



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

FOR

Component 2 of the New Jersey Youth At-Risk of Homelessness Federal Project:

Connect to Achievement

Three pilot program awards in

Burlington, Mercer, and Union Counties.

Funding of \$150,000 Per Pilot County (Total of \$450,000 in funding).

CFDA #93.670

Bidders Conference: 1/14/16 from 11:30am-1:00pm

Place: DCF Professional Center

30 Van Dyke Avenue New Brunswick, NJ 08901

Bids are due: 2/17/16

Allison Blake, PhD., L.S.W.

Commissioner

Date 12/10/15

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section I - General Information

A. Purpose	Page 1
B. Background	Page 1
C. Services to be Funded	Page 5
D. Funding Information	Page 9
E. Applicant Eligibility Requirements	Page 9
F. RFP Schedule	Page 13
G. Administration	Page 14
H. Appeals	Page 16
I. Post Award Review	Page 17
J. Post Award Requirements	Page 17

Section II - Application Instructions

A. Review Criteria	Page 18
B. Supporting Documents	Page 23
C. Requests for Information and Clarification	Page 25

Exhibit A

Exhibit B

Funding Agency

State of New Jersey
Department of Children and Families
50 East State Street,
Trenton, New Jersey 08625

Special Notice: *Potential Bidders must attend a Mandatory Bidder's Conference on 1/14/16 from 11:30am-1:00pm at the DCF Professional Center at 30 Van Dyke Avenue, New Brunswick, NJ 08901. Questions will be accepted in advance of the Bidder's Conference by providing them via email to DCFASKRFP@dcf.state.nj.us.*

Section I – General Information

A. Purpose:

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families' (DCF), Office of Adolescent Services (OAS) announces the availability of \$450,000 annually in DCF funds (including \$89,133-Year 1, \$103,416-Year 2, and \$101,673-Year 3 in Federal funds CFDA #93.670) for the purpose of implementing Component 2 of New Jersey's Youth At-Risk of Homelessness (YARH) Federal Project, Connect to Achievement. This initiative will provide educational advocacy and "near peer" and professional mentors for 14 to 21 year old youth with current involvement in New Jersey's Child Welfare System, the Division of Child Protection and Permanency (DCP&P). There will be **three** programs awarded; one grant of \$150,000 in **EACH** of the YARH pilot counties: Burlington, Mercer, and Union Counties.

This request for proposals requires the development of educational advocacy services and secure "near peer" and professional mentors for youth. This program intends to promote permanency, social connections, education/employment success, well-being and self-sufficiency.

B. Background:

DCF is charged with serving and safeguarding the most vulnerable children and families in the State and our mission is to ensure the safety, well-being and success of New Jersey's children and families. Our vision statement is "To ensure a better today and even greater tomorrow for every individual we serve."

Youth At-Risk of Homelessness (YARH) is a federal initiative that provided Phase I funding (2013-2015) for New Jersey and 17 other

jurisdictions to research and develop an intervention strategy for youth who are or have been involved in the child welfare system and are at a greater risk of becoming homeless or have experienced homelessness. New Jersey is now one of six grantees nationally to receive Phase II federal funding (2015-2018) to implement and evaluate a comprehensive intervention called Connecting YOUth. Connecting YOUth will pilot in Burlington, Mercer, and Union counties. This intervention package seeks to prevent and address homelessness and promote housing stability for youth with experience in the child welfare system. In addition, the intervention strategies aim to promote permanency/social connections, education/employment success, and well-being. In addition to federal dollars, New Jersey is re-conceptualizing services and committing significant state resources to this effort. DCF will continue its partnership with Child Trends, Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH), and the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) on this initiative. The Connecting YOUth target populations are:

- Population 1: youth 14-17 in foster care,
- Population 2: youth 18-21 aging out of foster care
- Population 3: youth up to age 21 with experience in foster care who have since become homelessness.

Through this RFP, DCF plans to award 3 programs, one in each of the pilot counties (Burlington, Mercer, and Union). Each awarded program will be responsible for implementing the Connect to Achievement (Component 2) YARH intervention. Please note that Child Trends will evaluate the installation of these new program components. Once programs are implemented, the evaluation will include rapid cycle testing to provide information that may result in required adjustments to the program model. In addition, Child Trends will also assess readiness for a future outcome evaluation, including the testing of data collection procedures to ensure they yield valuable evaluation information. The future outcome evaluation would quantify program impacts on youth outcomes. DCF seeks to implement and evaluate new and effective intervention strategies that can serve as national program models to improve outcomes for youth with experience in foster care.

Connecting YOUth Component 2: Connect to Achievement

As the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) reports, inadequate income, employment and education are well documented as causes of and contributing factors to people cycling in and out of homelessness. Without a regular income from steady employment, and the skills and opportunities made available by education, it can be very difficult to afford a decent, stable accommodation. Low levels of education

and literacy often lead to and maintain poverty, as an individual's engagement in the labor market is limited. As well, difficulties with employment, education, and income support can be related to difficulties with physical health, mental health, and addictions. All of these factors both affect and are affected by homelessness¹. This research combined with extensive stakeholder feedback and recommendations in Phase I indicated great need to develop more structured educational supports for youth in care.

Additionally, Phase I findings also underlined the need for youth to connect with mentors and supportive individuals who will help them to achieve their educational and career goals².

