



Community School Readiness Wiring Request for Proposals September 29, 2009

Thrive in 5 is sponsored by:



Thomas M. Menino
Mayor of Boston



United Way of Massachusetts Bay
and Merrimack Valley

**Community School Readiness Wiring Request for Proposals
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I. Overview of the Request for Proposals

Introduction

Thrive in 5 presents this Request for Proposals (RFP) for Community School Readiness Wiring (CSRW) in 5 Boston neighborhoods. Community School Readiness Wiring is one strategy of a comprehensive, 10-year plan called Thrive in 5: Boston's Promise to Its Children. For more information about Thrive in 5, please refer to Appendix A.

The goal of Community School Readiness Wiring is to strengthen communities' capacity to engage families in their children's learning and healthy development starting at birth by increasing families' access to early childhood information and resources. CSRW builds on the relationships and routines families have in their neighborhood¹ by equipping key entities – from the supermarket to the health center, the bodega to the church, the hair salon to the bank – with early childhood resources². The result is that families have multiple connections to knowledge and opportunities that support their child's learning and healthy development within their typical day, in their physical neighborhood, through sources they already know and trust. In CSRW neighborhoods, service providers work together closely so that there is “no wrong door” for families when it comes to finding services and there is a complete menu of resources to support and complement parents³ in their role as their child's first teacher.

Community School Readiness Wiring has three major areas of work:

1. Supporting families in promoting the learning and healthy development of their children.
2. Working with service providers to enhance service delivery so that young children and their families can easily access and engage in high quality services.
3. Building a movement in support of young children and their families that engages everyone and every organization (including businesses) in the community.

Thrive in 5 will provide funding to 5 organizations/collaborations in 5 Boston communities to lead the implementation of CSRW in their respective communities. These organizations or the lead agencies in collaborations are referred to as “hub agencies.”

¹ Throughout this document, “neighborhood” refers to both traditionally defined neighborhoods of Boston (e.g. Roxbury, East Boston, South End) and sub-neighborhoods or communities (e.g. Grove Hall, Dudley Square, Upham's Corner).

² Throughout this document, “resource” is an inclusive term that refers to information, activities, services, programs and supports.

³ Throughout this document, “parent” refers to the primary adult caregiver in a child's life, including (but not limited to) biological parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, foster parents, adoptive parents and older siblings.

Eligible Neighborhoods

In order to build on the strengths of existing early childhood work sponsored by United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley and by the City of Boston, Thrive in 5 will fund CSRW hub agencies in each of the following neighborhoods: Allston / Brighton, Charlestown, Mattapan and Roslindale.

In addition, through this RFP process, Thrive in 5 will choose a fifth CSRW hub agency in one of the following neighborhoods:

- East Boston
- Communities within Dorchester
- Roxbury or communities within Roxbury
- South End

If applicants would like to apply on behalf of a community within Dorchester or Roxbury, the proposed community must meet the following criteria:

- At least 500 children birth to under age 5 reside there
- At least 70% of children birth to under age 5 are children of color
- At least 29% of children birth to under age 5 live in households that are under the federal poverty line

We encourage applicants to think about what geographic area makes sense to their residents, and then consider the requirements above. Appendix B shows census data that can help determine whether or not a proposed community is eligible. In addition, www.census.gov is an online resource that can be used to find additional demographic information.

Applicants may contact Katie Britton, Thrive in 5 Ready City Manager, for help determining if the community they would like to propose is eligible: katie.britton@thrivein5boston.org or 617-635-3189.

Eligible Organizations

Organizations that are eligible to apply for this funding include established non-profit organizations, grassroots community groups, faith based organizations, community centers, family-serving agencies and for-profit organizations. Applicants are also encouraged to apply as a collaboration of 2 or more organizations working together. In all cases, a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization must be the lead and fiscal agent for the funds. Collaborations will receive a preference in the selection process. There are more details about applying as a collaboration in the Section V of this RFP.

Funding

Thrive in 5 will award the following grants through the this RFP:

- \$100,000 to each of 3 organizations for an 18-month funding cycle that is expected to begin on January 1, 2010.
- \$75,000 to 2 organizations for a 10-month funding cycle that is expected to begin on September 1, 2010.

Section V of this RFP contains more information about the hub agency selection process and criteria, including how it will be determined which organizations start implementation in January 2010.

We anticipate this will be the beginning of a long-term effort to implement CSRW fully in each pilot neighborhood and city-wide over the next 5-10 years. We are actively pursuing more funding for neighborhoods selected through this RFP and to begin the Community School Readiness Wiring process in more neighborhoods.

Key Dates and Deadlines for CSRW Applicants

Deadline for Intent to Apply Form (Intent to Apply form is optional but strongly encouraged)	October 7, 2009
Deadline for receipt of proposals	November 2, 2009
Site visits to finalists	November 18 – December 9, 2009 (tentative)
Notification of awards	December 18, 2009 (tentative)

Potential applicants are encouraged to attend the **Community School Readiness Wiring Bidder's Conference on October 13 at the Boston Children's Museum from 9:30 am – 12 pm or 2:30pm – 5 pm**. We encourage applicants to attend as teams of 2 or more organizations (with parents if possible). Please RSVP for the Bidder's Conference through the Intent to Apply Form, Appendix G.

Please direct any questions about this RFP to Katie Madrigal, Thrive in 5 Ready Families Manager, at 617-624-8196 or katie.madrigal@thrivein5boston.org.

II. Background of Community School Readiness Wiring

When families are engaged in their children’s learning and development, children do better – in terms of their academic success and social-emotional development. A large body of research supports this⁴, and we know it intuitively as parents and practitioners.

Learning begins at birth. Children are born ready to learn. What takes place in the first 5 years of a child’s life greatly determines how ready the child is for success in school and life. For example, the human brain is the only organ that is not mature at birth. The brain develops more rapidly from birth through age three than at any other time of life⁵. Parents play a huge role in their children’s healthy development and learning as their child’s first and most influential teacher.

It is critical to support parents as their child’s first teacher because the early years of a child’s life are incredibly important to his/her healthy development. Engaging families of young children also presents an opportunity because there are so many fun, easy things parents can do that can make a tremendous impact on children’s growth. All parents want to provide nurturing care giving that fosters their children’s healthy development and learning– we simply need to support them by making sure they have information about child development, parenting, and school readiness as well as access to resources that can help their family.

There are many city-wide and neighborhood-based programs that support families in obtaining resources and as their children’s first teacher. These supports for families include home visiting programs, early literacy programs, workshops, activities, guides, parenting programs, campaigns, information and referral services, play groups, one-on-one parenting support and parent support groups.

How can we increase access to these programs and others to support more families as they nurture their children’s healthy development and learning? Family engagement research and experience provide the following lessons learned:

- Relationships are critical.
- Ask families what they want and need, and listen to them.
- Use many different strategies, because what works for one person does not work for everyone.
- When families cannot come to you, go to them.
- Use multiple communication channels, because people need to hear information multiple times from multiple sources they trust before they will act on it.

⁴ Henderson, A. and Mapp, K. (2002). A New Wave of Evidence. Austin, TX: National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools. <http://www.seidl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>.

⁵ Shonkoff, J. and Phillips, D. (Eds.). (2000). From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Source of Early Childhood Development. Washington DC: National Academy Press.

- Make programs and supports engaging, fun, culturally competent and convenient.⁶

Based on these best practices, a group of parents and service providers developed Community School Readiness Wiring as a strategy to support families by expanding access to Boston's wealth of early childhood information, support services and programs. Through this RFP, Thrive in 5 is looking for partners to bring Community School Readiness Wiring to life in their neighborhood in a way that builds on their neighborhood's unique strengths and is responsive to its unique needs and demographics. These partners, the hub agencies, will lead and coordinate the CSRW process in their respective communities.

⁶ Henderson, A., Mapp, K., Johnson, V. and Davies, D.(2007). Beyond the Bake Sale: The Essential Guide to Family-School Partnerships. New York and London: The New Press.

III. Community School Readiness Wiring Implementation Process

The first step of Community School Readiness Wiring is to gather information from families and providers in the community about what the strengths of their community are. These strengths include where families go, who they have natural relationships with and what their overall skills and interests are. In terms of the community, these strengths include, but are not limited to, existing collaborations, programs and supports (formal and informal) for families, and what is working well in these programs and supports.

Next the selected hub agency will recruit parents and partners to form a School Readiness Roundtable. Neighborhoods are encouraged to build on existing community collaborations and coalitions to create their Roundtable. The School Readiness Roundtable must:

- Have representation across socio-economic and cultural groups.
- Have representation from parents, business, faith based community, early education and care providers (family child care, private/community-based centers, Head Start / Early Head Start and school based early education), Boston Public Schools, early childhood service providers, family support programs, community centers, libraries and health care sector (at a minimum).
- Have 1/3 parent representation or a separate Parent Advisory Group with representatives on the School Readiness Roundtable. In either case, there must be representation from any racial/ethnic group that makes up more than 5% of the population, according to US census data (www.census.gov and/or Appendix B). In addition to racial/ethnic diversity, there must be diversity in terms of socio-economic status, background and experience.
- Meet at least every other month between February 2010 and June 2011.

The School Readiness Roundtable will create and implement a CSRW Project Plan that must be submitted to Thrive in 5 within 6 months of receiving the grant. Thrive in 5 will provide a template for this plan. The following bullet points describe the four key components of the plan, including implementation steps, concrete examples and what Thrive in 5 expects to be accomplished in the first 18 months. The expectations are matched to this time period and reflect an understanding that CSRW is a large vision that will take several years and significant funding to implement in its entirety. Selected hub agencies will receive a more detailed explanation of the expectations at the CSRW Launch Meeting on January 14, 2010. Thrive in 5 and hub agencies that are funded starting in September, 2010 will together to modify the expectations based on the shorter funding period.

- A. LINKING FAMILIES TO SERVICES AND INFORMATION:** Connecting families with young children to resources that support them, including in their role as their child's first teacher.

Implementation steps:

- (1) Identify channels for communication: Where families go and who they have relationships with.
- (2) Identify resources: Services and information to link families to (play to learn groups, story hours, milestones guides etc.).
- (3) Recruit communication channel partners.
- (4) Train communication channel partners with early childhood understanding and key messaging.
- (5) Establish communication and support system among hub agency and partners.

18-month expectations:

- At least 5 communication partners that are new to their role, including at least 3 businesses, recruited and trained to provide information to families.
- At least 2 new forms of consistent communication in place to support partners in their communication and help link families to services directly (ex. newsletter, radio show, advertisements in print media).

Note: These forms of communication are intended to supplement and support (not replace) person-to-person interactions.

Examples of how this could look in a neighborhood:

- Cashier at the local convenience store tells a mom with a young child about the story hour at the library.
- Local health center receptionist talks to parents of young children about what play-to-learn groups are, where they meet and who they need to talk to in order to sign up.
- A bilingual, monthly newsletter about free activities and resources for families is distributed through early education and care providers and local businesses.
- Early childhood parenting information is incorporated into an ESOL class curriculum.

