



MILWAUKEE COUNTY AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT ALLOCATION

Community Support Program Proposal

Milwaukee County Early Childhood and Family Support Project

COMMUNITY SUPPORT CATEGORY

Please select the community support category that applies to this proposal:

- Household Assistance.** Proposals may include expenditures related to food programs; rent, mortgage, and utility aid; cash transfers; internet access programs; eviction prevention; unemployment benefits or cash assistance to unemployed workers; housing support: affordable housing; and housing support: services for unhoused people.
- Mental & Behavioral Health.** Proposals may include expenditures related to mental health services; substance abuse services; and other public health services.
- Other Social Determinants of Health.** Proposals may include expenditures related to job training assistance; small business economic assistance; aid to nonprofit organizations; aid to other impacted industries; healthy childhood environments: home visiting and services to foster youth or families involved in child welfare system; social determinants of health: community health workers or benefit navigators and community violence interventions; clean water; drinking water; and broadband.

PROJECT DESIGN

Provide an overview of how the community support project being proposed addresses an urgent community need brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Demonstrate how the project provides a feasible solution to the demonstrated need and is being coordinated with partners. Include any collaboration that will occur during the project. Explain how the proposal falls within Milwaukee County's scope of services. (500-word max response)

The goal is to help children thrive and give families techniques to help enhance their child's development and learning potential. This is especially important for families who have been underserved and under-resourced. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, child and family-focused pandemic recovery supports are essential to address potential risks to child development due to social and economic stressors, including:

- Social restrictions, distancing, and childcare shutdowns
- Loss of support networks
- Increased stress level of parents and caregivers as a result of illness caused by COVID-19, the difficulty of combining working from home with full-time childcare, and economic insecurity
- Increased exposure to pre-existing vulnerabilities within families such as domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental illness.

In the face of the COVID-19 pandemic, the expansion of existing resources which promote healthy development and prevent toxic stress are imperative to the overall health of children and their families. Families of children with disabilities as well as those who have been impacted by disparities in COVID-19, are at increased risk of the forementioned challenges.

Furthermore, COVID-19 has brought dramatic and detrimental changes to the lives of children and families and has severely increased the barriers to high quality early childhood experiences for many, undoubtedly widening the racial achievement and economic gap.

This project aims to implement the following:

- Healthcare access, social emotional development and mental health supports through partnerships
- Intergenerational programs in partnership with Aging and Disabilities Services
- Parental/ caregiver support
- Coaching for early childhood professionals and service coordinators to ensure they can identify and connect children to Milwaukee County services available through the Children's System of Care
- Evidence- based early literacy in everyday spaces
- Support for DHHS Staff and Contracted Providers to complete Infant Mental Health Capstone through UW- Madison

Key Partners

The initiative convenes Milwaukee County DHHS Birth to Three Program, the City of Milwaukee Office of Early Childhood Initiatives, Hear WI and the United Community Center. The problems facing children and families are extensive and require collaborative effort of families, community members, elected officials, organizations and system partners to facilitate solutions in a coordinated manner.

In addition to the key partners listed above, local mission- aligned community- based organizations, including but not limited to the following, will have an opportunity to apply for funding to participate in the initiative through a participatory budgeting process that involves families. Five awards per year, up to \$100,000 each, will be made.

- Next Door Foundation
- The Parenting Network
- Parent University
- Vision Forward
- Milwaukee Center for Independence (MCFI)

Existing partnerships with the following entities will also be leveraged to carryout initiative objectives in alignment with the guiding principles:

- Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS)
- Milwaukee County School Districts
- DMCPs & Partnering agencies
- Children's Wisconsin

- Office of Early Childhood Initiatives
- City of Milwaukee Health Department
- Community Health Centers (CHCs)

TRACKABLE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Provide an overview of the project's goals, objectives, outcomes, and/or outputs that will be achieved by December 31, 2024. Please ensure that proposed project outcomes align with the Milwaukee County vision to achieve racial equity and eliminate health disparities. (250-word max response)

