

**Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage
Request for Proposal Information**

Funding FY October 1, 2024- September 30, 2025

RELEASE DATE: April 23, 2024

Updated: 5/10/2024

Notes on Updates:

RFP 5. See Part III Contract Specifications (page 38).

RFP 8. See Part II (page 47).

Updates have been noted in grey highlights.

PLEASE NOTE

The deadline for all proposals is: May 28, 2024, at 3 p.m.

This deadline is firm, no exceptions.

Any submission received past this deadline will not be considered.

If a proposal does not include all components, it may be considered incomplete and will not be eligible for funding.



Contents

SECTION ONE: READY BY FIVE MILLAGE FUNDING OVERVIEW	4
I. Funding Details.....	4
II. Overview of Request for Proposals	8
III. Requirements of All Funded Agencies	12
IV. Equity and Inclusion Statement.....	14
SECTION TWO: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL	15
RFP 1: Outreach and Navigation Services- Coordinated Outreach, Screening, and Navigation	16
I. Overview	16
II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services.....	16
III. Contract Specifications	18
IV. Evaluation Criteria	19
RFP 2: Outreach and Navigation to Early Care – Early Care Connection.....	20
I. Overview	20
II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services.....	20
III. Contract Specifications	24
IV. Evaluation Criteria	24
RFP 3: Healthy Development Services	26
I. Overview	26
II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services.....	26
III. Contract Specifications	29
IV. Evaluation Criteria	30
RFP 4: Parent Education and Support Services.....	31
I. Overview	31
II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services.....	31
III. Contract Specifications	33
IV. Evaluation Criteria	33
RFP 5: Early Learning Services.....	35
I. Overview	35
II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services.....	35
III. Contract Specifications	38
IV. Evaluation Criteria	38
RFP 6: Parent Education and Support Language Services (Translation and Interpretation Supports)	40

I. Overview	40
II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services.....	40
III. Contract Specifications	42
IV. Evaluation Criteria	42
RFP 7: Healthy Development Infant Health – Fetal Infant Mortality Review Network Lead	44
I. Overview	44
II. Description, Attributes of Services	44
III. Contract Specifications	45
IV. Evaluation Criteria	46
RFP 8: Healthy Development Training – Ready by Five Network Training & Education Leads	47
I. Overview	47
II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services.....	47
III. Contract Specifications	49
IV. Evaluation Criteria	49
SECTION THREE: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) PROCESS	51
I. Directions for Submission of Proposals	51
II. Question and Answer Period	53
III. RFP Timeline.....	53
IV. Resident Proposal Review Board.....	54

SECTION ONE: READY BY FIVE MILLAGE FUNDING OVERVIEW

I. Funding Details

First Steps Kent seeks proposals for quality programming meeting specifications included in the Request for Proposals (RFP) to serve expecting parents and children from birth through age five residing throughout all of Kent County's communities.

The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board is the body that is responsible for reviewing and recommending the proposals that will be awarded funding. Evaluation and discussion of each proposal's merit is guided by the evaluation criteria that can be found in Section Two, Part IV of each RFP.

If awarded funds, an agency will be required to sign a contract or Service Provider Agreement with First Steps Kent. The contract period will begin on October 1, 2024, and end on September 30, 2025. An opportunity to apply for continued funding for 2025-2026 is contingent on the renewal of the Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage ballot initiative that will be voted on in August 2024. Upon passing of the Ready by Five Millage ballot measure, the opportunity to apply for continued funding will occur in April 2025.

All services will be paid on a reimbursement payment structure that may vary by service and program type (See Section Two, Part III of each RFP). Funding will be awarded in one of two ways:

1. Actual Cost Reimbursement
2. A Defined Rate reimbursed, set on a fee schedule

Contracts or Service Provider Agreement will include the following terms related to funding:

- Agencies will agree to expend any and all payments solely for the purpose(s) as specified in the contract or Service Provider Agreement.
- Funds must be spent within the contract period for which they are awarded and cannot be carried over.
- Agencies awarded funds may not invoice Ready by Five above the awarded allocation for each contract period.
- Reimbursement will be only for the actual, reasonable, and allowable costs of program delivery and allowable, related expenses.
- Agencies awarded funding will provide a program implementation timeline during the contracting process. Services are expected to commence with the contract's start date and in accordance with this timeline.

All awards are contingent on the annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to the availability of actual tax funds captured and the appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners for each fiscal period.

For this round of funding, the following estimate is currently available for Kent County's 2024-2025 fiscal year:

\$9,800,000

Note: First Steps Kent reserves the right to modify the estimated amount of funding allocated at any time. These figures represent the best current estimate of the total maximum set of funds to be allocated across all RFPs. All figures above are rounded. Actual amounts available to award may vary as they are contingent on the actual annual Kent County property tax capture.

Funding is designed to cover the cost of direct services and reasonable administrative costs. Unless specified in the RFP, Ready by Five Millage funding cannot be used to purchase equipment and property. Please see the [Ready by Five Service Provider Manual](#), Section 3.5 for complete details.

By applying, the Service Partner agrees that all additional available sources of funding will be leveraged to cover program costs. This may include funds from a private foundation or other philanthropic source of funding, as well as state, local, federal funding, the collection of donations by the agency, or the implementation of cost sharing strategies.

The requested millage funds may not supplant or replace existing private foundation or other philanthropic funds as well as state, local, and/or federal funds already in use by the Proposing Agency.

Additionally, services funded by the Ready by Five Millage are not “free” as there is a cost to Kent County taxpayers for these services. By asking families who participate in specific types of services to share some of the cost, there is an increased awareness of the value of a service as well as increased buy-in as families may assist with covering some of the cost. Unless stated as an exempt program type or scenario, each Service Provider must implement the Ready by Five Cost Sharing and/or Donation Policy. (See Section Two, Part III of each RFP to determine if a program is required to implement the Cost Sharing policy.)

Cost Sharing is a policy that requires a co-payment from the family for whom services are provided. Shared costs are based on a sliding scale. Cost Sharing is different than a donation contribution that is given on a voluntary basis by a family participating in services. For complete details and requirements on Cost Sharing and Donations, see the Cost Sharing Policy (Policy 3.4 and Appendix F) and the Donation Policy (Policy 3.4) in the [Ready by Five Service Provider Manual](#).

A. Budget Request Specifications

Note: Agencies requesting funds under RFP 6 or RFP 8 will follow a different budget format following directions as specified in each RFP.

As agencies prepare a budget request, they will consider the following:

- Costs included must be specific to supporting the proposed program. This means that budgets may only include costs that can be identified specifically with a program and therefore are charged to that program.
- Request for funding may include necessary program-related and administrative costs. Funds should not be utilized to fill general gaps within the organizational budget that are unrelated or disproportional to programing costs.
- Cost estimates should be based on the actual time for individuals that is necessary to implement the program.
- Agencies will be able to provide a calculation for each line item included in the budget.

All agencies requesting funds will be asked to submit a proposed budget that includes the following four sections:

Section 1: Direct Program Expenses	Section 2: Supportive Program Expense	Section 3: Administrative Expenses
<p>Expenses to support positions that are essential to service delivery that directly support families and young children. Any position that gives supervision to Direct Service Positions would be included in this section.</p> <p><i>Note: If the proposed program does not provide “face-to-face” services to families, it is considered an indirect service. Wages and benefits for professionals would be included under Section 2.</i></p> <p>Examples of expenses to include in this section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wages/benefits of direct professionals (this includes professionals who support with family outreach, recruitment, and intake) • Wages/benefits of the immediate supervisor or manager position • Mileage/travel/parking for Direct Positions • All program supplies • All program specific technology (may include subscriptions such as Zoom, Microsoft, etc., hardware under the set \$1,000 threshold, or mobile phone services) • All program related professional development • All program related printing and postage • Translation and interpretation* <p>Excludes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incentives for families to participate in programming • Bonus or incentives for paid professionals • Meeting expenses for meals or food (for paid professionals) • Purchase of equipment or property • Unless they provide dedicated and direct program supervision, the CEO or other executive leadership, time may not be allocated to this section. The organizational chart must 	<p>This section is reserved for costs that identify specifically with the proposed program but are not the resources providing face-to-face or direct support to families.</p> <p>Examples of expenses to include in this section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wages/benefits for positions that provide community convening supports • Wages/benefits for positions that support with scheduling or other program coordination efforts that do not require direct contact with families • Data support • Program-specific compliance or quality assurance • Program specific marketing and communications professional supports <p>Excludes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CEO, executive leadership, and general or unrelated administrative assistant staff time may not be allocated to this section unless they provide dedicated and direct staff time in this area. The organizational chart must illustrate % FTE they are providing and the specific role in this type of situation. • Bonus or incentives for paid professionals • Meeting expenses for meals or food (for paid professionals) • Purchase of equipment or property • Back-office costs included in the budget’s Administrative Expenses section • Fundraising expenses 	<p>This section is for specified “back-office” costs only. Cost estimates are based on the actual time for individuals that is necessary to implement the program.</p> <p>Ready by Five will not be utilized to fill general gaps within the organizational budget that are unrelated or disproportional to proposed programing costs.</p> <p>Agencies will submit this as a single expense that represents a percentage of the agency’s overall overhead as a percentage that is proportional to the program.</p> <p>First Steps Kent does not set a rate or formula for determining this percentage. The calculation for how this rate was developed must be included in the Budget Narrative Form under the section titled, ‘Administrative Expenses - Narrative to Budget’.</p> <p>Examples of expenses to include in this section:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupancy/rent/utilities • Financial services • IT services • HR • Insurance • Payroll • Audit • Leadership support

<p>illustrate % FTE they are providing and the positions they are overseeing in this type of situation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General or unrelated administrative assistant staff time may not be allocated to this section. • Backoffice costs included in the budget's Administrative Expenses section <p><i>*Note: Beginning Oct 1, 2024, requesting Ready by Five programs may cover the cost of other specific languages that are not currently offered by Ready by Five Translation and Interpretation Services with designated funds in their individual contract's program budget. See RFP 6 for more information.</i></p>		<p style="text-align: center;">Section 4: Subcontractor Expenses</p> <p>Any partner agency or contractor included in the indirect/direct expense section who will be receiving Ready by Five funds through the contract is considered a subcontractor.</p> <p>This includes any agency providing work on behalf of the program that does not fall under an administrative cost.</p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Partner agency subcontracts • Independent contractors providing services • Third-party evaluation
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Unless specified in the RFP, costs allocated to Ready by Five funding should not include major purchases of equipment or the development of intellectual property. Items developed or acquired with Ready by Five funds remain vested with First Steps Kent and Kent County.

The application budget will only include proposed costs that will be covered by Ready by Five Millage funding. A program has the option of attaching a full program budget to the proposal to better illustrate how other sources of funding contribute to the full program.

In addition to the application's budget that gives specific information on how the requested amount of Ready by Five funding will be used, proposing agencies will provide a list of all revenue sources for the program. Each agency will include an itemized list of funding sources and indicate whether the source is 'confirmed' or 'pending' at the time of the application submission. Agencies will provide an estimate of funds collected through voluntary donations and cost sharing (if applicable). See the [Ready by Five Service Provider Manual](#) for more information on Donation (Policy 3.3) and Cost Sharing (Policy 3.4 and Appendix F) requirements. Also see the RFP Section Two, Part III for each RFP to determine if Cost Sharing is required for the Program Type applied under.

