

**INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES**

**Request for Proposal to Provide:**

**Operation of Adoption Recruitment Services  
(Indiana Adoption Program)**

**Response Due Date:**

**March 27, 2015**

Reba James,  
Deputy Director, Permanency and Practice Support  
Indiana Department of Child Services  
302 W. Washington St., Room E306  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

## **SECTION ONE**

### **1.0 GENERAL INFORMATION AND REQUESTED PRODUCTS/SERVICES**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The Department of Child Services (DCS), in accordance with its State Plan requires multiple child welfare services in all 18 regions and 92 local offices. The regions and included counties are listed below. It is the intent of DCS to solicit responses to this Request for Proposals (RFP) in accordance with the statement of work, proposal preparation section, and specifications contained in this document.

This RFP is being posted to the DCS website ([www.in.gov/dcs/index.htm](http://www.in.gov/dcs/index.htm)) for downloading. Neither this RFP nor any response (proposal) submitted hereto are to be construed as a legal offer.

Region 1: Lake

Region 2: Jasper, LaPorte, Newton, Porter, Pulaski, Starke.

Region 3: Elkhart, Kosciusko, Marshall, St. Joseph.

Region 4: Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wells, Whitley.

Region 5: Benton, Warren, Fountain, White, Tippecanoe, Carroll, Clinton

Region 6: Cass, Fulton, Howard, Miami, Wabash.

Region 7: Blackford, Delaware, Grant, Jay, Randolph.

Region 8: Clay, Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion, Vigo.

Region 9: Montgomery, Putnam, Hendricks, Boone, Morgan.

Region 10: Marion

Region 11: Hamilton, Tipton, Madison, Hancock.

Region 12: Fayette, Franklin, Henry, Rush, Union, Wayne.

Region 13: Brown, Greene, Lawrence, Monroe, Owen.

Region 14: Bartholomew, Jackson, Jennings, Johnson, Shelby.

Region 15: Dearborn, Decatur, Jefferson, Ripley, Ohio, Switzerland.

Region 16: Gibson, Knox, Pike, Posey, Vanderburgh, Warrick

Region 17: Crawford, Daviess, Dubois, Martin, Orange, Perry, Spencer

Region 18: Clark, Floyd, Harrison, Scott, Washington

The overall goal is to assist DCS in achieving timely permanency for children in the foster care system awaiting adoption by carrying out the components outlined below in Section Four, Attachment B to recruit potential adoptive parents.

#### **1.2 PURPOSE OF THE RFP**

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The purpose of this RFP is to select a vendor that can satisfy the State's need for coordination/facilitation of the Adoption Recruitment Services. It is the intent of DCS to contract a vendor that provides quality facilitation services for the Indiana Adoption Program.

### **1.3 ELIGIBLE ENTITIES UNDER THIS PROGRAM:**

DCS expects the selected vendor to demonstrate and verify their experience and knowledge in child welfare, foster care, and adoption issues. The selected vendor is also expected to hire/subcontract with staff/agencies that are also sensitive to and knowledgeable about foster care and adoption issues.

### **1.4 SUMMARY SCOPE OF WORK**

The selected vendor will provide coordination/facilitation of the Indiana Adoption Program for the time July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017. It is the expectation of DCS that the selected vendor will not "reinvent the wheel" but build upon it and work with the existing database, supplies, and equipment including the current logo and branding for the Indiana Adoption Program.

### **1.5 SECRETARY OF STATE REGISTRATION**

If awarded the contract, the Respondent will be required to register with your legal name, and be in good standing, with the Secretary of State. The legal name must be used on all documents included in the proposal process. The registration requirement is applicable to all limited liability partnerships, limited partnerships, corporations, S-corporations, nonprofit corporations and limited liability companies. Information concerning registration with the Secretary of State may be obtained by contacting:

Secretary of State of Indiana  
Corporation Division  
402 West Washington Street, E018  
Indianapolis, IN 46204  
(317) 232-6576  
[www.in.gov/sos](http://www.in.gov/sos)

**Note:** When you complete the application, your agency's legal name must match your registered name with the Secretary of State. If it does not and your agency is selected for the contract, the contract will be delayed until this is resolved.