- # of community based organizations collaborating with Milwaukee County as a result of ARPA Early Childhood funding;
 - dollars allocated to community organizations; and
 - # of caregivers and community members who are engaged in the participatory budget process to allocate funds
- # of Public spaces like waiting rooms, bus stops, laundromats, grocery stores equipped with hands-on activities to encourage positive interaction and learning between caregiver and parent through Mighty Moments
- Completion of a Neighborhood, Public Education and Social- Media campaign that promotes messaging on early brain and child development
- # of families and children that HEAR Wisconsin provides linkage and follow up enhanced case management services to ensure connection with needed Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services programs and resources
- # of Milwaukee County staff and contracted providers who are able to complete the Infant Mental Health Capstone program
- Hire a bilingual Social Emotional Behavior Coach by Q4 2022
- Plan and hold 10 parent workshops a year, per site resulting in a total of 40 workshops. (Surveys will be administered.)
- 95% of parents who receive direct coaching from the SEL Coach will report an improvement in their ability to effectively manage and support their child(ren) during their quarterly parent meeting or home visit.
- 100% of Teachers will report they agree or strongly agree that they learned new approaches to supporting the children in their classroom using SEL or Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

INVEST IN EQUITY & INTENTIONAL INCLUSION

Provide an overview of how the proposed project supports historically underserved, marginalized

and/or adversely affected groups. Projects will be scored by their alignment with Milwaukee County's strategic objectives to (1) achieve racial and health equity, (2) dismantle barriers and (3) invest "upstream" to address root causes of health. Demonstrate how this proposal supports any or all of these objectives. If applicable, include how this proposal was informed by community input and builds capacity of community organizations. (500-word max response).

All of the partners who are participating in the initiative are serving children and families who have experienced disparities in education and health. Parent advisory committee (i.e., OEIC) and Parent Community Cafes (i.e., Milwaukee County) allow for consistent engagement of families and caregivers. The goal is to ensure projects and resources are acceptable, accessible and meet their needs in a way that is relevant and promotes equity.

Hearing and Language Development: Children who have hearing loss are at high risk for significant delays in understanding and using language which is the cornerstone of learning. Important neural pathways are developed throughout the early years of life. It is essential the brain be provided with acoustic information, via optimally fit technology, and language rich environments during this time in life when the brain is most receptive to learning. If early intervention services are not provided in a timely manner, as soon as possible after birth, the child's communication centers in the brain may not develop adequately and the child will not be on par with their hearing peers, resulting in significant difficulties with communication and language as they begin school.

Primary focus for this project is identification and contact with families of color who have children with confirmed hearing loss. The goal is to enroll families of children with hearing loss into hearing-loss-specific early intervention services.

Disparities in education and social emotional learning of Hispanic Children: Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Hispanic children faced huge health disparities that put them not only at greater risk of illness and disease, but make it harder to thrive and succeed in school and beyond. Research has found that Latino children are at higher risk for behavioral and developmental disorders, school dropout, obesity, diabetes, asthma, and more.

Latino infants have the same language and cognitive abilities as their white peers, but by the time they reach age two, they lag significantly behind. Researchers have found that poverty and lower participation in center-based child care are two reasons for this disparity. Providing support for parents and additional professional development for early childhood education staff will provide equitable access and opportunity, helping them to overcome the racial and health inequities of coming from a marginalized community.

Through the Building Resilience Project, these children will be more likely to improve their development, self-regulation skills, and school readiness, resulting in improved academic achievement, graduation, and ultimately, in improved earning power, countering the structural bias rooted in access to programs like this.

Participatory Budgeting: This method of allocating resources for community-centered work builds the capacity of community-based organizations while providing a platform for community members to share power and decision-making with government entities. Families who will benefit from the services, resources and programs will take part in selecting the organizations who will facilitate the projects.

EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGY

Please select the statement that aligns with the community support project. This project was developed with:

- Strong Evidence:** can support casual conclusions for the specific program with the highest level of confidence. This consists of one or more well-designed and well-implemented experimental studies conducted on the proposed program with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes.
- Moderate Evidence:** reasonably developed evidence base that can support casual conclusions. The evidence-base consists of one or more quasi-experimental studies with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes OR two or more nonexperimental studies with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes. Examples of research that meet the standards include well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental studies that compare outcomes between the group receiving the intervention and a matched comparison group (i.e., a similar population that does not receive the intervention).
- Preliminary Evidence:** can support conclusions about the program's contribution to observed outcomes. The evidence-base consists of at least one nonexperimental study. A study that demonstrates improvement in program beneficiaries over time on one or more intended outcomes OR an implementation (process evaluation) study used to learn and improve program operations would constitute preliminary evidence. Examples of research that meet the standards include: (1) outcome studies that track program beneficiaries through a service pipeline and measure beneficiaries' responses at the end of the program; and (2) pre- and post-test research that determines whether beneficiaries have improved on an intended outcome.

