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FCNBcps CLIFF NOTES

Issue No. 5 - September 1998

This publication is part of a series created to assist counties with the implementation of family-centered, neighborhood-based child protection services. The tools and helpful hints produced herein are a by-product of the materials and documents provided to PCSAO by staff at the Cuyahoga County Department of Children Services; the Hamilton County Department of Human Services; the Annie E. Casey Foundation. In some instances these materials have simply been reproduced. In other instances we have taken the liberty of interpreting and reformatting the information to enhance its usefulness.

This issue focuses on:

**RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT TO SUPPORT THE AGENCY'S
FAMILY-CENTERED, NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED EFFORTS**

The Standards For Effective Practice that link to this topic include:

1.1 Management of the PCSA; 1.11 Program Evaluation; 1.16 Provider Relations.

I. Background

Because of limited local funds for innovate community projects and family-centered, neighborhood-based services, there has been a lot of interest from phase 2 agencies in securing alternative funding to their efforts to integrate family-centered, neighborhood-based services locally. The following information has been developed as a result of requests received from phase 2 counties seeking information on Resource Development.

In this issue, staff will be provided with basic knowledge regarding the fundamentals of developing grant dependent initiatives, and constructing and submitting grant requests. It provides concrete, step-by-step activities that need to be considered when developing a project proposal. This issue also includes a listing of resources in Ohio that focuses on social services and child welfare and also includes listings of library resources.

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II. Components Of Grant Construction

Typically there are eight basic components of a grant application (aka: Request For Proposals), these include:

- a. Organizational Background
- b. Statement Of Need & Purpose For Request
- c. Program Description: Goals, Objectives, Activities, Time Frames
- d. Budget And Budget Narrative
- e. Q.A. Monitoring & Evaluation

- f. Letters Of Support
- g. Plan For Program Continuation
- h. Attachments: proof of 501 (3) (C) status, financial status, board approval board list, etc.

A. Organizational Background

This section typically requires the agency to provide background information regarding the organization. Typically, an agency will be required to provide information on the following: (1) agency purpose and broad-based goals; (2) length of time the organization has been in existence; (3) population served; (4) type of program services offered; (5) size of budget and budget sources; (6) history of collaboration within the community; etc.; (7) size of community/county; make-up (gender, race, age, poverty level, etc.).

B. Statement Of Need & Purpose For Request

This section typically requires the agency to describe why it needs the grant. It should include a discussion as to why the program service is needed, how it will help the client population, the results of not being funded, what the outcomes will be as a result of being funded.

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C. Program Description: Goals, Objectives, Activities, Time Frames

This section typically requires the agency to consider what must be done to achieve success with the target outcomes. The agency's staff must consider these objectives and provide a detailed listing of activities per objective. The activities should be tied to time frames. The agency should consider all aspects of program development and provide enough detail so as to provide the grantor with sufficient information to judge the plan well thought out, clear and descriptive.

Examples of the level of detail needed in for most applications include: (1) formulating job descriptions, advertising for the grant-funded positions, and interview and selection activities; (2) forming committees and work groups and building in time for product completion; (3) seeking bids on reproduction costs; (4) time allocated for developing, reviewing and revising program evaluation tools: surveys, questionnaires, etc.; (5) scheduling.

D. Budget And Budget Narrative

This section typically requires the agency to provide both a budget and budget narrative. The more the agency is able to breakdown the unit cost of various items the greater the likelihood the grantor will be satisfied the agency has been planful and mindful of costs. Generally, an in-kind contribution is required and administrative costs are limited by specific thresholds set by the grantor.

E. Q.A. Monitoring & Evaluation

This section has grown in importance over the past decade. Grantors want to know how the agency plans to evaluate progress towards achievement of program goals, objectives and client outcomes and how the agency intends to assure quality with program implementation. It behooves the agency to give careful consideration to this section and to devise strategies that are innovative and well thought out.

