

UNITED WAY OF OLMSTED COUNTY



EARLY SUCCESS

MAY 2018

UNITED WAY OF OLMSTED COUNTY
903 West Center Street, Suite 100.
Rochester MN, 55902

P : (507)-287-2000
E : impact@uwolmsted.org
W: uwolmsted.org
FB: facebook.com/uwolmsted
TW: twitter.com/uwolmsted

UNITED WAY OF OLMSTED COUNTY 2018 REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

United Way of Olmsted County is a community change organization that fights for the education, health, and financial stability of every person in our community. Olmsted County is a fantastic place to live, work, play, and raise a family. A community with tremendous natural beauty, caring neighbors, a strong economy, and seemingly boundless opportunity, Olmsted County is an exceptional community.

But too often, there are people in Olmsted County who are left behind and don't share in the vitality. An unacceptable income gap. Geographic and socio-economic segregation. Personal and collective isolation. Gross inequities along racial and ethnic lines. These conditions and more cause Olmsted County to be experienced differently by people in need. United Way fights to erase divisions, bridge divides, and right inequities. We work to connect people with resources that change lives and transform our community.

We do this in a variety of ways. We operate programs and shared resources that support the community, such as our 2-1-1 information and referral service or our Get Connected volunteer matching portal. We work collaboratively with partners from many organizations and walks of life to create system change and solutions that elevate our community more than any single program or organization could. We provide financial, technical, and volunteer support for programs that make a difference.

At United Way, we LIVE UNITED with the change-makers, risk-takers, and problem-solvers as we seek, find, and create lasting solutions to the challenges that face our community.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

United Way is working to bring an end to inequity in Olmsted County and help people in need reach their potential. This requires taking a long view, working to ensure that families are stable and children grow up in healthy environments that promote success. Those families can break cycles of poverty, strengthen across generations, and make a better community for us all.

Ensuring success for children by supporting their development early in life is one of the strongest levers available for communities to truly make a difference. By helping children and families build and grow strong foundations, our community can create the conditions for a strong future for everyone.

United Way sees a particular need in Olmsted County to provide access to quality childcare and early childhood education. There are well-documented capacity concerns, which impact families across economic strata and which have a disproportionate impact on low-income residents. Further, we recognize the need for families of young children to be supported by the community in ways that extend beyond the school-day or the 9-5 workday. We are issuing this Request for Proposals to establish partnerships and offer support for programs that increase the community's ability to serve low-income children (ages 0-5) in childcare and early childhood education settings and which provide additional supports to such families inside or outside the childcare/education environment.

United Way of Olmsted County welcomes proposals from organizations of all sizes serving Olmsted County's diverse communities. Organizations serving and led by people of color, immigrants/refugees, people with disabilities, LGBTQ people, or other underrepresented communities are especially encouraged to apply.

Anticipated Investments:

- United Way of Olmsted County anticipates awarding approximately \$200,000 in annual Early Success investments beginning July 1, 2019, through June 30, 2021
- There are anticipated to be fewer than 7 successful proposals for programming that prioritizes service to low-income children and their families

Key Program Requirements:

- Annually report the number of children enrolled in high-quality early childhood programs.
- Include administrative costs of at least 15%
- Demonstrate, practice, and report on continuous improvement practices
- Participate in anonymous partner surveys

* for complete details and program requirements, refer to page 10

Key Program Expectations:

- Attend quarterly partner cohort meetings
- Update your organization's 2-1-1 listings at least annually
- Participate in developing client success stories at least one time per year
- Submit annual program and performance reports on time

* for complete details and partner expectations, refer to page 10

Key Proposal and Review Information:

After submitting proposals, prospective partners may be invited to meet with United Way staff and volunteers to discuss the program being proposed. Additional paperwork may be requested and clarifying questions may be posed. The process is expected to be interactive, with prospective partners and United Way representatives engaging in ongoing dialogue about the proposal.

- **Public Information Session:**.....**May 29, 2018**
- **Initial Proposals Due:**.....**July 10, 2018**
- **Initial Meetings:**.....**July 19-25, 2018**
- **Full Proposals Due:**.....**August 10, 2018**
- **Final Meetings:**.....**August 27-31, 2018**
- **Performance Measurement:**.....**Sept. 5 - Oct. 10, 2018**
- **Anticipated Award Announcements:**.....**October 31, 2018**
- **Funding Begins:**.....**July 1, 2019**
- **Funding Ends:**.....**June 30, 2021**

UNITED WAY FOCUS AREA: EARLY SUCCESS

Success in the early years of life - generally prenatal to age five - is crucial in developing positive physical and emotional health. Children with strong foundations in the early years are more likely to have successful academic careers; launch and maintain successful employment; maintain financial stability as adults; and raise healthy, stable children themselves.

