

RESTORATIVE YOUTH JUSTICE AND HEALING THE HOOD EVALUATION

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS

APRIL 2021



T H E C E N T E R

at Sierra Health Foundation

This funding opportunity is provided by The Center at Sierra Health Foundation with funding from the California Board of State and Community Corrections.

The Center at Sierra Health Foundation is an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization bringing people, ideas and infrastructure together to create a collective impact that reduces health disparities and improves community health for the underserved living in California.

For information about The Center, visit www.shfcenter.org.

READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS AND CRITERIA CAREFULLY

BACKGROUND

Sierra Health Foundation: Center for Health Program Management

Sierra Health Foundation: Center for Health Program Management (The Center) was founded by Sierra Health Foundation in 2012 as an independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. With offices in Sacramento and Fresno, The Center is dedicated to health and racial equity and racial justice in communities across California. Leveraging leadership, operational and funding support from Sierra Health Foundation and its partners, The Center establishes investment partnerships with public and private funders; community members; community organizations; national, state, and local government agencies; nonprofits and businesses to advance health equity and racial justice.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROGRAMS BEING EVALUATED

The Center is seeking an external evaluator to assess the implementation and effectiveness of two complementary programs charged with reducing overall community violence and diverting young people from justice system involvement: **Healing the Hood and Restorative Youth Justice**. Together, these programs form a continuum of culturally responsive services that engage youth through trusted community members and leverage long-standing organizational partnerships.

Healing the Hood

Healing the Hood (HTH) is a program designed to reduce gun violence in Sacramento County through prevention, intervention and crisis response services delivered in seven neighborhoods with disproportionately high rates of violent crime.¹ HTH is funded primarily through a grant from the California Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) Violence Intervention and Prevention (CalVIP) program that started in October 2020 and continues through December 2023.

HTH leverages the structure and resources of the Black Child Legacy Campaign (BCLC), which was created to reduce the disproportionate rates at which African American children die compared to all other children in Sacramento County. Both BCLC and HTH are managed by The Center and implemented through a network of seven trusted community-based organizations rooted in each neighborhood, known as *Community Incubator Leads (CILs)*. With a previous CalVIP grant, HTH created an infrastructure of organizations and street outreach workers to support youth vulnerable to gang involvement and gang violence and to engage in violence interruption activities using a crisis response protocol to de-escalate youth violence. During the current implementation cycle, HTH will serve at least 70 youth (ages 12-17).

¹ Neighborhoods served include (1) North Highlands/Foothill Farms, (2) Del Paso Heights/North Sacramento, (3) Arden Arcade, (4) Oak Park, (5) Fruitridge/Stockton Blvd., (6) Meadowview, and (7) Valley Hi.

HTH is an adaptation of a successful program run by the City of Los Angeles Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD). The approach follows the four components of the [Los Angeles Gang Reduction and Youth Development](#) (GRYD) model's Comprehensive Strategy: Community engagement, gang prevention, gang intervention and violence interruption. Youth are referred to CILs by school districts and Probation. Under the supervision of the CIL, Community Intervention Workers (CIWs) work with the youth. CIWs are trusted messengers with lived experience, who serve as case managers working closely with CBO partners and county social services staff who are out-stationed to the CILs. As part of the CIW's case management and initial intake assessment, enrolled youth are provided strength-based, family-centered services, including case plans as identified by youth, family and each CIL's multidisciplinary team. Services may include referrals or in-house services for mentoring, substance abuse treatment, parent support and education, basic needs assistance, crisis intervention, health services, employment and job training, life skills planning, mental health services, victim services and trauma-informed care.

HTH's violence interruption strategy is focused on reducing escalation after a violent incident involving youth. Multiple partners are engaged in these interrupting activities through the crisis response protocol, including law enforcement, CIL program coordinators and CIWs, Advance Peace Neighborhood Change Agents and hospital system social workers. Together, the HTH program elements are intended to wrap services around youth participants and their families, while also strengthening community capacity to address gang involvement and violence.

