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| StateSeal.JPG | **RFP-23-73695 –System Point of Entry (SPOE)**  **Attachment F – Technical Proposal Template** | |
| **Respondent:** | | 1st Kids, Inc. |
| **Region(s):** | | A,B,C,D |
| **Instructions:**  Request for Proposal (RFP) 23-73695 is a solicitation by the State of Indiana in which organizations are invited to compete for a contract amongst other respondents in a formal evaluation process. Please be aware that the evaluation of your organization’s proposal will be completed by a team of State of Indiana employees and your organization’s score will be reflective of that evaluation. The evaluation of a proposal can only be based upon the information provided by the Respondent in its proposal submission. Therefore, a competitive proposal will thoroughly answer the questions listed. The Respondent is expected to provide the complete details of its proposed operations, processes, and staffing for the Scope of Work detailed in the RFP document and supplemental attachments. Respondents can submit one Technical Proposal for all regions they are bidding on. To the extent the Respondent utilizes different practices, structure, or procedures in different regions, please ensure that information is included in both Section 1 and wherever else applicable.  Please review the requirements in Attachment K, Scope of Work (SoW), carefully. Please describe your relevant experience and explain how you propose to perform the work. For all areas in which subcontractors will be performing a portion of the work, clearly describe their roles and responsibilities, related qualifications and experience, and how you will maintain oversight of the subcontractors’ activities.  Please use the yellow shaded fields to indicate your answers to the following questions. The yellow fields will automatically expand to accommodate content. Every attempt should be made to preserve the original format of this form. **A completed Technical Proposal is a requirement for proposal submission. Failure to complete and submit this form may impact your proposal’s responsiveness.** Diagrams, certificates, graphics, and other exhibits should be referenced within the relevant answer field and included as legible attachments. | | |

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| **1** | **SoW Sections I, II, III, IV, and V Introduction, Goals and Background, and Mandatory Respondent Qualifications/Exclusions to Bid**  Provide an overview of your proposal and describe how you currently meet and/or propose to meet the requirements in SoW Sections I, II, III, IV, and V including, but not limited to, the specific elements highlighted below:   * Describe why you are best suited to provide these services to the State. * Describe any notable accomplishments for your company you feel would be relevant to this proposal. * Provide an executive summary of your proposed approach to deliver the Scope of Work and at a high level, demonstrate your understanding of the SPOE’s program goals. * Describe and demonstrate your familiarity and experience with Indiana’s Bureau of Child Development Services First Steps program, including the federal and State policy governing this program. * Describe your experience providing case management services for early intervention or related programs, including any experience specific to providing services for children. * Describe any region-specific practices you will employ for each region you are bidding on. * Describe any region-to-region differences in your operations, structure, or procedures. * Describe how you meet and/or adhere to each of the Mandatory Respondent Qualifications/Exclusions to Bid. |
| * **Describe why you are best suited to provide these services to the State**.   1st Kids team members began working with the State of Indiana as a contractor for the SPOE and LPCC in 1996 as the System Point of Entry (SPOE) system was introduced in Indiana. Over the years 1st Kids expanded from serving just Lake County to serving the thirty-five counties located in First Steps Regions A, B, C and D. These many years of experience provide not only a tremendous amount of history but an ability to use perspective gained from past experience to inform future program planning, development and implementation. While much has evolved over the years, the shared commitment of partnering with the State and Division of Disability and Rehabilitative Services (DDRS) to serve the children and families of Indiana has remained steadfast.  1st Kids team members have and continue to invest time and effort toward the implementation of the EI HUB system. The consistency of maintaining 1st Kids as the administrator of the SPOE and LPCC programs in regions A, B, C and D will ensure continuity of services for children and families.  1st Kids is honored to provide support and guidance to families as they navigate the world of early intervention. An understanding of the long-term impact of early intervention motivates our team to best serve families and children. The importance of maximizing opportunities during the period of rapid brain development that occurs between birth and age three inspires our team to maximize opportunities for the children and families we serve. 1st Kids is eager to continue to work with the State to further implement innovative practices such as LIFE Course and Family-Guided Routines-Based Intervention (FGRBI). These practices allow early intervention providers to better support families during their time in the First Steps program as well as position them for continued success.  The collaborative effort of all of the First Steps regions we currently serve allows 1st Kids to successfully administer the SPOE and Local Planning and Coordinating Councils (LPCC) in regions A, B, C and D. The ability to share resources (both material and cognitive) creates the opportunity to deliver consistent quality services to children and families. Our experience in working in both urban and rural environments allows us to use past experience to quickly respond to unique needs of differing geographic areas.   * **Describe any notable accomplishments for your company you feel would be relevant to this proposal.**   1st Kids is a well-respected social service agency that has grown to serve all of northern Indiana while developing strong partnerships with First Steps provider agencies, schools, physicians, hospitals and other social service programs. 1st Kids First Steps LPCC staff have participated in a number of community councils and boards including the DDRS Policy Council. This activity allows for the active sharing of information and opportunities for both organizations and families.   * **Provide an executive summary of your proposed approach to deliver the Scope of Work and at a high level, demonstrate your understanding of the SPOE’s program goals**   1st Kids is uniquely positioned to fulfill the requirements of the Scope of Work to execute the management of the First Steps program in regions A, B, C and D. 1st Kids’ size allows the organization to be responsive to the unique needs of the thirty-five (35) counties contained in the four regions. 1st Kids will maintain a physical presence in regions A, B, C and D. The physical offices will be in place to offer support to employees through onsite training and development, collaboration and teaming. The onsite locations will also serve as an option for families to meet with their service coordinator as they learn about the First Steps system. 1st Kids will maintain leadership and support staff in each region to ensure our staff have the resources they need to effectively serve children and families. Every family will be assigned a service coordinator who will guide them through the early intervention system while providing support and opportunities to access additional resources and advocate for their child. 1st Kids will continue to coordinate a Local Planning Coordinating Council (LPCC) and LPCC Coordinator(s) in each region. The LPCCs will provide opportunities for families, community partners and First Steps provider agencies to come together to collaboratively address the needs of children and families in each community. 1st Kids will continue to foster positive relationships with Local schools to ensure transition activities are completed in compliance with State and Federal regulations. 1st Kids will continue to work with Head Start and other community programs to allow families the opportunity to transition to appropriate programming following the child’s third birthday.  1st Kids understands the importance of providing services as early and as quickly as possible to very young children. The window of opportunity is small in the birth to three population, but the potential impact is tremendous. 1st Kids is committed to ensuring every eligible child has the opportunity to benefit from early intervention services.   * **Describe and demonstrate your familiarity and experience with Indiana’s Bureau of Child Development Services First Steps program, including the federal and State policy governing this program.**   1st Kids and its employees have worked with the State of Indiana since the inception of the SPOE system in Indiana. The 1st Kids Executive Director began working with the State staff during the development stage of the system and was part of the “Phase 1” implementation group. This historical experience provides 1st Kids with unique perspective and insight as the First Steps program continues to evolve and improve. 1st Kids staff at the executive level and at each regional level maintains a strong positive collaborative relationship with State and BCDS staff. 1st Kids staff has actively volunteered and participated in partnership with State staff and other contractors in key stakeholder groups identified throughout the years to advance the development of the First Steps program and ultimately improve the experience of the family and those working in the system. 1st Kids is committed to continuing to work in a collaborative effort with State staff, BCDS staff as well as other SPOE, training and technology contractors.  1st Kids staff have understanding of IDEA and are able to use this knowledge to successfully guide families through the First Steps system while assisting families in accessing BCDS and other support services.  1st Kids staff actively participate in annual Quality Review activities administered by Indiana University and State staff. This process provides tremendous feedback regarding overall performance in each region with targeted attention to Annual Performance Report (APR) indicators reported to OSEP. Continual review, monitoring and evaluation of these indicators ensures quality services are delivered to children and families.1st Kids reviews results received through Quality Review reports. This information is shared with local SPOE leadership and staff, LPCC staff and Oversight committees. The information received also informs training and development needs that are addressed at each regional SPOE. 1st Kids staff also review the State Annual Performance Report to ensure consistency in the focus and effort between the State and local level.   * **Describe your experience case management services for early intervention or related programs, including any experience specific to providing services for children.**   1st Kids team members have worked as a partner with the State of Indiana since 1996 to provide service coordination services to First Steps early intervention participants. While processes and systems have changed and improved, our commitment to providing quality services through the years is fundamentally based in adhering to IDEA Part C and Indiana State Rule.  Service Coordination services, which are a mandate of IDEA Part C, are delivered to every family by a qualified service provider with the training and experience necessary to meet Indiana First Steps credentialing requirements. 1st Kids service coordinators ensure that infants and toddlers and their families receive required procedural safeguard rights and services. Each family’s assigned service coordinator acts as the single point of contact tasked with ensuring access to and the coordination of early intervention services as well as the coordination of other needed services.  Service Coordination is a continuous process that requires the coordination of:   * initial and ongoing evaluations and assessment * Development and subsequent review of initial and ongoing evaluation and Individualized Family Service Plans (IFSPs) * Coordination, facilitating and monitoring of the delivery of services written on the IFSP * Coordination of transition activities to special education preschool services, head start or other services as appropriate * Ongoing provision and adherence to procedural safeguards and rights   The service coordinator is the core of the early intervention system. The successful delivery of service coordination services is essential to the overall success of every child and family’s early intervention experience.   * **Describe any region-specific practices you will employ for each region you are bidding on.**   1st Kids does not employ region-specific practices but does respond to region specific needs or issues to provide individualized services.  1st Kids strives for consistency among each regional area served as well as partnering with the State team and other regional contractors. 1st Kids is committed to providing an exceptional experience for children and families regardless of their geographic location. While the fundamentals of our service delivery model remain consistent, we maintain the ability to adjust to the specific needs of families.   * **Describe any region-to-region differences in your operations, structure, or procedures.**   1st Kids strives to provide consistency in the delivery of services while recognizing and responding to the unique needs of specific geographic areas. An example of this would be our work in LaGrange county. The enrollment process remains consistent however given the extremely high Amish population the methods of interacting with families may differ based on individual needs. Ultimately every child and family is given the same opportunity to participate in the First Steps program but the path to achieve that outcome may be altered to fit individual family needs.   * **Describe how you meet and/or adhere to each of the Mandatory Respondent Qualifications/Exclusions to Bid.**   1st Kids currently provides service coordination services to children birth to age three enrolled in Indiana’s First Steps early intervention system.  1st Kids has provided service coordination services consistently since its inception in 2002 and maintains team members who have provided service coordination services since the inception of the SPOE in Indiana in 1996.  1st Kids is not and has never been a provider of direct services. | |