F. Collaboration and Letters Of Support

This section has taken on heightened importance over the past decade! The more collaboration exists in the community, the greater the likelihood that the proposed program will be funded. Funders want to see true efforts at collaboration with and between county stakeholders. This effort at collaboration speaks to the agency's ability to garner community support for the proposed program. The more the agency can demonstrate community support and build community involvement into the proposed program, the greater the likelihood that funding will be forthcoming.

G. Plan For Program Continuation

Planning for the continuation of the proposed program after the grant funding dries up is a typical requirement and usually challenging for the agency. The agency needs to consider ways to integrate the program into existing services; address potential local funds that might become available, and/or consider using volunteers when appropriate and possible.

H. Attachments: proof of 501 (3) (C) status, financial status, board approval board list, etc.

The grantor will typically require the completion of various forms specific to the grantor. Proof of (3)(C) non-profit status, annual budget and board approval will be required as part of the grant packet.

Proposal attachments that the agency wants to include contain information peripheral to the proposal. They may include such things as reprints, articles, Board Member lists, organizational charts, agency publications, etc. Judicious use of appendixes is one good way of overcoming agency constraints on page limits. Use appendixes for presentation of secondary supporting material. Put long charts, graphs, tables and other visuals in appendixes.

III. Grant Construction: 4 Primary Areas

- A. Developing the initiative
- B. Constructing the Program: Organizational Uniqueness; Statement of Need; Program Outcomes, Objectives, Activities and Time Lines; Budget, Narrative
- C. Assuring all RFP requirements are thoroughly covered
- D. Assembling the materials for submission & submitting the packet

Prior to Developing the Initiative

Prior to beginning the development process, the individual developing the grant should review the RFP requirements, time frames, etc. and develop a time line from the date of submission back to the date of development. This is critical because it allows for proper planning.

Planning should include:

- Letters requesting Letters of Support
- Development of initiative with team
- Development of program
- Review of draft
- Draft clean-up
- Assembling the grant
- Review of package
- Submission

A. Developing The Initiative

Often times we develop a grant request in reaction to a RFP rather than identifying a problem and brainstorming solutions. We operate within this framework because we are driven by resources.

Recognizing this, when grants are brought to our attention, we must work fast but in a planful manner. Planning will help determine our level of success.

- 1) To Develop the program concept, the individual responsible for coordinating the grant should schedule a meeting with the Unit, program experts who will be responsible for implementing the initiative.
- 2) Each participant should receive a write up on the grant RFP and the RFP requirements.
- 3) To Develop the program concept, the individual responsible for coordinating the grant should lead a discussion as to the importance of the grant in meeting or filling a service gap and open the discussion for brainstorming (drinks and snacks should be available to help in creating a friendly, supportive, open environment).
- 4) The individual responsible for coordinating the grant should take detailed notes, making sure that each component of the RFP is discussed and "fleshed-out" (including time frames) by the participants.
- 5) Following the meeting, the individual responsible for coordinating the grant should develop the grant program based on the brain-storming session. A preliminary budget should be worked up and the budget narrative drafted. The draft budget and budget narrative should be given to the individual in the agency responsible for agency finances. This individual should work with the grant developer to complete the RFP budget instructions.
- 6) The individual responsible for coordinating the grant should distribute a complete draft for the participants to review. A follow-up meeting should be scheduled to discuss the program draft and to clear up any outstanding items, clarify, etc.
- 7) The individual responsible for coordinating the grant should distribute the revised document for review and comment (if time permits).

B. Constructing The Program

1. Organizational Uniqueness

Funders contract with organizations offering services which are consistent with their needs and interests. To be successful, the agency needs to link up what it is proposing to the interests of the Funder. What makes your agency unique? What do you do well? What is your special niche?

- i. Begin by examining your mission statement. It should describe the agency's reason for being. It should distinguish you from other similar institutions.
- ii. Establishing your uniqueness enhances your credibility.
- iii. Demonstrate any crossover experience your organization might have had that will support you in implementing the proposed programs.

