

Ready by Five Request for Proposals Question and Answers

Requests must be made in writing during the period of July 14 through August 9, 2021, by 5 p.m.

No questions will be accepted after this period.

Updated: 8/12/21 – FINAL DOCUMENT



Supported by the Kent County Ready by Five Millage

<u>Date Submitted</u>	<u>RFP Document to Reference</u>	<u>Question</u>	<u>Answer</u>
7/14/21	Pre-conference	1. Our program is slightly different than others, as we are working through a medical provider rather than directly with a parent or child to deliver services. Will we need to say indirect, or will we still be direct?	<p>If there are any individual children or families being counted as served as a result of the program, your program would fall under one of the direct encounter types.</p> <p>An example of a current program that would be considered indirect is the Fetal Infant Mortality Review Network. This service does not provide services to specific children but convenes agencies to develop strategies to improve outcomes for children in Kent County.</p>
7/14/21	Pre-conference	2. If I have an e-CImpact account through another funder, can I use the same account or do I need to set up a new account?	All agencies applying for Ready by Five Millage funding will need to set up a new profile using the link provided in the RFP.
7/14/21	Pre-conference	3. Is the LOI mandatory?	For planning purposes, First Steps Kent is requesting the LOI be submitted by the stated deadline of August 6, 2021, at 5 p.m. If an agency does not meet this deadline for the LOI, they will not be disqualified, though.
7/14/21	Pre-conference	4. We have some questions specific to our agency, can we schedule a time to meet with First Steps Kent to review our questions?	As this is a competitive process, while the RFP process is open, all questions must be submitted through the Q&A process as described in the RFP document. When the competitive process is not open, First Steps Kent is available to meet 1:1 to discuss agency-specific questions about the funding process.

7/14/21	Pre-conference	<p>5. A shared experience for a number of early childhood service providers is that families may need support that is not met anywhere else in the community, but if met could stabilize a family and prevent them from being in need of deeper/more intensive services (i.e. a family may be served with Navigation services and using the available services in the community, but an unexpected expense occurs that cannot be covered by any other services, example being a car repair to keep a job.) This happens across a variety of services. To seek funding of this sort, is it possible for multiple organizations to apply with a lead organization that would administer this type of funding and immediate support?</p>	<p>Specifications for the RFPs do not currently allow funds to be used for costs related to emergency car repairs, rent assistance, home repairs, diapers, and other materials or services not defined in the RFP.</p> <p>First Steps Kent highly encourages collaboration with agencies and funding sources that are available and intended for these types of services.</p> <p>We want to clarify that funds designated for the Child Safety Initiatives may only be directed to address specific contributors to infant deaths including increasing availability of cribs to provide a safe sleep environment and child safety seats to ensure children are safe while in the car for families who cannot access these materials due to financial constraints.</p>
7/15/21	Pre-conference	<p>6. I understand there is one Primary Contact in e-CImpact, but can multiple individuals from an agency have access to collaborate on the application?</p>	<p>Yes, the Primary Contact is the individual who can add, edit and remove additional users from their agency who have access to the application.</p>
7/15/21	Pre-conference	<p>7. Is there an anticipated percent of the \$8 million in funding that would be expected to be allocated in each of the four funding types?</p>	<p>Not at this time. The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board will determine how the funds are allocated across the four RFP categories.</p>
7/15/21	Pre-conference	<p>8. With the change to only counting one target client (one child per family or expectant parent), will we still be expected to report data in monthly files on all served family members, or only the target client counted/reported?</p>	<p>For situations where there are multiple children in a household benefiting from one encounter of services, the direct 1:1 rate and Outreach and Navigation encounter type require a target child (or expecting mother) to be identified and reported on for each family served.</p> <p>In the situation where there are two children from a household and there are distinct enrollments for a service for each child, both children would be counted. An example would be two siblings are enrolled in the same behavioral health service and each child has a separate appointment time with the clinician. This would count as two children served.</p> <p>(Note: The Group Encounter rate includes <i>all</i> children from the home.)</p>