Both quality childcare and early childhood education have been demonstrated to promote positive development during childhood. It has been found that the strongest effects of quality childcare are found with low-income children (Cohen & Lurie-Hurvitz, 2009) and that preschool has the potential to change the developmental track of low-income children (Schweinhart et al., 2005), narrowing or even closing the achievement gap between them and their middle-income peers. For this reason, United Way of Olmsted County funding will be focused on programs that prioritize service to low-income children – those from families living at or below 185% of the federal poverty line.

WHY EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION?

Public preschool was initially designed to prepare low-income children for kindergarten by providing an educational setting for them to develop foundational academic skills that their peers were learning in the home environment or private preschool. Since the 1960s, multiple studies have demonstrated high rates of return on investment and improved outcomes for students who attend preschool.

The Abecedarian Project was a randomized control trial in which half the low-income children in a sample were provided high-quality educational childcare and children in the control group were not. The children remained in the program from birth to age five, and follow-up assessments were completed at ages 6, 8, 12, 15, 21, and 30. Children who received educational childcare reported numerous improved outcomes when compared to the children who did not receive the intervention. As children they had higher reading, math, and IQ scores; completed more schooling; were less likely to be teen parents; and were less likely to participate in criminal activity. As adults they held more skilled jobs, were less likely to be unemployed, less likely to use public assistance, and tended to delay parenting (Campbell, 2011).

Similar results were reported by the Perry Preschool Study (Schweinhart et al., 2005), with estimated returns on investment between the programs ranging from \$4 to \$9 for every dollar invested. Related studies have suggested that returns are highest when investments are made early in childhood (J. Heckman & Kautz, 2013), and the impact of quality care and education is largest for at-risk and low-income children (Cohen & Lurie-Hurvitz, 2009; Schweinhart et al., 2005).

Preschools originally involved a great deal of play but are now starting to focus more on achieving educational milestones and providing direct instruction. Many parents now want longer school days and more education for their children. This may be in part due to increased public awareness of the value of early childhood education, but another factor at play is likely the increased academic rigor of kindergarten. Between 1998 and 2010 the percentage of teachers expecting children to know how to read by the end of kindergarten had risen from 30% to 80% (Bassock, Latham, & Anna Rorem, 2016).

Due to the success of preschool and the expansion of kindergarten, traditional preschool for 4 year-olds has become commonplace, with nearly 70% of US children enrolled (NCES, 2017). While preschool has traditionally been available to four-year-olds in a half-day setting, enrollment has begun to include younger children and longer days. Nationally, in 2015, approximately 40% of three-year-olds were enrolled in preschool programs. Additionally, among three- to five-year-olds who were enrolled in preschool programs in 2015, some 51% attended full-day programs (NCES, 2017). In Olmsted County, 43% of three- and four-year olds are enrolled in nursery school and preschool. Of those, 55% attend a public option and 45% attend a private option (US Census Bureau, 2016a).

WHY CHILDCARE?

A compelling driver of UWOC's investment in childcare is due to local context: approximately 5-7% of Rochester's population is aged 0-4 at this time, a rate that is expected to remain steady or even grow in coming years (Werner, 2016). At the same time, Olmsted County is 1,855 spots short of the expected need for childcare slots (First Children's Finance, 2017). The challenge of finding affordable and appropriate childcare affects all families with children ages 0-4 years old, but accessing early childcare is especially challenging for single parents, parents who work non-traditional shifts, immigrants, and families from low-income and middle class households (Werner, 2016).

It is not only a capacity challenge that compels UWOC to invest in early childcare. Childcare plays a key role in many families: keeping a child safe and supervised while the adults in their family are at work. As more mothers enter the workforce, fewer grandparents live with their adult children, and more children come from single-parent homes, demand for childcare has grown dramatically since mid-century. As of 2001, 53% of one-year-olds and 59% of two-year-olds regularly attended childcare in the United States (Mulligan, Brimhall, & West, 2005). As children at this age are typically not yet able to attend preschool due to their age, access to quality childcare is important due to the long-lasting effects of early environmental influences and their significance for emotional security, cognitive development, and learning skills.

