



DULUTH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

*Preparing all students for successful lives in the twenty-first century . . .
success in the workplace, success in the home, and success in the community*

May 15, 2012

Joe Everett, Director
Ordean Foundation
501 Ordean Building
424 W Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55802

SUBJECT: 2013 Funding for the Habitat Program Teen Parent Collaborative

Dear Mr. Everett,

Attached is the Minnesota Common Grant Application requesting funding for the new Habitat Program Teen Parent Collaborative. The Collaborative will provide a bridge between the educational services offered through the Duluth School District, the district child care services offered through the Duluth YWCA where parenting students may receive parenting education and child care for their children, and Habitat Health Services, the school based clinic for pregnant and parenting teens and their children.

The Teen Parent Collaborative will work to incorporate the comprehensive services available through many other local community agencies that also serve this population into the programming provided at the Duluth YWCA location and thus reduce service delivery costs, reduce redundancy of service provider efforts, as well as simplify access to a broad spectrum of assistance for the teen parents. With your ongoing support, Habitat continues to explore new collaborative opportunities in the larger community and works to incorporate into the program the findings reflected in leading research on infant mental health, attachment theory and brain development.

Questions concerning this grant application should be directed to Deidre Quinlan at Habitat at 336-8700 ex 1504 or 591-4475. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

William L. Gronseth
Superintendent of Schools

WLG/skt

Minnesota Common Grant Application Form

Date of application: May 15, 2012 Application submitted to: Ordean Foundation

Organization Information

Habitat Program

Name of organization _____ *Legal name, if different* _____

401 North 44th Avenue West Duluth, MN 55807

Address _____ *City, State, Zip* _____ *Employer Identification Number (EIN)* _____

218.336.8700 x 2028 218.336-8840 41-6003776

Phone _____ *Fax* _____ *Web site* _____

William Gronseth Superintendent, Duluth Public Schools 218.336.8752

Name of top paid staff _____ *Title* _____ *Phone* _____ *E-mail* _____

Deidre Quinlan, MSW, LICSW Teen Parent Specialist 218.336-8700 x 2015 Deidre.quinlan@duluth.k12.mn.us

Name of contact person regarding this application _____ *Title* _____ *Phone* _____ *E-mail* _____

Is your organization an IRS 501(c)(3) not-for-profit? Yes No
 If no, is your organization a public agency/unit of government? Yes No

If no, check with funder for details on using fiscal agents, and list name and address of fiscal agent:
Duluth ISD #709 41-6003776

Historic Old Central High School 215N First Ave East, Duluth, MN 55802 Fiscal agent's EIN number

Proposal Information

Please give a 2-3 sentence summary of request:

This is a request for funding to help coordinate the transition to a new location at the Duluth YWCA and to put in place a cost effective system of core services and supports for pregnant and parenting students and their children in the district to be provided in partnership with community stakeholders.

Population served: Pregnant and parenting teens and their children Geographic area served: Duluth ISD #709 & surrounding areas.

Funds are being requested for (check one) *Note: Please be sure funder provides the type of support you are requesting.*

General operating support Start-up costs Capital
 Project/program support Technical assistance Other (list) _____

Project dates (if applicable): September 1, 2012 – August 31, 2013 Fiscal year end: June 30

Budget

Dollar amount requested: \$ 40,066

Total annual organization budget: \$110,066

Total project budget (for support other than general operating): \$ 40,066

Authorization

Name and title of top paid staff or board chair: William Gronseth, Superintendent of Duluth Public Schools



Signature _____

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

I. Organizational Information

Brief summary of organization history, including the date your organization was established, mission and goals, current programs, relationship with other programs

The Habitat Program is a comprehensive, school-based collaborative model established in 1982 through a community grant/school District partnership. The program serves pregnant and parenting students and their children in the Duluth Public Schools. Services include on-site child care for infants and toddlers (six weeks - 33 months), a school based health care clinic, advocacy, tutoring, counseling and social support services. Forty five percent of our program participants represent communities of color, and all of the families in our program qualify for free and reduced lunch and are Title 1 eligible.

One of the primary goals of Habitat, and an important facet of a comprehensive program for pregnant and parenting teens, is to build the parenting capacity of the participants. We recognize that many of the young parents served in our program have limited parenting skills because of their problematic history, not simply because they are adolescents. High quality child care is offered to serve as a compensatory social experience for young children of these high risk families. Curriculum, program delivery strategies, frequency of these services, as well as skill level of staff all affect the quality of outcome of these efforts in the delivery of service to participants. Habitat childcare staff are trained to provide responsive and intentional experiences in the Center to help develop "smart babies". We use this strategy to enhance both parent and baby's skill levels in social interactions and to encourage positive growth in the relationship.