### **1.6 COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATION**

Responses to this RFP serve as a representation that the respondent has no current or outstanding criminal, civil, or enforcement actions initiated by the State, and it agrees that

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it will immediately notify the State of any such actions. The Respondent also certifies that neither it nor its principals are presently in arrears in payment of its taxes, permit fees or other statutory, regulatory or judicially required payments to the State. The Respondent agrees that the State may confirm, at any time, that no such liabilities exist. If such liabilities are discovered, the State may bar the Respondent from contracting with the State, cancel existing contracts, withhold payments to set off such obligations, and withhold further payments or purchases until the entity is current in its payments on its liability to the State and has submitted proof of such payment to the State.

**1.7 AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT**

The Respondent specifically agrees to comply with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq. and 47 U.S.C. 225).

**1.8 SUMMARY OF MILESTONES**

The following timeline is only an illustration of the RFP process. The dates associated with each step are not to be considered binding. Due to the unpredictable nature of the evaluation period, these dates are commonly subject to change. At the conclusion of the evaluation process, all Respondents will be informed of the evaluation team’s findings.

| Key RFP Dates: Activity   | Date  |
|---|---|
| Open for Bidding  | 1/30/2015                                       |
| Provider Questions Due  | 2/13/2015 First Round<br>3/6/15 Second Round    |
| Response to Questions Posted  | 2/27/2015 First Round<br>3/13/2015 Second Round |
| Deadline for Submission of Proposals  | 3/27/15   |
| The dates for the following activities are target dates only. These activities may be completed earlier or later than the date shown. |   |
| Proposal Evaluation   | 4/1-4/30/2015                                   |
| Notification of Awards  | 5/1/15  |
| Start Date of the Contract  | 7/1/2015  |
| End Date of the Contract  | 6/30/2017                                       |

**SECTION TWO  
PROPOSAL PREPARATION INSTRUCTIONS**

**2.1 GENERAL**

To facilitate the timely evaluation of proposals, a standard format for proposal submission has been developed and is described in this section. The proposal should be submitted to DCS in both hard copy format and on a compact disc or flash drive.

Each Program Proposal must include:

1. Application Cover Sheet
2. Provider Narrative: The Provider Narrative outline must be used (Attachment A-embedded). This portion of the proposal allows the applicant to provide detailed information about the overall agency.
3. Service Narrative: The Service Narrative should be written in response to the Service Deliverables (Attachment B-embedded). This portion of the proposal allows the applicant to provide specific information regarding the proposed service.
4. Budget: Two budget templates are required (Attachment C). One budget will show the proposed cost for Child Recruitment, Child and Family Matching Events, Family Recruitment, Data Collection, and Minority Adoptive Family Recruitment. The second budget will show the proposed cost and proposed rates for Initial and Updated Child Summaries.

**Note:** All payments shall be made in arrears in conformance with State fiscal policies and procedures and, as required by IC 4-13-2-14.8, by electronic funds transfer to the financial institution designated by the Contractor in writing unless a specific waiver has been obtained from the Indiana Auditor of State. No payments will be made in advance of receipt of the goods or services that are the subject of this Contract except as permitted by IC 4-13-2-20.

Prior to submitting the proposal, it is vital that the proposal be reviewed to ensure that all required information is included.

Proposal cannot be submitted without the required application cover sheet, program narrative, service narrative, and budget. All proposals must be submitted in their entirety no later than the date listed on the RFP or post marked no later than the date listed on the RFP.

The proposal should be signed by a person authorized to commit the Respondent to its representation and who can certify that the information offered in the proposal meets all general conditions.

## **2.2 PROVIDER NARRATIVE AND SERVICE NARRATIVE**

The Provider Narrative (Attachment A) and Service Narrative (Attachment B) must utilize the provided outlines. The Provider Narrative will include information specific to

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the agency as a whole. The Service Narrative should be written in response to the Service Deliverables detailing how the agency is proposing to execute the requested services. Proposals must demonstrate the organizational and procedural structure necessary to deliver the services proposed.

### **2.3 BUDGET**

This section should include a budget (Attachment C) that is reasonable and necessary for the proposed activities outlined in the Service Deliverables (Attachment B).

**The state is expecting creative yet realistic cost saving solutions from all Respondents in an effort to distinguish the best partner to select.**

### **2.4 PROPOSAL SUBMISSIONS**

**All proposals must be submitted on or before March 27, 2015**

Proposals must be postmarked no later than March 27, 2015 and mailed to:

ATTN: Adoption Recruitment Services Proposal

Indiana Department of Child Services  
Permanency and Practice Support  
Room E306, MS47  
302 West Washington Street  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

**Proposals received in person or mailed with a postmark after March 27, 2015 will not be considered.**

## **2.5 QUESTION/INQUIRY PROCESS**

All questions/inquiries regarding this RFP must be submitted via email to: **dcs.childwelfareplan@dcs.in.gov** by the deadline of **5 p.m. Eastern Time** on **2/13/2015**.

Following the question/inquiry due date, the Department of Child Services personnel will compile a list of the questions/inquiries submitted by Respondents.

The responses will be posted to the Department of Child Services website according to the Proposal timetable established in Section 1.8. Only answers posted on the Department of Child Services website at [www.in.gov/dcs](http://www.in.gov/dcs) will be considered official and valid by the State. No Respondent shall rely upon, take any action, or make any decision based upon any verbal communication with any State employee.

If it becomes necessary to revise any part of this RFP, or if additional information is necessary for a clearer interpretation of provisions of this RFP prior to the due date for proposals, an addendum will be posted on the Department of Child Services website. If such addenda issuance is necessary, the Department of Child Services may extend the due date and time of proposals to accommodate such additional information requirements, if required.

## **2.6 PROPOSAL CLARIFICATIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND CONTRACT DISCUSSIONS**

The State reserves the right to request clarifications on proposals submitted to the State. The State also reserves the right to conduct proposal discussions, either oral or written, with Respondents. These discussions could include request for additional information, request for cost or technical proposal revision, etc.

Additionally, in conducting discussions, the State may use information derived from proposals submitted by competing respondents only if the identity of the respondent providing the information is not disclosed to others. The State will provide equivalent information to all respondents which have been chosen for discussions. Discussions, along with negotiations with responsible respondents may be conducted for any appropriate purpose.

The Department of Child Services or its appointed representatives will initiate and facilitate all discussions. Any information gathered through oral discussions must be confirmed in writing.

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A sample contract is provided in Attachment F. Any requested changes to the sample contract must be submitted with your response. The state reserves the right to reject any of these requested changes. It is the State's expectation that any material elements of the contract will be substantially finalized prior to contract award.

## **2.7 TYPE AND TERM OF CONTRACT**

The term of the contract shall be for a period of 24 months, beginning **July 1, 2015, and ending June 30, 2017**. The state may exercise the option to extend the contract for up to two years, for a total contract term of no more than four years.

## **2.8 CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION**

Respondents are advised that materials contained in proposals are subject to the Access to Public Records Act (APRA), IC 5-14-3 et seq., and, after the contract award, the entire RFP file may be viewed and copied by any member of the public, including news agencies and competitors. Respondents claiming a statutory exception to the APRA must place all confidential documents (including the requisite number of copies) in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Confidential" and must indicate on the outside of that envelope that confidential materials are included. The Respondent must also specify the statutory exception of APRA that applies. The State reserves the right to make determinations of confidentiality. If the Respondent does not identify the statutory exception, DCS will not consider the submission confidential. If the State does not agree that the information designated is confidential under one of the disclosure exceptions to APRA, it may seek the opinion of the General Counsel for the Department of Child Services. Prices are not confidential information.

# **SECTION THREE**

## **3.0 GENERAL (OPTIONAL)**

This section of the proposal may be used to introduce or summarize any information the Respondent deems relevant or important to the State's successful acquisition of the products and/or services requested in this RFP. This section should be no longer than two pages.

**SECTION FOUR**

**EMBEDDED ATTACHMENTS**

**ATTACHMENT A**

**PROVIDER NARRATIVE  
ADOPTION RECRUITMENT SERVICES  
Indiana Adoption Program**

**Agency Name:**

**Agency Director:**

**Agency Contact for purposes of this RFP:**

**Name:**

**Phone:**

**Email:**

**Agency Address:**

**Agency Phone:**

**Service Deliverables: Adoption Recruitment Services**

**Region/Counties to be served: 92 Counties/18 Regions**

**PROVIDER NARRATIVE (Maximum 3 pages)**

Respondents should only submit one Provider Narrative per proposal. The Provider Narrative must address the following topics:

**GENERAL PROGRAM/SERVICE TITLE**

This section should cover all important history and development of the organization to date, along with the organizational chart including Board of Directors and any other affiliates. This section of the narrative should also be used to cover all important

(v.2)

organizational history and your agency's history and ability to deliver Indiana Adoption Program services throughout the state. Include the program name.

## **HISTORY OF QUALITY SERVICES**

This section should document that the agency/provider historically has had an acceptable working relationship with the local DCS or other community agencies, if there is no prior relationship with the DCS. Respondent should document the agency/providers knowledge of child welfare issues and adoption.

## **ATTACHMENT B**

### **SERVICE DELIVERABLES ADOPTION RECRUITMENT SERVICES**

***Instructions:*** Please respond to the items under each heading listed below and indicate any attachments that have been included.

DCS expects the selected vendor to be *experienced and knowledgeable* in child welfare, foster care, and adoption issues. DCS expects the selected vendor to hire/subcontract with staff/agencies that are also sensitive to and knowledgeable about foster care and adoption issues.

The overall goal is to assist DCS in achieving timely permanency for children in the foster care system awaiting adoption by carrying out the below components to recruit potential adoptive parents.

The selected vendor must collaborate with community resources (i.e. staff at local offices of DCS, the Heart Gallery contractor, foster parents, mental health agencies, schools, etc) in an effort to increase the effectiveness and appropriateness of service without duplicating services. This joint effort will help to develop the regional emphasis on recruiting adoptive parents. It will be important that all providers work within the structure and needs of each DCS region (as listed above in section 1.1). Community resources and recruited families should reflect the metropolitan and rural cultural norms of each region.

The selected vendor is expected to collaborate and coordinate services for a seamless provision of services across the state.

All information used for recruitment will be provided by DCS. The information for child specific recruitment will be provided by DCS.

**Proposals should specifically indicate how each of the following service areas will be addressed and how the respondent's approach will meet the Department's goals.**

**The components of the service are:**

**I. Child Recruitment:**

**Picture Book:**

- The selected vendor must produce 6 picture books within 12 months, based on the existing *Opening Hearts Changing Lives* Picture Book. The contractor will be responsible for:
  - Production of the picture book, including publication, distribution, postage, and any changes to the format or information included in the book;
    - The picture book should be produced every other month.
  - Soliciting donated art work for the covers of each picture book;
    - The vendor should encourage youth currently in the foster system, or that have a history with the foster care system, to create artwork for the cover.
  - Maintaining an electronic version of picture book to be made available via email if requested;
  - Coordinating, by request, child recruitment photo taking, including meeting the child, taking and editing the picture. Otherwise, coordinate receiving pictures of the children to be included in the picture book.

**Videotaping:**

- The selected vendor will be responsible for coordination of videotaping of children, including working with the Special Needs Adoption Program Specialist (SNAPS) and/or Family Case Manager (FCM) to schedule videotaping, filming, editing and preparing video to be uploaded to AdoptUSkids website or other media events.
- The vendor is also responsible for prepping the child for videotaping.
- DCS expects 25 children to be videotaped within 12 months.
  - Taping should occur throughout the year to ensure videos of adoptable children are available.

**II. Child and Family Matching Events:**

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**SNAP Specialists hold 7 Child and Family Matching events annually. These events include bringing families and adoptable children together to allow them to interact in a non-threatening, fun atmosphere. For example, one event included carnival games where the potential adoptive parents ran the games and the adoptable children enjoyed playing the games.**

The selected vendor will:

- Provide support to SNAP Specialist for at least seven (7) Child and Family Matching Events each year by:
  - Securing event sites, food, prizes, and other items necessary to carry out the event;
    - DCS will reimburse for actual costs of these items.
    - DCS expects that the vendor will exhaust any and all resources for donated material and supplies (and track efforts) before making any purchases.
  - Providing adequate staff (up to three (3) staffers) for each Matching Event.
- Coordinate with SNAP Specialists to produce invitations and flyers for events to attract families and FCMs.

### **III. Family Recruitment:**

**Adoption Champions (ACs) are regionally based individuals who hold public awareness events to educate the community on adoption, in an effort to increase the number of potential adoptive parents.**

- The selected vendor must maintain the equivalent of 18 part time (approx 20 hours per week) Adoption Champions to be located regionally.
- Adoption Champions should be knowledgeable of the Indiana adoption system so they can answer questions from prospective adoptive families. Typically ACs have a personal connection to adoption.
- Adoption Champions will conduct educational/informational events to interested parties and the general public about adoption.
  - At least one adoption educational presentation will occur per quarter.
  - An event will occur in November to celebrate National Adoption Month.
  - Adoption Champions will have informational packets approved by DCS at each presentation to give to attendees that are considering adoption.
  - Each event will have a sign-in sheet that will be forwarded to the Adoption Manager or designee.

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- The vendor must coordinate with Regional Foster Care Licensing Specialists, and Heart Gallery, to recruit for shared events.
- The selected vendor will have to secure opportunities for educational/informational events (invited and/or pursued).
- The selected vendor must coordinate logistics of events, including securing space, inviting guests, publicizing the event, and printing informational packets.

#### **IV. Data Collection:**

##### **Database:**

- The selected vendor must maintain the existing database used by SNAPS, DCS staff and providers.
- Database must be accessible on the Internet through a secure website.
- The selected vendor must monitor and provide all database daily maintenance, IT assistance and database enhancements as needed/requested.
- The selected vendor must maintain web-hosting of the site.
- Vendor data entry will include:
  - Entering inquiries on children waiting for adoption;
  - Enter and track which children are registered on the AdoptUSkids website;
  - Enter updated pictures that are posted on AdoptUSkids website and in the picture book, and information for children.

#### **V. Minority Adoptive Family Recruitment:**

The selected vendor will develop a Minority Adoptive Family Recruitment campaign aimed at recruiting more families of color. Recruitment activities should include but not be limited to adoption educational presentations, by Adoption Champions, at churches, civic organizations, and community groups each with a high percentage of membership of color. These presentations should include child specific aspects so the membership sees actual children who are awaiting adoption in Indiana.

## **VI. Child Summary Completions:**

The selected vendor, upon referral from SNAPS, shall complete child social summaries and child social summary updates for children in need of adoptive homes in Indiana in accordance with the Child Summary Protocol outlined below.

(1) The Special Needs Adoption Program (SNAP) Specialist or DCS' Family Case Manager (FCM) will make referrals to the designated agency case manager/social worker (CM/SW) via e-mail. The referral will consist of the name, address, date of birth, county of wardship, and county of placement of the youth needing a child summary or an updated child summary. The county DCS' Director and FCM of the child will also be included in said e-mail. The physical address, e-mail, and phone number of the SNAP Specialist and FCM is requested.