Restorative Youth Justice

The Restorative Youth Justice (RYJ) program is a policy priority of [MBK Sacramento Collaborative](#) and is funded by the BSCC Youth Reinvestment Grant program through September 2023. Building on the network of services created by BCLC and HTH, the RYJ program aims to divert 240 predominantly youth of color ages 10 to 17 who are at risk for juvenile justice system involvement to services to support positive youth development. The program will be implemented by the seven CILs serving their respective neighborhoods and by Folsom Cordova Community Partnership serving Rancho Cordova. These neighborhoods experience high rates of juvenile arrests and racial disparities. For example, of the 764 juvenile arrests in 2018, 53% were of African American (AA) youth. In the seven neighborhoods for which we have data, AA youth were eight times more likely to be arrested than other youth. In addition, AA youth in 2018 were five times more likely to be referred to probation and 16 times more likely to be detained than white youth per capita.

The Sacramento County Probation Department and other local law enforcement agencies will refer youth who have committed minor offenses with low-level citations and pre-arrest youth who would otherwise be given a citation for low-level offenses to the CILs and Folsom Cordova Community Partnership for RYJ services. Secondary referrals for prevention services will come from local school districts, community-based providers working on violence reduction and community members in the eight neighborhoods. The CILs and Folsom Cordova Community Partnership will assign eligible youth to Diversion Case Managers (DCMs) who will provide case management services, including connecting youth and their families to community resources and supports (e.g., housing, food assistance) as needed; connecting youth to positive youth development activities including mentoring programming, educational support and pro-social activities; and referring youth who need mental health support to

therapists to improve coping skills and violence reduction strategies through culturally rooted, trauma-informed cognitive behavioral therapy. The RYJ program complements and strengthens existing HTH efforts through mentoring, case management capacity and trauma-informed mental health support.

EVALUATION OVERVIEW

The Center is seeking an experienced team to conduct an evaluation of the Healing the Hood and Restorative Youth Justice programs described above. **The duration of this contract is 2.5 years, from July 2021 through December 2023.** The evaluation is intended to inform planning and implementation of the two programs to improve their effectiveness and provide accountability to the state funding agency.

Evaluation Questions

The overarching evaluation questions are the following:

1. Who is served by the Healing the Hood and Restorative Youth Justice programs?
 - a. What are the demographic characteristics of the youth served?
 - b. How do the characteristics of the youth served compare to the programs' intended populations?
 - c. Of the youth who participated in HTH or RYJ, what percent successfully completed their program?
2. What is the quality of the implementation of the HTH and RYJ programs? What are the facilitators and challenges to implementation of the HTH and RYJ programs?
3. To what extent do the HTH and/or RYJ programs contribute to the anticipated outcomes defined in the joint program logic model? What are the unintended outcomes of the programs, if any?
4. What implementation practices are associated with the successful completion of the HTH and/or RYJ program by youth?
5. What is the overall experience of youth participating in HTH and RYJ programming?

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Evaluators who apply to this opportunity are asked to present their best thinking about design and methodology, including any suggested revisions or additions to the evaluation questions, within the constraints of funding and the evaluation guidelines.

The selected evaluation team will have one to two months to finalize plans in consultation with The Center and technical assistance partners.

BUDGET AND TIMEFRAME

The duration of this contract is from July 2021 through December 2023. The total budget should not exceed \$200,000 inclusive of travel and expenses. See below for guidance on how to present the budget and budget narrative.

WORKING WITH THE CENTER

The Center will provide support in obtaining service tracking data from the funded partners. Currently, the CILs use an online case management database to track HTH youth participant information, including demographics, referrals and services/supports provided to youth, and youth assessments. The CILs and Folsom Cordova Community Partnership will use the database to track similar information for RYJ participants. The Center also receives biannual progress reports from the CILs to monitor project components at each CIL. Folsom Cordova Community Partnership will also be submitting a progress report. A BCLC technical assistance provider leads semi-annual site visits that assess multiple dimensions of implementation quality (such as youth engagement, community capacity-building, violence reduction strategies and others), with the results reported to The Center.

