QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

2021 RFP: Three (3) Regional Peer to Peer Programs

Questions? Email us anytime at dcf.askrfp@dcf.nj.gov

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CLARIFICATION: For the budget language regarding Attachment I on page 29 and Attachment II on page 38, please note this clarifying language: "The start-up budget shall be separate from the Year 1, 12-month budget. The Year 2 budget shall reflect a 12-month operating schedule. All three budgets must include, in separate columns, total funds needed for each line item, the funds requested in this grant, and funds secured from other sources."

CORRECTION: See attachment for revised Start-up Budget form.

CORRECTION: See page 24 of the RFP- Attachment I-Bravelife Intervention. Part II-Activities/Implementation Supports/Outcomes **are worth maximum of 15 points**, not 10 points.

1. **How does my organization learn more about BLI?**

   Please see page 12 of the RFP:
   The BraveLife Intervention model was developed in partnership between Westchester County Department of Social Services and The Children's Village. BLI Lead Model Developer Agency: Westchester County Department of Social Services Contact: Tara Linh Leaman, JD, Program Director, tll2@westchestergov.com BLI Implementation Expert Agency: The Children's Village Contact: Warren Kent, MSW – Vice President, kent@childrensvillage.org

2. **I reviewed the RFP and regarding pages 8 & 9 that talk about referral and rejection processes; I am curious to know how they envision these referral/rejection processes to look like and what do they envision in terms of "peer"; the concept of being close in age or experience?"**

   DCF will partner with awarded agencies on referral and rejection processes.

   Please review Section IA and IB and Exhibit E regarding "peer".

3. **Are the annualized salaries negotiable on this grant?**

   No.

4. Can the $67,000 be a part of the startup cost ($155,000)?

No.

5. Can we apply for only a portion of the Northern Region, e.g., Essex County?

No.

6. Does the $67,000 allocated for initial training include staff compensation for the time that they participate in the training?

No.

7. P2P Navigators

a. Is it required that all P2P Navigators be full time?

Yes.

b. Must all P2P Navigators be at least 18 years of age?

Yes.

8. Is it correct to assume that a maximum of 50 foster children will be served (5 P2P Navigators x 10 cases each)?

Yes.

a. If more than 50 clients are referred, is a waiting list established?

Preliminarily yes, however this will be discussed with awarded agencies.

9. Can the FT Coordinator be a licensed social worker (LSW/LAC) or must this person have an LCSW/LPC?

If the applicant plans to select the BLI model, the requirement is listed on page 15. The RFP only requires that the FT coordinator is licensed clinical staff with an example provided. Any of the above credentialing is acceptable.

10. Please advise if the credible messengers have to reside in the region that you are applying for?

The staff for the program do not need to reside in the region being served.

11. Page 1, Section I.A. Purpose:

- **Will this program serve youth in foster homes only or youth in any placement setting?**

  The program will serve youth in any placement setting.

12. Page 15, Section F. Resources – Staffing Structure

- **The logic model indicates the navigator/mentor is part time, however, the staffing structure indicates they are full-time. Can you please confirm if these 5 positions are expected to be Full-Time, Full-Time Equivalent, and/or Part-Time?**

  Please note (page 5) the logic model reflects the vision of the youth council and their desired outcomes for a Peer to Peer program. If the applicant plans to select the BLI model the staffing structure is full time and is described on page 15. If an applicant is using another model, they should provide the staffing structure in their proposal.

- **Is a licensed master's level professional working toward independent licensure (LAC, LSW, LAMFT) acceptable for the Director and Coordinator positions or do these positions require independent licensure (LCSW, LMFT, LPC)?**

  The requirement for the position is a licensed clinical professional.

13. Page 15, Section F. Resources – Expectations for location of service delivery:

- **Recognizing that Peer Navigators are expected to meet with youth at locations that work best for them, does the provider have to have an office in each of the 3 counties in the identified region?**

  There are no requirements regarding location of office space, however in Organizational Capacity, agencies shall describe how they will meet the geographic area requirements of the program initiative (see page 27 & 36).

14. Page 28, Collaborations:

- **In addition to the letter of commitment and/or MOU specific to BraveLife Intervention, are additional letters of support required or accepted?**

  Additional letters of support are not required. Only a letter of commitment or MOU will be accepted.

15. Page 30, Section VII Budget:

- **Is an Annex B required? If so, where should it be included within the application (i.e., Appendix)?**

  No. Only the DCF Budget forms are needed for this submission. Please see Budget section and Appendix section.