7/15/21	General Question	9. If First Steps Kent is not able to fully fund the proposal, would there be an opportunity to adjust the proposed budget for a partial award of funding?	Yes. During the review process, agencies being considered for funding will be asked if the service could be provided for a reduced amount and provided specifics related to how a service would be implemented at a lower cost.
7/15/21	General Question	10. How will the cost share amount be calculated for each family? (Past funding was by the unit rate for each organization)	The Cost Share Policy will be updated for 2022. Costs will be based on the average cost per child. This amount would be estimated by taking the annual amount awarded and then divided by the number of children to be served included in the contract.
7/24/2021	Parent Education and Support Programming	11. The 2020-2021 grant allowed charging an indirect cost rate of up to 10% of total direct costs. Is that still the case, or do all indirect costs have to be listed/itemized separately (e.g., utilities, financial support, insurance)?	<p>Indirect administrative costs are allowed. There is not an administrative cost rate formula in place for Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funding. Proposed administrative costs must be reasonable and have available justification if more information is requested.</p> <p>Costs must be itemized and grouped as specified in the budget format by each predefined line items (i.e., insurance/liability, audit fees, etc.).</p>
7/24/2021	Parent Education and Support Programming	12. Could you please give examples of "Outsourced Support Fees," mentioned in the Program Direct Costs and Program Indirect Costs section of the online Budget form on e-CImpact? As well as examples of what would be considered an "Indirect Staff Position"? (Budget Form)	<p>Outsourced support fees would include any expenses that would require an agreement with an outside vendor or organization.</p> <p>Examples of indirect staff positions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data support time for monthly data submission • Scheduling and planning of direct staff time • Marketing/communications related to programming (including recruitment) • Financial staff time to track expenses and submit monthly invoice • Development of agreements (Service Provider Agreement and Partner Agreements) • Leadership staff time to support annual assessment • IT, HR and all other "back room" support staff time • Please note: The President, Executive Director, CEO and Executive Leadership time may be specifically included only if their time is dedicated to specific program activities.

7/26/2021	General Question about RFPs	13. Is the proposal available in a pdf form so we can see the questions prior to submitting the LOI?	<p>In e-Clmact, the full application is not available until the LOI is complete. This is because the application questions will look different based on the Service Type selected and how a few key questions in the service narrative section are answered.</p> <p>We are looking for the Service Type and only a very brief description of the proposed program in the LOI. This should allow each agency to easily move into the application process where more specifics and details will be provided.</p>
7/26/2021	Outreach and Navigation Services	<p>14. The RFP states that funded programs will need to identify a specific screening tool to ensure families are screened for all areas of need related to Social Determinants of Health.</p> <p>a) Are programs required to integrate a standardized screener for this or can they use an internal screening already developed that better relates to their service area? If it has to be universal, what is the expectation for existing service providers and new providers in aligning the assessment of needs of families from these screeners?</p> <p>b) Do screeners need to be tracked and reported on at the case level? (Page 10, Section 2, "screening")</p>	<p>a) There is not a designated screening tool required. Each program may select the screening tool(s) to be included in the proposal. At minimum, the tool must screen for all areas of need related to the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). For the purposes of this RFP, the definition of SDOH areas will follow the CDC, Healthy People 2030 definition.</p> <p>Additional screening tools (i.e., the ASQ screener or other program-specific screening tool) relevant to the service area may also be integrated.</p> <p>All Outreach and Navigation programs must be equipped to navigate families to available early childhood resources and programs.</p> <p>b) Outreach and Navigation programs must be able to track all individuals who have completed a screening at the case level. Programs must also be able to track all individuals who have received a referral and the outcome of referrals received. More information can be found in the preconference slides and presentation on this.</p>
7/26/2021	Outreach and Navigation Services	15. If an Outreach and Navigation provider uses the ASQ as their screening tool, can it be funded under Outreach and Navigation, or do they need to apply under Developmental Screening in the Healthy Development RFP? (Outreach and Navigation RFP - II. Attributes and Outcomes of Requested Services - Screening (Page 10/11))	<p>If the ASQ screening is used by the Outreach and Navigation model, it can be included in the proposed Outreach and Navigation budget. Please include a description of how the ASQ is used in the program's screening protocol in the Service Narrative. A separate application is not necessary in this scenario.</p>