| **2** | **SoW Section VI. A. 1-5 – SPOE Functions of Referral and Intake, Record, Evaluation and Assessment, Eligibility Determination**  Describe how you plan to execute SoW section VI.A.1, VI.A.2, VI.A.3, VI.A.4, and VI.A.5 in their entirety and in alignment with State laws and all other applicable Federal laws, updates, and guidance. Your response should include, but not be limited to, the specific elements highlighted below:   * Describe how you will accept and respond to referrals. * Explain how you will conduct intake activities. * Describe how you will ensure team collaboration and communication. * Describe how you will coordinate the application and enrollment of families to other programs. * Describe how you will work with State technology and databases to ensure complete and updated electronic EI Records. * Explain how you will conduct eligibility determination activities. |
| * **Describe how you will accept and respond to referrals.**   **Appendix A Referral to Start of Services Confirmation Process Chart**  1st Kids, Inc. has the capacity to accept referrals in a variety of formats (verbal, written and electronic). The web site, which serves all 1st Kids regions, is equipped to allow the user to make a referral directly to the SPOE through the site. Referrals received through the website are automatically distributed to the appropriate regional cluster office and processed accordingly. Each local region office has both a local and toll-free direct phone number that is answered during business hours and able to receive messages when the office is closed. Referrals can also be submitted via fax. Each regional SPOE office also receives and processes physical mail daily. Every referral receives a timely response in compliance with the two-day timeline outlined in IDEA part C.  1st Kids, Inc. strives to maximize efficiency. Therefore, coordinators are assigned to geographical areas throughout each Region. As each referral is received it is entered into the EI HUB data system the day received thus establishing the EI record. A corresponding record is created in the 1st Kids One Drive system which will house any documents not able to be uploaded to EI HUB. EI HUB assigns an ID number, and the referral is assigned to the service coordinator responsible for that particular geographic area. The coordinator assigned is responsible for contacting the family immediately, but the initial effort to contact may not exceed 2 days from receipt. In the event that the service coordinator is unable to reach the family by phone, the coordinator follows the 1st Kids, Inc. contact procedures which includes three phone attempts followed by a physical letter encouraging the family/guardian to contact the service coordinator at the SPOE.  1st Kids, Inc. has developed very positive relationships with each of the regional Department of Child Services (DCS) offices. Our internal process of reviewing the state monthly generated list of children with substantiated cases of abuse or neglect allows the opportunity to identify those children who are already receiving First Steps services. Those that are not already enrolled in the First Steps program are contacted, and the opportunity to create a referral is offered. If the family/guardian is not able to identify any areas of developmental concern, they may opt to participate in an Ages and Stages Questionnaire. This screening tool is helpful in offering some perspective of typical child development while reviewing the child’s current level of performance. This process allows family/caregivers to determine if they would like to proceed with the First Steps evaluation while also providing the assigned DCS caseworker with appropriate documentation to adequately represent the developmental status of the child while also respecting desires of the family/caregiver.   * **Explain how you will conduct intake activities.**   Each 1st Kids Coordinator is equipped with a notebook computer with a touch screen. This technology allows for the capturing of an electronic signature. Each coordinator has been trained to complete all intake activities directly into EI HUB as well as the generation of the Family Cost Participation record at the intake meeting or as early in the enrollment process as possible. This is done to increase the likelihood of obtaining reimbursement for initial evaluation activities. In addition, each coordinator maintains access to a complete fillable digital intake packets to be used in the event the EI HUB is not available. 1st Kids maintains a support system to process all fillable packets and manually transfer all information into the EI HUB. This process is consistent among all regions.  Upon receipt of a referral the assigned coordinator must contact the family within two days. During the initial communication with the family, the service coordinator explains the First Steps process from intake through ongoing IFSP development. The service coordinator may gather demographic and family information during the initial phone call and enter the information directly into EI HUB. The intake coordinator provides the family with a summary of the information that will be needed during the intake process. This includes income and insurance information. Families are asked to have this information present during the scheduled intake meeting. During the Intake meeting the family assessment is conducted to gain an understanding of the family’s daily routines. The family’s concerns are discussed, informed consent and written permission to proceed is obtained from the parent(s)/legal guardian and Evaluation Determination Team members are identified to conduct the initial evaluation. The parent/guardian is presented information on all enrolled First Steps Agencies serving their geographic area. Families select their primary and subsequent agency choices. During the intake meeting due process and procedural safeguard information is introduced to families and reviewed at all subsequent procedural safeguard moments. The service coordinator confers with the Evaluation Determination Team scheduler to confirm an assessment date and time which is provided to the family. Following the intake meeting the coordinator communicates with the selected agency through Teamwork, which is an online project management platform. The primary selected agency has the option of notifying other agencies in the service area if they know they do not have providers available to serve the child if eligible. Beginning this discussion early increases the likelihood that the coordinator will successfully identify provider options by the time of the eligibility and IFSP meetings.  **Appendix B Initial Provider Request Procedure**   * **Describe how you will ensure team collaboration and communication**.   The ability to communicate with IFSP team members is vital. This begins with the invitation of all team members to participate in the initial IFSP meeting and subsequent IFSP review meetings and ultimately with the annual eligibility and IFSP meeting.  1st Kids currently uses Teamwork, an online project management platform to communicate with team members. This platform allows the coordinator to securely identify appropriate team members for each individual child and grant them access to the platform to communicate with other authorized team members and to view scheduled meetings and tasks. 1st Kids understands that it is the goal of the State to utilize the EI HUB as the sole platform for all information and communication regarding First Steps enrolled children. 1st Kids will move exclusively to EI HUB as the development of the program advances. At this time all provider agencies enrolled in regions served by 1st Kids report satisfaction with ability to successfully communicate with team members through Teamwork. The Teamwork system also allows for the ability to communicate and share information directly with LEA (Lead Education Agency – School) to expeditiously share transition information. Again, Teamwork allows the coordinator to only allow access to entities with whom the family has given consent. When consent is obtained the LEA may access current IFSP and ongoing provider reports to better inform the school’s eligibility evaluation.  Each regional LPCC coordinates at minimum quarterly Agency network meetings. These meetings provide an opportunity for the ongoing exchange of ideas and information. The Agency meetings are helpful in gaining a clear understanding of the needs and challenges of both the agency and the SPOE. The consistent opportunity to share information and ideas has resulted in the evaluation and progressive advancement of many processes. 1st Kids values the opportunity to participate in the ongoing exchange of information.   * **Describe how you will coordinate the application and enrollment of families to other programs.**   The ability to identify and assist families in accessing available resources, as well as providing opportunities for families to advocate for their child and family are important components of the service coordinator’s role. First Steps is often a family’s first experience in accessing support services. Understanding that First Steps is only with a family until the child’s third birthday highlights the importance of not only finding resources for families but also in teaching families how to find and access ongoing resources that will assist their child and family as they continue their journey.  The education and enrollment process for other programs begins at intake. The service coordinator may identify additional resources that may be beneficial to the family and assist with the completion of the application or with a referral to the appropriate program. This may include, but not be limited to: Hoosier Health Wise, Children Special Health Care Services, Medicaid Waiver, Head Start, Early Head Start, WIC, Housing and Utility assistance, Community Children’s Activities, Legal Services, Child Care Referral and Resources etc. Many programs allow for the electronic submission of applications. 1st Kids, Inc. provides coordinators with ongoing training and education regarding community resources so that they may assist families in completing applications for all relevant programs. 1st Kids conducts monthly agency wide meetings which typically include training on programs that may be beneficial to First Steps families. Coordinators leave each meeting with a greater understanding of the identified resource program and the information needed to appropriately refer to or share with families. Each regional cluster also conducts monthly team meetings and identifies resources that may be specific to their particular geographic area. Representatives of these programs are invited to attend the regional meeting to share information with the regional service coordination team. Additionally, LPCC Coordinators consistently provide the service coordinators with information on available programs and resources.   * **Describe how you will work with State technology and databases to ensure complete and updated electronic EI Records.**   1st Kids team members have partnered with the State team throughout the implementation of the EI HUB system. Our commitment to the success of EI HUB has been evident throughout this process through our continued collaboration, sharing of ideas and information and our willingness and ability to modify practices as necessary to accommodate system needs. 