

George Latimer
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

80971

DATE: November 24, 2020

TO: Honorable Members of the Board of Acquisition and Contract

FROM: Kevin M. McGuire, Commissioner
Department of Social Services

SUBJECT: Resolution authorizing the County of Westchester to enter into an agreement with Family Ties of Westchester, Inc. ("Family Ties"), for the provision of the "Every Kid Counts" program serving low and moderate risk Child Protective Services (CPS) families with children and low and moderate risk families referred by the Cross Systems Unit (CSU), for the period from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 for an amount not to exceed \$385,650.

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 Family Ties of Westchester, Inc. ("Family Ties"), for the provision of the "Every Kid Counts" program to connect at risk families to needed services to improve family functioning and to reduce the number of families at risk of subsequent Child Protective Services ("CPS") reports and/or foster care placements within the areas covered under the Department of Social Services ("DSS"), for the period from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 for an amount not to exceed \$385,650 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget and subject to appropriation.

Family Ties of Westchester's Every Kid Counts program is a community based, short-term and intense family focused wraparound program that was developed to prevent child abuse, neglect and out-of-home care for low and moderate risk families that have come to the attention of Child Protective Services or Cross Systems Unit. Family Ties provides case management services for these families for a period of 3-6 months to reduce issues and behaviors that result in repeat CPS reports and/or foster care placements, to connect families to needed services and to improve family functioning. Every Kid Counts is a community-based program where families are linked to community service providers in order to address issues such as child safety, employment, housing, domestic violence, child support, education, and transportation. Family Ties will also provide a Family Team Meeting Specialist to conduct family team meetings (FTM's) for all youth who enter community based foster care. A FTM will be conducted and completed within

the first 21 days of placement. The specialist is essential in our Partnership 4 Permanency (P4P) in seeking to reduce the length of stay in foster care and achieve permanency for children in the quickest, safest manner.

This contract serves a **public purpose** because it promotes healthy families and reduces the risk of children entering foster care. Family Ties uses the family unity model to strengthen families and to address dysfunction and mal-adaptation in family systems that place children at risk of out-of-home placements.

The **goals and objectives of this agreement** is to provide short term, preventive and follow-up services addressing the needs of low and moderate risk families that have come to the attention of Child Protective Services or the Cross Systems Unit. The primary goal is to reduce and prevent family dissolution and substitute care for children. Secondary goals are to address family system dysfunction that places children at risk of abuse and maltreatment.

The **goals and objectives of this Agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of public health** because the services provided address specific family systems issues that place children at risk of abuse and maltreatment. Families are guided through services, activities and trainings to inspire them to practice alternative ways of parenting, coping and managing their environments. Parents that adopt healthier lifestyles are often better prepared to parent healthier children.

The **goals and objectives of this agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of public safety** as the program reduces the recidivism rate of CPS intervention and improves family functioning as well as provide a resource for the families even after their case is closed. Services through the program address family system dysfunctions, which without intervention, would lead to further abuse and maltreatment of children.

The **goals and objectives of this agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility** in that the Department is able to avert temporary and permanent substitute care of children and the costs associated with such placements. Preventing substitute care can result in substantial savings for the County and its taxpayers.

The **goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored** to verify process, outcome and impact of performance measures as will be indicated in the contractual agreement. Goals and objectives will also be tracked, monitored and verified through periodic reports submitted. The Department of Social Services will also verify goals and objectives through periodic site visits.

Based on the Performance Measurement Indicators, the Department is able to report that from January 1, 2020 through September 30, 2020, Family Ties has serviced 49 families, close to their annual capacity of 60 families. One hundred percent (100%) of the youth who received services were diverted from foster care placement and one hundred percent (100%) of the families did not experience a repeated, subsequent and/or initial CPS investigation while receiving services from the program.

The procurement of this is agreement is exempt from the application of the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3(a) xviii as the agreement creates and supports recreation projects and other appropriate programs for the prevention of delinquency and youth crime and the advancement of the well-being of the youth of Westchester County.

It should be noted that this agreement is not subject to the competitive procurement requirements of the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (formerly, the Grants Management Common Rule) as the federal funding for this program falls under Social Services Block Grant.

Accordingly, the County of Westchester is hereby requesting authority to enter into an agreement with Family Ties of Westchester, Inc. for the aforesaid purpose.

An appropriate resolution requesting your Honorable Board's approval is attached herewith.

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACTS 12/11/2020 - JOAN LOCIAO, SECRETARY