7/27/2021	General Question about RFPs	16. Will the Program Descriptions submitted under the Intent to Apply forms be used in the application process? If so, will there be an opportunity to revise descriptions?	The program description provided in the Letter of Intent will not be considered in the proposal review process. This information will be used for planning purposes only. Initial information provided in the LOI can be updated in the services narrative section. Please note: the Service Type selected in the LOI process cannot be updated or changed.
7/27/2021	General Question about RFPs	17. If your program has already been approved to waive cost sharing under a prior round of funding, do we need to apply for a cost sharing waiver under this funding as well? Or, does the previous cost sharing waiver carry over from the first round of funding?	In the Budget Narrative section, each agency has the opportunity to provide an explanation of why the Donation and the Cost Sharing Policy cannot be applied in their agency. If a waiver has been previously granted, include the rational language provided in the waiver in this section. This information will be considered in the contracting process if an agency is awarded funding.
7/28/2021	Early Learning Services	18. In the Early Learning RFP, we are asking for clarification on how to interpret what children are eligible to participate. Previously, playgroups were held in settings of all types of caregivers providing complementary expanded services that created play opportunities, coached caregivers, and built capacity in the various caregiver types. On page 10 of the EL RFP it states, "FSK is seeking proposals that respond to the documented shortage of quality early learning programming specifically for children not enrolled in a quality child care program, Great Start Readiness program or Head Start programming." In contrast, on page 11, 7th paragraph it states, "P&L Community programming offers children ages birth through 5 an avenue to community-based early learning programming outside of childcare and/or preschool. Programs are available to children in the care of any types of caregiver (parents, relative aide providers, licensed provider child care staff, preschool teachers, etc.)" Please clarify who can participate and in what setting.	<p>The intent of this statement referenced in the question on page 10 of the RFP is to acknowledge that lack of available services is a gap in Kent County. First Steps Kent acknowledges that the need for these services is broader. The Early Learning Services RFP document has been revised to clarify the RFP intent as seeking responses that ensure all children in Kent County have access to quality early learning programming. We are asking agencies to consider the varying circumstances of families in Kent County and propose programming that can respond as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) the shortage of quality early learning services by targeting programs to communities where children do not have access to programs such as Great Start Readiness Program, Head Start, or quality child care, -and/or- 2) emphasize inclusive and responsive programming to reach and engage distinguished groups in Kent County including, but not limited to families of color, children with special needs, families living in rural areas of the county, and families in households with incomes at or below 200% Federal Poverty Level. This is not an exhaustive list; all proposed groups will be considered. <p>Please note: Play and Learn Programming is not a model that provides child care.</p>