Proposed budgets will be evaluated in the following ways:

Across all proposals applying for each Service and Program Type, First Steps Kent will establish:

- An average for each of the four budget sections: a) direct program expenses, b) supporting program expenses, c) administrative expenses and d) subcontractor expenses. Each individual proposal will be compared to the overall average established. Any programs with costs that are higher than the established average may be asked to provide more information about included costs.

- The average cost per individual is to be served across all proposals. Cost per individual is calculated as the total request/the projected number individuals to be served included in the proposal. Each individual proposal will be compared to the overall average established. This cost per individual may be compared to previous years for each program if a program was previously funded. Any programs with costs that are higher than the established average may be asked to provide more information about included costs.

For each proposal, First Steps Kent will determine the following to be considered during the proposal review process:

- The percentage of Ready by Five funding compared to other sources of funding for the specific program.
- Compared to each organization’s overall annual revenue, the percentage of Ready by Five funding request(s).
- Review of findings by First Steps Kent’s financial team of overall financial soundness of each agency applying.

Proposals that are from agencies who have not been funded previously, have an increase in their request or scope (number served), have proposed budget costs that are consistently higher than the established average, or have not demonstrated complete performance in past contract periods may be asked to present to the Resident Proposal Review Board.

II. Overview of Request for Proposals

Proposing Agencies may only apply under one program type per proposed service. If an agency is interested in applying for more than one service/program type, they must submit a separate proposal as multiple service/program types cannot be combined into one proposal.

Services are for expecting parents and children birth through the age of five living in Kent County. This round will be deployed across the following separate funding opportunities.

RFP 1: Outreach and Navigation Services – Coordinated Outreach, Screening, and Navigation

Ready by Five millage funding has allowed for the creation of an Outreach and Navigation network by developing a multi-agency strategy to reach and engage families in a coordinated way. This network serves as the “right door” for families to find available resources, information, and programs. Programming will have a broad reach across Kent County and may be accessed by any family with a young child who resides in Kent County.

Please note. For programs serving very specific demographic groups or geographic communities, consider applying under RFP 3.c. Healthy Development – Niche Family Supports.

Outreach aims to increase the usage of early childhood programs and community resources by engaging future parents and families with young children who are not currently engaged in services or are unaware of services. As families are engaged, programs work to identify the needs of families through formal screening as

well as conversation with the individuals served. As needs are identified, navigation will address barriers to accessing services, information, and resources to ensure families are successfully connected to referrals and information.

RFP 2: Outreach and Navigation to Early Care – Early Care Connection

Programming funded under this RFP will develop enhanced infrastructure that will provide up to date information about the current child care openings available in Kent County ensuring families are accessing available child care spaces. Programming in this area will leverage technology to foster better connections between families and child care providers. Agencies applying under this program type will develop an online “platform” that will organize and provide access to information related to current child care openings in Kent County. Program staff will provide outreach, support, and technical assistance to stakeholders accessing the online system including a) families who are looking for care, b) providers with available openings, and c) community partners providing navigation services to families.

Programming will align with the Ready by Five Outreach and Navigation network which functions as the “front door” for families accessing early childhood services (RFP 1).

RFP 3: Healthy Development Services

Healthy Development programming will focus on improving outcomes related to healthy births, child health, and well-being as well as ensuring children are developmentally on track. Programming will demonstrate success in supporting positive health behaviors that drive better outcomes for children from birth through five years, as well as expectant parents.

Note: Home visiting program proposals applying under this category will not be considered - see RFP 4.

Proposals may include one of the following types of programming:

- a. Developmental, Social Emotional Screenings, and Referral Programming:** Ensures that children have regular developmental screenings to identify concerns as early as possible and as needed, follow-up referrals to services, and information. Services will support children and their families in one or more of the following ways:
 - Promote the positive social and emotional development of children served.
 - Ensure children and their caregivers will have access to clinical interventions that specifically support a healthy parent-infant attachment.
 - Address parental well-being through facilitated groups to support the acquisition of new coping skills and resources to strengthen the parent’s overall well-being.

- b. Healthy and Safe Home Environment Programming:** Families have access to support that addresses environmental home health in Kent County. Services could include, but are not limited to, environmental home health screening (to reduce home-based environmental health hazards regarding lead, asthma, accidental injury, etc.), child blood lead screening, and case management

for addressing lead and environmental hazards, including referrals to lead remediation resources. (Note: funds may not be used to cover costs related to home repairs or lead remediation services.)

c. Niche Family Supports: This program type will fund agencies who have experience reaching and supporting families who would benefit from specialized services and support. This Program Type encourages agencies who have an established position of trust and experience reaching and supporting families who would otherwise not be reached by programming to apply. Relevant areas for this specific RFP may include:

- Families who are refugees or New Americans,
- Families from communities within Kent County having the highest rates of poverty, or
- Families enduring housing insecurity, a history of trauma, or experiencing a complex set of needs to achieve economic self-sufficiency and well-being.

Programs will work to promote positive parenting practices and ensure families are supported and empowered with knowledge of how to access the available resources and services that support the healthy development and early learning of their young children.

RFP 4: Parent Education and Support Services

Parent Education and Support programming ensures parents have the knowledge and skills to support their children's health, development, and learning. As a result of services, expectant parents and families with young children will have access to the information, resources, and social support they need to be more confident and empowered to make informed choices for themselves, their children, and their families. Proposals may apply under the following type of programming:

Home Visiting Programming includes programs that support a two-generation, preventative approach that matches expectant parents as well as parents with young children with a trained early childhood or maternal infant professional. Programming is holistic and designed to meet the specific needs of each family being served and ensures parents are equipped with timely information about their child's development as well as connection to community resources and support. Services are provided in the home environment and include ongoing parent education, developmental screenings, health (including behavioral health) support, and referral to community resources.

RFP 5: Early Learning Services

This includes programming that supports early learning development and responds to the diverse families and children residing in Kent County. All programming will incorporate elements from the Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential's (MiLEAP) [Early Childhood Standards of Quality](#).

Providers applying for Early Learning funds will offer any number of nationally-recognized or evidence-informed models. Agencies may apply under one of the following two program types:

a. Play and Learn Community Programming offers children ages birth through five an avenue to community-based early learning programming. These services reach and connect with all types of caretakers to strengthen their understanding of how age-appropriate activities enrich holistic

development of a child’s social, emotional, and cognitive skills while demonstrating age-appropriate activities for the children in their care. In addition to play-based sessions, programs may offer workshops and training for families and caretakers. Topics may include child development, health, and social emotional well-being.

b. Early Literacy and Learning Programming includes evidence-based or evidence-informed programming that supports areas including improved language ability, listening, and communication skills in young children. Agencies must describe how programming meets one or more expectations as defined by [MiLEAP’s Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten](#).

RFP 6: Parent Education and Support - Language Services

Translation and Interpretation Supports offer the opportunity for agencies that specialize and provide interpretation and translation services (in-person, telephone, and written) to apply for Ready by Five Millage funding. Services are intended for families enrolled in all Ready by Five funded services.

RFP 7: Healthy Development Infant Health– Fetal Infant Mortality Review Network Lead Agency

This RFP seeks proposals that ensure services are addressing the social, economic, and health factors that contribute to healthy births in Kent County. Ready by Five is requesting proposals to select one (1) organization to lead the implementation and ongoing management of the Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) Network for Kent County.

Through a rigorous review process of infant death records, the FIMR Network seeks to identify factors contributing to infant deaths and develop action-oriented recommendations to reduce infant deaths in Kent County. Investment in the FIMR Network will provide insight and understanding of the factors that contribute to infant mortality, as well as understanding the factors that contribute to the disparities with mortality rates among babies of different race and ethnicities.

RFP 8: Healthy Development Training – Ready by Five Network Training & Education Leads

Funding under this RFP will increase knowledge in the Ready by Five professional network. Training will provide a reflective space for newly hired Ready by Five funded employees in direct service positions to attend and learn within the following topics:

- Health equity and related social needs
- Motivational Interviewing
- Empowering goal setting approach with families
- Effective documentation
- How to effectively work with interpreters
- Strategies to ensure families are successfully navigated in the community
- Approaches to support wellbeing for the professional

First Steps Kent anticipates that the Resident Proposal Review Board may select only one (1) proposal for this programming area.

III. Requirements of All Funded Agencies

A. *Ready by Five Service Provider Manual*

1. [The Ready by Five Service Provider Manual](#) lays out all policy expectations and guidelines for programs funded by the Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage. All agencies awarded funding will be expected to comply with all the policies, procedures, responsibilities, guidelines, terms, and conditions stated in the manual.

B. *Program Monitoring Requirements*

1. All agencies will attend all scheduled Service Provider meetings as well as participate in the Ready by Five Quality Improvement Consortium meetings and initiatives.
2. All agencies are required to participate in an annual program assessment. During the assessment, compliance with specifications in the Service Provider Agreement and the Ready by Five Service Provider Manual will be reviewed.
3. Each year First Steps Kent will conduct one fiscal assessment of Service Provider's performance to assure financial compliance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and all financial policies as outlined in the Ready by Five Service Provider Manual.
4. Unless otherwise specified within each RFP (see Section Two, Part III of each RFP), agencies providing direct programming that are awarded funding will be required to submit monthly data submissions at the individual level for each child and expectant parent served to the Kent County Health Department via a secure link.
 - a. Information for each individual served includes demographics, service information, and referral tracking (if applicable to your program).
 - b. This data submission follows a very specific .csv file format with required fields and codes as defined in the [Ready by Five Data Standard document](#).
 - c. Agencies will be required to sign a data agreement with First Steps Kent and Kent County Health Department as part of the contracting process.
5. Unless otherwise stated in the RFP (see Section Two, Part III of each RFP), agencies providing direct programming that are awarded funding will be required to report actual costs for reimbursement purposes, submit monthly individual-level data, and submit quarterly reports as follows:

	Monthly Invoice (By the 10 ^h of the month)	Monthly Demographic, Service, and Referral Data Submission (by the 15 th of each month)	Quarterly Report (By 30 th of April, July, October, and January)	Additional Details
How Submitted:	<i>Submitted through e-CImpact</i>	<i>Submitted to KCHD</i>	<i>Submitted through e-CImpact</i>	
Actual Expenses	★			<i>Program financials provided upon request from First Steps Kent</i>
Number Served		★	★	
Number of Encounters		★		
Ready by Five Indicators		★		
Program Specific Outcome			★	
Narrative Explanation of Variances & Implementation Timeline Update			★	

6. From data and reports submitted as described above, contract metrics will be tracked as follows:

- a. First Steps Kent uses the average monthly amount as an estimation to identify programs that may be underspending or overspending. All Service Providers will be required to provide a narrative to explain why there is a deviation from the average monthly amount (specifically, the annual award/total number of months in the award period) of projected expenses if 10% or greater.
- b. The actual number of individuals served by a Service Provider will be compared to the projected number as detailed in the Service Provider Agreement. Service Provider will be required to provide a narrative to explain why there is a deviation in the estimated number of individuals served if 10% or greater. *Note: This is not applicable to contracts that operate on an indirect service reimbursement structure.*
- c. Encounter units will be tracked as part of the contract monitoring process. Actual encounters will be compared to the projected number of encounters per individual served stated in the Service Provider Agreement. The number of encounters per individual will be confirmed during the contracting process. Service Providers will be required to report on encounters completed. If applicable, agencies will explain why there is a deviation in the number of actual units completed throughout the contract period. *Note: This is not applicable to contracts that operate on an indirect service reimbursement structure.*
- d. Information from the monthly Demographic, Service, and Referral data submissions sent to Kent County Health Department will be reconciled with the number of individuals served and

encounter units stated in the contract as well as numbers submitted in the quarterly reports and overall spending. *Note: This is not applicable to contracts that operate on an indirect services reimbursement structure.*

Source of Information:	Numbers in Contract	Quarterly Report	Monthly Data Submission to KCHD	Monthly Invoices
We are looking at:	Number Served Number of Encounters	Number Served Number of Encounters	Number Served Number of Encounters	Spending to Date



Do these match?

