



**Boston Children's Hospital**

Where the world comes for answers



**HARVARD MEDICAL SCHOOL  
TEACHING HOSPITAL**

## **Metro South West Community Health Initiative 2026 Mental Health and Well-Being Request for Proposals**

### **About Boston Children's Hospital**

Boston Children's Hospital (Boston Children's) is a 415-bed comprehensive center for pediatric health care and the primary pediatric teaching hospital of Harvard Medical School. Boston Children's community mission is to improve the health and well-being of children and families in the local community. In service of this mission, the hospital leverages its resources with community partnerships to address health disparities, improve child health outcomes, promote health equity, and enhance quality of life for children and families.

### **About the Metro South West Community Health Initiative**

[The Boston Children's Metro South West Community Health Initiative](#) (CHI) aims to improve the health and well-being of children, youth, and families experiencing the greatest inequities in health. It will support community health initiatives for underserved children, youth, and families in the communities of **Brockton, Framingham, Needham, Quincy, Randolph, Waltham, and Weymouth**. The three initiatives through this CHI are Mental Health and Well-Being, Flourishing Families, and Healthy Communities. For more information about the process used to determine these initiatives, read the full report [here](#).



## 2026 Funding Opportunity: Mental Health and Well-Being

The goal of this initiative is to **improve the mental and behavioral health of children, youth, and families**. Boston Children's is seeking proposals that will increase access to culturally and linguistically appropriate counseling and support and/or increase social cohesion in communities.

Projects will advance change by creating or expanding already existing programs and services; advancing systems change and cross-sector coordination, and/or engaging in policy and advocacy.

Applicants must propose a project that advances at least one of the four strategic focus areas outlined below:

- Counseling and support:** Promote integration of culturally and linguistically appropriate counseling and case management supports in childcare, school, community, and health center settings to keep children and families connected to these institutions and navigate changes in public assistance programs.
- Community education and peer support:** Promote culturally and linguistically appropriate education, peer support, and mentorship programs to promote belonging and reduce stress among children, youth, or parents/caregivers in school and community settings.
- Staff development:** Provide intensive, evidence-based practice training and personal support for staff working in community, school, and clinical settings. Examples include but are not limited to: Mental Health First Aid, Circle of Security, Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions, [Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences](#), stress management and resiliency training, financial coaching.
- Enrichment programs:** Provide free out of school time programs that intentionally promote child and youth mental health in innovative and creative ways including through music, arts, play, sports, and life coaching.

### Total Award and Tiers Information

- Up to \$3.2M will be available within this request.
- Funding will support projects for three years, September 1, 2026 to August 31, 2029.
- Boston Children's anticipates funding up to 11 awards for this request.
- Applicants may propose projects with budgets in one of two tiers. Applicants requesting higher budget amounts will be expected to implement more comprehensive efforts designed to achieve systems or policy change. The following table provides guidelines for the expected elements across the two funding tiers.

Table 1. Funding Tiers

Funding tier and level	Applicant expectation	Geography
Tier 1: Up to \$50,000 per year	Individual lead applicant	Single community
Tier 2: Up to \$150,000 per year	Individual lead applicant with at least 1 partner	Single or cross-community collaboration



## Eligible Organizations

Eligible organizations include:

- Community-based organizations with 501(c)(3) status, including non-profit early childcare providers or [non-profit networks supporting for-profit early childcare providers](#), community health centers, youth and family serving organizations, and grassroots organizations. If the organization is not a 501(c)(3) non-profit, they can apply with a tax-exempt fiscal sponsor.
- Public agencies, including schools, are eligible to receive funds, but not as the lead applicant. They may be named as a partner in an application submitted by a community-based organization.

Organizations not eligible to apply for funding include:

- Practices of and affiliated with Boston Children's Hospital
- For profit organizations
- Philanthropic organizations

## Use of Grant Funds

Grant funds **may be used** for project staff salaries, consultant fees, data collection and analysis, meetings, stipends for community participants, supplies, project-related travel, and other direct expenses, including a limited amount of equipment deemed essential to the project. Indirect expenses may not exceed 10% of total request.

