



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

Targeted Life Skills

Release Date: February 28, 2024

Pre-Proposal Conference: March 12, 2024 at 2 p.m.

Proposal Due: March 28, 2024 at 12:00 p.m.

Anticipated Award Notification: May 24, 2024

Anticipated Contract Start: July 1, 2024

Issued by:

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc.
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Baltimore, Maryland 21201

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. Overview of the Project	3
A. OVERVIEW OF BHSB	3
B. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT	3
C. SCOPE OF SERVICE	4
D. FOCUS POPULATION	6
E. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS	6
F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY	6
G. QUALITY AND FINANCIAL REVIEW	6
H. CONTRACTING WITH BHSB	6
II. Overview of RFP	9
A. PURPOSE OF RFP	9
B. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY	9
C. PROPOSAL TIMEFRAME AND SPECIFICATIONS	9
D. AWARD OF CONTRACT	11
E. RFP POSTPONEMENT/CANCELLATION	11
F. APPLICANT APPEAL PROCESS	11
G. GOVERNING LAW AND VACCINATION MANDATES	11
III. Format and Content of Proposal	12
A. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS	12
B. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE OUTLINE AND RATING CRITERIA	12

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

Targeted Life Skills

I. Overview of the Project

A. OVERVIEW OF BHSB

Behavioral Health System Baltimore, Inc. (BHSB) is a non-profit organization tasked by Baltimore City to manage the city's public behavioral health system. As such, BHSB serves as the local behavioral health authority for Baltimore City. In this role, BHSB envisions a city where people live and thrive in communities that promote and support behavioral health and wellness.

BHSB is committed to enhancing the behavioral health and wellness of individuals, families, and communities through:

- The promotion of behavioral health and wellness prevention, early intervention, treatment, and recovery;
- The creation and leadership of an integrated network of providers that promotes universal access to comprehensive, data-driven services; and
- Advocacy and leadership of behavioral health-related efforts to align resources, programs, and policy.

BHSB is committed to promoting behavioral health equity in Baltimore City by ensuring that the behavioral health provider network is culturally and linguistically responsive to the diverse populations served; reducing behavioral health care access barriers for populations known to experience discrimination and marginalization; and supporting communities directly to develop services that are responsive to their unique strengths and needs.

B. OVERVIEW OF PROJECT

BHSB is dedicated to promoting behavioral health equity in Baltimore City and recognizes that early intervention is vital for youth to follow through on this commitment. Studies show that every year substance use is delayed while the adolescent brain develops, the risks of substance misuse and addiction decrease.

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), BHSB is seeking up to three qualified organizations to serve youth aged 12-24 through Life Skills Training (also known as Targeted Life Skills), a substance abuse prevention program designed to prevent youth drug and alcohol misuse, tobacco use, violence, and other risk behaviors by teaching youth self-management skills, social skills, and drug awareness and resistance skills.

To encourage healthy behaviors and help address inequities, selected organizations will teach Life Skills Training to youth cohorts (at least 50 youth per organization) to increase their capacity to cope with the demands of everyday life. Topics will include housing, healthy living, employment, substance misuse, education, financial literacy, youth empowerment, mediating conflict, and restorative practices. Training sessions will provide information related to drug use, emphasizing resistance techniques. These life skills will be taught using a process of instruction, demonstration, feedback, reinforcement, and practice.

C. SCOPE OF SERVICE

The selected organization(s) will provide Life Skills Training to youth 12-24 years old. Program participants will develop interpersonal skills, good decision making, critical thinking and creativity, problem solving skills, and effective communication. They will develop skills to build healthy relationships, empathize with others, and cope with managing their lives in a healthy and productive manner. Additionally, participants will develop an understanding of how to achieve life goals, by strengthening their abilities to be successful in life. They will be able to address the effects of traumatic experiences and related fundamental problems.

The selected service providers will also screen participants for substance use history and/or risk factors through self-disclosure and make referrals accordingly. Youth do not have to have substance use history/risk factors to participate in this program. Organizations will also provide financial assistance to allow youth to obtain vital documents, attend job interviews and medical appointments, and engage in other activities to increase self-sufficiency.