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) proposes to develop and implement the Connect to Achievement intervention designed to establish:

- 1) Structured educational advocacy and planning through Educational Champions (Component 2A). Educational Champions will strengthen local partnerships with education stakeholders, linkage to educational programming and supports (i.e. tutoring, college-bound programming), conferencing educational needs and goals of youth with CP&P staff and team members, securing and utilizing education records and data in planning, and tracking educational outcomes. Educational advocacy is defined by, but not limited to, the following criteria:
 - a. Catalog community resources
 - b. Build connections to community resources (i.e. supplemental education programs, tutoring, college-bound programming)
 - c. Support workers in connecting to resources
 - d. Network with local school districts to
 - i. Create access to staff and resources
 - ii. Acquire data on students
 - e. Involvement in viewing/ensuring youth's education information is current/accurate in NJ Spirit (CP&P information system)
 - f. Create Education Passport
 - g. Case Conference on specific youth
 - h. Available resource to youth/worker as needed
 - i. Intensified case management for youth at risk of failing/dropping out

¹ <http://homeless.samhsa.gov/channel/income-employment-and-education-178.aspx> retrieved November 6, 2015

² Herrera, Carla, David L. DuBois and Jean Baldwin Grossman. 2013. The Role of Risk: Mentoring Experiences and Outcomes for Youth with Varying Risk Profiles, Executive Summary. New York, NY: A Public/Private Ventures project distributed by MDRC

- 2) Informal connections through mentoring that help coach and challenge youth to realize their potential and achieve their academic and career goals (Component 2B). The program will recruit and train “Near Peer” mentors recruited through post-secondary settings and “Professional” mentors recruited in a youth’s local community. Connections to these mentors will ensure youth have the stability and support (community, school and child welfare) necessary to achieve academic success and to have access to post-secondary or technical school opportunities.

Connecting YOUth Component 2A: Educational Champions

Educational Champion(s) will have specific knowledge and expertise of the education system in order to develop collaborative relationships between CP&P and the school districts in that county, track educational status, progress, and outcomes, and most importantly team with the youth and their supports (CP&P workers, resource parents, etc.) to understand and address academic needs and goals. This intervention is designed to provide youth with increased academic advocacy, access to more education related resources in the community and at school (including tutoring, supplemental educational and social opportunities, college bound programming, career and technical education summer academic enrichment, and guidance in educational decision making and ultimately facilitate the necessary supports and resources to promote a stronger likelihood that youth will achieve academic success as defined by the youth and their team.

Connecting YOUth Component 2B: “Near Peer” and “Professional” Mentors

The **Mentoring** intervention will focus on securing mentoring relationships designed to support youth to: identify and achieve their academic and career goals; build critical skills; help to develop a peer/professional network; and establish a positive and caring support and connection for a youth in care.

“Near Peer” mentors will be recruited from post-secondary institutions and utilized for Population 1 (14-17 year olds in foster care). “Professional” Mentors will be recruited from a youth’s local community and utilized for Population 2 (18-21 year olds in foster care) and for Population 1 as needed/requested.

This intervention component underlines the importance of permanency and social connections through a supportive relationship that intentionally and purposefully coaches and motivates a youth to achieve their academic and career goals.

The nature of these purposeful and goal-directed mentoring sessions will be adapted to fit three different mentoring models, depending upon the needs and goals that the mentee chooses. However all three mentoring models are recommended to be integrated into the mentoring relationship.

- 1) **Character, Social and Leadership Development (“I just want someone to talk to and hang out with.”)**-Focuses primarily on building a relationship between a mentee and mentor who serve as a role model and life coach.
- 2) **Academic Success (“I want to go to college or another educational/career technical program after high school.”)**-Intentional effort to exert a positive influence on a youth’s academic success and explores and identifies post-secondary options (i.e. internships and post-secondary education).
- 3) **Career Interest Inventory (“I’m not sure what I want to do yet.”)** Incorporates a more intentional effort to help young people explore a career direction. The activities between the mentor and the mentee in this model may include the following: career exploration; job/life skills; and post-secondary education/internships.

C. Services to be Funded:

DCF will provide funds for educational advocacy and mentoring services (also known as Component 2). One grantee will be responsible for implementing Component 2 in each of the pilot counties: Burlington, Mercer, and Union (3 programs/awards total). The grantees for these programs shall provide and coordinate an array of services, including the entire service component as outlined above and listed below.

Service Components

- I. Hire and maintain a skilled and experienced Master’s level Education Champion, one Full-Time Mentor Coordinator, and one Part-Time Youth Worker with preferred experience in the child welfare system per county.
- II. NJ-DCF is seeking to award this program to a provider that demonstrates the following:
 1. Believes relationships, social capital/network, and community connections, are critical for a youth’s successful transition to adulthood.

2. Are willing to strive for racial equity and cultural humility, specifically for African American youth who are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system.
 3. Understand the impact of trauma on youth development.
 4. Work from a protective factors lens that sees a youth for who they are, can see their inherent strengths and potential, and strives to nurture and develop these strengths (for example, <http://www.cssp.org/reform/child-welfare/youth-thrive>).
 5. Knows that local communities are the experts on the youth in their community.
 6. Knows that local communities are collectively responsible for the success of their youth.
 7. Believes that youth voice is imperative to any system change that involves youth.
 8. Can collaboratively work with others, knowing that different stakeholders have different perspectives, experiences, and goals-all of which are important and need to be valued and respected.
 9. Consider themselves life-long learners, willing to grow, listen, and be solutions-focused in their approach.
- III. The provider and DCF will work collaboratively with educational stability liaisons, homeless liaisons, and other critical partners in the local school districts to obtain up to date and accurate educational information on each youth.
 - IV. In collaboration with the youth and caseworker, the Educational Champion will be responsible for creating an innovative and youth friendly “education passport” designed for high school aged youth that outlines specific short and long term activities and milestones needed to achieve educational goals.
 - V. The provider will be responsible for recruiting, screening, and training “Near Peer” mentors for youth 14-17. “Near Peer” Mentors will be recruited through post-secondary settings. “Near Peer” Mentors will be required to make a minimum two-year commitment to a prospective mentee, with a preferred goal of sustaining the mentoring relationship through high school graduation.

- VI. The provider will need to collaborate with post-secondary education programs to develop creative opportunities for “Near Peer” mentors to receive an incentive for their mentoring relationship (college credits, work/study hours, funds towards books, etc.) and to seek out organizations within a campus community that would have interest in mentoring (i.e. fraternities and sororities, social clubs, EOF, Student Support Services).
- VII. The provider will be responsible for recruiting “Professional” mentors through partnerships with local educational institutions and the community for youth 18-21. Youth 14-17 could also receive a “Professional” mentor if a “Near Peer” mentor does not seem appropriate.
- VIII. The provider will be expected to recruit mentors preferably with similar demographic characteristics, educational/career goals, hobbies/interests, etc.
- IX. The provider will be expected to screen and train each mentor.
- X. The provider will be creative with matching each mentor-mentee through technology and other strategies to empower a youth to identify a mentor they can truly feel connected to and supported by.
- XI. The provider will offer support to the mentor-mentee relationship.
- XII. The provider will be required to maintain records on each youth.