In many respects, childcare provides benefits similar to preschool in promoting healthy development. First and foremost, and somewhat counterintuitively, access to childcare promotes and protects the mother-infant relationship. While mothers of infants who spend more than 30 hours a week in child care spend 32% less time with their infants, they are not less sensitive in interactions with their infants (Booth, Clarke-Stewart, Vandell, McCartney, & Owen, 2002). Intriguingly, for non-Caucasian women specifically, more hours of childcare have been associated with more sensitive mother-child interactions. Across the board, higher-quality childcare experiences have been consistently associated with somewhat more sensitive and engaged mother-child interactions (NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2003). In at least two of the four broad developmental categories – cognition and communication/language – childcare has been shown to have a strong, positive impact that extends through middle childhood and adolescence (Belsky et al., 2007; Vandell et al., n.d.).

WHAT CONSTITUTES QUALITY?

FOUNDATIONAL QUALITY

Enrollment in early childhood education or access to childcare in and of itself does not guarantee early success – quality matters greatly. Currently, a bevy of federal and state regulations work to ensure adherence to basic quality standards related to staff qualifications; child-to-adult ratios; naps and rest; behavior management; furnishings, equipment, materials, and supplies; sick

care; informing parents; field trips; emergency procedures; and the provision of food, water, and transportation. A center that fails to adhere to these standards may have to operate under a variance while working to address the problem and may have their license revoked for repeated violations (Department of Human Services, 2015). While these regulations establish essential baselines for many aspects of childcare and early childhood education centers, many centers have taken it upon themselves to provide families and children quality programming by promoting social emotional learning and by providing a culturally-responsive environment.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING

Multiple studies have shown that social emotional skills are significantly associated with children’s academic success and have been demonstrated to be at least as significant as IQ (Graziano, Reavis, Keane, & Calkins, 2007). In fact, re-analysis of the Perry Preschool and Abecedarian Program results suggests that the social emotional skills gained through preschool attendance may in fact account for the long-term benefits related to academics, employment, and criminal behavior – possibly more so than academic skills (J. Heckman & Kautz, 2013). Despite the fact that current research has not been able to clearly determine which portion of academic success is attributable to academic skills acquisition and which portion is attributable to social emotional skills, there has been extensive research on the ways in which children learn both cognitive and social skills.

Research shows that children learn largely through play (Mead, 2018) and small group interactions (Wasik, 2008). Children at this age also struggle with frequent transitions (Martinelli, 2018) and need repetition in order to learn new skills (Horst, 2013). Social emotional and cognitive skills are tightly correlated to income levels. Children growing up in poverty are at particularly high risk for delayed language skills, possibly due to reduced resources (such as books) and language stimulation (such as babbling and narration) in the home (Ryan, Fauth, & Brooks-Gunn, 2006). They are similarly likely to struggle with self-control and social skills, which may be attributed to parenting practices and home environment (Lengua, Horonado, & Bush, 2007). Given that much of the learning that occurs in preschool is due to peer effects, low-income children may see the most gains in school readiness when they attend a classroom filled with peers from various socioeconomic backgrounds rather than a classroom that is uniformly low-income (Schechter & Bye, 2007), although this finding is not as strong as many others in early education.

CULTURALLY-RESPONSIVE ENVIRONMENT

When polled, 55% of parents of public k-12 school students said having a mix of students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds is extremely or very important. However, in a 2001-03 sample of nearly 3,000 children in eleven state pre-K programs it was found that only 23% of preschoolers attended a classroom that could be considered diverse – between 30-70% nonwhite. Most students attended a classroom that was either mostly white (30%) or mostly nonwhite (49%). In classrooms where the students were mostly nonwhite, over 75% of the students were low-income. Only 17% of students attended a preschool classroom that was both ethnically diverse and medium or high-income (Reid, 2015).

A survey of Minnesota childcare providers in 2011 found that 94% of family childcare providers, 88% of center-based childcare providers, and 95% of preschool teachers were white statewide. Center-based teachers in the Metro were significantly more diverse, indicating that well over 88% of center-based childcare providers in greater Minnesota were white. This survey indicated little change in the racial and ethnic composition of childcare providers since 2000 (Valorose & Chase, 2012).

Culturally-responsive classroom management is an approach to running a classroom which includes maintaining high expectations, promoting cultural competence, and promoting critical consciousness (Dickson, Chun, & Fernandez, 2015; G Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gloria Ladson-Billings, 1995; Morrison, Robbins, & Rose, 2008). It is a pedagogical approach that calls for the instructor or childcare provider to recognize their biases and values and reflect on how these influence their expectations for behavior and their interactions with students (Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, 2008). While the approach is beneficial to all students (not just students of color or low-income students), it is an especially valuable approach in cases where the instructor is white and the majority of students come from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, as is the case in many Minnesota childcare and preschool classrooms that serve low-income students.