Grant funds **may not be used** to provide medical services provided by Boston Children's Hospital or its affiliates, support clinical trials, construct or renovate healthcare facilities, or substitute funds currently being used to support similar activities.

## Priority Communities

Funding through this initiative must support children, youth, and families in one or more of the following communities: **Brockton, Framingham, Needham, Quincy, Randolph, Waltham, and Weymouth**. Applicants must demonstrate their commitment and capacity to implement programs in one or more of these communities. Although cross-community or regional efforts may engage or impact children, youth and families from surrounding communities, Boston Children's expects that a significant percentage of funding will support children, youth, and families in the seven named priority communities.

## Priority Populations

### Children and Youth

- Black/African American, Indigenous, Latino, and Asian
- Immigrants
- LGBTQIA+
- Low-income households
- Any combination of the above

### Parents and Caregivers

- With young children ages birth to five years of age
- Single parents
- Black/African American, Indigenous, Latino, and Asian
- Immigrants
- Low-income households
- Any combination of the above

## Evaluation and Monitoring

Boston Children's is working with the UMass Donahue Institute (UMDI) to serve as the evaluation partner for this initiative. Upon award, grant partners will be expected to refine process, reach, and outcome indicators on their submitted work plan in collaboration with UMDI.

Grant partners will be expected to:

- Meet on a semi-annual basis with Boston Children's to share project progress and challenges. Notes from these meetings will be shared with grant partners and used to inform the evaluation of the initiative.
- Submit two reports per year, including a narrative mid-year progress report and an annual report containing aggregate data to demonstrate project implementation (process data) and impact (outcome data). These reports will be used to evaluate the impact of the initiative.

## Sharing and Learning

Boston Children's will convene grant partners for an onboarding meeting for organizational leadership and project staff in October 2026. In addition to semi-annual meetings with Boston Children's staff, grant partners will also be expected to participate in up to two sharing and learning activities annually with attendance from organizational leadership and project staff. Boston Children's staff will work with grant partners to identify appropriate activities.

## Proposal Evaluation Criteria

All applications will be evaluated through the lens of our Core Principles (equity, strong communities, collaboration, innovation, integration, sustainability) using a Proposal Review Tool. Reviewers will rate evaluation criteria using a weighted scale.

- Organizational Overview
- Advancing Equity
- Project Description
- Budget

## Key Dates

Week of March 9, 2026	Mental Health and Well-Being Request for Proposals released
Tuesday, March 17, 2026 11:00am – 12:00pm	Virtual Information Session. Register <a href="#">here</a>
March – April 2026	Office hours. Sign up to meet with Boston Children's staff <a href="#">here</a> .
<b>Friday, April 17, 2026</b>	<b>Proposals due by 5 p.m.</b>
By July 8, 2026	Notification of Decisions
September 1, 2026	Funding period begins
Tuesday, October 6, 2026 10:00am – 11:30am	Virtual Funded Partner Welcome and Kick Off
Thursday, October 29, 2026	Metro South West Community Health Initiative Funded Partner Convening (in-person)



## Application Instructions

**Proposals Due: Friday, April 17, 2026 by 5 p.m. at <https://bostonchildrens.smapply.io/>**

Applications will be accepted using our online application portal. Sign up for an account if you are a new user of the Survey Monkey Apply portal. Once you have logged in, select the initiative you are applying for to start your application. If you are a grant writer, please register using the name and email address for the primary contact of the application. Once you have completed the application, you must click 'Submit' to formally submit your application. You will receive notification by email that the submission was received. Use Google Chrome for the best experience. See Survey Monkey Apply frequently asked questions for applicants [here](#).

Please contact [haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu) with questions.

