



Wake County SmartStart Request for Proposal FY 2017-2020

GOAL AREA #4B- County Level: Children and families are supported by a strong, diverse, connected and integrated early childhood system that promotes results

OBJECTIVES

Improved countywide reach and impact of services for children birth to eight

- Stronger connection and shared vision among county level policy makers and funders for children birth to eight (years 1-2 of funding cycle)
- Implementation of comprehensive, countywide plan to address identified priorities (years 2-3 of funding cycle; longer term impact may not occur until years 4-5, beyond the current funding cycle)

STRATEGIES

As required by the North Carolina Partnership for Children, Wake County SmartStart only funds Evidence Based or Evidence Informed programs and practices as defined in the **Smart Start Resource Guide of Evidence Based and Evidence Informed Programs and Practices**. The WCSS Board has prioritized funding for activities based on the highest level of evidence possible. The Smart Start Resource Guide (p. 10) identifies evidence based practices for systems level initiatives based on the BUILD initiative. Strategies should reflect the Pathways framework principles of public will, informed decision making, common vision and aligned policies and funding. Specific strategies should be based on the BUILD areas with focus on the elements of **Context, Infrastructure, and/or Scale** (see Partner Resources for additional information). These may include:

- Jointly building the commitment, skills and resources of key stakeholders to achieve shared goals for young children
- Development/implementation of a funders collaborative to align goals and resources
- Shared leadership for development of county level impact framework
- Promotion of policy development that supports countywide impact priorities
- Infrastructure support for shared data system

IMPACT

All activities must identify how they will demonstrate impact through program level outputs and outcomes.

Required Outputs:

- # of system level stakeholders
- # of individual contacts with system level stakeholders **AND/OR**
- # of group contacts with system level stakeholders

Required Outcomes:

- #/% of stakeholders that report improved collaborative practices
- #/% of stakeholders that contribute to development of comprehensive priorities and plan
- #/% of stakeholders that contribute to implementation of comprehensive priorities and plan (e.g. aligned funding priorities, new/revised policies, resources for infrastructure support)
- Shared community level indicators demonstrates positive impact on children in Wake County (optional- may not be measurable until after 3 year funding cycle completed)

Some of the above outcomes may not be applicable each funding year of the 3 year cycle.

COMMUNITY INDICATOR

Activity outcomes should be linked to the following Board identified indicator:

- Percent of children reading by grade level in 3rd grade disaggregated by race and socio economic status

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE

- The BUILD initiative defines system development as an “organized effort to improve a system and its impacts”. To promote a shared understanding of system level work, additional descriptions include the following:
 - Building a new system or working to improve an existing system that is fragmented, informal or missing key pieces. System change includes components and practices that taken together are designed to improve the way in which programs professionals, families and community members work together to improve the services to children and families (NCPC)
 - The ongoing process of developing the structures, behaviors and connections that make all of the components of an early childhood system operate as a whole to promote shared results for children and families (Early Childhood Systems Working Group)
 - Creating partnerships to define a common vision, shared measures of success and coordinated strategies that support children’s optimal development, beginning at birth through alignment of policy, practice and funding (Pathways)
 - Changes in organizational culture, policies and procedures within individual organizations or across organizations that enhance or streamline access and reduce or eliminate barriers to needed services by a target population (Desert Vista Consulting for funding entities)
- Target Population/Key Stakeholders: Funders, Policy Makers, Elected Officials, Board Members, Community/business leaders
- Bidders should have the following characteristics and experience:
 - Strong relationships with a wide range of stakeholders identified above
 - Demonstrated experience engaging and convening Wake County stakeholder groups to address needs of children birth to five
 - In depth knowledge of system change models/frameworks
- Other information:
 - Bidders can submit separate applications for both Goal 4 RFPs or combine them in single application
 - Funding at this level is not intended to support direct services to children, families, child care facilities, or child care providers
 - All levels of system work (Program, Agency and County) are expected to align (see WCSS Strategic Plan for more information about each level)