



2025 REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL
Youth Mental Health & Wellness Initiative
Release Date: March 3, 2025
LOI Deadline: April 7, 2025

The Buhl Regional Health Foundation (BRHF) is a private health foundation, committed to making a positive impact on the health and well-being of the community we serve through education, grants, scholarships and collaborative partnerships with local organizations. Our mission to identify and address the diverse health care needs of the community gives us the unique opportunity to invest in your innovative solutions. BRHF envisions a healthy community where people are active participants in driving their physical and mental health and the health of the community.

Grant Opportunity

Buhl Regional Health Foundation is committed to improving the direct health of youth in our community by supporting nonprofit organizations that focus on youth mental health and wellness. This RFP seeks proposals from qualified nonprofit organizations to implement programs that provide counseling, peer support groups, and mental health education in schools or community centers. Additionally, we aim to fund initiatives that train educators and caregivers in youth mental health first aid.

Start-up organizations/new and piloted projects from direct-service organizations that will help address the far-reaching challenge of stress, anxiety, depression or other mental health issues in children, youth, and their families are welcome. Initiatives receive preference if they are collaborative and innovative in nature.

If awarded, funding must be exhausted within a one-year grant period from the date funds were received; BRHF does not award multi-year grants

Funding Priorities/Areas of Focus

We invite proposals that address one or more of the following priority areas:

1. **Youth Counseling Services** – Programs that offer free or low-cost mental health counseling to youth in schools or community-based settings.
2. **Peer Support & Mentorship Programs** – Initiatives that create peer-led support groups, mentorship opportunities, and safe spaces for youth experiencing mental health challenges.

3. **Mental Health Education & Awareness** – Campaigns or workshops that educate youth, parents, and educators on mental health literacy, stigma reduction, and early intervention.
4. **Youth Mental Health First Aid Training** – Programs that train teachers, caregivers, and youth workers in recognizing and responding to signs of mental distress in young people.
5. **Informed Mental Health Supports** – Non-medical supports for mental health provided by trusted peers, friends and family, religious leaders, support groups, or other non-health professionals.

Overall Goals/Use of Funds:

1. Increasing the availability of preventative and proactive support that children, youth, or families can use for mental health and well-being
2. Increasing the capacity of child-serving service systems (ex. Child welfare, juvenile justice system) on trauma-informed practices and providing smooth pathways to more formal services
3. Building knowledge of trauma-informed support and communication for parents, caregivers, and individuals close to children and youth
4. Improving equality in mental health and reducing health disparities through improving equitable access to services for parents, caregivers, and children that are culturally and linguistically responsive to the needs of populations of focus
5. Increasing early intervention so children and youth with, or at high-risk for, behavioral health conditions can access services before conditions escalate and require higher-level care
6. Supporting the resilience of children and by mitigating the adverse effects of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) (adverse effects could include brain development, emotional health, and behavioral health, among other conditions)
7. Reducing both stigma and crises

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must meet the following requirements:

- Applicants must be classified as tax-exempt by the IRS, typically 501(c)(3) status, government agency or utilizing a fiscal agent who is clearly identified in the application.
- Faith-based organizations must welcome all faiths and participation in religious activity participation must be clearly defined as optional.
- Demonstrate experience in youth mental health programming and service delivery.
- Provide a clear plan for measuring program impact and sustainability.
- Applicant's efforts must serve individuals, aged 18 and under who reside in Mercer County, PA.

- Previous grantees of BRHF must have fulfilled the required 18 month waiting period from their last grant award and all previous grants must be closed (all grant reporting completed and any unused funds returned).

Grant Requirements

To qualify as a grant recipient, your organization's initiative must meet the following requirements:

- Initiative may be new to the community or include improvements to an existing initiative.
- Initiative must have a clear plan for improving mental health and wellness for youth in Mercer County.
- Initiative must intentionally address mental or physical health, health disparities and/or inequities.
- Initiative's goals must be clearly identified and methods for measurement of goals and objectives should be clearly described.
- Initiative must include a plan for collaborating across sectors in our community and/or establishing strong community partnerships.

