



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2023-2024

LFIR # 1227

1. Project Title Center for Child Counseling: Urgent Children's Mental Health Services Expansion

2. Senate Sponsor Gayle Harrell

3. Date of Request 01/30/2023

4. Project/Program Description

For some time now, Florida has had a youth mental health crisis and concurrent critical shortage of child mental health professionals. Since 1999, the Center for Child Counseling (CFCC) has been a community nonprofit at the forefront of these issues, fighting the horrible impacts of trauma, abuse, and violence inflicted on children. In 2021, CFCC served over 7000 children and families in Palm Beach County alone, partnering with both the county and the school district, and yet referrals to CFCC have tripled. CFCC's waitlist has fluctuated between 500-1000 children/families at any given time. This is an immediate need. If funded, this appropriation will allow CFCC to immediately hire additional mental health and program specialists to eliminate the waitlist for these kids; many are victims of terrible trauma and abuse. The data is alarming: youth anxiety, depression, and suicide rates are up over 150% post-COVID, and 20.7% of total high school students seriously contemplated suicide.

5. State Agency to receive requested funds Department of Children and Families

State Agency contacted? Yes

6. Amount of the Nonrecurring Request for Fiscal Year 2023-2024

Type of Funding	Amount
Operations	300,000
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	300,000

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	300,000	48%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	200,000	32%
Other	125,000	20%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2023-2024	625,000	100%

8. Has this project previously received state funding?

No

Fiscal Year (yyyy-yy)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		

9. Is future funding likely to be requested? No

a. If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.

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

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

Yes

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

PPP Loan to support operations (\$588,000)

Complete questions 11 and 12 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

11. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

Planning Design Construction

b. Is the project "shovel ready" (i.e permitted)?

c. What is the estimated start date of construction?

d. What is the estimated completion date of construction?

12. List 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.

13. 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		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs: Other		
Salary and Benefits	Mental Health and Program Specialists - supports hiring qualified mental health specialists providing direct mental health services and support for children, adolescents, and families to eliminate CFCC's waitlist for services.	292,000
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/ Other		0
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study	Continuing education and other clinical workshops and training to support on-boarding and clinical implementation of qualified mental health specialists.	8,000
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/ Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		300,000

14. Program Performance

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



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Florida is experiencing a youth mental health crisis and concurrent critical shortage of child mental health professionals. CFCC has a wait list of nearly 1000 families as demand and referrals for services escalate. The data is alarming: in 2021, 41.5% of Palm Beach County high school students reported that they felt hopeless; 20.7% of total high school students seriously contemplated suicide. This is an immediate need. Funds will be used to increase available Mental Health Professionals and Program Specialists to address the crisis we are facing. No child or family should be turned away from services. CFCC's public health approach will build community capacity for the future, empowering parents and caregivers to support positive mental health.

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

CFCC's public health framework to mental health includes tiered implementation of services that prevent, provide early intervention to mitigate mental health concerns and trauma, and support children and families in crisis. Services are provided where children, adolescents, and families need them most including in-person (office, school, home, and community based), and virtual/telehealth activities, including mental health support groups and education, 1:1 mental health consultation for parents and adult caregivers, and a campaign to educate the wider community on how to support children's mental health and resilience.

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

Direct services include mental health specialists that can respond to the backlog of families and children seeking help. With a waiting list of approximately 1,000 families (which is escalating), hiring Mental Health Specialists and Program Specialists will enable CFCC to provide services of all levels to address the critical need in Palm Beach County and Florida. These services include Individual and Family Counseling for children and adolescents experiencing stress, trauma, grief, social-emotional concerns; Trauma-Focused Play Therapy for child victims of physical abuse, sexual abuse, violence; Individual Therapy for adult caregivers struggling with trauma, mental health, or substance misuse concerns impacting child or parent-child relationship; Parent-Child Relationship Therapy to promote attachment between caregivers and children, while teaching effective parenting and disciplinary strategies.

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

The children and families of Palm Beach County and Florida will be served by this project. The current, immediate need is approximately 1,000 families on CFCC's waitlist who will be served if this project is funded (in other words, approximately 2,000 children, adolescents, and their parents or adult caregivers (for example: foster parents and grandparents)). With this expansion funded, and including current services, CFCC will be serving approximately 10,000 families in total. CFCC has a long history working in the community (since 1999) and is well supported, with numerous letters of recommendation from local elected officials and community organizations/partners on both sides of the partisan divide. CFCC is also currently partnering (including funding) with Palm Beach County and the Palm Beach County School District to provide urgently needed mental health services and counseling to children and families who experienced trauma.

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

The mental health and resilience of our children is vital for Florida's future. With an estimated 1 in 4 children in Florida experiencing an adverse mental health issue, we must re-imagine our approach to care. The immediate benefit of this project is 1,000 children/families waiting for care in PBC will get the support they need. CFCC's public health framework will also focus on building caregiver and community capacity to support children's mental health. CFCC's Data Dashboard will be used to track all outcomes, at the child, family, and community levels. Through a collaboration and data sharing agreement with Florida State University, this model will be analyzed, with publication of results to inform practice in other communities.

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?

Failure to meet deliverables without notification of good reasoning, will result in financial penalties as described in contract.

15. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name

Renée

Last Name

Layman



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b. Organization	Center for Child Counseling
c. E-mail Address	renee@centerforchildcounseling.org
d. Phone Number	(561)244-9499
	Ext. 1

16. Recipient Contact Information

a. Organization	Center for Child Counseling
b. Municipality and County	Palm Beach

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	Renée	Last Name	Layman
e. E-mail Address	renee@centerforchildcounseling.org		
f. Phone Number	(561)244-9499		

17. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name	Matt Spritz
b. Firm Name	The Spritz Group
c. E-mail Address	spritz@thespritzgroup.com
d. Phone Number	(954)612-2185