

**Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage  
Parent Education and Support Programming  
Request for Proposal**

**RELEASE DATE: July 14, 2021**

**PLEASE NOTE**

**The deadline for all proposals is: August 27, 2021, at 1 p.m.**

**This deadline is firm, no exceptions.  
Any submission received past this deadline will not be  
considered.**

**Please see Section Three for proposal submittal instructions.**

**Do not deviate from the format of this RFP.**

**If a proposal does not include all components, it may be  
considered incomplete and will not be eligible for funding.**



Supported by the Kent County Ready by Five Millage

## SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

### I. About the Ready by Five Millage

On November 6, 2018, Kent County voters approved the Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage for 0.25 mills over a six-year period to provide dedicated and sustainable funding for programs that improve the health, school readiness and well-being of children ages 0-5.

Funds are being strategically invested in programs that contribute to what has been identified in Kent County as four “contributing indicators” of Kindergarten success that are defined below.

Objective to ensure K-Readiness	What the result be in Kent County
Parents will have increased access to resources and information	All parents have access to resources and information that impart knowledge and skills about their child’s development or health as well as assist with a wide variety of family needs. Programs offer timely support with navigating resources to ensure basic needs such as shelter, clothing, food, and other necessities are accessed by families in need.
Healthy Expectant and New Parents Programming - Increasing Mother’s Health & Well-Being	All mothers receive adequate prenatal care <sup>1</sup> . Programs address prenatal smoking and non-prescription drug use during pregnancy with all expectant mothers. Programs funded contribute to improved mother/baby bonding. As new mothers are supported, there is an increase with breastfeeding and new mothers are reporting fewer concerns about their emotional wellbeing.
More Children Developmentally on Track -Increase in Developmental and Social Emotional Screening and Connections	All young children are universally screened for developmental concerns using the ASQ and ASQ-SE screening tools. Children with identified concerns are connected to services and interventions that support receptive and expressive language, socioemotional development, fine/gross motor development, and other developmental concerns.
More Children are Healthy - Healthy and Safe Home Environment	There are no children with high blood lead levels and thus children are less at risk for learning, behavior and health complications caused by lead poisoning.

Ready by Five investments will support an early childhood system that helps all children and families thrive will lead to a community in which everyone can fully participate and contribute. Ready by Five funded programs have an important role to play in this process.

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<sup>1</sup> Adequate prenatal care is defined according to the Kotelchuck Index.

## II. Funding Details

The Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funding seeks proposals for quality programming meeting specifications in one of the four Request for Proposals (RFP) to serve expecting mothers and children from birth through age five in all of Kent County’s communities.

The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board will review and recommend proposals to be awarded funding.

Agencies will be reimbursed on a monthly basis for expenses up to the total amount of funds awarded. Reimbursement will be only for the actual, reasonable, and allowable costs of programming. Agencies awarded funding will agree to expend any and all payments solely for the purpose(s) as specified in the Service Provider Agreement.

All amounts are contingent on the actual annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners through the Fiscal Year 2022 and 2023 budget year.

Contracts will begin January 1, 2022, and continue through December 31, 2023.

Agencies awarded funding will provide an implementation timeline during the contracting process. Services are expected to commence January 1, 2022 in accordance with this timeline.

For this round of funding, the following estimates are available at this time:

Year 1	Year 2
\$8,000,000	\$8,000,000

*Note: These figures represent a best estimate of the total maximum set of funds to be allocated across providers awarded funds. All figures above are rounded. Actual amounts available to award may vary as they are contingent on the actual annual Kent County property tax capture.*

## III. Overview of Request for Proposals

This round will be deployed across four separate funding opportunities. Only one program type may be selected for each proposal submitted. Agencies may apply for more than one opportunity.

For more information and specifications, see Section Two of the respective RFP listed below.

