Help Me Grow California Learning Community
Request for Applications issued February 11, 2014

Organization Application Form
Submit your completed form by March 14, 2014 to Patsy Hampton at phampto@wested.org

Help Me Grow California is seeking new counties and/or regional consortia interested in joining our Learning Community. The Help Me Grow California Learning Community provides information on Help Me Grow (HMG), an approach to a comprehensive, coordinated system for the early detection, referral and care coordination of at-risk children to needed services and supports for development, learning and behavior. As a result of this Learning Community, participating counties/regional consortia are positioned to become a Help Me Grow California county/region.

What is Help Me Grow?
Help Me Grow (HMG) is a unique, comprehensive, and integrated statewide system designed to address the need for early identification and linkage to developmental and behavioral services and supports for children and their families.

The four core components of a comprehensive HMG system are:
• Centralized telephone access point for connection of children and their families to services and care coordination
• Community outreach to promote the use of HMG and to provide networking opportunities among families and service providers
• Child health care provider outreach to support early detection and early intervention
• Data collection and analysis to understand all aspects of the HMG system, including the identification of gaps and barriers

Help Me Grow promotes collaboration between families, health care providers, early care and education providers and community providers.

First developed in Connecticut, Help Me Grow is a proven model for a system of identification of at-risk children, with effective and efficient mechanisms to link children and their families to services. This was accomplished through a state-level partnership among Connecticut’s Department of Public Health, Department of Developmental Disabilities Services, Department of Education, Connecticut Children’s Trust Fund, and a specialized call center housed at the Connecticut United Way/2-1-1.

The Commonwealth Fund and the W.K. Kellogg Foundation supported technical assistance for the replication of Help Me Grow to 16 states over 3 years. California was one of those states receiving technical assistance. The Help Me Grow National Network has now expanded to include 19 states with rapid growing interest among others. For more background on Help Me Grow, please visit the national website: www.HelpMeGrowNational.org
Help Me Grow California
In 2005 Help Me Grow Orange County, California became the second location in the country to implement Help Me Grow. Later through the support of the Kellogg Foundation, California became a Help Me Grow replication state in 2011 and developed a consortium comprised of Orange, Alameda and Fresno counties, in collaboration with California Project LAUNCH, to implement HMG across the state. In 2012, Help Me Grow California formed the Learning Community and accepted applications from 15 counties. In late 2013, Help Me Grow California began accepting affiliation applications for counties ready to implement the model. To date, Solano and Ventura counties have become HMG affiliates. We are currently positioned to expand the Learning Community to additional counties interested in learning about the model.

The Purpose of the Learning Community
The Help Me Grow California Learning Community consists of a combination of virtual and in-person learning opportunities designed to share information on the principles and components of Help Me Grow, provide subject-matter expertise, establish peer-to-peer learning and to promote the dissemination and implementation of best and promising practices. As an outcome, participating counties and regional consortia will be positioned to become a Help Me Grow California county/region. This learning approach includes:

A shared learning agenda that includes implementation strategies for successful outreach to health providers, community outreach and networking, centralized access point for connection to services, and data collection and analysis

Technical assistance from the Help Me Grow California and three California counties experienced in building county-wide Help Me Grow systems:

- **Virtual training** - At least three 60-minute webinars spread over 12 months to cover the key components of Help Me Grow
- **Technical assistance sessions** - Occasional one-hour TA sessions provided via phone by Help Me Grow subject matter experts for participating counties/regions
- **Site visits** to existing Help Me Grow California programs to support the learning, networking and readiness of counties
- **Face-to-face meetings**, including an annual California Help Me Grow Summit

The only cost incurred by participating counties and regional consortia will be travel for site visiting and for the Help Me Grow Summit.

Key Dates and Deadlines
- Learning Community application announced: *February 11, 2014*
- Deadline for email submission: *March 14, 2014*
- Orientation webinar: *Late April-Early May 2014*

Who Can Apply
HMG CA is seeking county teams or regional consortia that are considering, developing or operating systems for early identification, referral and care coordination related to the development, learning and behavior of at-risk children. Successful applicants will indicate a lead agency and several key partnerships from agencies listed below (see Key Partnerships).
Only one team per county will be selected, and organizations are encouraged to collaborate or form regional consortia as appropriate for the development of their applications. Due to the size of Los Angeles County, applications from individual Service Planning Areas will be considered. Those counties implementing the new California Home Visiting Program and the Regional Consortia involved in the Race-to-the-Top Early Learning Challenge Grant are especially encouraged to apply.