For very young children, culturally-responsive care may involve working with parents to learn about care practices and rituals experienced by the child and mirroring those methods in the care setting. Care that connects with infants’ and toddlers’ home experiences helps them develop a sense of who they are and value their home cultures (Virmani & Mangione, 2013). Culturally-responsive care has also been shown to support healthy infant and toddler development and language development in particular

(Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000). Older students who are exposed to culturally-relevant teaching practices perform better academically (Byrd, 2016), and those exposed to culturally-relevant course content have shown improved attendance, GPA, and credit attainment (Dee & Penner, 2016). The earlier a child is immersed in a culturally-responsive environment, the earlier such gains can be seen.

WHAT ARE SOME POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS?

In addition to adjusting how care and education are provided in order to best serve low-income children and their families, many centers have taken it upon themselves to provide additional supports, whether inside or outside the childcare/education environment. The following examples of interventions that work are not meant to be an exhaustive treatment of all effective programs or approaches within the field but rather a demonstration of the breadth of work that United Way sees as supportive of early success.

TRAUMA INTERVENTION

There is a cluster of stressful experiences which researchers and social service practitioners often refer to as ‘adverse childhood experiences’, or ACEs. These fall under the following categories: physical, psychological, and sexual abuse; physical and psychological neglect; and parent(s) dealing with substance abuse, mental illness, incarceration, divorce, or domestic violence. When children have these experiences, they may show symptoms such as hyperactivity, apathy, or developmental delays. Sometimes stress will express itself in physical form, such as through recurring stomachaches and headaches (United Way of Central Iowa, 2017). Throughout their lifetime, these children often have difficulty forming and maintaining stable attachments to caregivers, friends, and romantic partners. As adults, they are more likely to face challenges in education, employment, and health. As the number of adverse childhood experiences increases, so does the risk of negative outcomes (Felitti et al., 1998).

Some children thrive despite ACEs and are able to return to good mental health even in a challenging situation - this phenomenon is often termed resilience. No child is magically resilient, but protective factors in the child’s environment and personality can allow resiliency to grow. The strongest protective factor has been shown to be close relationships with trusted adults (“Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) in Minnesota,” 2017). The presence of a trusted adult helps a child feel safe and allows for the body’s stress response to calm down more quickly during and after trauma. Sometimes, the presence of a trusted adult alone is not enough to overcome the effect of ACEs. Additional factors to consider are parent resilience, parenting skills, a strong sense of faith or culture, problem-solving skills, and social connectedness. A number of these can be fostered through appropriate intervention and support and are not solely dependent on a child’s parents.

SCREENING FOR MATERNAL DEPRESSION

While ‘baby blues’ affect up to 80% of women in the first week or two after giving birth, post-partum depression (which typically starts soon after birth) affects about 15% of women and is distinct in that it often interferes with a woman’s ability to care for herself or her family (National Institute of Mental Health, 2017). Those with low education or income and those who are not married have the highest rates of depression. Black and Hispanic depressed mothers are both more likely to experience multiple adversities (such as poverty, separation or divorce, unemployment, or financial difficulties) and less likely to receive services than white depressed mothers (Ertel, Rich-Edwards, & Koenen, 2011). Mothers of newborns who require time in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU) are 40% more likely to suffer from post-partum depression than the general population and experience significant challenges in bonding and caring for their babies (Vigood, Villegas, CL, & LE, 2010). Similarly, parents of children with physical and developmental disabilities are at risk of poor mental health as well as marital discord and divorce (Hung, Wu, Chiang, Wu, & Yeh, 2009; Namkrung, Song, Greenburg, Mailick, & Floyd, 2015).

Children whose caretakers suffer from depression are more likely to be depressed themselves, demonstrate insecure attachments, and often lack emotional self-regulation skills (England & Sim, 2009). Screening for maternal depression can help identify and refer mothers to supports as needed, which can then ultimately improve caretaking and emotional health outcomes of the child.

DEVELOPMENTAL SCREENING

Developmental milestones are broken into four broad categories: motor skills, communication and language skills, social and emotional skills, and cognitive skills (Minnesota Department of Education, Minnesota Department of Health, Minnesota Department of Human Services, 2018a, 2018b). Developmental screenings assess whether a child is considered to be achieving age-appropriate developmental milestones, which can then identify and refer children to additional supports as needed. At least nine screening tools exist to assess a child's development in the early years, all of which take inventory of a number of milestones. Conducted consistently, screening provides a benchmark for tracking children's development over time. Even without benchmarking, a one-time assessment can be instrumental in identifying a child who would benefit from additional intervention. For this reason, developmental screenings are scheduled at 9 months, 18 months, and 30 months of age during preventative pediatric visits. Developmental surveillance and psychosocial/behavioral assessment is ongoing at routine medical visits throughout childhood and can be instrumental in generating referrals to specialized assessments and interventions (Bright Futures, American Academy of Pediatrics, 2018).