15	☐	Exhibit D DCF Budget Forms for the following: Year 1 Start Up Budget Year 1 12 Month Year 2 12 Month

16. Page 38, Section VII Budget:

- **Does the $41,500 annualized salary for each peer navigator include fringe?**

  No.

17. Logic Model: What are the minimum and maximum age allowances for the P2P navigator/mentor? The logic model indicates they must be younger than 23. Please state the minimum and maximum allowable ages at hire.

Employees are required to be at least 18 years old. Please note (page 5) the logic model reflects the vision of the youth council and their desired outcomes for a Peer to Peer program.

18. The RFP states that the "peers should have the ability to reach out to the navigator when needed." Please advise if 24/7 access is expected? If not, please clarify.

See page 16: Hours of operation. Agencies should describe proposed work schedules and strategies that would provide flexibility and ensure peer navigators meet with youth at the times they are available at a location that works best for the youth.

19. The RFP states that start-up funds can cover the purchase of 3-4 vehicles. Is vehicle purchase required? If not, can part of the transportation budget be taken from the start up fund?

Vehicle purchase is not required, but money from the startup budget cannot be moved to the 12-month budget.

20. **Part of the Bravelife program requires that peers complete a fidelity checklist and survey. Please advise as to who is responsible for creating the checklist and survey?**

    The BraveLife Model Developer has created the fidelity checklist and survey.

21. **The RFP allows for the start-up budget to include funds for leasing office space. Therefore, would that only include initial leasing fees and any construction needed to the rental space?**

    Funds cannot be used to pre-pay expenses; the start-up funds could be used towards a security deposit and rent/lease payments for May and June. Fees to set up cable/wifi, electric, land line phone/cell phones, etcetera could all be part of start-up costs for setting up office space, office furniture. Renovations/constructions would require DCF pre-approval as they are capital expenditures.

22. **Level of Service:**
    a. **Will expected level of service be 50 clients?** Yes. **How soon after the grant is awarded will full level of service be expected?** This will be discussed and planned for upon award.

    b. **Will we be able to contact and engage stakeholders and DCPP local offices for referrals if/when needed?** Yes.

23. **Implementation:**

    a. **Are we expected to have an additional detail for the implementation model than what is listed on page 12 and 13?**

    If applicant is using BLI they do not need to provide additional detail about the BLI model. If they are using another model, they must provide an overview of that program model.

    b. **At what point are we expected for our navigators to meet with clients**?

    This will be discussed and planned for upon award.

24. **Description of Bravelife Intervention Model**

    a. **Can we be provided a copy of the model?**

    Please see hyperlink for project summary on page 2 of the RFP and refer to question 1 above for BLI contact information.

25. Data/Outcomes

a. Will assessment tools for outcomes be provided by BLI if using that model or will we be expected to come up with our own assessment tools? If using BLI the model developer will provide assessment tools. **Will that tool be provided to us prior to grant deadline?** Please see BLI contacts on page 12.

b. Is additional data collection be required outside of National Youth in Transition Database? Yes, this will be discussed and planned for with the agencies selected, DCF and the model developer upon award. Please also see the bottom of page 14.

26. Staff:

a. What is the difference in tasks between the Coordinator and coach/supervisor?

The BLI Coordinators focuses on the operational aspects of program, and providers clinical support to P2P Navigators. The BLI Coach/Supervisor provides direct supervision to the P2P Navigators. For additional information, please see the contacts for the BLI Model Developers listed on page 12 of the RFP.

b. The Logic Model and RFP has different staffing requirements on page 15 of the RFP (ex. navigators on RFP are full-time/Logic Model states part-time, supervisors are only listed, not coaches on Logic Model).

See Question 12.

c. What is the age requirement for peer navigator?

Please see question 17.

27. Does the Peer-to-Peer Navigator have to have their living experience in NJ?

Yes.

28. Can the Peer-to-Peer Navigator be hired from any state?

Yes, however they are required to provide in person services.

29. Does the job description need to be obtained from the BLI? On page 24 Training/Coaching/Technical Assistance bullet # 2 says to utilize the BLI job description and interview protocols during the hiring process, on page 40 #9 is asking to submit job descriptions. Will DCF provide the job description or are we expected to contact the BLI programs to obtain them?

If the applicant is using BLI, they will attach an attestation statement as set forth in Exhibit C, in the appendices stating the agency's commitment to participate in the training/coaching/technical assistance activities for BraveLife Intervention Model. This includes utilizing BLI job descriptions. For more information about job descriptions, contact the BLI program, please see BLI contact information on page 12. If the applicant is using an alternate model, the applicant will be expected to provide the job description.