1st Kids has consistently worked with state and PCG staff to ensure continued progress in the development of the EI HUB system while ensuring ongoing continuity of service delivery to children and families.   * **Explain how you will conduct eligibility determination activities.**   The evaluation process is a vital component of the family’s initial and ongoing experience with the First Steps system. This is a family’s first interaction with First Steps therapists. This interaction has the potential to set the tone for a family’s understanding and interaction with their First Steps therapists.  While meeting with the family for the Intake meeting, the First Steps Service Coordinator thoroughly discusses the parent/guardian’s concerns regarding their child’s development. Through this process the coordinator explains that First Steps must provide a multidisciplinary evaluation which will consist of two therapists of different professional disciplines i.e., Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Developmental Therapy and Speech Therapy. The coordinator further explains that the evaluators will be completing the state selected Assessment, Evaluation and Programing System (AEPS) tool. This tool provides a look at the child’s overall development and will provide families with information on each of the following developmental areas: Fine Motor, Gross Motor, Adaptive, Cognition, Communication and Social Emotional. The AEPS relies heavily on parent report as well as child observation. This is vital to a successful evaluation, as the parent report offers keen insight into the child’s developmental skills.  At the Intake meeting the coordinator is able to provide the family with evaluation scheduling options and confirm an evaluation date and time. 1st Kids, Inc. contracts Evaluation Determination Team Schedulers that provide evaluation scheduling services for each region. The coordinator reviews the next steps with the family and confirms the evaluation date and time. At the agreed upon date and time the Evaluation Determination Team conducts the evaluation and leaves the family with a brief summary and activities that the family may conduct with the child during the time between the evaluation and their subsequent Eligibility meeting. The Evaluation Determination Team members supply the coordinator with a complete report of the evaluation and debriefing form within two business days of the evaluation. The coordinator gathers the Evaluation Determination Team report and all other relevant information to assist in the eligibility determination process. At a place and time that is pre-determined through prior written notice, the eligibility meeting is held with the family and any other individuals the family has elected to invite. If eligibility is established, the team which includes the family, proceeds with an IFSP meeting. | |
| **3** | **SoW Section VI. A. 6-8 – SPOE Functions of Ongoing Service Coordination, and Quality Assurance, and Individual Family Service Plan (IFSP)**  Describe how you propose to execute SoW Sections VI.A.6, VI.A.7 and VI.A.8 in their entirety and in alignment with State laws and all other applicable Federal laws, updates, and guidance. Your response should include, but not be limited to, the specific elements highlighted below:   * Describe how you will educate and assist families in the identification of services and supports that best meet the unique needs of the child and family as well as the identified IFSP outcome(s). * Describe the strategies that you will utilize to ensure team participation and collaboration among IFSP team members. * Explain how you will conduct IFSP activities. * Describe how service coordinators will be assigned to meet the needs of families. * Explain your plan to ensure access to timely and appropriate services that will meet the needs of families. * Describe what procedures will be implemented to ensure families are contacted regularly. * Describe your plan to maintain any records, note, or files that are not housed in the State’s EI Hub. * Describe any tools you will provide to staff. * Describe what strategies you will utilize to support ongoing communication among early intervention professionals, families, and State staff. * Explain your plan to address inquiries, concerns, and complaints. * Describe the strategies you will utilize to monitor quality assurance for each of the following SPOE functions: a) referral, b) intake, c) record, d) evaluation and assessment, e) IFSP, f) ongoing service coordination, and g) administration. * Explain how you plan to collaborate and communicate with BCDS regarding quality improvement activities. |
| * **Describe how you will educate and assist families in the identification of services and supports that best meet the unique needs of the child and family as well as the identified IFSP outcome(s)** * **Describe the strategies that you will utilize to ensure team participation and collaboration among IFSP team members.** * **Explain how you will conduct IFSP activities.** * **Describe how service coordinators will be assigned to meet the needs of families.** * **Explain your plan to ensure access to timely and appropriate services that will meet the needs of families.**   The service coordinator is tasked with ensuring that all planning activities are conducted prior to the development of an IFSP for an eligible child. The service coordinator gathers information from the family and the child’s physician, the eligibility determination team as well as any additional developmental and medical information that may be available to help inform eligibility. The service coordinator, through the family assessment /family interview, may identify resources that would be of benefit. Every service coordinator is equipped with current resource information for each geographic region. Depending upon the identified needs of the family the coordinator may assist the family with the completion of an application for additional services or provide the family with contact information for identified resources.  During the process of preparing for the eligibility determination meeting and IFSP development the coordinator reviews all gathered information. Once eligibility is determined the family is invited to participate in the development of the IFSP. The IFSP is a collaborative document that is developed through the initial and ongoing collaboration of all IFSP team members. The IFSP process is explained thoroughly to families as they are an equal participant in the IFSP development as team members. The information gathered during the time leading up to the eligibility and subsequent IFSP meeting informs the conversation and contributes to the development of the IFSP outcomes. The outcomes reflect the needs and priorities of the family. Once outcomes are developed the identification of services that may best allow the child and family to make progress toward the identified outcomes are discussed. It is important to note that the identified outcomes drive services that are ultimately put on the IFSP.  The conversation regarding appropriate services must include consideration of variables such as family’s capacity to participate in services and what a typical day in the life of the child consists of. Coordinators are encouraged to develop unique plans that reflect the individual needs of each child and family. This may include a combination of therapies and their frequencies and intensities. IFSP’s are intended to be fluid documents that are agile and are able to change and adjust as the needs of each individual child and family change.  In compliance with IDEA part C the initial IFSP must be developed no later than 45 days from the date of referral. The service coordinator is tasked with insuring that all activities leading to the development of the initial IFSP are complete by the 45th day. Using the information gathered at the initial intake meeting the service coordinator works with the agency selected by the family to identify service providers to fulfill the IFSP requirements. Once the services and the provider agency are verified the service coordinator adds the agreed upon services to the IFSP service page. This will ultimately be entered directly into the EI HUB and will immediately result in the ability for the selected agency to view and access the service authorization. Until the EI HUB is able to receive this information directly from the IFSP meeting the service coordinator completes a fillable PDF form with all required information and submits it for data entry. Once submitted, the IFSP service authorizations are entered.  The selected agency is able to notify the service coordinator through Teamwork that services have started within the required 30-day timeline. If the service coordinator does not receive confirmation from the selected provider agency, they contact the agency and family to determine if services have started. If the services haven’t started the service coordinator determines why based on conversation and information gathering from the family and agency. Depending upon the reason for an identified delay, the service coordinator will determine a targeted start day with the provider agency or work with the family to identify any barriers to scheduling the initial service. If for some reason the 30-day timeline is not met, the service coordinator works with the provider agency to clearly document the reason for delay, dates of attempted scheduling of services, and the date services were ultimately delivered.  As Indiana early intervention works toward the implementation of Family Guided Routines Based Intervention (FGRBI) it is increasingly important that focus be placed on the daily routines of the child and family and early intervention services be provided in a way that meets families where they are and supports them in their typical daily activities. This can and should look different for each family.  Indiana, like all other states, is facing a shortage of available intervention providers. While this is challenging it is also an opportunity to focus on delivering services in a way that empowers families through coaching and parent education. Early intervention services should allow for the progress a child makes to continue to take place between intervention sessions. Early intervention therapy sessions should be a time to model and teach families what they can do with their child on a daily and ongoing basis.  Service coordinators maintain ongoing communication with families through regular phone calls, text messages, emails and visits. The ability to communicate in a variety of methods allows for service coordinators to maintain a positive relationship with families.   * **Describe what procedures will be implemented to ensure families are contacted regularly.**   1st Kids service coordinators are required to have contact at least monthly with families and more frequently as needed. This communication is to take place utilizing a method that is appropriate for each individual family. This may include phone calls, email, text message or in person visit. Additionally, monthly supervisions are conducted with each service coordinator and their assigned service coordinator supervisor. Verification of the completion of a variety of service coordinator tasks takes place during the supervision session. The supervision session includes verification of family contact.   * **Describe your plan to maintain any records, note, or files that are not housed in the State’s EI Hub.**   1st Kids maintains a secure One Drive file for each enrolled child. Each document that is not entered or uploaded directly into EI HUB is saved in the child’s One Drive electronic record. 1st Kids electronic system is securely backed up and maintained through ongoing system monitoring conducted by our information technology vendor, Proven IT. Proven maintains a Barracuda security and backup system which continuously monitors the 1st Kids system for errors and potential security risks.   * **Describe any tools you will provide to staff.**   The role of the service coordinator is challenging. 1st Kids understands the value of the service coordinator and works hard to provide a strong support network. Ongoing support is offered to each service coordinator through direct monthly supervision, regular full agency meetings as well as regional team meetings. Each employee has access to a supervisor, regional SPOE director and agency executive director. 1st Kids recognizes coordinator successes and works collaboratively to address challenges. 1st Kids recognizes coordinator successes and works collaboratively to address challenges. Additionally, 1st Kids ensures each employee is provided functional technology to allow them to efficiently conduct their job tasks. A managed services technician is available during working hours to assist 1st kids team members with any issues they may be experiencing related to their computer technology.   * **Describe what strategies you will utilize to support ongoing communication among early intervention professionals, families, and State staff.**   Communication is key to any successful relationship. This applies even more when working with families who are navigating territory with which they may not be familiar. The foundation of a good communication strategy begins with the initial interaction between the parent/guardian and the service coordinator. During the initial call the coordinator lays out a road map of what the family’s experience with early intervention may look like. The coordinator asks for specific documentation, explains the reasons for each request, introduces the various steps the family will take along the way and begins to introduce the idea of therapists and the role they play in the process. All of this can feel very overwhelming to a family new to the early intervention system. Continued supportive dialog between the coordinator and the family is key in helping parents and family members to become empowered advocates. Modeling strong communication among all team members allows families to feel confident communicating with all those participating in the care of their child. The service coordinator will communicate with the family by phone, email, text and in person and will make all of these options available to the family to communicate with all IFSP team members. Additionally, the ongoing service providers, eligibility determination team members and the service coordinator may all access information via EI HUB and Teamwork. These additional platforms allow for the sharing of information such as an address change or events taking place within a family that may prevent them from actively participating in services. All discussions regarding services or the review of the IFSP take place during formal IFSP team meetings which are held with written prior notice at a date and time that is conducive to the family and all participating team members. Any team member may request that the IFSP team convene.   * **Explain your plan to address inquiries, concerns, and complaints.**   1st Kids maintains a website that is representative of all regions served. The 1st Kids website allows for the easy submission of any concerns and complaints. Additionally, a concern or complaint may be submitted through other methods. 1st Kids maintains an agency wide process for the resolution or escalation of concerns and complaints. Families, providers, and any other interested parties may express concern in person, in writing, by email via the agency website or by phone. Complaint/Concern Forms are available to all providers, families, and office personnel. The Complaint/Concern Form is also available online.  When a complaint/concern is reported to office personnel, the person receiving the complaint/concern will gather basic information and complete the Complaint/Concern Form and submit the information to the Quality Assurance Coordinator within 24 hours. The Complainant will be advised that the Quality Assurance Coordinator will contact the individual within two business days. The Quality Assurance Coordinator forwards any perceived violation of Procedural Safeguards, along with any supporting documentation to the State immediately. The submitter of any complaint receives a letter from the Quality Assurance Coordinator informing them that the issue has been forwarded directly to the State.  The Quality Assurance Coordinator will contact the complainant within two business days to notify him/her that the complaint/concern has been received and to gather any additional information. As needed, the Quality Assurance Coordinator will also contact other parties involved to gather information pertaining to the complaint/concern. The process regarding concerns is as follows:  1st three concerns: The individual receives a letter from the Quality Assurance Coordinator outlining the specific violation(s) that have occurred. The violator will also receive reference materials regarding Best Practice, Cluster policy, procedural safeguards, any relevant issue clarifications, and provider agreement requirements.  4th concern: The individual receives a letter informing them that the issue has been forwarded directly to the State. The Quality Assurance Coordinator forwards the complaint and supporting documentation to the State.  Incidents related to the System Point of Entry: If the complaint or concern is related to a specific Service Coordinator, Quality Assurance will communicate the issue and any supporting documentation to the Service Coordinator Supervisor. Additionally, Quality Assurance will communicate the complaint to the SPOE Director.  The Quality Assurance Coordinator will follow up with parties involved with resolution of the concern.  Each regional LPCC Oversight committee receives an identity redacted summary of concerns and complaints at the quarterly meetings. All discussion related to the concerns and complaints are documented in the meeting minutes. The Oversight Committee may determine if any additional action is needed. If a conflict is unable to be resolved with SPOE and Committee action the issue will be forwarded to the State for resolution.   * **Describe the strategies you will utilize to monitor quality assurance for each of the following SPOE functions: a) referral, b) intake, c) record, d) evaluation and assessment, e) IFSP, f) ongoing service coordination, and g) administration.**   1st Kids will utilize various methods to monitor quality assurance for all aspects of the SPOE functions.   1. Referral – Referrals are generally entered by clerical staff. Referral information is entered day of receipt and dated accordingly. The assigned Service Coordinator is notified as soon as the referral is entered. The coordinator is provided the referral information as well as the projected “45th day” to ensure compliance with Federal indicators. The Quality Assurance Coordinator supervises the AA Staff and reviews timely entry of referrals and other information on a regular, ongoing basis. Additionally, all AA’s meet with the Quality Assurance Coordinator monthly. Timely contact of referred families is the responsibility of the service coordinator. The service coordinator must contact the family within two days of the referral date. Compliance with this requirement is monitored through periodic review as well as monthly service coordinator supervision. All service coordinator clinical records, which include documentation of any contact or attempted contact with families, is kept in the child’s One Drive and Teamwork record. 2. Intake – All service coordinators enter Intake information directly into the EI HUB system. A “supplemental intake packet” containing releases and other information not able to be entered directly into EI HUB is completed and submitted for review and filing in the child’s One Drive and Teamwork record. Intake Quality is reviewed at monthly supervision meetings and more frequently as needed. 1st Kids also looks at the frequency of record termination and the reason for termination. The coordinator supervisor reviews record terminations. This affords the supervisor the opportunity to identify trends or potential service coordinator performance issues. 3. Record – Ongoing child records are reviewed as part of the service coordinator monthly supervision process. 4. Evaluation and Assessment – The timely execution of the evaluation and assessment is necessary to ensure compliance with the 45-day indicator. All evaluations are scheduled by dedicated ED Team Schedulers. The schedulers are required to ensure that all evaluations are scheduled and in time to allow for the receipt of the evaluation report and subsequent completion of the IFSP for eligible children. ED Team Schedulers are required to report to the region SPOE Director and service coordinator if they are unable to schedule the evaluation in a timely manner. All documentation of potential evaluation dates offered and reasons for delay are provided. The region SPOE Director works with the scheduler, ED Team members and service coordinators to arrange for the evaluation to be completed. In the event the evaluation is not able to be completed in a timely manner the service coordinator completes the “Over 45 Day” form which is to include dates of scheduling attempts, reasons for delay and any other relevant information. Every completed evaluation is reviewed by the service coordinator. Questions or concerns regarding evaluation quality are brought to the regional SPOE Director and the Quality Assurance Coordinator. If training issues are identified the ED team member will be provided additional training and opportunity to shadow and work with a peer mentor to resolve identified issues. All new ED team members are required to complete AEPS training and are assigned a peer mentor that they will work directly with. The peer mentor also reviews and evaluates all evaluation reports of new team members. This process continues until it is determined that the new ED team member has reached a level of competence to permit them to work without direct supervision. 5. IFSP – At this time IFSPs are not able to be completed directly in EI HUB. Service Coordinators complete IFSP’s using a fillable PDF packet. Each IFSP is submitted for review. Each new IFSP is reviewed by a supervisor for quality. Quality issues are reviewed with the service coordinator as identified. Identified trends are used to inform training opportunities accordingly. 6. Ongoing Service Coordination – Ongoing service coordinators participate in regular training and meetings as well as monthly service coordinator supervision. The 1st Kids Service Coordinator Supervision plan can be found in Appendix G 7. Administration – The 1st Kids Executive team meets two times per month with full leadership team meeting quarterly. The frequency of communication encourages consistency among regions as well as opportunities for resource sharing. The Executive Director participates in each of these meetings to coordinate efforts and minimize duplication of effort. The Executive Director and Executive team members (as appropriate) meet with and participate in State led meetings and discussions. Each regional SPOE participates in LPCC Oversight committee meetings. The Executive Director meets with the 1st Kids Board of Directors quarterly. Additionally, 1st Kids participates annually in an Audit that includes financial review as well as contract compliance.  * **Explain how you plan to collaborate and communicate with BCDS regarding quality improvement activities**.   1st Kids has long maintained a system of internal quality review. Each fillable packet that is submitted goes through a review process prior to proceeding through the data entry process. This procedure has served as a quality review as well as an opportunity to identify areas of training need and development. The transition to the EI HUB system has required a change to this process. EI HUB allows each coordinator to enter all information directly into the electronic system. While this expedites the process, it eliminates the opportunity for review prior to entry. This change has required the development of a system to review information post entry. This process is evolving as at this time all intake activities are entered directly into the EI HUB, but the system is not yet ready to allow full IFSP’s to be completed in EI HUB. Moving forward coordinators will have a select number of intakes reviewed for accuracy. This will include the entry of information as well as the review of income and insurance information. The outcomes of these quality assurance checks will be reviewed during the service coordinator’s monthly supervision meeting. At this time all IFSP’s are being completed utilizing a PDF fillable packet and are reviewed prior to entry. The review process happens as information is submitted and does not delay the entry of service authorizations. Once the transition of the IFSP process is complete to EI HUB the quality review process will be modified to allow select IFSP’s to be reviewed in EI HUB and the findings reviewed with the coordinator at monthly supervision meetings.  Additionally, 1st Kids has and will continue to work with the IU staff of the Early Childhood Center to complete reviews of records selected for either formal review or as an opportunity for professional development. These record reviews are a wonderful teaching opportunity for service coordinators and supervisory staff. Coordinators are each given the opportunity to review their records as well as those of peers. This results in the sharing of information and ideas and the continued growth of all team members. It is anticipated that this process will be modified to adjust for the implementation of EI HUB. 1st Kids will continue to partner with state staff and IU Early Childhood Center staff to conduct these periodic reviews.  Each 1st Kids regional SPOE actively participates in the annual Quality Review conducted by state staff and IU Early Childhood Center staff. These reviews are opportunities to celebrate successes and address any areas in need of technical support. In the event technical support is needed, 1st Kids staff will work collaboratively with State staff to develop plans to correct any identified issues.  A continued challenge in the First Steps system is the management of Family Cost Participation (FCP). The FCP is developed through the entry of income information as provided by the family. While every effort is made to ensure accuracy, an error in this area has the potential to create frustration for families and personnel. 1st Kids has created support for service coordinators regarding the collection of income. Each service coordinator is provided with a fillable worksheet that they may enter income information into that will automatically calculate totals. The goal is to minimize the occurrence of mathematical errors. Additionally, service coordinators are encouraged to reach out to a supervisor if they are struggling with determining how income should be calculated. The secondary issue surrounding FCP is insurance. The accurate entry of insurance is vital as insurance coverage of any therapy services directly affects a family’s co-pay amount. Issues surrounding these areas require the close coordination of SPOE personnel, State staff and PCG personnel. 1st Kids understands the importance of providing necessary documentation to process claims and/or clarify concerns, complaints and issues. 1st Kids will continue to comply with all State procedures surrounding cost participation issues. | |