Development screening and up-to-date immunizations are required by law for children to enter kindergarten, but the timing of these events is not mandated. In Rochester, only 42% of students are screened at or by age three. For 17% of children in Rochester Public School district, the first time they are screened by the school district is when they are five years or older (Minnesota Department of Education, 2017). While the school district is not the only provider of screenings, a great number of children with existing developmental needs do not have interaction with a service provider during the early stages of their delay, when intervention is most effective. Some interventions – such as those that address hearing loss – can be dramatically more effective when undergone earlier. The best time to implement any intervention is the earliest possible moment – as soon as a developmental delay is noticed. When detection occurs early, interventions can often be simple, implemented by parents and primary care providers, and dramatically change the child's developmental path. Early intervention reduces the incidence of future problems and is generally both more effective and less costly than later interventions.

HOME VISITING

Home visiting, much like preschool, has been subjected to randomized control trial and subsequent 30-year longitudinal study of participants. It has been demonstrated to have a return on investment of approximately \$6 for every dollar invested (Stone & Page, 2009). Participation in home visiting improves both parenting attitudes and mental health of mothers, as well as boosts cognitive and social emotional skills for children. At age twelve, participants were shown to have enhanced achievement test scores, tying back to improved cognitive skills at age six (J. J. Heckman, Holland, Makino, Pinto, & Rosales-Rueda, 2017). Very frequently, home visiting is used as a vehicle for other supports such as prenatal education, screening for maternal depression, parent education, providing referrals, etc.

PRENATAL EDUCATION

Until birth, the health of the mother is the health of the baby. Numerous activities, when done prenatally, can have lasting and damaging impact on a child's health and development. For example, prenatal education can help mitigate or reduce the use of illicit drugs, alcohol, and cigarettes, which contribute to low birth weight and in turn can contribute to developmental delays (Children's Hospital of Philadelphia, 2018). Another example could be education about the dangers of lead exposure and taking preventative actions, as even small amounts of lead in the blood of a pregnant woman can have lifelong, irreversible effects on her child (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2017; National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, 2017). Additional topics include maternal health, diet, and exercise; learning about breastfeeding; learning about labor and delivery; developing a birthing plan; understanding post-partum care; and learning how to transport, bathe, and swaddle a newborn. Mothers-to-be can also be educated about post-partum depression and how to seek help. Prenatal education can be especially important for teenage mothers, as they are far less likely to seek prenatal care than mothers over the age of 18, while also being likely to have far fewer resources and supports and more likely to have birthing and pregnancy complications.

PARENTING CLASSES

In many ways, parents are a child's first teacher. In addition to learning about risks to their children's development and reducing exposure to environmental dangers, parents play a key role in promoting healthy childhood development. Many common parenting behaviors reinforce and encourage healthy development, including games such as peek-a-boo, reading to young children, playing make-believe, cuddling, and singing together. Parents who did not learn engaging parenting techniques in their family of origin are able to learn their importance and apply them in their homes. They are also able to learn about developmental milestones in order to determine if their child is developing as anticipated and work with providers to implement interventions that will help their child reach their full potential. For children who need additional intervention, it is often the parents who work with the child in the home to reach certain milestones or learn accommodations.

REFERRALS TO PUBLIC BENEFITS AND BASIC NEED SUPPORTS

Many childcare providers and preschools that work with low-income children are by extension working with families facing multiple barriers such as unemployment, underemployment, underinsurance, lack of transportation, etc. Programs may work with families to address these barriers in a number of ways: by providing referrals to public benefits such as SNAP, WIC, and housing assistance, or by connecting families to agencies providing services in accordance with the family's needs. Some programs work to provide basic needs supports to children and their families by maintaining a food pantry or coat closet or by providing take-home hygiene kits.

Beyond any doubt, there are countless other innovative and effective means for supporting families of young children as those children develop and grow. The above are provided as suggestions and models of programs that have been effective in other places but do not replace local innovations or ingenuity in developing solutions to local problems. United Way of Olmsted County welcomes proposals from programs that represent new innovations and concepts in supporting early success.

For a deeper exploration of early success and related research, visit www.uwolmsted.org/research.

If you wish to speak with a United Way staff member about this research, this request for proposals, or ask questions about a proposal idea, please contact Kelsey Zubke at KelseyZ@uwolmsted.org or 507-287-2000.