- B. EVERYDAY FAMILY INTERACTION OPPORTUNITIES:** Providing families opportunities to engage in positive adult-child interactions that are focused on learning as they go about their daily lives.

Implementation steps:

- (1) Identify family interaction opportunity partners: These partners support opportunities to engage in positive adult-child interactions focused on learning.
- (2) Work with families to develop community specific, culturally competent activities and messaging.
- (3) Recruit family interaction opportunity partners.
- (4) Train family interaction opportunity partners.
- (5) Establish communication and support system among hub agency and family interaction opportunity partners.

18-Month Expectations

- At least 5 family interaction support partners that are new to their role, including at least 3 businesses, have been recruited and trained to model activities. Note: These may overlap with communication channel partners from component A.
- There are at least 3 new culturally competent activities that partners support for families to engage in as they go about their daily routine.

Examples of how this could look in a neighborhood:

- The health center has colorful family friendly activity ideas in the reception area that encourage parents and their children to play together while they wait.
- The local supermarket has a scavenger hunt for parents to engage children in as they shop.
- Takeout restaurants give families parent-child activities to do together while they wait for their orders.

C. SERVICE COORDINATION: Coordinating services and service providers to promote inter-agency referrals, follow up and continued coordination for families receiving multiple services.

Implementation steps:

- (1) Map community resources, including family engagement supports and social service resources.
- (2) Establish communication system to exchange information across sectors on a regular basis (could be through Roundtable).
- (3) Help organizations make inter-agency referrals for families, follow up to ensure engagement and coordinate ongoing services.

18-month expectations:

- A data collection system, developed by Thrive in 5 and hub agency, will be established to track the # of referrals among providers (at a minimum) and potentially engagement and coordination data.
- The hub agency and at least 5 partners are using this joint data collection system and submitting data to Thrive in 5 on a regular basis for Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI)⁷.

Examples of how this could look in a neighborhood:

- Service providers exchange information and build relationships through the School Readiness Roundtable.
- School Readiness Roundtable members organize one large, high quality family resource fair instead of organizing individual fairs.

⁷ This process will involve collecting data and sharing it with Thrive in 5. Thrive in 5 will analyze the data and provide feedback to the hub agencies and their partners in each of the 5 communities. Thrive in 5, the hub agency, and its partners in each community will study the feedback and identify actions to improve effectiveness and efficiency. An action plan will be prepared and executed to achieve quality improvements.

- A mom who is attending a play-to-learn group learns about a local parenting support group. The group leader follows up with the mom to make sure the referral worked out for her.

D. INCREASE CAPACITY AND ENHANCE QUALITY: Expanding and enhancing supports for families based on the strengths of existing programs and on community needs.

Implementation steps:

- (1) Identify what resources (programs, services, events, activities) to support families are available. These may be neighborhood-based resources or city-wide resources that have a presence in the neighborhood.
- (2) Identify what is working well within these resources.
- (3) Identify where there are gaps in resources or quality.
- (4) Expand and enhance existing resources to build on strengths and fill gaps.
- (5) Engage in Thrive in 5's CQI process.

18-month expectations:

- A data collection system, developed by Thrive in 5 and the hub agency, will be established to track the # and type of, participation in and satisfaction with services provided.
- At least 2 programs will have expanded to serve at least 10% more families, based on CSRW strengths and needs assessment and/or existing data.
- At least 1 program will have enhanced quality.
- At least 12 Family Friend and Neighbor Care (FFNC) providers will be engaged in FFNC-specific activities and/or existing programs because of hub agency and/or subcontractor outreach.

Examples of how this could look in a neighborhood:

- Every family with a newborn baby receives a "Welcome Baby" visit that helps to connect families to community services and emphasizes the importance of reading to and talking to young children in parents' role as their child's first teacher.
- Several organizations and parents come together to create a strength-based, interactive workshop series for expectant parents that incorporates elements of each organization's programs.
- Saturday family field trips bring families with young children to a different Boston cultural institution each month.
- FFNC providers attend play-to-learn groups where they build relationships and engage in fun activities that promote learning.

Steps of the CSRW Process to Begin as Part of Proposal Development

- (1) Engage key partners to develop a proposal.
- (2) Begin to assess neighborhood strengths as described on page 8. There is more information about this in Section VI of this RFP.

Additional Hub Agency Responsibilities

In addition to leading and coordinating the creation and implementation of a CSRW Project Plan, participation in the following activities will be required of all hub agencies and key hub agency partners as a condition of accepting Thrive in 5 Community School Readiness Wiring funds:

- 1.) Community School Readiness Wiring Launch Meeting on January 14, 2010 from 9 am – 5 pm.
- 2.) 1 monthly meeting with Thrive in 5 (can be at the hub agency).
- 3.) CSRW Outreach and Engagement Plan (template will be provided), submitted within 6 weeks of receiving the grant.
- 4.) CSRW Project Plan (template will be provided), submitted within 6 months of receiving the grant.
- 5.) Data collection, accountability and continuous quality improvement of CSRW based on CSRW logic model outputs and outcomes.
- 6.) 2 representatives (including 1 parent) identified for participation in a city-wide CSRW Advisory Group that meets on a bi-monthly basis.

IV. Characteristics of Community School Readiness Wiring

Community School Readiness Wiring will be different in each neighborhood, depending on the neighborhood's unique strengths, needs, demographics and the creativity of the School Readiness Roundtable. It is important, however, that selected hub agencies ensure that their neighborhood's implementation of CSRW is defined by the following four characteristics. These defining characteristics must be incorporated into each component of CSRW from the beginning of the wiring process.

