



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: STRONG FAMILIES

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PART ONE. OVERVIEW & PRIORITIES

A. INTRODUCTION

This Request for Proposals (RFP) provides the information necessary to prepare a proposal for Maryland Family Network's (MFN), Strong Families grant program, which focuses on community-based efforts to prevent child maltreatment and strengthen families. This funding opportunity is made possible by the federal Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) program (FAIN #2402MDBCAP). The MFN Strong Families funding opportunity includes three possible priorities, which are numbered for ease of reference and not based on order of importance:

1. Approaches that address primary prevention of child abuse and neglect through a public awareness campaign focusing on child development, positive parenting practices, the promotion of protective factors, and educating the community about child abuse and neglect and ways to prevent it.
2. Approaches that address secondary prevention of child abuse and neglect by increasing families' economic mobility, improving access to resources for children and families, and eliminating financial stressors so that families can pursue opportunities and plan for the future.
3. Approaches that address primary and/or secondary prevention through enhanced collaboration among organizations focused on promoting protective factors and integrative approaches to preventing child abuse and neglect. Primary prevention refers to universal programs and strategies which are available to all families. Secondary prevention refers to targeted prevention efforts, which target children and families at risk for abuse or neglect. Tertiary prevention efforts or those directed toward children and families who have substantiated or unsubstantiated abuse or neglect reports and have a need for intervention services are not the focus of the CBCAP grant program. Instead, those interested in funding for tertiary or intervention focused programs should explore other Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) funding possibilities (<https://acf.gov/cb/law-regulation/child-abuse-prevention-and-treatment-act-capta>).

Desired outcomes for funded programs/projects include: Meaningful family engagement in prevention programming; Retention of families in prevention services; Assessment of families' strengths, challenges, and needs to best provide appropriate services; Strengthen families by building protective factors including parental resilience, nurturing and attachment, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete supports, and social supports.

Additional details about the MFN Strong Families grant program including definitions of primary and secondary prevention are described below. The deadline for proposal submissions is June 30, 2025, at 5:00:PM EST.

B. CONTACT INFORMATION & TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

MFN staff cannot assist the applicant with the preparation of its proposal. MFN can respond to technical questions about the RFP.

Questions about this grant announcement and its requirements will be accepted via email through June 6, 2025 (no phone calls please). Please use this email address to submit questions:

MFNStrongFamilies@marylandfamilynetwork.org.

C. APPLICATION DUE DATE AND SUBMISSION

Final proposals are due by June 30, 2025, at 5:00PM EST via the MFN Grant Application Portal at <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/cbcaprfp>. Proposals received later than the deadline will not be reviewed. Proposals will be rated and ranked competitively, and incomplete proposals will not be accepted.

D. ELIGIBILITY

1. MFN prefers to select grantees that represent varied regions throughout Maryland.
2. Applications must include a community-based public or private non-profit entity as a lead/primary partner. Applicants from public agencies can apply in partnership with a community-based non-profit agency and must submit one joint proposal.
3. Applicants are limited to one application. No duplicate applications will be accepted.
4. Applicants must demonstrate how their proposed services will represent primary or secondary child abuse prevention. Applicants may provide direct services or be an organization that serves as intermediary agency for pass-through funding and monitoring of prevention programming.
5. Priority will be given to applicants that are currently providing and/or serving as an intermediary agency for programs with family strengthening and/or child abuse and neglect prevention services.
6. Priority will be given to agencies that use a protective factors framework to inform their service offerings and approach.
7. Preference will be given to programs/projects that promote universal access to resources for the children and families served.
8. Applicants must demonstrate how their proposed services will be provided at hours or by a method which are most convenient to program participants.
9. Applicants must demonstrate how their services and philosophy are trauma-informed. The National Child Traumatic Stress Network provides resources on trauma and supports for children and families (nctsn.org). In the context of care, the organization realizes the widespread impact of trauma and understands potential paths for recovery; recognizes the signs and symptoms of trauma in clients, families, staff, and others involved with the system; and responds by fully integrating knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures, and practices, and seeks to actively resist re-traumatization.
10. Applicants must be willing and able to actively participate in shared quarterly learning conversations in-person at a centrally located destination in Maryland or via virtual meeting. The Program Administrator/Project Director for the funded program/project must attend all quarterly meetings in addition to other staff members as identified by the agency.
11. Applicants must be willing and able to collaborate with MFN and any designated evaluative partners in identifying appropriate evaluation methods, data collection, and technical assistance efforts.
12. Awarded grantees must be available for quarterly progress calls with the MFN grant management team. Quarterly progress calls are in addition to quarterly learning conversations.
13. Applicants must have demonstrated ability for successful partnerships that include key stakeholders (e.g., parents), communities, and/or state/county level government agencies. This funding opportunity requires applicants to collaborate with other organizations, agencies, and/or key stakeholders to implement their program/project. MFN prefers to fund grantees

that reflect collaboration with other organization based on the project/program description, memorandum of understanding, the budget, and budget narrative.

14. Organizations must not be listed on the Office of Foreign Assets Control Specially Designated Nationals list.
15. MFN will not fund organizations that discriminate in the provision of services or in employment practices based on race, color, religion, ethnicity, sex, age, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, marital status, and any other characteristics protected by applicable law. This policy does not prohibit funding programs that meet specific needs of populations based on sociodemographic factors as informed by a community needs assessment. By applying, your organization attests to this fact.

E. FUNDS

1. Source of Funds: Strong Families grants are supported by the federal program Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP). For more information about CBCAP funding visit: <https://acf.gov/cb/grant-funding/community-based-child-abuse-prevention-cbcap-grants>
2. Funding Cycle and Duration: October 1, 2025 – September 30, 2026, with the possibility for a second-year renewal based on project progress review.
3. Projected Funds Available: up to \$110,000 per applicant.
4. Restrictions on How Funds Must be Used:
 - a. Funding will only be allowed for programs, projects, activities, or services that strengthen families and prevent child abuse and neglect through public awareness/education campaigns, concrete supports, and enhance a continuum of collaboration across agencies. Funds that are requested by the applicant must be used exclusively for the operation and administration of the proposed activities outlined in the applicant's Proposal Narrative.
 - b. Funding may support and expand existing prevention programming, especially if funding will contribute to long-term program sustainability as well as for services distinct or separate from current/existing services as provided by the applicant and should not supplant/replace local, state, or federal funds.
 - c. The current announcement is not for programs solely seeking funding for planning activities. Programmatic service delivery and/or the administration of services must be the primary function of grantees. Programs that directly deliver services and/or organizations that serve as an intermediary and provide administrative support and monitoring to prevention-focused programs are encouraged to apply. The current funding opportunity is intended to support programs/projects that are currently implemented and/or require a minimal amount of start-up time, no longer than 3 months from the initial funding start date, for full implementation.
 - d. Funding may be used to sustain newly introduced services. A description of how new services will be sustained should also be provided.
 - e. Programs funded by a CBCAP grant must focus on primary and secondary prevention. Primary prevention consists of activities that are targeted toward the community at large. These activities are meant to impact families before any allegations of abuse and neglect. Primary prevention services include public education activities, parent education classes that are open to anyone in the community, and family support programs. Secondary prevention consists of activities targeted to families that have one or more risk factors, including families with substance use disorder, parents of children with disabilities, and low-income families. For more information about primary and secondary prevention

programs visit the FRIENDS National Center for Community-based Child Abuse Prevention website: <https://friendsnrc.org/prevention/what-is-prevention-of-child-abuse-and-neglect/>. Tertiary prevention programs, which intervene or treat families that are involved with the child welfare system are not eligible for CBCAP funding.

- f. For more information about allowable programs, services, and activities for CBCAP visit the Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau website: acf.hhs.gov/cb/grant-funding/community-based-child-abuse-prevention-cbcap-grants.

F. MFN BACKGROUND INFORMATION

MFN was formed in 2009 with the merger of two leading nonprofit organizations— Maryland Committee for Children, founded in 1945 to advocate for high-quality childcare, and Friends of the Family, founded in 1986 to administer Maryland's network of Family Support Centers. MFN existing programs and services include the following:

MFN's Strong Families Department, which focuses on community-based child abuse prevention (CBCAP) and serves as Maryland's CBCAP State Lead. The department works across MFN's agency portfolio to implement initiatives and activities that promote primary and secondary prevention of child abuse and neglect. A major focus of the department is on strengthening families and promoting protective factors. Additionally, the department focuses on collaboration and coordination across the state with family- and child-centered agencies and organizations as well as program evaluation and the development of continuous quality improvement activities.

MFN is Maryland's Family Support Center (FSC) Network Intermediary. MFN funds FSCs across the state that are child-centered, family-focused programs serving parents together with their children. Through Maryland's Blueprint Legislation, the FSC Network is expanding with new sites expected to open each year through 2031.

MFN is Maryland's largest Early Head Start (EHS) grantee and through sub-recipient relationships, we fund and monitor the operations of ten community-based centers that serve low-income and poor families. EHS provides a rich learning environment where children are nurtured and their families receive resources focused on parenting, child development, and their individualized needs.

MFN serves as the State Coordinating Entity for the Maryland Child Care Resource Network (MCCRN), providing grants management oversight and coordination of services for the seven regional childcare resource centers (CCRCs). The CCRCs individually and collectively provide professional development opportunities that include coaching, training, and technical assistance to childcare providers and programs throughout Maryland to improve the quality and accessibility of early care and education to young children. They work to expand and enhance home- and center-based programs with a focus the quality of interactions, environment, and family engagement. Additionally, utilizing a comprehensive database of licensed and regulated childcare and education programs in Maryland, MFN connects families seeking childcare with programs that meet their unique needs.

MFN is the leading public policy advocate in Maryland working to create a system of high-quality support that benefits all young children in the State and their families and communities. MFN is a voice for children in the General Assembly and in dealings with State, local, and federal agencies.

MFN's Training Department provides training and technical assistance to both MFN's employees and the staff of our funded networks with the goal of supporting professional development and continuous quality improvement. The Strong Families Department closely collaborates with the Training Department and initiatives are jointly developed and implemented.

For more information about MFN visit: marylandfamilynetwork.org/

G. GUIDING THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

Risk and protective factors are characteristics that may increase or reduce the likelihood of one perpetrating or experiencing child abuse and neglect. Risk and protective factors occur at the individual, family, and/or community levels (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, <https://www.cdc.gov/child-abuse-neglect/risk-factors/index.html>).

The Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) study and subsequent research shows that children who experience child abuse and neglect face immediate and long-term challenges including poor educational and health and mental health outcomes (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, . Children living in low-income communities are at higher risk for maltreatment and poor longitudinal outcomes. Our approach to preventing child abuse and neglect considers protective factors that promote children's development and serve as buffers to adverse experiences. Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences (HOPE) focuses on positive family-level and community-level experiences that nurture children's development and protects them from adverse experiences (positiveexperience.org/).

The HOPE framework has four building blocks that promote positive childhood experiences: Relationships within the family and with other children and adults; Safe, stable environments for living, playing, and learning at home and in school; Social and civic engagement to develop a sense of belonging and connectedness; and Emotional growth through playing and interacting with peers for self-awareness and self-regulation. The HOPE framework builds on and is directly informed by the Center for the Study of Social Policy's (CSSP) Strengthening Families framework (cssp.org/our-work/project/strengthening-families/), which describes five family- and community-level protective factors that buffer children and their families so that children develop in supportive environments: Parental resilience, Social connections, Knowledge of parenting and child development, Concrete support in times of need, and Social and emotional competence of children. The Federal Children's Bureau, which houses the Office on Child Abuse and Neglect also promotes a sixth protective factor: Nurturing and attachment (<https://friendsnrc.org/prevention/protective-factors/>). The research-informed protective factors approach is foundational to MFN's work on the prevention of child maltreatment, the promotion of healthy child development, and individualized supports that strengthen families and communities.

Importantly, MFN treats parent/family leadership and engagement as a fundamental partnership necessary to implement the Strong Families Department's CBCAP activities. From our perspective, a child's family represents the most proximal system to which s/he belongs, and we prioritize engaging families in the service of preventing child maltreatment. Therefore, we seek to engage families in co-constructing community-based efforts that meet their specific needs, reflect humility, and are clearly informed by some mix of evaluation, professional knowledge, and lived experience about family well-being and the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Population-based initiatives that target parents/caregivers throughout a community have the potential for a broad impact that meets parents where they are, and in doing so destigmatizes parenting support programs.

H. FUNDING PRIORITIES

Priority Area #1: All families benefit from knowledge about child development, health, and safety. Understanding child development and how to keep young children safe will help families set realistic expectations and how they can best support children. Increasing the likelihood of developmentally appropriate and supportive responses to children's needs is important to

promoting protective factors and child and family well-being. Families will also be better prepared to ensure safer home environments including awareness of common household dangers (e.g., positive parenting practices, safe sleep, and firearms safety). Educated communities can collectively prevent, not just respond to child abuse and neglect (Public Awareness Activities and Programs, <https://cblcc.acf.hhs.gov/topic-areas/engaging-communities>).

With an approach focusing on “primary prevention” MFN seeks to support initiatives that raise public awareness in the community about child development, positive parenting practices, recognizing abuse and neglect, and the promotion of protective factors.

Priority Area #2: Certain environmental and individual factors put children at higher risk for abuse and neglect, and these are not a result of anything that the children have done. Poverty is an individual and community risk factor that increases children’s vulnerability to child abuse and neglect. Children living with parents/caregivers experiencing economic stress in communities with high rates of poverty, unemployment, unstable housing, and limited economic opportunities are at higher risk for child abuse and neglect. Poverty for the youngest children has an especially negative effect (Duncan, Brooks-Gunn, & Klebanov, 1994; Jones Harden, 2007; McLoyd, 1998). Children younger than 4 years old and those with disabilities or special needs are at an even higher risk of child abuse and neglect (CDC, Risks & Protective Factors, 2024).

Young children, who inherently require significant care and attention, are more vulnerable to maltreatment when it occurs. In Maryland, the most recent data from KIDS Count shows that 28% of children from birth to 4 years of age were victims of maltreatment. Children ages 5 to 10 years old made up an equally high percentage, 30%, of maltreatment victims (Kids COUNT, 2022 (<https://datacenter.aecf.org/data/customreports/22,1/6225,9904/compared,multi#ind6225>)). Taken together, children in Maryland under the age of 10 comprised 58% of confirmed cases of maltreatment in 2022. Importantly, rates of maltreatment for children have decreased over the last five years for which data are available. The current funding seeks to support a continued decrease in rates of child abuse and neglect.

With an approach focusing on “secondary prevention,” MFN seeks to support initiatives that increase economic mobility, improve access to resources for children and families, and eliminate financial stressors so that families can pursue opportunities and plan (e.g., concrete supports that address crises prevention through direct financial assistance, distribution of tangible goods).

Priority Area #3: CBCAP funded programs must foster collaborations that amplify positive child and family outcomes above and beyond what any one agency/organization can do alone. Collaborations that reflect public-private, local, state, and organizations that are focused on strengthening families provide the context for change that has the potential to improve child, family, and systems outcomes. MFN is particularly interested in funding innovative and locally driven approaches that address community needs around the prevention of child maltreatment and as part of the work include an explicit focus on collaboration. Collaborative partnerships may include the following types of services: Child protection, early childhood, childcare, early health and development, adult and parent education, mutual support and self-help, parent leadership, disability, mental health, substance use disorder treatment, job readiness, self-sufficiency, domestic violence prevention, housing, and other child abuse neglect prevention organizations. All applicants are required to address collaboration as part of their programming.

With an approach focused on both “primary and secondary prevention,” MFN seeks to foster the development of and enhance collaborations among organizations focused on promoting protective factors through innovative and integrative approaches to preventing child abuse and neglect.

Additional Considerations for Priority Areas: The Strong Families funding opportunity requires

that all applicants include collaboration with other organizations, agencies, and/or key stakeholders (e.g., parents/families). Specifically, programs should address Priority Areas #1 and #3 OR Priority Areas #2 and #3. Grantees should also describe how their work is evidence-based/informed as described in child abuse prevention clearinghouses/registries, addresses protective and risk factors.

PART TWO. RFP TEMPLATE

A. ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

Answers to all fields below must be provided through the MFN Strong Families RFP Submissions website (<https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/cbcaprpf>).

1. Organization name, address, and website
2. Chief Executive/Authorizing Official contact information
3. Chief Financial Officer contact information
4. Program Administrator/Project Director contact information
5. Tax exempt/EIN Number
6. Date Organization was established
7. Current Organization Budget, please check a box
 - i. \$0-\$100,000
 - ii. \$100,001-\$250,000
 - iii. \$250,001-\$500,000
 - iv. \$500,001-\$1million
 - v. Above \$1million
8. Fiscal Year (MM/YYYY – MM/YYYY)
9. Organization's Mission (limit 150 words)
10. Program/Project Name
11. Type of Support Requested (Direct Service OR Intermediary/Pass Through)
12. Please indicate all zip codes the organization currently serves
13. Requested Amount

B. NARRATIVE.

The narrative is the main body of information describing the problem to be addressed (see H. Funding Priorities), the plan to address the identified problem through appropriate and achievable goals, activities, and deliverables; self-assessment as part of Continuous Quality.

Improvements and technical assistance to build evaluation capacity/evaluation; collaboration; and sustainability plans.

Organizational & Demographic Information (Limit 2 pages)

1. Purpose of the Request (Limit 150 words).

2. Please indicate the grant category for which you are applying: Direct service OR Intermediary/Pass Through.
3. Describe your organization's history, accomplishments, and how organizational affiliates, for example board members, engage in supporting programming and/or participants.
4. Describe your organization's current funding and services related to the prevention of child abuse and neglect in your community/service area. Include a discussion of how your organization is qualified to address the priority areas of this RFP.
5. Estimate number of people to be served by proposed program.
6. Describe characteristics of the population(s) or clients that your organization intends to impact through this request. Include information about demographics (e.g., language(s) spoken, age(s) of children served, disability status), social and economic wellbeing, family or individual challenges and strengths.
7. Describe the community that your organization intends to impact through this request, and how the community shaped the program/project. Include information about if/how ongoing opportunities for community input will be operationalized.

Implementation (Limit 4 pages)

1. Describe your assessment process in identifying the needs and challenges as well as strengths in existing programs, and why the proposed project/program is necessary to reach the identified population(s) or clients.
2. Describe the specific challenge or need that will be addressed by the proposed project/program.
3. Describe the services that your organization will offer in the funding period when you implement the proposed project/program.
4. Describe how you will build on existing and effective practices and resources already in place and working in your organization.
5. Please provide information about collaborations that will be developed or strengthened through the funded project(s). A memorandum of understanding (MOU) is required for partners.
6. Describe how the organization proposes to engage participating families, community members, staff, consultants, and/or in-kind partners to achieve project goals. Indicate whether you plan to hire staff to begin project implementation.
7. Provide an organizational chart that shows the project within the organization and includes position/experience and names of staff anticipated to be involved in the project. If staff are from the community, please describe the perspective that they bring to the project/program.
8. Describe the timeline for project/program startup, as applicable, and full implementation.

