

George Latimer
County Executive

Department of Social Services

Kevin M. McGuire
Commissioner

80982

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 The Children's Village, Inc. ("Children's Village") pursuant to which Children's Village will provide a Multi Systemic Therapy ("MST") Program, a community-based intensive case management program for families with adolescents involved with Persons-In-Need of Supervision ("PINS") Diversion for the period from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021 for an amount not to exceed \$881,022.

Authorization is requested for the County of Westchester ("County") acting by and through its Department of Social Services ("the Department") to enter into an agreement with The Children's Village, Inc. ("Children's Village") pursuant to which Children's Village will provide a Multi Systemic Therapy ("MST") Program, a community-based intensive case management program for families with adolescents who are exhibiting truancy, academic problems, curfew non-compliance, non-compliance with directives at home and other anti-social behaviors for the period from January 1, 2021 through December 31, 2021, for an amount not to exceed \$881,022 to be paid on a monthly basis pursuant to an approved budget, and subject to appropriation.

The services to be provided pursuant to this agreement will serve a **public purpose** by focusing on the diversion and prevention of delinquency and youth crime and the social and moral well-being of the youth of Westchester. Chapter 57 (Part E), NYS Laws of 2005, established requirements concerning the provision of diversion services to prospective PINS youth and their families for the purpose of avoiding the need to file a petition or to divert the detention of the youth. In addition, Chapter 57 (Part DD), NYS Laws of 2008 established additional requirements regarding alternatives to diversion and detention services. The referrals will be made to this program by the Westchester County Cross Systems Unit.

The **goals and objectives of this agreement** will address youth behaviors that place them at risk of out-of-home placements. Youth referred to the program are often non-compliant with directives at home which place them at risk of abuse and neglect. Research reveals that childhood abuse and neglect increased a youth's likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 59%

(Maxfield & Widom, 1996; Widom, 1989, 1992, as cited in *Youth Involvement in the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems*, Morris & Freundlich, 2004). MST provided by Children's Village empowers parents and caregivers to take more control of their homes by creating a more, or sometimes less, structured environment. A Mutli-Systemic Therapist, trained to deliver the MST Program model, will focus on helping parents and guardians to become more consistent with parenting. Parents and guardians will learn to use their natural environment (other family members, church members, school personnel, adult supervised community centers) to meet and sustain treatment gains.

The goals and objectives of this Agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of public safety as the program is designed to reduce anti-social behavior and violent activities associated with those behaviors. Youth referred for MST typically exhibit truancy, curfew non-compliance and substance abuse. According to Ryan & Testa (2004), the rate of delinquency increases among youth removed from their homes and placed in foster care (as cited in *Youth Involvement in the Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice Systems*, Morris & Freundlich, 2004). The MST program is designed to work with youth exhibiting multiple behavior issues that place them at risk of out-of-home placements. The MST program will ensure the safety of the youth, their families and the community by reducing out-of-home placements and youth delinquency.

The goals and objectives of this Agreement 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 will incorporate the use of the youth's total environment in the resolution of anti-social behaviors that would impair the health of the youth, the family and the community. The program will allow the youth and the family to incorporate aspects of the youth's environment that prove to be beneficial to the youth's social, emotional, intellectual, mental, spiritual and physical well-being. The MST model will allow the infusion of extended family and concerned community members into the service plan for the benefit of the child and maintenance of the family system.

The goals and objectives of this agreement are in the best interest of the County in terms of fiscal responsibility as the program is expected to reduce the number of future foster care placements and the cost associated with those placements. This initiative will be a viable alternative to detention of PINS and will result in substantial savings for the County and taxpayers. Youth that receive services through evidence based programs such as MST will produce a cost/benefit for both the program participant and the County.

The goals and objectives will be tracked and monitored to evaluate the success of the program and to determine and verify outcomes realized by youth, their families and the community. Mutually established performance measurement indicators will be used to track and monitor the outcomes resulting in improved school attendance, reduced substance abuse, out-of-home placements, reduced anti-social behaviors and reduction in behaviors that lead to formal family court involvement.

Based on the Performance Measurement Indicators, the Department is able to report that to date, the program is meeting targets and outcomes as outlined in the current contract. Of the 58 youths and 58 families who received services, 96% of youth serviced experience a reduction in anti-social behaviors evident by no formal criminal charges.

This procurement of this agreement is exempt from the Westchester County Procurement Policy and Procedures pursuant to Section 3(a) xviii.

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 The Children's Village, Inc. for the aforesaid purpose.

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

APPROVED BOARD OF ACQUISITION & CONTRACT - 12/10/2020 - USA MRSAJ SECRETARY