For example:

The XDE County CSB has been providing child protective services in the community for over 100 years. As the needs of the community have changed and grown, so to has the agency's ability to redefine services to effectively serve shifting populations and child and family needs. The XDE County CSB is the only agency in the county mandated to protect children at-risk of abuse and neglect and stabilize their vulnerable families. At the XDE County CSB, we have gone beyond the "rescuing children" mentality. While we have been constrained by a lack of available resources, we are committed to prevention efforts and have a rich history of providing prevention services in our county.

2. Statement Of Need - Problem - Purpose

- i. The problem statement should always be focused from the perspective of the Funder, not yours. Funding your project is not the Funders end goal. You must show how funding your project can be a means for them to reach their end goal - their mission.

- ii. A "need" is really a gap between "what is" and "what ought to be". Document that gap with statistics, quotations, reasoning or surveys and express it in human terms. Limit your documentation to brief but clear statements. Beware of the excessive use of statistics which only confuse the reader. Because the problem

statement represents the reason behind your proposal, it specifies the conditions you wish to change. The need statement should be supported by evidence drawn from your experience, from statistics provided by authoritative sources, and from appropriate literature reviews. It should be of reasonable dimensions, something that could be realistically done in the course of a grant.

- iii. The problem section should describe the gap as it is now and indicates what will happen to it in the future. In essence, when you document your project needs, you provide the sponsor with evidence that you are on the right track, that you understand the current problems.

For example:

The XDE County CSB has worked to implement a child abuse and neglect prevention program since 1995. Since that time, the agency has provided the community with monthly news articles in the local paper, has provided an annual report that is printed in the paper and has created and distributed C/AN flyers and informational brochures in all public and private child and family serving agencies throughout the county. However, our efforts do not appear to be working. In 1995 the agency received 1,100 calls regarding suspected C/AN, in 1996 1,500 call were received and in 1997 2,100 calls were received. Over this three year period, the agency substantiated 67% of its incoming referrals. In addition, the county's teen parent population is highest in the state and we are 23 out of 88 counties suffering from high unemployment and a low industrial tax base. The agency seeks to establish a rigorous speakers bureau, quarterly community forums and parent education forums throughout the county. To do so requires outside funding to initiate our community C/AN prevention program initiative.

3. Outcomes/Goals and Objectives

Your outcomes/goals should clear articulate the client and/or administrative end products. When Funders fund your project, they are literally "buying" your outcomes. This is why it is critical to specify your outcomes clearly. More precisely they should:

- i. Tell who
- ii. Is going to do what
- iii. when
- iv. how much (number of clients, units, etc.)
- v. how it will be measured

The goals/outcomes should convey confidence that you can close the gap between what is and what ought to be. These should be followed by objectives. Objectives break down the outcomes into "doable" chunks. The objectives should be followed by detailed activities (when the Funder asks for this level of specificity - and in most cases they do).

For example:

As a result of the XDE County CSB parent education forums, community speakers bureau and quarterly community forums:

- i. 1,500 parents will increase their knowledge and skills in parenting their children;
- ii. 800 XDE County adults will know what C/AN is and is not, how to identify C/AN, how to file a report of suspected C/AN based on C/AN criteria;

- iii. The XDE agency will have a cadre of 20 paid speakers to attend county functions, civic group and church meetings to present information on C/AN and the prevention of C/AN.
- iv. 45 county presentations will be conducted by speakers of the Speakers Bureau;
- v. The county will devise and initiate implementation of 3 strategies to prevent C/AN as a result of the quarterly community forums.

4. *Methods*

The methods section describes the agency's project's activities in detail, indicating how the agency objectives will be accomplished. The description should include the sequence, flow, and interrelationship of activities as well as planned staffing for the project. It should present a clear picture of the population, if any.