| **4** | **SoW Sections VI. A. 9, VI. B., and VI. C. – Conference Attendance and Professional Development, Community Presence, and SPOE Staff Requirements**  Describe how you propose to execute SoW Section VIA.9, VI.B.1, VI.B.2, VI.B.3, and VI.C in their entirety and in alignment with State laws, and all other applicable Federal laws, updates, and guidance. Your response should include, but not be limited to, the specific elements highlighted below:   * Describe your annual professional development plan, including any conferences you plan to attend during the fiscal year. * Describe how you will ensure that the SPOE’s presence is known and available in the community, including whether you plan to maintain a physical or virtual office presence.   + If you plan to maintain a virtual office, describe your approach to developing a Virtual SPOE Presence Plan. Please specify the outreach methods you will utilize as part of your Virtual SPOE Presence Plan.   + If you plan to maintain a physical office, explain how your proposed office location(s), functions, and staffing will support the responsibilities of the SPOE. * Describe your overall staffing plan to fulfill all SPOE roles and responsibilities outlined in the Scope of Work. * Please submit an organizational staffing chart and job descriptions for each of your proposed positions, including how activities will be supported by each position and where the positions will be stationed, if applicable. * Please describe your staff’s experience with providing case management services for early intervention or related programs, including resumes for all key or leadership staff. * Describe your plan to recruit, hire, and retain qualified staff. * Describe your plan for onboarding, training, and monitoring service coordinators. |
| * Describe your annual professional development plan, including any conferences you plan to attend during the fiscal year.   All 1st Kids coordinators must meet the State credentialing requirements. Opportunities are created locally to ensure that training and professional development is available to all staff. 1st Kids has invited all staff members to participate in the annual First Steps conference both in person and virtually. The First Steps state conference is the primary training activity funded by 1st Kids. The conference allows coordinators to participate in excellent educational sessions while teaming and partnering with peers across the state. The response from this training remains outstanding and 1st Kids intends to continue to fund this training opportunity. Additionally, local training opportunities are sought and participated in by 1st Kids staff. Our strong community partnerships have allowed 1st Kids staff to participate in training opportunities sponsored by local Division of Child Services offices, Head Start and Early Head Start programs as well as local social service programs and childcare centers. Training opportunities are created by 1st Kids at monthly agency and team meetings. These trainings are generally targeted at service coordinator development as well as training on available resources and programs that may benefit First Steps families.  1st Kids welcomes the opportunity for leadership staff to participate in national early intervention and early childhood education annual conferences.  ***APPENDIX C – ANNUAL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN INCLUDING CONFERENCES***   * **Describe how you will ensure that the SPOE’s presence is known and available in the community, including whether you plan to maintain a physical or virtual office presence.**   1st Kids will continue to maintain a physical office presence in each of the regions we serve. Each office is branded with the First Steps logo. Phones at each location are answered with a greeting of “Thank you for calling First Steps.” Each 1st Kids First Steps location is open 5 days per week / 52 weeks per year during normal business hours excluding recognized holidays. Each regional office is staffed to receive and respond to all incoming calls and referrals and to respond to State correspondence and requests.  Each 1st Kids SPOE location is equipped with on-site technology to allow for the quick scanning of documents for immediate sharing and communication.  Regional LPCC Coordinators participate in various boards and councils in an effort to share and gather information that will benefit the children and families that participate in the First Steps program. Each regional LPCC is supplied with First Steps outreach materials provided by the BCDS as well as local materials. Any locally developed material is created in compliance with State style guidelines and formatting templates.   * + If you plan to maintain a virtual office, describe your approach to developing a Virtual SPOE Presence Plan. Please specify the outreach methods you will utilize as part of your Virtual SPOE Presence Plan.   + If you plan to maintain a physical office, explain how your proposed office location(s), functions, and staffing will support the responsibilities of the SPOE.   The physical First Steps locations will provide an opportunity for team members who benefit from the support of working from a collaborative office space. The physical office will also house printer/copier machines to support all employees both onsite and virtual as necessary. The physical office locations will offer opportunities for teaming and sharing of ideas. Each 1st Kids location meets ADA accessibility guidelines.   * **Describe your overall staffing plan to fulfill all SPOE roles and responsibilities outlined in the Scope of Work.**   1st Kids is committed to providing quality service coordination services to every child and family. It is the goal of the agency to employ an adequate number of service coordinators to allow for a maximum caseload of 60 families. The total number of Service Coordinator positions is based upon child counts and assigned to each regional SPOE accordingly. Each service coordinator is assigned a direct service coordinator supervisor who is assigned to the regional SPOE. This person is charged with providing support and guidance to all service coordinators, particularly to their direct reports. Each regional SPOE has a dedicated SPOE Director. 1st Kids employs a team of Administrative Assistants who provide support to every region. The Administrative Assistant team is able to work in every region allowing the organization to respond to the specific needs of each region.  All 1st Kids staff are trained to adhere to the Professional Conduct Guidelines as outlined in the First Steps Policy Manual. Ongoing training opportunities are provided to all service coordinators to ensure they are able to meet and maintain appropriate early intervention credentialing requirements. All 1st Kids service coordinators are in good standing with the First Steps system. A service coordinator that is unable to meet and maintain state credentialing standards would not meet the criteria to retain employment with 1st Kids.  1st Kids provides service coordination and evaluation services exclusively. No 1st Kids employees are enrolled as ongoing providers through 1st kids to provide direct early intervention ongoing services. 1st Kids Evaluation team members are not permitted to provide ongoing services to any children for whom they have provided evaluation services. In the event this situation appeared necessary state approval would be sought prior to the delivery of any ongoing services.  1st Kids sees value in the separation of SPOE, Evaluation Determination and ongoing service provisions. No SPOE personnel supervise or work directly for an enrolled First Steps early intervention provider agency.   * Please submit an organizational staffing chart and job descriptions for each of your proposed positions, including how activities will be supported by each position and where the positions will be stationed, if applicable.   **APPENDIX D ORGANIZATIONAL CHART**  **APPENDIX E JOB DESCRIPTIONS**  1st Kids intends to employ a number of service coordinators to provide quality service coordination to families. The target maximum caseload is sixty (60). It is anticipated that approximately 104 ongoing service coordinators across all regions are needed to fulfil the needs of currently enrolled children. Coordinators will be distributed to each region based upon child count. Each location is also staffed with a Director, management staff and administrative support staff. Management staff provide supervision and guidance to service coordinators while clerical staff ensure daily operations and entry of information in EI HUB that is not able to be entered directly by the service coordinator. Efficient procedures and supports are necessary and in place to ensure there are no delays in delivering services to children and families.   * Please describe your staff’s experience with providing case management services for early intervention or related programs, including resumes for all key or leadership staff.   **APPENDIX F LEADERSHIP TEAM RESUMES**  1st Kids leadership team consists of an Executive Director, Quality Assurance and Human Resource Coordinator and 4 Regional Directors. Members of the leadership team have worked with the First Steps program from 10 to 26 years. The expansive experience allows 1st Kids to approach the administration of early intervention services with historical knowledge while maintaining a desire for innovation and advancement.   * **Describe your plan to recruit, hire, and retain qualified staff.**   1st Kids uses traditional methods to recruit potential team members such as Indeed on other web-based employee recruitment sites. Additionally 1st Kids uses various social media platforms as a way to reach potential employees. The most effective method of r. uitment has been word of mouth and referral from our current employees. 1st Kids has created a successful internship program in collaboration with local universities that has resulted in the successful hiring of many interns upon graduation. 1st Kids provides a supportive work environment that encourages employee success. The organization-wide open-door policy invites all team members to seek and receive support. The agency values its employees and the work they do to support families and children. Creating a positive supportive culture has resulted in employees feeling confident in readily referring potential employees.   * **Describe your plan for onboarding, training, and monitoring service coordinators.**   Each new 1st Kids Service coordinator is assigned a supervisor and mentor peer. This has proven to create a supportive environment for new coordinators to receive guidance and support while participating in many training and observation activities. All new service coordinators must complete the required state developed service coordinator and professional ethics training. Additional training and support is provided at the local level. 1st Kids uses a three-step process in training coordinators to conduct family meetings. Step 1 – Observation – service coordinators observe activities including, evaluation and completion of an AEPS, intake meeting, eligibility, IFSP development, six-month review, 9-month review and annual preparation and transition. These observations are completed in a methodical and organized manner to allow the trainee to understand the flow of the First Step process while allowing time to focus on each individual step. During the observation phase the coordinator watches an experienced coordinator facilitate each type of meeting while keeping a list of questions. Following the meeting the coordinator in training meets with the experienced coordinator to debrief and answer questions. Trainees have opportunities to observe each type of meeting multiple times.  2 – Participation – During this phase of training the new service coordinator will enter information into EI HUB or into the fillable packet while the experienced coordinator facilitates the conversation with the family. This gives new coordinators the opportunity to actively become familiar with connecting the dialogue with the electronic system. This process is repeated several times to increase familiarity.  3- Facilitation – During this phase of training the new service coordinator facilitates the meeting discussion while entering the gathered information into the EI HUB or fillable packet. This is done with the experienced coordinator present and available to support the new coordinator. Again, this process is repeated several times creating independence and confidence in the new service coordinator.  Additional training with ongoing provider agencies and community partner programs is conducted in conjunction with the training outlined above.  Once the coordinator has completed the training program and has demonstrated competence in all areas, they are permitted to conduct meetings independently. At that point regularly scheduled supervision meetings begin with the supervisor. These take place at an interval that is most appropriate for each individual coordinator with the goal of ultimately taking place once a month as confidence and competence increase.  **APPENDIX G Monthly Service Coordinator Supervision Procedure** | |