30. Are the provider agencies contacting the BLI program to obtain a letter of commitment?

Yes.

31. Are the Peer-to-Peer Navigators required to have a driver's license?

No.

32. Will the provider agencies have access to the youth council to assist in assuring their goals are met?

Yes, the provider agencies will have access to the youth council who will provide their input on how the program is doing and if their goals are being met.

33. Is the BLI staffing structure on page 15 per county?

No, per region as outlined on page 1.

34. Will DCF provide the cost code for awarded agencies to have access to receive the results of the Child Abuse Record Information and the FBI IdentoGO through the Central Registry Process?

More details will be provided after the award is made.

35. Are the mentors ages 18-23?

Please see question 17.

36. The Peer mentoring program logic model says the mentors will support multiple youth, is there a specific minimum or maximum number of youths that they're required to mentor?

If BLI is selected, please see F. on page 15.

37. **Would it be ideal for the provider agency to create an on-call policy for emergency situations for the mentee (if there isn't one already in place for the provider agency)?**

    See page 16: Hours of operation. Agencies should describe proposed work schedules and strategies that would provide flexibility and ensure peer navigators meet with youth at the times they are available at a location that works best for the youth.

38. **Page 9 under empowerment phase bullet #3: Is this a worksheet already in place or are the provider agency expected to create the worksheet? Is there a template?**

    Please see BLI contact information on page 12.

39. **Page 9 under the connection phase bullet # 4 on page 10 Is the engagement/development approach part of the BLI training?**

    All phases of the BLI model will be covered in training, for more information please see BLI contact information on page 12

40. **Page 10 Youth and P2P will actively engage and participate in service plan/case plan family team meeting, is DCF requiring DCPP to provide this documentation with the referral as well as court orders?**

    No, not at this time. **Will DCPP send invitations to the provider agency via email, letter, phone call informing the P2P in a timely manner about upcoming family team meetings?** No, the P2P will be required to develop a relationship and partner with CP&P staff. **If so, what will be their timeline to give notice?** N/A. **Are school meetings included for P2P Navigators to participate is asked for by the mentee**? Yes.

41. **Staff structure on page 15 of the RFP, is this structure per county?** Please see question 33. **Does the FT Coordinator have to require a licensure?** Yes. **Can they have and MSW, or master's degree in Marriage and family counseling, or even a licensed alcohol and drug counseling?**

    The full-time coordinator is required to be a licensed clinical professional, a licensed alcohol and drug counselor is acceptable.

42. **Budget on page 29 states there's a minimum salary of 41,500 for each navigator, is there a maximum and is that in accordance with the peer navigator has more than a high school diploma, but maybe an associate degree, bachelor or master's degree?**

    There are no maximum salaries.

43. **Can start up funds be used for the database system**.

    Yes.

44. **Is the worksheet mentioned on page 9 under Program Activities - Empowerment Phase, 3rd bullet, is the worksheet that is referenced provided or created by the awardee?**

    The worksheet has been created by the BLI model developer.

45. **What other stakeholders can make referrals, as referenced on page 8 item E - Referral Process.**

    This will be discussed and planned for upon award.

46. **Since the referral and screening process will be finalized upon program award, will this include the development of the referral form, if not, are there specific BLI requirements of the referral?**

    Yes, the referral and screening process will be finalized upon program award and it will include the utilization of the BLI referral form and may be modified for New Jersey's context.

47. **Is the family engagement/development approach referenced on page 10 (4th bullet under Connections Phase) a part of the BLI training?**

    See question 39.

48. **Is the Fidelity Checklist referenced on page 11 under Required Data Assessment and Measurement Tools (1st bullet - Fidelity) provided?**

    If the applicant is using BLI, the fidelity checklist will be shared upon award. If the applicant is using an alternate model, the applicant will be expected to provide the data assessment and measurement tools in their proposal.

49. **For the surveys referenced on page 11 under Required Data Assessment and Measurement Tools (2nd bullet - Outcomes) are the questions prescribed by DCF and/or the BLI model?**

    If the applicant is using BLI, they will utilize the BLI survey which may be modified for New Jersey's context. If the applicant is using an alternate model, the applicant will be expected to provide the assessment tools in their proposal.