- a. Strength-based Approach: CSRW is designed to build on the strengths of community and its families. These strength's include existing coalitions, partnerships and initiatives in addition to the communities' collective knowledge, interests, goals, creativity and connections. Hub agencies must take a lead role in helping families and community groups identify their communities' strengths and use the CSRW process to build on them. Three strengths that are particularly relevant to CSRW are Smart from the Start (in Charlestown, Mattapan and Roslindale), the Allston Brighton Early Childhood System of Care and Community Partnerships for Children neighborhood clusters (in every Boston neighborhood). CSRW must also build on the strengths of Boston's city-wide programs, services and institutions. Inherent to this strength-based approach is valuing parents as key advisors and partners in every step of the Community School Readiness Wiring process.
- b. Supporting Families at the Greatest Risk: Thrive in 5's goal is to prevent the achievement gap among Boston's next generation of children, therefore we focus on supporting the families of children at the greatest risk of entering kindergarten without the foundation they need to be successful. In Boston and around the country, data shows that the achievement gap disproportionately affects children of color, low income children, children with disabilities and children whose first language is not English. While CSRW is an inclusive, neighborhood-wide strategy, it has a particular focus on including and supporting these children and families. In order for CSRW to reach all families, hub agencies need to involve diverse families and families facing the most significant challenges as key advisors in the development and execution of their CSRW Project Plan and continuously create opportunities to engage families in the wiring process.
- c. Data Collection, Accountability and Continuous Quality Improvement: Data collection, accountability and continuous quality improvement are essential to ensure that CSRW strategies and activities meet the needs of all young children and families. As such, it is critical that agencies engage in data collection, encourage a culture of data-sharing amongst program partners, and assist other community programs in building capacity so that we can all work together to

improve outreach and engagement, identify gaps in services and enhance quality.

- d. Integration of Thrive in 5 Strategies: Community School Readiness Wiring (CSRW) is one strategy to achieve Thrive in 5's goals of getting all children ready for success and preventing the achievement gap present in kindergarten. Our vision is to integrate other Thrive in 5 strategies into CSRW wiring neighborhoods in order to fully implement the Thrive in 5 vision and maximize impact. The first example of this kind of strategy integration is Family, Friend and Neighbor Care (FFNC) outreach and engagement, which is a required activity of this funding. FFNC is the most common form of non-parental care in the United States. It is early care and education that is largely unregulated and unlicensed. CSRW hub agencies or agencies sub-contracted through the hub agency will reach out to FFNC providers, build relationships with them through fun, non-threatening activities, ask them what they want and need, and support them in enhancing the quality of their nurturing interactions with children.

V. Selection Process and Criteria

Applications will be reviewed and evaluated on the basis of the following organizational attributes:

- Ability to engage partners across sectors, socio-economic groups and cultural groups – particular attention to effectiveness of organization in engaging local businesses and families facing the most significant challenges.
- Demonstrated commitment and ability to use a strength-based approach.
- Demonstrated commitment and ability to engage all families in a variety of ways, including as decision-makers and key partners.
- Understanding of the overall vision for Community School Readiness Wiring and ability to create neighborhood specific action plan.
- A clear understanding of the proposed neighborhood, including community demographics, assets and challenges.
- Demonstrated ability to be creative and innovative in its approach.
- Culture of data collection and data-driven programming.
- Organizational vision and mission aligned with CSRW goals.
- Organizational vision and mission aligned with Thrive in 5 mission and approach.
- Budget that is feasible and aligned with proposed activities.
- Clear plan for staffing and the organizational capacity to support CSRW.
- Organizational ability to effectively engage Family Friend and Neighbor Care providers in meaningful ways that support healthy development and learning.

The 3 organizations that demonstrate they are the most ready to begin CSRW (based on the above criteria) will be selected for funding beginning in January 2010. The other 2 organizations will be selected for funding beginning in September 2010 with specific recommendations for steps to take between January and September in order to build the foundation needed to begin the CSRW process. **Organizations that apply as a collaboration of 2 or more entities working together will be in better position to be selected for the January start date.**

Thrive in 5 will convene a review team comprised of parents and representatives from community and city-wide organizations, the Boston Public Schools and Thrive in 5 staff to review the proposals based on the above criteria and recommend sites for grant funding to Thrive in 5.

VI. Application

Completed applications will contain the 5 sections outlined below:

Section 1:	Proposal Narrative (60 points)
Section 2:	Neighborhood Landscape (10 points)
Section 3:	Data Collection Questionnaire (10 points)
Section 4:	Budget Worksheet (8 points)
Section 5:	Appendix (12 points*)

Organizations choosing to apply as a collaboration of 2 or more entities working in partnership to implement CSRW must apply through one 501(c) (3) organization that will act as the lead and fiscal agent for the funds. Each partner organization and the lead/fiscal agent must submit signed a Memorandum of Commitment that articulates the parameters of the partnership and specific responsibilities of each partner. Please include Memorandum/a of Commitment in the Appendix of your application.

*Please note that organizations applying in collaboration are eligible to receive the full 12 points for the Appendix section of their application. Organizations that do not choose to apply in collaboration can receive a maximum of 8 points in this section.

Proposal Narrative (60 points): Please answer the following questions in the order in which they appear (maximum 12 single-spaced pages).

