



SOLE SOURCE FILING JUSTIFICATION

TO: Kris Gorgas
CONTRACT # 24-1245
TODAY'S DATE: 11/1/2023
CONTRACT SUB OBJECT CODE: CZ - Other Pro Serv

CONTRACTOR'S LEGAL NAME		TIN/UBI NUMBER
WithinReach		
ADDRESS	155 NE 100 Street #500, Seattle, WA 98125	
CONTRACT PURPOSE		
The purpose of the contract is to allow WithinReach, the Help Me Grow Statewide Affiliate, the capacity to provide consultation to the State (DCYF) in the planning and development of a specialized referral pathway designed for childcare providers serving marginalized infants and toddlers to offer families a tailored bundle of wrap-around supports, including a tiered support approach for developmental screening.		
FUNDING		
FEDERAL FUNDING \$535,000	STATE FUNDING \$	
CONTRACT TOTAL \$535,000		
CONTRACT DATES		
START DATE: 12/6/2023	END DATE: 6/30/2024	
SOLE SOURCE CRITERIA		
<u>What is a sole source contract?</u>		
<i>"Sole source" means a contractor providing goods or services of such a unique nature or sole availability at the location required that the contractor is clearly and justifiably the only practicable source to provide the goods or services. (RCW 39.26.010)</i>		
<i>Unique qualifications or services are those which are highly specialized or one-of-a-kind. Other factors which may be considered include past performance, cost-effectiveness (learning curve), and/or follow-up nature of the required goods and/or services. Past performance alone does not provide adequate justification however will not be on its own a sufficient justification.</i>		
<u>Why is a sole source justification required?</u>		
<i>The State of Washington, by policy and law, believes competition is the best strategy to obtain the best value for the goods and services it purchases, and to ensure that all interested vendors have a fair and transparent opportunity to sell goods and services to the state.</i>		
<i>A sole source contract does not benefit from competition. Thus the state, through RCW 39.26.010, has determined it is important to evaluate whether the conditions, costs and risks related to the proposal of a sole source contract truly outweigh for going the benefits of a competitive contract.</i>		

SPECIFIC PROBLEM OR NEED

1. What is the business need or problem that requires this contract?

Universal developmental screening (UDS) is a key action within the statewide early childhood system and is linked to several state agency priorities. In Department of Children, Youth, and Families' (DCYF) Strategic Priorities for 2021-2026, linking families to services and supports with an effective screening and referral system is included in the "Create a High Quality Integrated Birth to Eight System" focus area. In Department of Health's Strategic Priorities for 2022-2024, developmental screening is included in the Health and Wellness Priority of "Supporting community rooted and informed initiatives that address conditions early, including for adverse childhood experiences, and throughout the life course, to improve health and well-being longer term."

Child care providers are pivotal implementers in the UDS effort. Because child care providers are well-positioned to watch and support children as they develop, they play a key role in administering developmental screenings and supporting families as they celebrate developmental milestones, identify potential delays and challenges, and seek additional support. However, with often limited capacity, providers are struggling to find the time and resources to train on developmental screening, conduct a developmental screen, and connect a family to child development resources. As such, children at risk for cognitive, motor, communication, or social-emotional delays are getting missed.

Help Me Grow Washington will leverage their existing robust developmental screening and navigational infrastructure so child care providers can become developmental screening hubs with a streamlined link to Help Me Grow. In recognition that different child care providers may have different capacity to support developmental screening and connection to Help Me Grow, a tiered system of support will be offered so child care settings can choose the model that best meets the needs and capacity of their staff and families.

PROVIDING COMPELLING ANSWERS TO THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WILL FACILITATE THE EVALUATION

2. Describe the unique features, qualifications, abilities or expertise of the contractor proposed for this sole source contract.

The services and infrastructure offered by Help Me Grow WA directly align with the desired elements of a specialized referral pathway for child care providers, including connections to child developmental screening and follow-up resources and supports. As detailed below, this existing capacity and service delivery in developmental screening and wrap-around supports, paired with deep expertise in developing specialized referral pathways in the early childhood system is unique to Help Me Grow Washington.

Existing Developmental Screening Services and Capacity

HMG WA connects families with young children to services and supports in areas of child development, family stability supports, food security, and pediatric and adult medical care. Developmental screening is a foundational component of the HMG model and as such HMG WA's Statewide Coordinated Access Point promotes developmental screening during all intake calls with families, scores screenings, and follows up with families to link them to appropriate developmental and wrap-around services. This contract will also leverage Help Me Grow's enterprise status with Brookes Publishing to offer child care providers individual site licenses to access and track child-level data.

Navigational Infrastructure for Specialized Referral Pathway Infrastructure

Although universally offered, HMG WA also sustains specialized pathways for populations of focus across the public health, early learning, education, health care and social service sectors. These on-ramps are efficiently built upon the base HMG system and are designed to connect families to tailored services and supports throughout their communities. HMG WA is primed to develop a specialized pathway statewide designed for child care providers serving marginalized infants and toddlers to offer families a tailored bundle of wrap-around supports, including a tiered support approach for developmental screening.