Target Population

Educational Champions will be provided to high school aged youth (14 to 17; 18 to 21 on a case by case basis) who are in CP&P out of home care in the three pilot counties: Burlington, Mercer, and Union.

Mentors will be provided to youth in CP&P out of home care ages 14-21 as requested in the three pilot counties: Burlington, Mercer, and Union.

Youth will be screened into these services by DCF staff and the Connecting YOUth project team (see RFP for Component 1 for information regarding screening and referral).

Race & Cultural Equity

The Connecting YOUth Phase I data analysis found that African American youth in care are at increased risk for future homelessness. Unfortunately, this type of racial inequality is not unusual in child welfare and other systems

and stems from our nation's long history of discrimination and disinvestment in communities of color. We want to ensure that awarded providers and services recognize and attempt to redress racial inequities among the population to be served. To that end, the awarded programs will be required to outline how interventions will be culturally sensitive and responsive to African American youth, families and neighborhoods, as well as other underserved ethnic groups. Through technical assistance from the Connecting YOUth project team; staff from DCF, Local CP&P Offices, private providers and community partners will receive training and follow-up consultation on race, ethnicity and cultural humility.

To further address this challenge, in addition to training, the Connecting YOUth project's awareness and understanding of racial disproportionality will influence the staff hiring process, team formation and coaching structures.³

Additionally, the Connecting YOUth project is also creating County Based Implementation Committees in each pilot county that will also help identify local partners and providers (e.g., grassroots, faith-based and community organizations) that reflect and are effective in working with local racial and ethnic communities.

Geographic area to be served

The program will deliver services to youth whose CP&P cases originate in Burlington, Mercer, and Union Counties and who are in the custody and care of CP&P.

All applicants are advised that any software purchased in connection with the proposed project must receive prior approval by the New Jersey Office of Information Technology.

Applicants are also advised that any data collected or maintained through the implementation of the proposed program shall remain the property of DCF.

Organ and Tissue Donation: As defined in section 2 of P.L. 2012, c. 4 (N.J.S.A.52:32-33), contractors are encouraged to notify their employees, through information and materials or through an organ and tissue awareness program, of organ donation options. The information provided to employees shall be prepared in collaboration with the organ procurement organizations designated pursuant to 42 U.S.C. §1320b-8 to serve in this State.

³ Using information from Miller, O and Esenstad, A. (2105). Strategies to Reduce Racially Disparate Outcomes in Child Welfare. Retrieved from <http://www.cssp.org/media-center/child-welfare-systems-are-innovating-ways-to-eradicate-racial-patterns-of-experience-by-families-of-color>.

D. Funding Information:

For the purpose of this initiative, the Department will make available \$450,000 annually in DCF funds (including \$89,133-Year 1, \$103,416-Year 2, and \$101,673-Year 3 in Federal funds CFDA #93.760). Each of the three pilot counties (Burlington, Mercer, and Union counties) will be awarded \$150,000 annually from April 1, 2016 through September 29, 2018. Funding is anticipated to be extended beyond this funding period however is contingent upon the availability of funding in future fiscal years.

Matching funds are not required.

Operational start-up costs are permitted. Applicants must provide a justification and detailed summary of all expenses that must be met in order to begin program operations. See Section II under Budget.

Funds awarded under this program may be used to expand existing funding.

Any expenses incurred prior to the effective date of the contract will not be reimbursed by DCF.

E. Applicant Eligibility Requirements:

Staffing, Structure, Qualifications, Training, Evaluation

Staffing:

Component 2 will be awarded in each of the pilot counties; Burlington, Mercer, and Union (3 programs total). For each program there will be one full-time Education Champion, one Mentor Coordinator and one Part-Time Youth Worker with experience in the child welfare system per county.

a. The Education Champion will:

- i. Hold a Master's Degree in one of the following subjects: School Counseling, Social Work, Higher Education, Law, Secondary Education, Administration, or some other education related field.
- ii. Have training and experience serving children, youth, and families.
- iii. Have experience working with/in the New Jersey public school system and knowledge and application of education laws (with emphasis on special education and discipline).
- iv. Be responsible for working directly and holistically with child welfare workers, the adolescent / young adults, public schools and educational programs concurrently,

- v. Ensure advocacy for each youth in achieving their identified educational goals.
- b. The Mentor Coordinator will have supervisory and program management experience and will be responsible for recruiting, screening, training and supervising “Near Peer” and “Professional” mentors. The Mentor Coordinator will supervise the Youth Worker and provide opportunity for the Youth Worker to gain experience and build positive connections with mentees.
- c. The Youth Worker will assist with recruiting, screening, and training mentors. The Youth Worker will also assist the Educational Champion as needed with education planning and advocacy efforts.

Structure:

The Education Champion, the Full-Time Mentor Coordinator, and Part-Time Youth Worker will be expected to work in collaboration with the CP&P Local Offices within the specific counties to serve as a direct resource to CP&P staff in their specified fields. The Educational Champion (EC) will act as a liaison/resource between the youth, their family/supports, child welfare office, school and community in the county in which the program is awarded (Burlington, Mercer, or Union Counties). The EC will: obtain educational records through the CP&P Office and school district(s) to complete an educational assessment to determine needs. In order for CP&P Office staff to have easy access to the EC, the EC will allocate 40% of their time weekly to work in the Local CP&P Offices. The EC will assist the CP&P case worker to integrate educational goals and objectives into the Transitional Plan for YOUth Success (TPYS). The EC staff will work with CP&P staff to ensure that the educational information in the child welfare information system for each youth is complete, thorough, and up to date.

