



Request for Quotations

San Mateo County Early Childhood Mental Health Services:
Landscape Scan of Available Resources

Responses must be received via email by 4pm on Wednesday, January 17, 2024

Send responses to Jenifer Clark, jdclark@smcgov.org and Myra Cruz, ecruz@smcgov.org

Note regarding the Public Records Act:

Government Code Sections 6250 et seq., the California Public Record Act, defines a public record as any writing containing information relating to the conduct of the public business. The Public Record Act provides that public records shall be disclosed upon written request and that any citizen has a right to inspect any public record unless the document is exempted from disclosure.

Be advised that any contract that eventually arises from this Request for Quotations is a public record in its entirety. Also, all information submitted in response to this Request for Quotations is itself a public record without exception. Submission of any materials in response to this Request for Quotations constitutes a waiver by the submitting party of any claim that the information is protected from disclosure. By submitting materials, (1) you are consenting to release of such materials by the County if requested under the Public Records Act without further notice to you and (2) you agree to indemnify and hold harmless the County for release of such information.

Background

A partnership between the SMC Health System and SMC Office of Education called **United for Youth: Blueprint for School & Transition-Age Youth Wellbeing** has recently begun to map mental health resources available for children and youth from elementary school through young adulthood. However, the work being done by this project is not addressing issues related to mental health care for children prior to school entry. First 5 San Mateo County (F5SMC) aims to enhance the efforts of United for Youth by examining the landscape of early childhood mental health (ECMH) services available to children ages 0-5 and their families.

Families, childcare providers, teachers, social workers, and pediatricians often identify challenges accessing adequate therapeutic support for young children as a pressing problem in San Mateo County. For example, two in three respondents to the 2022 San Mateo County Early Learning Workforce Study reported negative changes in young children’s behavior and development since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and public health surveillance has identified prenatal and postpartum depression in Latina mothers as a persistent problem.

As is true of most aspects of human development, the foundations of healthy socioemotional and behavioral functioning are laid during the early years of life. According to the ZERO TO THREE Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Task Force, “Infant and early childhood mental health is the developing capacity of the child from birth to 5 years old to form close and secure adult and peer relationships; experience, manage, and express a full range of emotions; and explore the environment and learn—all in the context of family, community, and culture.”

Of course, infants and young children are not responsible for achieving healthy mental and emotional development on their own. Parents and other caregivers play an important role. The process of a caregiver and a young child jointly managing the child’s socioemotional, physiological, and behavioral functioning in the context of their relationship is called co-regulation. Co-regulation in infancy and early childhood both regulates the child in the moment and fosters the child’s ability to self-regulate as they grow older. The slow shift from primarily relying on co-regulation in early infancy towards competent self-regulation at later ages is one of the key tasks of healthy human development.

Some young children and their parents or caregivers encounter difficulties with the process of co-regulation. While there are multiple reasons why the process may go awry (e.g. the child’s temperament, parental mental health or substance use, exposure to trauma or toxic stress, the presence of other developmental conditions such as Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder or Autism Spectrum Disorder), the outcome can be dysregulated sleep, emotional expression, behavior, attention and executive function. For example, these children may have strong reactions to things and be difficult to soothe when angry, fearful, or distressed; throw tantrums that are especially intense or long-lasting; refuse to go to bed or have difficulty falling or staying asleep; struggle to initiate, respond to, or maintain healthy social interactions with peers and adults; or behave in ways that are disruptive or dangerous to themselves or others around them.

In many cases parents/caregivers can successfully manage such challenges with help from their pediatricians, childcare providers, or friends and family members. Some families, however, require more intensive support. These families may benefit from working with an Early Childhood Mental Health clinician. ECMH clinicians are licensed therapists who have additional training and certification in

therapeutic approaches where the client is not solely the caregiver or the young child, but the dyad. ECMH clinicians need a strong knowledge base in infant and early childhood development, developmental psychopathology, attachment theory, family systems, prenatal and postpartum depression, and any specific treatment methods they use in their work. Unsurprisingly, such highly trained therapists are rare. Even rarer are ECMH clinicians who are also bilingual and bicultural.

Because ECMH clinicians are so specialized, San Mateo County families who need help with the socioemotional and behavioral development of their young children often struggle to access this support. The difficulty is exacerbated by issues around insurance coverage, eligibility requirements for some programs, wait lists, language barriers, and—most recently—disruptions related to the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has increased the number of young children experiencing mental health challenges, the severity of those challenges, and at the same time created a crisis of burnout among therapists and other front-line providers.

