



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

TEEN HOME RECRUITMENT & RETENTION SERVICES

Procurement Manager:

Susan Lowe
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Issue Date: 2/15/2022

RFP Name: Teen Home Recruitment & Retention Services

RFP Number: FY2122-003

Response Due Date: 4/30/2022 no later than 5:00 pm Eastern Standard time. Please limit responses to twenty (20) pages.

Information will not be provided by telephone. Any information received through oral communication shall not be binding on Embrace Families and shall not be relied upon by any respondent.

Please consider this communication a formal Request for Proposals (RFP) in which responses will be thoroughly reviewed and used to determine the best-qualified vendor for these services and will be the basis for contract negotiation.

Embrace Families encourages participation by smaller businesses and organizations, minority firms, women's business enterprises and labor surplus area firms certified as such by the State of Florida, if possible. Any entity or person is eligible to submit a response and Embrace Families is committed to an open, competitive and fair procurement process. Embrace Families shall not discriminate against a potential provider or any person on the basis of race, creed, sex, religious orientation, or affiliation.

All costs and expenses incurred by any respondent or party in responding, preparing or participating to this Request for Proposals and any re-submittals, are the sole responsibility of the respondent. All other postings are secondary to the electronic posting on www.embracefamilies.org, which is the sole official posting for this advertisement. Communication of any protest regarding this advertisement must be made to the Procurement Manager and documented within 72 hours of the first official posting of the award.

Any contract or agreement with Embrace Families will require respondent's performance to be in compliance with all applicable federal and state laws, regulations, agency rules and procedures.

Please carefully read this RFP in its entirety, including Attachment I and Exhibits.

A. Introduction Background

Embrace Families Community Based Care, Inc. was created as a direct response to the Florida Legislature's and Department of Children and Families' (DCF) initiative to improve child welfare services by developing solutions to care for children and families in their home communities. Embrace Families CBC is the non-profit child welfare lead agency charged with developing community-based services and supports for children and families in Judicial Circuits 9 and 18, serving Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties.

We have been committed to serving the children and families of Central Florida who have been victims of, or at risk of, abuse, neglect or abandonment since 2004. Our ongoing goal includes providing the necessary services to more than 5,800 children we serve annually by strengthening the relationships between our families, caregivers, case management and network of local service providers who deliver a multitude of direct services to children and families. We envision a community that embraces vulnerable children and families with support – so that every child has a safe, stable and loving home and a path to a bright future.

B. Issue & Background*

There are approximately 150 children in Central Florida currently residing in residential group homes. These vulnerable youth do not have the traditional safety net of an engaged and loving family as they enter adulthood.

Older children are harder to place into foster homes or with relatives/friends. Of the 330 current foster homes in Central Florida, only 17% (N=57) are licensed to take a child aged 13-17 years old. Correspondingly, 99% of the 150 children who currently live in a group home are ages 10-17. Most (75%) of these children came into the system as teenagers and therefore, statistically, are unlikely to be permanently placed into a family unless they are reunified. Currently, 30-40 youth per year transition into adulthood while in the foster care system without any permanent family. Across the country, this is a consistent issue. Further research is needed on the reasons why the need for teen homes consistently outstrips the supply of those homes, and what can be done to address those barriers to teen placement in family home settings.

C. Relevance**

According to the National Foster Youth Institute, more than 23,000 children will age out of the foster care system this year. For these kids, the statistics are grim: 20% will instantly be homeless; 50% will develop substance dependence; 71% of women will be pregnant by age 21; 25% will be involved with the criminal justice system within two years; less than 3% will earn a college degree; and only half of them will have gainful employment by the age of 24. One of the big missing pieces for these youth is that they do not have the traditional safety net of a family. Increasing the number of foster and adoptive homes available for teens will provide loving homes for these youth and a backstop for the rest of their lives.