The awarded program will be responsible for working directly with youth, families, resource families/foster parents, educational stakeholders, other service providers, and community organizations. The awarded program will also be expected to work in close collaboration with the Connecting YOUth team and its national partners: the Center for the Study of Social Policy, CSH and Child Trends. In addition, they will be asked to participate in the County Based Implementation Committee in their county.

Qualifications:

The awarded program will meet the following qualifications:

- Based in and deeply familiar with the youth services in the pilot county.

- Exhibits a commitment to the adolescent population identified for this initiative.
- Endorses the Youth Thrive framework (<http://www.cssp.org/reform/child-welfare/youth-thrive>) and commits to a philosophy of positive youth development in their program. Positive youth development requires that adults engage and work with adolescents and young adults, giving them a voice, involving them in the development of services and policies that will impact their life, and works from strength based approach.
- Demonstrates a track record of addressing the unique needs and strengths of adolescents and their families and achieving positive outcomes with youth.
- Ability to work closely with DCF partners, educational stakeholders, and other social service agencies to help achieve educational goals and secure connections for and with adolescents and young adults in foster care.

Training:

The awarded program will participate in the 3-day Youth Thrive training provided by DCF. Additional professional development opportunities (i.e., on the job coaching, educational law/advocacy, case consultation and other skill building experiences) will be identified by DCF and as the project is implemented and the awarded program will be required to attend. In addition, the awarded program will also participate in training on undoing racism (or similar training) to address racial inequities and the implications for child welfare, as well as training on sexual orientation and gender identity issues.

Evaluation Activities:

DCF has received federal funds to implement, test, and evaluate the intervention strategies outlined in this RFP. Awarded programs are required to **fully participate in all evaluation activities** including but not limited to:

- 1) Support and comply with special data collection requirements;
- 2) Provide administrative data (e.g., on program participants and their participation or service receipt);
- 3) Facilitate and support on-site meetings and observations with and by DCF and project team staff and evaluators including interviews with program and

partner agency managers/staff;

- 4) Facilitate and support interviews or meetings with program participants;
- 5) Facilitate and support case file reviews, among other activities. Grantees are responsible for ensuring that partnering organizations comply with this condition of award; and
- 6) Adjust program model and service delivery as determined by evaluation activities and rapid cycle testing of these intervention strategies.
- 7) Report into the National Youth in Database (NYTD) system through technical support and training by DCF.

Awarded programs will not be allowed to use funds to support independent evaluations.

Other Requirements:

1. Applicants must be for profit or not for profit corporations that are duly registered to conduct business within the State of New Jersey.
2. Applicants must be in good standing with all State and Federal agencies with which they have an existing grant or contractual relationship.
3. If Applicant is under a corrective action plan with DCF, or any other New Jersey State agency or authority, the Applicant may not submit a proposal for this RFP. Responses shall not be reviewed and considered by DCF until all deficiencies listed in the corrective action plan have been eliminated to the satisfaction of DCF for a period of 6 months
4. Applicants may not be suspended, terminated or barred for deficiencies in performance of any award, and if applicable, all past issues must be resolved as demonstrated by written documentation.
5. Applicants that are presently under contract with DCF must be in compliance with the terms and conditions of their contract.
6. Where required, all applicants must hold current State licenses.
7. Applicants that are not governmental entities must have a governing body that provides oversight as is legally required.
8. Applicants must have the capability to uphold all administrative and operating standards as outlined in this document.
9. Applicants must have the ability to achieve full operational census within 120 days of contract execution. Further, where appropriate, applicants must execute sub-contracts with partnering entities within 30 days of contract execution. If the program is not fully operational

- within 60 days of contract execution then at the option of DCF the agreement may be terminated.
10. All applicants must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. To acquire a DUNS number, contact the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or inquire on-line at www.dnb.com
 11. Any fiscally viable entity that meets the eligibility requirements, terms and conditions of the RFP, and the contracting rules and regulations set forth in the DCF Contract Policy and Information Manual (N.J.A.C. 10:3) may submit an application.

F. RFP Schedule:

12/10/15	Notice of Availability of Funds/RFP publication
1/12/16	Deadline for Email Questions sent to DCFASKRFP@dcf.state.nj.us
1/14/16	Mandatory Bidders Conference
2/17/16	Deadline for Receipt of Proposals by 12:00PM

All proposals must be received by 12:00 PM on or before 2/17/16. Proposals received after 12:00 PM on 2/17/16 will **not** be considered. Applicants shall submit **one (1) signed original** and should submit **one CD ROM** as indicated below.

Proposals must be delivered either:

1) In person to:

Catherine Schafer, Director of Grants Management, Auditing and Records
 Department of Children and Families
 50 East State Street, 3rd floor
 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0717

Please allow time for the elevator and access through the security guard. Applicants submitting proposals in person or by commercial carrier shall submit **one (1) signed original** and should submit **one CD ROM** with all documents.

2) Commercial Carrier (hand delivery, federal express or UPS) to:

Catherine Schafer, Director of Grants Management, Auditing and Records
 Department of Children and Families
 50 East State Street, 3rd floor
 Trenton, New Jersey 08625-0717

Applicants submitting proposals in person or by commercial carrier shall submit **one (1) signed original** and should submit **one CD ROM** with all documents.

3) Online-DCF offers the alternative for our bidders to submit proposals electronically. Only a registered Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) or the designated alternate is eligible to send in a submission by submitting an AOR form.

AOR Registration forms and online training are available on our website at: www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/notices/

Forms are directly under the Notices section-See Standard Documents for RFPs

- [Submitting Requests for Proposal Electronically PowerPoint \(pdf\)](#)
- [Registration for the Authorized Organization Representative \(AOR\) Form](#)

We recommend that you do not wait until the date of delivery in case there are technical difficulties during your submission. Registered AOR forms may be received 5 business days prior to the date the bid is due.

G. Administration:

1. Screening for Eligibility, Conformity and Completeness

DCF will screen proposals for eligibility and conformity with the specifications set forth in this RFP. A preliminary review will be conducted to determine whether the application is eligible for evaluation or immediate rejection.