Unallowable Expenses

This grant may not be used to fund the following:

- Supplemental funding to previously awarded grants or existing programs.
- Direct payment to a pediatric care provider.
- Research projects, such as clinical trials.
- Health fairs or other one-time events.
- Consumables and daily supplies
- No reimbursements
- Snacks/food
- Give-a-ways/prizes
- Disposable items
- Individuals
- For-profit entities
- Lobbying/Political campaigns
- Debt reduction/existing financial obligations
- Foreign operations or expenditure
- Fundraising event sponsorship
- Membership in Civic Organizations
- Endowment support
- Purchase of vehicles
- Additional expenses may be disallowed at the discretion of BRHF

Application Process

Submit your proposal through our online portal at <http://www.buhlregionalhealthfoundation.org>. If you have any questions, please contact our Director of Grantmaking, Kimberly Porsch at kimberly@buhlrf.org.

[Responses to this RFP must be submitted through BRHF's grant portal](#). All other forms of submission will not be reviewed. First-time applicants will need to create a new account. Once an account is established, the Letter of Interest can be completed within the portal and must be submitted by the deadline listed in this RFP.

A review of the LOI's received will prompt BRHF to issue invitations for detailed proposals. All applicants will be notified of the status of their LOI, either via invitation to continue the application process or a letter of ineligibility.

Detailed proposals will require the upload of the organization's most recent 990, a full project budget, proposed use of the funding requested and additional details and documentation regarding your organization and proposed initiative

Additional attachments to the application are optional, not scored, and may not be used in response to application questions. Applicants may include up to four pages of attachments, including, but not limited to: citations/references, flyers, letters of support and letters of intent or interest from current or future community partners.

To support a Request for Proposal (RFP) aimed at enhancing the mental health of children in Mercer County, Pennsylvania, it's essential to present data that underscores the current needs and gaps in services. Below is pertinent information to substantiate the necessity for such an initiative:

Prevalence of Mental Health Challenges Among Youth

- The 2023 Pennsylvania Youth Survey (PAYS) provides insights into the behaviors and experiences of students in grades 6, 8, 10, and 12. While specific data for Mercer County is limited, statewide findings indicate significant concerns regarding youth mental health, including substance use and mental health challenges.

pa.gov

Child Maltreatment Statistics

- Child maltreatment has long-term adverse effects on mental health. In 2018, Mercer County reported a child maltreatment rate of 10.4%, highlighting the need for preventive and therapeutic mental health services.

papartnerships.org

Existing Mental Health Services and Identified Gaps

- The Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission (MCBHC) offers various services, including case management and support for children with mental health needs. However, the demand for specialized services, such as Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS), often exceeds the available resources.

mercercountybhc.org

- In response to these needs, Mercer County has issued RFPs seeking licensed IBHS providers to develop or modify center-based programs tailored to the unique needs of local youth. This indicates a recognized gap in current service provisions.

nw3rfp.sbhm.org

Socioeconomic Factors Impacting Mental Health

- As of 2023, 17.7% of children in Mercer County were living in poverty. Economic hardship is closely linked to increased mental health challenges among youth, underscoring the need for accessible mental health services.

datausa.io

Shortage of Child Psychiatrists

Pennsylvania faces a shortage of child psychiatrists, leading to longer wait times and limited access to specialized care for children in need of mental health services. This shortage is particularly pronounced in rural areas like Mercer County.

palbfc.gov

The data highlights significant mental health challenges among children in Mercer County, exacerbated by socioeconomic factors and a shortage of specialized care providers. These insights underscore the critical need for targeted interventions through an RFP to enhance mental health services for the county's youth.

Application Review

Detailed proposals will be reviewed and scored by a Grants Committee based on the following criteria:

- Alignment with the RFP objectives and focus areas
- Creativity and Innovation
- Significance of impact on health needs of youth in Mercer County
- Effective Collaboration efforts or goals
- Actionability

Reporting Requirements

- Grant recipients will be required to submit reports on project development and implementation on an interim and final reporting schedule determined by the BRHF Director of Grantmaking.

RFP TIMELINE

The RFP Cycle will follow the timeline below:

Deadline for LOI	April 7, 2025
Detailed Proposal Invitations Sent	April 14, 2025
Deadline for Detailed Proposal	May 21, 2025
Award Announcements	July 8, 2025
Funding Issued	July 15, 2025

NOTE - BRHF is anticipating multiple grantees

QUESTIONS

The Buhl Regional Health Foundation staff is here to be a resource throughout the application process. Questions, requests for guidance, and portal support needs should be directed to Kimberly Porsch, Director of Grantmaking, kimberly@buhlrf.org or Ashley Mausser, Executive Team Assistant, ashley@buhlrf.org.

CONCLUSION

We look forward to receiving your proposals and collaborating on projects that will make a lasting impact on the youth of Mercer County. Thank you for your dedication and commitment to improving and strengthening youth mental health and wellness in our community.