



The Florida Senate

Local Funding Initiative Request

Fiscal Year 2025-2026

LFIR # 1189

1. **Project Title** Communities Connect for Kids Early Services Engagement and Preservation Program

2. **Senate Sponsor** Gayle Harrell

3. **Date of Request** 2/5/2025

4. Project/Program Description

The Early Services Engagement and Preservation Program is a non-judicial in-home family preservation service designed to engage families for whom a DCF child protective investigator has determined the child(ren) are unsafe and in imminent danger of being removed from their homes. Certified Child Welfare Case Managers trained in Wraparound and Motivational Interviewing evidence-based practices maintain caseloads of no more than five families each and coordinate intensive safety and intervention services for up to six months. Program goal is to reduce the shelter rate in Circuit 19, which is currently and has historically been higher than the state average. The program began in St Lucie County in July 2024 and began taking referrals from DCF October 2024. Sixty children have been served as of 1/31/25.

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 2025-2026

Type of Funding	Amount
Operating	882,660
Fixed Capital Outlay	0
Total State Funds Requested	882,660

7. Total Project Cost for Fiscal Year 2025-2026 (including matching funds available for this project)

Type of Funding	Amount	Percentage
Total State Funds Requested (from question #6)	882,660	100%
Matching Funds		
Federal	0	0%
State (excluding the amount of this request)	0	0%
Local	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Total Project Costs for Fiscal Year 2025-2026	882,660	100%

8. **Has this project previously received state funding?** Yes

If yes, provide the most recent instance:

Fiscal Year (YYYY-YY)	Amount		Specific Appropriation #	Vetoed
	Recurring	Nonrecurring		
2024-25	0	969,551	318A	No

9. **Is future-year funding likely to be requested?** No

a. **If yes, indicate nonrecurring amount per year.**

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



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Complete questions 10 and 11 for Fixed Capital Outlay Projects

10. Status of Construction

a. What is the current phase of the project?

- Planning
 Design
 Construction
 N/A

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?

e. What funding stream will be used for ongoing operations and maintenance of the project?

11. 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.

12. 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	8% administrative rate for provision of staff recruitment and training, finance, payroll, quality assurance, contract administration, quality assurance and other non-direct service costs. * Reduced from 10% in prior year request to reflect completion of start-up.	65,383
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Operational Costs		
Salary and Benefits	One FTE program director; one FTE child-welfare certified program supervisor; six FTE case managers; one FTE peer support specialist; one FTE administrative assistant; benefits @30.7%.	668,981
Expense/Equipment/Travel/Supplies/Other	Travel, rent client assistance funds and liability insurance.	148,296
Consultants/Contracted Services/Study		0
Fixed Capital Construction/Major Renovation:		
Construction/Renovation/Land/Planning Engineering		0
Total State Funds Requested (must equal total from question #6)		882,660

13. Program Performance

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



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Reduce the number of children who are removed from their homes into foster care in Circuit 19, initially targeting St. Lucie County. Nearly 70% of removals in circuit 19 are from St. Lucie County. As DCF statewide removal comparisons can substantiate, the Circuit 19 removal rate is greater than the state average. From October 2022-October 2023, the Circuit 19 removal rate per 100 alleged victims was 5.1 vs the state average of 4.1. October 2023-October 2024, the Circuit 19 removal rate continued to exceed the state average.

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

An intensive in-home family preservation service that reduces the risk of the child(ren) being removed from their home by a DCF child protective investigator. The Child Welfare Certified Case Managers are Wraparound and Motivational Interviewing trained and design a plan with the family that addresses both immediate safety needs and long-term mitigation of risk factors for abuse and neglect. The program allows for much lower caseloads of five families to one case manager and includes a peer support component.

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

The family and case manager develop a family preservation plan tailored to the unique needs of the family. The plan is sequenced according to the most critical presenting challenge, and utilizes the full array of safety management, parenting, substance abuse treatment, family therapy and peer support services available in our community. Services are provided for up to six months.

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

Circuit 19 children and their families, initially in St. Lucie County, who are at imminent risk of being placed into foster care. Caseload is five families per case manager, with a projected total of 55 families served per year. As of 1/31/25, 60 children in 22 families have been served. Out of home care cost savings in the first four months of operations is estimated to be at least \$263,806; projected annual savings of \$816,080.

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

75% of the children served will not experience abuse or neglect for the same maltreatment type which results in the child's removal from the parents' home during services. This measure is a percent. The denominator is an unduplicated count of the children served. The numerator is an unduplicated count of the children served, who did not experience abuse or neglect for the same maltreatment type and remained in the home during services. In the first four months of operation, the ESEP program has diverted 58 children from out of home care.

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 in the contract?

Contracting agency may decide to cancel the contract with CCKids and require the service be competitively procured

14. Is this project related to mitigation, response, or recovery from a natural disaster?

a. If Yes, what phase best describes the project?

- Mitigation (reducing or eliminating potential loss of life or property)
- Response (addressing the immediate and short-term effects of a natural disaster)
- Recovery (assisting communities return to normal operations, including rebuilding damaged infrastructure)

b. Name of the natural disaster (or Executive Order # for events not under a federal declaration):

15. Has the entity applied for or received federal assistance for this project?

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received



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- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, provide the FEMA project worksheet ID#:

b. Provide the total project cost listed on the FEMA project worksheet:

16. Has the entity applied for or received state assistance for this project (other than this request)?

- Yes, Applied
- Yes, Received
- No
- No, but intends to apply

a. If yes, specify the program and state agency (ex. Local Government Emergency Bridge Loan, Department of Commerce):

17. Requester Contact Information

a. First Name Last Name

b. Organization

c. E-mail Address

d. Phone Number Ext.

18. 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)



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d. First Name Last Name
e. E-mail Address
f. Phone Number Ext.

19. Lobbyist Contact Information

a. Name
b. Firm Name
c. E-mail Address
d. Phone Number

The information provided will be posted to the Florida Senate website for public viewing if sponsored by a Senator.