The following criteria will be considered, where applicable, as part of the preliminary screening process:

- a. The application was received prior to the stated deadline
- b. The application is signed and authorized by the applicant's Chief Executive Officer or equivalent
- c. The applicant attended the Bidders Conference (if required)
- d. The application is complete in its entirety, including all required attachments and appendices
- e. The application conforms to the specifications set forth in the RFP

Upon completion of the initial screening, proposals meeting the requirements of the RFP will be distributed to the Proposal Evaluation

Committee for its review and recommendations. Failure to meet the criteria outlined above, or the submission of incomplete or non-responsive applications constitutes grounds for immediate rejection of the proposal if such absence affects the ability of the committee to fairly judge the application.

In order for a bid to be considered for award, at least one representative of the Bidder must have been present at the Bidders Conference commencing at the time and in the place specified below. Failure to attend the Bidders Conference will result in automatic bid rejection.

2. Proposal Review Process

DCF will convene a Proposal Evaluation Committee in accordance with existing regulation and policy. The Committee will review each application in accordance with the established criteria outlined in Section II of this document. All reviewers, voting and advisory, will complete a conflict of interest form. Those individuals with conflicts or the appearance of a conflict will be disqualified from participation in the review process. The voting members of the Proposal Evaluation Committee will review proposals, deliberate as a group, and then independently score applications to determine the final funding decisions.

The Department reserves the right to request that applicants present their proposal in person for final scoring. In the event of a tie in the scoring by the Committee, the bidders that are the subject of the tie will provide a presentation of their proposal to the evaluation committee. The evaluation committee will request specific information and/or specific questions to be answered during a presentation by the provider and a brief time-constrained presentation. The presentation will be scored out of 50 possible points, based on the following criteria and the highest score will be recommended for approval as the winning bidder.

Requested information was covered-	10 Points
Approach to the contract and program design was thoroughly and clearly explained and was consistent with the RFP requirements-	20 Points
Background of organization and staffing explained-	10 Points
Speakers were knowledgeable about topic-	5 Points
Speakers responded well to questions -	5 Points

The Department also reserves the right to reject any and all proposals when circumstances indicate that it is in its best interest to do so. The Department's best interests in this context include, but are not limited to: State loss of funding for the contract; the inability of the applicant to provide adequate services; the applicant's lack of good standing with the Department, and any indication, including solely an allegation, of misrepresentation of information and/or non-compliance with any State of New Jersey contracts, policies and procedures, or State and/or Federal laws and regulations.

All applicants will be notified in writing of the Department's intent to award a contract.

3. Special Requirements

The successful Applicant shall maintain all documentation related to products, transactions or services under this contract for a period of five years from the date of final payment. Such records shall be made available to the New Jersey Office of the State Comptroller upon request.

Applicants must comply with the requirements of N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et seq. and N.J.A.C. 17:27, the State Affirmative Action policy. A copy is attached as **Exhibit A**.

Applicants must comply with laws relating to Anti- Discrimination as attached as **Exhibit B**.

H. Appeals:

An appeal of the selection process will be heard only if it is alleged that the Department has violated a statutory or regulatory provision in awarding the grant. An appeal will not be heard based upon a challenge to the evaluation of a proposal. Applicants may appeal by submitting a written request to

Office of Legal Affairs
Contract Appeals
50 East State Street 4th Floor
Trenton NJ 08625

no later than five (5) calendar days following receipt of the notification or by the deadline posted in this announcement.

I. Post Award Review:

As a courtesy, DCF may offer unsuccessful applicants an opportunity to review the Evaluation Committee's rating of their individual proposals. All Post Award Reviews will be conducted by appointment.

Applicants may request a Post Award Review by contacting: DCFASKRFP@dcf.state.nj.us

Post Award Reviews will not be conducted after six months from the date of issuance of this RFP.

J. Post Award Requirements:

Selected applicants will be required to comply with the terms and conditions of the Department of Children and Families' contracting rules and regulations as set forth in the Standard Language Document, the Contract Reimbursement Manual and the Contract Policy and Information Manual. Applicants may review these items via the Internet at www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/contracting/manuals

Selected applicants will also be required to comply with all applicable State and Federal laws and statutes, assurances, certifications and regulations regarding funding.

Upon receipt of the award announcement, and where appropriate, selected applicants will be minimally required to submit one (1) copy of the following documents:

1. A copy of the Acknowledgement of Receipt of the NJ State Policy and Procedures returned to the DCF Office of the EEO/AA
2. DCF Third Party Contract Reforms Attestation
3. Proof of Insurance naming DCF as additionally insured from agencies and camps qualified to provide their services.
4. Proof of Insurance naming the camp where their aid will work as additionally insured from agencies qualified to provide their services to camps
5. Bonding Certificate
6. Notification of Licensed Public Accountant (NLPA) with a copy of Accountant's Certification

7. ACH- Credit Authorization for automatic deposit (for new agencies only)

The actual award of funds is contingent upon a successful Contract negotiation. If, during the negotiations, it is found that the selected Applicant is incapable of providing the services or has misrepresented any material fact or its ability to manage the program, the notice of intent to award may be rescinded.

Section II – Application Instructions

A. Proposal Requirements and Review Criteria:

All applications will be evaluated and scored in accordance with the following criteria:

The narrative portion of the proposal should be double-spaced with margins of 1 inch on the top and bottom and 1½ inches on the left and right. The font shall be no smaller than 12 points in Arial or Times New Roman. There is a 20 page limitation for the narrative portion of the grant application. A one (1) point reduction per page will be administered to proposals exceeding the page limit requirements. Five (5) points will be deducted for each missing document. If the deductions total 20 points or more, the proposal shall be rejected as non-responsive. The narrative must be organized appropriately and address the key concepts outlined in the RFP. Annex B budget pages, and attachments do not count towards the narrative page limit.

Proposals may be fastened by a heavy-duty binder clip. Do not submit proposals in loose-leaf binders, plastic sleeves or folders or staples.