### *RFP 1: Outreach and Navigation Services*

Outreach and Navigation programs ensure that parents know what resources and services are available to support the healthy development and early learning of their young children and have access to the service(s) of their choice that are appropriate for the level of their need. Outreach services reach out to and engage expectant parents and parents of young children to support engagement, with a strategic focus on those with the highest needs. Navigation services identify needs and bridge all families to early childhood information and services.

### *RFP 2: Healthy Development Services*

Healthy Development Programming follows evidence-based or evidence-informed practices that demonstrate success in supporting positive health behaviors and that drive better health outcomes for children from birth through five years, as well as expectant parents. Programming in this area will specifically focus on improving outcomes related to healthy births, child health, well-being and ensuring children are developmentally on track. This Request for Proposal will require programs work in tandem or complementary to home visiting programming. (Home visiting program proposals applying under this category will not be considered.) Proposals may include one of the following three types of programming:

- **Healthy Expectant and New Parent Programming:** As a result of services, expectant mothers and new parents will have access to the information and social support they need to be more informed, confident, and empowered to make healthier choices for themselves, their children, and their families.
- **Developmental and Social Emotional Screenings and Connection:** Children through the age of five years and their caregivers have access to services that maximize the child's physical and emotional health and ensures children have regular developmental screenings to identify developmental delays, disabilities, and emotional challenges. Also included in this program type are services ensuring children and their caregivers will have access to clinical interventions that specifically supports a healthy parent-infant attachment, as well as address positive social/emotional development of children. These programs may also address parental well-being through facilitated group supports to support the acquisition of new coping skills and resources to strengthen the parent's overall well-being.
- **Healthy and Safe Home Environment Programming:** Families have access to supports that address environmental home health in Kent County. Services could include, but are not limited to, environmental home health screening (to reduce home-based environmental health hazards regarding lead, asthma, accidental injury, etc.), child blood lead screening, and case management for addressing lead and environmental hazards, including referrals to lead remediation resources. (Note: funds may not be used to cover costs related to home repairs or lead remediation services)

### *RFP 3: Early Learning Programming*

A separate RFP will fund programming supporting early learning and development that responds to the diverse families and children residing in Kent County. All programming will incorporate elements from the [Early Childhood Standards of Quality](#) (ECSQ) as provided by the Michigan State Board of Education.

Agencies may apply under one of two program types:

- Play and Learn Community programming: offers age-appropriate activities to nurture cognitive, social and emotional development. Play and Learn Communities provide supports for caregivers and to offer linkages to developmental screenings and early intervention services.
- Early Literacy and Learning Programming: A new area of service being introduced for 2022 will fund evidence-based programming supporting improved language ability, listening and communication skills in young children. Programming will include one or more of ECSQ expectations including creative arts, language and early literacy development, early technology literacy as well as early learning in the areas of mathematics, science, and social studies.

### *RFP 4: Parent Education and Support*

A separate RFP will fund programs offering parent education through home visiting as well as ancillary supports addressing the preventable causes of infant mortality. As a result of services, expectant mothers and parents will have access to the information, resources, and social support they need to be more confident and empowered to make informed choices for themselves, their children and their families. Proposals may include one of the following two types of programming:

- Home Visiting Programming: Home visiting programming recognized by the [HomVee \(USDHHS\)](#) or [State of Michigan MIECHV](#) as an evidence based home visiting model. Evidence-informed home visiting models will also be considered.
- Child Safety Initiatives: A new area of service being introduced for 2022 will fund services to support child safety – specifically safe sleep and automobile safety for children birth through five years of age who are currently living in Kent County. Services will ensure there is increased availability of cribs for families who are unable to afford a safe environment. Professionals will provide education to parents so they can learn the ABCs of Safe Sleep (1. Baby is sleeping Alone, 2. on their Back, and 3) in a Crib) in an effort to reduce the number of infant deaths due to unsafe sleeping environments. Services will also ensure babies, infants, and children (through age 5) are secure in the appropriate car seat when being transported by automobile. In addition to providing families who are unable to afford a car seat, a professional will be available to train parents on proper installation of the car seat.

