



Robert P. Astorino
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Grant E. Mitchell, MD
Acting Commissioner

13704

Date: August 23, 2010

To: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition & Contract

From: Grant E. Mitchell, MD
Acting Commissioner, Department of Social Services

Re: Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group, Inc. to provide training and coaching for Foster Care Supervisors and Caseworkers with the Division of Child Welfare for the period from October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010 in an amount not to exceed \$50,000 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation

Authorization is requested for the County of Westchester, acting by and through its Department of Social Services ("the Department"), to enter into an agreement with the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group, Inc. ("CWPPG") pursuant to which the CWPPG will provide training and coaching for Foster Care Supervisors and Caseworkers with the Division of Child Welfare. The proposed contractual agreement will commence on October 1, 2010 and expire December 31, 2010. In consideration for services to be rendered, the County will pay an amount not to exceed \$50,000 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation. It is to be noted that the proposed contract is different from what the Department had last year with this vendor. Last year's contract was for providing training and coaching for the new Family Team Meeting Unit with the Division of Child Welfare. Training was provided to a small group of workers and the contract was for a lesser amount. Pursuant to the proposed contract, the Department will be working with the consultant to provide training for enhanced visitation and engagement skills to reduce the length of stay in foster care. There will also be several toolkits developed for supervisors and workers as part of the training. The training will be provided to over 60 workers and supervisors. Further, this

training is one of the Child Welfare Division's main strategies that has been incorporated into the New York State Performance Improvement Plan (NYSPIP).

The CWPPG is a private, non-profit agency that consists of child welfare and mental health professionals with experience in designing and implementing successful system change and in improving front-line child welfare practice. The training courses, tool kits and coaching provided by the CWPPG will assist foster care supervisors and casework staff with reducing the length of foster care placements and re-entry into foster care.

The services to be provided pursuant to this agreement will serve a **public purpose** as these services offer training courses and onsite coaching to the foster care supervisors and caseworkers. Courses include Building Working Agreements for the Supervised Visit, Progressively Moving to a Permanency Conclusion, and The Brain under Siege/Collaborative Problem Solving. The provision of these trainings for foster care supervisors and casework staff is a significant part of the Department's response to the mandatory NYSPIP in which the Department is working to reduce the length of stay of children placed in foster care.

The **goals and objectives** of this contract are to provide training and coaching for foster care supervisors and casework staff. The training courses will provide valuable information required by foster care staff when making permanency decisions for children in foster care. The coaching component provides developmental feedback to foster care supervisors and casework staff on their application of the skills acquired in training. The training and coaching are fundamental skills required when working with the children, families and resource families in setting up the visit and coaching of the families during the visit or family interaction process. The family interaction process offers a well-established and effective strategy for engaging families, including them in the planning process and strengthening ongoing collaborations (*Engaging Parents in Child Welfare Services: Bridging Family Needs and Child Welfare Mandates*, Kemp, Marcenko, Hoagwood and Vesneski, CWLA, 2009, 88:1). The overall objectives of the services provided by the CWPPG are to train and coach foster care supervisors and casework staff in effectively engaging families in the planning for the permanency of children in foster care.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public safety** as the services provided by the CWPPG address safety issues and permanency plans of children in out of home care. Training and coaching provided through the CWPPG assist casework staff in engaging families in the identification and understanding of their own strengths and needs. With the guidance and support provided, families will be more likely to create sustainable solutions to increase safety and prospects of permanency for their children.

The **goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health** of the youth and families of Westchester County because the services provided by the CWPPG address the health and well-being of children. Child welfare staffs are better prepared in engaging parents, guardians and extended family members in the process of

developing a safety and permanency plan for children. According to Kemp, Marcenko, Hoagwood and Vesneski (2009), parental engagement is a fundamental contributor to the three child welfare goals of safety, permanence and well-being of children (*Engaging Parents in Child Welfare Services: Bridging family Needs and Child Welfare Mandates*, Child Welfare League of America, 2009, 88:1). Child welfare outcomes for families also monitor the safety and risk of harm to children as it relates to their health and well-being.

The goals and objectives are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility as the program is designed to meet the requirements of the mandatory mandatory NYSPIP. The Department would avoid financial sanctions by adhering to the mandatory requirements of the NYSPIP. Services provided by the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group, Inc. focus on safely returning children home and achieving a more timely permanency solution. The benefit to the County of Westchester and taxpayers is the cost avoidance of maintaining children in out of home placements.

The goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored using the performance measurement indicators developed by the department and approved by the County Budget Office. The vendor will submit monthly statistics and quarterly performance reports in the format approved by the Department. The Department will be responsible for setting the milestones and tracking the vendor's achievements by reviewing the performance reports submitted by the vendor and making onsite visits.

Performance Measure Indicators to be tracked by the Department includes the participation of all Foster Care Caseworkers and Supervisors in progressive visitation training. All Foster Care Supervisors will receive a "Family Visiting" tool kit. Caseworkers will report improved family visit coaching skills and improved documentation as it relates to visitation.

The program under the previous contract with this vendor successfully met its goals and objectives. The goals and objectives under the previous contract were to develop a Family Team Meeting unit and have staff certified as Family Team Meeting Facilitators. Senior Caseworkers/supervisors/managers would need to attend 5 days of classroom training to learn the FTM process and facilitation. Each trainee would need to observe an actual family team meeting conducted by CWPPG. Each trainee would need to conduct his/her own family team meetings under the observation and coaching of CWPPG.

Eight Sr. Social Caseworkers, 4 Supervisors, 1 Manager, and 1 Director of Program Development in the training division became certified as Family Team Meeting Facilitators and Child Welfare Practice Leaders. With the completion of the training, the Family Team Meeting pilot program went into effect on July 1, 2010 and will move into full implementation on October 1, 2010.

This agreement is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3 (a) (ix) as this procurement contracts with teachers, lecturers and other educational professionals or experts.

Accordingly, the County of Westchester is hereby requesting authority to enter into an agreement with CWPPG for the aforesaid purpose. An appropriate resolution is attached herewith for your Honorable Board's approval.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 9-16-2010 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY

RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Acting Commissioner of the Department of Social Services, be it hereby

RESOLVED, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement with the Child Welfare Policy and Practice Group, Inc. to provide training and coaching for Foster Care Supervisors and Caseworkers with the Division of Child Welfare for the period from October 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010 in an amount not to exceed \$50,000 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Contract is subject to County Appropriation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this Agreement is also subject to further financial analysis of the impact of any New York State Budget (the "State Budget") proposed and adopted during the term of this Agreement. The County shall retain the right, upon the occurrence of any release by the Governor of a proposed State Budget and/or the adoption of a State Budget or any amendments thereto, and for a reasonable time after such release(s) or adoption(s), to conduct an analysis of the impacts of any such State Budget on County finances. After such analysis, the County shall retain the right either to terminate this Agreement or to renegotiate the amounts and rates approved herein. If the County subsequently offers to pay a reduced amount to the Contractor, then the Contractor shall have the right to terminate this Agreement upon reasonable prior written notice; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Executive or his duly authorized designee is hereby authorized to take such action and execute such documents as may be necessary and proper to effectuate the purposes hereof.

Account to be
Charged/Credited

	Fund	Dept	Major Program, Program & Phase Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars
2010	101	22	2600	4360	-----	\$50,000

Budget Funding Year(s): 2010 Start Date: 10/01/10 End Date: 12/31/10
(must match resolution)

Funding Source

Tax Dollars: 33%

State Aid: 42%

\$50,000
(must match resolution)

Federal Aid: 25%

Other _____

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 9-16-2010 - JOMARY VIEIRA, SECRETARY