Given the accelerating need for ECMH services and the lack of a coherent system for providing this support, F5SMC is commissioning this landscape scan. Our goal is to develop a clear understanding of the array of ECMH services available to San Mateo County children ages 0-5 and their families, and to examine the factors that complicate access to and delivery of appropriate therapeutic services.

RFQ Statement of Intent

Please Note: This RFQ is not a commitment or contract of any kind. F5SMC reserves the right to pursue any and/or all ideas generated by this RFQ. The responses will be used to determine the respondent's ability to render the services to be provided. The failure of a respondent to comply fully with the instructions in the RFQ may eliminate its response from further evaluation as determined at the sole discretion of F5SMC.

F5SMC is accepting quotes for conducting an Early Childhood Mental Health Landscape Scan of San Mateo County. The Scan intends to identify the resources available to San Mateo County families who are seeking support in addressing challenges related to mental, socioemotional, and behavioral health for their children ages 0-5. The Scan also aims to identify barriers to service access for children and families and surface issues that make it more difficult for both patients and providers to navigate the Early Childhood Mental Health system and experience integrated care.

Desired Tasks and Activities

Please Note: The tasks below are examples of the activities that the Consultant is likely to be asked to undertake. They are not intended to represent a final scope of work for this role. Final scopes of work and deliverables will be established during contract negotiations between F5SMC and the successful proposer prior to the start of the project.

1. Project Planning and Management: The successful proposer will be responsible for all aspects of managing and administering the ECMH Landscape Scan project, including (but not limited to):
 - a) Planning, scheduling and facilitating meetings, taking notes, and identifying “next steps”
 - b) Monitoring project activities and providing regular progress updates to F5SMC staff, including via regular (weekly or twice-monthly) project management meetings for the duration of the project
 - c) Invoicing for the project on a quarterly basis, using the F5SMC online grants management system

2. Key Informant Interviews & Analysis:

The Key Informant Interviews with local leaders and practitioners in the field of Early Childhood Mental Health have two desired outcomes:

- Develop an overview of the current landscape of Early Childhood Mental Health services available in San Mateo County, including: ECMH clinicians serving San Mateo County residents; factors impeding client access to services and complicating system navigation for both patients and providers; and challenges that make it difficult to expand ECMH service offerings in the County.
- Generate an initial contact list of ECMH service providers who should receive an online Practitioner Survey.

To accomplish these goals, the Consultant will implement the following activities:

- a) Work with F5SMC staff to develop and finalize a list of Key Informants for initial interviews, as well as the interview protocol.
- b) Outreach to desired Key Informants as needed, schedule and conduct up to 15 Key Informant Interviews, and analyze the resulting data.

3. ECMH Practitioner Survey:

The Practitioner Survey is intended to gather information from clinicians who provide ECMH services to San Mateo County children ages 0-5 and their families. This information will provide a more detailed picture of the ECMH services available in San Mateo County and barriers to accessing those services. The consultant will be responsible for all project management aspects of Practitioner Survey administration. Activities will include:

- a) Work with F5SMC staff to develop an online survey and recipient list. Information used to develop the survey and recipient list may come from a variety of sources, including: the

Key Informant Interviews; online review of any relevant practitioner databases; literature reviews of evidence-based, evidence-informed, and promising practices in the ECMH field.

- b) Disseminate the online survey to the recipient list, monitor completion status and rates, and communicate with respondents regarding reminder notices, survey closing dates, and provision of incentives.
- c) Partner with F5SMC Research & Evaluation Specialist in analyzing and interpreting Practitioner Survey data.
- d) Topics to be covered in the Practitioner Survey should include (but are not limited to):
 - Eligibility requirements: for example, child's diagnosis or other presenting issues (e.g. they only serve families where a child has an autism spectrum diagnosis or if there is violence in the home); insurances accepted; income cut-offs; age limits; other systems involvement (e.g. they only serve CWS-involved families or children eligible for MediCal)
 - Services modalities: for example, individual, dyadic, or family therapy sessions; parent coaching; classroom-based; group-based; in-person or telehealth services
 - Referral sources
 - Client population (ages, diagnoses, race/ethnicity, language, zip code, household income)
 - Wait lists
 - Models used: for example, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Dialectical Behavior Therapy, Child-Parent Psychotherapy, Parent Child Interaction Therapy, Applied Behavioral Analysis, play therapy, art therapy, music therapy, occupational therapy
 - Service dosage and duration
 - Information related to payors for services

4. Preparation and Dissemination of Reports, Presentations, and/or other Data Products:

In collaboration with F5SMC staff and other stakeholders as needed, develop and disseminate reports and presentations to share the results of the San Mateo County Early Childhood Mental Health Landscape Scan.

- Data products may include reports, dashboards, infographics, presentations, briefs, social media postings, etc.
- Audiences for data products will include: F5SMC staff, Commissioners, and grantees; Key Informant Interview and Practitioner Survey participants; United for Youth: Blueprint for School & Transition-Age Youth Wellbeing (a project of the SMC Office of Education and the SMC Health System). Additional audiences may include: policy makers; other ECMH service providers; F5SMC community partners; service recipients; the general public; and other stakeholders.

Budget

The proposed budget should not exceed \$50,000.

Timeframe

The anticipated timeframe for service delivery is from February 12, 2024 – June 30, 2024.

Response Submissions

Responses must address content areas 1 through 5 on the following pages. Submit an electronic copy of your response via email to Jenifer Clark, jdclark@smcgov.org and Myra Cruz, ecruz@smcgov.org. All responses must be received by **4pm on Wednesday, January 17, 2024**.

1. Independent Consultant or Agency (no more than 1 page)

Please provide the name and address of the independent consultant or agency submitting this quote. Include the number of years the entity has been in business and its experience working with the public sector on data collection, needs assessment, and/or landscape scan projects. Describe the level of knowledge and experience with the field of early childhood development generally and early childhood mental health specifically. Provide brief descriptions of research projects similar to those described in this RFQ that your entity has successfully undertaken.

2. Personnel (no more than 2 pages)

Please provide the name and title of each individual who will be working on this project, the specific activities that they will be performing, and a brief description of their relevant qualifications and experience, including linguistic and cultural competencies. Describe their level of knowledge and experience with qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis, including key informant interviews, survey development and administration, data analysis, and presentation of results to various groups of stakeholders. Include any knowledge and experience with organizations in the Early Childhood sector in San Mateo County, and in the field of early childhood mental health. Include each person's hourly rate. You may attach résumés if you'd like; these will not count towards the two-page limit for this section.

Indicate which individual is the contact person for this project and provide that person's phone number and email address.

3. Timeframe (no more than 1 paragraph)

Provide the date by which your entity will be available to start this work, and any lead-time or startup requirements that you may have. If your agency has an internal deadline for project completion (e.g. because a key staff member is going out on leave), include that information here as well.

4. Insurance (no more than 1 paragraph)

The County has certain insurance requirements that must be met. In most situations those requirements include the following: the contractor must carry \$1,000,000 or more in comprehensive general liability insurance; the contractor must carry motor vehicle liability

insurance, and if travel by car is a part of the services being requested, the amount of such coverage must be at least \$1,000,000; if the contractor has two or more employees, the contractor must carry the statutory limit for workers’ compensation insurance; if the contractor or its employees maintain a license to perform professional services (e.g., architectural, legal, medical, psychological, etc.), the contractor must carry professional liability insurance; and generally the contractor must name the County and its officers, agents, employees, and servants as additional insured on any such policies (except workers compensation). Depending on the nature of the work being performed, additional requirements may exist. **Please indicate whether your agency is able to meet these insurance requirements and note any questions or concerns you may have.** Note that, in some circumstances, these requirements have been waived and inability to meet these requirements does not automatically disqualify proposers.

5. Activities and Budget (no more than 2 pages)

Complete the Proposed Budget table below. We strongly suggest that you draw from the “Desired Tasks and Activities” listed on **pages 4-5** of this RFQ as you fill in the table. You may add rows and columns if needed. *Please note that the final budget, scope of work, and project deliverables will be determined during contract negotiations with the successful applicant.*

Activity	Estimated Hours	Estimated Cost	Staff Responsible

Review Process

All submissions will be reviewed by staff at F5SMC. During this process, F5SMC may require a respondent’s representative to answer additional questions orally (e.g. during a conference call or an online meeting) and/or in writing. Respondents will be notified via email if F5SMC has additional questions for them.

The criteria used as a guideline in the review will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Consultant and/or agency qualifications and experience, including knowledge, capability, and experience of key personnel in:
 - Working with F5 County Commissions on activities similar to those listed on pages 4-5 of this document

- Working with public agencies, community-based organizations, and mental health clinicians on activities similar to those listed on pages 4-5 of this document
- Socioemotional development in early childhood and the field of early childhood mental health
- Organizations and services offerings within the Early Childhood sector in San Mateo County
- Language capacity and cultural responsiveness for populations relevant to the work of F5SMC
- History of successfully working with public agencies, community-based organizations, organizational leaders, evaluation staff, and direct-service providers from multiple sectors
- Quality of oral and written expression
- Cost

The decision made by F5SMC will be communicated via email and will be final.