

**2014 Child Development Division
Strengthening Families Grants
SCOPE OF WORK TO BE PERFORMED**

A. PROGRAM BACKGROUND

The Child Development Division (CDD) has a long history of providing targeted grants to high quality child care programs. The purpose of these grants has been to help low income and/or at-risk children gain access to high quality services that are part of a family's protective services plan.

Currently, CDD grants to high quality programs incorporate research from the national Center on the Study of Social Policy about how high quality programs can intentionally strengthen families through specific policies and practices. This grant to a high quality child care program is one of the "Strengthening Families Grants" because of this.

To receive this Strengthening Families Grant, the Subrecipient has applied for the grant and has agreed to continue to meet the following criteria:

- Have an enrollment of 25% participation in the CDD Child Care Financial Assistance Program
- Have 4 or 5 stars in Vermont's STep Ahead Recognition System (STARS)
- Have CDD Specialized Child Care Provider status
- Provide a range of comprehensive services¹ to children and families, including determining children's overall health and relationship to medical insurance, a medical home and related health services.
- Commit to program strategies identified in the Strengthening Families approach as primary prevention strategies that support and strengthen families (see a description of the Strengthening Families approach at <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/basic-onepagers/Strengthening-Families-for-Practitioners.pdf> and at <http://www.cssp.org/reform/strengthening-families/resources/strengthening-families-101>)

B. SERVICE DESCRIPTION

1. Service Description

Provide comprehensive child care and family services including:

- Determining children's overall health and relationship to medical insurance, a medical home and related health services
- Implementing specific strategies that are supported and in-line with those identified by the national Strengthening Families research on protective factors
- Supporting continuity of care and regular attendance for enrolled children
- Participating in regional/community child family support activities including BBF regional council and partnerships with family child care homes and other centers

¹ Comprehensive services as defined for the purpose of this offering means child care enhanced by services to specifically support; children's health; a developmentally beneficial early education experience; children's social and emotional competence and wellness; meaningful inclusions and early education for children with disabilities; healthy nutrition and food security for children and families; family education and empowerment; and linkages and partnerships between service providers, local schools and other organizations in the community.

- Ensuring nutritious meals and snacks are provided to enrolled children

2. Target Population and Eligibility Criteria

- Children/families eligible for and participating in the CDD Child Care Financial Assistance Program (at least 25% of enrolled children).
- Children/families who are receiving specialized child care services: including children with an open case with the Family Services Division of the Department for Children and Families (including foster children), children in families participating in Reach Up, refugee children and teen parents.

3. Geographical Area:

Services to be provided will be within the child care program and within the areas and places that families gather to learn and meet with each other as per the strengthening families' protective factors policies and practices.

The program will serve families and children who live within the geographic service area of the program. This service area is flexible and depends on where families with enrolled children live and upon the outreach conducted by the program and related agencies such as the Child Care Resource and Referral Agency.

4. Length of time:

September 1, 2014, to June 30, 2016

C. SERVICE GOALS & OUTCOMES:

Goals & Objectives

The services enhanced by this Strengthening Families grant relate to the following CDD/DCF goals:

- Children are ready for school
- Children live in stable and supported households

The overarching objective of this grant is to have a positive and measurable impact on the above goals. The outcomes of this grant will contribute to the understanding of the efficacy of high quality programs implementing Strengthening Families protective factors policies and practices in achieving these goals.

Outcomes:

CDD FAP and specialized child care eligible children have access to the program.

- 25% of enrolled children are participating in the CDD Financial Assistance Program including specialized care

Continuity of care is supported/experienced by children.

- Attendance of children eligible for CDD FAP is consistent with their approved schedule

- Documentation is maintained of support and outreach activities for families whose attendance is not consistent
- Reasons for withdrawal and for children exiting the program are documented
- Transitions to new programs or services will be handled in a family centered professional manner

Family strengths are recognized and enhanced.

- Programs will use the state approved 6 question parent survey based on the National Center for the Study of Social Policy Protective Factors Survey. Programs may choose to use the longer more comprehensive survey provided by the Strengthening Families National Network but if this is used the subrecipient needs only to report to the state the parent feedback on the core state approved 6 questions.
- Families will have the opportunity to provide feedback to the program using the Strengthening Families parent questionnaire

Children will be healthy and well nourished.