A second goal of Habitat is to increase high school completion rates for parenting teens. Studies show that more than 80% of teen mothers who do not attend high school with their peers will not receive a high school diploma. However, more than 84% of Habitat participants complete high school (UMD statistics). Teen mothers are also more likely to end up on welfare – an estimated 80% of unmarried teen mothers rely on welfare at least some time in their lives. High school graduation greatly reduces the likelihood of the parents (and subsequent generations) becoming dependent on the welfare system.

The third and final goal of Habitat is to reduce additional unintended pregnancies. Nationally, twenty five percent of teen mothers will have a second child within two years of their first. Research shows that few programs have been able to effectively assist adolescent mothers to delay a subsequent pregnancy. Those that have been successful, like Habitat, provide intensive counseling services. More than 95% of Habitat graduates have chosen to delay a second pregnancy until after completion of high school.

Your organization's relationship with other organizations working with similar missions. What is your organization's role to these organizations?

Habitat also coordinates with a network of community partners to create the Teen Parent Collaborative, a safety net of services for young parents and their children. All of these services exist autonomously in our community, and Habitat offers a central location where multiple services and clients intersect. These on-site partners include Early Childhood/Family Education (ECFE), Early Childhood Special Education (ECSE), UMD Dept. of Social Work, UMD School of Medicine, UMD Speech/Pathology Department, UMD Early Childhood Education, St. Louis Co Public Health, Duluth Public Library, Program of Promise, SMDC, LSS, and Fond Du Lac Public Health. This collaboration of community providers works together to support the educational efforts of the District by providing expertise and by augmenting classroom services on site, as well as supporting the unique developmental needs of the infants and toddlers enrolled in our child care center. Habitat has been able to build and sustain these collaborative partnerships with funding from the Ordean Foundation.

Once again this year, UMD speech pathology graduate students facilitated the Interact Program, an interactive model designed to encourage language growth and communication

between moms and babies. Supervised by American Speech Language Hearing Association certified speech language pathologists, UMD Speech/Pathology graduate students facilitated small group discussion, demonstrations, parent-child play times, and individualized sessions. Through these shared experiences, graduate students helped parents gain support and practical ideas for parenting children experiencing speech delays and encouraged language growth and communication between moms and babies.

UMD early childhood students used the child care center for practicum experience. Some students implemented a videotaping curriculum called Seeing is Believing©. Through guided self observation, teen parents are encouraged to build on parenting strengths in the context of a supportive, nurturing relationship between the staff and the family. Habitat used Seeing is Believing© with young parents for the past three years in a partnership with UMD Early Childhood undergraduate students. This practicum experience allows college students the opportunity to join with parents in a parallel process of self discovery. UMD students also had the opportunity this year to participate in a reflective practice experience. Three students from the Community Partners class observed and implemented strategies in the toddler classroom with a high risk young child. Observations and interactions were discussed in a weekly group session facilitated by Habitat's clinical social worker. This weekly meeting provided an opportunity for reflection and coaching, and to help build the reflective functioning of the UMD students.

As Habitat evolves and grows, we continue to move our program in new directions that support evidence based research and best practice within the context of the community based collaborative. We are also working to build capacity in our community. We ask for your continued support in these efforts.

Number of Board members (please see attachment), full time paid staff, part time paid staff and volunteers (please see attachment)

Through the District, Habitat employs 4 positions: The Clinical Social Worker (.4 FTE district funded, .3 FTE grant funded) and 3 Child Care Workers (2.7 FTE). This is a reduction from past years that will be addressed in further detail below.

In addition, our collaborative efforts bring together those agencies in the community who provide services specific to this population. Private programs, individual providers, and public agencies that work with adolescent parents and their children have a vehicle through which to come together and partner to meet the diverse needs of these families.

II. PURPOSE OF THE GRANT

Opportunities, challenges, and issues or needs currently facing your organization.

Almost half of all poor children in this nation are born to an adolescent parent; this population of children is at high risk for poor health and poor developmental outcomes. Children of teen mothers are at an increased risk of cognitive and developmental delays, low birth weight, prematurity, poverty, growing up in a single parent family, welfare dependency, poor school performance, insufficient health care, inadequate parenting, and abuse and neglect.

Being an adolescent parent does not in and of itself equal poor family outcomes. But for the adolescent faced with domestic violence, homelessness, physical and emotional abuse, school failure, mental illness, alcohol and drug abuse, and/or poverty, having a baby becomes a manifestation of these other contributing factors. The combination of these environmental stressors and/or maladaptive behaviors can have dire consequences on the development of the children of teen parents.

To ensure that these high risk children have an opportunity to achieve appropriate health and developmental outcomes, school readiness, and ultimate success in life, these young families need access to comprehensive support services for both the parent and the child. Collaborative services should include health care, quality child care, mental health care, parenting education, social services, and case management.

The Habitat program, with support from both the Duluth Public Schools and community stakeholders, has provided many of these essential services over the past twenty plus years. During this time, we have seen our population change. Historically we have served young parents

for whom adolescent parenting is an adaptive life course, meaning they were doing well and were side tracked for a period of time because of an unplanned pregnancy; they typically pulled their resources together and moved on. In recent years, our population has shifted significantly to represent young mothers for whom the pregnancy has been a manifestation of broader involvement in problem behaviors and problematic relationships (i.e., mental illness, crime, domestic violence, school failure, poverty, homelessness). For the children of teen mothers who have a history of behavior and relationship concerns, there is particular risk to the children for emotional and behavioral problems. These young families need intervention services that focus on both the young mothers' needs and the building of a secure and stable relationship between the mother and the infant (the dyad).

As the District continues making significant changes in facilities, staffing and operations, the Habitat Program budget will once again be cut to help balance the 2012 school year budget. These deeper cuts follow on the heels of last year's 2011 budget cuts to the existing structure of the Habitat program that have compromised the outcomes and quality of the program design; specifically, the elimination of the Habitat classroom teacher and a reduction of more than 50% in space allocation for the center with the move from Central High School to the newly remodeled Denfeld High School. With the loss of a classroom teacher and designated classroom space, we have learned a hard lesson. Not only did we lose a teacher and the designated time and space for a parenting class, but we also lost the structured setting in the daily schedule that ensures all of the teen parents are together for a specific period of time each day. Having lost the structured classroom time has resulted in the inability to facilitate group cohesion, a decline in buy in to norms and expectations of the program, and no designated time to build relationships with staff. We have become like any other childcare center where parents drop off their children and leave. Although unplanned, this has been a valuable lesson in program design because it has turned out not to be effective in reaching our goals. Parents have been less successful in school as measured in grades, attendance and graduation rates. We have lost parents who have dropped out of school or are now in residential treatment programs.

More than ever, this experiment in program reductions has shown the District that without Habitat in its entirety, teen parents struggle. The program does not work when offered in bits and pieces. With this realization we entered into thinking about what Habitat needs to be successful in the 2012-2013 school year. But once again the District has proposed a \$110,000 cut to the budget, virtually eliminating the childcare component from the model.

At the same time, the Habitat Teen Parent Specialist has been partnering with the YWCA to implement the Circle of Security® Parent Education Curriculum to the parents with children enrolled in the YWCA childcare center, including the teen mothers enrolled in the YWCA Young Mother's Program. The Teen Parent Specialist has also offered training to the staff on attachment theory through the lens of the Circle of Security®. This working partnership has strengthened the relationship between the YWCA and Habitat and has helped identify common goals; in particular, how to collaboratively improve services in our community to adolescent parents and their children. With that in mind, the two organizations began brainstorming on ways we could partner in our work. Together we identified ways to reduce competing services and complement/strengthen programming. The YWCA has agreed to offer childcare to the Habitat infant population and to designate physical space for parenting classes and programming to the parenting students. The District has agreed to offer transportation, parenting class for elective school credit, and district staff support by continuing to employ the Teen Parent Specialist. This partnership restores Habitat to the original model and meets the District's goal of eliminating the cost of Habitat childcare from the 2012 budget.

There are other ways we continue to make improvements to our program model. Throughout the past decade, developmental research has demonstrated that understanding the organization of infant and parent behaviors as a relationship between the two produces better outcomes, rather than assess the parent's behavior or the infant's behavior as the potential focus of change. For this reason, the infant/parent relationship (the dyad) is becoming the centerpiece of our program efforts. We are now focusing our program growth and development on enhancing services that promote parent/child attachment, including model projects like Seeing is Believing®,

Interact Program, and Circle of Security®. This is a significant shift given the fact that Habitat has its origins within a secondary education school structure.

With funding from the Ordean Foundation, Habitat staff continue to receive training in one of the few evidence based programs developed specifically to address the relationship between parent and infant - The Circle of Security®. The Circle of Security® (COS) model includes both a group based parent education and also a cognitive restructuring intervention designed to shift patterns of care giving interactions in high-risk parent-child dyads to a more appropriate developmental pathway. Parents learn to increase their sensitivity and appropriate responsiveness to the child's signals; to increase their ability to reflect on their own and the child's behavior, thoughts and feelings; and to reflect on experiences in their own childhood that affect their current care giving patterns.

The Circle of Security Project is user-friendly. Through the use of videotape, parents work both individually and in groups to learn about patterns of interaction between parent and child. This includes teaching parents basic attachment theory while guiding them through taped reviews. It is based extensively upon attachment theory (from the work of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth).

To be able to utilize the key themes of the Circle of Security® protocol (attachment theory basics, building observational skills, increasing sensitivity to cues, building reflective dialogue, and exploring defensive processes) requires specific training. In the summer of 2009, with funding from the Ordean Foundation, the Habitat Teen Parent Specialist, who is a clinical social worker, participated in a two-week introductory training in the COS model. She also completed in 2008 two weeks of intensive training in attachment theory at the University of Minnesota. In January 2010, she passed her clinical examination and is now certified as a Parent Educator, and in May 2012 she completed her clinical supervision and is a certified provider and an endorsed reflective consultant.

The Habitat Teen Parent Specialist offers the Circle of Security cognitive restructuring intervention with families who need more intensive intervention. The Habitat Specialist is participating in long distance clinical supervision via a secure internet site as she introduces the intervention during weekly sessions with young Habitat mothers and their children. Sessions with mom and baby are videotaped at the UMD Speech/Pathology lab and group sessions are videotaped at Habitat and then saved to a secure web page that can be accessed by the Teen Parent Specialist and the supervising clinician in Spokane, Washington, where the Circle of Security originated. In this way, the Specialist receives up to five hours weekly of clinical supervision. Habitat parents are paid a stipend for their participation in the COS intervention program.

SMDC Corporate Contributions and the Ordean Foundation both financially support an on-site, school based health clinic for both moms and babies. Established in 1995, the Habitat clinic focuses on health promotion and risk reduction. The overall goal is to provide medical, mental health, and social support to parenting teens and their children to mitigate the potential negative consequences of teen parenting and to raise overall quality of life. With an SMDC Family Nurse Practitioner as its primary medical provider, the clinic offers preventive and urgent care, health maintenance, well child care, reproductive health, and health education. The clinic uses a collaborative community model to work closely with the parents' and babies' primary health care providers. Funding for the Nurse Practitioner for the past four years has been provided through SMDC Corporate Contributions. This year Corporate Contributions also provided funding for the Teen Parent Specialist to support the implementation of the Circle of Security. We recently were invited to once again apply for funding for the 2012-2013 school year.

With funding from Essentia Corporate Contributions and the Ordean Foundation, the Teen Parent Specialist (a clinical social worker) is on staff to provide intensive Circle of Security early intervention groups, counseling services, social and emotional support for both mothers and babies, and crisis intervention services. Young parents are also supported in accessing financial, medical, and housing assistance, mental health treatment, and other social, emotional, and parent support services. Over two thirds of the young parents in Habitat received mental health services during the past school year.

With funding from Sheltering Arms, the Teen Parent Specialist has partnered with the YWCA to introduce the Circle of Security to staff. Using videotape from the classroom, the Specialist meets regularly with YWCA to look for examples on video of Circle moments from interactions between staff and children in the childcare center. This provides a hands-on learning experience and a user-friendly way to learn attachment theory and the social emotional needs of children. The Specialist also offers monthly group based parent education classes using the Circle of Security. This model of integrating services to both staff and parents guarantees that everyone is using the same language when talking about the behaviors and needs of children.

In addition to delivering direct services, the program also serves as a learning lab. Habitat provides UMD School of Medicine students an opportunity to perform pediatric physical exams and to interact with teen parents under the supervision of a physician faculty. Habitat students are paid a stipend through Ordean Foundation for acting as a parent/child model for the medical students. UMD and St. Scholastica graduate students complete field placements on-site, and St. Scholastica RN students incorporate Habitat into their public health/nursing rotation.

Overall goal of the organization

The goal for the Habitat Program over the next year is to work toward the design of a model collaborative program for high risk parents and their children that will integrate four essential components:

- A community based collaborative approach to services that include family support, parent education and early intervention, physical and mental health, and social services
- Culturally sensitive programming to meet the diverse needs of our clients
- Quality infant and early childhood care
- Optimal physical and learning environment for babies and parents

Focusing on these essential components, we hope to move the Habitat Program from being a school based program to being a community sponsored project that partners with a variety of stakeholders including the Duluth Public Schools. The primary goal of Habitat since its inception has been to help parenting students graduate from high school while building the parenting capacity of the participants and improving outcomes for their children. With these grant dollars, we continue to focus our efforts on growing and refining our service delivery model to represent best practice in the field.

The coming school year presents Habitat with a unique challenge. Because of the pending changes in the program design which will affect everyone including staff, students, and babies, all will need additional support. Habitat will continue next year at YWCA Spirit Valley. There will be growing pains with the merger of public school students with residents of the YWCA Spirit Valley Young Mothers Program into one classroom location. This puts this vulnerable population who live on the fringe at even higher risk of getting lost. In the midst of all this change, Habitat needs to remain a secure base to help these high risk families continue on a path toward success. At the same time, the Habitat program must prepare for its own transitions and program changes.

Objectives or ways in which you will meet the goals, activities and who will carry out these activities; time frame in which this will take place.

Please refer to the following work plan spreadsheet.