Provide an explanation to support the statement that most aligns with the project. Include the experimental studies conducted on the proposed project. *Evidence-based strategies can be found through the following: [Results First Clearinghouse Database | The Pew Charitable Trusts \(pewtrusts.org\)](#) and [Homepage | CLEAR \(dol.gov\)](#). (250-word max)

UCC: There is preliminary evidence, based on a similar project implemented at UCC's Bruce-Guadalupe Community School with K5-3rd graders, which has seen wonderful success of the program with teachers, students, and children.

OEIC: There is preliminary evidence, based on jurisdictions across the United States who have implemented literacy in everyday spaces projects- including laundromats, playgrounds, grocery stores, public housing, family courts and more – as learning-rich environments that promote children's early brain and language development, as well as neighborhood equity.

HEAR WI: In 2021, HEAR Wisconsin conducted a pilot with Milwaukee County DHHS Disabilities Services to engage families with newborn children of color identified at birth with hearing loss, who were referred through the Wisconsin WE TRAC System and primarily resided in areas of the County where barriers to services are most significant. Through the pilot, HEAR Wisconsin was able to identify and connect multiple families in need of other supports that allowed the family to meaningfully participate in services.

Bto3: The Birth to 3 Program is a federally-mandated Early Intervention Program (Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act – IDEA) designed to support families of children with

developmental delays or disabilities under the age of three. It is a longstanding program that funds and implements evidence- based programming across the US.

ARPA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Provide a detailed overview of the applicant’s experience managing federal funds. Detail any experience ensuring accurate data collection and adherence to federal reporting requirements. If this is an internal application, detail any experience managing contracts and ensuring reporting deadlines are met. If this is an external applicant, detail any experience receiving funding from Milwaukee County and ensuring reporting deadlines are met.

Milwaukee County DHHS will serve as the manager for the initiative. The leadership, contracts and fiscal teams have extensive experience managing federal funds. This includes entities such as HUD and SAMHSA, fox example. Furthermore, DHHS managed several millions of dollars for COVID- 19 economic relief that was awarded to Milwaukee County from the US Dept. of the Treasury through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act. The other partners also have substantial experience receiving and managing Federal and County funds.

DHHS is further prepared to support community- based entities who may apply for funding through the participatory budgeting process by partnering with entities such as Hope House, Community Advocates, etc. to serve as fiscal agents for the community- based entities who may require additional professional service resources (i.e., accounting).

ARPA FUNDS REQUESTED

Provide the total request amount to be spent between 2022 – 2026. Explain how funds will be incurred and encumbered by December 31, 2024. Include if the project has matching funds or resources. (250-word max)

Partner	Amount Requested from ARPA	Matching Funds
United Community Center	\$254,500	\$75,650 (UCC and in-kind)
HEAR WI	\$120,000	
City of Milwaukee OECl	\$100,000	\$315,700 (City of MKE ARPA)
DHHS- Bto3	\$64,136	
DHHS- Participatory Budgeting	\$1,000,000	
Total Requested	\$1,538,636	

Milwaukee County DHHS will serve as the manager for the initiative. Contracts and specific codes will be set up to ensure funds are allocated appropriately. Each partner also has complex accounting systems (i.e., UCC utilizes Financial Edge finance system) which ensures that expenses align to accounts and contract standards as dictated.

BUDGET

Complete the short-form budget and provide a formula for your calculation by defining the expense item, number of units, and cost per unit for the requested project period. Please add rows as necessary. In the table below, outline any matching funds or resources. Please note: all costs needed for a project should be included in the budget below (example: staffing capacity, rent/space, utilizes, etc.).

Please refer to attached budgets submitted as attachments.