## IV. Funding Mechanisms

First Steps Kent (FSK) is committed to improving outcomes while ensuring that taxpayer dollars are spent responsibly. For agencies funded under specific Service and Program Types, FSK is offering a performance-based funding mechanism in which a portion of payments will be linked to the provider's ability to achieve select process and performance objectives.

Service and Program Types eligible for this option:

- All Healthy Development Program types (as described below in RFP 2)
- Parent Education and Support – Home Visiting Programming (as described in RFP 4)

Payments from this procurement will come from two sources:

- **Fee-For-Service Payments**, which will be paid on a reimbursement basis as a service is provided and invoiced each month.
- **Milestone Payments**, which will be made based on the extent to which the provider is able to achieve pre-determined programmatic milestone metrics that are consistent with quality implementation and fidelity to its program model. Milestone metrics will be contract-specific to fit the varying specification of each program model.

Providers will be reimbursed through Fee-For-Service Payments, invoiced on a monthly basis, during Year 1. Additionally, providers may earn Milestone Payments in excess of their Fee-For-Service Payments. These milestone payments will be capped at 2% of their Fee-For-Service billings for the performance period.

## V. Requirements of all Funded Agencies

### *Program Modifications Due to Social Distancing Requirements*

- A. All proposing agencies will have a plan to offer modified programming to addressing physical distancing requirements, as needed. This includes being flexible to meet parent preference to have alternatives when in-person supports are not an option due to circumstances such as a family is quarantining or remote services is still desired by parents, as needed.

### *Ready by Five Service Provider Manual*

- A. The Ready by Five Service Provider Manual lays out all policy expectations and guidelines for programs funded with Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funding. All agencies awarded funding will be expected to comply with all the policies, procedures, responsibilities, guidelines, terms, and conditions stated in the Manual.

*Program Monitoring Requirements*

- A. All agencies will attend all scheduled Service Provider meetings as well as participate in the Ready by Five Provider Network Quality Improvement Consortium meetings and initiatives.
- B. Child and expectant mother data will be submitted monthly and at the individual level to Kent County Health Department via a secure link.
  - a. Information includes demographics, service file and referral tracking (if applicable to your program)
  - b. This data submission follows a very specific .csv file format with required fields and codes as defined in the [Ready by Five Standardized Data Definitions](#).
  - c. Agencies will be required to sign a data agreement with First Steps Kent and Kent County Health Department as part of the contracting process.
- C. Agencies awarded funding will be required to report actual costs for reimbursement purposes, as well as monthly individual-level data and quarterly reports as follows:

	Monthly Invoice (By the 7 <sup>th</sup> of the month)	Monthly Client, Service, and Referral Data Submission (by the 15 <sup>th</sup> of each month)	Quarterly Report (By 15 <sup>th</sup> of April, July, October, and January)	Additional Details
<b>How Submitted:</b>	<i>Submitted through e-Clmact</i>	<i>Submitted to KCHD</i>	<i>Submitted through e-Clmact</i>	
<b>Actual Expenses</b>	★			<i>Program financials provided approximately every 6 months</i>
<b>Number Served</b>		★	★	
<b>Number of Encounters</b>		★		
<b>Ready by Five Indicators</b>		★		
<b>Program Specific Outcome</b>			★	
<b>Narrative Explanation of Variances &amp; Implementation Timeline Update</b>			★	

- D. All agencies are required to participate in an annual program assessment. During the assessment, compliance with specifications in the Service Provider Agreement and the [Ready by Five Service Provider Manual](#) will be reviewed.

E. Each year First Steps Kent will conduct one fiscal assessment of Service Provider’s performance to assure financial compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and all financial policies as outlined in the [Ready by Five Service Provider Manual](#).