Each proposal narrative must contain the following items organized by heading in the same order as presented below:

1) Applicant Organization (25 Points)

Describe the agency's history, mission and goals, and where appropriate, a record of accomplishments in working in collaboration with the Department of Children and Families and/or relevant projects with other State governmental entities. Describe the agency's ability to partner with other local supports, including but not limited to schools, faith-based organizations, businesses, and youth groups.

Describe the agency's background and experience in implementing the types of services described in the RFP including youth engagement, educational advocacy, and securing informal supports for and with youth.

Provide an indication of the organization's demonstrated commitment to cultural competency and diversity. The provider shall identify and develop, as needed, accessible culturally responsive services and supports. These shall include, but are not limited to, affiliations with informal or natural helping networks such as language services, neighborhood and civic associations, faith-based organizations, and recreational programs determined to be appropriate. Supervisors must be culturally competent and responsive, with training and experience necessary to manage complex cases in the community across child and youth serving systems. Explain how the provider is working toward a cultural competency plan that describes actions your agency will take to insure that policies, materials, environment, recruitment, hiring, promotion, training and Board membership reflect the community or the intended recipients of the services provided. The applicant will explain how cultural competency of the organization will be promoted and how resources and services will be provided in a way that is culturally sensitive and relevant.

Describe the agency's governance structure and its administrative, management and organizational capacity to enter into a third party direct State services contract with the Department of Children and Families. Note the existence (if any) of professional advisory boards that support the operations. If applicable, indicate the relationship of the staff to the governing body. Attach a current organizational chart.

Provide an indication of the agency's demonstrated capability to provide services that are consistent with the Department's goals and objectives for the program to be funded. Include information on current programs managed by the agency, the funding sources and if available, any evaluation or outcome data.

2) Need Justification (10 Points)

During Phase I, the Connecting YOUth Planning Team was able to gather national and statewide data. Please provide documentation describing the local need for the proposed services, including:

- Statements that demonstrate an understanding of the problem and the needs of the target population;
- A summary of existing services, including identified gaps in the current provision and availability of those services; and
- Citations of relevant statistics and discussions of studies that reflect the prevalence of the problem and the unmet needs of the target population.

3) Program Approach

(35 Points)

Specify a program approach that includes an overview of the proposed services and their anticipated impact on the target population, including:

- A description of the services to be provided, including innovative ideas to achieve the specific goals and objectives of these services outlined in this RFP (for both Components 2A and 2B);
- A description of the activities or methods that program personnel will employ to engage youth in a developmentally and culturally informed way;
- A description of the activities or methods that program personnel will employ to engage youth that have been impacted by trauma, experienced difficult family dynamics, and/or have specific needs (identity issues, mental health histories, expectant/parenting, etc.);
- A description of any service coordination, collaborative efforts or processes that demonstrates the ability to partner with local community agencies, educational institutions, and stakeholders to provide the proposed services (attach any affiliation agreements or Memoranda of Understanding);
- Outline how the program will incorporate a framework that focuses on strengthening and developing protective factors (i.e. Strengthening Families and Youth Thrive Frameworks), emphasizing how the program will promote and foster resilience, social connections, and develop skills and competencies;
- Information on the accessibility of services, including the hours and days that services will be available, a description of transportation options available, and handicapped accessibility;
- A description of data to be recorded, the intended use of that data and the means of maintaining confidentiality of client records; and
- Information on the level of service (LOS), including a definition of each unit of service and an indication of the level of service anticipated throughout the contract period.

Indicate the number, qualifications and skills of all staff, consultants, sub-grantees and/or volunteers who will perform the proposed service activities. Attach, in the Appendices section of the application, an organizational chart for the proposed program operation; job descriptions

that include all educational and experiential requirements; and resumes of any existing staff who will perform the proposed services.

Describe the management and supervision methods that will be utilized. Include a description of specific strategies to be employed that will assist staff to prevent and address vicarious trauma and compassion fatigue.

Provide a feasible timeline for implementing the proposed services. Attach a separate 60 day Program Implementation Schedule as part of the Appendix.

Describe how the proposed program will meet the needs of various and diverse cultures within the target community based on the Law Against Discrimination (N.J.S.A. 10:51 et seq.).

The New Jersey Department of Children and Families endorsed Prevent Child Abuse New Jersey's (PCA-NJ) Safe-Child Standards in August 2013 (The "Standards"). The Standards are a preventative tool for implementing policies and procedures for organizations working with youth and children and through their implementation, an organization can minimize the risks of the occurrence of child sexual abuse.

The Standards are available at:

<http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/SafeChildStandards.pdf>

As an Appendix, provide a brief (no more than 2 pages double spaced) Standards Description demonstrating ways in which your agency's operations mirror the Standards.

4) Evaluation Activities (10 Points)

Describe the agency's commitment to continuous quality improvement and willingness to participate in the evaluation activities that include but are not limited to:

- 1) Support and comply with special data collection requirements;
- 2) Provide administrative data (e.g., on program participants and their participation or service receipt);
- 3) Facilitate and support on-site meetings and observations with and by DCF and project team staff and evaluators including interviews with program and partner agency managers/staff;
- 4) Facilitate and support interviews or meetings with program participants;
- 5) Facilitate and support case file reviews, among other activities. Grantees

are responsible for ensuring that partnering organizations comply with this condition of award; and

6) Adjust program model and service delivery as determined by evaluation activities and rapid cycle testing of these intervention strategies.

Awarded programs will not be allowed to use funds to support independent evaluations.

5) Budget (15 Points)

The Department will consider the cost efficiency of the proposed budget as it relates to the anticipated level of services (LOS). Therefore, applicants must clearly indicate how this funding will be used to meet the project goals and/or requirements. Provide a line item budget and narrative for the proposed project/program. The budget narrative must be part of the 20 page proposal. The Annex B Budget forms are to be attached as an Appendix.

The budget shall be reasonable and reflect the scope of responsibilities required to accomplish the goals of this project. The budget shall also reflect a 12 month operating schedule and must include, in separate columns, total funds needed for each line item, the funds requested in this grant, and funds secured from other sources. All costs associated with the completion of the project must be clearly delineated and the budget narrative must clearly articulate budget items, including a description of miscellaneous expenses or "other" items.