(2) The CM/SW will make an attempt to contact the FCM within two (2) business days of receipt of the referral either via e-mail or telephone to arrange a time to come to the DCS' office to review the child's case file within seven (7) business days. A copy of the e-mail will be sent to the county DCS' Director and SNAP Specialist or FCM that made the referral.

(3) The original file is to remain in the DCS' office at all times. Copies may be made as appropriate.

(4) The DCS' FCM will inform the current caregivers of the child's participation in the project.

(5) Within five (5) days of review of the file, the CM/SW will also make arrangements with the current caregiver to meet with the child face to face. It is not a requirement for the FCM to be at this meeting. If access to the child(ren) has not been granted in ten (10) business days, the referring party will be notified.

(6) The CM/SW will use the attached format and protocol to write the child summary/summary update for the child within thirty (30) days from the initial meeting with the child. Sign off for child summaries/summary updates will require the signature of the CM/SW and agency supervisor.

(7) The child summary/summary update will be electronically sent to the FCM and SNAP Specialist in draft form. The FCM and/or SNAP Specialist will make comments/suggestions to the CM/SW within seven (7) business days of the date of receipt. All agreed upon changes will be completed by the CM/SW within seven (7)

(v.2)

business says subsequent to the discussion between the CM/SW, SNAP Specialist, and/or FCM.

## **VII. Contract Implementation and Review:**

The selected vendor is expected to begin services immediately upon execution of the contract. After the first 90 days of the contract period, an onsite review will be conducted at the selected vendor's main office by the DCS Adoption Program Manager (or their designee). The onsite review will include a review of the implementation of services and the results of the implementation. Subsequent reviews will take place no less than semi-annually and no more than quarterly. Each review will include county demographics, analysis and interpretation of outcome data, followed by a review of agency characteristics, workforce, resources, technological capacities and related information. If it is determined through review by the Adoption Program Manager that the vendor has not improved the recruitment of potential adoptive families, the Adoption Program Manager will determine what contract/program revisions need to be made.

## **VIII. Outcomes:**

During the length of the contract, quarterly reports will be provided to the state from the vendor, stating the:

- Number of outreach events to the community through Adoption Champion efforts, tracked by region.
- Number of adoptive families who became SNAP recommended who were recruited through the vendor's efforts, tracked by region.
- Number of child specific videotape referrals and completions, tracked by region.
- Assistance given to SNAP Specialists with Match events: expenditures, donations, and any media assistance, tracked by region and by SNAP.
- Number of picture taking requests and processing timeline to completion, tracked by region.
- Enhancements and maintenance completed on the database, tracked by request with time of completion.
- Number of Child Social Summary Referrals received and completed, tracked by county and region.

Data will be collected in a prescribed format to be determined by DCS

## IX. DCS Expects:

- The selected vendor to be culturally sensitive to not only the youth for whom we are recruiting, but be culturally sensitive to various geographic areas where recruitment and educational events are held. These events should be held at various and diverse locations all over the state.
- If the proponent chooses to use a dedicated person as the Coordinator/Director for the Indiana Adoption Program, then said person's resume must be included in the proposal.
- If the proponent chooses to use an entity to assume the Coordinator/Director functions, the resumes of those working on this project must be included in this proposal.
- **Adherence to the DCS Practice Model:** Services must be provided according to the Indiana Practice Model, providers will build trust based relationships with families and partners by exhibiting empathy, professionalism, genuineness and respect. Providers will use the skills of engaging, teaming, assessing, planning and intervening to partner with families and the community to achieve better outcomes for children. Permanency for children should be given priority consideration.
- **Trauma Informed Care:** Provider must develop a core competency in Trauma Informed Care as defined by the National Center for Trauma Informed Care (NCTIC) —SAMHSA (<http://www.samhsa.gov/nctic/>): Trauma-informed care is an approach to engaging people with histories of trauma that recognizes the presence of trauma symptoms and acknowledges the role that trauma has played in their lives. NCTIC facilitates the adoption of trauma-informed environments in the delivery of a broad range of services including mental health, substance use, housing, vocational or employment support, domestic violence and victim assistance, and peer support. In all of these environments, NCTIC seeks to change the paradigm from one that asks, "What's wrong with you?" to one that asks, "What has happened to you?" When a human service program takes the step to become trauma-informed, every part of its organization, management, and service delivery system is assessed and potentially modified to include a basic understanding of how trauma affects the life of an individual seeking services. Trauma-informed organizations, programs, and services are based on an understanding of the vulnerabilities or triggers of trauma survivors that traditional service delivery approaches may exacerbate, so that these services and programs can be more supportive and avoid re-traumatization.
- **Trauma Specific Interventions (modified from the SAMHSA definition):**
  - The services will be delivered in such a way that the clients/families feel respected, informed, connected, and hopeful regarding their own future.

