

**RFGA115****Infant, Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Consultation**

**TO:** Bidders and Interested Parties  
**FROM:** Department of Mental Health (DMH)  
**DATE:** May 20, 2024  
**RE:** RFP Questions and Responses

**ISSUE DATE:** 05/09/2024

**QUESTIONS DUE:** 05/20/2024, 4:30pm ET

**RFP RESPONSES DUE BY:** 06/07/2024, 4:30pm ET

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1. **We are interested in offering consultation, education and consultation services to programs providing afterschool care and summer programming for children within the public school systems. These programs are also underserved and supported and are challenged by children presenting with significant emotional, social, and behavioral needs. These children are usually age 5 and above. Would we be able to provide this service for children of school age range? Would we need to focus on children eight and under?**
    - a. Through this RFGA, the Department of Mental Health (DMH) is interested in building the capacity of Infant, Early Childhood and Family Mental Health Consultation for children *through age eight* and their families across Vermont's Early Childhood system as a strategy to promote inclusion in the classroom and reduce suspension and expulsion. This may also include but is not limited to providing training to teachers and staff in early childhood systems such as afterschool care and summer programming on trauma-responsive strategies within these settings and education of parents/caregivers who are seeking knowledge on child development, trauma, social and emotional learning.
  2. **Could WE share of the grant between two Howard center programs: ECFMH program serving children/families birth through 5 and family and community programs serving children/families 5 and over?**
    - a. The grant could be shared by multiple programs within your organization, however services funded through the grant must be focused on children only through age eight, their families and early childhood providers/teachers/systems.
  3. **Could we utilize funds to provide evidence-based psychoeducational groups to parents at their children's childcare programs?**



- a. Yes, education of parents/caregivers who are seeking knowledge on child development, trauma, social and emotional learning is an allowable activity through this grant.

**4. Can you please clarify if this RFGA115 is for Mental Health, DA's, specifically?**

- a. The state is interested in proposals from qualified applicants to build capacity for IECFMH consultation within Vermont's Early Childhood system as a strategy to promote inclusion in the classroom and reduce suspension and expulsion. For the purpose of this RFGA, qualified applicants are not exclusive to Designated Agencies. Qualifications include capacity to provide training on trauma-responsive strategies within early education settings and education of parents/caregivers who are seeking knowledge on child development, trauma, social and emotional learning. Per section #2 of the RFGA, these services are not intended for intensive or long-term mental health treatment services, or as treatment services delivered in a non-natural setting. In addition to other applicant requirements listed in section #2.5 of the RFGA, proposals must clearly demonstrate that the services proposed contribute to building capacity, quality and/or expand reach to populations not currently being served by IECFMH consultation.

**5. Can the PCC network apply for this RFGA?**

- a. Yes, Networks such as the PCCN can apply.

**6. Can you confirm that the intention of the grants is to offer consultation WITHOUT having to provide a diagnosis for an identified child. This is particularly important for them for the infants. I know the focus is on providing consultation to centers and childcare programs, but it is available focused on a particular child, right? And in that case, we don't have to comply with Medicaid billing that requires an actual diagnosis...correct?**

- a. This is correct, the RFGA does not intend for providers to have to diagnose individual children or bill Medicaid or other insurance to provide the service, but instead to build capacity for IECFMH consultation and education to improve the overall capacity of caregivers and professionals through this grant funding.

For further clarification, please refer to the following sections of the RFGA:

- **#1.2: RFGA OBJECTIVE:** The purpose of the RFGA is to solicit proposals from qualified applicants to build capacity for IECFMH consultation within Vermont's Early Childhood system as a strategy to promote inclusion in the classroom and reduce suspension and expulsion. This may also include but is not limited to providing training on trauma-responsive strategies within these settings, education of parents/caregivers who are seeking knowledge on child development, trauma, social and emotional learning.
- **#2:** "These services are not intended for intensive or long-term mental health treatment services, or as treatment services delivered in a non-natural setting."
- **#2.2: Applicability to the State's Objectives and Need Areas:** Proposals should establish a clear link between the services and/or programming proposed and meeting one or more of the specific objectives or need areas listed below:



- Increased capacity for IECFMH consultation with early care and learning, parents/caregivers, and other key partners (e.g. DCF Family Services Division, Parent Child Centers, other Children’s Integrated Services providers, and other child focused agencies) and families.
- Increased capacity to serve privately insured children and children not enrolled or eligible for Childrens Integrated Services (CIS).
- Increased capacity for Early Care and Learning programs and Family Childcare Homes to engage in IECFMH consultation by providing direct operational supports, such as stipends for staff, cost of substitutes, etc.
- Increase quality of IECFM consultation by offering training, coaching and technical assistance in consultation models within the System of Care.
- Increase supports for parents and caregivers who are in need of education and information on trauma-responsive parenting, are awaiting developmental assessments, etc. by providing virtual or in-person consultation and education.