### Completed Application components include:

- Applicant information
- Full proposal narrative
- Project budget ([Template](#) provided)
- Project work plan ([Template](#) provided)
- Organizational budget
- W-9 tax form for organization or fiscal sponsor ([Blank copy](#) provided)
- Letters of support (Two letters from project participants or partners outside of your organization.)
- Partnership Letters, if applying for Tier 2 funding (A jointly signed letter or one letter of support from each partner. Each letter must be one page maximum.)
- Other supporting materials (Optional)

### Support for Applicants:

Boston Children's will hold an optional information session on **Tuesday, March 17, 11:00-12:00 pm via Zoom** (register [here](#)). There will be an opportunity to have your questions answered during this session. The session will be recorded and responses to questions will be posted online in the application portal. Applicants can also sign up for office hours with Boston Children's staff (register [here](#)). Applicants can also email questions to [haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu).

### Mental Health and Well-Being Required Proposal Sections

Please carefully answer the questions below and follow the directions provided in the online system. Applications that do not meet the format or answer all questions will not be considered for funding.

#### **I. Applicant Information**

The applicant information section requests information about the organization applying and the primary contact person.

#### **II. Proposal Narrative**

The proposal narrative is a combination of written responses to specific requests for information and questions prompting you to select applicable responses. When preparing your narrative responses, please be sure to note the allowable number of words for each response.



## 1. Funding Request and Tier

Please include the total and per year amount of funding being requested.

### Funding Tier (Select one)

- Tier 1: Up to \$50,000 per year for three years (Total requested amount: up to \$150,000)  
*Boston Children's expects Tier 1 applicants to apply individually.*
- Tier 2: Up to \$150,000 per year for three years (Total requested amount: up to \$450,000)  
*Boston Children's expects Tier 2 applicants to apply with a least 1 additional partner. Partnership letters are required – see Section III. Required Uploads.*

## 2. Organizational Overview

- a. Mission: Share your mission and describe how it aligns with the proposed project. (150 words)
- b. Experience: Using a health equity lens, describe your organization's experience working with the intended community and priority population. (150 words)

## 3. Project Alignment

- a. How will your project advance change? (Select one)
  - Policy advocacy: These efforts will 1) initiate or support promising campaigns to develop or change policy, 2) identify, connect, mobilize, and organize stakeholders, and/or 3) raise community-level information or knowledge.
  - Systems change and cross-sector coordination: These efforts will 1) equip and support systems stakeholders in facilitating change or coordination processes, 2) strengthen connections and coordination between or among stakeholders, and/or 3) advance cross-sector and/or cross-community collaboration.
  - Create or expand programs and services: These efforts will create, expand, or enhance programs or services utilizing innovative approaches to reach underserved communities, particularly those that are socially, culturally, or linguistically isolated from existing programs or services.
- b. Strategic Focus Area: Select the strategic focus area that will be the focus of your project. (Select one)
  - Counseling and support: Promote integration of culturally and linguistically appropriate counseling and case management supports in childcare, school, community, and health center settings to keep children and families connected to these institutions and navigate changes in public assistance programs.
  - Community education and peer support: Promote culturally and linguistically appropriate education, peer support, and mentorship programs to promote belonging and reduce stress among children, youth, or parents/caregivers in school and community settings.
  - Staff development: Provide intensive, evidence-based practice training and personal support for staff working in community, school, and clinical settings. Examples include but are not limited to: Mental Health First Aid, Circle of Security, Supportive Parenting for Anxious Childhood Emotions, [Healthy Outcomes from Positive Experiences](#), stress management and resiliency training, financial coaching.
  - Enrichment programs: Provide free out of school time programs that intentionally promote child and youth mental health in innovative and creative ways including through music, arts, play, sports, or life coaching.



#### 4. Project Description

Your responses in this section should be consistent with the [Project Work Plan](#).