Repeatedly in various strategic planning processes, the need to link families to the resources and supports (such as developmental screening) across the state and in local communities is listed as a high priority. Help Me Grow is the early childhood resource and referral system DOH, DCYF, ESD, DSHS, local health jurisdictions, and a growing number of communities have chosen to use in Washington State.

WithinReach is the statewide affiliate of National Help Me Grow system and have been since 2010. As such, they are the only Washington organization that is contracted with the national offices that certify and ensure fidelity to the Help Me Grow model and the only entity in Washington State that can lead this work to help Washington grow an interconnected statewide and local system of early childhood resource and referral.

3. What kind of market research did the agency conduct to conclude that alternative sources were inappropriate or unavailable?

Much research has been conducted by state agencies as well as local health and community groups around early childhood referral and linkage systems. Although there are several other proprietary models that offer similar services, Help Me Grow was assessed to be the most flexible, and through an extensive stakeholdering process Help Me Grow was deemed to be the most appropriate system to fit with the early childhood sector's needs in Washington state. WithinReach is the only organization that can hold the lead role in this process and system.

Washington State has a long history of working to improve child health and wellness, and to increase developmental screening rates. Years of work by the Universal Developmental Screening Partnership (housed at DOH) and Help Me Grow WA established baseline knowledge, created strong partnerships, and inspired efforts upon which the state is now building. Most recently, DOH's Universal Developmental Screening program has worked to stand up a statewide developmental screening data system. In their program research, Help Me Grow Washington is the only statewide entity with the unique pairing of existing statewide capacity and service delivery in developmental screening and wrap-around supports and deep expertise in developing specialized referral pathways in the early childhood system.

4. Provide a detailed and compelling description of the costs and risks mitigated by contracting with this contractor (i.e. learning curve, follow-up nature).

DCYF has been collaborating with WithinReach since the inception of the Help Me Grow pilot project in WA in October 2012. Over the last decade, DCYF has invested in the Help Me Grow model to assist families with access to community services and supports so they can easily connect to the resources they need, when they need them.

With support from DCYF, HMG WA has recently invested in building out technology infrastructure to support the type of collaboration required in this contract between providers and sectors. HMG WA has established pathways to receive online referrals from healthcare and social service providers and are also currently building out technology to close the loop with these providers (i.e. notify them of service outcomes if requested and the family grants consent). They are also in the process of creating a technology bridge from their Brookes ASQ Online Family Access portal to their internal client management system which tracks services, referrals, and follow up with families. Together, these technology developments will form the basis for a system of closed loop communication with child care settings, as well as effective data sharing with the state.

Much investment from several state agencies has been made into the Help Me Grow Washington system. Without being able to contract with WithinReach, DCYF would have to start over with another proprietary model to take the place of Help Me Grow.

5. Is the agency proposing this sole source contract because of special circumstances such as confidential investigations, copyright restrictions, etc.? If so, please describe.

NOT APPLICABLE

6. Is the agency proposing this sole source contract because of unavoidable, critical time delays or issues that prevented the agency from completing this acquisition using a competitive process? If so, please describe. For example, if time constraints are applicable, identify when the agency was on notice of the need for the goods and/or service, the entity that imposed the constraints, explain the authority of that entity to impose them, and provide the timelines which work must be accomplished.

NOT APPLICABLE

7. Is the agency proposing this sole source contract because of a geographic limitation? If the proposed contractor is the only source available in the geographical area, state the basis for this conclusion and the rationale for limiting the size of the geographical area selected.

NOT APPLICABLE

8. What are the consequences of not having this sole source filing approved? Describe in detail the impact to the agency and to services it provides if this sole source filing is not approved.

Losing the ability to contract with WithinReach for the Child Care Specialized Referral Pathway body of work would significantly delay statewide implementation of a tiered support structure for child care settings. Children at risk for cognitive, motor, communication, or social-emotional delays will get missed.

As DCYF views this specialized referral pathway as a key component of the Help Me Grow system, DCYF's ability to scale and spread Help Me Grow as the early childhood resource and referral linkage system would be greatly diminished. Communities and families would inevitably experience system fragmentation.

9. What considerations were given to providing opportunities in this contract for small business, including but not limited to unbundling the goods and/or services acquired.

WithinReach holds the gatekeeper role in Washington State for the Help Me Grow model, which is a proprietary model. DCYF is not aware of a small business in Washington that provides these services for Help Me Grow.

REASONABLENESS OF COST

10. Since competition was not used as the means for procurement, how did the agency conclude that the costs, fees, or rates negotiated are fair and reasonable. Please make comparison with comparable contracts, use the results of a market survey, or employ other appropriate means calculated to make such a determination.

DCYF negotiated with WithinReach to agree to a budget that matched the direct costs that would be incurred and associated with the services and goals mandated in the Child Care Development Fund.