F. From data and reports submitted as described above, contract metrics will be tracked as follows:

a. Service Provider will be required to provide narrative to explain why there is a deviation from the 1/12 monthly amount (specifically, the annual award/12) of projected expenses if 10% or greater. Service Providers may invoice for amounts higher. First Steps Kent uses the 1/12 amount to identify programs that may be underspending or overspending.

$$\frac{\text{Actual Spent To Date}}{\text{Total Annual Projected}} = \% \text{ Annual Spending To Date}$$

b. Actual numbers served will be compared to projected served. Service Provider will be required to provide narrative to explain why there is a deviation in the estimated number of individuals served if 10% or greater.

$$\frac{\text{Actual Served Individuals To Date}}{\text{Projected Served Individuals To Date}} = \% \text{ Served Individuals To Date}$$

c. Encounter Units will not be used for invoicing but will be tracked as part of the contract monitoring process. Actual encounters will be compared to projected number of encounters per individual served stated in the Service Provider Agreement. (Number of encounters will be confirmed during the contracting process.) Service Providers will be required to explain why there is a deviation in the amount if 10% or greater.

$$\frac{\text{Actual Total Encounters To Date}}{\text{Total Projected Encounters}} = \% \text{ Encounters Completed}$$

## SECTION TWO: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

### I. Overview of Parent Education and Support Programming

Parent Education and Support Programming provides services to expectant parents and children through age five currently residing in Kent County, Michigan.

In addition to a focus on parent support, the goals of this RFP are:

- **Increase cross-sector collaboration** between providers to ensure families are being connected with needed services in the form of a warm handoff through other referrals.
- **Reduce outcome disparities** by supporting models that serve traditionally underserved community members based on their racial background, zip code of residence or cultural factors.

Parents hold the keys to their child's success. Equipping parents with key information, support, and connections to resources will increase outcomes related to child health and well-being, including:

- Educating parents about the causes of child mortality. Nationally, the number one cause of mortality, (reported at 31.5% of deaths FY 2019), for children ages one-six is unintentional injury.<sup>2</sup> According to MDHHS, in 2019, in the State of Michigan, 9.9% of infant deaths died due to accidents and most of these accidents were due to accidental suffocation in bed.<sup>3</sup>
- Educating parents about the role immunizations play in their child's health. The most current data for Kent County shows 77.3 % of children ages 19-35 months have been fully immunized. It is speculated the number has dropped due to children not being seen for regular well-child visits during the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>4</sup>
- Increasing the number of parents reading to their child every day. According to 2018-2019 data for the State of Michigan, 33% of families read to their child every day. An additional 23.4% were read to four-six days per week, and 38.6% of children were read to one-three days per week.<sup>5</sup>
- Ensuring parents have tools to screen their young children for developmental concerns. According to 2018-2019 data for the State of Michigan, 29.3% of children ages nine-35 months received a development screening using a parent-complete screening tool in the past year.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Center for Disease Control and Prevention, Injury, Prevention and Control, Fatal Injury Dataset. Accessed on 7/5/2021 at <https://www.cdc.gov/injury/wisqars/fatal.html>

<sup>3</sup> Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Summary of 2019 Infant Death Statistics access on 7/5/21 at: <https://www.mdch.state.mi.us/osr/InDxMain/Infsum05.asp>

<sup>4</sup> Michigan League for Public Policy Kids Count in Michigan 2021 Report. Available at: <https://mlpp.org/2021kcgeographicprofiles/>

<sup>5</sup> Source: 2018-2019 National Survey of Children's Health accessed on 7/5/2021 at <https://www.childhealthdata.org>

<sup>6</sup> Source: 2018-2019 National Survey of Children's Health, Title V Maternal Child and Health Service Block Grant Measures for Michigan. Accessed on 7/5/2021 at <https://www.childhealthdata.org>

Home visiting is a two-generation, preventative approach that matches expectant parents as well as new parents with a trained early childhood or maternal infant professional. Programming is holistic and designed to meet the specific needs of each family being served and ensures parents are equipped with timely information about their child’s development as well as connection to community resources and supports.

Home visiting services address a number of outcomes across child health, maternal health, family economic well-being, positive parenting practices, and school readiness such as reductions in child maltreatment, family economic self-sufficiency, increasing linkages to community resources and supports, as well as reductions in family violence.

