



SOLE SOURCE FILING JUSTIFICATION

TO: Kris Gorgas
CONTRACT # 25-1024
TODAY'S DATE: 5/14/2024
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
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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 growth of a statewide Help Me Grow resource and referral network. As the State Affiliate, WithinReach will: 1) operate the statewide family resource and referral linkage system's coordinated access point; 2) expand the Help Me Grow Washington Network by building capacity for community coordination and referrals across Washington State; and 3) implement the statewide community-based Plan of Safe Care and SUD in Pregnancy pathways.

FUNDING

FEDERAL FUNDING \$425,000	STATE FUNDING \$ 1,045,000
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CONTRACT TOTAL \$1,470,000

CONTRACT DATES

START DATE: 7/1/2024	END DATE: 6/30/2025
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SOLE SOURCE CRITERIA

What is a sole source contract?
"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)

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.

Why is a sole source justification required?
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.

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.

SPECIFIC PROBLEM OR NEED

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

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

WithinReach is the WA state affiliate of the National Help Me Grow system, and have been since 2010. As such, WithinReach is the only organization that is contracted with the Help Me Grow National Center that can certify and ensure fidelity to the Help Me Grow model and hence 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.

Additionally, in response to the 2016 Comprehensive Abuse and Recovery Act (CARA) and impacts to the Child Abuse and Prevention Treatment Act (CAPTA), DCYF opted to develop a community-based pathway for infants requiring a Plan of Safe Care. The legislation requires DCYF to develop a system to oversee the Plan of Safe Care, which includes a collaborative relationship since 2021 with the selected statewide community partner Help Me Grow Washington.

Help Me Grow Washington is also leveraging their existing statewide navigational infrastructure and perinatal SUD expertise to expand the Plan of Safe Care into the prenatal period through developing and operating a statewide hub to connect pregnant people to voluntary prevention services before birth, as part of DCYF's Substance Use Disorder Prevention Families Funding.

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.

WithinReach is the statewide affiliate of the 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.

Help Me Grow Washington’s statewide navigational infrastructure and expertise in building referral pathways for families experiencing substance use disorder directly aligns with the desired elements of the Plan of Safe Care and the statewide hub for the SUD in Pregnancy program. As detailed below, this capacity and infrastructure paired with deep expertise in developing specialized referral pathways in the perinatal and early childhood system is unique to Help Me Grow Washington.

Expertise in Perinatal Substance Use Disorder Support

Help Me Grow Washington has served as the statewide community partner in the [Plan of Safe Care](#) (POSC) initiative since 2021. In this role, Help Me Grow Washington operates the community-based pathway for substance-exposed infants requiring a POSC, provides technical assistance to birthing hospitals in adopting the updated POSC policy and procedures, supports a Community of Practice for hospital social workers and other community providers, and develops both provider- and family-facing marketing and messaging POSC materials.

Help Me Grow Washington also serves as the statewide hub in the SUD in Pregnancy program. DCYF views this statewide initiative to connect pregnant people experiencing substance use disorder to voluntary services as the preventative upstream effort to the Plan of Safe Care. Both initiatives support perinatal families experiencing substance use, just at different times along the continuum (one during pregnancy, and one at birth). DCYF sees value and efficiency in aligning and integrating the two initiatives. For example, Help Me Grow Washington has developed a specialized Mental and Behavioral Health team to support specific services and resources tailored for the POSC initiative that is also supporting the SUD in Pregnancy program. This team’s tailored support includes but is not limited to the following services and resources: application assistance for benefits, home visiting, SUD treatment or assessment, mental health resources, recovery coaching or peer mentoring, parenting supports like childcare, and infant supplies. The ability to leverage this team realizes significant cost-savings and a streamlined ramp-up to statewide expansion.

Navigational Infrastructure for Specialized Referral Pathways

The Help Me Grow Washington system has been invested in over many years by several state agencies, including DCYF, DOH, HCA and DSHS. This has allowed Washington State to develop a statewide perinatal and early childhood resource and referral linkage system with robust navigational infrastructure, including a statewide contact center and ever-growing network of coordinated access points, a comprehensive resource directory

specializing in perinatal and early childhood services and supports, robust referral relationships and technology, and state affiliate capacity that works to weave systems together while offering technical assistance to providers and partnering organizations. As such, Help Me Grow Washington is skilled at leveraging its existing expertise and infrastructure to create and sustain statewide referral pathways with partnering organizations, such as those required for the POSC and SUD in Pregnancy hub structure.

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.

DCYF leadership conducted extensive stakeholdering with state-level agencies, statewide organizations, Washington State Hospital Association, and a multitude of community partners and providers from 2018-2021 to select Help Me Grow Washington as the statewide community partner for the Plan of Safe Care community-based pathway. As described in Response #2, DCYF is aligning and integrating the Plan of Safe Care with the SUD in Pregnancy program.

In our program research, Help Me Grow Washington is the only statewide entity with the unique pairing of: 1) existing statewide capacity and service delivery in perinatal substance use and 2) expertise in developing statewide referral pathways in the perinatal and 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 2010. 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. More recently, DCYF has markedly increased investment (with funds and staffing capacity) into the Help Me Grow system. 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.

DCYF has partnered with WithinReach over the past three years to develop the Plan of Safe Care community-based pathway statewide, over the past 18 months around the SUD in Pregnancy program to connect pregnant people experiencing substance use with voluntary services and supports in King County, and over the past year to develop the SUD in Pregnancy statewide hub model. Significant financial investment has been invested into WithinReach to build the appropriate technology for the POSC and SUD-P specialized referral pathways and to develop capacity to engage providers across the state to further expand statewide implementation. Cross-agency financial support through the Department of Health funds continuous improvement. Losing the

ability to contract with WithinReach for this body of work would significantly delay statewide implementation and potentially cause parallel initiatives to be developed in silos.

- 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.**

If this sole source filing were not approved, DCYF would attempt to continue to scale and spread Help Me Grow, but would not be able to tap into the Help Me Grow state affiliate's expertise. Momentum would be diminished and communities and families would inevitably experience system fragmentation.

Losing the ability to contract with WithinReach for the Plan of Safe Care and SUD in Pregnancy bodies of work would significantly delay statewide implementation and risk DCYF falling out of compliance with federal legislation. Pregnant people experiencing substance use disorder and infants experiencing prenatal substance exposure (who do not require child welfare intervention) would either be erroneously routed to Child Welfare or offered no services at all, increasing the possibility of infant out-of-home placement.

- 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 Help Me Grow services mandated in the legislative proviso.

DCYF negotiated with WithinReach to agree to a budget that matched the direct costs that would be incurred and associated with the services mandated in the CAPTA and Substance Use Disorder Prevention Families Funding.