- i. To begin, start with your objectives;
- ii. Describe the precise steps you will follow to carry out each objective including what will be done, who will do it and when it will be done;
- iii. Finally, review the sequence of activities per each objective and attach time frames for each activity. Be careful not to bunch all the time frames up into one or two months - spread them out, give the staff time to implement the program while maintaining their current work load.

If you have problems getting started, imagine the Funder's check is in the mail. What is the first thing you will do? Hire staff? Order equipment? Keep asking "what next" and you will lead yourself through the methodology section.

5. *Evaluation & Quality Assurance*

Conducting some preliminary surveys and gathering preliminary data on the scope of the problem will help the agency in pin-pointing what is really happening so it can clearly identify where it wants to go. Based on evaluation information, the agency can better allocate resources, improve services and strengthen the overall project's performance. Beyond these benefits, project evaluation can discover needs to be served in the next proposal as well as make it easier to sustain funding. In addition, at the time of the writing, the agency may not have a firm grasp on the cost/benefit ratio, the projects strengths and weaknesses. Including an evaluation component will allow the agency to monitor progress, success and weaknesses and to adjust services accordingly.

Make sure a separate evaluation component is developed for each project outcome and objective. Designing an evaluation section for each objective forces the agency to examine the clarity of its objectives, the ease with which they can be measured and the possibility of their being achieved. The evaluation section can be strengthened by citing examples of surveys, questionnaires, data collection instruments, data analysis forms and other evaluation methodologies that will be used to demonstrate that this section has been well thought out and planned for.

Make sure the evaluation is not just qualitative and philosophical in nature. The evaluation section must be specific, describing methodology.

6. *Budget*

A budget is more than just a statement of proposed expenditures. It is an alternative way of expressing the proposed project. Funders will look at the budget to see how well it fits the proposed outcomes, objectives and activities. Incomplete budgets are examples of sloppy preparation. Inflated budgets are signs of waste. The budget is a statement of credibility as is the project narrative.

i. Direct Costs

Those costs that are line items listed in the budget as explicit project expenditures. Personnel, equipment, supplies, travel, publication charges.

ii. Indirect Costs

Those costs that are not directly listed in the budget and yet are costs incurred in the project due to the project's existence. Payroll expenses, space, phone, accounting, xeroxing. Normally Funders allow you to use an indirect cost pool percentage to figure this type of overhead. Funders normally want to know the fringe benefit rate - what it includes and the percentage

iii. Cost Sharing

Those costs the agency contributes partially whether in hard dollars or in-kind contributions. Most Funders expect some cost sharing as a show of commitment to the project.

Additional Notes:

- i. Multi-year budgets - allow for cost increases
- ii. A budget narrative should follow the budget summary - itemizing each cost category and providing a detailed explanation for each
- iii. If the project occurs in phases, list budget costs for each phase
- iv. Don't overlook budget items such as maintenance, shipping, insurance...
- v. Assuring RFP Requirements Are Thoroughly Covered

C. Assuring All RFP Requirements Are Thoroughly Covered

I. Developing the Problem Statement

As you write the problem statement, consider these questions. Does the proposal:

- a. Demonstrate a precise understanding of the problem or need that you are attempting to solve?
- b. Clearly convey the focus of your project early in the narrative?
- c. Indicate the relationship of your project to a larger set of problems or issues and justify why your particular focus has been chosen?
- d. Establish the significance and importance of the problem?
- e. Signify the contribution of your project?
- f. Establish the theoretical or conceptual base for your project?
- g. Provide rationale for your project's objectives and methods?
- h. Justify why your problem should be of special interest to the Funder?
- i. Include appropriate statistical data?
- j. Demonstrate your problem is solvable?
- k. Provide an appropriate and compelling introduction to the rest of the application?
- l. Make the reviewer want to read further.

II. Developing the Outcomes and Objectives

When developing the outcomes and objectives for the proposal, ask yourself whether they:

- a. Clearly describe your project's objectives, hypotheses, and/or research questions?
- b. Signal the project's objectives without burying them in a morass of narrative?
- c. Demonstrate that your objectives are significant, timely. Clear, concise?
- d. Are stated in a way that can be later evaluated or tested?

When developing your outcomes and objectives strive:

- a. Not to confuse your outcomes and objectives (ends) with your method (means). A good objective emphasizes what will be accomplished as a result of the methods employed.
- b. Include outcomes (ultimate) and objectives (immediate)
- c. Use action verbs to get started.
- d. List the outcomes in no more than one or two sentences each in approximate order of importance.
- e. List the specific objectives in expected chronological order of achievement if you are submitting a phased proposal.

III. Developing the Evaluation Section

When writing the evaluation section, ask yourself if you have:

- a. Described why evaluation is needed in the project?
- b. Define what is meant by evaluation?
- c. Clearly identified the type and purpose of your evaluation and the audience to be served by its results?
- d. Demonstrated that an appropriate evaluation procedure is included for every project outcome and objective?
- e. Provided a general organizational plan or model for your evaluation? How will direct and indirect impact be assessed in terms of quantitative and qualitative goals?
- f. Demonstrated that the scope of the evaluation is appropriate to the project? To what extent the project is practical, relevant, generalizable?
- g. Described what information will be needed to complete the evaluation and potential sources for this information, and the instruments that will be used for its collection?
- h. Provided sufficient detail to demonstrate the technical soundness of all data collection instruments and procedures?
- i. Identified and justified procedures for analysis, reporting, utilization?
- j. Defined the standards that will be used in judging the results of the evaluation?
- k. Identified potential constraints on the evaluation?
- l. Discussed who will be responsible for conducting the evaluation?
- m. Clearly summarized any reports to be provided to the funding source based on the evaluation and generally describe their content and timing?

IV. Developing the Budget

When developing the budget, ask yourself if you have:

- a. Included all guidelines governing the project's budget as outlined by the Funder?
- b. Provided sufficient resources to carry-out the project?
- c. Included a narrative to justify major budget categories?
- d. Presented the budget in the requested format?
- e. Provided sufficient detail so the Funder can understand how budget items were calculated?
- f. Separate indirect from direct costs?
- g. Developed a budget that relates to the project's objectives?
- h. Included cost sharing items?
- i. Included attachments to justify unusual requests?

D. Assembling the Materials for Submission & Submitting the Packet

When assembling the materials for submission to the grantor, be sure to follow the order and sequencing of items as delineated in the grantor's Request For Proposal packet. All T's must be crossed and all I's

dotted. Make no mistake, if it is a competitive grant, the Funder will be looking for ways to reject proposals to narrow the playing field. The agency must rigorously respond and comply with submission requirements or risk being rejected for not following the Funder's outline.

Appendixes

When developing appendix items, ask yourself if:

- a. The Funder could make an informed decision without any appendix information?
- b. You have included strong letters of support and endorsement?
- c. Assurances of cooperation are included if requisite?
- d. You have included the resumes of key project personnel?

IV. WHY GRANT REQUESTS ARE REJECTED

Many organizations fail the review process because they have not responded to each requirement of the Funder. Some typical reasons for proposal rejection include the following:

- a. Agency fails to include a statement regarding program continuation
- b. The evaluation component is weak, does not show how monitoring will lead to enhanced program delivery
- d. Time frames are missing
- e. Outcomes, goals and objectives are not written in measurable language
- f. Budget is inflated and unrealistic
- g. The Statement of Need is soft, not making a strong argument

The Cliff Notes series was originally developed to provide phase 2 counties with information from the Cuyahoga and Hamilton county pilots, the Casey Foundation and the national family-centered, neighborhood-based services experience. The purpose was to support agencies in their effort to integrate family-centered, neighborhood-based services [FCNB] locally.