- a. Project title: Provide a name and a one sentence description for the project. (75 words)
- b. Select whether your organization is applying for a Continuation or New Grant.
  - Continuation Grant (Only current funded partners may apply)
  - New Grant (Available to new applicants and current funded partners proposing a new project)
- c. Continuation grants only: Reflect on the successes and challenges of your original proposed project and provide an overall assessment of progress towards your goals to date. What aspects of your current project will you carry forward and what will be changed? (250 words)
- d. Project Goal and Objectives: Clearly state one overall goal for your project and up to 5 SMART objectives. SMART objectives are specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound. (250 words)
- e. Project Description: Provide a detailed description of the proposed project. Outline its purpose, scope, and significance, and include key components and activities. (600 words)
- f. For applicants who selected "Staff development" as a strategic focus area only: Please describe the rationale for the staff development project, evidence to support the effectiveness of this approach to retain staff and describe the plans for how staff will be continuously supported before, during, and after training. (250 words)
- g. Expected Outcomes: Briefly outline the anticipated outcomes of the project, encompassing both direct and collective impacts. (250 words)
- h. Community Engagement: Briefly describe the community to be served. Address your capacity to meet their unique needs. Highlight your community engagement process and how community input shaped the project's design and implementation. (300 words)
- i. Tier 2 applicants only: Describe your key partners for the project, their role on the project and how funding resources will be shared. (250 words)  
*Note: For each partner listed, you will need to include either a jointly signed letter or one signed letter per partner indicating their understanding of roles, responsibilities, and allocated resources (see required uploads)*
- j. Tier 2 applicants only: Briefly explain how your project seeks to be a transformative force within the current system or policy environment. (250 words)

#### 5. Organizational Capacity, Budget, and Sustainability

- a. Project Staffing: Describe the skills and capabilities of the staff who will implement and evaluate project activities. If there are new staff roles to be filled, describe your plans for hiring, including how you will make progress on your project should new staff not be hired within the first 6 months of the grant. (200 words) *Note: Funds may be allocated toward evaluation activities (e.g. data collection and reporting) in the proposed budget and should align with the level of effort for the proposed project.*
- b. Use of funds: Clearly articulate the use and impact of grant funds from Boston Children's for the project, including how you will leverage funding from Boston Children's if awarded. (200 words)
- c. Learning and Sharing: Describe your plans to collect and share the data from the proposed project, including with whom and for what purposes (e.g. process improvement, decision-making, etc.). (200 words)



- d. Optional: Please share any other information you would like us to know about your organization or your proposed project, or any areas of capacity building support that would be helpful. (150 words)

### III. Required Uploads

Complete and upload the documents described below. Documents 1 – 5 are required for all applicants. Document 6 is required for applicants who are requesting Tier 2 funding. If you are unable to upload any of the documents required below, contact [haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu](mailto:haley.piette@childrens.harvard.edu).

1. Project Work Plan (Use template provided [here](#)). The purpose of this work plan is to demonstrate how your proposed project activities align with specific objectives that support achieving your overall goal. If funded, this work plan will become part of your grant agreement and will be used to monitor and evaluate your progress. See an example of how to complete your Project Work Plan [here](#).
2. Completed Project Budget (Use template provided [here](#))
3. Organizational Budget (Use own format)
4. Completed W-9 tax form for organization or from fiscal sponsor (Use form provided [here](#) or upload own form. Submitted W-9 must include the specific address where payment should be mailed.)
5. Two Letters of Support (One-page each, single spaced, combined into single document.)
6. If applying for Tier 2 funding, partnership letters (A jointly signed letter or one-page letter from each key partner, single spaced, combined into single document.)

### IV. Optional Uploads

Please share any additional documents that may support your application. Examples include:

1. Most recent annual report
2. Project management chart for proposed project
3. Project theory of change and/or logic model
4. Evaluation supporting materials (e.g. project evaluation plan; draft data collection tools; peer-reviewed publications)