* **Source:** Florida Department of Children & Families, FSFN

** **Source:** National Foster Youth Institute. <https://nfyi.org/51-useful-aging-out-of-foster-care-statistics-social-race-media/>

D. Challenge

The high incidence of our older youth in group home settings is not only detrimental to their short and long-term well-being, it places tremendous fiscal pressure on our system of care. Group care, especially for teens with specialized therapeutic needs, is expensive and all too often perpetuates the cycle of trauma that our system seeks to break. Our current strategies to address the need for additional homes willing to accept teens must be bolstered if we are to sufficiently address and break this cycle.

E. Purpose of RFP

Embrace Families is seeking proposals designed to think beyond the traditional confines of child welfare circles, and to build upon proven techniques in other fields, with the potential to transform the recruitment and retention of teen foster homes.

The purpose of this RFP is to research barriers to recruiting and retaining homes for children ages 10+, and then to recommend and ultimately implement changes to address those barriers. As a child welfare system in Central Florida, we seek to think outside of the status quo to ensure that all children in the foster system who cannot be reunified with their family will leave the foster system with a loving family committed to ongoing support.

Responses will be thoroughly reviewed, evaluated and used to award a vendor agreement to the successful applicant(s). The vendor agreement will include required deliverables and key performance indicators. The expected time frame for the vendor agreement resulting from this RFP will be 90 days to begin June 15, 2022. This time frame is contingent upon availability of funds and vendor performance.

F. Service Requested

Please respond thoroughly and specifically to the requested information listed below in your proposal.

1. Description of how your proposal can impact the recruitment and retention of foster homes for teens.
2. Overview of any preliminary research supporting your proposal from proven and/or promising practices.
3. Outline of plan for collection, review and evaluation of additional research, data, case studies, and/or testimony from those with lived experience.
4. Description of the discernment process that will be used to create a series of action-step recommendations based on data collection and analysis.
5. Description of the key performance indicators (KPI) that your methodology, technology and/or process will use to measure impact and effectiveness. (Include Baseline data and/ or a timeline on when baseline data will be established for the purposes of measurement.)
6. Outline of plan for sustainability or what ongoing support, financial or otherwise, would be needed in order to sustain the methodology, technology and/or process in your proposal.

G. Schedule of Events

All Times Eastern Standard Time. Time and Locations Subject to Change.

ACTIVITY	DATE	TIME	COMMENT
RFP posted to Embrace Families website	2/15/2022	5 pm	https://embracefamilies.org/make-a-difference/prospective-providers
Responses received by Embrace Families	4/30/2022	5 pm	Email: Susan.Lowe@embracefamilies.org
Award selection(s) posted to Embrace Families website	5/15/2022	5 pm	https://embracefamilies.org/make-a-difference/prospective-providers

H. Response Contents

- 1. Detailed Written Response** to all questions listed in **Section F**.
- 2. Detailed Budget** to support your response proposed in **Section F**.
- 3. Presentations/Demonstrations:** Embrace Families may or may not request presentations by some or any of the respondents based on their narrative RFP response score. Should this opportunity become available, Embrace Families will contact you with dates and times that are convenient for both parties.
- 4. Attachment I Response Cover Sheet.** Respondent's information, which includes contact information: name, title, mailing address, email address, signature and phone number of the contact person for questions relating to the RFP.

I. How to Respond

Submit your response in PDF or Word format via email to the Procurement Manager no later than the day and time indicated on the **Schedule of Events in Section G**.

J. Confidential / Proprietary Information

Do not submit anything considered by you or your agency to be confidential or proprietary. Do not indicate confidential or proprietary on any submission documents.

K. Attachment & Exhibits

Attachment 1: Response Cover Sheet

**ATTACHMENT I
RESPONSE COVER SHEET**

Agency or Person Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Mailing Address (if different): _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Telephone: _____ **Fax Number:** _____

Email Address: _____

Website Address: _____

Type of Respondent:

Agency: _____

Individual: _____

Other (Specify): _____

Name of Person Completing: _____

Title of Person Completing: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____