50. **Are the peer-to-peer mentors limited to the number of hours they can spend with a mentee? Being as though they can work with up to 10 youth, is there a set number of hours required per youth?**

There is not a required number of hours. Hours should be flexible and meet the needs of the youth**.**

51. **CP&P is identified as a stakeholder. Who else would be identified as a stakeholder in the referral process (schools, hospitals, treatment centers, resource parents)?**

    This will be discussed and planned for upon award.

52. **Would a youth be able to self-refer in order to receive services from Peer to Peer Navigator Program?** Yes. **Will the prospective Peer Navigators be referred to the process in efforts for the Peer to Peer program to interview and hire them?** No.

53. **As youth are referred, will the Peer to Peer program be provided a comprehensive history of the youth that includes but is not limited to psychiatric and psychological evaluations, IEPs, medical and social history, psychosocial evaluations, etc.?**

    This will be discussed and planned for upon award.

54. **As an awarded agency, what is the timeframe for identifying hired staff for all positions listed in the RFP? Is it prior to the May deadline?**

    This will be discussed and planned for upon award.

55. **Will Peer Navigators have to undergo a comprehensive background check?**

    Yes.

56. **Which stakeholders will be responsible for the comprehensive background checks be performed on Peer Navigators?**

    The awarded agencies.

57. **Based on the Exhibit E- Logic Model, would the mentor be obligated to facilitate the youth through systems/processes like social security, obtaining a State ID, and/or opening a bank account, etc.?**

    Potentially, yes.

58. For the required data assessment and measurement tools, will these tools be provided to the programs OR will the program have to develop different data assessment and measurement tools to capture the fidelity and outcomes of the program?

If the applicant is using BLI, they will utilize the BLI survey which may be modified for New Jersey's context. If the applicant is using an alternate model, the applicant will be expected to provide the assessment tools in their proposal.

59. Is it a requirement of the RFP applicant process to provide an example in the proposal of the measurement tools that will be used to capture the necessary information?

See answer for question 58.

60. For frequency and duration of services that are flexible to meet the needs of the youth, what is expected in detail to be included in the proposal?

It is expected that applicants will be able to demonstrate how they will provide flexible services that meet the needs of youth.

61. As an awarded agency, will we receive formal training on the data collection and program reporting related activities with DCF? Yes.

This question references "Required participation in data collection and program reporting related activities w/DCF Awarded agencies shall participate in data collection and evaluation activities as outlined during the contract negotiation process. This will include such activities including program specific administrative data entry, program reports, National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) services, and other program information as requested by DCF."

62. RFP Page 6 – With respect to the target population identified in Section C, would you please indicate how many youth (age 14-21) are currently in placement for less than 18 months in the Central Jersey Region by County (i.e., # in Mercer, # in Monmouth, # in Ocean).

This will be discussed upon award.

63. RFP Page 10 – With respect to Anticipated Outcomes identified,

1. **will DCF require reporting/metrics for these Outcomes?** Yes.
2. **will the BLI curriculum provide assessment tools for measuring these outcomes or will the grantee be required to develop/identify such assessments?** Yes.

64. **RFP Page 11 – The section on Required Data Assessment & Measurement Tools specifies that program youth will complete an 18-month survey, however time-in-program averages 12 months (see page 12).**
    1. **is the 18-month survey a post-program assessment?** For more information from BLI see question 1 for their contact information.
    2. **is any (other) post-program follow-up required?** Yes, this will be discussed and planned for with the agencies selected, DCF and the model developer upon award.

65. **RFP Page 14 – The section, "Required participation in data collection and program report related activities w/DCF" specifies that awardees shall participate in data collection and evaluation activities, what data additional data elements, beyond the BLI assessments, are anticipated/required for collection by awarded agencies?**

    Please see pages 10, 11, the bottom of page 14, and the top of page 15.

66. **RFP Page 18 – The section "Registration for the AOR Form" specifies that AOR forms may be received 5 business days prior to the date the bid is due. Does this preclude AORs from being submitted before March 24?**

    We will accept AORs any time prior to the deadline.

67. **<u>RFP Page 29: VII. Budget & Start up Budget Form:</u>**
    Start-up budget questions:

    a. **RFP Page 29: VII. Budget: Is there a minimum/maximum period for start-up?** No. **Page 12: Brave Life Intervention required Training/Coaching Phase 1 and Phase 2 is a combined 6 months, is that in line with anticipated start-up period?**

       Yes.

    b. **Start Up Budget Form: The start-up budget form notes at the top "only up to $70,000" however the RFP on page 29 mentions "up to $155,000" for startup funding. Which is correct?**

       $155,000 A correction has been issued (see above) and a new start up budget form has been posted.

    c. **Start Up Budget Form: The start-up budget form has categories A through H in the first column. Is it allowable to add/remove categories on the form? Such as include staff wages for start-up activities of hiring/training new staff.**

       Do not change the form. Agencies may explain as much as is needed in the budget narrative. Staff salary is included in the year one budget, so it should not be in the start-up budget.

d. **RFP Page 16: F. Resources: If we acquire vehicles for the transportation component of the program, is it preferred the vehicle is leased or purchased?**

Preference is vehicles be purchased, not leased, but DCF will consider respondents' justifications as to why leasing a vehicle is a better use of contract monies than purchasing a vehicle. If vehicles are leased, DCF funds may not be used for any lease agreement closing costs, including unusual wear and tear or any excess mileage charges.

e. **RFP Page 16: F. Resources: Will leased/purchase vehicles become the property of DCF at the end of the contract?**

Yes.

f. **Start Up Budget Form: Category A. Consultants & Professional Fees for Model Development – please give examples of what expenses during start-up this category entails. (RFP Page 38: VII. Budget) According to the budget instructions $67,000 and $20,000 have been allocated to Year 1 and Year 2 budgets, respectively.**

Agencies should enter $0 if there are no consultants and professional fees for model development during start-up. The $67,000 in Year 1 will cover the activities on page 13 of the RFP. The $20,000 in Year 2 will be discussed post award.

68. <u>Page 29: VII. Budget:</u> What is the cap for indirect expense percent on all direct expenses (General and Administrative Costs)?

While there is not a cap on General and Administrative Costs, your budget will be evaluated based upon certain criteria.
The Department recognizes that allowable general and administrative (G&A) costs are essential and legitimate costs of provider agencies. At the minimum, the following factors must be considered in the allowability of individual items within the cost cluster:

1. Is the cost reasonable
2. Is it allocable
3. Generally accepted accounting principles and practices appropriate to the circumstances will be applied to G&A cost determinations

69. <u>Page 30: VII. Budget:</u> Please clarify if the budget narratives are included in the 35-page proposal narrative limit.

Yes, the budget narrative is included in the page limit.

70. <u>Page 29: VII. Budget:</u> **Will billing be based on an hourly, per diem, cost reimbursement, or installment basis? If rate based, should the rate be included in the budget narrative?**

Cost-reimbursement.

71. <u>Page 14: E. Activities/Implementation Supports/Outcomes:</u> **Do we need to include registration fees, air travel, hotel, meals, etc. for overnight stays in relation to RFP Page 14: Required participation in monitoring and evaluation activities with DCF?** No.

    a. **For budgeting wages for staff, how many <u>hours per staff</u> is estimated for these activities?** This is TBA.

    b. **Where will these activities be held?** This is TBA.

72. **Budget: When using the one-page 12-month budget form, are we expected to itemize all line items under each budget category? For example, under Personnel - Salary, do you want us to list all full-time employees and their allocated salary. Or for the purpose of this RFP should we just list the totals of each budget category?**

List each of the required positions for either BLI or an alternate model and include the name of an existing employee or "to be hired" and the salary. Provide detail for each budget category. Like items can be grouped into a total cost. For example, if buying office supplies, applicants can budget for $1000 and note in the line item it includes pens, pencils, paper, etc. for the total # of staff.

73. **Page 28 & Page 40 #12: If we choose to use the BraveLife Intervention model, do we need to submit an MOU/Letter of Commitment from the Model Developer with our proposal?**

Yes. See Question 1, 5 and 14.

If so, could you please specify who we should be getting in touch with to request the MOU?

See Question 1 and Question 5

74. **Page 6: Is it allowable for an organization serving one of the three geographic areas, to have an office in just one of the three counties, or must the provider have a physical presence in all three of the counties that make up that region?**

There are no requirements regarding office location.

75. Can two agencies partner for the Regional Peer to Peer Program?

There can only be one lead agency responsible for the grant submission, the contract and accountable for the work to be performed. The nature of the partnership will need to be detailed in a written agreement but there can only be one lead agency.

76. If two agencies can partner, does one need to be a lead agency or can we do a joint application?

There can be only one lead agency as the applicant and the provider.

77. If two agencies partner, if we base staffing for this program on the BraveLife Intervention model, can we have staff at both sites and/or make a F/T position and create instead 2 P/T positions? For instance, for the Five F/T P2P Navigators, we would propose three for one agency and two for the other based on the geographic scope each is serving and have the F/T coordinator be 2 P/T coordinators, one for each site.

No this would not be permitted.