7/28/2021	General Questions	19. Are letters of support to be submitted for the organization as a whole, or for each specific RFP that the organization is applying for? In the portal, it appears that the letters are to be uploaded in the Required Materials section under the organizational information, not for each RFP like was submitted in the past.	Letters of Support are to be submitted for the organization as a whole and should provide support for the organization being qualified to provide quality services to expecting parents and families with children through age five in Kent County.
7/28/2021	General Questions	20. What services are required to participate in Donation and Cost Share requirements?	<p>Programming required to participate in Cost Sharing include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthy Development: a) Healthy Expectant and New Parents; b) Developmental Screenings and Connection; and c) Healthy and Safe Home Environment programming • Early Learning: Early Literacy and Learning programming • Parent Education and Support: Home Visiting Programming and Child Safety Initiatives
7/29/2021	Outreach and Navigation	21. Our program provides screening and referrals for all families provided services. Can you provide more of a description of what services would fit under Outreach and Navigation vs Healthy Development Services?	<p>For the purposes of this RFP, Outreach and Navigation programming serves as the agency reaching and engaging parents, providing screenings to assess a child or family's needs, and then connecting families to resources and services that provide a specialized or specific type of service based on identified needs.</p> <p>The services funded under Healthy Development will offer continuous, long term, or additional supports (in addition to developmental screening and connection to resources) to families that meet the specifications of one Program Type identified in the RFP. Services that offer long term support or case management would fall under Healthy Development.</p> <p>[See question 38 for related question and answer.]</p>
7/29/21	General Questions	22. My organization has a federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement. Can we use that negotiated percentage rather than using the "Program Indirect Costs" table in e-CImpact?	All expenses must be provided in the format as prescribed in the RFP. This allows the Resident Proposal Review Board to understand the actual cost to provide a service and compare costs among all proposals.
7/30/21	Early Learning	23. Early Learning is not listed as a category that falls under cost sharing requirements in the cost sharing policy, but in the Budget Narrative section of the Early Learning application, it asks if the organization can adhere to the cost sharing	<p>Under the Early Learning Service Type there are two types of programs:</p> <p>1) Early Literacy and Learning Programming <u>is not</u> exempt from Cost Sharing.</p> <p>2) Play and Learn Programming <u>is</u> exempt from Cost Sharing.</p>

		policy. Can you confirm that Early Learning is exempt from cost sharing? If so, should we mark "No" to this question?	The additional Service and Program Types will be included in the 2021 Ready by Five Service Provider Manual updates. This question relates to information provided Question 20.
7/31/21	Parent Education and Support (Also falls under General Questions)	24. In the Pre-Conference Power Point, it states that "A complete application for each proposed Program will include.... Proposal Program Certifications" (which is Attachment C), and just below that the slide says, "Submitted at the agency level: Attachment B & C Proposing Agency agreement." Do we need one Attachment C for each program or just one per agency?	In e-CImpact, there are three separate sections that requests the following at the agency level: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Agency Information 2. Attachment A: Agency Staff and Leadership Diversity 3. Required Materials: you will find separate fields to upload Audited Financials, one PDF file containing three Letters of Recommendation, an Org Chart, as well as a designated space to upload signed documents for Attachment B and Attachment C <p>At the Program Level there is one program certification that highlights Ready by Five Millage funding requirements to be reviewed by program leadership as the application for funding is submitted.</p>
8/2/2021	Parent Education and Support (Also falls under General Questions)	25. Are there fillable (Word or excel) versions of the Narrative, Budget, and Budget Justification Forms that we could download to fill in offline and then copy-and-paste to upload via e-CImpact?	The application's questions will look different based on the Service Type selected and how a few key questions in the service narrative section are answered. A fillable word document is not available for this reason.
8/2/2021	General Questions	26. What will the actual expense reporting consist of, specific to staffing costs? What level of detail will be required for monthly invoices?	All agencies will need to provide actual expenses as submitted in the proposal template approximately every six months. The monthly invoicing will be submitted through e-CImpact. This process is currently in development. More details will be shared as things are finalized.
8/2/2021	General Questions	27. Would you consider raising the threshold for allowable property purchases to \$1,500? Due to COVID, it is difficult to get a computer for less than \$1,000, and we will need to purchase some for new Early Childhood staff and possibly replace older machines for existing staff.	This threshold has been established by Kent County. First Steps Kent is not authorizing the purchase of equipment (property costing \$1,000 or higher) in this round of RFPs.

