



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

RFP Response Form

Foster Care Agencies

RFP PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: Three Rivers Youth

Authorized Representative Name & Title: Peggy B Harris, President & CEO

Address: 6117 Broad Street, Pittsburgh PA 15206

Telephone: 412-441-5020 [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Website: www.threeriversyouth.org

Legal Status: For-Profit Corp. Nonprofit Corp. Sole Proprietor Partnership

Date Incorporated: 1881

Partners and/or Subcontractors included in this Proposal: No

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific.* We receive notifications from county about solicitations.

REQUIRED CONTACTS

	Name	Phone	Email
Chief Executive Officer	Peggy B. Harris	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Contract Processing Contact	Peggy B. Harris	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Chief Information Officer	Kristin H Walker	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Chief Financial Officer	Robert Krotzer	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MPER Contact*	Robert Krotzer	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

* *MPER is DHS's provider and contract management system. Please list an administrative contact to update and manage this system for your agency.*

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

BOARD INFORMATION

Provide a list of your board members as an attachment or in the space below.

Beth M. Ross (Chair)	Edwin Edwards, Jr.
Dr. Margaret Larkins-Pettigrew (Vice Chair)	LaJuana Fuller
Gloria Brown	Dr. Noble A-W Maseru
Jeanine Kilgore	David Meadows
Rhonda Curry	Andrew Zihmer
Audric K. Dodds	

Board Chairperson Name & Title: Beth M. Ross, Vice President, Total Rewards, Highmark Health

Board Chairperson Address: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Telephone: [REDACTED] (O) [REDACTED] (C)

Board Chairperson Email: [REDACTED]

REFERENCES

Provide the name, affiliation, and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization. *Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references.*

1. A Second Chance, INC
Dr. Sharon McDaniels, Founder, President & CEO

[REDACTED]
www.asecondchance-kinship.com

2. Gwen's Girls
Dr. Kathi Elliott, Executive Director

[REDACTED]
<http://www.gwensgirls.org/>

3. Macedonia FACE
Trisha M. Gadson, PhD, Chief Executive Officer

[REDACTED]
<http://www.macedoniaface.org/home.html>

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Date Submitted 2/10/2021

Amount Requested: \$1,246,658

CERTIFICATION

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, as applicable:

I have read the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts and the requirements for DHS Cyber Security, EEOC/Non-Discrimination, HIPAA and Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law.

By submitting this Proposal, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

Choose one:

My Proposal contains information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information and I have included a written statement signed by an authorized representative identifying those portions or parts of my Proposal and providing contact information.

OR

My Proposal does not contain information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information.

ATTACHMENTS

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. These can be found at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations>.

- MWDBE documents
- Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
- 3 years of audited financial reports
- W-9
- Organizational Chart
- Implementation Timeline
- Line-item Budget, if desired

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

REQUIREMENTS

Please respond to the following. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is **250** points. Your response to this section should not exceed 30 pages.

Organizational Experience and Capacity (30 points)

1. Describe your organization's demonstrated experience working with the following populations: children from birth up to their 21st birthday who are at-risk or involved with the child welfare system; prospective and current Foster Care parents; birth parents; and all other stakeholders in Foster Care (e.g., court system, DHS caseworkers, other provider agencies), or an equivalent. Include how the input of children, Foster Care parents and birth parents have been incorporated into this Proposal.

Organizational Experience

At-Risk Youth: Three Rivers Youth's (TRY) experience began in 1880 and has included programs and services devoted to vulnerable youth from birth to 21 years of age both at-risk and already involved with the child welfare system for the past 140 years. TRY's child welfare related programming which included historically PATHWAYS (1980-1999); Curfew Center (1986-2003); Truancy Abatement Program (1998-2003); Project Finish Line (2010-2013); Transitional Living Program (1991-2013); Loft Basic Center (1983-2013); & Congregate Care/Shelter (1970-2017); & currently includes, Family Partnership Program (In-Home Services) (1998-Present); & Foster Care (2015-present) has granted TRY significant knowledge about the underlying factors contributing to a youth's involvement with the child welfare system. This at-risk population of youth has several compounding issues that contribute to their vulnerability and potential involvement with the child welfare system including, behavioral and mental health issues, truancy, substance abuse/use disorders, poverty, lack of resources, homelessness, inequitable treatment/involvement with the juvenile justice system, neglect by their caregivers and an intergenerational involvement with the child welfare system.

Foster Care Parents: In May 2015 TRY began offering Foster Care services in Allegheny County. Over the past almost 6 years, TRY has engaged with prospective resource families to determine their knowledge and willingness to become foster parents and raised awareness about the plight of foster youth in our communities. In addition, TRY has certified foster parents, matched parents with foster youth and supported foster parents in serving the youth in their homes. TRY has received significant positive feedback from foster parents, specifically recognizing TRY's availability and responsiveness to issues and concerns. Staff communicate with foster parents weekly, with daily correspondence as necessary during a crisis. This helps to establish a partnership with families to care for foster youth. Prior to 2015, TRY had been servicing foster parents through our In-Home Service program: Family Partnership Program (FPP). FPP staff have in the past and currently work within a foster home to stabilize foster placements, as well as with birth families to ensure smooth reunification.

Birth Parents: For as long as TRY has served at-risk youth, we have worked with and served birth parents/legal guardians. For over 50 years through our various out-of-home placement

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

programs TRY staff engaged birth parents/legal guardians in service planning, family nights, and facilitated home visits for youth. Through our school-based programs, TRY staff have engaged birth parents/legal guardians to assist at-risk youth with academic issues including truancy, tardiness, evening school prep schedules, and school discipline violations. For over 23 years FPP staff have worked with birth families/legal guardians to preserve the family unit and prevent out-of-home placement. In addition, FPP staff have served birth parents/legal guardians with reunification of their children who had been removed from the home. Throughout all our programs, TRY has engaged birth parents through conference and teaming meetings for our youth clients. Unless parental rights have been revoked, birth parents/legal guardians are key stakeholders in the service of youth at-risk or already engaged in the child welfare system.

Relevant Stakeholders: All of Three Rivers Youth's programs have in the past and/or currently navigate(d) various systems and engage with relevant stakeholders, including Allegheny County, Department of Human Services, Office of Children Youth and Families (DHS/ACOCYF), Family Court, The Education System, Juvenile Justice System, and other community organizations.

- *DHS/ACOCYF:* First and foremost, TRY has been a non-profit child welfare agency for over 140 years. We receive(d) referrals from the Allegheny County Office of Children Youth and Families for out-of-home placement, Foster Care, and Family Partnership (in-Home service Program). In these programs, staff actively collaborate(d) with Case Managers, Child Advocates, Supervisors, Family Court Judges, and other providers to both offer quality services and comply with county standards of excellence.
- *Family Court:* A key component of the child welfare system with which we have extensive knowledge is the navigation of the family court system: different from Juvenile Justice. Frequently, TRY staff are responsible for ensuring clients, both youth and adults, arrive on time and participate in court proceedings. Staff have also acted as advocates for clients in court as necessary.
- *Education System:* Since most of our clientele are and have been youth, TRY has widespread experience in the education system. From obtaining youth records to enroll clients in school to participating in IEPs and accompanying parents to parent teacher conferences and disciplinary meetings; Three Rivers Youth has always emphasized education as a key component to alleviating generational poverty and obtaining long-term success. TRY's educational experience has crossed several school districts and knowledge reflects the nuances and challenges of both urban and suburban school systems. Currently, TRY works in the following districts: Pittsburgh Public Schools, McKeesport and Sto-Rox.
- *Juvenile Justice System:* Throughout our years of experience, we have found that the Child Welfare System and Juvenile Justice System are often intertwined. A significant portion of clients admitted to our programs over the years have had open probation cases or other involvement with the justice system. TRY's staff participates in probationary hearings, follows up with probation officers and engages local magistrates for clients.
- *Other Organizations:* Finally, youths engaged with the child welfare system often have several services provided by a varying number of organizations. TRY assists youth, foster parents, and birth parents with navigating various services by ensuring a healthy working

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

relationship with partner agencies. TRY actively refers to and takes referrals from partner agencies to ensure clients receive all necessary services.

Incorporating Client/Foster Parent Input: As a nationally accredited human service agency through the Council on Accreditation (COA), continuous quality improvement drives service delivery across programs and services at Three Rivers Youth. Our commitment to quality services and evidence-based approaches catalyzed our decision to apply to become a Sanctuary Certified Organization; a process we will complete this year. Both COA and the Sanctuary Model acknowledge the importance of obtaining and utilizing feedback to guide program growth and planning. As part of Continuous Quality Improvement, TRY collects feedback from both staff and clients (including foster youth and foster parents) on a quarterly basis. TRY utilizes suggestions and feedback to support decision making with regard to program changes and planning of new programs.

Data collected from foster parents, foster youth, and at-risk youth, adults and families engaged with the child welfare system, along with suggestions from experienced staff has significantly influenced the design of TRY's foster care program described in this proposal. Specifically, input has influenced foster care staffing patterns. As you will see later in this proposal, TRY has incorporated a staffing plan that allows for a small staff to client ratio; as well as staff members whose primary responsibility is transportation assistance. Input from foster parents has stressed the importance and value of the availability and responsiveness of TRY staff, thus resulting in a lower client to staff ratio, which will allow staff the greatest availability to support parents. Furthermore, feedback from foster parents has brought to light the issues surrounding transportation of foster youth to various appointments. Youth in foster care often have a disproportionately greater number of appointments/services than their counterparts. Foster parents sometimes find it difficult to manage the day-to-day appointments in addition to the extras required for foster youth. As a result, TRY has included staff members devoted specifically to transportation to ensure that foster parents are not over-taxed and that foster youth attend all necessary appointments.

Finally, feedback from foster parents and foster youth have stressed the importance of "letting families be families". According to our foster families, they are overwhelmed with requirements and regulations, which often interfere with the ebb and flow of the family. On several occasions, our foster families have shunned the idea of "another meeting" or appointment such as parent support sessions or family activities. As a result, TRY has designed peer support services to be fluid, available, but not mandatory for foster parents.

2. Describe your organization's demonstrated experience working with communities and populations that are diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, religion, culture and SOGIE and reflective of the target population.

Organizational Experience

Working with Diverse Populations: Three Rivers Youth was founded in 1880 as the Home for Colored Children. Born out of a racial justice agenda, the organization responded to the racial disparities of excluding orphaned black youth from the Caucasian run orphanages. Of the many

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

orphanages founded during that era, TRY remains one of three in this nation that persevered over time, reinventing its focus while continuously serving persons of color. Our programming data shows that most of our clients (approximately 86%) are African American with over 20% identifying as LGBTQIA+. While quantitative data regarding ethnicity, SOGIE, culture and religion is not available, qualitative data shows that our client population is comprised of diverse youth, adults, and families. As a Sanctuary Certified Organization TRY recognizes every client and staff as individuals creating a platform of non-violence and open communication where topics of race, ethnicity, religion, culture and SOGIE can be discussed and celebrated. Furthermore, TRY ensures each client has access to religious and cultural experiences through established partnerships within the community.

We pride ourselves on having a culturally diverse workforce and board membership which mirrors the populations and communities we serve. Most of our staff and board members are African American and live within the communities our clients call home. Our staff have both the knowledge and experience in the public welfare and education systems to offer the highest quality of services, while maintaining that sense of comradery with our clients.

3. Provide clear reasoning why your organization feels it is a strong candidate for this opportunity and how Foster Care fits well within your organization's mission.

TRY has been devoted to the mission of serving at-risk youth since our inception, foster care is an extension of service provision that allows us to serve one of our community's most vulnerable populations. With over 140 years of experience, TRY is uniquely positioned to best serve foster youth, foster parents and birth parents involved in the child welfare system. We are fiercely committed to servicing this population by responding to the interconnectivity of compounding issues affecting foster youth including, behavioral and mental health issues, substance abuse/use disorder, physical abuse, homelessness, neglect, domestic violence, sexual exploitation, and poverty. TRY recognizes and actively uncovers the root causes of issues resulting in engagement with the child welfare system. Furthermore, through our experience TRY has recognized the importance of providing a systemic approach, where at-risk youth, adults, and families receive a holistic menu of services to break the generational cycle of child welfare involvement.

4. Provide the number of homes and total bed capacity you anticipate being able to maintain at any given time. Be specific about the number of homes you anticipate being best equipped to care for different child demographics and other characteristics (e.g., infants, teenagers, Therapeutic Foster Care, LGBTQIA+ individuals).

TRY's proposed foster care program is designed to serve approximately 50 youth (50 beds) aged 0-21 years old at any given time in 30 foster homes, which allows for 1-2 youth per home or more to allow for sibling groups. The program size permits TRY to make a significant impact without overtaxing our capacity and sacrificing the quality of services. It also allows for flexibility and growth. Based on the demographic of youth in foster care and other requirements as outlined in this RFP, TRY anticipates the following characteristics of foster homes.

- TRY's foster care program will begin with 9 Therapeutic Foster Homes (30%) and expand to 15 Therapeutic Foster Homes or 50%. Therapeutic Foster Homes will have

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

specific requirements for foster parent qualification and training. More about Therapeutic Foster Homes is outlined in question 11.

- In addition to Therapeutic Foster Homes TRY anticipates having at minimum 1 Respite Foster Home, 1 Emergency Respite Foster Home, 1 Emergency Placement Home, 7 Foster Homes specifically equipped to serve teens, 2 homes prepared to serve infants, 3 foster homes available for LGBTQIA+ Individuals, and 6 general foster homes.

It is important to note that client demographics and characteristics are not mutually exclusive. TRY recognizes the importance of not limiting the capacity of foster parents to only serve one specific type of child, or children with specific characteristics. TRY's proposed foster care program will ensure that foster parents are properly trained and resourced to serve multiple demographics of foster youth. TRY's training program, discussed later in this RFP, will ensure foster parents are well rounded and capable of handling any issues that may occur within the foster home. Furthermore, TRY staff will partner with foster parents and facilitate communication between foster parents so for example, those with extra training to handle teens can assist a general foster parent who might have a teen placed in their home. In addition, TRY will stress the importance of not narrowing the purview of acceptable foster youth with prospective foster parents prior to certification.

Promoting Placement Stability (60 points)

5. Describe your plan for *recruitment* of diverse, culturally humble Foster Care families who will provide high-quality and trauma-informed care and safety for children. Please include:
 - a. Specifics about which populations you will target.
 - b. The strategies you will use to ensure your Foster Care families are diverse and culturally humble.
 - c. The recruitment staffing strategy, specific roles and number of staff involved in the recruitment of Foster Care families.
 - d. The specific recruitment strategies you will use for Emergency Placement Homes, Respite Homes and Emergency Respite Homes.
 - e. How you will incorporate a "customer service" approach.
 - f. How you include matching events and preplacement visits in your approach.

A: Target population: Recruitment of diverse, compassionate, culturally humble, open-minded, and devoted foster parents is the first step to ensuring placement stability in a trauma-informed and safe environment. TRY's current foster care program has succeeded in recruiting and retaining diverse foster homes including minority, same-sex, single parent homes of all ages. TRY's proposed foster care program will target minority populations, specifically those residing in at-risk communities such as Penn Hills, Clairton, Homewood, and McKeesport. TRY will target individuals and couples (same-sex and male/female) from a wide age range to offer services to foster youth including those interested in fostering teens, youth with behavioral/medical needs, infants, and foster youth of all ages. A specific target population for foster parents, with which TRY has had success, are those homes where biological children are seniors/juniors in high-school or with children who have recently moved out. These "empty nesters" usually have the capacity and resources to care for a foster youth. TRY will target individuals and couples with a combination of trauma background, life experience as well as

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

professional degrees and training. TRY will also focus on recruiting individuals who have experience working with the child welfare system including former/current staff members of child welfare organizations, who are aware of the behavioral needs of and the impact of trauma on this population.

B: Strategies to Ensure Diversity and Cultural Humility: To ensure cultural humility and diversity among foster parents, TRY must first guarantee these traits in foster care staff. TRY will make a conscious effort to hire staff that are both culturally sensitive and racially balanced, mirroring the target population. The first step in ensuring cultural humility among foster parents is to make certain TRY's foster care Recruiter understands and can recognize cultural humility among prospective foster parents. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) defines cultural humility as "a lifelong process of self-reflection and self-critique whereby the individual not only learns about another's culture, but one starts with an examination of her/his own beliefs and cultural identities." TRY will rely on the expertise of the foster care Recruiter utilizing a screening protocol to recognize the signs of cultural humility among foster parents. These signs will be evident during the initial and subsequent interviews with prospective foster parents. TRY's foster care Recruiter will be trained to ascertain a prospective foster parent's understanding of their own culture and their opinions/biases against other cultures. They will be expected to pick up undercurrents of compassion, empathy, through culturally sensitive speech. Training in cultural humility will also be key to becoming a foster parent with TRY.

The first strategy to ensure diversity among foster parents is to make a conscious effort when recruiting. TRY's foster care Recruiter will target recruitment efforts among minority and ethnically diverse populations in at-risk communities. In addition, marketing and recruitment materials will be specifically designed to highlight the need for and benefit of diversity among foster parents. Having a diverse workforce bolsters TRY's ability to recruit individuals from diverse backgrounds. Furthermore, utilizing already established foster parents as referral sources for prospective foster parents will increase the diversity of TRY's resource families.

C: Recruitment Staff & Strategy: TRY's proposed foster care program includes one dedicated full-time staff member for foster parent recruitment. The foster care Recruiter will be responsible for all outreach, marketing, and recruitment efforts up until a prospective foster parent completes the initial application. After completing the initial application and agreeing to become a foster parent with TRY the Recruiter conducts a warm hand off to the Program Director who will complete initial intake paperwork and begin certification.

Foster parent recruitment is a multi-step process, where interested individuals and couples see and hear information regarding foster care several times before making the decision to become foster parents. TRY's foster care Recruiter will be responsible for providing prospective foster parents with the necessary information about being a foster parent, while simultaneously building rapport to assuage concerns and assessing the suitability of each prospective parent. Foster parent recruitment at TRY will include refer-a-friend incentives, recruitment events/activities (including virtual events), billboards and/or radio advertisements and established social media presence where interested parties can discuss issues surrounding foster care and prospective parents can be identified. In addition, TRY plans to leverage already established relationships with McKeesport and other school districts, churches, community

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

organizations and other non-profits to recruit foster parents. Overall recruitment at TRY will be both individual within our organization and communal participating in DHS's Recruitment Collaborative to coordinate recruitment efforts and share learning and best practices of recruitment experiences.

D: Specific Recruitment for Specialized Homes: Beyond general recruitment strategies, foster parents being recruited to offer specialized services including, Emergency Placement Homes, Respite Homes and Emergency Respite Homes will be the focus of targeted recruitment efforts. TRY's Recruiter will listen to the preferences and concerns of potential foster parents, specifically those interested, but wary of a long-term placement. The Recruiter will be responsive to prospective foster parent concerns, tailoring information based on the prospective foster parents' questions, opinions, and requests. Accurate marketing materials specifying Foster Home options at TRY are vital to ensure proper messaging. As a sanctuary certified organization open communication and transparency during recruitment will ensure Foster Parents who agree to be Emergency, Respite and Emergency Respite Homes understand the need for and specific requirements of these homes, thus ensuring availability and stability for foster youth.

E: Customer Service: According to AdoptUSkids three dimensions make up the PRO Framework for good customer service in child-welfare: process, relationships, and organization. TRY's proposed foster care program adheres to these principles.

- **Process:** TRY's process will focus on relational consistency and the dynamics of integrity. TRY's foster care program has received significant positive feedback regarding our availability and responsiveness to current foster parents. We will continue this practice moving forward. TRY's foster care Case Managers, Therapeutic Case Managers, Parent Specialist and the Program Director are available 24 hours a day 7 days a week to foster parents. The proposed foster care program will have a 24/7 on-call system where foster parents have continual access to TRY staff whenever necessary. Access to and responsiveness of staff is expected for prospective foster parents as well as certified parents. Foster parents receive warm hand-offs between staff members during the process of being certified and/or during service transitions; this ensures they never feel abandoned by the staff with whom they have already established a relationship.
- **Relationships:** Paramount to recruitment and retention of qualified foster parents is the building of rapport and the relationships between parents and staff. TRY's foster care program focuses on building a partnership with foster parents. We ensure foster parents know they are a valuable member of TRY's foster care team. Staff ensure foster parents and prospective foster parents are treated with respect, care, and empathy, while continuously engaging them in the treatment/service of foster youth.
- **Organization:** As a sanctuary certified organization, TRY is committed to a culture that responds to staff and client needs by adhering to the 7 commitments of Sanctuary: non-violence, social learning, social responsibility, democracy, open communication, emotional intelligence and growth & change. At the organization level good customer service is an expectation for all staff. Quality services and customer service is maintained through weekly supervision and quality improvement feedback loops including suggestions and satisfaction surveys. TRY reviews satisfaction data quarterly and makes programmatic adjustments as necessary.

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

F: Matching Events/Pre-placement Visits: In TRY's proposed foster care program, Foster Care Case Managers initiate and partner with Allegheny County, Office of Children Youth & Families for sponsored matching events. TRY staff takes an active role in advocating for foster youth and foster parents during matching events, focusing on the strengths of each home and the compatibility of youth with specific homes. Once matched TRY's Case Managers will organize pre-placement visits usually held in the foster parent home.

6. Describe specific efforts you will take and approaches you will use to *retain* foster parents, including Foster Care parents who have Emergency Placement Homes, Respite Homes and/or Emergency Respite Homes. Include how support will be available to Foster Care parents 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Foster Parent Retention: Nationally, the turnover rate for foster parents ranges from 30% to 50% annually resulting in a lack of available homes for youth. Such high rates of turnover result in placement instability and affect not only foster care providers, but the youth in care. TRY's foster parent retention strategies begin during recruitment and training and continue through a foster parent's service to youth. TRY's strategies focus on the youth, the parent, and the family as a unit ensuring each member is valued and has the support necessary for retention.

TRY's approach to foster parent retention begins during recruitment following the adage of "the best defense is a good offence". Through feedback with foster parents including those who decided to cease offering foster care services, TRY has realized that properly preparing and resourcing foster parents to feel confident in their ability to respond to crisis and other issues improves overall retention. TRY's robust foster parent training curriculum ensures foster parents' preparation for service provision. Training continues to be available to foster parents throughout their service with TRY, providing knowledge on a continual basis.

After properly preparing foster parents, the next step in retention is providing quality services and support. TRY's foster care program takes a team approach to service provision, where staff establish a partnership with foster parents to serve foster youth. By approaching service provision as a partnership, foster parents feel a sense of responsibility to TRY, our mission, and the youth we serve. Staff are available 24/7 and responsive to foster parent inquiries and needs. TRY's proposed foster care program includes a crisis response team that will be available to respond to a crisis occurring within the foster home at any time. Good customer service is an integral part of TRY's retention strategy. TRY's customer service approach, explained above, ensures foster parents feel respected and valued as a member of TRY's team. Providing foster parents and foster youth with a voice also bolsters retention. TRY's quality assurance program ensures open communication through feedback loops including surveys and suggestions. Another integral aspect of support for TRY's foster parents is the availability of respite. TRY's proposed foster care program includes at least 1 respite foster home and 1 emergency respite foster home, both homes will be available for foster parents who need a temporary reprieve from service provision; this number may fluctuate depending on the needs of the youth in care. It is important to note that the foster parents providing respite, emergency respite and emergency foster care are at a high risk for turnover due to the transient nature of their placements. TRY's retention strategy for these homes will include specific attention to the foster parents offering these services ensuring they play an active role in TRY's foster care program.

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

Finally, TRY recognizes the importance of standing up for our foster parents, not only supporting them through quality services, but advocating for them with DHS, family court, and the school system. TRY will promote system change and advocate for policy changes regarding unreasonable expectations that overtax foster parents and challenge retention.

7. Please describe a plan for facilitating peer supports for Foster Care parents. This may include strategies, a specific model (such as the Mockingbird Model) or informal mechanisms, and be based on common challenges, geography or something else.
 - a. Where you see fit, include innovative solutions that have arisen as a result of COVID-19 (e.g., videoconferencing, virtual visits).

TRY's proposed foster care program is designed to create a community of foster parents, birth parents, foster youth, and staff, where each individual works together to ensure the best possible outcomes. Peer support is an integral part of TRY's foster care community. TRY envisions a community where foster parents support each other through informal mechanisms that are individualized for each foster family. TRY's proposed foster care program focuses on "teaming" foster parents together. Each team will be comprised of two-three foster parents that will act as both peer support and mentors/mentees. The characteristics of the foster family teams will depend on the family characteristics and could connect families based on experience, demographics, geography, characteristics of youth, family composition etc... for example we may team an experienced foster parent with a new foster parent who is having anxiety; or we may pair a group of foster parents living close together geographically or having the same demographic of foster youth i.e. teens. Each team will be established based on the needs of the foster families. Teams will be expected to communicate regularly, participate in activities together and provide both support and respite to other team members.

If the outbreak of COVID-19 has taught us anything it is that people can come together even while staying apart. TRY's foster care program capitalizes on this idea and the new norm of virtual engagement through virtual peer support including support sessions and a foster care group via Facebook. Peer sessions will be offered on a standard schedule i.e. once a month. However, the sessions will not be mandatory. As stated previously in this proposal, feedback from foster parents and youth acknowledge the importance of having access to support but are reticent to commit to "another meeting". The overabundance of requirements on foster families disturbs the normal family rhythm, thus support sessions will be available, but not mandatory. In addition to peer support sessions, TRY will establish a Facebook Group designed to be a safe platform for prospective and active foster parents, foster youth, biological parents, TRY staff and relevant stakeholders to engage, support each other, and gain knowledge about applicable topics and available resources. Staff will maintain the Facebook Group encouraging discourse and posting information. Though it is a platform for open communication, TRY will establish and employ guidelines to preserve confidentiality and prevent unhealthy dialogue for the Facebook Group. Utilizing Facebook represents an innovative method of peer support and will depend on the overall participation of everyone involved. TRY's foster care staff will actively recruit group members and encourage current members to invite friends.

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

8. Describe your process and timeline for Foster Care Home approval. If your anticipated timeline will routinely take more than three months for approval from receipt of application, please explain.

Foster home approval begins during recruitment, where TRY's foster care Recruiter will assess each individual prospective foster parent for their readiness to commit to the overall 90-day certification process. Any interested parent is given a clear schedule of the certification activities to ensure they are prepared prior to beginning the process. Once a prospective foster parent has completed the initial inquiry, and has shown they are ready to commit, TRY's Recruiter will provide a warm-hand-off of prospective foster parents to the Program Director this will occur within 24 hours. An initial home visit is scheduled to discuss the foster care process, what it means to be a foster parent and complete an application. Upon receipt of the application, TRY begins the orientation and certification process which includes clearances, enhanced background checks, home inspections, physical and TB tests, reference checks, insurance certificates and the training requirements.

Assessing a prospective foster parent's readiness to commit to the 90-day certification and properly defining the process will prevent most delays. Having said that, TRY recognizes that circumstances occur that will delay the certification process including a medical issue or a life event within the family unit. The Program Director will provide support and direction to potential foster parents as they navigate the certification process. The new foster parents will remain connected to the Program Director until the certification process is near completion. At that time the Program Director will provide a warm-hand-off to the Case Manager or Therapeutic Case Manager who will remain connected to the family through their fostering experience. TRY's proposed foster care program will include an incentive process for prospective foster parents to improve their timely completion of certification. Incentives (gift cards, show/movie tickets, gift baskets etc...) will be given at the 25%, 50%, 75%, and 100% benchmarks. Prospective parents will be made aware of this incentive structure prior to committing to the overall certification process.

Promoting Well-Being (65 points)

9. Provide a detailed pre-service and ongoing training plan for Foster Care parents that emphasizes cultural humility and includes all required and relevant topic areas.

TRY's proposed foster care program takes a semester approach to foster parent training, where every foster parent participates in a core curriculum of training courses that are mandated by the state and/or county. In addition to core courses, cohorts of foster parents will participate in additional training courses designed to provide a deeper dive into information necessary to serve a specialized demographic of foster youth, i.e., Teens, LGBTQIA+ etc... Courses are offered on a set schedule with the allowance for make-up sessions for foster parents who miss courses due to extenuating circumstances.

TRY's core curriculum offers 30 hours of pre-service training for perspective foster parents and 12 hours of in-service training for current foster parents. Training is offered at times convenient for individuals and training may be completed in the family's home. TRY's training program

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

recognizes the differences among adult learners and will explore different mechanisms of information dissemination including role playing, experiential learning, coaching, and even shadowing within a foster home setting. Core pre-service training courses include: Orientation to TRY's Philosophy and Practices., The foster Care family's role and responsibilities to meet the child's needs; TRY's Role and responsibilities to assist the foster care family in serving the child. Professional Boundaries/ First Aid and CPR; Fire Safety and Universal Precautions; CPI training; HIPAA; Child Protective Services Law; SOGIE: Common Sense Parenting; Reasonable and Prudent Parenting; Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children; Suicide Prevention; Teaming and Conferencing; Tackling Group Dynamics; Cultural Competence: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Cultural Responsiveness to include, Racial equity, AFFIRM, and Cultural Humility; understanding children with special needs; Trauma Informed Care and Parenting; Managing difficult Behaviors; Anger Management; Mental Health Disorders in children; Substance Abuse Disorders; Child and Adolescent Development; Greif and Loss Issues; Attachment-Based Parenting Skills; Co-Parenting and relationship building with Birth Parents; Legal System Topics. An additional 15 hours of specialized courses will be required for foster parents providing specialized services including teens, LGBTQIA+, Therapeutic Homes and Infants. Specialized courses will include SOGIE, LGBTQIA+; CSEC; Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Cultural Responsiveness; Mandated Reporting; Passive Restraint; De-escalation; Crisis Response; Birth Family/Triad Relationships: Helping Teens Heal; and Creating Teen Connections. Specialized foster homes will be required to participate in 15 hours of in-service training annually.

Training at TRY is an ongoing process of growth and development for all foster parents. Monthly parenting meetings provide an opportunity for foster parents to hear about new topics or discuss age-old parenting topics. Training is continually refined and developed according to the needs of foster youth and foster parents. The Facebook Group will allow training topics and foster parents needs to be discussed on a continual basis. TRY will incorporate suggestions to streamline and advance training techniques and activities for foster parents.

10. Describe your plan to facilitate co-parenting between birth parents and Foster Care parents, including how you will connect these people as early on as possible after a new placement is established.

Co-parenting garners positive outcomes, including more stable placements, better emotional development, and faster return home for foster youth. TRY's approach to co-parenting is encompassed in our overall teaming approach to foster care. Biological parents are an integral part of TRY's foster care community and will be included in support sessions, the Facebook Group, training, and activities as necessary. TRY's co-parenting is driven by the foster parent who will participate in relevant training on recognizing and building parental protective factors that enhance outcomes for families and support reunification, including strategies to reinforce and celebrate successes.

TRY staff notify biological parents via letter immediately once a youth is placed in a foster home. An "icebreaker" meeting between birth parents and Foster Care parents will occur within 72 hours of a youth being placed in a foster home. The "icebreaker" meeting will focus on the wellbeing of the child, introductions between the foster and biological parents and a discussion

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

of the plan to include biological parents in all aspects of the youth's placement; it serves as a starting point for establishing communication and building a relationship.

TRY's foster care Case Managers, Parent Specialist along with foster parents will ensure ongoing communication between birth families, foster parents, and foster youth. TRY will coordinate activities and outings to include biological parents, foster parents and foster youth; these activities will allow engagement between foster and biological parents in a community setting. TRY expects that the initial meeting and many subsequent meetings will be via a virtual platform (ZOOM, TEAMS etc...). TRY also expects that biological parents will participate in feedback surveys, suggestions, and the Facebook group as their experiences are invaluable to the overall stability of foster care placement and successful reunification.

11. Provide a detailed plan for establishing and sustaining Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) homes. Please include:

- a. The standards of the specific model you intend to use and why you chose it.
- b. How you will implement the model, including specifics about the development and use of treatment plans at the client level.
- c. How your organizational capacity and infrastructure will be able meet all model standards and train and support Foster Care parents.
- d. Your proposed process and timeline to establish between 30% and 50% of your Foster Care homes as TFC settings.

A: Therapeutic Foster Care (TFC) at TRY: TFC at TRY is designed to adhere to the principles and standards of the Sanctuary Model, while incorporating best practices in TFC. The Sanctuary Model is an evidence-informed, organizational change model that addresses the impact of clients, staff and organizational trauma on overall service quality and outcomes. Sanctuary Certified Organizations have shown significantly better outcomes for clients, in addition to increased overall morale and improved retention rates for staff. The Sanctuary Model rests on four "pillars": Scientifically-grounded knowledge about trauma, adversity, and attachment (Trauma Theory); the Sanctuary Commitments as a values-based, interactive system; a Shared Language called "S.E.L.F."; and a set of practical instructions, the Sanctuary Toolkit, for creating and maintaining a Sanctuary culture.

- Pillar 1: Trauma Theory = Shared Knowledge
- Pillar 2: 7 Commitments = Shared Values, Beliefs, and Ideas
- Pillar 3: S.E.L.F = Shared Language/Communication
- Pillar 4: Toolkit = Shared Rituals, Practices, and Traditions

TRY's TFC parents will be trained in trauma theory, adhere to the 7 commitments, understand, and utilize sanctuary's shared language and incorporate relevant rituals, practices, and traditions in their foster homes. Key tools of the Sanctuary model that will be utilized for TFC are community meetings, safety plans, self-care plans, red-flag reviews, and S.E.L.F. Treatment Planning.

Utilizing sanctuary principles, TRY's TFC Treatment Team addresses problematic behaviors that could potentially disrupt foster care placement. TRY's internal Behavioral Health program

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

staff will be available for clinical consultation and support. Behavioral Health Therapists will participate in Treatment Team and assist in treatment planning.

TRY, who is in our final year of sanctuary certification, has seen positive outcomes for current clients when utilizing sanctuary principles and standards. In addition to sanctuary principles and standards, TRY's TFC has incorporated components of other evidence based TFC programs as described by the California Evidence Based Clearing House for Child Welfare.

B: Model Implementation: Implementation of TFC at TRY begins with recruitment and training of staff and foster parents. TFC staff will be expected to have a more clinical background and experience working with youth with behavioral issues and/or mental diagnosis as well as those who are medically needy. TRY will recruit and train foster parents who are willing and able to handle youth and situations associated with a therapeutic foster home, specifically behavioral and medical issues that may arise. TRY will recruit TFC foster parents that show maturity and physical dexterity that will be necessary to handle the youth in TFC homes. TRY recommends that at least one parent stays at home, for example a single parent household where the parent works from home or a couple where one parent works from home or is a stay-at-home parent. Foster parents make up a key piece of the TFC Treatment Team and are on the frontline regarding treatment plan implementation. Thus, it is a necessity to have a parent available to reinforce treatment goals and respond to crisis 24/7. Youth in need of TFC often have an abundance of appointments, school related issues and plethora of services coming into the home, which is another reason for the stay-at-home recommendation. Once recruited, TFC foster parents will participate in approximately 30 hours of pre-service training and an additional 15 hours of specialized training for TFC.

TFC homes and foster youth will receive the same services available to all TRY's foster care parents and youth, in addition to more therapeutic services including a Treatment Team and a treatment plan. TFC Treatment Teams are comprised of the Foster Parent, a Therapist, Therapeutic Case Manager, and Program Director. Following sanctuary standards and principles, the Treatment Team works together with the TFC youth to establish a safety plan, self-care plan and design an individualized Treatment Plan utilizing S.E.L.F. Treatment Plans are strength based and individualized for each youth. They are designed to address behavioral, social, and academic issues affecting foster youth's overall wellbeing. The Treatment Team headed by the foster parent utilizes the Treatment Plan as a roadmap to guide the foster youth to positive outcomes. Treatment Plan goals may include recommendations for individual, group or family therapy sessions including foster youth, foster parents, and biological parents. Therapy session will be held at the frequency recommended by the Treatment Team in the Treatment Plan.

C: Organizational Capacity: After completing three years of Sanctuary Certification and meeting all relevant standards and requirements, Sanctuary Model standards have saturated TRY's infrastructure to allow all programs and services to focus through a trauma informed lens. As a result, TRY is poised to implement the expand the sanctuary model practices and standards to the proposed foster care program. Our current staff includes a mental health program team that will assist with treatment planning for TFC and a part-time training specialist, who will expand his services to all newly recruited foster parents. All other staff for the proposed Foster Care Program (Program Director, Case Managers, Therapeutic Case Managers, Recruiter, and

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

Drivers) will need to be recruited, hired, and trained. TRY plans to fully collaborate with CYF for foster parents to participate in the county's training module.

D: Timeline: TRY recognizes the importance of hiring the right staff and recruiting the right foster parents for TFC. TFC homes will be high-risk for incidents and crisis, having prepared and compassionate foster parents with well trained and responsive staff can prevent issue escalation that could result in placement instability or foster parent burnout. TRY plans to recruit 30% or 9 of the 30 proposed TFC foster homes within the first year of program implementation, basically during the first wave of recruitment. In year two, TRY will focus on the remaining 20% or 6 more homes by both recruiting and converting already established foster homes to TFC homes.

12. Describe your plan to ensure timely completion of assessments for children in Foster Care through staff training, supervision, and quality assurance.

Case Managers and Therapeutic Case Managers are responsible for all assessments associated with children. Assessments for youth include but are not limited to initial safety assessment, 15 & 30 day assessments, Child and Adolescent Needs Assessment (CANS), Educational Screening Tool, Individual Service Plan (ISP), and Transition Planning. The Treatment Team will be responsible for conducting all assessments based on Treatment Planning for TFC youth. In addition, the Program Director will conduct all required assessments with regard to foster home certification, including the Home Study/Family Profile, Resource Parent Development Plan etc.... TRY will ensure timely completion of assessments through staff training, supervision, and our Performance and Quality Improvement (PQI) strategies.

Training: During the onboarding process, all potential TRY staff are apprised of their job duties. Foster care staff will receive a detailed explanation of the specific assessments for which they are responsible. TRY invests a significant number of resources in providing training opportunities to both expand staff knowledge and hone skills in the field. Newly hired staff are responsible for completing 40 hours of pre-service training. Current staff are required at a minimum to complete 20 hours of training annually. Training is conducted by a part-time trainer, knowledgeable TRY staff, and outside trainers sponsored by TRY. Upon completion of specific training, the staff member receives a certificate of completion noting the name of the training and the hours completed. All staff hired for the foster care program will receive training and one-on-one coaching about required assessments. This may include outside certification.

Supervision: Three Rivers Youth recognizes supervision as an important activity to enable the provision of quality services. Supervision is an on-going process of development, consultation, communication, accountability, support, and evaluation. Supervision involves input from both the supervisor and the supervisee with mutual responsibility for communication of information, ideas, and awareness of issues.

Staff providing foster care services will meet with the Program Director for a minimum of 1 hour a week for supervision. In addition, the program will host team meetings for staff at a minimum once a month. During supervision and team meetings staff will be able to discuss their clients and brainstorm solutions to difficult cases, as well as ensure timely assessments and quality services. In addition, supervision and clinical team meetings will facilitate problem-solving and professional development.

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

Quality Assurance: Three Rivers Youth's Performance Quality Improvement (PQI) program is designed to promote excellence in service delivery and organizational management and to support the continuous improvement of both through a systemic, broad-based, organization-wide and inclusive process of engagement and quality improvement involving both staff and stakeholders. Our PQI program supports the organization's long-term strategic objectives by providing qualitative and quantitative data to enhance decision-making and planning through stakeholder and needs-based analyses; longitudinal and benchmark analysis of client outcomes; feedback from stakeholders; and ongoing program evaluation. PQI is driven by an organization-wide qualitative and quantitative metric system that comprehensively measures organizational performance, client outcomes and program impact using nationally recognized indicators and benchmarks. Part of PQI includes program compliance, including timely and accurate completion of required assessments. The PQI Committee as well as the Program Director will review client files monthly for compliance. During these compliance checks, the PQI process will reveal any issues with completing assessments. The Program Director will follow up with staff accordingly.

Building a High-Quality and Consistent System (15 points)

13. Describe your organization's plan to regularly collect feedback from Foster Care children, parents, and families and how you will incorporate it into your Foster Care program and ensure continuous quality improvements. Please include:
- How you will collect feedback from children in Foster Care and use it to inform your practice.
 - How you will get Foster Care family input to evaluate what supports are needed, and how this feedback will inform changes to practices.

A: Collecting Feedback: Qualitative data in the form of satisfaction surveys, focus groups, and suggestions is an integral part of our overall PQI strategy. Youth in foster care and resource families will have an open opportunity to offer suggestions via a virtual suggestion box. In addition, the Case Managers will collect satisfaction survey information quarterly and specifically at discharge. Information gathered will highlight specific topics of concern including issues clients and foster parents are facing, needed resources, and requests for support. TRY's proposed foster care program will build a Youth Advisory Board (YAB) of foster youth to help drive services delivery through recommendations/suggestions. The YAB will be expected to meet quarterly in-person or via virtual platform to discuss foster care at TRY.

B: Improving Programs: The Program Director will collect and submit Satisfaction Surveys, Point of service client feedback surveys and suggestions to the Director of Development and Organizational Advancement. The Director will report qualitative data monthly to the Executive Team, who will make decisions about remedying any disclosed issues. This information is also presented by the CEO to the Board of Directors Quarterly.

14. Describe your process and plan for tracking, entering, and reporting data in a timely and accurate manner. Be specific about which staff will be required to perform the data entry, how they will be supervised, monitored, and supported and where data entry fits into the overall business process.

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

The Program Director will ensure accurate and timely client-level and program-level data collection and data entry into an agreed upon information management system. For TRY's Foster Care Program, the Program Director will be responsible for entering data into the EMPER system, Foster Care Home Status System and completing pipeline reports. Case Managers will be responsible for all data entry into the KIDS System and SharePoint. It is the expectation at TRY that program staff utilize time each week to complete data entry into the various systems. The Program Director monitors staff's data entry through daily monitoring, weekly checks, and supervisions, and monthly PQI audits. Staff provide both direct and indirect services to foster care clients and parents. Indirect services include data entry and reporting, both integral to overall service provision.

Staffing and Staff Training (40 points)

15. Attach an organizational chart that reflects the positions, including responsibilities and current or desired qualifications, of all staff members involved with all components of operating Foster Care. The attachment is not included in the page count.

See Attachment F

16. Describe your plan and strategy for recruiting any additional staff needed for Foster Care, or how current staff meets all needs, including the staff who will support TFC homes. Describe past successes using this strategy.

TRY employs a comprehensive recruitment strategy which includes internal postings as well as external job postings on our website, and through relationships with colleges and Universities, Career Links, Images Pittsburgh, Non-profit Talent, Monster, Indeed, Job Gateway, local newspapers, employment sites, job fairs, churches and faith-based institutions, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh (multiple locations), and NAACP.

As an equal opportunity employer, Three Rivers Youth has great success in recruiting, developing, and engaging a diverse and talented workforce. We conduct a thorough review of employee references, employment verification, and background checks. Onboarding staff will include (2) interviews, comprehensive orientation, individual and team supervision. We have an open-door policy across all levels of leadership, annual performance evaluations, and weekly individual supervision. TRY's retention efforts include use of the Sanctuary model Principles. Feedback loops, and staff recognition through both formal and informal programs (ie. Employee of the year).

As stated previously, our current staff includes a mental health program team that will assist with treatment planning for TFC and a part-time training specialist, who will expand his services to all newly recruited foster parents. All other staff for the proposed Foster Care Program (Program Director, Case Managers, Therapeutic Case Managers, Recruiter, and Drivers) will need to be recruited, hired, and trained.

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

17. Provide a detailed staff training plan that emphasizes cultural humility and ensures that staff are trained in relevant topic areas, including the changes you will make to the existing training program to meet requirements.

TRY invests a significant amount of resources into providing training opportunities to both expand staff knowledge and hone skills in the field. Newly hired staff are responsible for completing 40 hours of pre-service training. Current staff are required at minimum to complete 20 hours of training annually. Training is conducted by a trainer, knowledgeable TRY staff, and outside trainers sponsored by TRY. Upon completion of specific training, the staff member receives a certificate of completion noting the name of the training and the hours completed.

We provide an array of training opportunities at Three Rivers youth including all 3680 - 3700 trainings, Emergency medical first aid training, including Coronary Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) and AED, Crisis management and how to diffuse a situation, Child abuse recognition and staff responsibilities, Basic safety practices, including fire and other emergency evacuation, procedures and the use of fire extinguishers, Principles and practice of child care. In addition to clearances the staff will be required to properly use and comprehend the Key Information and Demographic System (KIDS).

Also, all staff including proposed foster care program staff will be required to have the proper training including, but not be limited to the following topics:

- Substance abuse 101
- Adolescent development
- Working with families
- Concurrent child welfare permanency planning
- Teen relationship abuse
- HIV/AIDS
- Universal precautions - Blood Borne Pathogens,
- Prudent Parenting Standards,
- SOGIE,
- Language Barriers
- Risking Connection,
- Child and Adolescent Development,
- Mental Health First Aid,
- Suicide Prevention
- Behavioral management & modification
- Child development disorders
- LGBTQIA+
- Sanctuary Model Standards, Principles and Practices
- Gender identity& expression SOGIE
- Sexually acting out
- Trauma theory
- Crisis intervention
- Recognizing and assessing child safety
- Work safety

18. Describe your plan for hiring racially and culturally diverse staff.

TRY prides itself for being racially and culturally diverse. We intentionally look at a demographics and clientele when we are making hiring decisions plus all of our employees are trained in cultural competency and implicit bias however they must demonstrate respect for diversity and differences among youth, families, communities, and staff we serve. Staff participates in annual dignity and respect plus they must understand commonalities and

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

differences among peoples of diverse cultures, genders, races, ethnicities, social classes, abilities, sexual orientations, ideologies, and faiths. We work on team projects and individual activities, staff is encouraged to search for, retain, and appreciate information about families, communities, and employees with cultural and economic backgrounds different from their own. Staff learns the ability to build on diversity among individuals to strengthen organizations, communities, and individual capacities. We also have started a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion discussion as part of our PQI process.

Organizational Capacity and Implementation Challenges (30 points)

19. Complete the following chart of services your organization currently provides in contract with DHS and/or other PA counties. You may add additional lines to the chart, as needed.

Service Name	Service Description	Contracting Entity	Contract Amount	Start Date of Contract
Foster Care	Foster Care	DHS	NA	July 1
Family Partnership Program	In-Home Services	DHS	\$1,194,822	July 1
Intervention	Drug & Alcohol Intervention	DHS	\$182,993	July 1
Recovery House	Support/Transitional services for persons with SUDs	DHS	\$275,000	July 1
ALDA	Funds for uninsured Outpatient D&A Treatment	DHS	\$20,000	July 1
Ungrouped Services	Training and education	DHS	\$25,000	July 1
Goal 13 Health of Network	COVID-19 Assistance	DHS	\$52,526	July 1

20. Describe the challenges that your organization has experienced in the past and/or that you anticipate with fulfilling the Foster Care Scope of Services, as described in the RFP, and how you will mitigate those challenges.

Historically, TRY has experienced three significant challenges: a properly resourced program, the recruitment of foster parents and timely foster parent certification.

First and foremost, without proper financial support a program as complex as foster care cannot run smoothly and ultimately does not have the capacity to grow. A foster care agency is not able to receive funding until a youth is placed in a foster home. Thus, the services necessary to recruit, certify and train an ideal foster parent remain unfunded. To mitigate this issue TRY has submitted an accurate budget showing the “true cost” of providing high quality foster care services. Additionally, TRY will maintain a high integration of certified homes and close the gap between certified and placement.

The second issue TRY has experienced and expects to present an issue in our proposed foster care program is the recruitment of foster parents. Without a dedicated Recruiter the recruitment of foster parents for TRY’s current foster care program has been reliant on the Program Director, who also has several other foster care tasks. To ensure the issue of recruitment does not occur, TRY has included a full-time foster care Recruiter in our proposed program. With a full-time Recruiter, exclusively dedicated to outreach, marketing and recruitment, TRY expects to see improved recruitment numbers.

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

Finally, TRY has experienced issues with the timely certification of foster parents, an issue that has been exasperated by the COVID-19 Pandemic. Foster parents have routinely canceled appointments for home studies, neglected to attend training, and on some occasions refused to complete paperwork in a timely manner. TRY has already begun mitigating these issues by employing in-home training to alleviate issues with scheduling and attending required training and streamlining the process of completing paperwork. For the proposed program, TRY will better engage prospective foster parents from the beginning, build rapport with prospective parents and provide warm hand-offs from the Recruiter to the Program Director for certification and training. TRY will enforce accountability and commitment to the process of becoming a foster parent from recruitment throughout certification.

21. Provide a plan for implementation that clearly identifies your organization’s strengths and challenges to implementing the Scope of Services, including the changes your organization will need to make (in terms of staffing, training, structure, Board of Directors, etc.) to deliver the services described. Attach a timeline for implementation that includes benchmarks and anticipated completion dates, clearly showing what can be in place by July 2021 and what will require more time to implement. The attachment is not included in the page count.

Financial Management and Budget (10 points, not included in page count)

22. Provide a detailed line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing and sustaining Foster Care, including the suggested Maintenance Rate for TFC homes for the selected model and whether that amount varies based on the age of the child in care. You may provide the line-item budget as an attachment (e.g., Excel file) or in the space below.

See Attachment H

23. Provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in the proposed budget.

REVENUE		TOTAL
Number of Clients		50
Allegheny County		\$1,246,658
Total Revenue		\$1,246,658
EXPENSES		
Salaries & Wages		
VP Operations	Current Salary * 10%	\$10,000
Program Director	1 FT Position - Salaried	\$50,000
Case Manager	1 FT Position - Salaried	\$35,000
Case Manager	1 FT Position - Salaried	\$35,000
Therapeutic Case Manager	3 FT Positions @ \$23/hour * 2080 hours	\$143,520
Parent Specialist	1 FT Position - Salaried	\$35,000
Recruiter	1 FT Position - Salaried	\$35,000

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

Trainer	1 FT Position - Salaried	\$35,000
Drivers	2 PT Positions @ \$12/hour * 1040 hours	\$24,960
Total Salaries & Wages		\$403,480
Benefits & Taxes		
FICA Tax	Total Salaries * 7.65%	\$30,866
PA Unemployment Tax	Total Salaries * 2.05%	\$8,271
Workmen's Compensation Tax	Total Salaries * 5.02%	\$20,255
Health Insurance	9 FT Positions * \$6,000 (annual health, dental, and vision care)	\$54,000
Total Benefits & Taxes		\$113,392
Total Personnel Costs		\$516,872
Operating Expenses		
Foster Care Providers	current rate \$25/day * 50 clients * 365 days	\$456,250
Staff Development	\$500/employee * 10 positions	\$5,000
Laptops	\$1000/unit * 9 positions	\$9,000
Office Supplies	\$200/month * 12 months	\$2,400
Housekeeping Supplies	\$150/month * 12 months	\$1,800
Telephone	\$650/month * 12 months (includes monthly program cost and staff cell phones)	\$7,800
Occupancy		
Rent	\$400/month * 12 months	\$4,800
Electric/Gas	\$450/month * 12 months	\$5,400
Water/Sanitation	\$150/month * 12 months	\$1,800
Equipment Rental	\$150/month * 12 months	\$1,800
Building Maintenance	\$300/month * 12 months	\$3,600
Pest Control	\$100/month * 12 months	\$1,200
Insurance	\$400/month * 12 months	\$4,800
Travel		
Van Gas	\$600/month * 12 months	\$7,200
Van Repairs	\$300/month * 12 months	\$3,600
Auto Mileage	\$350/month * 12 months	\$4,200
Parental Engagement		
Client Assistance	\$25/month * 12 months * 50 clients	\$15,000
Food	\$400/month * 12 months (Monthly Meetings)	\$4,800
Transportation	\$200/month * 12 months (Monthly Meetings)	\$2,400
Total Operating Expenses		\$542,850
Total Expenses		\$1,059,722
Administration Expense - 15%		\$186,936
Total Expenses		\$1,246,658
Operating Surplus (Deficit)		(\$0)

RFP for Foster Care Agencies

NOTES:

Revenue based total expenses/total number of days of care :

Total Expenses = \$1,246,658

Total Days of Care = 50 clients * 365 days = 18,250 days

Daily Rate = \$1,246,658/18,250 = \$68.31

Attachments:

- A. MWDBE Documents
- B. 2016-2017 Audit
- C. 2017-2018 Audit
- D. 2018-2019 Audit
- E. W-9
- F. Organizational Chart
- G. Implementation Timeline
- H. Line-Item Budget

ATTACHMENT F

Organizational Chart

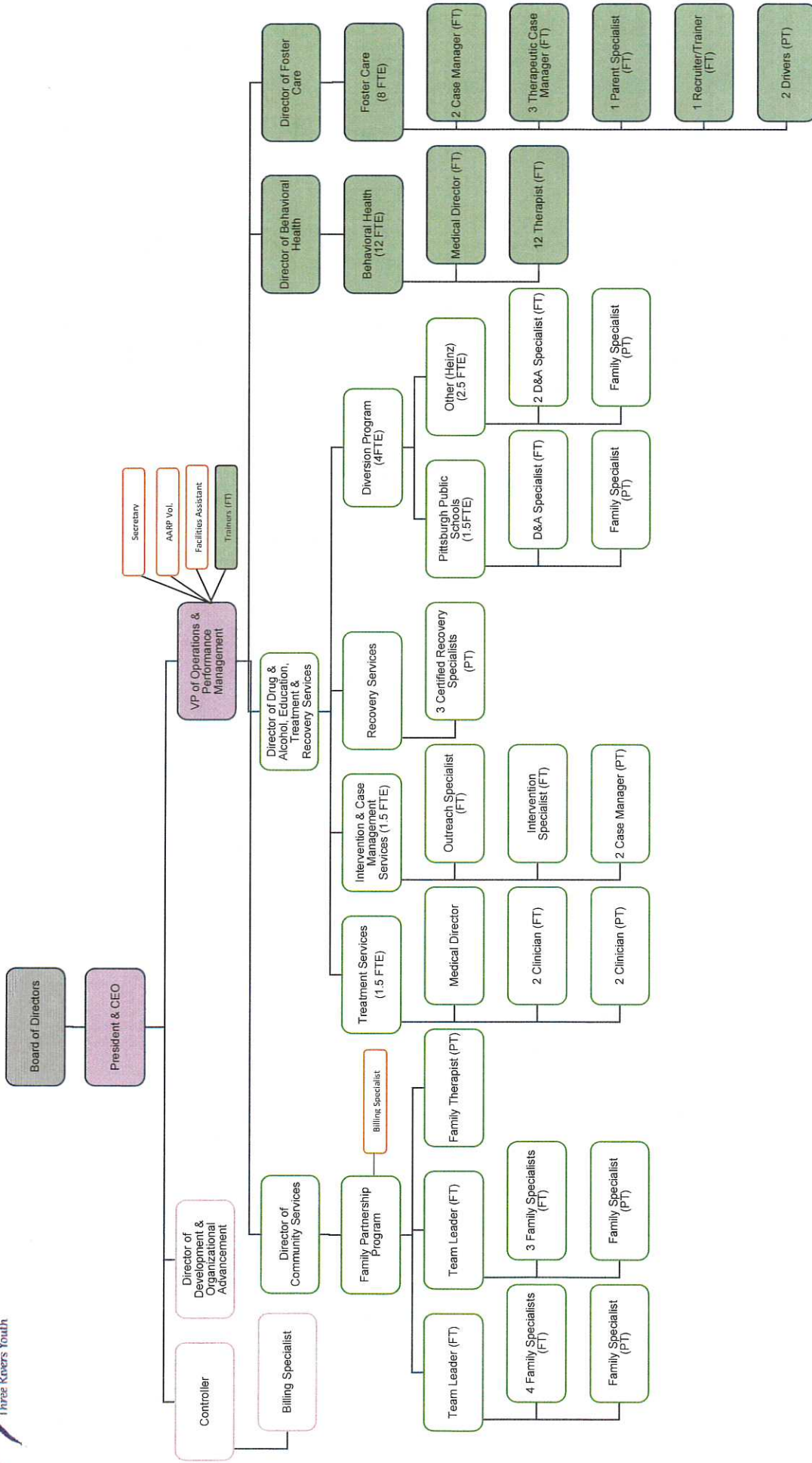
Staffing

Positions	Qualifications	Current or desired Duties & Responsibilities
<p>VP, Operations and Performance Management W. Aaron Mickens</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● M.S.L.B.E. in business Ethics ● 15 years with Three Rivers Youth ● 25 years' experience in children, client & family, BH and D&A services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oversees all programs ● Reports to President/CEO ● Supervises Directors of In-Home, Education, Foster Care, Behavioral Health and Drug and Alcohol Services ● Monitors compliance with all local, state & federal contracts and regulations
<p>Program Director</p>	<p>He/she must possess a masters-level degree in a relevant field or be actively working towards completion of a master's program. Program Supervisors must possess a minimum of three years' experience in children, youth or family services or demonstrate similar relevant professional experience. Verbal and written communication skills to carry out assigned tasks, cultural competence and knowledge and skill in individual and group counseling is required. Must have a valid PA driver's license and reliable transportation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Oversees foster care program ● Supervises management staff & evaluates performance ● Performs clinical supervision of therapeutic case managers ● Provides quality assurance with respect to compliance & reporting. The Program Director would be responsible for direct supervision of the program staff and oversight of day-to-day operations. His/her primary responsibilities would include: ● Manage the daily structure and functioning of the program to assure compliance with governmental regulations and agency policies and procedures. ● Supervise and manages assigned staff, including leadership of weekly supervisions and staff meetings. ● Plan, manage and coordinate the transportation and transition of clients. ● Provide direction to staff concerning transportation and safety needs and strategies regarding clients. ● Provide presentations as needed. ● Assume responsibility for the financial management of the program. ● Ensure that client records are complete, accurate and up-to-date and meet agency, regulatory and accrediting bodies' standards, and requirements.

<p>Case Managers</p>	<p>He/she must possess a bachelor’s degree in social work or related discipline and a minimum of one-year experience working with youth, preferably at-risk adolescents. A combination of education and relevant professional work experience may be considered. Verbal and written communication skills to carry out assigned tasks, and cultural competency is required. Must have a valid PA license and reliable transportation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provides case management & service brokering. ● Provide direct services such as intake assessment. ● Develops service plans & aftercare plans ● The Case Manager assesses individual needs of client and provides individual counseling with the goal of helping client to address problems and resolve issues. The Case Manager will work along with the director, parents and providers providing any additional information about the clients as needed.
<p>Therapeutic Case Managers</p>	<p>Master’s Degree preferred; Bachelor Degree in social work, psychology, criminal justice, social science or other related fields, and a minimum of 10 years of experience working in the field of substance abuse addiction and recovery; and/or High School Diploma with CAC with the same amount of field experience. The individual must possess knowledge of the 12 Step Program for NA and AA.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The position requires an individual who possesses competencies that are essential to the effective practice of counseling for psychoactive substance use disorders and knowledge, skills, and attitudes. The individual needs to become fully proficient in understanding addiction, treatment, knowledge, application to practice, and professional readiness; full proficiency and understanding is required in practice dimensions clinical evaluation, treatment planning, referral, service coordination, counseling. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Responsible for the overall therapy of clients. Provides counseling to youth and families. Conducts individual and group counseling with clients. ● Maintains progress and intake reports and develops individual and family service plans. The Therapist partners with community/schools and outside agencies to facilitate appropriate referrals. Excellent written, verbal and technology skills a must. ● While this position does not require on-call responsibilities, availability is required for evening and weekends.
<p>Parent Specialist</p>	<p>He/she must possess an associate’s degree or higher and two years’ experience in children, client or family services or demonstrate similar relevant professional experience.</p>	<p>The Parent Specialist will provide direct service and case management to families in their homes. The Parent Specialist will provide referral services to families, assisting the family in achieving the goals identified in the Service Plan. The Parent Specialist completes the initial</p>

		family contact and will direct the frequency and intensity of subsequent family services for assigned families.
Trainer	<p>Master's degree preferred or bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university, preferably in the social sciences. The Training/HR Specialist must be a team player. Verbal and written communication skills to carry out assigned tasks, cultural competence and knowledge and skill in individual and group training is required. The individual must have the ability to build rapport with participants, be creative, and enjoy working with people. Maintain current training hours and certifications as a certified trainer. Ability to understand and follow instructions. Ability to work independently and manage varied and complex priorities. Must be organized, task and detail oriented, and have good written and oral communication skills including telephone and face to face interaction. A broad knowledge of office equipment's and various software Must have a valid PA driver's license and reliable transportation and insurance.</p>	<p>Trainer is responsible for the overall orientation and training of employees initial and annual trainings in compliance with DHS, DPW and COA mandates, as well as remaining up to date on changes. Provides one-on-one training with individuals or teaching whole groups. Ensures Three Rivers Youth's three tier training system is implemented 1. Mandate trainings, 2. Client Population/trends 3. Personal Development. Assess the effectiveness of delivered training programs and determine what additional training might be necessary in the future. Keep up with developments in area of expertise by reading current journals, books, and magazine articles. Maintains accurate and prompt records of all training hours, clearances, and other employee mandates.</p>
Recruiter	<p>Associates or higher in human services or public relations with demonstrated public relations skills and one-year work experience in social services with youth and families. Sensitive and responsive to the cultural differences in DHS' service population.</p> <p>Candidate should have a strong connection and knowledge base of the community. Foster care/Adoption experience / knowledge is desirable. Bilingual in English/Spanish is a plus, valid PA Driver's License and access to a personal vehicle is required. Flexible scheduling, including weekends is required.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruit resource families who can be certified by DHS for resource parent licensure. • Recruit foster families who have the ability and desire to provide foster care to the vulnerable youth who are referred to DHS. • For the purpose of recruiting resource families, establish and maintain community contacts such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Schools ○ Community organizations ○ Faith Based organizations ○ Service groups ○ Other resources as deemed appropriate • Utilize a multi-systemic approach to recruit foster families including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Advertisements (determine value and efficacy of such

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Presentations to the community ○ Utilizing current DHS resource families for recruiting ○ Assure articles and stories related to foster care placed in news media ● Function as the point of contact for prospective resource families. ● Establish positive relationships with prospective families ● Provide licensing requirements to prospective foster families ● Follow up with prospective resource families through the initial certification process ● For the purpose of recruiting foster families, establish and maintain community contacts such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Provide presentations to the community ● Tracked Outcomes: 15-20 families are referred to the agency monthly ● Maintain data about the process so decisions can be made about improving recruitment strategies.
<p>Drivers PT</p>	<p>He/she must possess a high school diploma or its equivalency and two years' experience in children, client or family services or demonstrate similar relevant professional experience. Valid driver's license</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Part-Time Drivers is a member of the team providing care and treatment essentials for the growth and development of clients. This treatment includes preventive counseling, crisis counseling, crisis intervention, and regular checks of assigned client and transportation to various places as needed.



ATTACHMENT G

Implementation Timeline

Three Rivers Youth's Timeline for Implementation of Foster Care Program

As a current provider of foster care services, TRY is excited to plan the expansion and redesign of its services to youth in foster placement. Building on a solid base of its current program, TRY will launch a redesigned program that is served by an accomplished team of staff leaders, affirmed by agency and board leadership and poised for success. TRY has demonstrated strength in attracting and retaining diverse staff and foster families. TRY's sanctuary model anchored in trauma informed theory will provide a platform for program success.

TRY will achieve this implementation over several phases as outlined below:

Phase 1

May 1 – June 30, 2021

Reengineering/Recruitment/Collaboration

TRY will convene meetings with both Current staff and foster families to further indoctrinate them on the new program design and assess capacity to succeed in new program construct
Concurrently TRY will launch an aggressive staff recruitment effort to build staff capacity

Outcome

Identify Recruiter

Redesign of training program
Recruitment strategies refined
Identification of collaborative partners

Phase 2

July 1- August 1, 2021

Recruitment Strategies Launched

TRY will hire a Recruiter who will launch an aggressive foster Family recruitment campaign; campaign Will be focused on critical service demographics

Recruiter Hired

<p>Phase 3 August 1, - Oct. 31, 2021</p>	<p>Class One- Foster Family Certification Ongoing recruitment for Class Two Emergency/Respite homes prioritized</p>	<p>10 families begin certification</p>
<p>Phase 4 November 1- January 31, 2022</p>	<p>Class Two/Placement of Youth Class Two Foster Family Certification Staff hiring continues to accommodate increased placements and families Ongoing program evaluation</p>	<p>Utilization of 80% of homes 10 families complete certification</p>
<p>Phase 5 February 1 – June 30, 2022</p>	<p>Continued outreach and community education re needs of youth and families Partner with women’s organization re Services to foster families</p>	

ATTACHMENT H

Line-Item Budget

**Three Rivers Youth
Foster Care
Proposed Budget**

REVENUE	TOTAL
Number of Clients	50
Allegheny County	\$1,246,658
Total Revenue	<u>\$1,246,658</u>
EXPENSES	
Salaries & Wages	
VP Operations	\$10,000
Program Director	1 FT position \$50,000
Case Manager	1 FT position \$35,000
Case Manager	1 FT position \$35,000
Therapeutic Case Manager	3 FT positions \$143,520
Parent Specialist	1 FT position \$35,000
Recruiter	1 FT position \$35,000
Trainer	1 FT position \$35,000
Drivers	2 PT positions \$24,960
Total Salaries & Wages	<u>\$403,480</u>
Benefits & Payroll Taxes	
FICA Tax	\$30,866
PA Unemployment Tax	\$8,271
Workmen's Compensation Tax	\$20,255
Health Insurance	9 FT eligible \$54,000
Total Benefits & Payroll Taxes	<u>\$113,392</u>
Total Personnel Costs	<u>\$516,872</u>
Operating Expenses	
Foster Care Providers	\$456,250
Staff Development	\$5,000
Laptops	\$9,000
Office Supplies	\$2,400
Housekeeping Supplies	\$1,800
Telephone	\$7,800
Occupancy	
Rent	\$4,800
Electric/Gas	\$5,400
Water/Sanitation	\$1,800
Equipment Rental	\$1,800
Building Maintenance	\$3,600
Pest Control	\$1,200
Insurance	\$4,800
Travel	
Van Gas	\$7,200
Van Repairs	\$3,600
Auto Mileage	\$4,200
Parental Engagement	
Client Assistance	\$15,000
Food	\$4,800
Transportation	\$2,400
Total Operating Expenses	<u>\$542,850</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$1,059,722</u>
Administration Expense - 15%	<u>\$186,936</u>
Total Expenses	<u>\$1,246,658</u>
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	<u>(\$0)</u>