- The provider must demonstrate an understanding, through the services provided, of the interrelation between trauma and symptoms of trauma (e.g., substance abuse, eating disorders, depression, and anxiety).
- The provider will work in a collaborative way with child/family, extended family and friends, and other human services agencies in a manner that will empower child/family.
- **Cultural and Religious Competence:**
  - Provider must respect the culture of the children and families for whom provides services.
  - All staff persons who come in contact with the family must be aware of and sensitive to the child's cultural, ethnic, and linguistic differences. All staff also must be aware of and sensitive to the sexual and/or gender orientation of the child, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning (LGBTQ) children/youth. Services to youth who identify as LGBTQ must also be provided in accordance with the principles in the Indiana LGBTQ Practice Guidebook. Staff will use neutral language, facilitate a trust based environment for disclosure, and will maintain appropriate confidentiality for LGBTQ youth. The guidebook can be found at: <http://www.in.gov/dcs/files/GuidebookforBestPracticeswithLGBTQYouth.pdf>
  - Efforts must be made to employ or have access to staff and/or volunteers who are representative of the community served in order to minimize any barriers that may exist. Contractor must have a plan for developing and maintaining the cultural competence of their programs, including the recruitment, development, and training of staff, volunteers, and others as appropriate to the program or service type; treatment approaches and models; and the use of appropriate community resources and informal networks that support cultural connections.
- **Child Safety:** Services must be provided in accordance with the Principles of Child Welfare Services. Please note: All services (even individual services) are provided through the lens of child safety. As part of service provision, it is the responsibility of the service provider to understand the child safety concerns and protective factors that exist within the family. Continual assessment of child safety and communication with DCS is required. It is the responsibility of the service provider to report any safety concerns, per state statute, IC 31-33-5-1. All service plans should include goals that address issues of child safety and the family's protective factors. The monthly reports must outline progress towards goals identified in the service plans.

## SECTION FIVE

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## **PROPOSAL EVALUATION**

### **5.1 PROPOSAL EVALUATION PROCEDURE**

The State will select a group of personnel to act as a proposal evaluation team. Subgroups of this team, consisting of one or more team members, will be responsible for evaluating proposals with regard to compliance with RFP requirements. All evaluation personnel will use the evaluation criteria stated in Section 4.2. The Department of Child Services designee will, in the exercise of sole discretion, determine which proposals offer the best means of servicing the interests of the State. The procedure for evaluating the proposals against the evaluation criteria will be as follows:

1. Each proposal will be evaluated for adherence to requirements and Assurances on a pass/fail basis. Proposals that are incomplete or otherwise do not conform to proposal submission requirements may be eliminated from consideration.
2. Each proposal will be evaluated on the basis of the categories included in Section 2.1. A point score has been established for each category.
3. If Service Deliverables proposals are close to equal, greater weight may be given to price.
4. Based on the results of this evaluation, the qualifying proposal determined to be the most advantageous to the State, taking into account all of the evaluation factors, may be selected by the Department of Child Services for further action, such as contract negotiations. If, however, the Department of Child Services decides that no proposal is sufficiently advantageous to the State, the State may take whatever further action is deemed necessary to fulfill its needs. If, for any reason, a proposal is selected and it is not possible to consummate a contract with the Respondent, the Department of Child Services may begin contract preparation with the next qualified Respondent or determine that no such alternate proposal exists. The State may also choose multiple respondents to provide services.