8/2/2021	Outreach and Navigation (Also falls under General Questions)	28. With the switch to reimbursement for actual expenses (which is a great change), it will be difficult to produce an invoice by the 7th of the month immediately following because we do not close our books that quickly, and I suspect few nonprofit agencies do. Can this due date be moved? Otherwise, we may have to accrue/estimate and adjust future invoices.	First Steps Kent is required to have all invoices received, reviewed (and corrected, if needed) as well as formatted and approved before submittal to Kent County-all needing to happen no later than the 20 th of each month. Beginning in 2022, First Steps Kent will be requesting all invoices be submitted no later than the 10 th of the month. Any invoices received after the 10 th will be paid the following month.
8/2/2021	Outreach and Navigation	29.If we received funding for an outreach and navigation project for 2021-22, should we apply for continuation of funds in this round, or will there be a new round of funding that would begin when the 2021-22 funding ends?	At this time First Steps Kent anticipates that an RFP for Outreach and Navigation Services would be issued in 2022 for agencies to apply for continued funding beginning in 2023. If there is anticipated need for additional services in 2022, agencies may apply to expand programming awarded funds in 2021 for this RFP
8/2/2021	General Question	30.In the Budget section, should we include Ready by Five Cost Sharing and Donations in our expense budget?	For the purposes of the proposal budget, only include expenses that would be allocated to the Ready by Five funds awarded.
8/2/2021	Outreach and Navigation Services	31. a) The RFP says: "Proposals could include an innovative, new program or an expansion of current Outreach and Navigation services." However, we will be requesting funds to continue the Outreach and Navigation work funded in 2019-2021, as well as some expansion. b) This question also applies to the last section on page 11 that frames all indicators as "increases" - how does this apply to continuation of existing RB5 funded services?	a) Continuation of previously funded programming is encouraged. If there is anticipated need for additional services in 2022, agencies may propose to expand programming previously awarded funding. b) The increase will be tracked based on performance in the contract beginning January 1, 2022. If there is relevant data from a previous funded contract, this will be considered as Encounter Unit goals are set during the contracting process. (For more information on Encounter Units, see slide 38 from the Preconference presentation.)
8/3/2021	Parent Education and Support	32. For the question regarding referral tracking, are the referrals outward to other services? Or is this meant to be how we track referrals to our own service? (See Program Service Narrative and Details, last question of "Programming Details" section.)	In the 'Proposed Service Narrative and Details' section the application asks, "Does your program regularly provide referrals to services or resources beyond your program?". If your agency answer "Yes" to this question there is a follow up question that requests the agency to describe, "How does your program track referrals that ensure individuals referred are successfully connected to a service or resource?". This question is referring to the referrals your agency provides that are outward to other services and connect families to available services or resources.

8/5/2021	Parent Education and Support (Also falls under General Questions)	33. If our program model utilizes both individual/family (1:1 direct service) and group sessions, are we submitting two RFPs?	If the evidence and effectiveness of a proposing agency's program model is validated by incorporating more than one type of encounter type (i.e. 1:1 direct service and group sessions), the proposing agency should continue to select only one encounter type for the purposes of the proposal <i>and</i> describe all components of the model that fall under each encounter type in the Service Narrative. If awarded funding, additional encounter types described in the proposal narrative may be incorporated into the final contract during the contracting process.
8/5/2021	Healthy Development Services (Also falls under General Questions)	34. We completed the LOI and received an email from e-CImpact stating it was successfully submitted. Is there additional messaging from FSK that we should expect to receive? Wanting to make sure I did not miss a step.	<p>Once the LOI is complete, you will have access to complete the full proposal. Please carefully review the steps in the e-CImpact Agency Training Manual regarding the application submission.</p> <p>If your agency has questions or technical issues with the e-CImpact system, please reach out to First Steps Kent staff at: readybyfivekent@firststepskent.org</p> <p>Note: During the RFP development process First Steps Kent is available to assist with questions and issues specifically related to the e-CImpact online application process. We are unable to answer questions related to the RFP unless they are submitted through the written process as described in the RFP documents.</p>
8/6/2021	Healthy Development Services (Also falls under General Questions)	35. Since all programs funded by Ready by Five now have access to translation and interpretation services, with costs covered by Ready by Five Millage funding, should we include interpretation dollars in our budget?	It is not necessary to include costs related to Translation and Interpretation Services in your proposal's budget.
8/9/2021	General Questions	36. Are subawards allowable as opposed to a subcontract? Or, if a lead applicant's own procurement standards justify a sole source contract, will this be recognized by FSK? For this particular project, one organization is proposing to use millage funding for staff housed at another organization. Due to the specific nature of the work, the lead applicant does not believe a competitive contract would be appropriate.	<p>This RFP allows subcontractor relationships. A subcontractor relationship requires the agency awarded funds to serve as the primary agency. It is the primary agency's responsibility to ensure performance of all subcontracts and must annually assess each subcontractor for contract compliance.</p> <p>Proposing agencies will disclose proposed subcontracts with estimated costs in the Budget and Budget Narrative sections of the proposal (additional details may also be provided in the Service Narrative at the discretion of the applying agency). This will become part of proposal that serves as the mechanism to "bid" for</p>