| **5** | **SoW Section VII – Local Planning and Coordinating Council (LPCC) Requirements**  Describe how you propose to execute SoW Section VII in its entirety and in alignment with State laws, and all other applicable Federal laws, updates, and guidance. Your response should include, but not be limited to, the specific elements highlighted below:   * Detail your specific goals related to public awareness and child find as well as your plan to meet them. * Describe the strategies you will utilize to conduct public awareness and child find activities within the region. Please include an activity calendar with the narrative response. * Explain how ongoing communication will be facilitated with parents, service providers, local referral sources, and local education agencies to increase awareness of local resources and program information. * Describe how you will maintain the regional website. * Describe how you plan to increase access to family resources. * Outline the types of transition activities you will conduct and when the activities will occur. Please include an activity calendar with narrative response. * Describe your plan to maintain and staff the LPCC. * Describe the experience and qualifications of your fully dedicated LPCC coordinator(s). * Describe your plan to conduct recruit LPCC recruitment activities, including how you will build relationships with local schools and higher education institutions, and participate in career fairs |
| * **Detail your specific goals related to public awareness and child find as well as your plan to meet them.**   1st Kids maintains a strong First Steps program presence throughout each region. This is accomplished through regional Local Planning and Coordinating Councils. Each region has at least one LPCC Coordinator. The regional LPCC Coordinator facilitates child find and public awareness activities throughout the region. These activities include participation in community outreach fairs in collaboration with our community partners as well as training and education to potential referral sources regarding system eligibility guidelines and referral procedures. These entities include but are not limited to Childcare agencies, physician offices, social service agencies and community agencies. Each of these entities are contacted and communicated with on an ongoing basis.  1st Kids maintains an agency wide website that allows referrals to be made directly and also provides users with information regarding program requirements.   * Describe the strategies you will utilize to conduct public awareness and child find activities within the region. Please include an activity calendar with the narrative response.   Each regional LPCC Coordinator works with their regional Council to identify public awareness and child find targets. In addition to participating in community outreach activities LPCC Coordinators typically target a particular type of referral source each month/quarter. Examples include Child Care Centers, Pediatrician offices, Primary Centers, WIC offices, etc. A targeted approach allows the LPCC Coordinator to ensure that various types of referral sources are contacted on a regular rotating basis.  **Appendix H Regional LPCC Activity Calendars 2023 – Regions A, B, C and D**   * Explain how ongoing communication will be facilitated with parents, service providers, local referral sources, and local education agencies to increase awareness of local resources and program information.   Communication with parents, service providers, local referral sources and local education agencies is accomplished through a multifaceted approach. Each regional cluster maintains a social media presence. These platforms allow for the mass sharing of general information and also allow a method for personalized communication if initiated by the user. Targeted communication with provider agencies takes place through social media, email and regular agency network meetings.  . The LPCC Coordinators facilitate opportunities to communicate with families and ensure the program is responsive to the needs and priorities of both families and providers. While each of the LPCC’s work collaboratively with parents, community partners and provider agency directors the opportunity to partner with BCDS to conduct self-assessment activities through measurable metrics such as surveys will assist in the development of strategies to improve local programs and family experiences   * **Describe how you will maintain the regional website.**   Indianafirststeps.org is a website that represents all 1st Kids First Steps regions. The website is hosted and managed by GoDaddy. Changes are easily made as needed. The site allows users to click on each region of the state and submit a referral directly to their local SPOE throughout the entire state. The site also offers users the ability to communicate directly with the director of each of the 1st Kids regional clusters to obtain LPCC information or First Steps program information.   * **Describe how you plan to increase access to family resources.**   Personal discussion and interaction between the family and the service coordinator is the most common way of identifying family needs and connecting them with appropriate resources. 1st Kids provides ongoing training to service coordinators on family resources. This is done through training, staff meeting trainings, regional team meetings and peer to peer communication.  1st Kids will pursue adding a resource page to the indianafirststeps.org website that will list known resources and contain direct links to related websites.   * **Outline the types of transition activities you will conduct and when the activities will occur. Please include an activity calendar with narrative response.**   Each regional LPCC works to ensure a strong relationship is maintained with each Local Lead Education Agency (LEA) and Head Start and Early Head Start program. This is accomplished through the maintenance of local Memoranda of Agreements (MOAs) with each entity or group of entities. Each regional LPCC hosts regular transition committees which consist of representatives from local LEAs, Head Start, Early Head Start, Parents, Providers and service coordinators. These collaborative meetings are opportunities to share information, successes and challenges and to identify overall program improvement opportunities.  1st Kids LPCC and SPOE staff understand the importance of timely successful transition out of First Steps to Local LEAs, Head Start or an entity of the family’s choice. Transition to LEA is most common and is accomplished through providing specified LEA personnel with access to appropriate transition information. IDEA part C transition timelines are adhered to for each enrolled child. With parent consent the LEA is sent notice at 30 month and each enrolled child receives a transition meeting no less than 90 days prior to the child’s 3rd birthday. All LEAs working with 1st Kids are provided access to the child’s Teamwork record which includes all IFSP, eligibility, assessment, and ongoing provider reporting information. This is helpful in expediting the review process and IDEA Part B eligibility determination process.  **Appendix H Regional LPCC Activity Calendars 2023 – Regions A, B, C and D**   * **Describe your plan to maintain and staff the LPCC.**   Each 1st Kids First Steps region maintains dedicated LPCC coordinator(s). The LPCC is a critical component of the early intervention system. 1st Kids is committed to the continuation and expansion of the LPCC role and the continued employment of LPCC staff. Each regional LPCC maintains membership representation that exceeds the minimum requirements of:   * + 1. LPCC membership:        1. Two (2) parents of children with disabilities under the age of 12.        2. One (1) health or medical representative        3. One (1) educational representative        4. One (1) social services representative        5. One (1) early intervention service provider        6. One (1) Head start representative        7. One (1) child care representative        8. One (1) coordinator   The LPCC Coordinator works in collaboration with LPCC Council members and SPOE staff to plan and facilitate regular quarterly meetings. Additional meetings are scheduled as deemed necessary. LPCC Coordinators work to recruit LPCC membership that not only meets the membership requirements but also reflects the demographic makeup of the region.  Each local region maintains approved by-laws as well as minutes documenting meeting attendance, voting and any other pertinent information. LPCC Coordinators share information directly with families through social media channels as well as through service coordinators.   * **Describe the experience and qualifications of your fully dedicated LPCC coordinator(s).**   Each 1st Kids LPCC Coordinator has a bachelor’s degree and has 12-14 years of experience working in the First Steps system. The 1st Kids LPCC Coordinators have an understanding of each aspect of the First Steps early intervention system which allows them to understand the importance of maintaining community, parent and provider involvement.   * **Describe your plan to conduct LPCC recruitment activities, including how you will build relationships with local schools and higher education institutions, and participate in career fairs**   1st Kids has proudly built strong relationships with the many local school corporations serving regions A, B, C and D. Representatives from each of the LEAs participate in Transition and LPCC Oversight committees in each region. Regularly scheduled Transition committee meetings are held to ensure ongoing communication. The consistent method of communicating information from First Steps to LEAs has resulted in a strong and trusting relationship between the entities. 1st Kids has developed relationships with colleges and universities serving the regions as well. Purdue University recognizes and encourages students to complete their internship requirements with 1st Kids. This is done with the Lafayette, Hammond and Fort Wayne campuses. This opportunity allows new graduates to gain an understanding of the potential career opportunities available in the First Steps system. The 1st Kids Executive Director serves on the Purdue University Northwest Human Development and Family Studies Advisory Board. This partnership has been valuable in helping university personnel understand the employment requirements of the First Steps program to better prepare students for a career in First Steps. | |
| **6** | **SoW Section VIII – Data Requirements**  Describe how you propose to execute SoW Section VIII in its entirety and in alignment with State laws, and all other applicable Federal laws, updates, and guidance. Your response should include, but not be limited to, the specific elements highlighted below:   * Describe how you will ensure initial early intervention files and electronic records are uploaded to EI Hub within two (2) days of an activity occurring. * Describe the process you will use to ensure that the data and documentation entered into EI Hub are both accurate and complete. * Describe your plan to monitor data entries and report errors to the State within seven days, if necessary. * Describe how you will safeguard any records not uploaded to EI Hub in accordance with State guidelines, Family Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA) regulations, and Protected Health Information (PHI) regulations. |
