



ChildNet, Inc.

Request for Proposals

To Provide Adoption and Permanency Support Services

Broward County

RFP #CN2015-01

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RFP Response Due Date: Monday, October 12th, 2015

Contact Person:
Denesee Rankine-Palmer
Procurement Manager
ChildNet
1100 W. McNab Road,
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33309
(954) 414-6000, ext. 3816

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Request for Proposals Adoption and Permanency Support Services

I. INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS

A. Statement of Purpose

ChildNet, Inc. has been chosen by the Florida Department of Children and Families to serve as the Community Based Care (CBC) lead agency in both Broward and Palm Beach Counties. As such, it is the single private non-profit entity responsible for administration of the local child welfare systems in each county. It fulfills this responsibility by managing comprehensive networks of child welfare services providers. The agency's mission is to protect abused, abandoned and neglected children in the communities it serves. Fulfillment of this mission requires input and support from community stakeholders and services providers.

In this effort, ChildNet is soliciting proposals from organizations that have the ability to provide Adoption and Permanency Support Services that will support children and their pre-adoptive families in the dependency system and adoption support services, on a time-limited basis, to families who have adopted children from the dependency system. These services shall be delivered to children who have been adjudicated dependent in Broward County but may reside in Palm Beach or Miami-Dade Counties. **The deadline for proposals in response to this Request for Proposals is 12:00 p.m., Monday October 12th, 2015.**

As the lead agency and provider of child welfare case management services in Broward County, ChildNet is responsible for providing a comprehensive array of services that will facilitate the timely reunification of children with their families. However, when the reunification of children is no longer an option, alternate options are sought to ensure each child's needs are met in a safe and permanent living arrangement. One of the primary alternate permanency planning options is placement with an adoptive family. Although adopting a child is a joyful event, adoption also involves loss for all involved and comes with its own unique set of family issues. Like all children in traditional homes, children who are adopted may face difficulties with emotions, development, friendships, or school adjustment. Even children who are adopted into loving homes may experience conflicted feelings about their adoption and struggle with stress and anxiety. Similarly, parents who are well prepared to adopt can also develop feelings they did not expect and may need additional supports to strengthen and/or develop parenting skills that supports healthy family relationships. Consequently, these are inherent challenges that are considered to be a normal part of the adoption process.

To ensure that each child and adoptive family are given every opportunity to succeed, support services are provided to both the pre-adoptive family and the child as soon as possible after the child's permanency planning goal is changed to adoption. To encourage adoptions while supporting families who have adopted children from the dependency system, Adoption and Permanency Support Services are provided as an integral part of our service delivery system as it prepares both the child and the adoptive family by providing the necessary clinical intervention as it relates to separation, trauma, grief and loss, identity confusion and attachment. These services are provided to support children and their adoptive parents in order to expedite the Termination of Parental Rights process, facilitate the adoption, stabilize the placement and

optimize the family's chances for a successful and permanent adoption. Services may also be provided to families who have already adopted and the adoption is at risk of disruption due to struggles with integration and attachment concerns. According to the Adoption Institute, "intervention should be provided early and as often as needed to effectively address challenges". These interventions are important to ensure permanency and expedite the adoption process. According the U.S. Children's Bureau, Adoption and Foster Care Analysis Reporting System (AFCARS) data, at the end of Fiscal Year on September 2013, the number of children waiting to be adopted was 101,840. The number of children waiting to be adopted whose parental rights (for all living parents) were terminated during the fiscal year was 58,887 and the number of children adopted with public child welfare agency involvement during the fiscal year was 50,608. This data tells us that there are more children experiencing termination from their parents than children being adopted. Similarly, in Broward County, there are approximately 500 children in the dependency system with a goal of adoption. Of the 500 children awaiting adoption, 283 parents' rights have been terminated (for all living parents). Of the 283 children, 44% or 125 children do not have an identified placement or have not yet been matched with a forever family.

The purpose of this Request for Proposals (RFP) is to define ChildNet's minimum requirements, solicit proposals, gain adequate information by which ChildNet may evaluate the services offered by Applicants, and as a result, enter into a contract with the successful Applicant. The contract objectives will require the successful Applicant to:

- Promote adoptions out of the foster care system by providing activities that expedite permanency.
- Support children and their prospective adoptive families by providing clinical services that reduce the stressful factors that negatively impact parent-child relationships.
- Address family needs and problems that could disrupt adjustment and optimize the chances of a successful and permanent adoption.
- Clinically support children to prepare them to continue through the permanency process.
- Provide trauma-sensitive interventions to children and their families so that they feel respected, empowered and supported.
- Provide crisis intervention and supports to post-adoptive families.
- Establish a pool of adoption competency trained therapists.