IV. Equity and Inclusion Statement

Ready by Five investments will support an early childhood system that helps all children and families thrive, regardless of race, ethnicity, and household income so that socioeconomic conditions are no longer predictors of kindergarten and later school success. In their approach to identifying needs in Kent County, agencies will consider group-based factors and deploy specific approaches that address the varying needs and circumstances of each group eligible for Ready by Five funded services. First Steps Kent has a comprehensive interest in improving equity among all demographic groups, especially communities of color as well for all families in households with incomes at or below 200% of the Federal Poverty Level living throughout Kent County.

Within the RFP for each direct service (See Section Two, Part I of each RFP) are specifications of groups and geographies that would benefit from expanded or new programming. Ready by Five defines geography in Kent County by five distinct community types: City/Urban, Surrounding or Suburban Communities, Northern County, Eastern County, and Southern County (southwest Kent County). Links to: a) [list of ZIP codes](#) in each Community Type and b) a [county map illustrating the geography of all Community Types](#). Agencies proposing new or expanded services must describe a plan that illustrates how successful outreach and engagement of groups or geographies not currently reached will occur.

First Steps Kent recognizes that equity is not the same as equality. The path to equity requires that Ready by Five funding provide more support and resources to the families in our community that are challenged by compounding inequities based on their race or ethnicity, health, education, housing, economic opportunities, among other factors that have put groups at a historical disadvantage and creates barriers to individuals reaching their full potential. As proposals are reviewed and discussed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board, how we balance equity with county-wide access will be considered.

Please see Appendix A of the [Ready by Five Service Provider Manual](#) for the full Ready by Five Equity and Inclusion Impact Statement.

SECTION TWO: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

	RFP #	Service Type (RFP)	Program Type
Direct Program Types	1	Outreach and Navigation Services	Coordinated Outreach, Screening and Navigation
	2	Outreach and Navigation to Early Care	Early Care Connection
	3	Healthy Development Services	a. Developmental, Social Emotional Screenings & Referral b. Healthy and Safe Home Environment Programming c. Niche Family Supports
	4	Parent Education and Support Services	Home Visiting Programming
	5	Early Learning Services	a. Play and Learn Community Programming b. Early Literacy and Learning Programming
Indirect Program Types	6	Parent Education and Support Language Services	Translation and Interpretation Supports
	7	Healthy Development Infant Health	Fetal Infant Mortality Review Network Lead
	8	Healthy Development Training	Ready by Five Training and Education Leads

RFP 1: Outreach and Navigation Services- Coordinated Outreach, Screening, and Navigation

I. Overview

Outreach and Navigation is crucial to connecting families to early childhood information and community resources within the five domains of the Social Determinants of Health: healthcare access, economic stability, education access, safety, and social support. Needs within the Social Determinants can be a primary source of family stress; research shows stress early in life can have adverse consequences on educational outcomes as well as long-term health and wellbeing.

Ready by Five funding has allowed for the creation of an Outreach and Navigation network that serves as the “front door” to help families find available resources and choose those most appropriate for their needs.

New and expanded services: First Steps Kent seeks to continue to fund effective service programming that successfully reaches all families. In addition to sustaining and strengthening the successful connections with communities currently happening within millage-funded services, First Steps Kent is requesting agencies who include new or expanded services in their proposal consider how program access meets the relative needs of families in underserved groups or areas of Kent County – particularly households at or below 200% FPL (See Section One, Part IV for more details).

For this RFP, new or expanded programming serving households in the following community types will be prioritized:

- Northern Kent County
- Southern Kent County
- Eastern Kent County

II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services

This programming aims to increase the usage of early childhood programs by engaging future parents and families with young children not currently engaged in services or who are unaware of program options. Services support families with connecting them to needed community resources. As families are engaged, programs work to identify the needs of families through formal screening as well as conversation with the individuals served. As needs are identified, navigation will address barriers to accessing services, information, and resources to ensure families are successfully connected to referrals and information.

Programs applying under this RFP will have a broad reach across Kent County and may be accessed by any family with a young child who resides in Kent County.

Please note: For programs serving very specific demographic groups or geographic communities, consider applying under RFP 3.c. Healthy Development – Niche Family Supports.

Programs must define four components in their model including: Coordination, Outreach, Screening, and Navigation. A summary of each component is included below:

Coordination: A goal of this RFP is to increase cross-agency collaboration between outreach and navigation partners to ensure efforts to reach and engage families are maximized. Within the Ready by Five network, partners funded as Outreach and Navigation providers will work towards increasing entry points for expecting parents and families with young children to access services, information, and resources. **Within the first 60 days of the contract start date, all partners working in this program type will convene to develop a coordinated outreach strategy and a method of ongoing communication to ensure alignment within the shared outreach strategy continues for the term of the contract period. Service Partners will also coordinate outreach efforts with the agency developing the Early Education Technology Link programming (see RFP 2).**

Outreach: This is the initial contact with potential families/caregivers that seeks to engage families to make them aware that assistance and information is available. This could include general messaging, place-based messaging, or specific connection points with an individual. In the proposal the service partner establishes the conditions, communications, and touchpoints for information, awareness, and potential services to empower families and caregivers. Outreach services aim to:

- Through strategic outreach strategies, engage future parents and families with young children not currently engaged in any services or who are unaware of services.
- Reach and support families who are engaged in services with connections to additional needed services (i.e., Play and Learn Communities).

Screening: Programs will identify the needs of families through a defined screening approach as well as through conversation with individuals served. All programs must develop a consistent screening approach for determining the needs of all individuals engaged by the program. Each funded program will designate a specific screening tool to ensure needs related to the [Social Determinates of Health](#) are identified by the agency. Programs may opt to include additional screening tools (i.e., ASQ screening) to further identify and guide families to resources.

For families who indicate an interest in home visiting options in Kent County, First Steps Kent strongly encourages programs to utilize the [Kent County Parent Support](#) site. This is especially important if the provider also offers a home visiting program within their agency to ensure families are fully aware of all home visiting program options available.

Navigation: Programs will offer shared relationships through which navigators partner with families/caregivers to prioritize identified needs, explore available resources, and make progress in overcoming barriers. Once needs are identified, navigation will offer connection and address barriers to access services, information, and resources. Programs will have clear procedures for tracking referral success. Additionally, navigation services will:

- Provide trusted, accessible, person-centered care with culturally responsive, trained, and supported staff who use best practices in the field.
- Develop procedures to ensure families requiring interpretation services are effectively served.

All programs must employ professionals with expertise that is applicable to the model. This may include professionals who are registered nurses, nurse practitioners, educators, social workers, community health workers, or other similarly trained professionals. All positions funded by Ready by Five must complete a background check upon hire, maintain current professional licensing as required by the model, complete training as required by the model, and complete all training required by First Steps Kent.

Parent and Family Feedback: First Steps Kent believes that parents and caretakers know best about the services their child needs. All providers are required to collect and interpret feedback from parents about their level of satisfaction with services as well as engage parent voice within programming.

Within the proposal, each program will describe how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by a) collecting and incorporating parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.

All agencies are required to include standardized questions as defined by First Steps Kent into their current parent satisfaction questionnaire tool. First Steps Kent has set the following goal for responses:

- Acceptable: 40 percent of families served
- Ideal: 70 percent of families served

Additional information about how parents can be engaged in programming is available on the [Center for the Study of Social Policy’s Parent Leader Network](#) website.

Results: All programs applying under this RFP will increase access to information that imparts knowledge to parents and other adult caregivers thus impacting one or more of the following result indicators:

- Increased referral completion and follow-through.
- Increase in the number of children and expecting parents engaged in navigation support.
- Increase in the number of families receiving referrals to additional ongoing support.

<u>Standard Family Satisfaction Questions</u>	
<i>Overall, how satisfied are you with your most recent interaction with [Program, Agency]?</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Extremely satisfied</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Somewhat satisfied</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Somewhat dissatisfied</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Extremely dissatisfied</i>
<i>If you were to share and additional comments about your most recent interaction, please enter them here: _____</i>	

III. Contract Specifications

If awarded funding, the following contract terms will be in place for all programs funded under this Service and Program Category. See Section One for full details.

Funding Details:	
Contract start and end dates*:	Start: October 1, 2024 End: September 30, 2025
Monthly reimbursement type:	Actual Cost
Type of service:	Direct
Cost sharing required for this program?	No, this service is exempt
Program Monitoring Requirements:	
Annual program assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Annual fiscal assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Monthly child/parent data submission to KCHD required?	Yes, this is required

**All awards are contingent on the actual annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners for each fiscal period.*

IV. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board. This body will recommend what proposals are funded and for how much. Organizations must meet all requirements listed below to be considered for funding.

Additional Required Criteria**
Proposing Agency’s financial audit shows the organization to be in good financial standing.
Proposing Agency has adequate funding to cover program costs and plans to pursue additional sources of funding in addition to Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
Proposing Agency has clearly explained how current funding will not be supplanted by Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
The program has demonstrated a history of success. For agencies that have previously been funded, the program spending has been on track and program outcomes defined in the contract we met.
The submitted proposal is complete.

***Proposals must meet all listed requirements to be considered for funding.*

The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board may consider historical performance of previously funded programs as well as the following evaluation criteria to select recipient organizations based on their responses to the RFP.

Programming Criteria*	Total Points
Proposes a clear plan that articulates high-quality services that meet Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage specifications to: a) screen and assess an individual’s needs, and b) successfully track if families are successfully connected to services. New and expanded services include special consideration for currently underserved populations and geographies.	20
Program has included in their narrative their commitment to work collectively with all Outreach and Navigation partners to increase community outreach efforts throughout Kent County. Agency has described commitment to convene within the first 60 days of the contract start date to determine a coordinated strategy and method of ongoing communication to ensure alignment with all Outreach and Navigation efforts.	15
The proposing agency has described how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by a) collecting and incorporating parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.	15
Demonstrates established partnership(s) with community partners to: a) reach and engage families, and b) ensure families are successfully connected with services.	15
Equity and inclusion are fostered within the organization at both the leadership and staff levels.	20
The overall submitted proposal describes services and costs in a clear, complete, concise narrative and budget details are clear. Proposed costs are comparable to all Outreach and Navigation providers for specific intervention.	15
Total Possible Points	100

**Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.*

RFP 2: Outreach and Navigation to Early Care – Early Care Connection

I. Overview

Early childhood research substantiates the rapid development of emergent literacy and language skills that occur in a child’s first three years of life. In combination with key skills in the socio-emotional, physical, and cognitive domains, these skills are the foundation for lifelong learning beginning in kindergarten and continuing into subsequent school years. Access to quality child care is essential to supporting a child’s early development.

First Steps Kent convened partners and parents to learn more about the challenges with accessing child care. Two significant themes emerged: 1) child care costs too much and 2) parents cannot find child care easily. These challenges have been acknowledged and efforts are underway to solve the issue of child care shortages through start up grants and small business startup support that have been put in place by the State of Michigan. Additionally, at this time the issue of affordability is being addressed by a local Vibrant Futures’ pilot funded through philanthropic dollars to ensure families are accessing available child care benefits (e.g., child care subsidy, Tri Share) that will ease the cost burden of child care on families.

