**Race to the Top Early Challenge Grant**

**Department of Housing Community Development**

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**Purpose of Grant:**

To provide a coordinated, intregrated and effective resource sharing, professional development and services that will support children and families in Massachusetts, especially families experiencing or at risk of becoming homeless. The desired outcome is support long-term positive outcomes for children and families.

**General Work Plan:**

**1. Child Development**

* Identify and or provide trainings on child development, brain building, resources to shelter staff, case managers, housing stabilization programs and all other relevant staff.
* Develop a coordinated effort with local CFCE’s to identify services for families
* Encourage families to participate in CFCE’s activities
* Identify and collaborate with DHCD shelters, caseworkers, hotel and motel staff, housing programs and local community agencies and resources, such CFCE’s, MASS 211.
* Develop knowledge and linkages of comprehensive services and programs in their community
* Provide parents of young children with relevant information, in native language, on child development and resources
* Develop a process and policy to ensure that all children 0-5 have access to developmental screening ASQ-SE
* Offer in-service trainings to staff on the Department of Early Education and Cares Subsidy ( how to access child care)
* Offer Kinderwait (universal childcare wait list for all state childcare subsidies) training to all relevant shelter staff, case managers, and others.
* Provide for parents to have on-line access to Kinderwait

**2. Review and revise policies and procedures:**

* Ensure that all supports offered to families and culturally sensitive and support child development
* Work with agencies to ensure ASQ-Se trainings are available, that agencies are using kits, offer support to staff in the administration of the ASQ-SE
* Identify and work with providers/organizations that were unable to attend the ASQ-Se trainings set up trainings for new staff
* Review existing DHCD policies and practices to assure best practices are being used. Work with providers and organizations to explore best practices, ensuring they meet the needs of children and families in shelters, hotels and motels.

**3. Screenings and Referrals**

* Help develop a policy and process to assure all children birth to 5 have access to developmental screenings
* Develop a mechanism for referral when a developmental concern in identified

**Questions:**

What are your challenges in accessing services (not housing) for children and families in your programs?

Do you feel there are enough services for children 0-5 in your service area?

What is parents’ greatest concern re: their children’s development?

What type of trainings would you like to see developed for your staff

What trainings, if any is your staff requesting

Would you be willing to participate in sub-committee or working group to explore best practices, intake procedures, and a referral mechanism?

Within the scope of the work plan (very generic) what else would you like to see added.

What are your questions, comments and or suggestions?

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