ChildNet expects that in order to successfully achieve and surpass State and Federal outcome targets, services should effectively meet the needs of the children and families served, thereby improving outcomes. These services are essential and ChildNet will devote considerable attention to effectively engage families by developing supports and services that families need in order to facilitate and sustain successful pre- and post-adoptive placements. As such, it is important to find service providers who understand the complexity of adoption-related issues

and the importance of proper training to increase professional competencies. In a survey completed by the Center for Adoption Support and Education (C.A.S.E.), titled What does adoption competency mean?, “81% of the respondents reported that if they had a choice, they would choose a therapist who has earned a certificate as an adoption competent therapist over one who has not earned such a certificate”. Many participants in the survey explained that they would select the adoption competent therapist because they sought additional training to better serve adoptive children and their families. Adoption competent therapists possess specific knowledge, skills, and competencies that distinguish them as adoption competent. This point was re-emphasized in a Literature Review Project published by Hennepin-University Partnership in 2010, in their statement that a gap currently exist in the Social Work field which “is the need for additional training and resources for all professionals who work with adoptive parents, including social workers, therapists, school personnel and counselors, to increase understanding about the complex issues and contexts experienced by adoptive families and adopted youth.” In short, adoptive families need supports from professionals who are experts in the issues that are common to the adoptive family.

For the purposes of this RFP, the definition of adoption and adoptive placement are as follows:
Adoption: The act of creating the legal relationship between parent and child where it did not exist, thereby declaring the child to be legally the child of the adoptive parents and their heir at law, and entitled to all the rights and privileges and subject to all the obligations of a child born to such adoptive parents in lawful wedlock. Adoptive Placement: Placement of a dependent child in a prospective adoptive home prior to adoption finalization. The date of adoptive placement is determined by the signature authorization on the memorandum of agreement with the prospective adoptive family.

B. Proposal Process and Minimum Requirements

1. Proposals must be prepared in compliance with provisions of this RFP. Failure to comply with all provisions of this RFP may result in disqualification of the proposal.
2. Proposals must be received by mail or hand delivered by **12:00 p.m.**, local time on **Monday, October 12th, 2015**. **One original plus 6 copies shall be submitted**. Any proposal received after the time stipulated will not be considered.
3. Proposals may be mailed or hand delivered to the following address:

**ChildNet
Attention Procurement Manager: Denesee Rankine-Palmer
1100 W. McNab Road,
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309**

4. Before submitting a proposal, Applicants may have the opportunity to ask questions. All questions should be directed only to Denesee Rankine-Palmer at drankine-palmer@childnet.us between **September 14th and September 16th**. All questions and answers will be addressed via posting on the ChildNet website to be available to all applicants. Questions and answers will be posted at <http://www.childnet.us/portal/request-for-proposals> on September 18th, 2015. This is the only source of official information regarding this RFP.

5. Services which are not specifically requested in this RFP but are necessary to provide the functional capabilities proposed by the Applicant should be included in the proposal.
6. No allowance will be made after proposals are received for oversight, omission, error or mistake by Applicant.
7. All proposals and any accompanying documents become the property of ChildNet and will not be returned.
8. ChildNet will not be liable in any way for any costs incurred by Applicants in the preparation of their proposals in response to this RFP.
9. ChildNet reserves the right to withdraw this RFP at any time and for any reason and to issue such clarifications, modifications, and/or amendments as it may deem appropriate.
10. Receipt of proposal materials by ChildNet or submission of a proposal to ChildNet offers no rights against ChildNet nor obligates ChildNet in any manner.
12. ChildNet reserves the right to waive minor irregularities in proposals. Any such waiver shall not modify any remaining RFP requirements or excuse the Applicant from full compliance with the RFP specifications and other contract requirements if the Applicant is awarded the contract.
15. Proposal must be signed by an officer of the Applicant who is legally authorized to obligate the Applicant to a contract.