A previous assessment included a [crime and safety report](#) of changes in juvenile arrests, probation involvement and other crime and safety variables from 2016 to 2018 for seven of the eight neighborhoods. The Center is planning to add the eighth neighborhood to the analysis and, by 2023, we expect to have data through fiscal year 2021-22. This information would also be available to the external evaluation consultants.

The Center has a collaborative approach to working with external evaluation consultants. This involves regular communications to coordinate interactions with the funded partners, discuss evaluation activities, solve challenges encountered during the course of the evaluation, and generally work together so that the evaluation is useful and credible.

The Center uses the professional standards for evaluation articulated in documents such as the American Evaluation Association's *Statement on the Importance of Cultural Competency in Evaluation* and *Guiding Principles for Evaluators* and the Joint Committee's *Standards for Program Evaluation*.

ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION PROCESS

Eligible applicants are research institutions, universities, colleges, policy centers, and private and nonprofit consulting firms.

Selection Criteria

The most competitive applications (inclusive of responses to application questions, evaluation plan, staff resumes and other materials) will demonstrate:

- Commitment to racial justice and health equity, including a deep understanding of the social determinants of health and culturally responsive evaluation
- Experience conducting high quality evaluations of complex, systems change initiatives and multi-site initiatives, including working with local organizations with a range of capacities for data collection and data management
- Knowledge of evidence-based youth diversion programs, violence prevention or intervention programs or similar programs to reduce community violence
- Experience engaging youth in evaluation
- Experience presenting evaluation findings in multiple formats that appeal to a variety of audiences

Strongly preferred:

- Expertise evaluating violence prevention and intervention programs, youth diversion programs and youth development programs
- Familiarity with Sacramento County neighborhoods

Selection Process

Applications submitted by the deadline and meeting the application guidelines will be evaluated by the degree to which the criteria above are met, the qualifications of the proposed project team, completeness of the required elements, and feasibility and relevance of the proposed plans. Applicants with the most highly ranked proposals will be invited for an interview with the review team, which will include representatives of The Center's program and evaluation teams, and funded partner representatives.

The final selection will be based on the results of the interviews and approval of The Center.

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE GUIDELINES

The proposal narrative should detail your plan for responding to the evaluation questions listed above. The evaluator who is selected will work with The Center to finalize a detailed plan, schedule and budget during the first two months of the contract.

The proposal narrative should be no longer than 15 pages and should include the following elements.

Evaluation Questions

Indicate the priority you will assign to different questions at different points in time. Feel free to propose additional questions that you think will make the evaluation more useful or will increase its equity focus.

Evaluation Design

Describe the proposed design, including:

- Data collection sources and methods, and (1) the alignment of data collection plans with evaluation questions, (2) potential limitations of the data (for example, data quality and completeness), and (3) methods for storing and securing data. If individual-level data are being proposed, identify the procedures for protecting confidentiality
- Sampling plans
- Plans for youth engagement and data collection
- Analysis plans
- Rationale for methodological decisions, including consideration of how proposed methods reflect a commitment to racial justice and health equity and are culturally responsive
- Reporting plans (purpose, nature of the content, potential format(s)), including reports to staff of The Center and other audiences
- Proposed staff and their roles

Quality Control Strategies

Identify the strengths and weaknesses of the design with reference to the five categories of standards described in *The Program Evaluation Standards: Utility, Feasibility, Propriety, Accuracy, and Evaluation Accountability* (<https://evaluationstandards.org/program/>).²

Schedule and Deliverables

Provide an overall schedule of key evaluation activities and deliverables.

² Yarbrough, D. B., Shulha, L. M., Hopson, R. K., Caruthers, F. A. (Eds.), (2011). *The program evaluation standards: A guide for evaluators and evaluation users (3rd Edition)*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

BUDGET AND BUDGET NARRATIVE

The budget and budget narrative are not included in the 15-page limit for the evaluation design description.

Itemized Budget

The total budget should not exceed \$200,000 inclusive of travel and other expenses. Submit the budget using the template provided in the portal. If your personnel rates already include indirect, do not include personnel in calculating the indirect costs stated in the line item and indicate that personnel rates include indirect in the budget narrative.