Nationally, programs have been evaluated and find that home visiting programs have a positive impact on indicators related to cognitive development and behavior, including higher IQs and language scores, higher grade point averages and achievement scores at age nine, and higher graduation rates from high school.<sup>7</sup>

The Michigan Home Visiting Report give examples of how parents enrolled in programs across the state are more likely to receive adequate prenatal care, the rate of preterm births is lower for women enrolled, and better outcomes amongst other maternal-child outcomes such as reduced smoking during pregnancy and increase success with breastfeeding.<sup>8</sup>

Also important to parents’ success is access to ancillary services that provide information and specific material supports when families cannot access products that ensure their child’s safety due to considerable financial constraints.

First Steps Kent is requesting proposals for programs that ensure expectant mothers and parents will have access to the information, resources, and social support they need to be more confident and empowered to make informed choices for themselves, their children, and their families.

This RFP will fund two program types:

- Home Visiting: expanding the amount of funding already available in Kent County that is currently funding Home Visiting programming.
- Child Safety Initiatives: providing a separate amount of funds to promote child safety in Kent County.

Please note: Proposing Agencies may apply under the Home Visiting Program type to offer parent education through home visiting -or- apply under the Child Safety Program Type to offer ancillary supports addressing the preventable causes of infant mortality. If an agency is interested in applying for

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<sup>7</sup> Source: The Research Case for Home Visiting, Zero to Three. Available at: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/144-the-research-case-for-home-visiting>

<sup>8</sup> Michigan Home Visiting Report, 2017 accessed at: [https://www.michigan.gov/documents/homevisiting/Home\\_Visiting\\_Initiative\\_Report\\_2017\\_637278\\_7.pdf](https://www.michigan.gov/documents/homevisiting/Home_Visiting_Initiative_Report_2017_637278_7.pdf)

both program types, they must submit separate proposals under each program type as these program types cannot be combined into one proposal.

## II Attributes of Requested Services

Agencies responding to this RFP will consider how their proposed program works in tandem or complements [programs currently funded by the Ready by Five Millage](#) and when possible, serve additional areas, communities or groups where current available services may be limited.

All models must employ professionals with expertise who are registered nurses, nurse practitioners, parent coaches, educators, social workers, community health workers, or other similarly trained professionals who can provide culturally appropriate services and who have completed a background check.

Providers may apply for Parent Education and Support Programming funds to support programs that focus on one of the following two (2) types of programming:

### *Program Type 1: Home Visiting Programming*

Services are provided in the home environment and include ongoing parent education, developmental screenings, health and behavioral health support as well as connection to resources with an emphasis on culturally relevant services, father engagement and inclusiveness as well as strengths-based approaches.

Programming will follow evidence-based or evidence-informed practices that demonstrate success in driving better outcomes for children from birth through five years of age, as well as expectant parents. Home Visiting Models that are recognized by the [HomVee \(USDHHS\)](#) or [State of Michigan MIECHV](#) as an evidence-based home visiting model will be considered. Evidence-informed home visiting models will also be considered.

At minimum, all programs must implement the [Ages and Stages Questionnaire](#) (ASQ-3 and ASQ SE) if they serve families beyond the postpartum period. Programs may opt to include additional screening and assessment tools to further identify needs and guide families.

Programs applying under this RFP will impacting one or more of the following Ready by Five Result Indicators:

Indicators included in the Healthy Expectant and New Parents Objective:

- Decrease in mothers smoking during pregnancy.
- Decrease in mothers using non-prescribed substances during pregnancy.
- Ensure expectant mothers and primary caregivers are screened for wellbeing.
- Ensure mothers receive adequate prenatal care. (Defined by the Kotelchuck Index)

- Increase in healthy births. (Defined as Babies Born at Healthy Weight at 2500 Grams)
- Increase in mothers breastfeeding.
- Programs may propose additional indicators and results that support in this area.