C. Evaluation of Proposals and Notification of Award(s)

1. ChildNet seeks to buy the best services at the most favorable, competitive prices and to give all qualified businesses, including those that are owned, by minorities, women, persons with a disability, and small business enterprises an opportunity to do business with ChildNet as a subcontractor. ChildNet, at its sole discretion, shall determine whether particular Applicants have the basic qualifications to conduct the desired service for ChildNet. In determining whether an Applicant possesses the basic qualifications to operate, ChildNet may consider the following:
 - Applicant's general reputation for performance and service;
 - Applicant's longevity of service (number of years) and previous experience in operation of requested services;
 - Applicant's financial condition;
 - Applicant's status as a formal Network Provider. (*Network Provider Application form and instructions are included as Attachment #3 of this Request For Proposals*)
2. All proposals will be evaluated and scored according to a uniform set of criteria and by an evaluation team consisting of ChildNet staff. ChildNet reserves the right to also include other community personnel who ChildNet believes will add value to the rating process. ChildNet's rating committee may take up to 14 days to review all proposals received. The rating committee may then elect to conduct interviews with one or more of

the applicants at a date, time, and place to be announced. Recommendations are made based upon the scores from the rating team and consideration of all other relevant factors outlined in the procurement document. Recommendations for contract awards shall be made by the Assistant Vice President of Administration and presented to the CEO.

3. ChildNet reserves the right to accept or reject in part or in whole any or all proposals submitted.
4. ChildNet reserves the right to request in writing clarifications or corrections to proposals. Clarifications or corrections shall not alter the Applicant's price contained in the cost proposal.
5. ChildNet reserves the right to negotiate further with the successful Applicant. The content of the RFP and the successful Applicant's proposal(s) will become an integral part of the contract, but may be modified by the provisions of the contract.
6. By submission of proposals pursuant to this RFP, Applicants acknowledge that they are amenable to the inclusion in a contract of any information provided either in response to this RFP or subsequently during the selection process.
7. Award(s) shall be made to the most responsive Applicant(s) whose proposal is/are determined by ChildNet's CEO to be the most advantageous to ChildNet and its clients taking into consideration the terms and conditions set forth in this RFP. A valid and enforceable contract exists when an agreement is fully executed between ChildNet and the Applicant.
8. **Final announcement of award(s) will be posted on ChildNet's website no later than 5:00 pm on November 6th, 2015.** Notice of Awards is posted for a minimum of 72 hours. **It is ChildNet's intent to enter into a contract with an organization(s) on or after January 1st, 2016.**
9. All applicants have the right to protest the award. Parties wishing to protest a contract award shall file a notice of protest in writing to ChildNet's CEO within 72 hours after the award is posted on ChildNet's website. The formal written protest shall be filed within 10 days after the date the notice of protest is filed. When protesting a decision, the protesting party must post a bond equal to one percent (1%) of the estimated contract amount. The estimated contract amount shall be based upon the contract price submitted by the protestor. If no contract price was submitted, ChildNet shall provide the estimated contract amount to the protestor within 48 hours of the receipt of the protest notice (excluding Saturdays, Sunday and agency recognized holidays). Failure to file the proper bond at the time of filing the formal written protest will result in a rejection of the protest. In lieu of a bond, ChildNet will accept a cashiers check, official bank check, or money order in the amount of the bond.
10. ChildNet's CEO will provide the protest information to ChildNet's Senior Management committee. This committee will investigate the complaint and issue a written finding and resolution to the protesting party. This protest procedure provides recourse to applicants

who believe that their proposal did not receive proper consideration. Applicants entering a protest should be prepared to document specific factors, which put the aggrieved applicant at a competitive disadvantage, and/or document violations of specific sections of state or federal regulations and the procedures set forth in the respective competitive procurement solicitation document. ChildNet reserves the right to refuse to consider an appeal that does not identify specific procedural shortcomings.

II. SPECIFICATIONS OF PROPOSAL

A. Overview

Each proposal shall include the following five items:

1. Narrative Description of Proposed Services which includes information on the General Qualifications of the Applicant and Narrative Description of Services for the proposed services. The narrative shall be limited to 10 pages, double spaced and in either Times New Roman 12 point or Arial 11 point type.
2. Unit Description and Cost Summary- Attachment #1 (*or similar pricing document*)
3. Signature Page – Attachment #2
4. Completed Network Provider Application Form- Attachment #3
5. Budget and Budget Narrative Form – Attachment #4

B. Narrative

All proposals shall include a detailed description of the services to be provided, how they will be delivered, and how they will meet the goals of the contract set forth in this procurement document. Proposals should minimally include discussion of or consider the following items:

1. General Qualifications

- a. Organizational Capacity: Describe the agency's years in business and experience providing the proposed services. Provide a description of how the organization currently receives funds. Describe the organization's goals and future business plans.
- b. Financial Stability and Insurance Coverage: Provide a statement of the agency's financial position. Applicants may choose to submit financial statements or independent audits at their discretion. Applicants should also describe the current insurance coverage and willingness to comply with minimum required amounts as listed in Attachment #5.