The completed budget proposal must also include a detailed summary of and justification for any one-time operational start-up costs in the narration section marked "Budget Narrative". These costs must also be reflected on a separate schedule in the Annex B budget form.

The grantee is expected to adhere to all applicable State cost principles.

Standard DCF Annex B (budget) forms are available at: <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/providers/contracting/forms/> and a description of General and Administrative Costs are available at <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/providers/notices/>

6) Completeness of the Application (5 Points)

The Department will also consider the completeness of the application and the clarity of statements within the proposal, including the availability and accuracy of all supporting documentation.

B. Supporting Documents:

Applicants must submit a complete proposal signed and dated by the Chief Executive Officer or equivalent and a CD ROM containing all the documents in PDF or Word format. There is a (20) page limitation for the narrative portion of the grant application. A one (1) point reduction per page will be administered to proposals exceeding the page limit requirements. Failure to submit any of the required documents requested in this RFP will result in a loss of five (5) points per item from the total points awarded for the proposal.

All supporting documents submitted in response to this RFP must be organized in the following manner:

Part I: Proposal

1. Proposal Cover Sheet*
2. Table of Contents-Please number and label with page numbers if possible in the order as stated in Part I & Part II Appendices
3. Proposal Narrative (in following order)
 - a. Applicant Organization
 - b. Needs Justification
 - c. Program Approach
 - d. Outcome Evaluation
 - e. Budget Narrative
 - f. Completeness

Part II: Appendices

1. A written plan for emergency/crisis situations and on-call staffing.
2. Descriptions of key personnel, resumes if available for key personnel (please do not provide home addresses or personal phone numbers)
3. Proposed organizational and staffing chart for program
4. Organizational chart for agency.
5. Proposed program implementation plan and schedule.
6. Safe-Child Standards Description of your agency's implementation of the standards (no more than 2 pages)
7. DCF Annex B Budget Forms*
8. Copy of agency's Conflict of Interest policy
9. Copies of any audits or reviews completed or in process by DCF or other State entities from 2013 to the present. If available, a corrective action plan should be provided and any other pertinent information that will explain or clarify the applicant's position
10. Letters of Commitment, MOUs, and Letters of Support (limit to 15 pages).
11. Dated List of Names, Titles, Address of Current Board of Directors

12. Signed DCF Standard Language Document
<http://www.nj.gov/dcf/documents/contract/forms/StandardLanguage.doc>
13. Documentation Demonstrating Compliance with Obtaining a DUNS Number. All applicants must have a Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number. To acquire a DUNS number, contact the dedicated toll-free DUNS number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or inquire on-line at: <http://www.dnb.com>
14. Renewal Printout from the System for Award Management (SAM) website (<https://www.sam.gov/portal/public/SAM/>)
15. Signed HIPAA Business Associate Agreement
(<http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/contracting/forms/HIPAA.doc>)
16. Copies of Applicable Licenses-Licenses are not required but if you have licensed individuals you may provide them or
17. Current Affirmative Action Certificate or Copy of Renewal Application Sent to Treasury
18. Certificate of Incorporation
19. New Jersey Business Registration Certificate with the Division of Revenue
20. Agency By-laws or Management Operating Agreement if an LLC
21. Tax Exempt Certification-IRS Determination Letter regarding applicant's charitable contribution or non-profit status, if a non- profit
22. Disclosure of Investigation and Other Actions Involving Bidder- Full Version** Signed and dated
23. Disclosure of Investment Activities in Iran** Signed and dated
24. MacBride Principles** Signed and dated
25. Statement of Bidder/Vendor Ownership Full Version** Signed and dated
26. Chapter 271** Signed and dated
27. Source Disclosure Certification** Signed and dated
28. Two-Year Chapter 51/Executive Order 117 Vendor Certification and Disclosure of Political Contributions (For-Profit only) **Signed and dated
29. Annual Report to the Secretary of State
(https://www1.state.nj.us/TYTR_COARS/JSP/page1.jsp)
30. Annual Report- Charitable Organizations (If applicable)
<http://www.njconsumeraffairs.gov/charity/charfrm.htm>
31. W-9 form (new agencies only) or
(<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/omb/forms/pdf/W9.pdf>)
32. Certification regarding Debarment*
<http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/providers/notices/Cert.Debarment.pdf>
33. Statement of Assurances*
34. Form 990 for Non-Profits or Form 1120 intended for For-Profit entities. LLC's shall provide an applicable tax form and may delete or redact any SSN or personal information
35. Copy of Most Recent Audit or financial statement certified by an accountant or accounting firm

* Standard forms for RFP's are available at:
www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/notices/ Forms for RFP's are directly under the Notices section.

Standard DCF Annex B (budget) forms are available at:
<http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/providers/contracting/forms/>

** Treasury required forms are available on the Department of the Treasury website at

<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/purchase/forms.shtml>

Click on Vendor Information and then on Forms.

Standard Language Document, the Contract Reimbursement Manual and the Contract Policy and Information Manual. Applicants may review these items via the Internet at www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/contracting/manuals

C. Requests for Information and Clarification

Applicants shall not contact the Department directly, in person, or by telephone, concerning this RFP. Applicants may request information and/or assistance from DCFASKRFP@dcf.state.nj.us until the Bidders Conference. Inquiries will not be accepted after the closing date of the Bidders Conference. Questions may be emailed in advance of the Bidders Conference to DCFASKRFP@dcf.state.nj.us.

DCF will provide eligible applicants additional and/or clarifying information about this initiative and application procedures at the technical assistance meeting indicated below. All prospective applicants must attend a Bidders Conference and participate in an onsite registration process in order to have their applications reviewed. Failure to attend the Bidders Conference will disqualify individuals, agencies, or organizations from the RFP process.

Inclement weather will not result in the cancellation of the Bidders Conference unless it is of a severity sufficient to cause the official closing or delayed opening of State offices on the above date.

In the event of the closure or delayed opening of State offices, the Bidders Conference will be cancelled and then held on an alternate date.