The interesting thing First Steps Kent also heard during listening sessions was that while there is a shortage of available providers, care providers stated they have challenges with filling open child care slots. Both partners and parents stated the importance of, “child care information must be more readily available in one location – a designed hub for parents.”

This RFP offers the opportunity to invest local Ready by Five funding to support the development of an enhanced infrastructure that provides up to date information about the current child care openings available in Kent County. Ready by Five is requesting proposals to select one (1) organization to lead the development and implementation of this program.

II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services

One agency currently in Kent County will be selected to lead implementation and oversight of a technology-based solution and program supports that will foster better connections between families and child care providers.

With this service area, efforts at the local level must align with Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) efforts and long-term planning happening at the state level. As technology is developed, regular communication with the Early Childhood Investment Corporation (ECIC) and Michigan’s Lifelong Education, Advancement, and Potential (MiLEAP) is crucial.

The agency selected will attain all of the following program components:

An online “Platform”: Technology solution that will organize and provide access to information related to current child care openings in Kent County in the following ways:

- The online user interface is accessible and compatible with computer/PC, smartphone, and tablet.

- Features will include a) a parent-facing search feature that allows navigators and families to find care options that fit their needs, and b) a provider-facing system that allows for an efficient way to update information about child care slots that are open.
- This platform will align with the current Great Start to Quality (GSQ) online system, adding a provider and parent facing experience that complements the current GSQ website.
- This technology would give navigators, parents, and providers across the county information about currently available child care slots.
- The platform will offer a welcoming interface that is simple to navigate. Users will experience a site that offers clear instructions and prompts to guide users through the steps to sign into the system, update information, and access all features of the system.
- Provides simple, yet secure, log in and sign-up experience for parents, navigators and child care providers accessing the site. Ideally, the feature would include single sign on technology as well as a password-reset option.
- Development of a solution that aligns with the GSQ online system currently administered by the Michigan Department of Education and ECIC.

Community support: The Agency selected would provide outreach, support, and technical assistance to: a) families who are looking for care, b) providers with available openings, and c) community partners providing navigation services to families. The platform and program staff will serve three distinct groups in the following ways:

Group:	1. Child Care Providers	2. Families	3. Community Partners
Platform and Technical Feature	<p>Allow information about openings to be updated in an efficient way.</p> <p>Support new child care providers who are filling new available child care openings.</p>	<p>Communicates information in a simple format for parents to understand key information about the child care options available that best meet their needs and preferences (e.g., location, hours, quality rating).</p> <p>Locate care that meets specific needs of families, including care for a child with special needs.</p>	<p>Communicates information in a simple format for parents to understand key information about the child care options available that best meet their needs and preferences (e.g., location, hours, quality rating).</p> <p>Locate care that meets specific needs of families, including care for a child with special needs.</p>

Group:	1. Child Care Providers	2. Families	3. Community Partners
Staff Support Feature	<p>Marketing to increase awareness of the platform and increase child care providers engagement with the platform.</p> <p>Dedicated time to build personalized relationships with Kent County providers to encourage engagement in the platform.</p>	<p>Marketing to increase parent awareness and how to access the platform.</p> <p>Offering options supporting parents with questions about finding child care options ideally offering phone, text and email options for parents to contact program staff.</p> <p>Convening and supporting the parent advisory group.</p>	<p>Marketing to invite community partners to learn about the platform and how community navigators can access the platform.</p> <p>Maintaining a contact list of community partner navigators who support families with platform access. Provide regular communications with updates to partners.</p> <p>Educating community partners and groups about how to access the platform and related support services.</p>

Programming will also ensure the following components are in place:

- Regular hours for parents, child care providers, and partners to contact program staff for assistance.
- Ensure technical components are fully functioning and families, providers and navigators are supported if they have technical questions or concerns.
- Reporting of the identified gaps with child care services and successes to community partners, the parent advisory group, and First Steps Kent.
- Process to collect feedback from community partners, families, and child care providers on how the platform functions and ideas to improve the platform.

Additionally, the program will establish formal partnerships that will allow the platform and staff the ability to offer connectivity to child care resources and additional child care related support including:

- Availability of information about child care benefit programs available (e.g., CDC subsidy and Tri share). This includes 1:1 assistance with determining if parents are eligible for benefits and connection to assistance with applying for benefits (this may be supported by partners).
- A warm connection to navigation programs that can assist with identifying and connecting to resources to address additional needs (e.g., health benefits, housing, WIC).
- Maintaining an online directory of key supports and helpful resources related to child care.

All programs must employ professionals with expertise that is applicable to the model. This may include professionals who are registered nurses, nurse practitioners, educators, social workers, community health workers, or other similarly trained professionals. All positions funded by Ready by Five must complete a

background check upon hire, maintain current professional licensing as required by the model, complete training as required by the model, and complete all training required by First Steps Kent.

Programs are required to track key demographics and information about services and referrals for individuals served that will be submitted through the monthly data submission process. Specifications of required data fields to be reported will be defined with the service partner as development of the technology solution progresses.

Programming will align with the Ready by Five Outreach and Navigation network which functions as the “front door” for families accessing early childhood services by ensuring all families living in Kent County are connected with the right service at the right time.

Parent and Family Feedback: First Steps Kent believes that parents and caretakers know best about the services their child needs. All providers are required to collect and interpret feedback from parents about their level of satisfaction with services as well as engage parent voice within programming.

Within the proposal, each program will describe how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by a) collecting and incorporating parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.

All agencies are required to include standardized questions as defined by First Steps Kent into their current parent satisfaction questionnaire tool. First Steps Kent has set the following goal for responses:

- Acceptable: 40 percent of families served
- Ideal: 70 percent of families served

Standard Family Satisfaction Questions

Overall, how satisfied are you with your most recent interaction with [Program, Agency]?

- Extremely satisfied*
- Somewhat satisfied*
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied*
- Somewhat dissatisfied*
- Extremely dissatisfied*

If you were to share any additional comments about your most recent interaction, please enter them here: _____

Additional information about how parents can be engaged in programming is available on the [Center for the Study of Social Policy’s Parent Leader Network](#) website.

New Services: Within this program type, First Steps Kent seeks to fund effective service programming that successfully reaches all families, with a focus on groups and families living in all communities – particularly those who live in households with income at or below 200% Federal Poverty Level - who would benefit from these navigation supports. (See Section One, Part IV for more details.)

Results: The agency under this RFP will increase access to information for parents and other adult caregivers thus impacting one or more of the following result Indicators:

- Increased referral completion and follow-through.
- Increase in the number of children and expecting parents engaged in navigation support.
- Increase in the number of families receiving referrals to additional ongoing support.

III. Contract Specifications

If awarded funding, the following contract terms will be in place for all programs funded under this Service and Program Category. See Section One for full details.

Funding Details:	
Contract start and end dates*:	Start: October 1, 2024 End: September 30, 2025
Monthly reimbursement type:	Actual Cost
Service:	Direct
Cost sharing required for this program?	No, this program is exempt
Program Monitoring Requirements:	
Annual Program Assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Annual Fiscal Assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Monthly Child/Parent data submission to KCHD required?	Yes, this is required

**All awards are contingent on the actual annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners for each fiscal period.*

IV. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board. This body will recommend what proposals are funded and for how much. The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board may consider historical performance of previously funded programs as well as the following evaluation criteria to select recipient organizations based on their responses to the RFP.

Programming Criteria*	Total Points
Proposes a clear plan that considers the three key stakeholders: families, child care providers, and community navigators. Services meet Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage specifications to: a) develop online platform b) reach and support participants, c) successfully track if families are successfully connected to services, and d) support greater childcare navigation efforts in Kent County.	20
The proposing agency has included in their narrative how they will work collectively with efforts at the local and state level.	15
The Proposing agency has described how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by: a) collecting and incorporating both provider and parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.	15
Demonstrates established partnership(s) with community partners to: a) reach and engage families, and b) ensure families are successfully connected with services.	15
Equity and inclusion are fostered within the organization at both the leadership and staff levels.	20
The overall submitted proposal describes services and costs in a clear, complete, concise narrative and budget details are clear. Proposed costs are comparable to all Outreach and Navigation providers for specific intervention.	15
Total Possible Points	100

**Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.*

Additional Required Criteria**
Proposing Agency's financial audit shows the organization to be in good financial standing.
Proposing Agency has adequate funding to cover program costs and plans to pursue additional sources of funding in addition to Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
Proposing Agency has clearly explained how current funding will not be supplanted by Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
The program has demonstrated a history of success. For agencies that have previously been funded, the program spending has been on track and program outcomes defined in the contract we met.
The submitted proposal is complete.

***Proposals must meet all listed requirements to be considered for funding.*

RFP 3: Healthy Development Services

I. Overview

Health through the early years is an important contributor to later educational success and life-long health. Nationally and in Kent County, data supports the need for services beginning in a child's early years and before kindergarten entry. First Steps Kent is seeking equitable interventions and programming that support all children and address the significant disparities in health, well-being, and developmental concerns among groups.

Healthy Development Services provide programming to expectant parents and children through age five currently residing in Kent County, Michigan. Programming will demonstrate success in supporting positive health behaviors and drive better health and developmental outcomes for children ages birth through five years as well as expectant parents.

New and expanded services: First Steps Kent seeks to continue to fund effective service programming that successfully reaches all families. In addition to sustaining and strengthening the successful connections with communities currently happening within millage-funded services, First Steps Kent is requesting agencies who include new or expanded services in their proposal consider how program access meets the relative needs of families in underserved groups or area of Kent County – particularly households at or below 200% FPL (See Section One, Part IV for more details.)

For this RFP, new or expanded programming serving households in the following community types will be prioritized:

- Northern Kent County
- Southern Kent County
- Eastern Kent County

II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services

Models in this area will focus on improving outcomes related to healthy births, child health, and well-being as well as ensuring children through age five are developmentally on track. Programming will follow evidence-based or evidence-informed models that build on the family or child's strengths while supporting their individualized needs. Programs may work in a specialized way with populations to provide services that are centered around specific cultural and/or group-based needs.

All models must employ professionals with expertise that is applicable to the model. This may include professionals who are registered nurses, nurse practitioners, educators, social workers, community health workers, or other similarly trained professionals. All positions funded by Ready by Five must complete a background check upon hire, maintain current professional licensing as required by the model, complete training as required by the model, and complete all training required by First Steps Kent.

Note: Programming under the RFP area may support families enrolled in early learning opportunities throughout Kent County. For proposed programming that is co-located within or affiliated with an early

learning classroom: funds may not be utilized to meet minimum student-to-staff classroom ratios required as by licensing or to cover the costs otherwise covered by state-funded or private tuition sources.

First Steps Kent believes that parents and caretakers know best about the services their child needs. All providers are required to collect and interpret feedback from parents about their level of satisfaction with services as well as engage parent voice within programming.

Within the proposal, each program will describe how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by a) collecting and incorporating parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.

All agencies are required to include standardized questions as defined by First Steps Kent into their current parent satisfaction questionnaire tool. First Steps Kent has set the following goal for responses:

- Acceptable: 40 percent of families served
- Ideal: 70 percent of families served

Additional information about how parents can be engaged in programming is available on the [Center for the Study of Social Policy's Parent Leader Network](#) website.

