



Make Way for Kids Grant Guidelines

(updated 12/6/2019)

*Working with communities to take action that
increases access to high-quality child care and helps high-quality programs thrive*

Overview

As part of our mission to ensure affordable access to high-quality child care for all Vermont families, Let's Grow Kids (LGK) is working in collaboration with the Vermont Child Development Division (CDD) to increase the number of child care spaces in the state. **Grant projects should be informed by local community needs and must include either start-up of new programs or the expansion of existing programs that result in additional child care spaces.** LGK team members who are experienced early childhood education leaders will provide technical assistance during the grant application process and grant period to support the strength of the application and the sustainability of the project.

Who Can Apply

- Organizations, businesses, schools, municipalities or agencies that currently operate or plan to operate a licensed child care or early education program.
- Currently registered family child care programs planning to expand to a licensed program.
- Individuals planning to open a registered family child care.
- Organizations, schools, municipalities or agencies with projects or programs that will increase the capacity of high-quality child care/early education for children ages birth through five years.
- Organizations that have previously received an MWFK grant that are looking to fund a new project to increase access to high-quality child care.
- Newly opened or expanded programs that have added spaces within 12 months of application submission.

Expenses Eligible for Funding

Funds made available by CDD require projects to enroll children/families participating in CDD's Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP) and plan to increase the number of infant and toddler spaces. There is a limited amount of grant funds made available by LGK that *may* fund projects that result in an increase in prekindergarten spaces. The following are eligible expenses for funding:

- Capital and other investments that result in new high-quality child-care spaces.
- Construction and capital improvements to public or commercial buildings must allow for additional infant, toddler and/or prekindergarten care within the child care site.
- Family child care homes are only eligible to apply for renovations or additions if the improvements are required to meet health and safety requirements to serve additional children (i.e., egress for exit or stairway, or changes related to supervision improvements).

- Program changes or improvements to increase total number of infants, toddlers and/or pre-kindergarteners served at the program.
- Equipment and materials needed to support early learning environments, physical health and the wellbeing of **additional children served in newly created child care slots** (e.g., cribs, changing tables, outdoor play equipment, literacy materials, learning toys, etc.).
- Training and compensation costs related to workforce recruitment and development for program start up or expansion.
- LGK funding may support a limited number of projects for specific investments that will allow programs with 3 or fewer stars to achieve 4 or 5 stars within 11 months of grant award.

Before You Apply

To apply for an LGK Make Way for Kids grant:

- Attend a 30-minute MWFK informational call for grant applicants **(1-802-448-4854)** on December 17 at 10 AM, December 18 at 1 PM, January 7 at 10:30 AM and January 9 at 6 PM.
- You must submit an intention to apply request at https://webportalapp.com/webform/mwfk_inquiry
- You will then be contacted by an LGK team member to schedule a grant consultation meeting. Together, we'll determine if your project is a potential match for Make Way for Kids.

Successful projects often include these characteristics:

- Leadership provided by local champions and members of the community with expertise in early education, credibility in the community and the ability to plan, establish, strengthen and sustain an early care and education system in the community.
- A planning process that includes input from community leaders of at least two stakeholder groups (e.g., Building Bright Futures Council, public schools, private community-based early care and learning programs, community employers, parents of young children, town/city government, local nonprofits, etc.).
- A project that creates meaningful access for all kids to full-day/full-year child care services, especially those who are typically underserved or from families with economic or historic disadvantage.
- A project that demonstrates a strong regional collaboration and includes more than one early education program. **Priority consideration for funding made available by LGK will be given to these projects.**
- A project that increases infant and toddler child care capacity. **Priority consideration will be given to these projects.**
- Confirmation/evidence regarding the permitting and zoning process in the community relevant to your proposed project.
- Understanding of and willingness to meet the typical MWFK grant conditions for funded projects (e.g., utilization of the immunization and developmental screening registry, sharing of regulatory history, press release cooperation, STARS participation etc.). *You do not need to implement all of these immediately, but you should be willing to do them during the grant period.*

Grant Amounts

The total amount of grant funds available is expected to be approximately \$1,600,000 (this includes \$1,200,000 in funding from CDD). LGK expects to fund 20–30 projects of a variety of sizes. Priority will be given to new program expansion and start-ups that will serve infants and toddlers, however, recently opened and expanded programs (within 12 months of application submission) may apply.

- Family child care (home-based) programs can apply for up to \$10,000.
- Applicants from child care centers, schools, businesses, municipalities and other agencies may apply for funds up to \$50,000.
- Center-based and community development projects that demonstrate a plan to increase early education capacity by adding 25 or more new spaces in underserved communities may be eligible to apply for more than \$50,000.

Eligibility to request funding at higher levels than outlined above may be identified during the consultation process between LGK and the prospective applicant.

Grant funds will be distributed in two parts. For-profit programs that are awarded funding must provide additional documentation and meet assurances prior to the release of funding. Some projects will be funded with funds awarded to LGK from the state of Vermont. Your LGK team member can provide you with more information.

Timeline for Grant Process

The first grant application deadline is December 11, 2019. After the December 11, 2019 deadline, grant applications will be accepted on a rolling basis as funding allows. Grants applications will be reviewed every 4–6 weeks in 2020.

September 23, 2019	Original grant guidelines released
September 23 – November 25	Consultation/TA from LGK staff for initial deadline (deadline to request December consultation is November 25)
December 6	Updated grant guidelines released and application updated to reflect increased grant funds made available through collaboration with CDD
December 11	Application deadline for January decision
December 12 – ongoing	Consultation and TA from LGK Staff
December 12 – ongoing	Applications accepted as funds are available

If you plan to apply, please join an informational call:

December 17 at 10 AM	Informational call #1 for potential applicants
December 18 at 1 PM	Informational call #2 for potential applicants
January 7 at 10:30 AM	Informational call #3 for potential applicants
January 9 at 6 PM	Informational call #4 for potential applicants

Grant Application

All grant applications must be submitted using LGK's online grants management system. Your LGK team member will share the link directly with you when your proposed project meets the goals of the MWFK program. The questions below are provided to allow you to prepare to enter your responses into the online system.

Each application must include **all twelve** of the sections included in the application

1. Organization/Program Name

Primary Contact Person/Title:

Mailing Address:

Phone Number:

Email Address:

Business Status:

Federal Tax-Exempt ID Number (if applicable):

Grant Amount Requested:

Number of high-quality spaces that will be created as a result of this funding (by age group):

Are you in good standing with Vermont Department of Taxes?

2. Please list the leader(s) of this project, including their names, email addresses and relevant affiliations. Please list the community stakeholders you've consulted as part of your planning process.

- ☐ Building Bright Futures
- ☐ Public schools
- ☐ Private community-based early care and learning programs
- ☐ Community employers/businesses
- ☐ Parents of young children
- ☐ Local health care organizations/providers
- ☐ Town/city government
- ☐ Higher education institution
- ☐ Other nonprofit agencies

3. Please briefly describe any community engagement process that informed this proposal (i.e., meetings, interviews, surveys, etc.) and your plan to sustain community engagement if the project is funded.

4. Please briefly describe the factors in your community/region that contribute to a shortage of early care and learning spaces (this should be informed by both the community engagement/discussion process and data about child care in your community).

5. Please briefly describe the specific strategy you are requesting LGK grant funds to support (include a specific proposal objective).

6. *Community Impact Statement (We recommend this section not exceed 250 words):* Describe how the program will contribute to increased capacity of high-quality child care for infants (6 weeks to 12 months), toddlers (13 months to 35 months) and/or prekindergarteners (3–4-year-olds) in your community. This section should also explain how partnerships are or will be formed with other organizations in the community.

7. *Leadership and Personnel (This section should not exceed 200 words):* Please indicate the qualifications and relevant experiences of the project leader(s) and any key personnel who will be involved in the development and implementation of the proposed project. Include relevant experience, current or past roles, and relevant education and/or credentials. Please also include information about individuals or organizations providing business/nonprofit management advising.

8. *Workforce Strategies (This section should not exceed 150 words):* For center-based programs, include general information regarding salary and benefits offered to center staff and additional strategies that will be used to attract and retain a qualified workforce.

9. *Sustainability (This section should not exceed 200 words)*: Please describe the strategies you have identified that will sustain this project after grant funding ends.

10. Please comment briefly on how you are currently or planning in the future to integrate the following components into the early childhood program (if applicable):

- Strengthening Families Framework
- Developmental Assessment/Screening
- Shared Services
- Professional Networks
- Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP)
- Food Services

11. *Budget*: Applicants are required to complete the grant budget form provided and offer a brief narrative that explains the grant request, the total cost of the project, the timeline for expenses, and the funding sources (i.e., loans, other grants and internal funds) for any project expenses not included in the grant request. Additional financial documents may be requested during the application or review process. A budget template will be provided.

12. *Timeline*: Please provide a comprehensive timeline for all aspects of your project. Include all permits or tests (i.e., child care licensing, water quality, wastewater, furnace inspection and other zoning-related requirements) that must be completed for your project to be successful.

Selection Process

- A. The selection process will be the responsibility of a grant committee that will make recommendations to the Vermont Community Foundation.
- B. Incomplete proposals will not be considered for funding.
- C. Applications that do not meet the grant eligibility requirements will not be considered for funding.
- D. Existing programs that are expanding must be in good standing with the state of Vermont's child care licensing regulations;
- E. Programs must agree to enroll children/families eligible for and participating in CDD's Child Care Financial Assistance Program (CCFAP).

Notification

Applicants will be notified by email within 6 weeks after application is submitted.

Acceptance

Upon notification of grant awards, applicants must sign a Terms of Agreement document and meet other grant conditions prior to receiving funds.

Ongoing Grant Consultation and Technical Assistance

Grant applicants are expected to participate in ongoing consultation with LGK prior to submitting a grant application and monthly throughout the cycle of the grant.

Reporting Procedures

Required Reporting: Grantees will be required to complete a mid-year progress report and a final report at the end of the grant period. These reports will document how grant funds have been used, any accomplishments and challenges, and next steps. These reports will include the total spaces in the program (disaggregated by age of children, children receiving CCFAP, specialized care and children enrolled in universal prekindergarten/Act 166 when applicable). The reports will also note the number of screenings that were completed (developmental or other) and information about the program's meal program/policies.

For evaluation, LGK will aggregate this information and provide cumulative results in its evaluation report. The evaluation report will compare the baseline (per grant award) with the progress and final reports.