Indicators included in the Developmental and Social Emotional Screening and Connection Objective:

- Increase in the number of children screened by program for developmental concerns.
- Increase in the number of children screened by program for social emotional concerns.
- Increase in the number of children successfully connected to supports when a developmental or social emotional concerns is identified.
- Programs may propose additional indicators and results that support in this area.

### *Program Type 2: Child Safety Initiatives*

A new area of service being introduced for 2022 will fund services to support child safety – specifically safe sleep and automobile safety for children from birth through five years of age who are currently living in Kent County.

This opportunity is open to all agencies who will specifically commit to:

- Identifying a clear outreach plan to ensure families know about the availability of this service.
- Verifying a family’s residency and identifying a family’s ability to pay by following a standardized cost-share formula as outlined in the [Ready by Five Service Provider Manual’s Cost Share Policy](#).
- Being visible and accessible, serving all families in Kent County (i.e., not limiting the services to only individuals enrolled in a specific program.)
- With the delivery of a crib, providing 1:1 services to demonstrate how the crib operates and information to parents that emphasizes the importance of the ABCs of Safe Sleep (1. Baby is sleeping Alone, 2. on their Back, and 3) in a Crib) in an effort to reduce the number of infant deaths due to unsafe sleeping environments.
- Providing 1:1 services to families that will ensure babies, infants, and children (through age five) are secure in the appropriate car seat when being transported by automobile. In addition to providing families who are unable to afford a car seat, a trained professional will be available to demonstrate proper installation of the car seat.
- Purchasing car seats and cribs through vendors or organizations that allow for items to be purchased at a reduced rate.
- Agency must have adequate facility space to properly store items as well as procedures in place to fully track inventory.
- Develop procedures to ensure families requiring interpretation services are effectively served.

Please Note: While the amount of funding allocated to proposals under the Child Safety program type will ultimately be determined by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board, First Steps Kent expects the total contracts awarded under the Child Safety program type will not exceed \$200,000.

### III. Equity and Inclusion Statement

Ready by Five investments will support an early childhood system that helps all children and families thrive.

In the approach to identifying needs in Kent County, agencies will consider group-based factors and deploy targeted approaches that address the varying needs and circumstances of each group eligible for Ready by Five funded services. Ready by Five has a comprehensive interest in improving equity for marginalized demographics, especially communities of color and families in households with incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level.

### IV. Criteria Breakdown

All proposals will be reviewed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board. This body will recommend what proposals are funded and for how much. The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board will use the following evaluation criteria to select recipient organizations based on their responses to the RFP.

Programming Criteria	Total Points
Clearly articulated plan that demonstrates relevant, high-quality services and integrates evidence-informed practice as well as Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage specifications.	15
Articulates a clear need for the proposed service as well as consideration of how this proposed service will align and cooperate with current available services.	15
Proposal includes a plan to deliver services with a special consideration for underserved populations and geographies not currently served.	20
Demonstrates established partnership(s) with community partners to reach and engage families as well as fully serve families.	15
Equity and inclusion are fostered within the organization at the leadership and staff levels.	20
Proposed costs are comparable to all providers for specific Program Type and interventions.	15
<b>Total Possible Points</b>	<b>100</b>

*\*Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.*

In addition to program components, organizations must meet all requirements listed below to be considered for funding.

<b>Additional Required Criteria**</b>
Proposing Agency's financial audit shows the organization to be in good financial standing.
Proposing Agency has adequate funding to cover program costs and plans to pursue additional sources of funding in addition to Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
Proposing Agency has clearly explained how current funding will not be supplanted by Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage Funds.
The expenses include description and calculations (where applicable) and provide sound reasoning for why each budget item is necessary.
The submitted proposal is complete.

*\*\*Proposals must meet all listed requirements to be considered for funding.*

## SECTION THREE: RFP PROCESS

### I. Directions for Submission- Letter of Intent and Proposals

**A. The deadline to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) is August 6, 2021, at 5 p.m.**

Information provided in the LOI will be considered preliminary and used by First Steps Kent for planning purposes. Information will not be used for proposal scoring purposes.

