



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2021-2022

LFIR # 1124

1. Project Title
2. Senate Sponsor
3. Date of Request

4. Project/Program Description

With a specific appropriation of \$250,000 in the 2021-2022 budget, Easterseals will continue providing Early Diagnosis, Functional Assessment and evidence-based Intervention treatments for children suspected of an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) who are underfunded or underinsured within the Northeast and East Central regions of Florida. Currently, the CDC states 1 in 54 children are affected by ASD. Our target population is children 18 months to 18 years who have been referred by their physician for autism assessment and diagnostic services. Further, we propose to extend our expansion of the PLAY Project (Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters) with our partner Easterseals affiliates State-wide to include up to 40 children in the pilot. Our collective outcomes will create an effective argument for public policy changes to swiftly address ASD waiting lists and change the lifetime course for children with ASD.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds
- State Agency contacted?

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2021-2022

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	250,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	250,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2021-2022 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	250,000	61%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	157,920	39%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2021-2022	407,920	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2020-21	0	175,000	248	No

9. Is future funding likely to be requested?

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

b. Describe the source of funding that can be used in lieu of state funding.

Private donors and corporate grants.
We are working to become licensed for some billable services.



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10. Has the entity requesting this project received any federal assistance related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

If yes, indicate the amount of funds received and what the funds were used for.

Paycheck Protection Program - \$950,000
Small Business Disaster Loan - \$500,000

11. Details on how the requested state funds will be expended

Spending Category	Description	Amount
Administrative Costs:		
Executive Director/Project Head Salary and Benefits		0
Other Salary and Benefits		0
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Administrative Cost Allocation	2,068
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits	Salaries/Wages; Benefits	85,650
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Program supplies; Office supplies; Cont. Ed; IT; Telephone/Utilities; Equipment lease/purchase;+ Insurance/ Maintenance/Repair; Postage; Bank Fees; Payroll service fees; PLAY Project License; Staff travel; Maintenance; Misc	28,082
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Professional Fees (psychiatrist/ clinical psychologist/ PLAY home consultants)	134,200
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		250,000

12. Program Performance

a. What specific purpose or goal will be achieved by the funds requested?

Simply put, too many young children with autism (ASD) are waiting for services. Given ASD prevalence (1 in 54 children), it is critical for children to be diagnosed as early as possible so that effective, evidence-based interventions can be prescribed at an early age. Easterseals proposes to identify and serve up to 214 in the Northeast Central Florida region for early diagnosis, Comprehensive Diagnostic Evaluations (CDE) and intervention treatment for children with ASD. We've partnered with state-wide Easterseals affiliates to treat up to 40 children as an expanded pilot of the PLAY Project. PLAY is a parent implemented, intensive early intervention program for young children with autism that is evidence-based and can be provided at 1/10 the cost of therapist delivered services. It is cost effective, easily implemented, and can serve large numbers of families efficiently. We anticipate our outcomes will support a case for public policy changes in service delivery options.

b. What activities and services will be provided to meet the intended purpose of these funds?

Easterseals receives physician referrals, locally and regionally, for Autism Diagnosis and Functional Assessment on a regular basis and potential clients for diagnostic services are channeled through a bi-weekly clinic to receive therapy (occupational, physical and speech/language) and audiology evaluations, parent interviews, case management and administration of the Autism Diagnostic and Observation Schedule (ADOS) 2, with a follow-up meeting for differential diagnosis and treatment plan with a clinical psychologist or psychiatrist.

Additionally, up to twenty clients will be identified to receive intensive, evidence-based interventions – Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) or PLAY (Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters) Project, both of which demonstrate great success for children with ASD to make significant gains in Functional Development Levels.



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c. What direct services will be provided to citizens by the appropriation project?

Service tasks, tracked by individual client and reported monthly, would include the following:

- a) Functional assessment (initial evaluations and functional skill assessment through OT, PT, ST, audiology test and ADOS-2); b) Clinic coordination and case management; c) Final psychological assessment and diagnosis by a team psychologist or psychiatrist; d) Post-diagnosis treatment and action plan—education and support for families to obtain and engage in services; and e) Treatment—provide recommended therapies/interventions and family education. Interventions include: Occupational, Physical and Speech Therapy, and evidence based interventions, including P.L.A.Y. Project (Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters), Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA) and Social Skills group training.

d. Who is the target population served by this project? How many individuals are expected to be served?

Our target population is up to 150 children 18 months to 18 years who have been referred by their physician for autism assessment and diagnostic services. Further, we propose to extend our pilot of the PLAY Project (Play and Language for Autistic Youngsters) up to 20 children with our partner Easterseals affiliates across the Central Florida region. Specifically, the PLAY Project targets young children (ages 2-6) as an evidence-based alternative to traditional services which have long waiting lists. The PLAY Project is devoted to helping parents develop a better connection with their child through play, and helping the child improve their language, development, behavior, and social skills.

e. What is the expected benefit or outcome of this project? What is the methodology by which this outcome will be measured?

Performance Measures that will be tracked for a proposed 150 NEW clients include:

- a) 75% of the children referred by their Physicians for diagnostic and functional assessment shall complete the process within the funded year
- b) 80% of client parents/guardians will receive a detailed plan of care at the time of diagnosis that addresses behavior concerns and prescribed therapy interventions
- c) 85% of the parents, guardians or legal representatives receiving a thirty (30) day post-diagnosis check-in call shall have completed the initial steps to access all recommended resources and interventions following a family support call
- d) 85% of the children enrolled in evidence-based interventions (ABA/Social Skills and PLAY Project) will demonstrate monthly gains in one or more Functional Development Levels

f. What are the suggested penalties that the contracting agency may consider in addition to its standard penalties for failing to meet deliverables or performance measures provided for the contract?

Since we are proposing a direct services contract, we would expect not to be paid until the monthly reporting of performance levels met the contract expectation.

13. The owners of the facility to receive, directly or indirectly, any fixed capital outlay funding. Include the relationship between the owners of the facility and the entity.

N/A



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14. Requestor Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

15. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization

b. Municipality and County

c. Organization Type

- ☐ For Profit Entity
- ☒ Non Profit 501(c)(3)
- ☐ Non Profit 501(c)(4)
- ☐ Local Entity
- ☐ University or College
- ☐ Other (please specify)

d. First Name Last Name

e. E-mail Address

f. Phone Number

16. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name

b. Firm Name

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number