- c. Collaborative Partners: Describe, if any, the agency's relationship with other organizations or professionals that are critical or necessary to the delivery of the proposed services.

2. Narrative Description of Services – Specific Scope of Work

ChildNet is seeking applications from for profit and non-profit community based organizations for proposals to provide collaborative and innovative approaches to the delivery of adoption and permanency support services. Applicants are encouraged to review literature and best practices including the Wraparound/System of Care Approach and demonstrate that the services being proposed are tailored to meet the needs of the identified populations.

Proposals submitted by Applicants should include detailed description of the services to be provided, how they will be delivered, and how they will meet the objectives referenced in this RFP. ChildNet encourages Applicants to submit as comprehensive and explicit a response as reasonably possible. Broad generalizations and simple statements will not provide ChildNet with the information needed to properly evaluate the efficiency and potential success of the proposed approach and services. The following guidelines and program components should be considered and discussed in the proposal:

- a. Target population: Provide a number of how many clients will be served. Include any evidence or best practice research that suggests that the proposed programming will be successful with the proposed target population.
- b. Program services: Describe in detail the services that will be provided. Describe the specific service components, activities, resources and supports that will be provided to children and pre/post adoptive families. Consideration should be given to mental health services, behavioral health services, therapeutic visitation, support services and service linkage. Provide evidence indicating or suggesting that these program services will be successful with the target population. In the absence of actual data or evidence, provide a logical explanation for your expectation that the proposed services will be effective in promoting, facilitating and supporting pre- and post-adoption services.
- c. Service delivery area: Applicants will be expected to provide pre- and post-adoption services to children and their families residing in Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade Counties.
- d. Implementation Plan of Operation Readiness: Outline timelines and critical milestones associated with the implementation of the program.
- e. Assessment: Describe any and all strength-based assessments that will be used to identify client needs and strengths, direct service planning and evaluate progress. Also indicate the frequency with which the assessments will be completed, reviewed and how they will be used to improve client outcomes.

- f. Family engagement: Describe specific efforts to positively and effectively engage and involve families in the proposed services and to maintain their effective engagement and involvement throughout service delivery.
- g. Social Networks and Informal Supports: To avoid dependency on formal systems, describe how services and supports will encourage building and strengthening social networks and natural supports of family, friends, and community resources for children and families.
- h. Referral and admission: Describe how children and families will be identified and enrolled in the proposed services. If referral requires coordination with other agencies describe how those agencies will be engaged and the specifics of the proposed referral process. Describe specific admission criteria and how they will be assessed.
- i. Cultural competence: Describe specific efforts to identify, acknowledge and effectively consider the client's culture, including but not limited to such areas as, race, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, and gender, in the provision of services.
- j. Discharge: Describe the expected length of service, how client progress will be assessed and reported, and the criteria that will be used to determine successful program completion and how they will be measured. Describe the conditions for unsuccessful program discharge and how and when it will be undertaken.
- k. Follow-up support: Describe what services and/or support families may receive following program completion and what level and duration of follow-up will be provided. If community and natural supports are to be employed, describe how they will be identified, engaged and maintained and how their effectiveness and value will be assessed.
- l. Accessing and availability of services: Describe where services will be provided. If not in the home, describe transportation arrangements or other means of facilitating consistent client participation. Describe the days and hours that services will be provided. If multiple services are proposed describe when each will be provided or available.
- m. Staffing: Include a detailed description of proposed staffing patterns. Include each position's responsibilities, educational requirement, work experience and specialized training requirements for each position. Provisions for competent and adequate supervision and administration shall also be necessary. Additionally, describe efforts that will be employed to recruit and retain staff and reduce turnover among those who have direct contact with children and families.

All employees of the selected organization(s) who will be providing pre- and post-adoption services will be required to complete adoption competency training in order to increase adoption competencies that focuses on the core issues that are inherent to the adoption process.

Additionally, each employee shall undergo Level 2 background screening as a condition of employment. The requirements set forth in Chapter 435, Florida Statutes, pursuant to Level 2 employment screening must be met.

- n. Equipment and Supplies: Equipment needed to perform services described in the proposal should be included in the budget and a description and justification for such expenses must be included in the budget narrative.
- o. Quality Improvement Plan: Provide an outline for a quality improvement plan focusing on achieving effectiveness toward limiting each of the following: maltreatment during service provision, unsuccessful discharges, and adoption disruption after case closure.
- p. Service coordination and information sharing: Describe planned efforts to ensure that proposed services are integrated with other services being provided to the child and family. If a team approach is proposed, list the members of the team as specifically as possible and describe in detail how the team will function. How, when and where will it meet and how will individual members be identified, engaged and maintained as effective participants? How and with what other agencies and individuals will client information, including assessments and progress reports, be shared? If limits on or barriers to the sharing of information with ChildNet staff and/or the Seventeenth Judicial Circuit Court are anticipated, please describe and explain them. Provide sample or actual cooperative interagency agreements or contracts (such as letters of agreement or memoranda of understanding) if you believe that they will enhance effective interagency cooperation. Simple letters of support that do not provide a detailed description of how the agencies will actually interact are not necessary.
- q. Outcome measurement: Applicant's proposal shall address how the agency intends to meet each outcome measure. Describe how the necessary data will be gathered to actually measure the outcomes. Include proposed timeframes for measuring and reporting outcome progress. Describe and/or demonstrate how the outcome measurement information and data will be presented to ChildNet. If data gathering will require the efforts of other agencies or entities, present proof of their willingness to assist or describe the efforts that have been made to ensure their cooperation.
 - 95% of families having no verified indicators of abuse/neglect during service provision
 - 96% of children enrolled in the adoption program for 90 days or more will not end in disruption
 - 80% of children who show improved capacity to interact appropriately at home, with peers, and at school as measured by pre- and post-test scores on the Children's Global Assessment Scale (CGAS) or similar tool approved by ChildNet's Contract Manager

- 80% of families for whom the majority of family service plan or treatment plan goals were successfully completed within 6 months of admission
- 90% of families who adopted and were enrolled for at least 60 days that are intact 1 year following discharge
- 85% of families satisfied with program post-discharge

C. Cost Pricing and Method of Payment for Proposed Services

Applicants must define all units of service for their proposal and identify the cost of providing each unit. Pricing for individual unit costs shall be documented on Attachment #1 or Applicant may choose to submit their own pricing format provided that minimally the same information is being included. The total amount of funding is not pre determined but will rather be based upon the unit costs of specific services and the number of clients that require such services throughout the contract term.

- *In the Proposal, applicant shall identify the maximum number of units that can be provided for the service(s) being proposed. Additionally, a proposed cost for each unit shall be provided and must be based on a line item budget that supports the service and cost. Cost and budgets must be submitted on the forms provided and the budget must include a detailed justification for each expense. An agency will not be paid for clients who do not attend sessions. ChildNet will not provide funding to supplant any other source of funds.*

III. GENERAL INFORMATION AND SUBCONTRACT CRITERIA

A. Contract Formation

This is a Request for Proposals only. Proposals will be treated as offers to enter into a contract with ChildNet. The written acceptance of the Applicant's Proposal by ChildNet shall constitute a contract, pending execution of a formal written contract satisfactory to both ChildNet and the subcontractor.

B. Length of Contract

ChildNet intends to enter into a multi-year contract with the subcontractor on or after January 1st, 2016 which will expire on June 30, 2016. There will be two additional 12 month renewal periods that will ultimately expire on June 30, 2018. Renewals will be contingent upon the continuing satisfactory performance by the subcontractor.

C. Subcontract Criteria

If awarded a contract, Applicant(s) must be able to comply with all sections of ChildNet's standard core contract utilized with Network Providers. Specific criteria pertaining to insurance requirements, indemnification, employee background screening, applicable federal and state

laws, regulations, agency rules, and procedures, and other legal and regulatory details are contained within the core contract. The standard core contract is Attachment #5 of this Request for Proposal.

D. Conflict of Interest

The Applicant shall disclose and describe on Attachment #2 any business, financial, pecuniary or familial relationship existing between the Applicant (or any officer, agent, or employee of the Applicant) and any officer, employee, agent or board member of ChildNet.

E. Taxes

ChildNet is exempt from all federal, state and local taxes. ChildNet shall not be responsible for any taxes that are imposed on the Applicant. Furthermore, the Applicant understands that it cannot claim exemption from taxes by virtue of any exemption that is provided to ChildNet.

IV. ATTACHMENTS

Attachment #1	Unit Description and Cost Summary
Attachment #2	Signature Page
Attachment #3	Network Provider Application
Attachment #4	Budget and Budget Narrative
Attachment #5	Standard Core Contract