Providers may apply for Healthy Development Programming funds to support programs by selecting one of the following types of programming:

Program Type a.) Developmental and Social Emotional Screenings and Referral

Children and their caregivers will have access to comprehensive, coordinated care that maximizes the child's physical and emotional health. Programming ensures children have regular developmental screenings to identify developmental delays, disabilities, and emotional challenges.

This Program Type includes evidence-based or evidence-informed models that ensure access to clinical interventions. Models may offer individualized service, a group-based service, or a combination of both. Program components include one or more of the following:

- Supporting a healthy parent-infant attachment,
- Addressing positive social and emotional development of children,
- Promoting parental well-being through an evidence-informed facilitated group model so families acquire new coping skills to strengthen their overall wellbeing.

Regardless of the model, all programs funded in this Program Type will implement the following components:

- Screening: All funded programs will implement and report on the [Ages and Stages](#) (ASQ-3 and ASQ-SE) developmental screening tools through the monthly data submission process. Programs may opt to include additional screening or assessment tools to further identify needs and guide families.

Standard Family Satisfaction Questions

Overall, how satisfied are you with your most recent interaction with [Program, Agency]?

- Extremely satisfied*
- Somewhat satisfied*
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied*
- Somewhat dissatisfied*
- Extremely dissatisfied*

If you were to share any additional comments about your most recent interaction, please enter them here: _____

- Connection: All programs will establish a referral protocol to ensure all children with an identified concern are referred and connected to further additional assessment or resources to address the concern(s) at hand. Information about referrals will be submitted through the monthly data submission process.

Results: Agencies applying under this program type will impact one or more of the following result indicators:

- Increase in the number of children screened by programs for developmental concerns.
- Increase in the number of children screened by programs for social emotional concerns.
- Increase in the number of children successfully connected to support when a developmental or social emotional concern is identified.

Program Type b.) Healthy and Safe Home Environment Programming

This area includes programming that ensures families have access to support that specifically addresses environmental home health concerns including, but not limited to, lead-based paint dangers and other home-based environmental concerns that contribute to poor health outcomes for young children living in Kent County.

Services could include but are not limited to:

- Home health screenings to reduce home-based environmental health hazards regarding lead, asthma, accidental injury, etc.
- Child elevated blood lead level screening
- Case management for addressing lead issues and home environment hazards
- Activities to coordinate outreach efforts among agencies to ensure successful outreach to families in specific neighborhoods, groups, or geographic regions

Note: funds may not be used to cover costs related to home repairs or lead remediation services.

All programs will establish a protocol to ensure all homes with an identified environmental hazard will be connected to further assessment or resources for home lead remediation. Information about referrals will be submitted through the monthly data submission process.

All programs will report on program features described below (as applicable) through the monthly data submission process:

- Screening/testing for environmental and lead-based home hazards and the outcome.
- Child elevated blood lead level screening/test results.

Results: Programs applying under this program type will impact one or more of the following result indicators:

- Increase in the number of children receiving blood screening to test for elevated levels of lead.
- Increase in the number of children's homes screened for environmental hazards and lead by a trained professional.
- Increase the number of families successfully referred to resources and services when one or more environmental concerns in the home have been identified.

Program Type c) Niche Family Supports

This Program Type will fund agencies who have experience reaching, supporting, and connecting families who benefit from specialized services and support. This RFP encourages agencies who have an established position of trust and experience reaching and supporting families who would otherwise not be reached by programming. This may include:

- Families who are refugees or New Americans,
- Families engaged within an intervention-type service such as child welfare services,
- Those experiencing housing insecurity,
- Those otherwise engaged in any program serving at-risk adults with young children, or
- Agencies may propose how families with a very specialized or specific need may be served within their proposal.

Programs will work with parents to establish individualized goals or plan to encourage individual behavior change that will support parental well-being as well as their child's early development.

Programs will work to promote positive parenting practices and ensure families are supported and empowered with knowledge of how to access the available resources and services that support the healthy development and early learning of their young children.

All programs will establish a program-specific protocol to ensure families with an identified need are connected to further assessment, community resources, or programming. Information about referrals will be submitted through the monthly data submission process.

Results: All programs applying under this RFP will increase access to information that imparts knowledge and skills to parents and other adult caregivers about their child's development thus impacting one or more of the following result Indicators:

- Increased referral completion and follow-through.
- Increase in the number of children and expecting parents engaged in support.
- Increase in the number of families receiving referrals to additional ongoing support.

III. Contract Specifications

If awarded funding, the following contract terms will be in place for all programs funded under this Service and Program Category. See Section One for full details.

Funding Details:	
Contract start and end dates*:	Start: October 1, 2024 End: September 30, 2025
Monthly reimbursement type:	Actual Cost
Type of service:	Direct
Cost sharing required for this program?	Yes, this is required
Program Monitoring Requirements:	
Annual program assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Annual fiscal assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Monthly child/parent data submission to KCHD required?	Yes, this is required

**All awards are contingent on the actual annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners for each fiscal period.*

IV. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board. This body will recommend what proposals are funded and for how much. Organizations must meet all requirements listed below to be considered for funding.

Additional Required Criteria**
Proposing Agency’s financial audit shows the organization to be in good financial standing.
Proposing Agency has adequate funding to cover program costs and plans to pursue additional sources of funding in addition to Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
Proposing Agency has clearly explained how current funding will not be supplanted by Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
The program has demonstrated a history of success. For agencies that have previously been funded, the program spending has been on track and program outcomes defined in the contract we met.
The submitted proposal is complete.

***Proposals must meet all listed requirements to be considered for funding.*

The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board may consider historical performance of previously funded programs as well as the following evaluation criteria to select recipient organizations based on their responses to the RFP.

Programming Criteria	Total Points
The narrative provides a clear plan for services (intake, enrollment, discharge, the setting service is provided, how often service takes place, and how the program is delivered). Proposal meets all the specifications outlined in this RFP. New and expanded services include a special consideration for underserved populations and geographies not currently served.	30
There is clear evidence that describes the effectiveness of this program.	10
The proposing agency has described how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by a) collecting and incorporating parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.	15
Demonstrates how formalized partnership(s) with community partners will reach and engage families as well as fully serve families.	10
Equity and inclusion are fostered within the organization at the leadership and staff levels.	20
Proposed staff FTEs and costs are comparable to all providers for specific Program Category and interventions.	15
Total Possible Points	100

**Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.*

RFP 4: Parent Education and Support Services

I. Overview

Parent Education and Support Services ensure parents have the knowledge and skills to support their children’s health, development, and learning. As a result of these services, parents will have access to the information, resources, and social support they need to be more confident and empowered to make informed choices for themselves, their children, and their families. Services provide in-home and/or community-based support and education.

New and Expanded Services: First Steps Kent seeks to continue to fund effective service programming that successfully reaches all families. In addition to sustaining and strengthening the successful connections with communities currently happening within millage-funded services, First Steps Kent is requesting agencies who include new or expanded services in their proposal consider how program access meets the relative needs of families in underserved groups or area of Kent County – particularly households at or below 200% FPL (See Section One, Part IV for more details).

For this RFP, new or expanded programming serving households in the following community types will be prioritized:

- Northern Kent County
- Southern Kent County
- Eastern Kent County

II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services

Under this RFP, First Steps Kent is requesting proposals for evidence-based evidence-informed home visiting programming.

All programs must employ professionals with expertise that is applicable to the model. This may include professionals who are registered nurses, nurse practitioners, educators, social workers, community health workers, or other similarly trained professionals. All positions funded by Ready by Five must complete a background check upon hire, maintain current professional licensing as required by the model, complete training as required by the model, and complete all training required by First Steps Kent.

First Steps Kent believes that parents and caretakers know best about the services their child needs. All providers are required to collect and interpret feedback from parents about their level of satisfaction with services as well as engage parent voice within programming.

Within the proposal, each program will describe how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by a) collecting and incorporating parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.

All agencies are required to include standardized questions as defined by First Steps Kent into their current parent satisfaction questionnaire tool. First Steps Kent has set the following goal for responses:

- Acceptable: 40 percent of families served
- Ideal: 70 percent of families served

Additional information about how parents may be engaged in programming is available on the [Center for the Study of Social Policy's Parent Leader Network](#) website.

Providers may apply for Parent Education and Support Programming funds under one of two (2) types of programming described below.

Please note: Proposing Agencies may apply under the Home Visiting Program type to offer parent education through home visiting -or- apply under the Child Safety Program Type to offer ancillary support addressing the preventable causes of infant mortality. If an agency is interested in applying for both program types, they must submit separate proposals under each program type as these cannot be combined into one proposal.

Program Type: Home Visiting Programming

Home visiting programming addresses several outcomes across child health, maternal health, family economic well-being, positive parenting practices, and school readiness. Programs have shown evidence of reductions in child maltreatment, family economic self-sufficiency, increasing linkages to community resources and support, as well as reductions in family violence.

Programming will follow evidence-based or evidence-informed practices that demonstrate success in driving better outcomes for children from birth through five years of age, as well as expectant parents. Home visiting models that are recognized by the [HomVee \(USDHHS\)](#) or [State of Michigan MIECHV](#) as an evidence-based home visiting model will be considered. Evidence-informed or those that are promising practices of home visiting models will also be considered.

At minimum, all programs must implement the [Ages and Stages Questionnaire](#) (ASQ-3 and ASQ SE) if they serve families beyond the postpartum period. Programs may opt to include additional screening and assessment tools to further identify needs and guide families. Results of screening will be submitted through the monthly data submission process. Additionally, all programs will establish a referral protocol to ensure all children with an identified concern are referred and connected to further additional assessment or resources to address the concern(s) at hand. Information about referrals will be submitted through the monthly data submission process.

Results: Programs will be asked to submit data on additional program features (as applicable to each model) through the monthly data submission process that relates to the result indicators listed below. Programs applying under this program type must track impact with one or more of the following result Indicators:

- Decrease in mothers smoking during pregnancy.

Standard Family Satisfaction Questions

Overall, how satisfied are you with your most recent interaction with [Program, Agency]?

- Extremely satisfied*
- Somewhat satisfied*
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied*
- Somewhat dissatisfied*
- Extremely dissatisfied*

If you were to share any additional comments about your most recent interaction, please enter them here: _____

- Decrease in mothers using non-prescribed substances during pregnancy.
- Ensure expectant mothers and primary caregivers are screened for wellbeing.
- Ensure mothers receive adequate prenatal care. (Defined by the Kotelchuck Index)
- Increase in healthy births. (Defined as Babies Born at Healthy Weight at 2500 Grams)
- Increase in mothers breastfeeding.
- Increase in the number of children screened by the program for developmental concerns.
- Increase in the number of children screened by the program for social emotional concerns.
- Increase in the number of children successfully connected to support when a developmental or social emotional concerns is identified.

III. Contract Specifications

If awarded funding, the following contract terms will be in place for all programs funded under this Service and Program Category. See Section One for full details.

Funding Details:	
Contract start and end dates*:	Start: October 1, 2024 End: September 30, 2025
Monthly reimbursement type:	Actual Cost
Service:	Direct
Cost sharing required for this program?	Yes, this is required
Program Monitoring Requirements:	
Annual Program Assessment required?	Yes, this is required.
Annual Fiscal Assessment required?	Yes, this is required.
Monthly Child/Parent data submission to KCHD required?	Yes, this is required.

