

REQUEST FOR QUALIFICATIONS

MID- AMERICA HEAD START EARLY CHILDHOOD

Mental Health Consultant Services

Mid-America Regional Council

May 6, 2026



Key Information:

Request for qualifications issued publicly	May 6, 2026
Deadline for questions / additional information	May 13, 2026
Final responses to questions released	May 14, 2026
Closing date for proposals	May 20, 2026 by 5pm CST
Selected agencies/individuals notified	June 1, 2026
Contract negotiations	June 10-June 17, 2026
Contracts finalized	June 19, 2026
Anticipated contract start date	July 1, 2026

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BACKGROUND

The Mid-America Regional Council (MARC) is a nonprofit association of city and county governments and the metropolitan planning organization for the Kansas City region. MARC promotes regional cooperation and develops innovative solutions while providing a forum for the region to work together to advance social, economic, and environmental progress.

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Capitalizing on well-established community connections, MARC serves as the grantee for Head Start and Early Head Start programs in metropolitan Kansas City in Clay, Platte and Jackson Counties. These programs provide comprehensive, high quality, birth through five early education services that facilitate healthy development, including physical and social/emotional development, and prepare children for school success. Head Start and Early Head Start programs will serve approximately 2300 children and their families through contracted direct service providers throughout Clay, Platte and Jackson Counties in Missouri. Services will be provided in center-based and home visiting programs for children from birth to five years and pregnant women. See attachment A for listing of all sites.

MARC employs a team of qualified early childhood professionals, each with specific areas of expertise, who support delegate and partnership agencies in the implementation of direct services to children and families. Accountability is maintained through strong contractual agreements, clearly defined procedures and structured systems. As the Federal Head Start grantee MARC is responsible for providing mental health consultants who assist:

- The program implementation strategies to identify and support children with mental health and social emotional concerns;
- Teachers to improve classroom management and teaching practices through strategies that include using classroom observations, coaching and consultations to address teacher and individual child needs and creating physical and cultural environments that promote positive mental health and social and emotional functioning;
- Other staff, including home visitors, meet children's mental health and social and emotional needs through strategies that include observations and consultation;
- Staff to address prevalent child mental health concerns, including internalizing problems

such as children who are withdrawn or children with challenging behaviors;

- In helping both parents and staff to understand mental health and access mental health interventions if needed;
- Provide therapy services for individual children, family and staff. Facilitate social skill groups for children.

Although most children enrolled in MARC's Head Start and Early Head Start programs are Medicaid eligible, often the mental health services needed are not considered eligible for reimbursement through Medicaid. This contract covers only services costs not eligible for Medicaid reimbursement.

MARC is seeking qualified individuals or agencies to provide mental health services for children and pregnant women as outlined in the scope of work below. MARC will accept applications to provide services for all locations and to serve selected locations and programs.

Responses will be accepted from individual(s) or agencies with the following credentials and experience: Licensed Clinical Social Worker or Licensed Professional Counselor, experience working with children under five years. Previous experience with Head Start is preferred. Bilingual candidates are encouraged to apply.

Scope of Work

The following represents the scope of work to be completed during the contracted time. Services can be offered virtually and in person.

Individual and Family Therapy

- Conduct observations and assessments of developmental, behavioral and/or social-emotional needs of individual children and families as referred.
- Provide therapeutic services on a schedule of sufficient frequency to provide effective intervention for identified concerns.
- Meet with families at home, school or in the community to consult on child and family needs and create or follow up on plans to support these needs.
- Solicit parental information, observations, and concerns about their child's mental health.
- Share staff observations of children with parents and discuss and anticipate with parents their child's behavior and development, including separation and attachment issues.
- Discuss and identify with parents' appropriate responses to their child's behaviors.

- Discuss how to strengthen nurturing, supportive environments and relationships in the home and at the program.
- Help parents better understand mental health issues and support their participation in any needed mental health interventions.
- Provide guidance and model developmentally appropriate activities for children and effective ways to work with and support young children.
- Provide child and family referral and follow-up to community services.
- Consult with child psychiatrists or other professionals as needed to support children and families referred for services.

Classroom and Program Support

- Provide individual coaching to classroom teachers on responding to challenging behaviors.
- Visit classroom of referred child for observation and assessment.
- Assist in providing special help for children with atypical behavior or development through consultation with program staff and parents.
- Meet with classroom teams to review classroom and child observations and develop and implement plans as needed for referred children.
- Promote children's mental wellness by providing staff and parent education on mental health issues.
- Promote staff mental wellness by providing staff with training to support self-care, strategies to address stressful situations and workplace burnout.

Individualized Child and Family-Centered Observations and Consultations

- Promote children's mental wellness by providing staff and parent education on mental health issues.
- Share observations, assessments and plans developed with families with the classroom team to ensure continuity for the child.

Funding Timeframes:

- The terms of this contract will be divided into two contract periods.
- The first contract will extend from July 1, 2026, through October 31, 2026. The second contract period will extend from November 1, 2026, through October 31, 2027.
- Thereafter, MARC may extend the term of the contract to one additional period. This extension is contingent upon successful performance and services provided, and upon availability of funds.