### **5.2 EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Proposals will be evaluated based upon the proven ability of the Respondent to satisfy the requirements of the RFP in a cost-effective manner. Each of the evaluation criteria categories is described below with a brief explanation of the basis for evaluation in that category. The points associated with each category are indicated following the category name (total maximum points = 25). If any one or more of the listed criteria on which the responses to this RFP will be evaluated are found to be inconsistent or incompatible with applicable federal laws, regulations or policies, the specific criterion or criteria will be disregarded and the responses will be evaluated and scored without taking into account such criterion or criteria.

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| <b>Summary of Evaluation Criteria: Criteria</b>  | <b>Points</b> |
|--|---------------|
| A. Adherence to mandatory requirements - includes responses regarding sections 1.5, 1.7, Assurances (Attachment D) using proper format, addressing every section | Pass/Fail     |
| B. History of Quality Services   | 5 points      |
| C. Program Name/Service Standard & Intake/ Referral Process  | 5 Points      |
| D. Service Demographics  | 5 points      |
| E. Practice Model  | 5 points      |
| F. Program Evaluation  | 5 points      |
| G. Cost  | 5 points      |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>30</b>     |

All proposals will be evaluated using the following approach.

Step 1

In this step proposals will be evaluated only against Criteria A to ensure that they adhere to Mandatory Requirements, followed instructions and standard format, and inclusion of a budget. Any proposal not meeting the Mandatory Requirements, Certification Statement and Assurances will be disqualified.

Step 2

The proposals that meet the Mandatory Requirements and Assurances will then be scored based on Criteria B, C, D, E, F, and G ONLY. This scoring will have a maximum possible score of 30 points. All proposals will be ranked on the basis of their combined scores for Criteria B, C, D, E, F, and G ONLY. Step 2 may include one or more rounds of proposal discussions focused on cost and other proposal elements.

The Department of Child Services designee will, in the exercise of sole discretion, determine which proposal(s) offer the best means of servicing the interests of the State. The exercise of this discretion will be final. DCS reserves the right to contract with multiple respondents for the same service within the same region and local office.

## **SECTION SIX AWARD INFORMATION**

### **6.1 Selection Process**

Award will be competitively selected and issued in an amount adequate to meeting the Program goals and objectives.

### **6.2 Notice of Award**

Each applicant will receive written notification of the outcome of the selection process. The applicant selected for funding may be required to respond to special conditions placed on their application before funding can proceed. Letters of notification do not provide authorization to begin work under the Program.

### **6.3 Other**

If contracts are awarded, the following items will be required by DCS to be submitted:  
Reports (Attachment H-external sample Monthly/Quarterly)  
Exhibit 1-Background Checks (Attachment E- external) (Submit either at the signing of the contract or within (30) days of the start date of the contract.)

### **6.4 Reports (Attachment H- external)**

Providers will be required to prepare, maintain, and provide any statistical reports, program reports, other reports, or other information as required by DCS relating to the service providers. Attachment H is a *sample* report form, but format and content will be negotiated with the selected vendor when the contract is awarded.

### **6.5 Exhibit 1-Background Checks (Attachment E-external)**

It is a requirement of the contract that any person considered as “Covered” must obtain a background check. “Covered” personnel is defined as staff who have direct contact with children or staff who have direct contact with children’s records.

## **SECTION SEVEN**

### **EXTERNAL ATTACHMENTS**

|              |                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| Attachment   | Application Cover Sheet            |
| Attachment C | Budget Templates                   |
| Attachment D | Assurances                         |
| Attachment E | Background Checks<br>Exhibit 1     |
| Attachment F | Sample Contract                    |
| Attachment G | Proposal Scoring Tool              |
| Attachment H | Quarterly Report Template (sample) |