- 1.) Please describe the vision and mission of your organization and the services you provide in your community. (2 points)
- 2.) Please identify the community for which you are applying. Describe the geographic area and demographics. (2 points)
- 3.) Please describe how your organization will recruit and engage local businesses, faith based institutions, early education and care providers, Boston Public Schools, early childhood service providers, family support programs, community centers, libraries and the health care sector in CSRW. Address the following in your response: (7 points)
 - a. How do you currently engage a broad range of community partners in your work. How will you build on these partnerships?
 - b. How do you currently build on existing community collaborations, coalitions and initiatives? How will you build on them as you lead and coordinate the Community School Readiness Wiring process?
 - c. How will you engage potential partners who are not able to participate in School Readiness Roundtable meetings?

- d. It is critical to involve local businesses in CSRW. In your answer, please give particular attention to how you will garner the support and participation of your local business community.
- 4.) Family outreach will be a key aspect of your **CSRW Outreach and Engagement Plan**, because we believe that it is essential to involve families as key advisors in all strategies that hope to engage or serve families, including CSRW. (8 points)
- a. How does your organization currently engage families as advisors and decision makers? In what other ways does your organization currently engage families of all socioeconomic backgrounds, races/ethnicities and cultural groups in its programs?
 - b. What role do you see parents playing in the planning and implementation of CSRW in your neighborhood? What strategies will you use to ensure you are successful in this?
- 5.) We believe cultural competency is essential to the success of family-serving programs. Please discuss your organization’s commitment to cultural competency. (6 points)
- a. Do you have any written policy or organizational core value related to cultural competency? If so, please include it as an attachment.
 - b. Please provide examples of how your organization demonstrates a commitment to cultural competency. Please include how you have ensured that your staff has this capacity.
 - c. How will you ensure cultural competency in your leadership and coordination of CSRW?
- 6.) Please describe the process your organization will use to develop the **CSRW Project Plan**. Address the following in your response: (9 points)
- a. What is your vision for how to effectively “wire” your community? Consider the 4 components of CSRW in your response.
 - b. How will you ensure the strategies you create will reach families facing the most significant challenges?
 - c. What challenges do you anticipate and how will you deal with them?
- 7.) Please describe 1-3 examples of a program, service or support your organization is responsible for that demonstrates innovation and creativity. (6 points)
- 8.) Please discuss how you envision managing CSRW within your organization. (6 points)
- a. Will you hire a new staff member to coordinate CSRW or build this into an existing staff member/s job? Please attach a draft job description for any new staff positions you intend to create and/or provide amended job descriptions for existing positions. Please attach resumes for any current staff if you are adding CSRW responsibilities to existing positions.

- b. What support (supervision etc.) will you provide and what resources will be available to this individual?
 - c. What support will you need from Thrive in 5 to implement CSRW successfully?
- 9.) Describe how you, either directly or through a subcontractor, would reach out to identify, engage, and support FFNC providers in your community. Further describe how you would work to enhance the quality of FFNC providers' services. (7 points)
- 10.) What possibilities do you see to engage the following entities in CSRW? What do you anticipate will be the challenges and opportunities of working with them to implement CSRW? (7 points)
- a. City of Boston departments that serve families with young children (e.g. Boston Public Schools, Boston Public Health Commission, Boston Centers for Youth and Families, Boston Public Libraries) and city/community school readiness initiatives (e.g. Countdown to Kindergarten, Smart from the Start, Read Boston / Early Words)
 - b. United Way funded agencies including the Allston Brighton Early Childhood System of Care (if applicable)
 - c. Community Partnerships for Children and their clusters
 - d. Local early childhood programs/services.
 - e. Local family support programs/services.

Neighborhood Landscape (10 points): We are asking potential hub agencies to do the first step of the CSRW process by gathering information from families and providers in the community about the strengths of their community. A template is attached as Appendix D.

Data Collection and Continuous Quality Improvement Questionnaire (10 points): Neighborhoods participating in Community School Readiness Wiring will have the opportunity and be expected to participate in a data collection process that Thrive in 5 and hub agencies will develop jointly. The goal of this data collection process is continuous quality improvement of CSRW activities and quality enhancement of individual programs and services. Please complete the attached data collection questionnaire, Appendix E. Organizations applying in collaboration are encouraged to complete data collection questionnaires for each organization.

Budget Worksheet (8 points): Thrive in 5 received a grant from the W.K. Kellogg Foundation to fund several Thrive in 5 strategies including Community School Readiness Wiring. Due to the way the Kellogg funding is structured, there are certain limitations on the way a hub agency can create a CSRW budget, based on a total award of \$100,000:

- 37% of the total award must be allocated for hub agency expenses and activities.

- 43% of the total award must be allocated for expanded and enhanced programs and services for families.
- 10% of the total award must be allocated for data collection and continuous quality improvement.
- 10% of the total award must be allocated for Family Friend and Neighbor Care outreach and engagement.
- The allowable expense categories are:
 - Salaries, wages and benefits (at most 50%)
 - Supplies and operating expenses
 - Printing costs
 - Parent participation: stipends, child care, translation
 - Refreshments
 - Subcontracts (at least 20%)
 - Indirect costs, including executive oversight and fiscal management (at most 10%)
- Hub agencies are encouraged to subcontract with partners whenever it makes sense to do so. Hub agencies must subcontract at least 20% of the total award to partner organizations.

The attached Budget Worksheet, Appendix F, synthesizes the information listed above into a budget chart and provides space for a budget justification. Applicants are encouraged to replicate the budget chart as an MS Excel spreadsheet; however it is also possible to complete the chart as a MS Word document.

Appendix (12 points): Please use this section of your proposal for the following items:

- Memorandum/s of Commitment for all partners if you are applying as a collaboration.
- Letters of support from other community partners and/or parents
- Draft job description for any new staff position and/or amended job descriptions for any staff member who is currently employed and will assume significant additional responsibilities associated with CSRW.

