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Metropolitan Portland Regional Action Initiative
Improving Access to Parenting Education and Information

Project Consultant Needed: Request for Bids
Due: February 11, 2011

Objective

A coalition of funders, headed by The Oregon Community Foundation, seeks a consultant to help explore strategies for developing a stronger and more coordinated parenting education system in the Metro region, including Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties. The consultant's research and analysis will yield recommendations on approaches to achieving this outcome. The project consultant will research, draft and review options for the potential structure and leadership for the system through interviews, surveys, and focus groups with key leaders in the community throughout the region and beyond. The six-month project will begin on March 1, 2011, with a final report due on September 30, 2011.

Why Invest in Parent Education?

OCF and its foundation and community partners believe that parents are the first and most important teachers of their children, and that parents of all circumstances can benefit from parenting education. Research continues to show the fundamental importance of adult-child relationships in the earliest years of children's lives, as well as the critical role that parents play in nurturing their children's cognitive and social-emotional development. Healthy and effective parenting can help make sure children have a strong foundation for success in school and in life. "Should We Invest in Parenting Education?" ([PDF download](#)), provides an overview of the field of parenting education research. For more information, please go to: <http://oregoncf.org/receive/grants/grant-opportunities/ready-to-learn/parenting-education>

Why Invest in a Stronger System?

Parents, grandparents, and caretakers of children at all ages need information, skills and support to raise healthy, productive people. Parenting education providers in all three counties share an interest in strengthening their ability to communicate across county lines and more effectively serve parents,

grandparents and caretakers throughout the region. The question is how should this be accomplished? Through this six month project, research and analysis will lead to a clearer picture of what the system should look like, who should lead it, what it is going to take, and how the community will benefit if steps are taken to build a more effective parenting education system in the Metro region.

Background Information

OCF launched the Regional Action Initiative (RAI) in 2008 to engage Oregonians in a new level of civic leadership to increase Oregon's quality of life and improve communities in a significant and lasting way. After investigating their community's needs, the Metropolitan Portland Leadership Council decided to improve access to parenting education and information. A comprehensive inventory of parenting education services throughout Clackamas, Multnomah, Hood River and Washington counties is being completed now.

Separate funding from the Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative (a statewide funding collaborative described here: <http://oregoncf.org/receive/grants/grant-opportunities/ready-to-learn/parent-ed-collaborative>) created six Parenting Education Hubs in 2010 serving regions outside the Metro area. Hub organizations receiving initial grant funding:

- Were selected by their community partners through a collaborative process to coordinate parenting education activities for their region.
- Are working with private and public partners in their region to build a coordinated network of parenting education programs for parents of children of all ages, with an emphasis on programs for parents of children prenatal to age 6. Partners and programs may include Healthy Start, Commissions on Children and Families, Relief Nurseries, Head Start agencies, school districts, education service districts, community colleges, faith-based organizations and other nonprofit service organizations.
- Are expected to promote a spirit of collaboration among all regional stakeholders while serving as a point of coordination for parenting education planning, information and activities.
- Are leading a collaborative effort to develop a region wide parenting education framework, identifying needs and gaps and planning for the sustainability of parenting program coordination and delivery.
- Are delivering (directly or through subcontracts) best practice parenting education programs for parents of children prenatal to age 6.

The Metro region's system may or may not resemble the approaches that are taking root in less populous areas of the state, but the ultimate goals are the same.

The coalition of funders wishes the consultant's research process to determine the following:

- 1) What would be the best approach to achieving a stronger and more coordinated system of parenting education in the Metro region?
- 2) Should there be a parenting education Hub or Hubs for the region, and if so, in what ways would it be similar or different to the model laid out in the Oregon Parenting Education Collaborative Request for Proposals

http://oregoncf.org/Templates/media/files/grants/Early%20Childhood/rtl_ped_newhubs1112_rfp.pdf.pdf ?

- 3) How should the system be organized (e.g., tri-county, individual counties, serving areas within counties, or another variation?)
- 4) What are the implementation models and pros and cons of each?
- 5) What is the gap in coordination that the system could fill?
- 6) What is the gap in service provision that the system could fill?
- 7) What are the criteria to be a part of the system?
- 8) What organizations are likely candidates to undertake system leadership and administrative functions?
- 9) How should an Advisory Committee be structured (membership, frequency of meetings, etc)?

The process should include, but is not limited to, a literature review for prospective models, an anonymous survey of relevant stakeholders and providers of parenting education services, focus groups and/or key informant interviews with key leaders, and meetings with parenting education providers to determine answers to the questions listed above. As part of the project, the consultant should plan on interviewing at least one existing Hub coordinator to learn about the context of Hubs across Oregon.

The information and data collection process must include meeting with representatives of the following:

- Parenting education providers for parents of babies, young children, and school-age kids/teens
- Stakeholders to parenting education (e.g. courts, child welfare, schools)
- Organizations representing communities of color
- Medical practitioners (e.g., pediatricians, nurses)
- Related public agencies (e.g. health departments, community colleges, education service districts, schools, commissions on children and families)

The consultant's work must result in a report summarizing the findings from this research process. When possible, data from previous assessments should be incorporated to strengthen the plans and recommendations on the questions above. OCF will provide the assessments as background information to the consultant.

The consultant must schedule bi-monthly meetings with Melissa Durham, OCF Regional Action Initiative Coordinator and manager of this project, and a committee from the funders group. A draft report will be due in mid-August, and will be shared with key members of the early childhood and funder group for comments. A final, complete version of the report will be due by September 30, 2011.

Timeline

February 11:	Proposals due
February 14-24:	Review of bids; interviews with competitive candidates by coalition partners and volunteers
February 25:	Consultant selected
March 1:	Contract begins

Mid August: Draft report due to OCF staff
September 30: Final report due with comments incorporated from coalition partners

Budget

Submit a detailed budget for the project, clearly outlining all expenses (e.g., consultant time, travel, meeting space, participant incentives, data collection).

Competitive Bids will include:

- Scope of work (not more than 5 pages), including
 - Project summary
 - Project details, deliverables, milestones, and expected outcomes
 - Timeline for implementation
- Two letters of recommendation
- Consultant's resume
- Cover letter (1 page) explaining qualifications and interest in the project; examples of similar work should be demonstrated.
- Budget (1 page)

Bid Submission

Please email your bid and mail a hard copy to Melissa Durham at The Oregon Community Foundation, 1221 SW Yamhill, Suite 100, Portland, OR 97205; mdurham@oregoncf.org on or before February 11, 2011 at 4:30 p.m.

If you have any questions, please contact Melissa Durham or Mary Louise McClintock, OCF Early Childhood Program Director, at 503-227-6846.