- Policies are implemented that determine the child's access to a medical home and/or health services and insurance and outcomes of this policy are documented.
- If eligible, the program participates in the USDA Child and Adult Care Food Program. If not, there is an effective family centered policy that will ensure enrolled children have nutritious meals and snacks

The community capacity to strengthen families and provide high quality care is enhanced.

- Participation in regional systems efforts/partnerships such as (but not limited to) the Building Bright Futures Regional Council, the local Children's Integrated Services Team, local school district and Starting Points networks and other programs providers contributes to a broader understanding of how child care programs in partnership with families and community .
- The program has an overall professional development plan that includes education/training on topics that contribute to understanding and implementing supports that enhance the staff/program's capacity to support/develop the child and families protective factors as defined by the Center for the Study of Social Policy.

Deliverables & Outputs:

Programs will be required to:

- Use the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) Strengthening Families Program Assessment tool one time during the grant period. Adhere to CSSP recommended self-assessment practices that includes staff and parents as well as the director.
- Create and submit a program improvement plan that results from the Strengthening Families program self assessment survey (s). (If a plan of this type is done as part of a STARS application during the grant period, this program plan may be submitted as part of this grant requirement).
- Participate in a Vermont Strengthening Families Learning Community. Minimal participation will include program staff participation in quarterly webinars or conference calls and an annual full day meeting or conference as available.

D. SPECIFICATIONS

Service Delivery & Activities:

High quality child care services will be delivered in the context of strengthening families protective factors. This includes the following:

- Full day/full year child care services
- Attention and follow-up with the family regarding child attendance
- Program documents, as approved by the state, absence of target population when there are extended times during which the program is working with the family to ensure return to the program and continuity.
- Implementing Strengthening Families family/child activities
- Documentation regarding children's medical home and health insurance status

Mandatory Requirements, Standards & Targets:

- Accepting Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CDD Financial Assistance Program) Maximum Rate as full payment for child care services provided to families receiving 100% of Child Care Financial Assistance Program benefit.
- Maintain 4 or 5 star level with no less than 2 points in the Families and Communities Arena
- Maintain CDD FAP enrolled children at 25% of total enrollment
- Maintain Specialized Child Care Provider status
- Maintain continuity of care. Target: 75% of target population maintains their enrolled status for the grant period

E. PERFORMANCE MEASURES:

- Program demonstrates 100% compliance with previously stated grant outcomes and related activities, targets and specifications (Sections A, B, C and D) including:
- Documented use of the Center for Social Policy Strengthening Families Program Assessment tool through submission of outcomes and related program plan.
- Continuity of care improves as measured by attendance records and compared to participants in CCFAP including specialized care in other non Strengthening Families programs. (CDD will be a partner in the performance measure.)
- 70% of parents report positive family experiences (protective factors) as part of their overall experience of having an enrolled child in the program. (CDD will be a partner in this performance measure.)
- A general report on the learning/developmental outcomes of the target (child) population during the course of the grant period. This report should be based on the practice of child observation/assessment as required by STARS and/or NAEYC.

F. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION AND EVALUATION

1. The CDD will monitor core compliance with this grant with information provided through BFIS including CC FAP eligible children enrollment and attendance, star level and specialized care status.
2. Subrecipients will maintain the following records and submit them four times during the grant

period. (January 2015, July 2015, January 2016 and July 2016. (See also payment provisions):

- Special activities to support continuity of care and
- New or ongoing strengthening families' activities
- Outcomes from the Strengthening Families Program Self Assessment
- Summary report of parents' response to the 6 question Strengthening Families Parent Survey
- A general report on the learning/developmental outcomes of the target (child) population during the course of the grant period. This report should be based on the practice of child observation/assessment as required by STARS and/or NAEYC.
- Reports must indicate significant progress toward the measurable outcomes in Section E. If sufficient progress is not being made, the subrecipient in conjunction with State Grant Manager, will develop a corrective action plan signed by both parties. Ongoing funding will be contingent on effective implementation of the plan and achievement of agreed upon outcomes. Overall funding may be reduced if outcomes are not fully addressed.