Evaluation, Improvement, & Sustainability (Limit 4 pages)

9. Describe how the organization currently conducts program evaluation to assess the effectiveness of program and activities. Grantees funded through MFN's Strong Families – CBCAP award, will be required to implement the Protective Factors Survey (PFS) and use the Protective Factor Survey Online Data System (PFSODS) (<https://friendsnrc.org/evaluation/protective-factors-survey/pfs-database/>). Include a description of how the PFS and PFSODS will be used to measure clients' protective factors. For example, please describe how the program will implement the PFS, the proposed timeline for

administering the PFS, and what program or department in the agency will be responsible for administering the survey. If the agency uses another assessment(s), in addition to the PFS to measure client outcomes, please describe how de-identified aggregate findings from this assessment will be reported. MFN recognizes the utility of the PFS because it can be used across prevention-focused programs to examine changes in clients' protective factors. MFN requires reporting on other assessment(s) that are specific to the clients' experience in the funded program/project because this can provide insight about program effectiveness. Awarded grantees can anticipate quarterly reporting on PFS data and other assessments (withholding identifying information) and aggregate reporting on specific child and family outcomes including clients' likelihood to recommend the program to other family members or friends.

10. Provide brief background on whether the program, model, and/or curricula for which you are requesting funding has evidence showing it effected positive change in families. Specifically, discuss whether the program and/or model is included on the clearinghouses/registries for evidence-based programs. A listing of these programs can be found on the FRIENDS National Center website under "Crosswalk of Evidence-based Programs." <https://friendsnrc.org/evaluation/evidence-based-practice/ebp-crosswalk/>. If not listed on the FRIENDS website or other clearinghouses, briefly describe if other research exists supporting effectiveness for clients served at the grantee organization so that MFN can continue to demonstrate funding of high-quality programs and practices.
11. Describe how the program will track the following desired outcomes: i. Family engagement in prevention programming; ii. Retaining families in prevention services; iii. Assessing families' strengths, challenges, and needs to best provide appropriate prevention services; iv. Strengthening families by building protective factors including parental resilience, nurturing and attachment, knowledge of parenting and child development, concrete supports, and social supports.
12. Will this project be implemented beyond the funding period (Yes/No)? If yes, describe sustainability plans of the project beyond the funding period. If no, describe how clients will be appropriately transitioned to a relevant program/service.
13. If you have other funds available for this project, describe your plans to leverage, match or otherwise utilize funds for the project (however, do not include these funds on the budget).

C. BUDGET

The purpose of the project budget is to demonstrate how the Applicant will implement the proposed plan with the funds available through this funding award. The budget is the basis for management, fiscal review, and audit. Project costs must be directly related to the objectives and activities of the project. The budget must cover the entire grant period. In the budget, include only those items covered by grant funds. Projects may supplement grant funds with funds from other sources. However, since approved line items are subject to audit, Applicants should not include in the project budget any funds other than listed in the grant. Budgets are subject to MFN modifications and approval.

MFN requires the Applicant to develop a line-item budget, using the suggested categories that will enable the project to meet the intent and requirements of the funding award and ensure the successful and cost-effective implementation of the project. The Applicant should prepare a realistic and prudent budget avoiding unnecessary or unusual expenditures which detract from the accomplishment of the objectives and activities of the project.

Budget Categories

The nine budget categories include: 1. Personnel, 2. Fringe, 3. Travel, 4. Equipment Purchases, 5. Supplies, 6. Contractual, 7. Construction, 8. Other, 9. Prohibited Expenses, and a maximum of 10 percent Indirect Cost.

Each category is explained in detail as follows, and the Applicant should use these definitions to complete the budget.

If a grant is awarded, MFN will collaborate with grantees regarding additional financial requirements and documentation, which may include the submission of an independent audit, requirements of fiscal sponsorship—dependent on applicant experience and organizational structure.

1 & 2. Personnel and Fringe Benefits

Positions that are directly involved in the development, delivery and support of the grant activities are listed under this line item with Personnel and the Fringe Benefits listed separately.

- Personnel. Identify each funded position by job title. Please complete the Personnel worksheet to record staffing details in addition to the Full Budget template.
- Staff who perform only administrative and fiscal duties are not included in this line item. They can only be included as part of indirect expenses. Please use the MFN Personnel template to submit staff. Administrative and fiscal duties must not exceed 15% of Admin Component.
- Identify the annual salary rate for each position. Do not combine multiple personnel on the same line. Each position must be displayed on a separate line.
- Fringe Benefits. Expenses include, but are not limited to, employer paid social security; worker's compensation insurance; unemployment insurance; health, dental, vision and/or life insurance; disability insurance; pension plan/retirement benefits etc. Fringe benefits should not exceed 30% of Personnel costs.

3. Travel. Travel and per diem rates are based on Internal Revenue Service standard mileage rates and General Services Administration per diem rates, respectively. Expenses for Out-of- State travel will not be allowed without prior written approval by MFN. Out-of-country travel is prohibited. Applicants must include sufficient travel and per diem allocation to attend any required in-person meetings, as needed.

4. Equipment Purchases. Equipment purchases should be listed in the Full Budget template, and a description of what was purchased should be listed on the Equipment worksheet.

5. Supplies. Supplies include office supplies, program supplies, and other supplies, as needed.

6. Contractual. MFN reserves the right to approve contractor agreements.

- A contractor results when a Recipient enters into an agreement for services with another party. All contracts must be included in the budget and the use of contractors shall be justified in the budget narrative. If any contractor is subcontracted with for a total grant amount of over five thousand (\$5,000), the contract must be submitted for approval by MFN prior to final execution of the grant and/or reimbursement, and a separate Budget Summary will be required. If the contract is less than five thousand dollars (\$5,000), MFN reserves the right to request a copy.
- The Recipient shall be solely responsible for the work of any contractor under this agreement. Contractors are subject to the same provisions as the primary grant agreement and should therefore contain written reference to the provisions of the primary grant agreement.

- Contractor costs may not be included in the indirect cost total.

7. Construction. Any construction projects funded under this grant must obtain prior approval.

8. Other. Other expenses capture program expenses related to the implementation of the program activities. For example, outreach/advertising materials for public education purpose, stipends for families, recruitment cost associated with hiring, general insurance, and liability insurance should be included here. Any expenses not covered in the above categories must be explained and justified in the budget narrative.

9. Prohibited Items. Funds from this grant may not be used for: Supplanting existing services; Capital improvement; and Costs incurred prior to award of a contract. Grants using federal Health and Human Services Agency federal funds are required to follow cost principles governing non-federal entities and are outlined in the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) regulations found at 2 C.F.R. Part 200, Subpart E – Cost Principles.

10. Indirect Cost Rate. The indirect cost rate refers to costs that accrue in the normal conduct of business that can only be partially attributable to performance of a grant (e.g., administrative expenses such as payroll handling, accounting/personnel expenses, liability insurance coverage, executive director's time). The indirect cost rate must be justified in the budget narrative. The limit for indirect cost charges is 10% of the total award. If an agency has a Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement or an Indirect Cost Letter that states the agency can charge more than 10% for indirect charges, this letter/agreement must be submitted as the "Indirect Cost Rate Agreement."

D. BUDGET NARRATIVE (Limit 2 pages)

The Applicant is required to submit a narrative with the project budget. The budget narrative provides a brief narrative that justifies the appropriateness and necessity of each expense. In addition, the narrative should also describe each personnel position, its role in performing these activities, and qualifications to do so. The budget narrative must describe:

1. Describe how the project's proposed budget supports the program's objectives and activities and the intent and requirements of the program.
2. Include a discussion of the duties of program-funded staff, including those with the lived experience, community engagement experience, and/or education level necessary for the job assignment;
3. How does the budget support collaboration with the identified partner organization/agency?
4. If staffing changes, how will this be addressed so that the level of service delivery remains consistent over the course of the funding period?
5. How program-funded staff duties and time commitments (FTE) support the proposed objectives and activities; in addition to time allocated to this indicate the proposed staff percentage of time to other efforts in the agency. Please use the "Certified Time & Effort Staffing Statement" template provided by MFN to reflect proposed staff and time commitments. The template can be downloaded from the Strong Families Grant Application Portal at <https://www.marylandfamilynetwork.org/cbcaprfp>.

6. What systems are in place to monitor program expenditures and activities? Please describe the accounting system used at the agency, as well as key features of your fiscal management policies.
7. What process is used to assess the financial stability of your organization on a regular basis? For example, do you undergo an external audit each year?
8. The necessity for subcontracts and unusual expenditures; and
9. Any salary range adjustments anticipated during the grant period.
10. Attach job descriptions and resumes for all project staff and contractors.

PART THREE. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA OF PROPOSALS

A. CHARACTERISTICS OF STRONG PROPOSALS

1. Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect, Promotion of Well-being, and Individualized Responsiveness. Programs which demonstrate that their strategies/activities/approaches correlate with the prevention of child abuse and neglect, promote child and family well-being and are responsive to families' needs are encouraged to apply. Addressing child, parent, and family well-being is established in the research literature as essential to a holistic approach to supporting children and families and preventing child maltreatment. Children and their families benefit from support and resources that focus on physical, mental, social, and cognitive well-being. Promoting the protective factors in the service of child abuse prevention requires building on families' strengths, and where improvement areas exist, addressing them in a meaningful, holistic, and responsive manner that meets families' individualized needs.

2. Evaluation and Technical Assistance. MFN seeks to fund programs that implement a continuous quality improvement (CQI) process and are informed by the PFS and PFSODS. Implementation of the PFS and use of the PFSODS is a requirement of funding. Applicants that are building evaluation capacity may provide a description of the organization's technical assistance needs related to enhancing program evaluation. Specifically, we want to learn about ways applicants believe they would benefit from technical assistance to meet the desired program outcomes as outlined in this request for proposals. As part of this funding opportunity, awarded applicants will receive technical assistance and evaluation support.

Applicants are required to describe how they will integrate the PFS into their data collection efforts. Informed by the Strengthening Families Framework, the PFS is designed for use with parents and caregivers participating in family support and child maltreatment prevention services. The survey provides a snapshot of families served; measures change in family protective factors; and helps identify ways that staff can support families in increasing their protective factors (e.g., PFS-2nd Edition includes a focus on concrete supports). The PFS was developed by FRIENDS National Resource Center for Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention in collaboration with the University of Kansas Institute for Educational Research and Public Service. More information about the Protective Factors Survey is available at friendsnrc.org/evaluation/protective-factors-survey.

3. Collaboration. Programs that aim to enhance the continuum of prevention services and resources implemented to strengthen and support families and communities have the potential to amplify their impact. Applicants must describe an integrated approach to the prevention of child abuse and neglect. Strong proposals will indicate partnerships that will develop or be enhanced to better serve children and families and promote the protective factors and these partnerships will

be reflected in MOU(s). The FRIENDS Collaboration Toolkit provides resources to facilitate collaboration and collective impact. Visit link for details: friendsnrc.org/friends-resources/collaboration-toolkit. Moreover, prevention programming that elevates parent/family voice so that families are equal partners in the collaborative process have the potential for improved outcomes and sustainability. Proposals that include collaboration with the goal of reducing duplicative efforts are also encouraged. Finally, describing how a program/project directs as much of the funding as possible to the communities who are most impacted is considered a characteristic of a strong proposal.

B. SCORING RUBRIC

Topic to be Addressed	Points Awarded
Management/knowledge of community need, meaningful family engagement	20 points
Budget/financial resources, use of funds	20 points
Evaluation plan, description of technical assistance needs, and plan for continuous quality improvements	10 points
Description of Protective Factors Survey Implementation	10 points
Utilization of evidence-based/informed program or curriculum that is supported by child maltreatment clearinghouse/registry	10 points
Feasibility of work plan for implementation of services/activities that prevent child abuse and neglect, especially those that promote protective factors	10 points
Collaborative agreements/Memorandum of Understanding	10 points
Staffing	10 points

PART FOUR. REFERENCES

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