VII. How to Apply

To be considered for funding, **all proposals must be received by 5 pm on November 2, 2009.** Please note that proposals received after this deadline will not be accepted and no extensions will be granted.

Proposals may be hand delivered, submitted by mail or submitted via email:

Thrive in 5
c/o United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley
attn: Katie Madrigal
51 Sleeper Street, 2nd floor
Boston, MA 02210

Katie.Madrigal@thrivein5boston.org

You will receive email confirmation that your proposal has been received.

Potential applicants are encouraged to attend the **Community School Readiness Wiring Bidders Conference on October 13 at the Boston Children's Museum from 9:30 am – 12 pm or 2:30pm – 5 pm.**

Please direct any questions about this RFP to Katie Madrigal, Thrive in 5 Ready Families Manager at katie.madrigal@thrivein5boston.org or 617-624-8196.

Application Check List

- Intent to Apply Form by October 7, 2009 (optional).
- Application Cover Sheet
- Proposal Narrative
- Neighborhood Landscape
- Data Collection and Continuous Quality Improvement Questionnaire
- Budget Worksheet
- Appendices (Memorandum/a of Commitment, letters of support, job description/s, resumes)

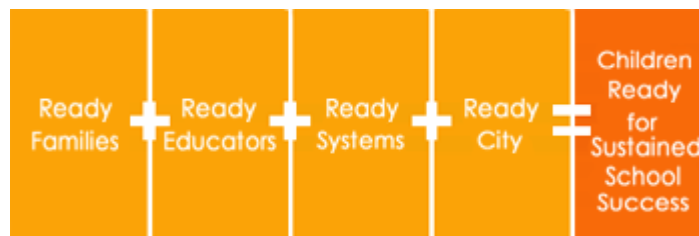
APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY NOVEMBER 2, 2009 at 5 PM.

Appendix A: Thrive in 5 Summary

Thrive in 5 was developed through a multi-year planning process to prevent the achievement gap in the next generation of students by promoting school readiness and the healthy development of all children. Thrive in 5 is a public-private partnership sponsored by the City of Boston and United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley to engage the entire city in a movement with this mission: **By age 5, every child in Boston will be ready to succeed in school and in life. The readiness gap that is currently evident at school entry will be prevented.**

The “5” in Thrive in 5 refers to:

- ⇒ The importance of the first 5 years of life.
- ⇒ The importance of all 5 areas of development on a child’s school readiness: 1.) Cognitive development, 2.) Social and emotional development, 3.) Approaches to learning, 4.) Language development and 5.) Physical and motor development.
- ⇒ The 5 components of the Thrive in 5 equation for success:



THRIVE IN 5 GOALS

- **Ready Families:** Parents will be able to **obtain** the **accurate, culturally appropriate information** they seek on child development, parenting, and school readiness, as well as community resources that help to strengthen families.
- **Ready Educators:** Boston will become the city with the **highest quality early education and care** system for all young children – infants, toddlers, preschoolers and kindergartners – in all settings: family child care, private/community-based centers, Head Start/Early Head Start, and school-based early education.
- **Ready Systems:** Health care, early intervention and other systems that serve young children will succeed in **earlier detection and more effective responses** to barriers to child development and school readiness, including earlier detection of family and environmental conditions that can create “toxic stress” in young children.
- **Ready City:** The many sectors in Boston will **work together** to ensure children’s school readiness becomes and remains a top priority.
- **Ready Children:** Thrive in 5 will **track and report** on its success in ensuring universal school readiness.

For more information about Thrive in 5, please visit: www.thrivein5boston.org.

Appendix A: Census Data (page 1 of 2)

Characteristics	Allston-Brighton	Back Bay/ Beacon Hill	Central (West End/ Chinatown)	Charlestown	East Boston	Fenway/ Kenmore	Hyde Park	Jamaica Plain	Mattapan
Total # of 0 to 5	2165	674	667	859	2780	330	2123	1751	3060
% of Citywide 0 to 5 Total	7%	2%	2%	3%	9%	1%	7%	6%	10%
Total Neighborhood Population	69648	26398	25602	15195	38413	36191	31697	38074	37371
% of Neighborhood Population Under 5	3%	3%	3%	6%	7%	1%	7%	5%	8%
Race/Ethnicity*									
<i>African-American</i>	6%	2%	5%	16%	4%	22%	49%	27%	80%
<i>Asian</i>	13%	1%	29%	7%	3%	11%	1%	6%	0%
<i>White</i>	61%	95%	60%	59%	60%	31%	36%	41%	5%
<i>Other/Multi-racial</i>	20%	3%	6%	17%	33%	36%	14%	25%	14%
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	21%	3%	9%	28%	56%	40%	17%	31%	19%
Poverty Status									
<i>All 0 to 5</i>	22%	0%	23%	38%	29%	49%	13%	20%	31%
<i>African-American</i>	25%	0%	47%	61%	50%	44%	11%	29%	26%
<i>Asian</i>	30%	0%	41%	46%	68%	22%	60%	16%	60%
<i>White</i>	16%	0%	10%	22%	27%	21%	10%	14%	68%
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	47%	0%	13%	70%	26%	93%	15%	23%	61%

This is 2000 Census Data, from BRA Neighborhood Profiles, <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/pdr/PDRSubject.asp?SubjectID=25>.

*Census collects ethnicity data separately from race, therefore totals do not equal 100%.