Question and Answer:

DCF will provide eligible applicants additional and/or clarifying information about this initiative and application procedures through a time-limited

electronic Question and Answer Period. Answers will be posted on the website at: <http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/providers/notices/>

Questions may be submitted in writing in advance of the Bidders conference via email to: DCFASKRFP@dcf.state.nj.us.

All inquiries submitted to this email address must identify, in the Subject heading, the specific RFP for which the question/clarification is being sought.

Written questions must be directly tied to the RFP. Questions should be asked in consecutive order, from beginning to end, following the organization of the RFP. Each question should begin by referencing the RFP page number and section number to which it relates. Written inquiries will be answered and posted on the DCF website as a written addendum to the RFP.

All other types of inquiries will not be accepted. **Applicants may not contact the Department directly, in person, or by telephone, concerning this RFP.** . Inquiries will not be accepted after the closing date of the Question and Answer Period except that technical support through DCFASKRFP@dcf.state.nj.us regarding forms or technical issues can be made at any time.

EXHIBIT A
MANDATORY EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY LANGUAGE
N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et seq. (P.L. 1975, C. 127)
N.J.A.C. 17:27
GOODS, PROFESSIONAL SERVICE AND GENERAL SERVICE
CONTRACTS

During the performance of this contract, the contractor agrees as follows:

The contractor or subcontractor, where applicable, will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex. Except with respect to affectional or sexual orientation and gender identity or expression, the contractor will ensure that equal employment opportunity is afforded to such applicants in recruitment and employment, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex. Such equal employment opportunity shall include, but not be limited to the following: employment, upgrading, demotion, or transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. The contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices to be provided by the Public Agency Compliance Officer setting forth provisions of this nondiscrimination clause.

The contractor or subcontractor, where applicable will, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the contractor, state that all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex.

The contractor or subcontractor will send to each labor union, with which it has a collective bargaining agreement, a notice, to be provided by the agency contracting officer, advising the labor union of the contractor's commitments under this chapter and shall post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment.

The contractor or subcontractor, where applicable, agrees to comply with any regulations promulgated by the Treasurer pursuant to N.J.S.A. 10:5-31 et seq., as amended and supplemented from time to time and the Americans with Disabilities Act.

The contractor or subcontractor agrees to make good faith efforts to meet targeted county employment goals established in accordance with N.J.A.C. 17:27-5.2.

The contractor or subcontractor agrees to inform in writing its appropriate recruitment agencies including, but not limited to, employment agencies, placement bureaus, colleges, universities, and labor unions, that it does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex, and that it will discontinue the use of any recruitment agency which engages in direct or indirect discriminatory practices.

The contractor or subcontractor agrees to revise any of its testing procedures, if necessary, to assure that all personnel testing conforms with the principles of job-related testing, as established by the statutes and court decisions of the State of New Jersey and as established by applicable Federal law and applicable Federal court decisions.

In conforming with the targeted employment goals, the contractor or subcontractor agrees to review all procedures relating to transfer, upgrading, downgrading and layoff to ensure that all such actions are taken without regard to age, race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, affectional or sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, disability, nationality or sex, consistent with the statutes and court decisions of the State of New Jersey, and applicable Federal law and applicable Federal court decisions.

The contractor shall submit to the public agency, after notification of award but prior to execution of a goods and services contract, one of the following three documents:

Letter of Federal Affirmative Action Plan Approval

Certificate of Employee Information Report

Employee Information Report Form AA302 (electronically available at www.state.nj.us/treasury/contract_compliance).

The contractor and its subcontractors shall furnish such reports or other documents to the Department of Children and Families, the Division of Purchase & Property, CCAU, EEO Monitoring Program as may be requested by the office from time to time in order to carry out the purposes of these regulations, and public agencies shall furnish such information as may be requested by the Department of Children and Families, the Division of Purchase & Property, CCAU, EEO Monitoring Program for conducting a compliance investigation pursuant to **Subchapter 10 of the Administrative Code at N.J.A.C. 17:27.**

EXHIBIT B

TITLE 10. CIVIL RIGHTS
CHAPTER 2. DISCRIMINATION IN EMPLOYMENT ON PUBLIC WORKS

N.J. Stat. § 10:2-1 (2012)

§ 10:2-1. Antidiscrimination provisions

Antidiscrimination provisions. Every contract for or on behalf of the State or any county or municipality or other political subdivision of the State, or any agency of or authority created by any of the foregoing, for the construction, alteration or repair of any public building or public work or for the acquisition of materials, equipment, supplies or services shall contain provisions by which the contractor agrees that:

a. In the hiring of persons for the performance of work under this contract or any subcontract hereunder, or for the procurement, manufacture, assembling or furnishing of any such materials, equipment, supplies or services to be acquired under this contract, no contractor, nor any person acting on behalf of such contractor or subcontractor, shall, by reason of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, gender identity or expression, affectional or sexual orientation or sex, discriminate against any person who is qualified and available to perform the work to which the employment relates;

b. No contractor, subcontractor, nor any person on his behalf shall, in any manner, discriminate against or intimidate any employee engaged in the performance of work under this contract or any subcontract hereunder, or engaged in the procurement, manufacture, assembling or furnishing of any such materials, equipment, supplies or services to be acquired under such contract, on account of race, creed, color, national origin, ancestry, marital status, gender identity or expression, affectional or sexual orientation or sex;

c. There may be deducted from the amount payable to the contractor by the contracting public agency, under this contract, a penalty of \$ 50.00 for each person for each calendar day during which such person is discriminated against or intimidated in violation of the provisions of the contract; and

d. This contract may be canceled or terminated by the contracting public agency, and all money due or to become due hereunder may be forfeited, for any violation of this section of the contract occurring after notice to the contractor from the contracting public agency of any prior violation of this section of the contract.

No provision in this section shall be construed to prevent a board of education from designating that a contract, subcontract or other means of procurement of goods, services, equipment or construction shall be awarded to a small business enterprise, minority business enterprise or a women's business enterprise pursuant to P.L.1985, c.490 (*C.18A:18A-51 et seq.*).