			<p>Ready by Five Millage funding. Proposing Agencies are not expected to secure outsourced or subcontracted services through a competitive procurement or "bidding" process for services included in a proposal.</p> <p>Technicalities with subcontractors will be reviewed and finalized in the contracting process for all proposals awarded funding.</p> <p>Policies related to subcontractors can be found beginning on page 29 of the Ready by Five Service Provider Manual.</p>
8/9/2021	Healthy Development (Parent Education and Support)	<p>37. The Healthy Development RFP - Child Safety Initiatives is based on the ABCs of Safe Sleep. If an organization can demonstrate that its proposed service meets American Academy of Pediatrics safe sleep guidelines, which offer a more nuanced approach than the ABC acronym, can proposals vary slightly from the ABC approach? For instance, providing pack and plays instead of cribs so that an infant can sleep in close proximity to parents but still on a separate surface?</p>	<p>To clarify, the Child Safety Initiative Programming falls under the Parent Education and Support RFP.</p> <p>Regarding Child Safety Initiatives Programming:</p> <p>Yes, the AAP's safe sleep guidelines would meet expectations.</p> <p>Yes, a Pack-and-Play or similar type crib or bassinet (as described in the AAP guidelines) would be acceptable.</p>
8/9/2021	Outreach and Navigation	<p>38. a) We are trying to determine if we should be applying under Outreach and Navigation or Healthy Development. What are the distinctions between these program types?</p> <p>b) Can we change the Service Type we indicated in the LOI?</p>	<p>a) See Section Two of each RFP for full details.</p> <p>For the purposes of this RFP, Outreach and Navigation programming serves as the agency reaching and engaging parents with young children as well as expecting parents.</p> <p>All programs must have a plan to reach parents, especially those who are not currently engaged in services, screen families using a designated screening tool (see the RFP for more specifics on the screening tool requirements) to assess a child or family's needs, and then connecting families to resources and services that provide a specialized or specific type of service based on identified needs. The intent of these services is to be the "front door" and means for families to connect to information, resources, and individualized long-term support services.</p> <p>The services funded under Healthy Development will offer continuous, individualized, long term, case management, or other type of on-going supports (in addition to developmental screening</p>

			<p>and connection to resources) to families that meet the specifications of one Program Type identified in the RFP.</p> <p>b) It is <u>very</u> important that the service you are proposing clearly aligns to the description, specifications, and evaluation criteria of the RFP and Program Type that you are applying under. You can find this information in Section Two of each RFP. The Service Type your agency intends to apply under must be designated in the LOI.</p> <p>If your agency needs to update the LOI Service Type originally submitted, please reach out to First Steps Kent staff to have your LOI reopened that will allow you to make changes. Staff can be reached at: readybyfivekent@firststepskent.org</p> <p>[See question 21 for related question and answer.]</p>
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