- All awards are provisional pending approval of the MARC's federal grant application by The Administration for Children and Families.
- Should a respondent's contract be terminated or relinquished for any reason, MARC reserves the right to return to the pool of respondents generated from this RFQ to select another qualified respondent.
- The need for services may be higher at the start of the school year (fall) and may lessen as the year progresses however it is not possible to predict how many children will require services or the dates those services will be needed and therefore, we cannot guarantee a particular amount of service / reimbursement per month. MARC will only reimburse providers for those services that are not billable to Medicaid.

Selected candidate / agency should be aware that this is a federally funded project and as such the contract will be subject to all terms and conditions applicable to federal grants. Selected candidate must also provide documentation of a clear criminal background check and TB screening. Proof of professional license and liability insurance will also be required.

RESPONSE REQUIREMENTS

Responses to this Request for Qualifications should be directed to Kasey Lawson at the address below NO LATER THAN 5 p.m. CST on May 20, 2026.

Kasey Lawson
 Head Start Director
 Mid-America Regional Council
 600 Broadway, Suite 200
 Kansas City, MO 64105-1659
 Email: klawson@marc.org

Please provide your response in electronic format (PDF) via e-mail. The following items should be addressed in your response.

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email address
- Resume: provide current resume with education, certifications and work experience.
- Background: Provide additional information on background, including experience, education and skills necessary to perform the required work. Indicate specific credentials that make the individual well suited to meet MARC's requirements.
- References: provide three references of clients or employers where similar knowledge and expectations were required.
- Proposed hourly fees

QUESTIONS

Questions must be submitted in writing to Kasey Lawson at klawson@marc.org by 5pm CST on May 13, 2026. Answers to all questions will be posted on the MARC website at <http://www.marc.org/Requests-for-Proposals> by close of business on May 14, 2026.

ENGAGEMENT

This Request for Qualifications does not commit MARC to award a contract or pay costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal in response to this request. MARC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all responses received as a result of this request if it is considered in the best interest of MARC. MARC may require the proposer selected to participate in negotiations, and to submit to such price, technical or other information may be needed to finalize a particular engagement for services.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/DRUG-FREE WORKPLACE

MARC hereby notifies all respondents that it will provide equal opportunity to submit proposals in response to this request and will not discriminate in consideration of the contract award on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or veteran status. Consultant must agree to comply with the requirements of the Drug-Free Workplace Act of 1988, P.L. 100-690, and Sections 5151 through 5160.

CONTACT FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Kasey Lawson, klawson@marc.org.

Attachment A

<u>Tier</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Zip</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Hanthorn Early Education</u>	<u>1511 Kings Hwy.</u>	<u>Independence</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64055</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Korte Elementary</u>	<u>2437 S. Hardy</u>	<u>Independence</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64052</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Mill Creek Elementary</u>	<u>2601 N. Liberty</u>	<u>Independence</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64050</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Sunshine Center</u>	<u>18400 E. Salisbury Rd.</u>	<u>Independence</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64056</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>William Southern Elementary</u>	<u>4300 Phelps Rd.</u>	<u>Independence</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64055</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Richardson Elementary</u>	<u>3515 Park Ave. E</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64109</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Woodland Early Learning</u>	<u>711 Woodland Ave.</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64106</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Operation Breakthrough</u>	<u>3039 Troost Ave.</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64109</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Columbus Park</u>	<u>1100 East 4th St.</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64106</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>Mattie Rhodes</u>	<u>3100 NE 83rd St. #1501b</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64119</u>
<u>3</u>	<u>Operation Breakthrough at De La Salle</u>	<u>3737 Troost Ave.</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64109</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>Yellowjacket/Center School District</u>	<u>8817 Wornall Rd.</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64114</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>Futures First</u>	<u>444 Minnesota Ave Suite 200</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>KS</u>	<u>66101</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>EarlyStart St. Mark</u>	<u>2008 East 12th St.</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64127</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>Cub Care/Blue Springs School District</u>	<u>3575 SW Liggett Road</u>	<u>Blue Springs</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64111</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>Emmanuel Family & Child Development</u>	<u>4736 Prospect Avenue</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64130</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>Excelsior Springs School District</u>	<u>500 N. Jesse James Road</u>	<u>Excelsior Springs</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64024</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>High Grove/Grandview School District</u>	<u>2500 High Grove Rd.</u>	<u>Grandview</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64030</u>
<u>2</u>	<u>Guadalupe Centers</u>	<u>3800 East 51st Street</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64130</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>Learn A Lot ELC-Sterling</u>	<u>4010 Sterling Ave</u>	<u>Kansas City</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64133</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>Great Beginnings at Paradise Park/Lee's</u>	<u>1421 NE Independence</u>	<u>Lee's Summit</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64086</u>

	<u>Summit School District</u>	<u>Ave.</u>			
<u>1</u>	<u>Three Trails/Raytown School District</u>	<u>812 Gregory Blvd</u>	<u>Raytown</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64133</u>
<u>1</u>	<u>Renders Hope</u>	<u>1316 S Osage</u>	<u>Independence</u>	<u>MO</u>	<u>64055</u>