

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Child Care Provider Grants Expanding Services in Crisis Child Care.

Q: What is Crisis Child Care?

A: Crisis child care provides initial crisis assessment and intervention services (e.g., respite child care, caregiver counseling), after crisis interventions (such as follow-up care) and/or referral to other community services. The services are provided with no waiting period and without charge to families. This type of care supports families at a time of crisis and can prevent abuse or neglect. Staff would receive additional training in trauma, cultural sensitivity, and Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) model. Care would be available for extended hours to serve families needing care for children 0-8 in the following situations:

- a family crisis situation
- a parent who needs to attend a doctor's appointment and has no childcare
- a family situation that has become unsafe
- a sudden medical or other family emergency.

Q: Who is eligible to apply for the grants?

A: Bright Futures B-5 will provide grants to:

1) Approved licensed and/or registered family child care homes, group child care homes, and centers serving children ages 0-8.

OR

2) Early Head Starts, Head Starts, AIAN Early Head Starts and AIAN Head Starts serving children ages 0-8.

OR

3) Tribally licensed programs serving children ages 0-8.

AND

4) **Have not** received ARPA Innovation Grant funds.

Q: What benefits and services are provided to caregivers, parents, and families?

A: Potential Benefits and Services Provided:

- Reduces caregiver stress
- Allows caregivers to reflect, regroup, and take care of their own needs
- Helping families form healthy, supportive connections to ensure their child's needs are met
- Development and/or coordination of supporting resources
- Referrals to local and community services
- No or low cost care
- Drop-in availability

Q: What are the requirements to apply for the grant?

A: Applicants must complete an application through "Submittable" that includes:

- Implementation Plan

- Budget and narrative
- Complete a sustainability plan
- Commitment to required reporting (quarterly and annually) and participation in data gathering for evaluation.

Q: What are the requirements of the implementation plan?

A: A child care program will create a detailed implementation plan outlining how your program will use grant funding to effectively and sustainably implement in crisis child care services. The plan should demonstrate your program's ability to meet community needs and achieve lasting positive outcomes.

The following areas should be addressed in the implementation plan:

- Specific strategies for crisis child care services (i.e. increasing capacity, flexible and extended hours, resource sharing, no or low cost to families, drop-in availability, partnerships with local community programs)
- Number of additional children and families to be served and the impact on families, program and community (i.e. increased enrollment and access)
- Methods for implementation and sustainability (i.e. collaborative partnerships, needs assessment, professional development, diversified funding sources, community support and involvement)
- Approaches for monitoring and evaluating the program's effectiveness (i.e. surveys, assessments, key performance indicators, outcome measurements, quality and data analysis)
- Information on sustainability. (i.e. funding diversification, community partnerships, staff development, resource management)

Q: What can the grant funding be used for?

A: Funding can be used for equipment, supplies, professional development, services, compensation, travel, and fees for consultation which contribute to health, safety, and development of children. Specific category examples are listed in the guidance of the grant application.

Equipment refers to large, durable items.

Supplies are consumable items necessary for daily operations in a child care facility.

Resources encompass educational materials and tools that enhance curriculum delivery and support effective teaching practices.

Professional development refers to targeted training and educational opportunities designed to improve the skills and knowledge of child care staff, ultimately enhancing service quality.

Services refer to specialized consulting and support resources contracted to improve operational effectiveness and address specific needs within child care programs.

Compensation refers to the financial remuneration provided to staff members for their work, encompassing salaries, wages, and benefits.

Travel costs refers to the compensation provided to staff for expenses incurred while traveling to and from the consulting crisis child care program.

Fees for Consultation services include the professional expertise in specialized screening/assessment, intervention, and support services that focuses on families in crisis situations needing child care.

Q: When is the application open to apply for funds?

A: January 6th, 2025 through January 24th, 2025

Q: What is the grant period?

A: February 1st, 2025 through December 30th, 2025.

Q: What are the deliverables of the grant?

A: Funding awarded to participants must be utilized within the grant period (2/1/25-12/30/25) and must be utilized for crisis child care services.

Grantees will provide data and evaluation by completing required reporting to show how funds are utilized through quarterly and annual reports with data collection on the following:

- increase in program capacity for crisis child care
- expanding the program's hours of operation to meet crisis care needs
- set up and implementation of crisis care facility
- report on staff hiring, training and professional development, and/or obtained certification(s)
- description of funding utilization related to budget categories (equipment, supplies, professional development, services, and compensation)

Meet monthly with state designated consulting crisis child care program to receive TA and mentoring in combination of in person and virtual meetings.

Complete state designated trauma-based and cultural awareness training potentially includes travel.

Participate in state pilot Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) which is a prevention-based approach that pairs a mental health consultant with adults who work with infants and young children in the child care setting. Programs are required to collaborate with IECMHC consultant 1 to 3 hours per week for visits, modeling and observation.

Q: Does Consultation fees include Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation (IECMHC) and Mentor Consultation outlined in the grant deliverables listed in the application?

A: No, this funding category is for other consultation services as identified by individual programs.

Q: How much funding can I receive through the grant for developing and/or expanding *Crisis Child Care* services for children ages 0-8?

A: Eligible child care providers can receive:

- \$40,000 for Family CC Homes
- \$60,000 for Group CC Homes
- \$90,000 for Centers

Q: What are the targeted populations of the grant?

A: Populations include:

- Children with special needs (medical diagnosis, developmental delays, mental health concerns, etc.)
- Infants and toddlers
- Children in a high-risk family situation
- Tribal populations

Q: What are the vulnerable populations of the grant?

A: Vulnerable populations providers serve include:

- Infants and toddlers (0-35 months)
- Counties designated as rural or frontier.
- Tribal populations or on reservations.
- Children with diagnosed developmental disability or delay.
- Families that are low-income.
- Children in Foster Care.
- Families who are homeless.
- Families with non-traditional work hours.
- Child care deserts.

Q: How can I determine if my area qualifies as a child care desert?

A: A child care desert is defined as any geographic area where child care supply meets less than a third of the potential demand. Nearly 60% of Montana's counties are classified as child care deserts, including four counties without a single licensed provider. Approximately 30% of children under age six live in a county designated as a child care desert.

Refer to this document for further information:

https://lmi.mt.gov/_docs/Publications/LMI-Pubs/Special-Reports-and-Studies/ChildCareDesertsWhitePaper-FINAL.pdf

Q: Is our program required to complete an implementation plan and budget?

A: Yes, both are required and are fillable documents in the application.

Q: Does our program have to enter dollar amounts in each budget category?

A: No. However, the dollar amounts need to total the amount per funding category.

Q: What are the reporting requirements for grantees?

A: Grantees must complete required quarterly and annual reporting to demonstrate how funds are utilized and participate in data sharing and evaluation activities as outlined in the award letter.

Q: If our program applies for Crisis Child Care, can we apply for the other child care provider grants (Infant/Toddler Care, Special Needs, and/or Expanding Hours of Operation)?

A: No, you cannot apply for both. However, if you apply for the Crisis Child Care grant and receive a decline letter, you can then apply for Infant Toddler, Special Needs and Expanding Hours of Operation funds if funding is still available.

Q: If I am not currently licensed, can I apply to become licensed and receive the funding?

A: If you are not fully licensed at this time, you may be eligible if there is a second round of funding.

Q: How will the funds be disbursed?

A: Funds will be disbursed as a first-come, first served basis as funds allow.

Funds will be disbursed to approved applicants based on the implementation plan and budget upon successful completion of the application process. Payment will be dispersed after monthly invoices are submitted and approved. Quarterly reports will be utilized for monitoring and tracking of funding use and expansion and enhancement efforts within each grant category. Quarterly reports will be utilized for monitoring and tracking of funding use and expansion and enhancement efforts within each grant category.

Q: What is the total funding allocated for slot expansion activities (Infant/Toddler, Special Needs, Expanded Hours of Operation, Crisis Child Care)?

A: Yes, the total funding allocated for slot expansion activity is \$2,000,000 over the two-year period if funding is available.

Q: What happens if funding runs out?

A: Funds will be disbursed as a first-come, first served basis.

Grants will be provided only as long as funding is available, so applying early is encouraged.

Updated Questions 1/7/2025

Q: How can I get more information or assistance with the application?

A: For more information or assistance, you may contact the grant administration team at Bright Futures B-5 via email at pdgb5@mt.gov or check the website at [Montana Early Childhood System \(mt.gov\)](http://MontanaEarlyChildhoodSystem.mt.gov) for resources and guidance. Zero to Five is also available for assistance with the grant application. Contact Jason Nitschke @ jasonn@zerotofive.org

Q: What if my program does not have a UEI#?

A: Please apply for a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number, list in that section that you have applied for it and submit the expansion application. A UEI# will need to be provided within 30 days of the closing of this application period. For assistance with UEI# applications please go to SAM.GOV and [Unique Entity Identifier \(UEI\) | EXIM.GOV](http://Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) | EXIM.GOV) or a Montana resource <https://montanaapex.org/>.

Updated Questions 1/16/2025

Q: Can funding be used for construction or renovations?

A: No funding cannot be used for construction/ remodeling or renovations. We cannot allow any items that increase the value or useful life of the property. That includes fences, ramps, windows, sidewalks, kitchen/bathroom renovations, carpeting, etc.

Q: Can funding be used for vehicles?

A: No, the grant does not allow funds to be used towards the purchase of a vehicle.

Q: Will this grant impact my License/Registration?

A: Because these grants are about expanding slots, expanding hours of operation, and/or serving Children in Crisis, YES, contact your Licensor to discuss your grant application. Licensing regulations will need to be adhered to, and adjustments may need to be made to your license/certificate if you are awarded a grant.

Updated Questions 2/4/2025

Q: Why are there only 2 programs being funded?

A: We will be awarding the Crisis Child Care grant to two programs as this is what funding, mentor capacity and outcomes allow. The two programs will work with a mentoring program already providing Crisis Child Care and participate in the Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation pilot program.

Q: When will B5 Staff announce grant awards?

A: We will announce awardees for both grants in Mid-February after the closing of the Slot Expansion Grant.