Budget Narrative

Submit the budget narrative using the template provided in the portal. To complete it, type in the applicant name then use the gray space to provide a brief justification for each budget area. In no more than two pages, describe the bases for the estimated costs in the design and implementation phases. Include the hourly rates of each of the members of the evaluation team and their respective time requirements to this project, estimated travel expenses, and other operational expenses required to complete the proposed design and the implementation plan for the evaluation project.

OTHER REQUIRED APPLICATION ATTACHMENTS

In addition to (1) the proposal narrative, (2) the proposed budget completed in The Center's Proposed Budget Template (template available in the online portal) and (3) justification for the proposed budget, applicants must include the following attachments:

- Two- to three-page resumes for proposed evaluation team members
- Two to three work products that demonstrate qualifications – links to products may be provided instead of the work products themselves

APPLICATION TIMELINE AND GUIDELINES

At The Center's discretion, the timeline below is subject to change to best meet programmatic needs and funder requirements.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

May 10, 2021, at 1 p.m. (Pacific Time)

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS:

Mid May 2021

INTERVIEWS WITH FINALIST CANDIDATES:

Late May-early June 2021

CONTRACT FINALIZED:

Early July 2021

CONTRACT START DATE:

Early July 2021

To be considered, proposals must be submitted by 1 p.m. (Pacific Time) on the deadline date of May 10, 2021. Proposals received after the due date/time will not be reviewed. Submission before the deadline date is advised in case you experience technical difficulties with submitting your application through the portal. We may not be able to respond to your requests for help on the deadline date.

Incomplete applications will not be reviewed. Applications received after the above deadline will not be considered.

For technical assistance in submitting a grant application or using the online portal, please email centergrants@shfcenter.org.

Important Application Guidelines

To help us process your application, please follow these submission guidelines:

- We encourage you to submit your application before the deadline date in case you need help with the application process.
- Applications are due no later than 1 p.m. (Pacific Time) on May 10, 2021.
- Submit the application via our online portal through this [link](#). New users of the portal will need to create an account as the first step in the application process. You will only use this link one time to initiate your application. After you have started working on your application, use the link below or received via e-mail to continue working on your saved application.
- In the portal, for optimal functionality, use Internet Explorer as the browser when working on a PC and use Safari as the browser when working on a Mac. Do not use Google Chrome.
- Respond to all required fields (marked with an *).
- Upload all attachments listed under “Application Checklist” below.
- On the portal, you may click “Save & Finish Later.” You will receive an e-mail with a link to return to your in-progress application. You may also use this [link](#) to return to your in-progress application.
- Click “Save & Finish Later” any time you will not be working in your application for a few minutes.
- You may submit your application only once. Be sure your application is complete and accurate, including required documents, before submitting it. Revised applications will not be accepted.
- If you are unable to submit your application online or need help, please contact us at centergrants@shfcenter.org with the subject line: Application Online Help.

Send questions and inquiries related to the Restorative Youth Justice and Healing the Hood evaluation funding opportunity to eval@shfcenter.org with the subject line:
RYJ and HTH Eval RFP Question

Frequently Asked Questions will be posted on The Center's web site on the [MBK Sacramento web page](#) and the [Steering Committee on Reduction of African American Child Deaths web page](#).

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

□ Initiate the funding application online. The link also is posted on The Center's web site on the [MBK Sacramento web page](#) and the [Steering Committee on Reduction of African American Child Deaths web page](#).

□ **Required Application Attachments**

- Evaluation proposal narrative
- Brief resumes of proposed staff
- Proposed budget completed in The Center's [Proposed Budget Template](#) (template available in the online portal)
- [Proposed budget justification](#)
- Sample work products (can be submitted as links with brief descriptions in an attachment to the proposal, not included in the 15-page limit)

Incomplete applications and/or proposals will not be reviewed. Applications/proposals received after the above deadline will not be considered.

If you are unable to submit your application online or need help, please contact us at centergrants@shfcenter.org with the subject line: Application Online Help.