

**18129**

**TO:** Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

**FROM:** Diane G. Balistreri  
Coordinator, Office for Women

**DATE:** March 30, 2011

**SUBJECT:** Authority to enter into an agreement with My Sisters' Place, Inc. to provide a school-based domestic violence education program for an amount not-to-exceed \$102,620 for the period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011

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The attached Resolution, if approved by your Honorable Board, would authorize the County of Westchester (the "County") to enter into an agreement (the "Agreement") with My Sisters' Place, Inc. ("My Sisters' Place") to provide school-based education through its Domestic Violence Education and Prevention (DVEP) program.

The proposed Agreement will have a term of one year beginning January 1, 2011 and ending December 31, 2011, for an amount not-to-exceed One Hundred Two Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Dollars (\$102,620), to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved budget, of which

- the County's share will be \$68,205: \$44,290 through the budget of the Office for Women; and \$23,915 which is the County's share of the Federal/State/County domestic violence money administered by the Office for Women under an Interdepartmental Cooperative Plan with the Department of Social Services;
- New York State's share will be \$20,999, which is the State share of the Federal/State/County domestic violence money administered by the Office for Women under an Interdepartmental Cooperative Plan with the Department of Social Services; and
- the Federal government's share will be \$13,416, which is the Federal share of the Federal/State/County domestic violence money administered by the Office for Women under an Interdepartmental Cooperative Plan with the Department of Social Services.

Please be advised that Section 459-c of the New York Social Services Law directs social services districts, such as the County, to offer and provide non-residential services to victims of domestic violence, whether eligible or ineligible for public assistance. Non-residential services programs must have the ability to provide the following services:

- 1) Information and Referral services
- 2) Advocacy
- 3) Counseling
- 4) Community education and outreach activities
- 5) Hotline services

The proposed Agreement will promote the public health, safety and general welfare by educating middle and high school students in an effort to end teen dating violence. My Sisters' Place will work with schools and various community organizations throughout Westchester to provide classroom presentations, discussion groups, individual counseling, and an extracurricular program. By educating teens, they are given the tools to recognize the signs of abuse and break the cycle of violence, possibly preventing their involvement in an abusive relationship. The ultimate goal is to break the cycle of violence and prevent their involvement in an abusive relationship now or in their future, thereby reducing pain and suffering, public safety costs and medical costs.

Through the DVEP program, My Sisters' Place works with schools and various community organizations throughout Westchester to provide classroom presentations, discussion groups, individual counseling and an extracurricular program. By educating teens, they are given the tools to recognize the signs of abuse and break the cycle of violence, possibly preventing their involvement in an abusive relationship. My Sisters' Place developed this program based on its experience that educating teens themselves is the most effective way to stop teen dating abuse. There are several aspects which make this program valuable and unique. My Sisters' Place is able to reach thousands of middle and high school students on multiple levels because of the program's various components. The classroom presentations provide students with information to expand their knowledge of the issue. The discussion groups promote increased involvement and interaction while allowing teens to speak openly with each other. The individual counseling sessions, which are initiated by the students, are important because students are able to discuss private matters without fear of what others would think. My Sisters' Place even went one step further and created a program (S.A.F.E.R.) where teens have the opportunity to get involved and raise awareness of domestic violence through various community projects, walks, and other events.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement (as more fully described in Schedule A) are for My Sisters' Place to provide assistance to 30 unduplicated schools, making approximately 480 presentations and reaching nearly 4,800 students through the DVEP program. During the previous contract term, My Sisters' Place provided assistance to 44 unduplicated schools, making 583 presentations and reaching over 5,600 students.