GRANT DETAILS & REQUIREMENTS

Investment Information:

United Way anticipates making approximately \$200,000 in annual investments in early success through this RFP. Investments will begin in July, 2019, and end in June, 2021. We anticipate fewer than 7 total successful proposals.

Reporting & Milestones:

- Key performance measure(s): Number of children enrolled in high-quality early childhood programs
- Additional performance measures to be co-developed by program and United Way

Budget Requirements:

Proposals that advance in the review process will be expected to include a program budget that provides both income and expense details. Program budgets may be submitted in your own preferred format; if you do not have a budget template of your own, we are happy to provide you with a sample you may work from.

While United Way wants to understand your program as clearly as possible in order to establish a positive partner relationship, we know that programs and program plans change and evolve over time. We anticipate that there will be changes to program budgets and designs over the life of the program and ask that you consult us when such changes are warranted.

United Way knows that all programs require foundational organization support for administrative and fundraising functions. In recognition of that, all program budgets should include an administration cost of at least 15% of the total program cost.

Similarly, any capacity-building (such as program evaluation systems, equipment, or training) needed to enact or sustain the program should be reflected in the program budget.

United Way funding is provided for programs, rather than organizations. Early Success investments will not be restricted to specific line items within a program's budget (such as an individual staff member, a scholarship fund, or a capital purchase). These awards are made to the overall program budget and are not restricted to specific kinds of program-related expenses.

Audit / Financial Reports:

United Way of Olmsted County policy requires that partners and prospective partners required by state law to conduct an independently prepared financial audit annually (all those with annual revenues greater than \$750,000) maintain the most current audit available on file with United Way of Olmsted County (UWOC) at all times.

All other partners and prospective partners (those with annual revenues less than \$750,000) must submit and maintain on file with UWOC a current financial audit independently prepared by an outside firm and completed within the past three program agency fiscal periods. For each year between audits, partners must submit to UWOC a financial compilation that is in GAAP format. For purposes of this proposal process, at a minimum, a compilation will need to be on file with United Way prior to October 1, 2018 and a completed audit must be submitted no later than June 30, 2019.

Proposal review criteria:

Proposals will be evaluated in consideration of the following criteria, which will inform United Way's investment decisions:

- **Alignment:** Program fits UWOC values and strategies, as well as the investment goals identified in this RFP.
- **Priority Populations:** Program is intentionally designed to serve vulnerable and/or low-income populations, specifically households with children (0-5 years old), living at or below 185% of federal poverty guidelines.
- **Performance Measurement:** Program demonstrates commitment to data-driven reporting and continuous improvement efforts.
- **Program Design:** Program is intentionally designed, with high likelihood of achieving goals.
- **Budget:** Program budget includes administrative costs, capacity-building needs, and meets United Way's overall investment criteria.

Additional consideration may be given to programs that demonstrate the ability to partner effectively with United Way and others and which are able to advance UWOC programs and strategies.

EXPECTATIONS OF PARTNERS:

- **Attend quarterly partner cohort meetings:**

Each quarter, for the length of this award period, representatives of partner organizations will gather with United Way staff to discuss programming, relevant challenges and opportunities, and emerging trends in the field. These meetings will sometimes be intended for executives and other times for program staff contacts. This is an important part of United Way's ongoing knowledge-building plan.

- **Update your organization's 2-1-1 listing at least annually:**

United Way sponsors 2-1-1, our local affiliate of the nation-wide information and referral service, available by phone, mobile-responsive web platform, and live internet chat. It is critical that this service maintain the most up-to-date information possible about community supports and services. All United Way partners are required to update their service information at least one time each year.

- **Participate in developing client success stories:**

It is to the mutual benefit of United Way and its partners that we develop compelling stories of the success of individual clients, with appropriate permissions and media releases. These stories help to illustrate the value of our partnership

and enhance United Way’s ability to continue providing financial support for programs throughout the community.

- **Submit annual program and performance reports on time:**

For the length of the award period, partner programs must submit program and performance reporting on an annual basis. Metrics reported will include the Key Performance Measure(s), referenced above, and other performance measures mutually determined by your program and United Way staff.

- **Make volunteer engagement opportunities available:**

While it is not required of any program that it engages volunteers in its work, United Way asks that partners assist in finding and developing opportunities to engage United Way’s stakeholders (volunteers, donors, corporate partners, etc.) in volunteer service opportunities.

- **Integration with United Way programming:**

Also not a requirement, United Way asks partners to consider the ways in which other United Way programming can be promoted through the partner’s work (e.g. providing FamilyWize prescription discount cards to program participants, etc.).