**All awards are contingent on the actual annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners for each fiscal period.*

IV. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board. This body will recommend what proposals are funded and for how much. Organizations must meet all requirements listed below to be considered for funding.

Additional Required Criteria**
Proposing Agency’s financial audit shows the organization to be in good financial standing.
Proposing Agency has adequate funding to cover program costs and plans to pursue additional sources of funding in addition to Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
Proposing Agency has clearly explained how current funding will not be supplanted by Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
The program has demonstrated a history of success. For agencies that have previously been funded, the program spending has been on track and program outcomes defined in the contract we met.
The submitted proposal is complete.

***Proposals must meet all listed requirements to be considered for funding.*

The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board may consider historical performance of previously funded programs as well as the following evaluation criteria to select recipient organizations based on their responses to the RFP.

Programming Criteria	Total Points
The narrative provides a clear plan for services (intake, enrollment, discharge, the setting service is provided, how often service takes place, and how the program is delivered). Proposal meets all the specifications outlined in this RFP. New and expanded services include a special consideration for underserved populations and geographies not currently served.	30
There is clear evidence that describes the effectiveness of this program.	10
The proposing agency has described how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by: a) collecting and incorporating parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.	15
Demonstrates how formalized partnership(s) with community partners will reach and engage families as well as fully serve families.	10
Equity and inclusion are fostered within the organization at the leadership and staff levels.	20
Proposed staff FTEs and costs are comparable to all providers for specific Program Category and interventions.	15
Total Possible Points	100

**Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.*

RFP 5: Early Learning Services

I. Overview

Early Learning Services nurture a child’s cognitive, social, and emotional development. Early childhood research substantiates the rapid development of emergent literacy and language skills that occur in a child’s first three to five years of life. In combination with key skills in the socio-emotional, physical, and cognitive domains, these skills are the foundation for lifelong learning beginning in kindergarten and continuing into subsequent school years.

New and Expanded Services: First Steps Kent seeks to continue to fund effective service programming that successfully reaches all families. In addition to sustaining and strengthening the successful connections with communities currently happening within millage-funded services, First Steps Kent is requesting agencies who include new or expanded services in their proposal consider how program access meets the relative needs of families in underserved groups or area of Kent County – particularly households at or below 200% FPL. (See Section One, Part IV for more details.)

For this RFP:

- New or expanded programming serving households in the following community types will be prioritized:
 - Southern Kent County
 - Northern Kent County
 - Eastern Kent County
- Within all geographic community types, proposals that will specifically serve the following groups will be prioritized:
 - Children in households with incomes at or below 200% FPL
 - Families from communities of color
 - Latinx, including Spanish-speaking families
 - Families who are Refugee or Immigrant (non-English speaking)

II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services

First Steps Kent is seeking proposals that ensure children in Kent County have access to quality early learning programming. All programming will incorporate elements from the Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential’s (MiLEAP) [Early Childhood Standards of Quality](#). Each agency will reference how the proposed programming aligns and incorporates these standards, as well as describe the evidence of the model’s impact within these standards.

Note: Programming under the RFP area is intended to complement and enhance early learning opportunities throughout Kent County. Funds may not be used to provide scholarships to children in licensed early care programming. For proposed programming that is co-located within or affiliated with an early learning classroom: funds may not be utilized to meet minimum student-to-staff classroom ratios required as by licensing or to cover the costs otherwise covered by state-funded or private tuition sources.

In addition to describing the program model, Proposing Agencies will include in their program description the following considerations:

- These services may not have a specific navigation focus but will describe how they will promote linkages between caretakers and [Ready by Five Outreach and Navigation Services](#) for families to be connected to additional resources within their programming.
- These services may not be conducive to providing developmental screenings but will at minimum describe how they will promote linkages between caretakers and Ready by Five programs offering developmental screening and navigation supports in their programming.

All programs must employ professionals with expertise that is applicable to the model. This may include professionals who are registered nurses, nurse practitioners, educators, social workers, community health workers, or other similarly trained professionals. All positions funded by Ready by Five must complete a background check upon hire, maintain current professional licensing as required by the model, complete training as required by the model, and complete all training required by First Steps Kent.

Programs are required to track demographics and services received for each child served. This information will be submitted through the monthly data submission process.

First Steps Kent believes that parents and caretakers know best about the services their child needs. All providers are required to collect and interpret feedback from parents about their level of satisfaction with services as well as engage parent voice within programming.

Within the proposal, each program will describe how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by a) collecting and incorporating parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.

All agencies are required to include standardized questions as defined by First Steps Kent into their current parent satisfaction questionnaire tool. First Steps Kent has set the following goal for responses:

- Acceptable: 40 percent of families served
- Ideal: 70 percent of families served

Additional information about how parents can be engaged in programming is available on the [Center for the Study of Social Policy's Parent Leader Network](#) website.

Providers may apply for Early Learning Programming funds to support programming that focuses on one of the following types of programming:

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Standard Family Satisfaction Questions</u></p> <p><i>Overall, how satisfied are you with your most recent interaction with [Program, Agency]?</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Extremely satisfied</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Somewhat satisfied</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Somewhat dissatisfied</i></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> <i>Extremely dissatisfied</i></p> <p><i>If you were to share any additional comments about your most recent interaction, please enter them here: _____</i></p>

Program Type a.) Play and Learn Community Programming

Programs are designed for the purpose of reaching and connecting with all types of caretakers (e.g., parents, relative-aide providers, licensed providers, child care center staff, preschool teachers) to strengthen their

understanding of child development to increase opportunities for all children to receive age-appropriate activities that enrich holistic development of a child’s social, emotional, and cognitive skills. Play and Learn Community Programming may follow the [Kaleidoscope Model](#) or other nationally recognized models.

Typically, Play and Learn Community programs offer regularly scheduled play-based sessions for at least 90 minutes in public neighborhood locations such as community centers, elementary schools, public libraries, and public or transitional housing. Programs are designed to be attended on a drop-in basis and are welcoming to all children and their caretakers who attend a session.

Each program offers information to develop a caretaker’s understanding of how they can nurture their child’s early learning development. At each session, caretakers have an opportunity to connect and learn from professionals who have early childhood expertise on a variety of topics including, but not limited to, basic math skills, literacy skills, and social emotional development. During each session, the child engages in play with their caretaker that is set up in stations to reflect a learning domain linked to the Michigan Department of Education’s Learning Expectations. Sessions contain defined, essential learning objectives for the child and their caretaker. Every child who attends generally leaves with a small takeaway project or book to extend the age-appropriate learning that occurred in that session.

Communities can be customized by the needs and feedback from the caretakers who attend. Materials may be customized to offer culturally relevant information about early child development and school readiness. Programs will ensure staff training and processes are implemented to support culturally responsive program delivery to all children and caregivers who attend. In addition to play-based sessions, programs may offer workshops and training for families and caretakers. Topics may include child development, health, and social emotional well-being.

All programs applying under this RFP will increase access to information that imparts knowledge and skills to parents and other adult caregivers about their child’s development thus impacting one or more of the following result Indicators:

- Increase in the number of new children with access to developmentally appropriate activities that promote early learning and literacy.

Program Type b) Early Literacy and Learning Programming

This area is broad and encompasses evidence-informed early literacy programming that supports improved language ability, listening, and communication skills in young children. Agencies must describe how programming meets one or more Early Learning and Development Standards as defined by [MiLEAP’s Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten](#). Programming must include one or more of the following standards:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| • Approaches to Play and Learning | • Creative and Expressive Arts |
| • Social and Emotional Development | • Mathematics |
| • Physical Development and Health | • Engineering and Technology |
| • Communication, Language, and Early Literacy Development | • Science |
| | • Social Studies |

Each agency will reference how the proposed programming aligns and incorporates these standards, as well as describe the evidence of the model’s impact within these standards.

Results: All programs applying under this RFP will increase access to information that imparts knowledge and skills to parents and other adult caregivers about their child’s development thus impacting one or more of the following Ready by Five Result Indicators:

- Increase in the number of new children with access to developmentally appropriate activities that promote early learning and literacy.

III. Contract Specifications

If awarded funding, the following contract terms will be in place for all programs funded under this Service and Program Category. See Section One for full details.

Funding Details:	
Contract start and end dates*:	Start: October 1, 2024 End: September 30, 2025
Service:	Direct
Monthly reimbursement type:	Actual Cost
Cost sharing required for this program?	Program Type a is exempt (Play and Learn Communities) Program Type b is required (Early Literacy and Learning Programing)
Program Monitoring Requirements:	
Annual Program Assessment required?	Yes, this is required.
Annual Fiscal Assessment required?	Yes, this is required.
Monthly Child/Parent data submission to KCHD required?	Yes, this is required.

**All awards are contingent on the actual annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners for each fiscal period.*

IV. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board. This body will recommend what proposals are funded and for how much. The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board may consider historical performance of previously funded programs as well as the following evaluation criteria to select recipient organizations based on their responses to the RFP.

In addition to program components, organizations must meet all requirements listed below to be considered for funding.

Additional Required Criteria**
Proposing Agency's financial audit shows the organization to be in good financial standing.
Proposing Agency has adequate funding to cover program costs and plans to pursue additional sources of funding in addition to Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
Proposing Agency has clearly explained how current funding will not be supplanted by Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
The program has demonstrated a history of success. For agencies that have previously been funded, the program spending has been on track and program outcomes defined in the contract we met.
The submitted proposal is complete.

***Proposals must meet all listed requirements to be considered for funding.*

Programming Criteria	Total Points
The narrative includes a clearly articulated plan that demonstrates relevant, high-quality services as well as Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage specifications. New and expanded services have a special consideration for underserved populations and geographies not currently served.	30
The narrative has described how the model aligns to MiLEAP's Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Birth to Kindergarten	10
The proposing agency has described how parents will be engaged as key stakeholders by a) collecting and incorporating parent feedback in programming, and b) engaging with parent partners to provide voice within programming decisions.	15
Demonstrates established partnership(s) with community partners to reach and engage families as well as fully serve families.	10
Equity and inclusion are fostered within the organization at the leadership and staff levels.	20
Proposed costs are comparable to all providers for specific Program Type and interventions.	15
Total Possible Points	100

**Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.*

RFP 6: Parent Education and Support Language Services (Translation and Interpretation Supports)

I. Overview

The languages and dialects spoken by families in Kent County are vast and varied. First Steps Kent acknowledges the importance of investment in resources to support communication with families of many languages and cultures.

Services funded under this RFP will improve access to early learning and health focused programming by increasing availability of interpretation and translation services. With these resources available, early childhood programs will more effectively serve families who are not first language English speakers. Services will help to reduce outcome disparities across specific populations by increasing partners' capacity to offer culturally relevant services inclusive of all populations.

II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services

This Request for Proposals seeks agencies that offer translation and interpretation services in one or more of the following formats:

- Face-to-face interpretation
- Over the telephone/video interpretation
- Document translation
- One-hour in-services for requesting agency staff to learn about cultural considerations as they serve families through translation services

In past iterations of this RFP, First Steps Kent has requested that Proposing Agencies respond with a broad set of languages. Feedback from the Ready by Five partners indicated the need to develop a consistent and responsive network of interpreters and translators. For the purposes of this RFP, First Steps Kent is seeking agencies who can consistently provide the languages utilized most often by families served.