This training must be built around SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF). It is imperative that applicants understand SPF and have plans to operationalize these values in their day-to-day work.

The SPF includes these five steps:

- **Assessment:** Identify local prevention needs based on data (e.g., What is the problem?)
- **Capacity:** Build local resources and readiness to address prevention needs (e.g., What do you have to work with?)
- **Planning:** Find out what works to address prevention needs and how to do it well (e.g. What should you do and how should you do it?)
- **Implementation:** Deliver evidence-based programs and practices as intended (e.g., How can you put your plan into action)
- **Evaluation:** Examine the process and outcomes of programs and practices (e.g. Is your plan succeeding?)

The SPF is also guided by two cross-cutting principles that should be integrated into each of the steps that comprise it:

- Cultural competence: The ability of an individual or organization to understand and interact effectively with people who have different values, lifestyles, and traditions based on their distinctive heritage and social relationships.
- Sustainability: The process of building an adaptive and effective system that achieves and maintains desired long-term results.

Deliverables are as follows and may be subject to change:

- Using community partners, social media campaigns, and other agencies to recruit and retain Opportunity Youth for program participation;
- At least 50 youth participating in cohorts;
- Screening participants for substance use by self-disclosure and make referrals accordingly;
- Report the number of referrals made;
- Providing emergency flex funds to support participants;
- Providing participants with a monthly bus pass to facilitate obtaining vital documents, attending job interviews, attending medical appointments, and other activities to support self sufficiency;
- Scheduling regular check ins with sub-vendors regarding relevant updates, satisfaction surveys, and progress toward goals and objectives;
- Implementing evaluation activities and tools to assist in collecting, visualizing, utilizing, and presenting data to identify effective practices, document the success of programs, determine if intended results were achieved, and if lives were better off; and
- Performing pre and post testing to measure increased knowledge of life skills and decreased substance use determined by self-reporting using surveys, focus groups, and process evaluation.

Applicants should have:

- Experience working with diverse families with ability to demonstrate cultural, racial, and ethnic understanding as well as the ability to work with a family in their home language or make effective use of interpreters.
- Knowledge and experience with LGBTQIA children/youth and families and transitional aged youth (12-24 years).
- Knowledge and experience with trauma informed practices and working with children, youth and their families that have experienced victimization and complex and intergenerational trauma.

- Knowledge and experience with children, youth, and families with potential exposure to environmental conditions including substance use, discrimination and racism, social and economic inequalities, and community violence.
- Knowledge and/or experience with children and youth with cognitive and developmental delays, emotional and behavioral concerns, issues around separation and loss, and attachment and bonding.

D. FOCUS POPULATION

Selected providers shall serve youth ages 12-24, regardless of race, color, national origin, sex, gender, or religion.

E. STAFFING REQUIREMENTS

There are no specific FTE staffing requirements for this program. However, the person facilitating the Targeted Life Skills program must complete Botvin LifeSkills Training before the contract start date. [Visit this link for more information on Botvin LifeSkills Training.](#)

F. FUNDING AVAILABILITY

A total of \$238,621 is available. BHSB expects to select two or three providers, which can request up to \$120,000.

Allowable costs include salaries plus fringe benefits for positions supporting the program, training, travel, funds required for service delivery, program materials, and other direct costs. Indirect costs up to 10% of salaries and fringe are also allowed.

G. QUALITY AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

As part of BHSB's procurement process, internal Quality and Financial Reviews are completed to ensure there are no significant concerns with the organization(s) being selected. Applicants should be sure to provide the most recent available versions of all requested documentation with their RFP application in order to ensure this is a smooth process.

H. CONTRACTING WITH BHSB

Applicants selected through this process will enter into a contractual agreement with BHSB. Following a notification of selection, BHSB will issue a Letter of Award that provides details about the contract and the process for executing it. Selected organizations will be required to submit a new budget on BHSB's budget forms, which will be reviewed for allowable costs under the grant.

Please note that applicants may be asked to change their budgets and/or details of their proposals even if the proposal was selected for funding. Applicants new to BHSB's contract process are encouraged to review relevant forms available on our website here: <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/forms-for-providers>.

Contract Type and Payment

The contract and payment type that will result from this procurement is described below. Applicants are encouraged to consider whether their organization will be able to operate with this payment mechanism before applying for these funds.

- Cost Reimbursement – Advance Basis
 - Vendor receives payment in advance of incurring and reporting costs based on a pro-rated budget (e.g., 1/4 of budget each month).

BHSB issues payments once per month. Applicants should note that submitting required documents and reports late can result in delayed payment.

Contract Monitoring and Technical Assistance

Selected applicants will be required to submit regular Program and Financial reports to BHSB using an electronic contract management system. BHSB will review these reports to monitor progress and contract compliance throughout the contract term.

Program Reports include an update on progress toward deliverables (e.g., number of people served, number of services delivered, etc.). Some program reports may also require organizations to attach a data report with additional information (e.g., consumer demographic information, process and/or outcomes data, etc.). BHSB monitors progress on these reports throughout the contract term and may offer technical assistance and support if deliverables are not being met.

Financial Reports are required to generate payment and involve submitting actual expenditures or invoices (depending on the contract type) and to monitor spending compared to the budget or award amount. If organizations are spending more or less than expected awarded throughout the contract term, BHSB may offer technical assistance and support to ensure the funding covers the contract term fully and BHSB may reduce funding if all funds are not likely to be expended by the end of the contract term.

Please note that submitting Program or Financial Reports late can result in delayed payment.

Verification of Services

BHSB audits all contracts to review whether the requirements set forth in the contract were completed as reported and that relevant federal, state, and local

regulations were followed. This generally occurs after the conclusion of the contract period. Audits may be conducted remotely through a review of documents submitted to BHSB or on-site at the organization's location.

Applicants should be aware of best practices in documenting both programmatic and financial activities to aid in an efficient audit.

II. Overview of RFP

A. PURPOSE OF RFP

The purpose of this RFP is to select two or three organizations to provide Life Skill Training/Targeted Life Skills to youth aged 12-24. The selected applicants will develop a substance abuse prevention program designed to prevent youth drug and alcohol misuse, tobacco use, violence, and other risk behaviors through teaching youth self-management skills, social skills, and drug awareness and resistance skills.

B. APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Applicants must meet all of the criteria outlined below to be considered eligible to be selected through this RFP process:

- Minimum 3 years of experience working with youth ages 12-24.
- The person facilitating the Targeted Life Skills program must complete Botvin LifeSkills Training before the contract start date.

C. PROPOSAL TIMEFRAME AND SPECIFICATIONS

1. Timeline

Release Date:	February 28, 2024
Pre-Proposal Conference:	March 12, 2024, at 2 p.m.
Proposal Due:	March 28, 2024, at 12:00 p.m.
Anticipated Award Notification:	May 24, 2024
Anticipated Contract Start:	July 1, 2024

2. Pre-Proposal Conference

Date: March 12, 2024

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: Microsoft Teams meeting - Join on your computer or mobile app

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

Or call in (audio only): +1 443-819-0973,,626981677#

Phone Conference ID: 626 981 677#

Please join five minutes early to leave time to troubleshoot. If you have any problems accessing the meeting, please contact

Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org.

All questions related to this RFP should be submitted in advance to Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org no later than the close of business on **March 11, 2024**. There may be time at the end of the meeting to ask additional questions, depending on the number of questions submitted.

Questions posed prior to or during the Pre-Proposal Conference and BHSB's responses will be posted on BHSB's website at <https://www.bhsbaltimore.org/for-providers/funding-opportunities/> by **March 19, 2024**.

The questions and answers will also be emailed to all individuals who submitted questions. If you would like to be emailed this document but do not have a question, please let the Procurement Lead know by emailing Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org.

Questions received after this conference cannot be answered.