Appendix A: Census Data (page 2 of 2)

Characteristics	North Dorchester	Roslindale	Roxbury	South Boston	South Dorchester	South End	West Roxbury	Citywide
Total # of 0 to 5	1815	2223	4426	1474	4369	1067	1982	31765
% of Citywide 0 to 5 Total	6%	7%	14%	5%	14%	3%	6%	
Total Neighborhood Population	29215	34628	55663	29938	63647	28160	28663	589141
% of Neighborhood Population Under 5	6%	6%	8%	5%	7%	4%	7%	5%
Race/Ethnicity*								
<i>African-American</i>	32%	25%	64%	9%	50%	43%	13%	36%
<i>Asian</i>	13%	2%	1%	3%	13%	11%	4%	6%
<i>White</i>	30%	52%	9%	71%	21%	24%	73%	38%
<i>Other/Multi-racial</i>	25%	21%	27%	18%	16%	21%	11%	20%
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	21%	26%	32%	21%	11%	28%	8%	24%
Poverty Status								
<i>All 0 to 5</i>	27%	18%	38%	34%	21%	34%	8%	25%
<i>African-American</i>	32%	29%	37%	62%	22%	45%	31%	29%
<i>Asian</i>	14%	16%	22%	100%	22%	42%	0%	29%
<i>White</i>	18%	9%	26%	18%	12%	9%	5%	15%
<i>Hispanic/Latino</i>	49%	37%	46%	72%	38%	45%	0%	41%

This is 2000 Census Data, from BRA Neighborhood Profiles, <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/pdr/PDRSubject.asp?SubjectID=25>.

*Census collects ethnicity data separately from race, therefore totals do not equal 100%.

Appendix C: Community School Readiness Wiring Logic Model

Goal: Parents will be able to obtain the accurate, culturally appropriate information they seek on child development, parenting, and school readiness, as well as community resources that help to strengthen families.				
Strategy: Community School Readiness Wiring				
Inputs →	Activities →	Outputs →	Outcomes	
			Short Term (1-2 years)	Long Term
<p>Thrive in 5:</p> <p>Funding for hub agency per neighborhood.</p> <p>Implementation budget per neighborhood.</p> <p>Thrive in 5 staff time.</p> <p>Advisory group time and small budget.</p> <p><u>Neighborhood:</u></p> <p>Children and families</p> <p>Individual organizations within neighborhoods</p> <p>Service Providers</p> <p>Businesses</p> <p>Faith based organizations</p> <p>Smart from the Start</p>	<p>(1) PROJECT DEVELOPMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Convene School Readiness Roundtable (incl. reps from Parent Advisory Group) for project planning and (4). ▪ Convene a diverse Parent Advisory Group (PAG) for project planning and (2) and (3). ▪ Work with Roundtable and PAG to assess strengths and needs, create culturally competent strategies, set benchmarks, implement strategies and manage process. ▪ Work with Thrive to establish data collection system and continuous quality improvement process. ▪ Coordinate at least 1 parent led project that is a visible demonstration of the neighborhood's commitment to school readiness (ex. mural, monument, garden). 	<p># participants on Roundtable</p> <p># of sectors⁸ represented on Roundtable</p> <p># of Roundtable meetings</p> <p># of participants on Parent Advisory Group</p> <p># of participants at PAG meetings</p> <p># of PAG meetings</p> <p>Diversity of PAG</p> <p>Plan incl. needs assessment, strategies and benchmarks</p> <p>Completed parent led project</p>	<p>Families are actively engaged as decision makers in the CSRW process.</p> <p>There are new champions of school readiness present in the community (business owners etc.).</p> <p>Visible neighborhood changes demonstrate a community-wide focus on children's healthy development.</p>	<p>Children receive nurturing care giving that fosters their development.</p> <p>Parents are actively engaged in their children's healthy development and learning, starting at birth.</p> <p>Families access high quality early childhood programs.</p> <p>Families access resources that promote active engagement in their children's healthy development and learning.</p> <p>Parents have the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to support their children's healthy development and learning.</p> <p>Children and their parents/caregivers engage in learning activities in everyday moments.</p> <p>Early childhood curriculum content (from Talk Read Play, Read Boston etc.) is present in interactive ways throughout the neighborhood.</p> <p>Organizations that support families are more knowledgeable about each other and have stronger relationships.</p> <p>Organizations make referrals to other organizations based on families' needs and coordinate ongoing services.</p> <p>Neighborhood has increased family engagement resources that address families' wants and needs.</p> <p>Resources that exist to support family engagement are high quality and accessible to families.</p> <p>Families access high quality services and supports that meet their needs.</p> <p>Neighborhoods have increased capacity to support families of young children.</p>
	<p>(2) LINKING FAMILIES TO SERVICES and INFORMATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify where parents go and who they have relationships with = channels ▪ Identify resources and information to link parents to (play groups, story hours, milestone guides etc.) = resources ▪ Establish messaging based on resources ▪ Recruit channels as partners ▪ Train partners in key information ▪ Establish communication and support system between hub and partners. 	<p># of outlets identified</p> <p># of sectors represented in outlets</p> <p># of outlets recruited to participate</p> <p># of resources recruited to participate</p> <p># of materials distributed</p> <p># of types of materials</p>	<p>Families access high quality early childhood programs.</p> <p>Families access resources that promote active engagement in their children's healthy development and learning.</p> <p>Parents have the skills, knowledge and confidence they need to support their children's healthy development and learning.</p>	
	<p>(3) EVERYDAY FAMILY ENGAGEMENT⁹ OPPORTUNITIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify best partners to provide opportunities to engage in positive adult / child interactions focused on learning. ▪ Work with Thrive to develop community specific, culturally competent practice activities and messaging. ▪ Recruit partners. ▪ Train partners. ▪ Establish communication and support system between hub and partners. 	<p># of partners trained</p> <p># of different activities implemented</p> <p># of materials distributed.</p> <p># of families participating in activities</p>	<p>Children and their parents/caregivers engage in learning activities in everyday moments.</p> <p>Early childhood curriculum content (from Talk Read Play, Read Boston etc.) is present in interactive ways throughout the neighborhood.</p>	
	<p>(4) SERVICE COORDINATION</p> <p>(4) Map community resources, including family engagement supports and social service resources.</p> <p>(5) Establish communication system to exchange information across sectors on a regular basis (could be through Roundtable).</p> <p>(6) Help organizations make inter-agency referrals for families, follow up to ensure engagement and coordinate ongoing services.</p>	<p># of resources mapped</p> <p># of participants on Roundtable</p> <p># of inter-agency referrals made</p>	<p>Organizations that support families are more knowledgeable about each other and have stronger relationships.</p> <p>Organizations make referrals to other organizations based on families' needs and coordinate ongoing services.</p>	
	<p>(5) INCREASE CAPACITY and ENHANCE QUALITY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identify what resources (programs, services, events, activities) to support family engagement are available. ▪ Identify where there are gaps in resources or quality ▪ Expand and enhance existing resources to fill gaps. ▪ Engage in Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI). 	<p># of resources mapped</p> <p>Plan to build on strengths and address gaps in services and quality</p> <p># of resources expanded and/or enhanced</p> <p># of CQI activities completed</p>	<p>Neighborhood has increased family engagement resources that address families' wants and needs.</p> <p>Resources that exist to support family engagement are high quality and accessible to families.</p>	