First Steps Kent has established a focus on nine languages representing those that are most requested by the Ready by Five network. Agencies proposing services should discuss in the proposal how they will focus on ensuring there is a consistent availability and quality within one or more the following languages:

- | | | |
|----------------|-------------------|-----------|
| 1. Spanish | 4. Haitian Creole | 7. Arabic |
| 2. Kinyarwanda | 5. Pashto | 8. Karen |
| 3. Swahili | 6. Burmese | 9. French |

Agencies may propose to offer services in additional languages within their proposal.

All currently Ready by Five funded partners will be eligible to request these interpretation and translation services. Partners will be asked to utilize Ready by Five Translation and Interpretation services as the first

source of services for the key languages identified above. Partners may request any additional languages offered by Ready by Five Translation and Interpretation services.

Beginning Oct 1, 2024, requesting Ready by Five partner programs may cover the cost of other specific languages that are not regularly offered by Ready by Five Translation and Interpretation services with funds in their individual contract's program budget.

First Steps Kent will provide a current list of programs currently funded that are eligible for translation and interpretation, including the name of each agency, program, and the authorized primary contact who may request services. Agencies awarded contracts under this RFP will be required to track the eligibility of agencies requesting service against this list of eligible agencies prior to submitting an invoice to First Steps Kent.

Additionally, translation and interpretation partners will be required to track the following related to services:

- Information on services that are completed (date, time, requesting agency, type of service and language).
- Services that were requested but were not fulfilled (date, time, requesting agency, type of service, language, and reason for service non-fulfillment).

Fee Schedule Specifications

The proposing agencies will develop and submit with the proposal a fee schedule giving the pricing methodology with attention to detail that includes all associated costs to successfully provide services as described in your response. Include:

- A description of any premiums or discounts for the specific languages provided by the agency.
- Details about how the purchase of services by multiple programs through this contract could create cost savings.

Proposal Budget Specifications

Proposal budgets for this RFP will be prepared in the budget form within the online application but will follow a very specific format using two specific fields only. Expenses included on additional line items in the budget form other than what is specified below will not be recognized for this specific RFP.

Expenses: should only be added under the section of the budget titled "Expense Total for RFP 6". Under expenses, only enter the total amount of funding your agency is requesting in the coinciding field for the RFP you are applying under (RFP 6).

Double check that your proposal's total expenses equal the amount requested.

? Expense Total for RFP 5 and 8 - *NOTE FOR THESE RFPs *

Note: Only fill this section in if you this section - the total expenses. E these specific RFPs. See the RFP dc

Request Total	
RFP 5: Translation and Interpretation - Total Expenses	<input type="text"/>
RFP 8: Training and Education Leader - Total Expenses	<input type="text"/>

III. Contract Specifications

Ready by Five service partners will be paid monthly at a pre-determined rate as proposed by the agency. On a monthly basis, Ready by Five will work with translation and interpretation agencies to reconcile invoices with services reported by Ready by Five service partners. Annual Program Assessments will include verification of interpreter credentialing, licensing, and qualifications as described in their proposal for staff providing services paid for by millage funds.

If awarded funding, the following contract terms will be in place for all programs funded under this Service and Program Category. See Section One for full details.

Funding Details:	
Contract start and end dates*:	Start: October 1, 2024 End: September 30, 2025
Monthly reimbursement type:	Defined Rate (See Fee Schedule)
Service:	Indirect
Cost sharing required for this program?	No, this program is exempt
Program Monitoring Requirements:	
Annual program Assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Annual Fiscal Assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Monthly Child/Parent data submission to KCHD required?	No, this program is exempt

**All awards are contingent on the actual annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners for each fiscal period.*

IV. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board. This body will recommend what proposals are funded and for how much. The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board may consider historical performance of previously funded programs as well as the following evaluation criteria to select recipient organizations based on their responses to the RFP.

Programming Criteria*	Total Points
Agency has demonstrated experience serving individuals and families in Kent County.	15
Agency states the capability to offer languages as specified in Part II of this RFP.	25
Agency has demonstrated the ability to provide quality services in languages that are needed in Kent County.	30
There is cost effectiveness with comparable interpretation and translation services.	30
Total Possible Points	100

**Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.*

Additional Required Criteria**
Proposing Agency's financial audit shows the organization to be in good financial standing.
Proposing Agency has adequate funding to cover program costs and plans to pursue additional sources of funding in addition to Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
Proposing Agency has clearly explained how current funding will not be supplanted by Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
The program has demonstrated a history of success. For agencies that have previously been funded, the program spending has been on track and program outcomes defined in the contract we met.
The submitted proposal is complete.

***Proposals must meet all listed requirements to be considered for funding.*

RFP 7: Healthy Development Infant Health – Fetal Infant Mortality Review Network Lead

I. Overview

Ready by Five seeks to ensure services are addressing the social, equity, economic, and health factors that contribute to healthy births in Kent County. Ready by Five is requesting proposals to select one (1) organization to lead the implementation and ongoing management of the Fetal Infant Mortality Review Network for Kent County.

The rate of fetal and infant (defined as before a child's first birthday) death is recognized by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, among other leading health organizations, as an important indicator of a community's overall health. The Healthy Development – Fetal Infant Mortality Review Network Lead Agency RFP will focus on improving birth outcomes, health outcomes, and reducing disparities. Investment in the Fetal Infant Mortality Review Network will provide insight and understanding of the factors that contribute to infant mortality, as well as understanding the factors that contribute to the disparities with mortality rates among babies of different race and ethnicities. This knowledge will further inform Kent County's early childhood network on what key programs and initiatives are necessary to support the healthy development of all babies and infants.

II. Description, Attributes of Services

One agency currently working in maternal infant health in Kent County will be selected to lead implementation and oversight of Kent County's Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) Network. The model will closely follow the Fetal Infant Mortality Review model as established at the state level. More information about the Michigan FIMR process is available [HERE](#).

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services describes the Fetal Infant Mortality Review (FIMR) as an evidence-based process of identification and analysis of factors that contribute to fetal and infant death. FIMR complements other studies of infant death but uses an approach that is community-based, action-oriented, and designed to bring together local health providers, consumers, advocates, and leaders.

The Fetal Infant Mortality Review has two overarching goals:

- Describe significant social, economic, cultural, safety, health, and systems factors that contribute to mortality; and
- Design and implement community-based action plans founded on the information obtained from the reviews.

This lead agency will have established relationships in Kent County and be recognized as an agency with expertise in maternal infant health. This agency will successfully establish relationships with public health and healthcare providers to access current, case-specific information related to fetal and infant deaths in Kent County.

The selected agency will convene and lead the Fetal Infant Mortality Review network. This network will include stakeholders with an interest in maternal infant health in Kent County. Members will include but not be limited to clinicians, public health professionals, home visiting program staff, children’s protective services staff, educators, non-profit organizations, medical providers, faith-based organizations, law enforcement, researchers, social justice advocates, grief support professionals, and other committed community members.

The selected agency will provide necessary data expertise to analyze and extrapolate data, as well as review, compile and identify relevant information to include in reports to the community. Quarterly updates and an annual summary of findings will be made available to all early childhood providers in Kent County.

This agency would be familiar with and have established all necessary privacy and security standards for sharing and protecting sensitive information.

With rigor, the network will review incidents of fetal and infant deaths by means of interviews and chart reviews. Based on the findings, the lead agency will publish and present (as requested) quarterly updates and a published annual update of key themes and trends with infant mortality in Kent County that would include recommendations for:

- Improving access to critical services to reduce disparities in care.
- Increasing cultural relevance within service delivery.
- Identifying enhanced support for families before and after birth.
- Inform funding of services, community-based education, and communications initiatives to support families.
- Recommendations of policy.
- Additional key findings.

Proposing agencies should state in their proposal whether they would be eligible to leverage FIMR funding from MDHHS.

III. Contract Specifications

If awarded funding, the following contract terms will be in place for all programs funded under this Service and Program Category. See Section One for full details.

Funding Details:	
Contract start and end dates*:	Start: October 1, 2024 End: September 30, 2025
Monthly reimbursement type:	Actual Cost
Service:	Indirect
Cost sharing required for this program?	No, this program is exempt
Program Monitoring Requirements:	
Annual Program Assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Annual Fiscal Assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Monthly Child/Parent data submission to KCHD required?	No, this program is exempt

**All awards are contingent on the actual annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners for each fiscal period.*

IV. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board. This body will recommend what proposals are funded and for how much. The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board may consider historical performance of previously funded programs as well as the following evaluation criteria to select recipient organizations based on their responses to the RFP.

Programming Criteria*	Total Points
Agency demonstrates experience in maternal infant health and with the FIMR model. Proposal addresses all RFP specifications as outlined in Section II of this RFP.	20
The proposal clearly articulates how partners in the FIMR Network will be recruited and convened, how meetings will be facilitated and who will be responsible for organizing the meetings. The proposal clearly articulates the process by which fetal and infant mortality cases would be reviewed.	20
The proposal clearly articulates data from fetal infant death cases will be accessed, the data kept secure.	15
The proposal articulates the plan to communicate information and updates about infant mortality and recommendations to Kent County early childhood partners.	15
Equity and inclusion are fostered within the organization at the leadership and staff levels.	20
The overall submitted proposal describes services and costs in a clear, complete, concise narrative and budget details are clear.	10
Total Possible Points	100

**Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.*

Additional Required Criteria**
Proposing Agency's financial audit shows the organization to be in good financial standing.
Proposing Agency has adequate funding to cover program costs and plans to pursue additional sources of funding in addition to Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
Proposing Agency has clearly explained how current funding will not be supplanted by Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
The program has demonstrated a history of success. For agencies that have previously been funded, the program spending has been on track and program outcomes defined in the contract we met.
The submitted proposal is complete.

***Proposals must meet all listed requirements to be considered for funding.*

RFP 8: Healthy Development Training – Ready by Five Network Training & Education Leads

I. Overview

The Ready by Five Millage funds programs that seek to reach expecting parents and children under the age of five and younger in Kent County. The importance of the Ready by Five network being knowledgeable in key areas is important as services are delivered to so many families in Kent County.

Based on feedback from community partners, First Steps Kent seeks to increase training and knowledge in the network through the support of training opportunities for all direct service professionals funded by Ready by Five.

First Steps Kent anticipates that the Resident Proposal Review Board may select up to one (1) proposal for this area.

II. Description, Attributes and Results of Services

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit proposals from quality training providers who have the expertise and capacity to develop and deliver training programs designed to further the professional development of Ready by Five Millage funded professionals.

The training will be for all newly hired direct professionals funded by Ready by Five. Professionals that are subcontracted may attend based on available openings within the training.

First Steps Kent is looking for one partner to deliver a broad series of learning sessions that are relevant to all Ready by Five program's early childhood professionals. Session(s) will provide a reflective space for professionals to attend and learn, fostering increased knowledge and expertise throughout the Ready by Five network. Training in this area will be proposed by agencies. Areas of particular interest include:

- Ensuring successful navigation and referrals to community partners
- Topics relevant to the provision of quality services including but not limited to documentation, motivational interviewing, reflective supervision, and conflict resolutions. Additional topics will be considered.

Proposals offering training that qualifies as Continuing Education Units (CEUs) will be more strongly considered.

Additional Attributes of All Trainings

All training will include technical and soft skills that must be applicable to the broad audience of early childhood professionals across programs including but not limited to, social workers, community health

workers, play and learn coaches, nurses, navigators, behavioral health clinicians, and home visitors. Training developed for agencies outside of the Ready by Five network will not be considered this round.

Agencies will be responsible for advertising and communicating training opportunities to qualifying agencies in the Ready by Five service partner network. Additionally, agencies providing training will be required to track participation of all individuals attending each training session, ensure eligible early childhood staff attend sessions, and provide documentation of training completion to the employing agency for each participant.