**B. The deadline for proposals is August 27, 2021, at 1 p.m.**

This deadline is firm, no exceptions. First Steps Kent is not responsible for delays caused by any occurrence. Under no circumstances shall submissions received after the time be considered.

**B. LOIs and Proposals will only be accepted in electronic format and must be submitted through the e-CImpact system.**

- All forms and required information must be submitted by the stated deadline.
- If a proposal is missing elements, First Steps Kent may disqualify the proposal from further consideration.
- The e-CImpact system is accessible by any computer with an internet connection and current version of web browser (example: Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, Safari).
- Your agency EIN number is required to set up a profile.
- To access the Ready by Five e-CImpact website, please go to: <https://agency.e-cimpact.com/login.aspx?org=FirstStepsKent>
- Please bookmark the address to easily access e-CImpact at your convenience.
- All additional materials will be posted on the First Steps Kent website at: <https://www.firststepskent.org/millage>
- In the situation your agency has technical issues, please contact First Steps Kent at [readybyfivekent@firststepskent.org](mailto:readybyfivekent@firststepskent.org). Please allow two business days for First Steps Kent to respond.

## II. RFP Timeline

- A. First Steps Kent reserves the right to change the RFP schedule. First Steps Kent also reserves the right to cancel, reissue, or make corrections or amendments to the RFP due to errors or changes identified by First Steps Kent and to otherwise modify the terms of the RFP at any time.
- B. The timeline for the RFP is:

7/14/2021	RFP Issued – Posted on First Steps Kent website
7/14/2021	Preconference #1 (Virtual)
7/15/2021	Preconference #2 (Virtual)
8/6/2021	Letter of Intent Deadline – 5 p.m.
8/9/2021	Question and Answer Period Closes – 5 p.m.
8/16/2021	Final questions and revision to RFP (if necessary) posted to FSK website
8/27/2021	RFP Proposal Submittal Deadline – 1 p.m.

## III. Question and Answer Period

- A. All questions, clarification and interpretations of the RFP must be submitted in writing.
- Requests must be made in writing during the period of July 14, 2021, through August 9, 2021, by 5 p.m. No questions will be accepted after this period.
  - All questions must be submitted in writing via the following on-line form [\[CLICK HERE\]](#)
  - Questions will not be accepted by any other means including, but not limited to, verbal communication, text messages, email communication, and/or by phone.
- B. All answers to questions will be published on the First Steps Kent website accessible at: <https://www.firststepskent.org/millage>
- C. It is the respondent's sole responsibility to monitor all inquiries (including those submitted by other agencies and published by First Steps Kent) to properly prepare proposal for submission.
- D. Two types of questions generally arise. One may be answered by First Steps Kent to offer clarification of a specific section of the RFP. Other questions may be more complex and may require a written amendment to the RFP. First Steps Kent staff will make that decision.

- E. All final answers and notification of amendments to the RFP will be posted on the First Steps Kent website ([www.firststepskent.org](http://www.firststepskent.org)) by August 16, 2021, at 5 p.m.

#### IV. Resident Proposal Review Board

- A. The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board is the body who reviews and determines a recommendation for whether a proposal should be funded and how much funding will be allocated. These recommendations are reviewed and approved by the First Steps Kent Board of Directors and final approval is decided by the Kent County Board of Commissioners.
- B. The Resident Proposal Review Board will use the Programming Criteria Rubric in the RFP's Section Two to guide discussion as they evaluate and score the proposals based on the organization's responses to the RFP questions. Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.
- C. Questions and communication will only be sent to the Primary Contact listed in your agency profile's contact information (please double check the email and phone contact information for this individual is correct prior to submitting). First Steps Kent will reach out by email to Proposing Agencies with questions from the Resident Proposal Review Board. Answers and clarifications will be considered in the proposal review process. **Agencies submitting a proposal should anticipate they will receive emails requiring an urgent response as the Resident Proposal Review Board meets during the dates of September 21 through September 24, 2021.**