⁸ Sectors refers to the different parts of a community. For example: business, faith based, early care and education, government, non profit, health care.

⁹ Family Engagement is everything that parents/caregivers do to help their children learn and grow. Family engagement includes what parents do at home to help their children's development – talking, reading, playing, providing nurturing care giving – in addition to advocating for their children and engaging with resources to help them.

Use the table below to map out where families go on a regular basis and why. Please be as specific and comprehensive as possible. You may add rows to the table as needed.

Place	Description of Families <i>What families visit this location?</i>	Reason <i>Why do families go to this location?</i>

What programs, services and supports does your neighborhood currently have to support families in their role as their child’s first teacher? Think about programs/services/supports that are city-wide with a neighborhood presence and those that are community-based. You may add rows to the table as needed.

Description of Program/Services/Supports	Organization	Number of Families Served

Please describe any coalitions or formal collaborations that exist in your community.

What additional strengths does your community (including the families that live there) have that that you envision building of for Community School Readiness Wiring?

How did you gather this information (through interviews, focus groups, partnerships etc.)?

Appendix E: Data Collection and Continuous Quality Improvement Questionnaire

(Maximum 2 single-spaced pages - 10 points)

The purpose of the following questions is to learn more about the culture and practice of data collection in your organization.

- A. Describe your organization's data collection efforts. What specific information do you track regarding your clients (ex. race/ethnicity and income levels), activities (for ex. attendance rate) and your collaboration with other agencies (ex. referrals made/received)? What data do you collect to analyze whether or not your program is achieving its desired results?

- B. Describe how your agency engages in continuous quality improvement. Using at least one specific example, illustrate how your agency uses data to 1.) evaluate the quality of your services 2.) plan its future efforts and/or outreach activities.

- C. What type of information would you like collect to improve your services that you don't currently collect? What additional resources and supports would you need to gather this information?

- D. Do you currently share data with other programs within your community? Is so, what is this data and how is this data used? Is there data from other programs that is currently not shared and/or collected that you feel would enhance outcomes for your clients? If so, please explain.

Appendix F: Budget Worksheet (8 points) (page 1 of 2)

Budget period: 1/1/2010 – 6/30/2011

	Hub agency activities	Increased capacity / enhanced quality*	Family Friend and Neighbor Care Outreach and Engagement	Data Collection and Continuous Quality Improvement	Total
Total Allocation	\$37,000	\$43,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$100,000
Salaries / Wages / Benefits					
Parent Participation (stipends, child care, translation)					
Materials / Supplies					
Printing Costs					
Refreshments					
Subcontracts					
Indirect costs (executive oversight, fiscal management)					
Other					
Other					
Other					
TOTAL →					

*This refers to expanding and enhancing the menu of services and programs available for the families of young children.

If you would like to add rows, please feel free to do so, but include the specified rows as subtotals that sum to the total.

Appendix F: Budget Worksheet (page 1 of 2)

Budget Justification:

Salaries, Wages, Benefits

Supporting Parent Participation

Materials and Supplies

Printing Costs

Refreshments

Subcontracts

Indirect Costs

Other

Appendix G: Intent to Apply / Application Cover Sheet

INTENT TO APPLY FORM / APPLICATION COVER SHEET

Bidder's Conference RSVP Form

Community School Readiness Wiring

Please FAX or EMAIL by 4:00 PM on October 7, 2009

ATTN: Katie Madrigal

Fax: 617-624-9114

Email: katie.madrigal@thrivein5boston.org

(1.) Hub Agency: The proposed fiscal and lead agent for the funds

Organization Name: _____

Contact Person: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

(2.) Will your agency attend the Bidder's Conference on October 13?

Yes 9:30 am – 12 pm No

Yes 2:30 pm – 5 pm

(3.) Total number of people from your agency and potential partner agencies anticipated to be in attendance at Bidder's Conference: _____

(4.) Proposed Boston neighborhood or sub-neighborhood to be served:

(5.) Anticipated key partners for proposed CSRW collaborative:

Organization Name:	Organization Name:
Organization Name:	Organization Name: