



## Make Way for Kids Grant Application

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

*A Collaboration with the VT's Child Development Division*

### Overview

As part of our mission to ensure affordable access to high-quality child care for all Vermont families who need it, Let's Grow Kids (LGK) is working to increase the number of high-quality child care spaces in the state. Make Way for Kids (MWFK) is an LGK program funded in part by a grant from VT's Child Development Division that offers grants and technical assistance to efforts that will increase the number of child care spaces in the state. **Projects should be informed by local community needs and must include either start-up of new programs, or expansion of existing programs.** LGK team members who are experienced early childhood education leaders will provide technical assistance during the 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 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

- Capital and other investments that result in new child care spaces ready for enrollment within 11 months of application submission. (*Priority consideration* given to programs enrolling before July 1, 2021.)
- 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 major 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 expansion/start up.

## Before You Apply

To apply for an LGK Make Way for Kids grant:

- Attend an MWFK informational Zoom meeting for grant applicants on **November 30 at 6 PM or December 1, 2020 at 1 PM. Email Sherry Carlson ([sherry@letsgrowkids.org](mailto:sherry@letsgrowkids.org)) for Zoom link.**
- You must submit an intention to apply request at [https://webportalapp.com/webform/mwfk\\_inquiry](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.

Please consider these characteristics of a successful project:

- Leadership provided by local champions and members from 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 project planning process that includes input from community leaders from 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 demonstrates a strong regional collaboration and includes more than one early education program. *Priority consideration 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 licensing, permitting, and zoning process relevant to your proposed project.
- Understanding of and willingness to meet the typical MWFK grant conditions for funded projects (e.g., all staff credentials submitted to BFIS, business software management, utilization of the immunization and developmental screening registry, sharing of regulatory history, press release cooperation, etc.). *You do not need to implement all of these immediately, but you should be willing to do them during the 12-month grant period.*

## Grant Amounts

The total grant pool is approximately \$400,000. Let's Grow Kids expects to fund 10 to 15 projects of a variety of sizes. Priority will be given to new program expansion and start-ups, however, recently opened and expanded programs (within 10 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 \$30,000.

Center-based projects that demonstrate a plan to significantly increase capacity in a high-needs community may be eligible to apply for more than \$30,000. Eligibility to request funding at higher levels than outlined above will 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. Your LGK team member can provide you with more information.

### **Timeline for Grant Process**

If funds remain after the January 20, 2021 deadline, additional grant applications may be accepted through an invitation process initiated by LGK.

November 23, 2020	RFP released and Informational Zoom meeting (6 PM)
December 1, 2020	Informational Zoom meeting (1 PM)
November 23–ongoing	Consultation/TA from LGK staff (deadline to request grant application and consultation is 1/14/21)
January 20, 2021	Applications due
February 9, 2021	Formal decision notification sent to 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 when it is determined that 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 12** 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 infant and toddler spaces that will be created as a result of this funding:

Are you in good standing with Vermont Tax Department?

#### **2. Please list who is leading this project including their names, email addresses, and relevant affiliations, and 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 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 using data about child care in your community).

5. Please briefly describe the specific strategy you are requesting grant funds to support.

6. *Community Impact Statement:* (We recommend this section not exceed 250 words.) Describe how the program will contribute to increased capacity of child care for infants (6 weeks to 12 months) and toddlers (13 months to 35 months) 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 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/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 the following components are currently integrated into the early childhood program (if applicable) or the plans for the future integration:

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

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.

## **Notification**

Applicants will be notified in accordance with the timeline provided in this document.

## **Acceptance**

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

## **Ongoing Consultation and Technical Assistance**

Grant applicants will be 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 (disaggregated by age of children, children receiving CCFAP, specialized care, and children enrolled in universal prekindergarten/Act 166). 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.