PROPOSAL & REVIEW PROCESS

- **Public Information Session:May 29, 2018 at 3:00pm**

An optional public session, during which United Way staff will provide an overview of the investment opportunity, the program requirements, and the proposal and review process. There will be a brief time for questions and answers. Individual follow-up discussions may also be arranged.

- **Initial Proposals Due:July 10, 2018**

All initial proposals must be completed by 12:00pm on Tuesday, July 10, 2018. Proposals are intended to be brief (questions included here as Appendix A) and should be submitted through UWOC’s online grants portal at www.uwolmsted.org/grants. For assistance with the online tool, please contact Zeni Aly at 507-287-7877 or zenia@uwolmsted.org.

- **Initial Program Meetings:July 19 - 25, 2018**

A brief initial meeting will be scheduled with select prospective partners. These initial meetings are informal and require no specific preparation. In most cases, it’s advised to include a key program contact in these conversations. This time allows for dialogue that will help our team become familiar with your program plans.

- **Full Proposals Due:August 10, 2018**

Programs invited to complete a full proposal should submit their completed proposal by 12:00 pm on Friday, August 10, 2018. The full proposal (questions included here as Appendix B) will request additional details related to your requested funding level and the details of your program budget. Your own program budget format will be accepted. If you don’t have a program budget already, a template can be provided to assist you.

- **Final Program Meetings:August 27 - 31, 2018,**

Select prospective partners will be invited to have further dialogue with United Way’s review team. This meeting is intended to clarify any remaining questions our team has about your program and address any remaining questions or concerns your organization has about partnership with United Way of Olmsted County.

- **Performance Measurement:Sept. 5 - Oct. 3, 2018,**

Finalists will work together with UWOC staff to develop the performance measures to be reported during the funding cycle. These measurements will be co-created and specific to the program. Performance measures should align with Results Based Accountability measures and focus on measurements of “how much and how well,” while “better off” measures will be considered above-and-beyond.

- **Anticipated Award Announcements:October 31, 2018**

Prospective partners can anticipate being notified of the status of their request on or before October 31, 2018, after United Way’s Board of Directors has approved its final decision.

- **Funding Begins:July 1, 2019**

First disbursements of Early Success grants will be made in July, 2019.

- **Funding Ends:July 30, 2021**

Final disbursements of Early Success grants will be made in June, 2021.

UNITED WAY’S ONLINE GRANTS PORTAL:

All proposals must be submitted through United Way of Olmsted County’s online grants portal. In your web browser, type in www.uwolmsted.org/grants to learn more about UWOC’s funding priorities. The grants portal works best in Google Chrome.

To submit a proposal, click on “Funding Opportunities” to access the most up-to-date listing of funding opportunities. Select the opportunity that interests you, and click on apply. You’ll be asked to log in or create a new user account in order to access the proposal materials.

For technical support with the proposal process, you may contact Zeni Aly, Community Impact Administrative Assistant, at 507-287-7877 or ZeniA@uwolmsted.org.

For previous UWOC partners – this is a new system and all partners will need to create a new account.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can one organization submit proposals for multiple programs?

Yes. United Way of Olmsted County makes awards to programs, rather than to organizations. In the event that a single organization has more than one program that meets the goals of the RFP, multiple proposals will be considered.

Organizations may also be eligible to submit proposals to multiple RFPs within United Way’s overall investment portfolio.

My program has been funded under one of UWOC’s impact areas in the past. Is this RFP for me?

That depends. This RFP is intended to make investments in programs that help to address early success throughout Olmsted County. It is open to programs planning to increase the community’s ability to serve low-income children (ages 0-5) in childcare and early childhood education settings and which provide additional supports to such families inside or outside the childcare/ education environment.

My program already receives United Way funding. Can I submit a proposal to this RFP as well?

Yes. There is no rule limiting a single program from receiving United Way support through more than one funding stream, nor is there any promise that any eligible program will necessarily be selected for investment.

Will you accept joint proposals?

Yes. Joint proposals involving multiple organizations are welcome to submit their proposals but are limited to programs that are being jointly delivered. In practical terms, that requires all organizations to be serving the same individual clients toward a single, shared outcome over a sustained period of time.

We recognize this is a change of practice, which may produce fewer joint proposals. We prefer to reserve this practice for situations that require shared proposals, shared reporting, and shared program planning. We encourage community-serving

organizations to develop robust cooperation and partnerships wherever possible, even where they aren't able to jointly submit their proposal.

I represent a [faith-based organization] / [unincorporated group] / [government agency]. Is my organization eligible?

Yes. Government agencies/units are eligible.