3. Proposal Due Date, Time, and Location

BHSB uses Survey Monkey Apply (SM Apply) to manage applications. All proposals must be submitted through this system. Applicants must register with the system ahead of time and submit narrative and supporting documents directly through the system. You are able to save your application and continuing working on it before submitting it. BHSB encourages all applicants to test this system well in advance of submitting proposals.

Applicants can access SM Apply here: <https://bhsb.smapply.org/>

All proposals must be received no later than **12:00 pm (noon) EST on March 28, 2024**. All submitted proposals become the property of BHSB. If you are having technical troubles related to submitting your proposal, contact BHSB before the due date/time at Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org

Proposals submitted after the due date/time cannot be considered.

4. Interviews

Applicants whose proposals are ranked highest by a Review Committee may be asked to participate in an interview.

5. Authorized Contact

Applicants are advised that the authorized contact person for all matters concerning this RFP is Kelsi Loos whose contact information is listed below.

Kelsi Loos, Procurement Lead

Email: Procurements@BHSBaltimore.org

6. Anticipated Service Term: July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025.

D. AWARD OF CONTRACT

The submission of a proposal does not, in any way, guarantee an award. BHSB is not responsible for any costs incurred related to the preparation of a proposal in response to this RFP. BHSB reserves the right to withdraw an award prior to execution of a contract with a selected applicant in BHSB's sole and absolute discretion.

BHSB will select the most qualified and responsive applicants through this RFP process. BHSB will enter into a contract with selected applicants following the notification of award. All selected applicants must comply with all terms and conditions applicable to contracts executed by BHSB.

E. RFP POSTPONEMENT/CANCELLATION

BHSB reserves the right to postpone or cancel this RFP, in whole or in part.

F. APPLICANT APPEAL PROCESS

Applications must be complete and fully responsive to the below Proposal Narrative Outline and must include all required appendices. Applicants may file an appeal within five days of notification of non-selection. BHSB will not review new proposal materials that were not included in the application. BHSB will review the appeal letter and respond to the non-selected applicant within ten working days of receipt of the appeal.

G. GOVERNING LAW AND VACCINATION MANDATES

The applicant acknowledges and agrees that BHSB is a federal contractor for purposes of Executive Order 14042, Ensuring Adequate COVID Safety Protocols for Federal Contractors (the "Order"). The applicant and its subcontractors shall comply with the Order and all other applicable mandates, rules, laws, and regulations (collectively, the "Requirements"). Upon request by BHSB, selected applicants shall promptly provide evidence of compliance with the Requirements and shall promptly take such further actions as may be requested by BHSB with respect to the Requirements and/or the resulting Contract. The applicant and all of its subcontractors shall, for the duration of the resulting Contract, comply with all guidance for contractor and subcontractor workplace locations published by the Safer Federal Workforce Task Force. These requirements shall be incorporated into all subcontracts of Sub-Vendor.

III. Format and Content of Proposal

A. PROPOSAL INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants must submit all required information using Survey Monkey Apply (SM Apply) accessible here: <https://bhsb.smapply.org/>.

Late proposals will not be considered.

It is the policy of BHSB to adhere to the rules and regulations in the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA). We do not anticipate that any proposal submitted in response to this RFP would include individually identifiable health information. However, if it does, please remember that protected health information (PHI) needs to be secured via encryption and should adhere to the Guide to IT Privacy and Security of Electronic Health Information:

<https://www.healthit.gov/topic/privacy-security-and-hipaa/health-it-privacy-and-security-resources-providers>.

B. PROPOSAL NARRATIVE OUTLINE AND RATING CRITERIA

The outline below shows the information being requested for applications and how points will be awarded during the review. Use SM Apply to submit your responses. See the instructions for more information about how to submit proposals.

1. Organizational Background and Capacity (20 points)

- a. Provide an overview of your organization, including its history, mission, and overall purpose.
- b. Describe your organization's experience managing programs similar to this project, meeting contractual deliverables and obligations (including any contracts with BHSB), and your capacity to manage the programmatic and financial requirements of this grant.
- c. Describe the organization's history and experience, including length of time, delivering life skills training to youth 12 – 24 years old, including evidence-based or trauma-informed practices used.
- d. Describe your organization's experience working with culturally, racially, linguistically, and cognitively diverse children and families. Additionally, provide any history of work with LGBTQIA children/youth and families with potential exposure to environmental conditions including substance use, discrimination and racism, social and economic inequalities, and community violence.

2. Principles and Values (10 points)

- a. Describe your organization's commitment to racial and social justice and health equity. Include specific examples of what your organization does to illustrate this commitment.

- b. This project seeks to empower youth/peers/etc. and promote positive youth development by involving young people/peers in leadership and engagement opportunities. Describe how your organization will involve youth/peers in the planning and implementation of your proposed activities?

3. Service Delivery (25 points)

- a. Describe your organization's plan to provide all services as outlined in the Scope of Service section of this RFP, and how it fits into SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework.
- b. Describe your organization's ability to successfully implement evidence-based trauma-responsive services, how you will use these interventions within the program, and maintain fidelity to the standards model.
- c. Describe how the proposed program would be responsive to the needs of the City as a whole as well as the local neighborhood surrounding the program.
- d. Describe how this program would function as a low barrier "safe space" that is welcoming, non-stigmatizing, and affirming to the population to be served.

4. Staffing Plan (10 points)

- a. Describe your proposed staffing pattern, including supervisors, and how it will fulfill the staffing requirements in this RFP. Include an organizational chart that shows how this program will fit into your organization's overall structure.
- b. Describe your proposed training plan for staff assigned to this program and indicate any relevant expertise, training, and/or skills staff already possess.

5. Effectively Serving the Focus Population (10 points)

- a. Describe how your organization is uniquely qualified and designed to address known disparities experienced by this youth population.

6. Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance (15 points)

- a. Describe how your organization obtains and incorporates feedback from people served and other stakeholders into the development, implementation, operation, and improvement of program services.
- b. Describe your willingness and ability to participate in the reporting and evaluation described in the RFP.
- c. Specify how consumers' Protected Health Information will be collected, maintained, used, and disclosed in compliance with (i) The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (42 U.S.C. 1320d et seq. and implementing regulations at 45 CFR parts 160 and 164) as amended, (ii) the Confidentiality of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Records

(42 U.S.C. 290dd-2, as implemented by 42 CFR part 2) as amended; and (iii) the Maryland Confidentiality of Medical Records Act (Md. Code Ann. Health-General Section 4-301 et seq.) as amended.

7. Proposed Program Budget (5 points)

- a. Attach a line-item budget for the grant period in the RFP that includes anticipated revenue from grant funding and fee-for-service reimbursement and all expenses as an appendix. BHSB has budget forms on its website that can be used but are not required for this submission. (Link:[FY21-Budget-Forms-Cost-Reimbursement.xlsx \(live.com\)](#))
- b. Provide a budget narrative/justification that explains revenue and expense projections in more detail. The budget narrative should be included in the body of your proposal, not as an appendix.

8. Implementation Timeline (5 points)

- a. Provide a detailed timeline for implementation that includes all of the activities that you have committed to perform in your proposal. Show an outline of all the steps necessary to fully operationalize this project and by when each step would be completed. Contracts are expected to start on July 1, 2024.

9. Appendices

- Resume or curriculum vitae for individuals/consultants working on this project
- Certificate of Botvin Lifeskills Training, or letter attesting to the ability for the trainer to complete this program before the contract start date, July 1, 2024
- Organizational chart
- Line-Item Budget
- Most recent site visit report from the ASO, Accrediting Organization, and/or the Office of Health Care Quality (OHCQ), including any statements of deficiencies and program improvement plans
- Most recent final Financial Audit package including Findings and Management Letter from an independent auditor (preferred) OR a recent unaudited Income Statement AND Balance Sheet, if an audit is not available.
- Most recent IRS 990 – Return of Organization Exempt from Income Taxes or the most recent Business or Personal Tax Return if an IRS 990 form is not required to be filed
- Certificate of Good Standing from the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (screenshots from the MDAT website will not be accepted) - the certificate must be dated within one year of the RFP submission due date.
- Two letters of support