| Each referral made to a 1st Kids regional office is entered into the EI HUB the day of receipt. This action creates the EI HUB electronic record. Subsequently, 1st Kids service coordinators complete all intake activities and initial and annual family cost participation activities directly into EI HUB. This includes uploading income and insurance information. In the event the EI HUB is not available all service coordinators have access to fillable PDF forms. All PDF packets are processed through data entry and entered into EI HUB. This process will evolve to one in which all information is entered and uploaded directly into EI HUB as the IFSP and other components of the system become fully functional.   * **Describe the process you will use to ensure that the data and documentation entered into EI Hub are both accurate and complete.**   Ongoing quality assurance will be conducted initially at the monthly supervision held with the service coordinator and the service coordinator supervisor. During these sessions, the supervisor will review recently completed meetings and corresponding information entered into the EI HUB. Additionally regular quality assurance reviews will be conducted through the review of records identified through Quality Assurance lists generated by IU Early Childhood Center. Additional records will be reviewed for accuracy as the quality review process is modified to adjust to the continued implementation of EI HUB.   * **Describe your plan to monitor data entries and report errors to the State within seven days, if necessary.**   1st Kids staff submit tickets to PCG regarding system error and data entry errors in real time. Staff are trained to submit all relevant information and screenshots of issues or errors as soon as identified. Issues that remain unresolved or that directly impact a family’s experience in First Steps or a provider’s ability to execute services or submit billing for services are escalated to state staff if unable to be resolved at the helpdesk level.   * **Describe how you will safeguard any records not uploaded to EI Hub in accordance with State guidelines, Family Educational Rights and Privacy (FERPA) regulations, and Protected Health Information (PHI) regulations.**   1st Kids IT system is secure and in compliance with FERPA and PHI regulations. 1st Kids maintains a Sophos Firewall at each location as well as Crowdstrike anti-virus and continuous network monitoring and security management. 1st Kids works with Proven IT for ongoing monitoring and security of the network to ensure security and compliance with State guidelines, FERPA and PHI. | |
| **7** | **SoW Section IX and Attachment B1 – Corrective Action and Key Objectives**  Describe how you propose to execute SoW Section IX in its entirety and in alignment with State laws, and all other applicable Federal laws, updates, and guidance. Your response should include, but not be limited to, the specific elements highlighted below:   * Please demonstrate your understanding of and indicate that you agree to comply with the corrective action requirements described in Section IX. * List any corrective actions that you have been subject to in the past five (5) years for services similar to those described in this RFP. Additionally, please describe what measures you will take to address and prevent corrective action throughout the Contract term. * Please describe any lessons learned from previous Corrective Actions, sanctions, or formal complaints. * Describe how you plan to meet each of the five Key Objectives described in Attachment B1. * For each Key Objective, describe your ability to perform each of the SPOE Project Activities, LPCC Project Activities, and meet the associated Metrics. * Outline your data collection practices, including any software utilized for data collection, cleaning, and analysis. |
| * **Please demonstrate your understanding of and indicate that you agree to comply with the corrective action requirements described in Section IX.**   It is the intention of 1st Kids to execute the required tasks in a manner that would never necessitate the need for corrective action. 1st Kids intends to communicate and partner with BCDS and State staff in an ongoing and productive manner to prevent the escalation of an issue to the level of required corrective action. 1st Kids does understand and agrees to comply with the corrective action requirements as described in the Scope of Work.   * **List any corrective actions that you have been subject to in the past five (5) years for services similar to those described in this RFP. Additionally, please describe what measures you will take to address and prevent corrective action throughout the Contract term.**   1st Kids has not been subjected to any corrective action in the past five (5) years.   * **Please describe any lessons learned from previous Corrective Actions, sanctions, or formal complaints.**   While 1st Kids has not experienced any corrective actions we are an organization focused on continuous improvement and growth. 1st Kids is committed to the ongoing improvement of the family experience.   * **Describe how you plan to meet each of the five Key Objectives described in Attachment B1.**   **Objective 1: Increase the number of infants and toddlers receiving early intervention services.**  With a goal of beginning to deliver early intervention services as early as possible 1st Kids is committed to meeting the State targets for the percent of children served under age 1 as well as the total infant population served. The state determined incremental growth will be achieved through expanded targeted outreach to physicians, hospitals, neonatal intensive care units and WIC programs. These outreach efforts in each region will result in referrals of children representative of the demographics of the region.  LPCC Coordinators and Oversight Committees will assist in these efforts through the review and analysis of referral data, demographic information, and referral source summaries. Representatives of areas that appear to not be adequately represented will be invited to participate on the LPCC to provide insight and guidance into the needs of the identified area.  As previously discussed, LPCC Coordinators and LPCC Child Outreach oversight committee members will conduct coordinated outreach and First Steps training regarding eligibility and referral procedures to referral sources. These areas include but are not limited to childcare agencies, physicians’ offices, social service agencies and community agencies.  Each regional First Steps LPCC will maintain MOAs with local referral agencies and maintain the agency wide website that provides current program information and resources.  **Objective 2: Ensure that the First Steps program is responsive to the needs of children and families.**  Compliance with respect to the responsiveness to the needs of children and families is fundamental to the core operations of the 1st Kids organization. The State and Federal metrics regarding this objective are very clear:   * 100% of eligible infants and toddlers will have an IFSP developed within 45 days of referral (including evaluation, assessment, and initial IFSP meeting). * 100% of eligible infants and toddlers with IFSPs receive early intervention services in a timely manner (30 days from parent consent). * 100% of eligible infants and toddlers with IFSPs receive services in natural environments. * 100% of IFSPs receive timely 6-month review. * 100% of IFSPs are evaluated annually prior to their expiration. * 100% compliance with requirement to provide prior written notice to parents (10-day notice).   1st Kids is committed to working toward compliance in all areas. Consistent policies and procedures provide clear direction toward continued success in achieving these metrics. These include:   * Every referral is responded to within two (2) calendar days of receipt. * Each 1st Kids First Steps region maintains a fully functioning evaluation/assessment team to ensure timely eligibility determination in accordance with state policy and state and federal regulations. 1st Kids is able to move eligibility determination teams to different regions as needed to ensure timely evaluation and assessment. * Every child is assigned an ongoing service coordinator who maintains regular, ongoing communication with families via phone, email and face-to-face visits. * Ongoing service coordinators coordinate continuous IFSP team communication and discussion according to state policy and state and federal regulations and work to increase and support whole team collaboration. * Every eligible child has an IFSP within the required timelines, 6-month IFSP review and annual IFSP development * Referral information is available to provider agency to ensure that services are delivered within the required timeline (30 calendar days from parent signature on initial IFSP or change page; 30 days from IFSP start date for annual IFSPs). * All Infants and toddlers with an IFSP primarily receive early intervention services in the natural environment. If services are not able to be provided in the natural environment an appropriate setting will be identified and reviewed by the IFSP team, including the family, to meet the unique needs of the child and family. Any concerns received by the SPOE will be processed and addressed within 60 days and escalated to State staff.   **Objective 3: Ensure each eligible infant, toddler, and their family experiences a smooth exit from early intervention services, including a smooth transition when children move from First Steps to preschool or other services.**   * 100% of eligible toddlers exiting First Steps have timely transition planning. This means the SPOE: (a) facilitates the development of transition steps in the IFSP; (b) notifies the local education agency (LEA) of the toddler’s potential eligibility for IDEA Part B special education preschool services; and (c) convenes a transition conference for the eligible toddler and the toddler’s family.   This metric will be achieved through ensuring:   * Every enrolled child will have a completed transition packet, along with a transition conference, in accordance with State policy and State and Federal regulations. * State policy is followed in the initiation of transition activities for eligible infants and toddlers. * Every IFSP will have a complete transition page which includes transition steps and services with input from the family. * Transition conferences are held in conjunction with the initial IFSP meeting when a child is referred at 29 months of age or older. * Each regional LPCC will maintain memorandums of agreement (MOA) with all LEAs and/or special education planning districts, as well as with all Head Start/Early Head Start entities in the cluster(s). * Each regional LPCC will maintain a cluster transition committee comprised of families, early intervention service providers, service coordinators, and representatives from all LEAs and Head Start/Early Head Start agencies. * Each LPCC will review and analyze cluster transition data and work with the SPOE to identify strategies for improvement as necessary. * Each LPCC will work with the regional SPOE to develop and deliver transition training to SPOE staff, LPCC members, families, and other community partners as necessary on a semi-annual basis.   **Objective 4: Increase and improve communication and collaboration among all early intervention stakeholders in the region(s)**   * Each First Steps region will maintain an established LPCC in each region 1st Kids oversees * The LPCC is convened at least quarterly. * A meeting for all First Steps provider agencies in the cluster(s) is held at least quarterly. * Each regional LPCC will maintain the required membership.   This metric will be achieved through:   * The identification of community resources and ongoing communication and collaboration with families, early intervention service providers, SPOE staff, LPCC members, transition committee members, referral sources, and community partners. * SPOE staff will participate in local LPCC meetings as well as State ICC meetings and committees as appropriate. * Each region will maintain current information from each provider agency to share with families to assist in the family’s selection of a provider agency. 1st Kids will maintain policies and procedures regarding provider communication and interaction. This will include but not be limited to how families are provided information about available service providers. 1st Kids will continue to work with provider agencies to manage procedures around provider availability issues. Procedures will be modified and updated as determined necessary by agency and SPOE personnel. * Service coordinators will continuously receive updated information and training on available community resources and transition options. * LPCC and SPOE staff will work together to identify community resources and engage in ongoing communication and collaboration with families, early intervention service providers, SPOE staff, LPCC members, transition committee members, referral sources, and community partners. * Each regional office will maintain a standard procedure to receive and follow up with DCS referrals through collaboration with DCS. This will include referrals made directly by DCS and those received through the monthly list of children who are the subject of substantiated abuse or neglect or have been exposed to illegal substances. * Each regional LPCC maintains standard operating documents that outline procedures around conflict resolution, conflict of interest, council membership and voting, and confidentiality of child and family personally identifiable information. * Families are provided information regarding LPCC opportunities periodically throughout their involvement with First steps. Families are also invited to participate in social media channels hosted by each region. * 1st Kids staff has and will continue to participate in ICC workgroups and other committees/groups relevant to early intervention and the broader early childhood system. * Each regional LPCC shares “State Updates” as a standard agenda item. This practice will continue. * 1st Kids LPCC staff have and will continue to collaborate with the State team on outreach and engagement activities.   **Objective 5: Adhere to operational requirements; maintain documentation to meet State policy and State and federal regulations; and support First Steps program improvement.**  1st Kids staff understand the importance of consistent compliance with this objective. Successfully obtaining and maintaining this information increases family satisfaction and increases the likelihood of potential reimbursement. 1st Kids is committed to working with the State to achieve the identified metrics:   * 100% income documentation * 100% insurance documentation * At a minimum, project activities not captured by the above metrics will be assessed annually during Quality Review.   This metric will be achieved through:   * The submission of information and reports to the State office as requested. * Continued training to ensure that SPOE staff have working knowledge of the First Steps system, system policy, and all State and federal regulations governing the Part C program. Compliance with all regulations and policies. * Required training to ensure all SPOE staff adhere to the Professional Conduct Guidelines as outlined in the First Steps Early Intervention Personnel Guide. * Collaboration with Quality Review teams and BCDS to address any areas in need of technical assistance and support. * Maintenance of an independent First Steps identity exclusive of an affiliation with any other entity. * Maintenance of a community presence that is available to the public five (5) days per week, fifty-two (52) weeks per year or in accordance with a State-approved calendar during normal business hours. The SPOE hours of operation will be indicated to callers on the phone system and posted at each office. * SPOE staff will meet early intervention credentialing requirements in accordance with the First Steps Early Intervention Personnel Guide. This will be accomplished through direct programmatic supervision from a SPOE or service coordination supervisor and the ongoing opportunity to attend and participate in relevant training opportunities. * 1st Kids will maintain clerical support through the employment of Administrative support staff to perform clerical functions related to the completion of data entry not able to be completed by the service coordinator directly into EI HUB, the creation of authorization(s) for IFSP services and to assist the Eligibility Determination Team to maintain and update paper or electronic EI Records not able to be uploaded to the State’s EI Hub. * 1st Kids will maintain any EI records and electronic files not uploaded to the State’s EI Hub through the use of One Drive and Teamwork systems. * EI records will be maintained with accuracy and timely data entry and record-keeping. This includes the maintenance of a comprehensive record of any information not able to be uploaded to the State’s EI Hub, in accordance with State policy and State and federal regulations. All information will be maintained in a secure manner compliant with FERPA and safeguards against any potential breach of Personally Identifiable Information. * Original files will be maintained for all enrolled children containing documentation of the AEPS, to support eligibility as determined by a multidisciplinary evaluation in accordance with State eligibility guidelines. * Income and insurance documentation will be reviewed for accuracy by the coordinator and subject to review during service coordination supervision. Ongoing Quality reviews will also include the review of income and insurance information to ensure files contain accurate and complete income and insurance documentation, including 3 consecutive paystubs, taxes, letter from employer, copy of insurance card, signed cost participation form, etc. * IFSP meeting notifications will be maintained in the electronic record for IFSP reviews/evaluations and new IFSPs. Secure electronic records will also house progress reports, releases, and comprehensive documented key correspondence. * Information shared with IFSP team members will be done through controlled secure access to the Teamwork system. Any information sent outside the organization will be sent using encrypted email. This will include the transmission of data electronically to health care and insurance providers, including claims, payment and remittance advice, premium payments, claim status, referral certification and authorization, and coordination of benefits. * Data errors and issues will be reported to the helpdesk as they are identified. Issues that are not able to be resolved or are of heightened concern will be reported to the State office within seven (7) calendar days. * 1st Kids will follow set procedure for the notification of the IFSP team (including the family) and First Steps Provider Enrollment when a service coordinator is no longer employed with the SPOE. * LPCC staff will submit information and reports to the State office as requested. * All LPCC staff have working knowledge of the First Steps system, system policy, and all State and federal regulations governing the Part C program. 1st Kids is committed to maintaining compliance with all regulations and policies. * All LPCC staff adhere to the Professional Conduct Guidelines as outlined in the First Steps Early Intervention Policy Manual. * 1st Kids staff will consistently collaborate with Quality Review teams and BCDS to address any areas in need of technical assistance and support. * Each regional LPCC Coordinator will document the proceedings of all LPCC meetings and cluster transition committee meetings. * Each regional LPCC Coordinator will maintain up-to-date rosters for the LPCC and cluster transition committee. * Each regional LPCC Coordinator will maintain up-to-date list of child find and cluster outreach activities and report to the LPCC quarterly * The LPCC will assist in the maintenance of all training and presentation files. | |
| **8** | **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)**  Describe how your company will prioritize DEI across all considerations and decisions made. Your response should include, but not be limited to, the specific elements highlighted below:   * Describe your understanding of the demographics of each region in which you are proposing services. * Demonstrate your experience meeting the unique needs of under-resourced populations. * Describe how you will identify under-resourced populations and detail how you will provide services to support those identified. * Describe the specific methods you will employ to promote services to under-resourced populations. |
| * **Describe your understanding of the demographics of each region in which you are proposing services.**   1st Kids serves an extremely diverse population ranging from counties with under 2% of the population identifying as a race other than white to over 35%. It is important that we reflect the demographics of the communities we serve in our First Steps enrollment and 1st Kids staff.  The identification of children is done through continuous outreach and child find activities. LPCC staff work with and participate in a variety of community boards and programs. These relationships generate opportunities to participate in community events and activities to share First Steps information and resources as well as connect with potential referral sources. LPCC staff target outreach to locations where children and families typically live, work and play. While there are some standard outreach targets such as physicians’ offices, WIC programs, Hospitals/Birthing Centers, Head Start/Early Head Start, Daycare etc. Each community has potential referral sources that are unique. These may include but are not limited to: Community organizations, libraries, Salvation Army, food pantries, resource centers, women’s care centers, pregnancy centers and health departments. 1st Kids LPCC staff work diligently to identify the specific needs and most utilized resources in each community to identify children and families that may benefit from early intervention programs.  1st Kids identifies DEI as a strategic priority. The organization recruits potential employees from the areas we serve. Hiring employees that live in the area they serve helps to increase the likelihood that staff will reflect the community and increases employee understanding and knowledge of the community. 1st Kids employs a diverse leadership team which ensures a diverse hiring panel and objective fair process. 1st Kids ensures pay is equitable throughout the organization by ensuring there are no pay gaps. 1st Kids staff participate in diversity and unconscious bias training. 1st Kids benefits are inclusive and provide support to the workforce through flexibility and the ability to balance work and home needs. 1st Kids employees are surveyed to provide input into the development of benefits to ensure the agency is providing meaningful support. 1st Kids is proud to maintain a diverse leadership team and Board of Directors. 1st Kids is committed to maintaining and expanding our diverse, equitable and inclusive environment. Agency leadership and Board understand that this is an ongoing process and are committed to continuing to make DEI a strategic priority.   * **Demonstrate your experience meeting the unique needs of under-resourced populations.**   1st Kids provides services in very diverse communities that display their unique needs differently. Region A is an example of an area that has long experienced an extremely high infant mortality rate. Region A contains Lake County, Indiana’s second most diverse county. Research confirms that non-Hispanic black infants are 2.4 times more likely to die than non-Hispanic white infants in Indiana. This statistic confirms the importance of early outreach and identification of children that may benefit from early intervention services. While child find activities in Lake County cover the entire county additional attention and effort are made to identify children residing in high-risk communities. This is achieved through targeted outreach and community partnerships. Ongoing effort is made to ensure children and families served in each community is reflective of the population residing in the community.   * **Describe how you will identify under-resourced populations and detail how you will provide services to support those identified.**   Disadvantaged populations and areas are those for which the social conditions in which people are born and live does not ensure opportunities for them to be healthy and to flourish. Under-resourced and marginalized populations are at risk of receiving fewer and lower quality care, goods and services. Opportunities for under-resourced and marginalized children and families to engage in early intervention services have the potential to positively impact the trajectory of their lives.  Tailoring care and services to the cultural, social and other socio-demographic contexts of individuals served is vital. Communities and individuals will benefit when they receive services that are effective, equitable and culturally appropriate. This process requires ongoing community engagement with community partners and at-risk families in meaningful and authentic ways. Creating opportunities for participants to provide feedback and ongoing assessment of their experience in the program is fundamental for ongoing growth and modifications. Building trust with families is critical to achieve successful outcomes. Engaging community partners with lived experience will help strengthen the effectiveness of the program.   * **Describe the specific methods you will employ to promote services to under-resourced populations**.   Reaching under-resourced populations is a strategic priority to the entire 1st Kids organization. This will be accomplished through a multifaceted approach. Outreach will be conducted in a targeted manner to reach under-resourced populations. This will include but not be limited to participation in community outreach events, collaboration with community partners organizations and ministries and targeted social media activities. Ongoing effort will be made to partner with local physicians, WIC programs, Healthy Families, Head Start and Early Head Start, Daycares and Health Departments.  Ongoing training and support will be provided to staff to ensure culturally competent communication. Families will receive communication in a way that is culturally relevant. | |