Sessions may occur in one session or throughout multiple sessions. Trainings may be delivered in the following formats:

- Classroom (in person)
- Hybrid – some portion of the training is provided in-person and some virtual.
- Virtual – live streaming of training
- Online learning portal (content is self-paced and available anytime)

The content of all training must be informed by reputable, nationally recognized organizations.

All training will address cultural responsiveness as service providers providing training will demonstrate an understanding that both the culture of each participant in the training and the trainer's own culture hold influences in their teaching. Content will also reflect the importance of cultural awareness and responsiveness when working with families in Kent County.

Proposal Budget Specifications

Proposal budgets for this RFP will be prepared in the budget form within the online application but will follow a very specific format using two specific fields only. Expenses included on additional line items in the budget form other than what is specified below will not be recognized for this specific RFP.

Expenses: should only be added under the section of the budget titled “Expense Total for RFP 5 or 8”. Under expenses, only enter the total amount of funding your agency is requesting in the coinciding field for the RFP you are applying under (RFP 8). **Double check that your proposal’s total expenses equal the amount requested.**

Expense Total for RFP 5 and 8 - *NOTE FOR THESE RFPs *

Note: Only fill this section in if you this section - the total expenses. E these specific RFPs. See the RFP dc

	Request Total
RFP 5: Translation and Interpretation - Total Expenses	<input type="text"/>
RFP 8: Training and Education Leader - Total Expenses	<input type="text"/>

Fee Schedule Specifications

Ready by Five service partners will be paid monthly at a pre-determined rate per training session. This session rate is based on the actual cost of delivering the service and as proposed by the applying agency. A reconciliation of training sessions provided versus the number invoiced for will occur monthly.

The proposing agencies will develop and submit a fee schedule giving a cost per class session for each training proposed. First Steps Kent acknowledges that agencies may propose training that takes place over multiple class sessions. However, for the purposes of the proposal’s fee schedule a “class session” is defined as the period of one session, per day (e.g., Tuesday from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. and Wednesday from 10 a.m. - 12 p.m. would be two class sessions). Agencies must also include the minimal number of students who will be present for a class to take place within the fee schedule.

III. Contract Specifications

If awarded funding, the following contract terms will be in place for all programs funded under this Service and Program Category. See Section One for full details.

Funding Details:	
Contract start and end dates*:	Start: October 1, 2024 End: September 30, 2025
Monthly reimbursement type:	Defined Rate (See Fee Schedule)
Service:	Indirect
Cost sharing required for this program?	No, this program is exempt
Program Monitoring Requirements:	
Annual Program Assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Annual Fiscal Assessment required?	Yes, this is required
Monthly Child/Parent data submission to KCHD required?	No, this program is exempt

**All awards are contingent on the actual annual Kent County tax capture and are subject to appropriation by the Kent County Board of Commissioners for each fiscal period.*

IV. Evaluation Criteria

All proposals will be reviewed by the Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board. This body will recommend what proposals are funded and for how much. The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board may consider historical performance of previously funded programs as well as the following evaluation criteria to select recipient organizations based on their responses to the RFP.

Additional Required Criteria**
Proposing Agency’s financial audit shows the organization to be in good financial standing.
Proposing Agency has adequate funding to cover program costs and plans to pursue additional sources of funding in addition to Ready by Five Early Childhood Millage funds.
The program has demonstrated a history of success. For agencies that have previously been funded, the program spending has been on track and program outcomes defined in the contract we met.
The submitted proposal is complete.

***Proposals must meet all listed requirements to be considered for funding.*

Programming Criteria*	Total Points
Narrative demonstrated how the agency is qualified to lead training in the proposed area. The trainers are qualified to teach training and source of information presented is from a reputable source.	20
Description of training is clear (including the length, setting, how often, method of delivery, number of attendees).	20
Narrative addresses all specifications as outlined in this RFP's Part II are met.	20
The Proposing Agency describes how the training is inclusive and culturally responsive.	20
CEUs are offered for the training.	5
Rational for additional staff positions to support training is clear and reasonable. There is cost effectiveness as compared with all proposals in this area of funding.	15
Total Possible Points	100

**Proposals must meet a minimum of 70 total points to be considered for funding.*

SECTION THREE: REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP) PROCESS

I. Directions for Submission of Proposals

A. The deadline for proposals is May 28, 2024, at 3 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time)

This deadline is firm, no exceptions. First Steps Kent is not responsible for delays caused by any occurrence. Under no circumstances shall submissions received after the time be considered.

B. Proposals will only be accepted in electronic format and must be submitted through the e-Clmpact system.

- All forms and required information must be submitted by the stated deadline. The forms for each RFP can be found on the e-Clmpact portal.
- Each agency will provide agency information and register for the specific RFP(s) under which they plan to apply under. Please note! It could take up to three business days for the registration process to be completed. Agencies will receive an email once the registration process has been completed and the application is available.
- It is the responsibility of the proposing agency to review all program type specifications within the RFP and respond to all questions within the program narrative.
- If a proposal is missing elements, First Steps Kent may disqualify the proposal from further consideration.
- The e-Clmpact system is accessible by any computer with an internet connection and current version of web browser (example: Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome, Safari).
- For all new agency users, your agency EIN number is required to set up a profile. Profiles set up on e-Clmpact through AAAWM, the Heart of West Michigan United Way or other funders using the e-Clmpact system are separate from First Steps Kent.
- To access the Ready by Five e-Clmpact website, please go to: <https://agency.e-clmpact.com/login.aspx?org=FirstStepsKent>
- Please bookmark the address to easily access e-Clmpact at your convenience.
- The e-Clmpact user guide with instructions on how to set up a profile and submit an proposal can be found here: <https://www.firststepskent.org/uploads/financial-reports/Ready-by-Five-General/EC-Impact-Agency-Training-Manual-vApril-2024.pdf>

- In the situation your agency has technical issues with e-CImpact, please contact First Steps Kent at readybyfivekent@firststepskent.org. Please allow two business days for First Steps Kent to respond.
- All additional materials, written responses to any questions submitted, and updates will be posted on the First Steps Kent website at: <https://www.firststepskent.org/articles/2025funding>

C. Attachments

Agencies are required to submit the following information with the submitted proposal:

1. Attachment A: Agency Staff and Leadership Diversity. One form per agency is submitted. This form is available electronically on the e-CImpact portal.
2. Attachment B: Proposing Agency Agreement. This agreement must be signed by the Executive Director, President, or CEO -AND- the Board Chairperson of your organization. An uploaded PDF version of this agreement must be included with the proposal submission.
3. Attachment C: Proposal Certification Statement. This statement must be signed by the Executive Director, President, or CEO -AND- the Board Chairperson of your organization. An uploaded PDF version of this agreement must be included with the proposal submission.
4. The agency's most recent annual financial audit. (Note: First Steps Kent may complete a financial review for an organization having annual contributions under \$550,000 in lieu of the audit.)
5. Organizational chart at the program level that clearly identifies all positions included in the proposal's budget.
6. No more than three letters of support for each agency. All letters must be bound in one pdf file and included with the proposal submission. Letters should come from partner organizations that can speak to the Proposing Agency's experience in providing quality services within the program and community focus areas included in the proposal(s).
7. If applicable, a fee schedule giving the pricing methodology with attention to detail that includes all associated costs to successfully provide services as described in your response. (RFP 6 and RFP 8 only).

Optional materials that an agency may include:

1. A complete program budget to better illustrate all expenses and how the other sources of funding contribute to the full program. Please be sure to include the specific program name in the document title.
2. The Agency's annual community report.

II. Question and Answer Period

- A. First Steps Kent is available to assist with technical questions and issues specifically related to the e-Clmpact online application process.
- B. First Steps Kent is unable to answer questions related to the RFP unless they are submitted through the written process as described in the RFP documents.
 - Requests must be made in writing during the period of April 23, 2024, through the deadline to submit questions of May 14, 2024, 5 p.m. through the online form provided by First Steps Kent. No additional questions will be accepted after this deadline.
 - All questions must be submitted in writing via the following on-line form. [[CLICK HERE](#)]
 - Questions will not be accepted by any other means including, but not limited to, verbal communication, text messages, email communication, and/or by phone.
- C. All answers to questions will be published on the First Steps Kent website accessible at: <https://www.firststepskent.org/articles/2025funding>
- D. It is the respondent's sole responsibility to monitor all inquiries (including those submitted by other agencies and published by First Steps Kent) to properly prepare a proposal for submission.
- E. Two types of questions generally arise. One may be answered by First Steps Kent to offer clarification of a specific section of the RFP. Other questions may be more complex and may require a written amendment to the RFP. First Steps Kent staff will make that decision.
- F. All final answers and notification of amendments to the RFP will be posted on the First Steps Kent website (<https://www.firststepskent.org/articles/2025funding>) by May 17, 2024, at 5 p.m.
- G. If your agency has technical issues with the e-Clmpact system, please reach out to First Steps Kent staff at: readybyfivekent@firststepskent.org

III. RFP Timeline

- A. First Steps Kent reserves the right to change the RFP timeline. First Steps Kent also reserves the right to cancel, reissue, or make corrections or amendments to the RFP due to errors or changes identified by First Steps Kent and to otherwise modify the terms of the RFP at any time.

B. The timeline for the RFP is:

4/23/2024	RFP Issued – Posted on First Steps Kent website
4/23/2024	Preconference #1 (Virtual)
4/24/2024	Preconference #2 (Virtual)
5/14/2024	Question and Answer Period Closes – 5 p.m.
5/17/2024	Final questions and revisions to RFP (if necessary) posted to First Steps Kent website
5/28/2024	RFP Proposal Submittal Deadline – 3p.m.
6/20/2024- 6/26/2024	Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board (RPRB) Allocation Meetings
6/27/2024	First Steps Kent Commission – Review and Approve RPRB Allocation Recommendations
7/8/2024	Agencies will receive preliminary notification of award.
<i>Note: The final award approval is contingent on approval by the Kent County Board of Commissioners approval that will happen sometime in July or August.</i>	

IV. Resident Proposal Review Board

- A. The Ready by Five Resident Proposal Review Board (RPRB) is the body who reviews and determines the recommendation for whether a proposal should be funded and how much funding will be allocated. These recommendations are reviewed and approved by the First Steps Kent Board of Directors and final approval is decided by the Kent County Board of Commissioners.
- B. The Resident Proposal Review Board will use the Criteria Rubric included in each RFP to guide discussion as they evaluate and score the proposals based on the organization’s responses to the RFP application questions. Proposals must meet the minimum required points to be considered for funding.
- C. For agencies requesting continued funding, First Steps Kent will provide to the RPRB:
- Whether the contract is on target with spending for the current year.
 - Whether the proposal has an increase, decrease or similar amount requested compared to last year.
 - Notice of Contract status and findings or relevant recommendations.
 - All Annual Assessment recommendations.
- D. First Steps Kent will reach out to Proposing Agencies with all questions from the Resident Proposal Review Board. Questions and communication will only be sent to the Primary Contact listed in the agency’s e-C Impact profile’s contact information (note: please double check the email and phone contact information for this individual is correct prior to submitting). Answers and clarifications will be considered in the proposal review process. Agencies submitting a proposal should anticipate they will receive emails requiring an urgent response as the Resident Proposal Review Board meets during the dates of June 20, 2024 – June 26, 2024.