The goals and objectives of the proposed Agreement will be tracked and monitored by the Office for Women, which will be responsible for monitoring My Sisters' Place's performance by means of site visits, as well as their monthly statistics and quarterly narratives. The effectiveness of the DVEP program will be determined by pre- and post-tests provided to students. Outcome results will be measured by their understanding of teen dating violence dynamics; their knowledge of the warning signs of teen relationship violence; and their understanding of the impact of gender stereotyping. For example, in 2010:

- 76% of students showed an increased understanding of teen dating violence dynamics
- 81% of students showed demonstrated knowledge of the warning signs of teen relationship violence
- 76% of students showed an increased understanding of the impact of gender stereotyping

In addition, over 2,800 students completed the pre- and post-tests and showed a 12% average increase in their scores.

The procurement for the school-based DVEP program is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy pursuant to Section 3(a)(ix), which exempts contracts with “teachers, lecturers and other education professionals or experts,” as well as Section 3(a)(xviii), which exempts contracts for the “advancement of the moral, physical, mental and social well being of the youth of Westchester County.”

Accordingly, I recommend approval of the attached proposed Resolution.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 4-21-2011 - JOMARY VIERA, SECRETARY

# RESOLUTION

Upon a communication from the Coordinator of the Office for Women, be it hereby

**RESOLVED**, that the County of Westchester is hereby authorized to enter into an agreement (the "Agreement") with My Sisters' Place, Inc., for the period January 1, 2011 to December 31, 2011, for provision of a school-based education through its Domestic Violence Education and Prevention (DVEP) program; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that in consideration for services to be rendered, My Sisters' Place, Inc. shall be paid an amount not-to-exceed One Hundred Two Thousand Six Hundred Twenty Dollars (\$102,620), to be paid quarterly pursuant to an approved budget, of which:

- the County's share will be \$68,205: \$44,290 through the budget of the Office for Women; and \$23,915 which is the County's share of the Federal/State/County domestic violence money administered by the Office for Women under an Interdepartmental Cooperative Plan with the Department of Social Services,
- New York State's share will be \$20,999, which is the State share of the Federal/State/County domestic violence money administered by the Office for Women under an Interdepartmental Cooperative Plan with the Department of Social Services, and
- the Federal government's share will be \$13,416, which is the Federal share of the Federal/State/County domestic violence money administered by the Office for Women under an Interdepartmental Cooperative Plan with the Department of Social Services; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this Agreement is subject to County appropriations; 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 period of 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 to either 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 be and hereby is authorized and empowered to execute any and all documents and take any actions necessary to effectuate the purposes hereof.

Account to be charged/credited:

FUND	DEPT	Major Program, Program & Phase, Or Unit	Object/ Sub-Object	Trust Account	Dollars	Funding Year
263	11	111L	4380	T111	\$58,330	2011
101	11	0900	4380	N/A	\$44,290	2011

**Budget Funding Year(s)** 2011

(must match resolution)

**Start Date:** 1/1/2011

**End Date:** 12/31/2011

\$102,620

(must match resolution)

**Funding Source:**

Tax Dollars \$68,205

State Aid \$20,999

Federal Aid \$13,416

Other \_\_\_\_\_

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## Schedule A

### **THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE EDUCATION AND PREVENTION (DVEP) PROGRAM**

Since 1981, the **Domestic Violence Education and Prevention (DVEP)** Program has worked with schools and local organizations in Westchester County to educate teens about the reality of dating violence. In our experience we have found that the most effective way to end teen dating violence is by going to the source—teens themselves. By collaborating with educators, we give young people the tools to recognize and break the cycle of violence in their lives. Our team of educators works with middle and high school students through classroom presentations, individual counseling, and discussion groups.

#### **Classroom Presentations**

**The Domestic Violence Education and Prevention (DVEP) Program** works with schools and community organizations throughout Westchester County to provide educational prevention presentations to teens, serving both middle and high school students. Presentations usually occur over two periods/days with the collaboration of school educators, most often taking place in health classes. The goal of the presentations is to get the students involved in their own learning experience about the issue of dating violence. Using various techniques such as discussion, role play, and supplemental materials, our educators work *with* students to expand their knowledge of teen dating violence and healthy friendships.

