this RFP, applicants must be human services agencies or not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organizations that:

- Either (a) employ licensed mental health professionals who have specialized training and experience in infant and early childhood assessment, diagnosis, and treatment OR (b) are accredited or approved by the appropriate State agency, as applicable, to provide for children, from birth to 12 years of age, mental health promotion, intervention, and/or treatment services; and
- Provide infant and early childhood services or programs that are evidence-based or that have been scientifically demonstrated to show further promise but would benefit from further applied development.

Eligible applicants must also meet the following additional requirements:

- At least one mental health treatment provider organization with experience providing applicable clinical services must be involved in the proposed project;
- Each mental health treatment provider organization must have at least two years of experience providing relevant services to children from birth to 12 years of age; and
- Each mental health treatment provider organization must comply with all applicable local and state licensing, accreditation, and certification requirements.

Organizations must hire a Project Director and Lead Evaluator for the program and both positions will require prior approval by SAMHSA.

PROGRAM SERVICES

Awarded organizations must use program funding allocated through this RFP for the following required activities:

- Provide culturally and developmentally appropriate mental health promotion, prevention, early intervention, and treatment services to children from birth to age 12 (telehealth service options for underserved and/or remote areas must be considered);
- Identify and implement a mental health consultation model to build capacities of personnel at early care and education programs;
- Create opportunities for child and family serving providers to develop greater expertise in infant and childhood mental health; and
- Provide specialized training on evidence-based practices and models for infant and childhood mental health treatment and early intervention, which may include clinical supervision.

In addition, programs must describe a pathway to sustainability and will be expected to develop a plan for the dissemination of the program to other sites and settings.

TARGET POPULATION

The target population eligible for services under this program include children from birth to 12 years old who are at risk for, show early signs of, or have been diagnosed with a mental illness, including serious emotional disturbance (SED).

APPLICATION

Proposals will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Population of Focus and Statement of Need (10 points)
- Proposed Implementation Approach (30 points)
- Proposed Evidence-Based Service/Practice (25 points)
- Staff and Organizational Experience (20 points)
- Data Collection and Performance Measurement (15 points)

Awards will be distributed based on the above criteria, the availability of funds, and an equitable distribution of funding by geographic area, population need, and program size.

Timeline

Proposals must be submitted by June 29th. Questions should be submitted to Jennifer Oppenheim at Jennifer.Oppenheim@samhsa.hhs.gov for program issues and Gwendolyn Simpson at FOACMHS@samhsa.hhs.gov for grants management and budget issues.