Selection Criteria and Determination
Selected counties or regional consortia will demonstrate an understanding of their local systems of early identification and linkage to services, and are encouraged to emphasize surveillance and screening as the preferred process for developmental monitoring as well as to focus on the early detection of and intervention for at-risk children and their families. A successful plan for creating a HMG system will include the identification and recruitment of partners and a process for involving them in the planning and discussions of a local HMG system. The comprehensiveness of stakeholders who agree to partner and participate in this work will be rated more highly.

Experience with HMG to date suggests that these key partnerships are essential for the success of the implementation of Help Me Grow:
- County First 5 agencies
- Local Early Childhood Special Education (IDEA, Part B)
- Local Early Intervention agencies (IDEA, Part C)
- Local health agencies (such as MCAH or CHDP)
- Local Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) or a physician champion
- Family Resource Centers
- Local mental health agencies

Examples of other potential partners include, but are not limited to:
- Information and Referral Systems [such as 2-1-1 services; Child Care Resource and Referral programs and Specialized Call Centers]
- Assuring Better Child Development (ABCD) Projects
- Medi-Cal Agencies
- Child Welfare Agencies
- United Way agencies and programs
- Foundations
- Parent advocacy groups
- Home visiting programs
- Strengthening Families
- Hospitals
- Colleges and/or Universities

Steps to Apply
- Complete the application found on the following pages
- Submit your completed application on or before March 14, 2014 to Patsy Hampton at phampto@wested.org

Format Requirements
Submit the application with 1-inch margins, in easily read 12-point font. Limit the page numbers in Section D. Required Questions to five pages, double-spaced.
Help Me Grow California Learning Community
Application Form

Submit your completed form by **March 14, 2014** to Patsy Hampton at phampto@wested.org

County or geographic region ________________

**A. Contact Information**

Information on Person Completing the Application for Lead Agency

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**B. Key Partnerships**

Identify the key partners in your county/regional consortia participating in this application.

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C. **Is your county involved with any of the following early childhood initiatives?**
   Check all that apply.

- [ ] California Home Visiting Program
- [ ] Race-to-the-Top Early Learning Challenge
- [ ] Strengthening Families

D. **Required Questions**

*Provide responses to questions 1-6 in a document not to exceed five pages double-spaced (font size 12).*

1) Describe your organization and its experience as an organizing entity involving a number of partners. Include previous and/or current collaborative efforts that involve one or more of the following groups: local /county agencies, public officials, health care providers, early care and education services, social services, funders, parents, and advocates, non-profits/community based organizations serving children and families.

2) Has a lead contact been identified?
   a. If yes, provide name, title, and a brief bio outlining experience relevant to the Learning Community.
   b. If a lead contact has not been identified, please describe how you plan to select someone.
3) In addition to the project lead, who will be responsible for serving on a core leadership team for your county/consortia? Please identify key individuals and the role each individual will play, and a brief paragraph on their expertise. (Generally, no more than 3-5 individuals play this kind of core leadership role.)

4) What is your rationale for exploring the Help Me Grow model in your region? How will the Learning Community assist you in achieving your goals to promote children’s healthy development?

5) If your geographic area targeted is a consortia of counties, describe your plan working as a consortia and how you have worked together in the past.

6) The four components of Help Me Grow are:

   • **Centralized telephone access point** for connection of children and their families to services and care coordination
   • **Community outreach** to promote the use of HMG and to provide networking opportunities among families and service providers
   • **Child health care provider outreach** to support early detection and early intervention
   • **Data collection and analysis** to understand all aspects of the HMG system, including the identification of gaps and barriers

Please describe any work currently underway in your county/region in each of these areas. Which of these areas would you like to strengthen through your involvement in the Help Me Grow Learning Community?