Faith-based organizations are eligible, provided they can demonstrate that there will be no explicitly faith-related content included in their programming and that there are no discriminatory restrictions (age, race, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion, ability, or otherwise) on service recipients.

Unincorporated community groups are eligible, provided they can document their relationship with a proper fiscal sponsor.

Can I save and edit my progress on the online proposal?

Yes. Our online proposal management system requires a login to be created, which allows you to create, save, edit, and submit your proposal online.

When can I expect to hear back from you?

You should expect to receive an automated notification that your proposal has been received shortly after submitting it. If you believe you've successfully submitted your proposal, but you haven't received an acknowledgement, please contact Zeni Aly (zenia@uwolmsted.org or 507-287-7877) for assistance.

After submission, you should anticipate hearing about the progress of your proposal during the week of July 16, 2018. We anticipate notifying final awardees around October 31, 2018.

APPENDIX A - INITIAL PROPOSAL

Organization Information:

Organization's Legal Name:	Proposal Contact Name:
Organization's Common Name, if different from above:	Proposal Contact Address/Phone/Email:
Organization Address:	Executive Director/CEO:
Organization Phone:	ED Address/Phone/Email:
Organization Email:	Employer Identification Number:
Program/Project Name:	

Joint proposals involving multiple organizations are welcome to submit their proposals, but are limited to programs that are being jointly delivered. That requires all organizations to be serving the same individual clients, toward a single, shared outcome, over a sustained period of time.

Is this a joint proposal? Y/N

How many Collaborating Organizations are involved? (1,2,3)

Proposal Overview

1. Describe your proposed program (1 or 2 short paragraphs will do).
2. What are the goals of your proposed program?
3. We're funding programs and initiatives that increase the community's ability to serve low-income children (ages 0-5) in childcare and early education settings, and which provide additional supports to such families, inside or outside the childcare/education environment: Tell us how your program achieves these things. (1 or 2 paragraphs would be great)

Equity

4. UWOC's goal with this investment is to serve children and their families in households living at or below 185% of federal poverty guidelines. Tell us how your program serves this population. (1 or 2 paragraphs would be great)

Continuous Improvement

5. For this funding opportunity, the "Key Performance Measure" is the number of children enrolled in high-quality early childhood programs. Do you measure, or are you willing and able to measure, the Key Performance Measure? (Yes/No)

United Way is not asking your requested funding amount at this time. If your program proceeds to the full proposal, you will be asked provide your requested funding amount, program and organizational budgets, and recent financial statements.

APPENDIX A - FULL PROPOSAL

Equity

1. Describe the demographic make-up of the people you serve, or intend to serve through this program (this could include household income, race, ethnicity, age, etc...).

Continuous Improvement

2. Describe your proposed program's evaluation and/or continuous improvement plan(s). We understand that some programs don't yet have one in place. If you don't have a plan in place already, describe your current approach to data collection and how you'll develop a continuous improvement plan (3 paragraphs will be enough).
3. How many people do you expect to serve annually during the grant period?

Program Design

4. Describe your program in detail (shorter than 5 paragraphs would be preferred).
5. Tell us how your program a) aligns to an evidence-based program or best-practice, AND/OR b) responds in an innovative or unique way to local conditions (shorter than 5 paragraphs would be preferred).

Attachments / Org Documents

Program Budget

Your budget should:

- o show all projected income streams for this project, including your organization's in-kind support and your requested funding from United Way
- o include management and fundraising costs of at least 15%
- o include and indicate any capacity-building needed to enact the program
- o if you desire technical assistance in preparing your budget, please click here to access United Way's budget help page

6. United Way of Olmsted County intends to invest up to \$200,000 annually in Early Success programming, through fewer than 7 programs in the community. What dollar amount are you requesting from United Way of Olmsted County? (this should match the number reflected in your program budget).
7. Use this space to provide any explanations, descriptions, or other narrative that should accompany your program budget.

Other Attachments

- IRS Determination Letter
- Most recent IRS Form-990
- Contact list of current Board of Directors (name, mailing address, email, phone)
- Most recent audited financial statements*
- Your current organization budget

* For applicants and partners that are required by state law to conduct an independently prepared financial audit annually (all those with annual revenues greater than \$750,000), the most current audit available will be on file with United Way of Olmsted County (UWOC) at all times.

All other applicants (those with annual revenues less than \$750,000) must submit and maintain on file with UWOC a current financial audit independently prepared by an outside firm and completed within the past three program agency fiscal periods. For each year between audits, partners must submit to UWOC a financial compilation that is in GAAP format. **At a minimum, a compilation will need to be on file with United Way prior to October 1, 2018, and a completed audit must be submitted no later than June 30, 2019.**

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