THE CLIFF NOTES SERIES FOCUSED ON THE FOUR PRIMARY FCNB AREAS:

ISSUE 1: BUILDING THE AGENCY'S SELF EVALUATION TEAM
Produced August 1997

ISSUE 2: BUILDING RELATIONS WITH THE AGENCY'S FOSTER CARE GIVERS [RETENTION AND RECRUITMENT]
Produced October 1997

ISSUE 3: BUILDING RELATIONS WITH TARGETED NEIGHBORHOODS
Produced December 1999

ISSUE 4: BUILDING RELATIONS WITH PUBLIC AND PRIVATE PROVIDERS
Produced May 1998

THIS ISSUE WAS DEVELOPED AS A DIRECT RESULT OF YOUR FEEDBACK. WE RECEIVED REQUESTS FOR RESOURCE INFORMATION ON GRANT DEVELOPMENT TO AUGMENT FAMILY-CENTERED, NEIGHBORHOOD-BASED INTEGRATION EFFORTS AND CREATED THIS ISSUE AS A RESULT.

THIS IS THE FIFTH AND FINAL PLANNED ISSUE OF FCNBcps CLIFF NOTES PUBLICATION...

UNLESS... YOU WANT MORE!

WE WOULD BE MORE THAN INTERESTED IN PRODUCING ADDITIONAL CLIFF NOTES BASED ON YOUR FEEDBACK. PLEASE LET US KNOW, USING THE ENCLOSED FORM, WHAT OTHER TOPICS YOU WOULD LIKE US TO RESEARCH. Thank you and good luck in your efforts to integrate FCNB services locally!

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FEEDBACK FORM

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING AND RETURN IT TO PCSAO: [ATT. S.A. SAUNDERS] W/IN 3 WEEKS OF RECEIVING THIS PUBLICATION. WE HOPE IT IS USEFUL - LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK.

County Agency: _____

Person Completing this Form: _____

Date: _____

	Absolutely	Somewhat	It's OK But...	Not at All
1. This publication has answered some questions we had about resource development.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2. We would like this publication to continue	_____	_____	_____	_____
3. Topics we are interested in for future issues include:				
4. Suggestions we would like to make include:				

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FCNBcps CLIFF NOTES

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ACCOMPANYING HANDOUTS

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT DEVELOPING THE IDEA

There are several techniques which can be employed when developing the idea for a grant-funded program. These include:

Flip Chart:

On flip chart paper develop a question that will provide insight into the grant idea from which a program can be developed.

For example: Increase the number of agency minority foster homes.

1. What activities can the agency initiate to increase the number of agency minority homes?
2. What "barriers" prevent agency recruitment and licensing of minority foster homes?
3. What has worked/hasn't worked in recruiting minority foster homes?
4. What resources are available to assist us in the development of strategies for the recruiting and licensing agency foster homes.

Delphi Technique:

The Delphi Technique works best when getting together with staff is practically impossible. **This technique should only be used on this circumstance.**

1. The grant writer identifies the problem and basic project concept with accompanying questions to provoke brainstorming. This is written up and distributed to staff. Staff react to the problem and provide ideas to respond to the basic program concept.
2. Responses are received, the grant writer summarizes the ideas generated and develops a new set of questions to gain clarity and add detail. This is redistributed.
3. The grant writer re-summarizes and redistributes this document several times to refine the proposal idea without ever convening the group.

Focus Groups:

When time permits, focus groups help to clarify the "big picture" by gaining the perspective of several key constituents or stakeholders.

1. Identify 6-8 staff from diverse areas of the agency (may include foster parents, adoptive parents, etc. depending on the subject of the proposal).
2. Develop a series of questions all related to the problem and population to be served.
3. Introduce the questions, allow time for feedback and brainstorming.
4. Use the information to shape the proposal.

Grant Idea Worksheet:

Distribute a grant idea worksheet as a way of generating ideas prior to meeting with staff.