



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

EMPOWERMENT • OPPORTUNITY • INCLUSION

Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

Announces a Funding Opportunity

To increase the number of children with developmental disabilities who learn and play alongside their peers without disabilities

Child Care: Building Capacity through Technical Assistance

Purpose

The purpose of this initiative is to provide specialized technical assistance to child care providers with the goal of increasing the number of children with developmental disabilities and special health care needs in child care programs alongside their peers without disabilities. Funds will be used to provide onsite and remote technical assistance to child care providers to increase their knowledge and skills and build capacity that has a long-term impact.

Child care providers are in need of specialized technical assistance to build capacity to welcome and support more children with disabilities and special health care needs in high quality, inclusive child care settings. A variety of trainings are available, but providers consistently seek more training and customized technical assistance by subject matter experts to more effectively support children with disabilities to learn and play alongside children without disabilities.

Background

Families of children with disabilities continue to face obstacles to finding and keeping high quality, inclusive child care. In 2012, the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (Council) issued a report, *Barriers to Quality Child Care and Out of School Time Activities in Maryland*. The report found that 72% of families of children with developmental disabilities had difficulties finding and maintaining child care and 53% of families removed their child from a child care program because the provider was not adequately trained to support their child with a disability.

Families of children with disabilities reported, and child care providers agreed, that:

- More information and strategies, as well as support, training and on-site technical assistance is needed so child care providers can better serve and support children with disabilities;
- Concerns about serving a child with disabilities, including medical and behavior issues, need to be addressed; and
- When child care providers receive adequate assistance and support, they are willing and able to serve children with disabilities side-by-side children without disabilities.

To address the needs of children with disabilities and their families the Council has focused efforts, including advocacy and funding, on increasing access to inclusive child care including:

Supporting Children with Developmental Disabilities in Child Care: this online training developed by the Maryland Family Network (MFN) and funded by a Council grant, is now available nationally and the second most requested training. More than 500 child care providers in Maryland have completed the training. The training includes an overview of developmental disabilities, inclusion, and strategies to support children in different ways. To implement these strategies effectively, technical assistance is necessary.

Inclusive child care videos, produced with funding from the Council: these videos highlight inclusive practices in child care. The two videos are now used in the approved ADA and Inclusive Practices training that all Maryland child care providers are required to receive.

To help child care providers implement the strategies outlined in the trainings, technical assistance is necessary. Therefore, in 2015, the Council collaborated with the Department of Health/Office of Genetics and People with Special Health Care Needs to fund training and technical assistance to child care providers on Maryland's Eastern Shore. The *Upper Shore Inclusive Child Care Project* provided technical assistance through subject matter experts and a community of practice facilitated by the Maryland Family Network for 29 child care providers. As a result, 127 child care program staff were trained, 37 children with disabilities are receiving support to meaningfully participate in the child care setting, and more child care providers on the Eastern Shore have the skills and knowledge to support children with disabilities.

Expected outcomes of technical assistance include:

1. Child care providers will have increased capacity, knowledge and skills related to supporting children with developmental disabilities and special health care needs.
2. The number of child care providers capable of supporting children with developmental disabilities and special health care needs with their typically developing peers will increase.
3. The number of children with developmental disabilities in inclusive child care settings will increase.

Scope of Work

1. Establish a process for providing technical assistance statewide, including outreach, simplified intake, assessment of need, provision of services remotely and in-person, and evaluation.
2. Provide technical assistance to child care providers throughout Maryland. Technical Assistance will be provided by individuals with substantial related experience and expertise.
3. Document and report on lessons learned and develop recommendations to improve support to child care providers.

What Proposals Must Include

1. Describe your/your organization's experience working to ensure children with disabilities are included in high quality, inclusive settings. This could include child care, education, and/or other settings where children with disabilities are supported alongside their peers without disabilities. Include how long your organization or consultants have engaged in this work. *Specifically note when this work included the provision of technical assistance to individuals or organizations.*
2. How many providers in each region of the state do you expect to reach with in-person TA based on the funds available under this RFP? How many providers in each region of the state do you expect to reach with remote TA? *Technical assistance must be made available remotely and in-person across the state.*
3. What will the process be for the provision of technical assistance across the state? Describe outreach activities, the intake and assessment process, methods of technical assistance, and explain if there will be any differences between regions of the state or issues needing to be addressed.
4. Who will provide the technical assistance? What are their related credentials and experience?
5. How will technical assistance be provided to expand the capacity of the providers beyond specific children, in order to have a long-term impact that benefits many children and families? (i.e., builds capacity)
6. How will you evaluate the effectiveness of the technical assistance? This must be a specific plan.

Attachments

1. Resumes of key staff/consultants.
2. At least two letters from organizations and/or families describing how they benefitted from your past technical assistance work related to children and inclusion.

Funds Available

Funds will be available beginning January 1, 2018. Each organization submitting a proposal may apply for a maximum of \$75,000. The Council expects to award one grant.

Matching Funds

A non-federal match is required for this initiative. Twenty-five (25%) percent of the total cost of the project (not of grant funds requested) is required. Matching funds may include in-kind supports or

other non-federal sources of funds. Any in-kind support used for the match must have a value directly related to the grant.

Who May Apply

Any incorporated non-profit or for-profit organization may apply. Qualified, independent consultants with relevant experience are eligible to apply if they align with an organization willing to serve as a fiscal agent. In the latter case, the organization serving as the fiscal agent does not have to have the required expertise if all the technical assistance is provided by the consultant.

Collaborations between multiple organizations to cover the state is permissible.

Pre-Proposal Information Sessions

Two pre-proposal information sessions will be held. The purpose and topics of the pre-proposal information sessions will be the same. The pre-proposal information sessions will be the only opportunity to ask questions. Attendance, however, is not mandatory.

- In-person Information Session **October 16, 2017 at 11am**
Maryland Association of Community Services
8835 Columbia 100 Parkway, Unit P
Columbia, Maryland 21044

Reservations for the in-person session are not required. Email or call Faye Bell Boulware at the DD Council if you require an accommodation at the Information Session: FayeB@md-council.org or 410-767-6249.

- Conference call Information Session **October 17, 2017 at 11am**

Email or call Faye Bell-Boulware at the DD Council to register and get call-in information: FayeB@md-council.org or 410-767-6249.

Proposal Deadline

To be considered, proposals MUST be received by **October 31, 2017 at 12:00pm (noon).**

Email your proposal to the Council at info@md-council.org.

Important Note: Receipt of all proposals will be acknowledged by email or phone. If you do not receive confirmation by 2pm on October 31, 2017, contact Faye Bell-Boulware at 410-767-6249.