#### **Rap Groups**

**DVEP** also offers two 6 – 8 week long student rap discussion group cycles during the school year. These discussion groups cover intersecting issues such as alcohol and drug abuse, stalking, community violence, sexual health and warning signs of violence in LGBTQ relationships. Facilitators include the DVEP Program Coordinator, as well as other community educators. By creating a supportive environment where students are encouraged to talk openly with one another, rap groups are designed to expand the students' level of personal growth, while covering topics that may not otherwise be included in their educational experience. It has been our experience that the most effective Rap groups include no more than 10 students each session. Students in these Rap groups form closer bonds, become more involved in discussions and are more active participants.

#### **Individual Supportive Counseling**

Although many teens are familiar with dating violence, our classroom presentations and rap groups might be the first time they have had the words to label their experiences as abusive. Often students have additional questions, or would like to speak with someone privately about their own experiences with teen dating violence, sexual assault, or family violence. They may request to do so anonymously at the end of a presentation, or may contact My Sisters' Place offices directly. A limited number of individual supportive counseling sessions may occur at the

school or at our agency's non-residential offices in White Plains or Yonkers with the DVEP Program Coordinator.

**S.A.F.E.R.**

S.A.F.E.R. (**S**tudents **A**dvocating for **E**quality in **R**elationships) is the DVEP Program's community service forum for teens. S.A.F.E.R. recruits volunteers through its prevention presentations and collaborates with existing youth groups in Westchester County schools and community agencies to provide community service projects on teen dating violence awareness; these projects can be in exchange for community service hours or credits. S.A.F.E.R. activities include fundraising, participating in events to raise awareness about domestic violence, and various other projects. S.A.F.E.R.'s focus is on working with participants to gain a full understanding of teen dating violence to prepare them to take a more active role as ambassadors and mentors in educating their peers.

My Sisters' Place will provide non-residential services to middle and high school students under this contract.

<b>Presentations</b>	<b>Level of Service-Goal</b>
<p><b>Number of Schools:</b> This program will make presentations to the following number of schools and community organizations over the coming calendar year:</p> <p><b>Number of Unduplicated Schools:</b></p>	<p><u>45</u> number of schools</p> <p><u>30</u> unduplicated schools</p>
<p><b>Number of Presentations:</b> This program will make the following number of presentations per month (summer months will average much less than this). A presentation is defined as either a classroom hour or one community presentation. A two-day presentation counts as two presentations.</p>	<p><u>47</u> presentations per month  <u>483</u> presentations per year            (47 presentations X 10 mo. + 13 summer presentations)</p>
<p><b>Number of students:</b>            This program will reach the following number of students:</p>	<p><u>471</u> students per month  <u>4795</u> annual            (471 x 10 mo. + 85 students over the summer)</p>
<b>Rap Groups</b>	<b>Level of Service-Goal</b>
<p>A "contact" equals a client visit to a group session.</p>	<p><u>2</u> cycles per year  <u>6-8</u> sessions per cycle  <u>7-10</u> student contacts per cycle</p>
<b>Individual Counseling</b>	<b>Level of Service-Goal</b>
<p>This program will provide individual domestic violence counseling to students who request it.</p>	<p><u>10-12</u> clients per year  <u>24-48</u> sessions per year</p>

<b>Requests for Counseling</b>	<u>6</u> requests per month
<b>S.A.F.E.R.</b>	<b>Level of Service-Goal</b>
S.A.F.E.R. collaborates with existing youth groups in Westchester County schools and community agencies to provide community service projects geared towards teen dating violence awareness in exchange for community service hours or credits.	<u>12</u> meetings per year <u>5 -10</u> students per meeting <u>6</u> community projects per year

**Measuring Program Effectiveness:**

**As a result of participating in DVEP presentations, the following outcomes are expected:**

- 80% of students will show an increased understanding of teen dating violence dynamics.
- 85% of students will show demonstrated knowledge of the warning signs of teen relationship violence.
- 80% of students will show an increased understanding of the impact of gender stereotyping.

These outcomes will be measured through pre-tests and post-tests distributed before the initial presentations and after final presentations.

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