

**Caregiver Retention, Education and Support Services (CaRES): Mentor  
UW RFQQ 22-0039  
Update 6/7/2022 V3**

**INTENT**

This Request for Qualifications (RFQ) is issued by the University of Washington to solicit proposals from Contractors interested in providing caregiver retention and support services and foster parent training. Execution of a contract is not a guarantee of business.

The pool will remain open and ongoing in order to add additional trainers at UW discretion.

**BACKGROUND**

The Alliance for Child Welfare Excellence (Alliance) is a comprehensive statewide partnership between the University of Washington, University of Washington Tacoma, Eastern Washington University and the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF). Our partnership is dedicated to developing the skills and capacity of those working with vulnerable children and their families. The Alliance provides training to alternate caregivers, DCYF staff, Tribal entities, and staff, as well as others involved in serving children, youth, and families. As part of our training and professional development service array, we provide trainings to potential and current caregivers (also called foster parents) and other alternate caregivers for children in the custody of DCYF. The Caregiver Retention and Support Program (CaRES) was newly awarded to The Alliance by the DCYF and began December 2020.

The goal for this project is to retain and support prospective foster parents, licensed and kinship caregivers, and to assist caregivers in accessing support services as they care for children and youth placed in their homes. We believe our approach will support reducing disproportionality of negative outcomes for children and youth of color, LGBTQI+ children, and disabled youth. The Alliance is looking for partners to support licensed caregivers and kinship caregivers across the state to, mentor, navigate community resources, and strengthen the community in support of positive outcomes for youth and families. Our vision is that services will transcend geographic and cultural barriers through engagement with allies, recognition of our own diverse internal resources, and our connections to rich and diverse communities. Service and support will prioritize and strengthen community-based, culturally relevant, trauma-informed practices using Alliance staff, peer mentors and a web of contracted community members, volunteers, and allies (Collectively called the Caregiver Retention, Education and Support (CaRES) program). The Alliance and our partners will prepare and support licensed caregivers and kinship caregivers by providing training, coaching, mentorship, and resource navigation to meet their individual culturally specific needs.

The CaRES Program will strongly support prospective caregivers through the licensure process by providing culturally relevant services and ongoing outreach. Contractors selected by the Alliance will provide responsive support to alternative caregiving families, answering their questions and concerns that arise through licensing and as they provide care.

Our top three strategies for retaining potential caregivers are:

- Improve cultural relevancy and community connection in the supports and services caregivers receive;
- Utilizing the voice of experience in the coaching and mentorship we offer; and
- Identify and respond in a timely manner to barriers in licensing and retention of caregivers and kinship providers.

**SCOPE OF WORK**

Alliance mentor will

- Call caregivers in their region at key times (i.e. at the time of licensure, at the time of first placement, etc.) to offer support and resources

- Follow-up with resources and answers to specific questions as requested by caregivers, assigned by Alliance CaRES, or referred by DCYF staff
- Follow-up with assigned caregivers as needed to ensure ongoing and personal support
- Foster a collaborative effort between local foster care supports and the Alliance CaRES program.
  - Attend events
  - Share information between organizations
  - Make introductions or connections when appropriate
  - Coordinate donations
- Opportunity to facilitate CaRES support groups
- 10-25 hours per month on a flexible schedule
  - One mandatory team meeting per month (1 hour)
  - Other work is daytime, evening, and weekend as determined by the mentor

Alliance CaRES provides:

- Statewide resource list
- Ongoing resource information and connections
- Training on the data management tools
- Dedicated Microsoft Outlook email & team zoom access
- Training and onboarding for all CaRES policies and procedures
- Ongoing monthly opportunity for check-in/training/coordination with the Mentor team.

#### **APPLICANT MENTOR QUALIFICATIONS**

- Current licensed WA state caregiver
  - No founded allegations with a license in good standing
  - Certificate of completion for CCT (Can be completed post-hiring)
- 5 or more years of experience as a foster caregiver
- Deeply connected to their local foster care community
- Knowledgeable about their local foster care resources and supports
- Knowledgeable about common DCYF policies and procedures for licensed foster caregivers
  - Basic WACs, the various DCYF roles, and caregiver expectations
- Positive, solution-oriented, and a willing DCYF partner

#### **UPDATED 6/7/2022- PAY RATE**

\$28-\$35/ hour based on experience

#### **PERIOD OF SERVICE**

The initial term of this Agreement shall be for two (2) year commencing on date of execution and expiring on June 20, 2024. UW at its discretion, may extend for additional 2-year terms.

#### **SUBMISSION**

Please Submit

- A copy of your current foster care license & CCT certificate (or CCT progress)
- 2 references (related to your local foster care community connections)
- Completed criteria checklist on Page 3
- A brief response to the following email prompt Page 4
  - Caregivers frequently reach out to their mentor with questions and challenges, please answer the following as if it were a caregiver in your region.

- Return documents to Dawn Lake, Senior Contracts Manager [dawnlake@uw.edu](mailto:dawnlake@uw.edu) and Shana Burren [srburren@uw.edu](mailto:srburren@uw.edu)

Alliance CaRES Mentor  
Criteria Checklist

- I am a currently licensed foster home in the state of Washington
- I have \_\_\_\_\_ years of foster experience
- I have completed the Alliance Caregiver Core Training (CCT)
  - or I will have completed it by the end of my first month with CaRES.
- I am involved in the local fostering community
  - including but not limited to positive relationships with DCYF staff, 1624 representative, non-profit groups, and informal caregiver networks
- I am knowledgeable about the WA state foster care system and local resources
  - Including but not limited to common DCYF policies and procedures for licensed caregivers, local clothing closets, educational supports, and the responsibilities and limitations for caregivers
- I can be a positive, solution-oriented, and willing DCYF partner in my support of foster caregivers

Signed \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Caregivers frequently reach out to their mentor with questions and challenges, please answer the following as if it were a caregiver in your region.

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Hello Mentor,

We need some help! The placement desk called last night with a sibling set. We thought we were going to take a toddler, but now we will have a 2<sup>nd</sup> grader too. We don't have a twin bed or any of the things the older child will need and the social worker hasn't said what they would bring with them. On top of that, the desk mentioned that the older child has intervention services at their current school. How do we transfer those services and what else do we need to think about if there are behavior challenges at school? We both work full-time so we aren't sure how to support a child not in regular daycare.

We are excited but feeling a bit overwhelmed!

Thanks,

Alex & Jayden Smith

Written response here: