

**New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH)**  
**Successfully Transitioning Youth to Adolescence (STYA) Request for Applications (RFA)**  
**FAU #1203101230**

**Questions and Answers**

The responses herein are the official responses by the NYSDOH for questions submitted by potential applicants that were received by the due date of July 25, 2012 and through the applicant conference held on July 31, 2012. These questions and answers are hereby incorporated into the STYA Initiative RFA #1203101230 issued on July 11, 2012. In the event of any conflict between the RFA and these responses, the requirements or information contained in these responses will prevail.

**Clarification:** It is expected that contracts resulting from this RFA will have the following time period: **November 1, 2012 through October 31, 2017.**

**General Questions:**

- Question:** Can additional questions be submitted subsequent to the applicant conference call?

**Answer:** No, the question and answer period has ended. All questions and answers will be included in a document that will be posted to the NYSDOH website on or about August 7, 2012.

- Question:** Our local county health department would like to partner with other departments and service agencies in the county. We would not be the primary recipient of the grant money, but work with the other departments. Is it acceptable that the local health unit is not the primary recipient?

**Answer:** Yes, this is acceptable. There is no requirement that the local health unit must be the primary recipient of funding. As stated on page 11 in the RFA, applications will be accepted from state and local government entities such as city and county health departments, school districts, and youth bureaus; and from not-for-profit 501(c)(3) organizations, including, but not limited to, Article 28 healthcare facilities, and community-based health and human service agencies.

- Question:** When will successful applicants be notified? Will it be in time to begin services on November 1, 2012?

**Answer:** It is anticipated that award announcements will be made in time to begin contracts by the start date, November 1, 2012.

- 4. Question:** Could you please advise if a local county government is required to complete the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire and Vendor Responsibility Attestation for application submission under the STYA RFA?

**Answer:** Local county governments are not required to complete the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire and Vendor Responsibility Attestation.

- 5. Question:** If the agency has multiple elementary-middle school programs that would be enriched by the addition of these components, do we have to submit multiple applications or can we submit one program application with multiple sites?

**Answer:** An agency can submit one application with multiple program sites; however, as stated in the RFA on page 11, applicants must focus their efforts in one county.

Applications to serve multiple counties will not be accepted. In addition, within their identified target county, applicants need to define a more specific target area for their proposed project, as defined by highest-risk ZIP codes within that county based on the Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index (ASHNI), (see Attachment 9 for selection of highest need ZIP codes for the county selected).

- 6. Question:** In Section I-D, the RFA states that preference will be given to 15 counties with the highest number of births to adolescents. Do you anticipate any remaining funding for counties not on the list that may have a smaller total number of teen pregnancies but a higher rate than some of those listed?

**Answer:** As stated in the RFA on page 4, to ensure that grant resources are used most effectively to address the needs of young people residing in high-risk communities, the NYSDOH will prioritize program funding to the 15 NYS counties (listed in the RFA on page 4) which experience the highest number of births to adolescents under age 20. Programs in other counties will be considered for awards if funds remain after viable projects targeting these 15 counties have been awarded. The Department is unable to anticipate whether funding will be awarded to projects beyond the 15 priority counties as that depends on the applications received.

- 7. Question:** Can an organization apply for STYA funding both as a lead agency in one community and as a collaborating partner/sub-contractor in another community as long as both communities are in the same county and separate applications are submitted?

**Answer:** Yes, an organization can submit an application for funding as a lead agency and serve as a collaborating partner/sub-contractor on a separate application submitted from another agency.

- 8. Question:** Will applications from other departments within the same institution be considered?

**Answer:** Yes, applicants that meet the requirements stated in the RFA on page 11, D. "Who May Apply: Minimum Eligibility Requirements," can apply for funding.

When developing a local STYA project, applicants are encouraged to work in collaboration and partnership with other service providers and community stakeholders who are representative of the community to identify and provide or expand a range of positive opportunities for the youth and their families.

- 9. Question:** For the populations we hope to target (foster care in particular), the ASHNI ZIP codes do not always apply. Are we limited by the highest risk ASHNI ZIP codes or can we serve a larger area if the target population comes from a larger area?

**Answer:** As stated on page 11 in the RFA, applicants will be expected to provide services to youth residing within the highest need areas, as identified by the Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index (ASHNI). An applicant proposing to serve youth in foster care could consider the ZIP code(s) that youth resided in before placement or in which they are currently residing.

- 10. Question:** Our agency is located in Brooklyn. Do you have a cut-off point or a determination for what are the areas with the highest need? We serve schools within four high need ZIP codes. Are there a certain number of high need ZIP codes that have to be served?

**Answer:** There is no specific number of high risk ZIP codes that an applicant must serve.

- 11. Question:** Our agency works/focuses on the needs of fragile and chronically ill youth (about 1500 youth) and we are located across the city. Do we have to focus on one ZIP code when our youth come from all over the county?

**Answer:** Applicants do not have to focus on one ZIP code, they have to focus on one county and are able to propose serving high need ZIP codes in that county. An applicant could choose to serve all of the ZIP codes in a county, for example.

- 12. Question:** Can we focus on a target population and not address the zip codes?

**Answer:** No, ZIP codes need to be addressed as outlined in the RFA. As stated on page 11 in the RFA, applicants will be expected to provide services to youth residing within the highest need areas, as identified by the Adolescent Sexual Health Needs Index (ASHNI).

- 13. Question:** There are 25 ZIP codes in the Bronx and our proposal will include the eighth highest high need ZIP code. Is this too far down the list to qualify as highest need?

**Answer:** No, the applicant organization proposal should demonstrate why this is a high need ZIP code and why it is proposing to serve this ZIP code.

**14. Question** We serve youth in foster care and youth with disabilities that might come from different ZIP codes. Will that be counted as extra credit towards the high needs service population?

**Answer:** There are no provisions to provide extra credit during the applicant grant review process.

**15. Question:** We are proposing a program that will operate out of a school. Do I need to list the ASHNI based on where the school is located or where the students are coming from? Should I list three of the most prevalent ZIP codes? What do you recommend?

**Answer:** When working in a school, applicants should select the ZIP code(s) where the majority of students reside.

**16. Question:** We are planning on targeting preteen youth in foster care who come from all over our county. Can we include youth who are outside our highest risk ZIP code areas?

**Answer:** Yes, as long as the majority of youth are coming from the high risk ZIP codes.

**17. Question:** Please define what is meant by the term counseling in the statement, “mentoring, counseling and adult supervised activities.”

**Answer:** The term counseling in this RFA relates to the provision of age appropriate information and support for young people to delay the onset of adolescent sexual activity and decrease the incidence of adolescent pregnancy and childbearing; and discussions between caring adults and young people focused on improving a preteen youth’s sense that he/she has achievable life prospects and a positive outlook for the future, factors that are contingent upon delaying sexual activity.

**Please note:** Counseling under this RFA does not relate to the provision of professional mental health services including mental health counseling, psychoanalysis or treatment for severe mental illness, crisis intervention, or case management services. Youth requiring these services should be referred to appropriate professionals in the community.

**18. Question:** Are there any expectations for staff qualifications or experience?

**Answer:** The applicant agency is responsible to ensure that staff qualifications are commensurate with the position and assigned responsibilities to implement STYA activities.

**19. Question:** Was this call recorded and if so will it be available?

**Answer:** No, the call was not recorded. The Questions and Answers that were received to date, as well as those that were asked on the applicant conference will be posted to the NYSDOH website on or about August 7, 2012.

**20. Question:** Will applicants lose points if we exclude Component 1A and select Component 1B?

**Answer:** No, under Component 1, applicants can select Component 1A and/or Component 1B.

### **Completing the Application**

**21. Question:** Besides the Work Plan Attachment, is there a place to project the number of youth and parents, guardians and other adult caregivers for preteen youth that will be served? Should this be an annual projection or for a five-year period?

**Answer:** In addition to the work plan, the number of youth and parents, guardians and other adult caregivers for preteen youth that will be served annually through Component 1A and/or B and Component 2 should be noted in the application in response to Section II. 6, Proposed Activities, c) Identify the target population to be served and how the proposed services are relevant to this population. The projected number of youth and parents, guardians and other adult caregivers for preteen youth that will be served through this initiative should be an annual number.

**22. Question:** On Page 22 of the RFA, Section 7. Work Plan: Attachment 19 has a space for “Contract Year”. Do we complete a separate work plan for each year? Or do we complete one work plan and include timeframes for the entire project?

**Answer:** One annual work plan should be submitted with the application, which will serve as a template for proposed annual activities. A five-year work plan will be submitted by applicants that are awarded funding as part of the contracting process.

**23. Question:** In completing the work plan (Attachment 19) do we need to complete the process and outcome evaluation methods?

**Answer:** Yes, applicants should complete the process and outcome measures in the work plan.

**24. Question:** Page 19-20, 4. Organizational Capacity and Experience: Under the heading, it indicates a *three page limit*. Page 20, in the “Please note” section at the end it says “two page” limit. Is it a three page or two page limit for this section?

**Answer:** Organizational Capacity and Experience has a three page limit.

**25. Question:** Does the Project Summary have to be double-spaced, or can it be single-spaced?

**Answer:** The Project Summary and work plan can be single-spaced. Other components (4-6) of the application need to be double-spaced.

**26. Question:** Can we include tables and figures in the application in the first 14 pages before we get to the work plan? Can tables and figures be single-spaced or do they have to be double-spaced?

**Answer:** Tables and figures can be included in the application, however these are not required. Tables and figures can be single-spaced.

**27. Question:** Do references go in an appendix?

**Answer:** Yes, references/citations can be placed in an appendix.

**28. Question:** On Page 7 of the RFA, youth with disabilities are discussed as youth with physical disabilities. Can you define what you mean by youth with disabilities?

**Answer:** Preteen youth ages 9-12 with physical, mental and/or developmental disabilities can be participants in the STYA initiative.

**29. Question:** Page 12 of the RFA indicates that preference will be given to applicants that demonstrate that Board of Directors, and staff are representative of the racial, ethnic and/or cultural populations that we plan to serve. Does that include former residents, former clients, and former consumers that may now be on the Board of Directors?

**Answer:** Yes, former residents of a youth facility, former clients, and former consumers, who may now be on the Board of Directors, would qualify as representative of the population that you plan to serve.

**30. Question:** Are there any specific requirements for letters of commitment/support for the project application?

**Answer:** The RFA states on page 12 that preference will be given to applicants who demonstrate a letter of commitment from all schools, service providers and institutions, community or faith-based organizations, juvenile detention centers, residential care facilities or other venues where project services will take place. Letters of commitment/support should be included from the community agencies or groups that the applicant agency proposes to work with through STYA.

## **Program Requirements**

**31. Question:** The RFA “Section E: Workscope” indicates that youth who are sexually active need to be referred to necessary health care services. Could you define what you mean?

**Answer:** As stated in the RFA, on page 13, funded programs need to have a mechanism in place to refer youth, including youth who may be sexually active, to appropriate health care services. Projects are expected to refer youth to community service providers for

physical, social, emotional, educational, and developmental support and services, as necessary, based on the individual needs of that youth. Note that this initiative cannot be used to fund direct services such as childcare, health care, or other services that are available through other resources.

- 32. Question:** If a program participant asks a question about sexuality or the pressures of sexual activity, or a general question about contraception, would it be permissible to teach abstinence while also teaching the medically accurate information about contraception?

**Answer:** No, provision of education on contraception would fall outside the allowable scope of STYA. However, as noted in the RFA, on page 13, and in response to Question #31 above, funded programs need to have a mechanism in place to refer youth, including youth who may be sexually active, to appropriate health care services, based on the individual needs of that youth. A program participant can be *referred* for comprehensive sexuality education. The STYA initiative supports mentoring, counseling and/or adult-supervised activities designed for preteen youth; providing adult-led group sessions to encourage discussion of topics of concern to preteen youth; and providing parenting education to parents, guardians and caregivers.

- 33. Question:** Our program serves students within and outside the 9-12 age range. Must we offer our STYA program only to students within that age range?

**Answer:** Yes, the age group for the STYA initiative supports mentoring, counseling and supervised activities provided by adults for preteen youth ages 9-12.

- 34. Question:** We pride ourselves in mentoring matches that are often sustained for several years. If twelve year olds are served in the first year of the grant, are we able to continue to provide services to them in subsequent years with grant money?

**Answer:** No, the STYA initiative supports mentoring, counseling and supervised activities provided by adults for preteen youth ages 9-12. If you currently have a mentoring program in place for young people older than 12, participants in the STYA program can be transitioned into your already existing program, however grant funds could not be used to support activities for youth over age 12.

- 35. Question:** Is there a minimum number of participants (youth, and parents, guardians and other adult caregivers of preteen youth) that we must serve annually and for the total project?

**Answer:** There is no minimum number of participants for youth, and parents, guardians and other adult caregivers of preteen youth that should be served annually and for the total project. However the scope of the proposed services and the number of participants need to be commensurate with the requested funding.

**36. Question:** How many hours are we required to serve each student annually?

**Answer:** As stated on page 13 of the STYA RFA, mentored relationships should be at least one year in duration. Youth who participate in other project components should be exposed to at least 14 hours of programming annually.

**37. Question:** The RFA states: “Youth who participate in other project components should be exposed to at least 14 hours of programming”. Is this the total amount of time that youth need to be engaged in all activities proposed including mentoring, or is this specific to abstinence education?

**Answer:** According to *Emerging Answers: Research Findings on Programs to Reduce Teen Pregnancy, 2001*, by Douglas Kirby, one of the characteristics of effective programs is that programs last a sufficient length of time. Longer programs that lasted 14 or more hours were more effective. Shorter programs did not appear to be effective. Youth should receive a minimum of 14 hours of programming annually for both Component 1B and Component 2. Mentored relationships are expected to be at least one year in duration.

**38. Question:** Attachment 19 provides grids for outlining goals and objectives. Could this be provided for program elements Component 2 and 3?

**Answer:** Attachment 19 is the STYA work plan. The goals are included in the work plan form. Applicants need to identify the objectives and activities for each Component of their proposed STYA project.

**39. Question:** Page 12 of the RFA, states that “Applicants must employ a STYA project director/coordinator.” Does this mean this person must be 100% FTE?

**Answer:** The Project Director does not need to be employed as a 100% FTE for this project. As stated on page 12 of the RFA, the applicant organization/agency, if awarded a contract, will be responsible for employing a STYA project director/coordinator within the organization that will be accessible full-time to the NYSDOH (including by e-mail); perform the essential tasks required to administer the project; be the lead in programmatic activities; and, be responsible for the successful completion of the project/contract. The applicant should ensure the percent effort for this position is consistent with the proposed scope of services, reasonable, and cost effective.

**40. Question:** Page 12 of the RFA states, in bold, that the Project Director must be the lead in programmatic activities. Can we get more detail on what that means exactly?

**Answer:** The Project Director/Coordinator is responsible to provide the overall leadership for the STYA project; and perform the essential tasks required to administer the project to assure that the activities are implemented appropriately. The Project Director/Coordinator is responsible for the successful completion of the project/contract.

**41. Question:** Does the full time program liaison have to be a MSW?

**Answer:** No, an agency does not need to employ an individual with a master's in social work as the Project Director/Coordinator for the STYA initiative.

**42. Question:** Page 12-14, E. Work Scope, paragraphs 1-7. Can projects take existing, eligible mentoring matches and enhance with the group programming and parenting education or do all mentoring matches need to be "new"? May we include youth who are already in our mentoring program in the STYA, along with new youth and families?

**Answer:** The STYA RFA funding can be used to expand existing activities or create new activities. If an agency already has a mentoring program, they can enhance their existing project adding additional youth not already served by the existing mentoring program. Youth who are already in your current mentoring program could certainly receive the other Components of STYA; however, the mentoring they are already receiving through other funding sources should not be funded with the STYA grant. Funding through this RFA may not be used to supplant funds for existing activities.

**43. Question:** Must the program be open to all youth within the targeted county and zip codes?

**Answer:** No, the proposed program does not need to include all youth within the targeted county and ZIP codes. As stated on page 11 of the RFA, applicants will propose to serve youth within a single county. Within their identified target county, applicants need to define a more specific target area for their proposed project, as defined by highest-risk ZIP codes within that county based on the ASHNI.

**44. Question:** Do youth served need to receive all services (Goals 1A, 1B and 2)?

**Answer:** Youth need to receive 1 or more services in Components 1A and/or 1B and one or more services in Component 2. As stated on page 13 of the RFA, proposed projects should include all of the components described (within Component 1, applicants should select A and/or B, but do not need to do both A and B), designed and implemented as part of a well-articulated, integrated overall program.

**45. Question:** If a child enters the program at 9 years, will that child remain in the program until the age of 12?

**Answer:** The applicant's proposed program design and structure will determine how long young people, ages 9 to 12, remain with the program. However as stated in the RFA on page 13, mentored relationships should be at least one year in duration. Youth should receive a minimum of 14 hours of programming annually for both Component 1B and Component 2.

**46. Question:** Is enrollment done annually?

**Answer:** The applicant's program design and structure will determine how often young people, ages 9-12, are enrolled in the STYA program.

**47. Question:** On the bottom of page 10 of the RFA, it states “services will be delivered to individuals or groups in such venues as schools, community or faith-based organizations.” Should I assume that means individuals and/or groups so we don’t have to choose one or the other?

**Answer:** Yes, services can be delivered to individuals and/or groups.

**48. Question:** Are there any evidence-based curricula that you are recommending for the educational component?

**Answer:** There are no evidence based curricula associated with the topics of discussion that were listed under component 2.

**49. Question:** Is there a regulatory body that we need to register with for childcare and out of school time programming?

**Answer:** NYSDOH does not require licensure for STYA, but it is the responsibility of the applicant to assure that they have appropriate licensure or otherwise comply with any relevant regulations for their programs.

## **Component 1**

**50. Question:** The guidelines for the proposed Activities section of the application refer to “volunteers” in the descriptions of Components 1B and 2. Are these components expected to be led by volunteers only, or can they be led by paid staff?

**Answer:** Activities under Component 1B and Component 2 may be conducted by volunteers or paid staff.

**51. Question:** Do all of the youth who have mentors need to also attend the group sessions for Component 2?

**Answer:** Yes, youth who have mentors should also attend the adult-led group sessions (Component 2) as part of as part of an integrated program.

**52. Question:** Page 13 in the “Work Scope” section states that “mentored relationships should be at least one year in duration. However, in Attachment 12, page 51 of the Team Mentoring column indicates that the mentor relationship is long term and involves frequent contact (at least two to four hours every week). Please clarify.

**Answer:** The RFA requirement is that mentored relationships for preteen youth ages 9-12 be at least one year in duration. Mentored relationships should involve frequent contact and can certainly last for more than one year.

**53. Question:** Can we use high school students as mentors being led by adults for Component 1A?

**Answer:** No, as stated on page 46 of the RFA, peer mentoring is not permitted.

**54. Question:** As stated on page 4 of the RFA, the STYA model incorporates mentoring, counseling and supervised activities provided by adults for preteen youth ages 9 to 12. Is the acceptable age of mentors age 18 or 21 to meet the requirements of adult-led?

**Answer:** The acceptable age of mentors is age 18 or older.

**55. Question:** If mentors are working with youth on activities, can they be college students?

**Answer:** Yes, college students can serve as mentors if they are age 18 or older.

**56. Question:** Are there clearances such as state sex offender registries, criminal history background checks, etc. for mentors and/or staff that have contact with the preteen youth?

**Answer:** As stated on pages 13 and 14 of the RFA, it is the responsibility of funded grantee organizations to assure the safety of youth participating in programs at all times. All mentors working with youth must undergo a comprehensive and rigorous screening process (see Attachment 10). Screening should include completion of an application, personal interview, personal and professional reference checks and criminal background checks. Other checks, such as child abuse and sexual offender registries and motor vehicle records should also be done, consistent with your organization's policies and procedures. Ongoing monitoring of the interaction between mentor and mentee is recommended at least monthly and more often in the beginning of the mentor relationship. The purpose of the supervision is to ensure that the match continues to make progress and to address any problems that may arise. Separate conversations should also be done with the mentor, mentee and the mentee's caregiver to assess any issues or concern.

Adult volunteers working with youth should complete an application, have a personal interview, and provide personal and professional reference checks. Criminal background checks should be done if adult volunteers will have any responsibilities that involve a one-to-one relationship with youth and ongoing supervision, as described above.

The awardee is responsible to screen staff based on their own organization's requirements, policies and procedures.

**57. Question** Is the screening process done through NYSDOH? We currently screen everyone through the NYS OCFS process for background checks.

**Answer:** The NYSDOH will not perform background checks. Awardees will be expected to follow their own organization's requirements, policies and procedures for background checks in the STYA initiative. Applicants could certainly continue to select OCFS if they would continue to do those types of background checks.

**58. Question:** Are the background checks, (screening, fingerprinting, sex offender registry) only for mentors? Is this just for Component 1-A for mentors only, not if you are doing group-led sessions?

**Answer:** You need to follow your agency guidelines regarding adults/staff that work with preteen youth.

## **Component 2**

**59. Question:** The RFA notes that Component 2 is intended to fund sessions with “approximately six-eight youth” (page 15). Are there specific limits to group size?

**Answer:** Yes, for Component 2, group size is expected to be small (approximately six-eight youth) to allow for in-depth discussion of topics of concern to preteen youth and create an opportunity for youth to go through a problem-solving process where they discuss decision making around these issues.

**60. Question:** Are the youth for Component 2 (14 hours of discussion-oriented workshops) the same as those from Component 1? Also, are the parents receiving parent education, the parents of the youth in Component 1 and/or 2?

Yes, young people participating in Component 1 A and/or B should be participants in Component 2 activities. Their parents and other supportive adults in the community should participate in Component 3. Per the RFA page 13, proposed projects should include all three of the components described (within Component 1, applicants should select A and/or B), designed and implemented as part of a well-articulated, integrated overall program.

**61. Question:** For Component 2, the RFA states that the sessions should be on ‘topics of interest to teens so the topics are not necessarily only about pregnancy prevention?’

**Answer:** A positive youth development approach focuses on developing careful strategies that increase young people's exposure to positive and constructive relationships and activities that promote healthy and responsible choices. It is imperative that young people have diverse opportunities for learning, guidance, meeting challenges, exploring limits, for experiencing consequences, developing self-confidence and self-control, helping others, and improving their communities.

Component 2 activities should focus on in-depth discussions of topics of concern to preteen youth and create an opportunity for youth to go through a problem-solving

process where they discuss decision making around these issues. This can serve as a model on how to approach and resolve future problems. These discussions provide the opportunity for young people to practice behaviors to resist pressures to initiate sexual activity and other risk-taking behaviors. Please see page 16 of the RFA for suggested topics that might be used for Component 2. Some of these include: healthy life skills, healthy relationships, adolescent growth and development, educational and career success and other appropriate topics.

### **Component 3**

**62. Question:** Our program serves students within and outside the 9-12 age range. Must we ensure that our parenting education services target parents of children in that age range only?

**Answer:** Yes, as noted in the RFA on pages 8 and 9, the specific goals of the STYA initiative and local STYA projects include providing education to the parents, guardians and caregivers of preteen youth ages 9-12 to enhance their parenting skills.

**63. Question:** Component 3 refers to “providing information and education to parents, guardians and adult caregivers of preteen youth at such venues as schools, the workplace and other community-based settings.” It also refers to “workshops”. Are workshops the required format for the parenting education component?

**Answer:** Workshops are not a required format. Attachment 16 contains a list of resources for use when developing effective parenting education programs for parents, guardians and adult caregivers of preteen youth.

**64. Question:** Are projects required to offer a specific number of sessions or hours of parenting education? Is there a time requirement for parents to be engaged?

**Answer:** No, projects are not required to offer a specific number of sessions or hours of education for parents, guardians and adult caregivers of preteen youth. Attachment 16 offers a variety of options for multi-session parenting education, which may be helpful in developing a proposed local STYA program model. There is no time requirement for parents to be engaged in Component 3 activities, however the scope of the proposed services and the number of participants need to be commensurate with the requested funding.

### **Evaluation**

**65. Question:** On page 18, the RFP states, "Funded projects will be required to adhere to reporting requirements supplied by the NYSDOH that include the specific measures mandated by ACYF." Could you please explain what these mandated measures are? What kind of data collection will be required?

**Answer:** Specific data reporting requirements have not yet been finalized for STYA. However, it is known at this time that funded projects will be required to report on specific measures required by ACYF to include process measures related to the number of unduplicated youth served; and the number of service hours provided through Component 1 and 2 and the unduplicated number of parents, guardians, and other adult caregivers served; and the number of service hours provided through Component 3. In addition, as stated on page 23 of the RFA, the Center of Excellence will work with each individual funded project and the NYSDOH to develop and conduct an evaluation for both community-based project activities as well as the overall STYA initiative in NYS. All awardees will be required to participate in this evaluation process. This may require additional data collection to be done.

**66. Question:** Can you provide more detail about the reporting requirements that will be required of contractors as mentioned in section III.H (3)?

**Answer:** As stated in the RFA, pages 29-30, Section III H (3), the grant contractor will be required to submit quarterly vouchers and reports of expenditures to the State's designated payment office. The grant contractor will also be required to submit Quarterly Progress Reports that includes a narrative on grant activities and data measures required by ACYF and NYSDOH. The grant contractor will also be required to submit an annual report. The quarterly report form and outline of the annual report form will be provided to awardees by NYSDOH.

**67. Question:** In terms of the evaluation, would our agency be responsible for the evaluation component or is the evaluation conducted by the New York State Department of Health?

**Answer:** The NYSDOH in conjunction with the ACT for Youth Center of Excellence (COE) is responsible for the evaluation component of STYA. All awardees will be required to participate in the evaluation process.

**68. Question:** How do we measure outcomes?

**Answer:** Outcome measures are used to assess a program's effectiveness to identify whether the program achieved an intended goal. Depending on the specific outcomes you identify, the outcome measurement could include surveys of participants, focus groups, pre and post tests, community assessments, etc. A program's outcome measurement process provides the opportunity for periodic review of activities and the opportunity to improve activities and make changes, if needed.

### **Fiscal Questions:**

**69. Question:** On page 24, the RFA says we can use volunteer time as part of the 43% local agency grant match. Is there a limit on what % of the budget is for volunteer time? And, for volunteer mentors, can we allocate at the Independent Sector rate of \$21.79/hr of

estimated value of volunteer time? As an example, can we use as a match something like this: 50 volunteer mentors x 8 hours/month x 12 months x 21.79 = \$104,592.

**Answer:** The use of volunteer time for part of the 43% share is permitted and it should be commensurate with and appropriate to the specific activities outlined in the application. The Federal Office of Budget Management (OMB) Circulars should be used as a guide for the value of volunteer time based on the appropriate type of organization (A-110, A-122, 45 CFR 74, and A-87). You should refer to your agency's policies regarding the valuation of volunteer time and can research the OMB Circulars at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/circulars/default>

**70. Question:** The RFA states that NYSDOH will fund no more than 57% of the project's total cost and that the remaining 43% must be covered by matching funds. However, federal/state funds cannot be included in the match amount (p. 12). If we receive other federal or state funds for our program, should we exclude them before calculating the project's total cost?

**Answer:** Yes, if you receive other federal or state funds you should exclude them before calculating the project's total cost. Other federal and state funds that an agency receives cannot be included in the local share.

**71. Question:** Are incentives allowable costs for Components 2 and 3?

**Answer:** Incentives for program participation are not allowable project expenses. However, assisting with costs of items such as transportation and expenses related to program activities is allowable.

**72. Question:** Can we include healthy snacks in the budget for youth participating in program activities?

**Answer:** Healthy snacks are allowable for youth participants. Snack provided should follow the *Guidelines for Healthy Food and Beverages for Adolescent Health Programs* ([http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/resources/docs/adolescent\\_food\\_guidelines.pdf](http://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/nutrition/resources/docs/adolescent_food_guidelines.pdf)).

**73. Question:** Can we include healthy snacks in the budget for parenting education sessions?

**Answer:** Healthy snacks are allowable to enhance participation in the Component 3 parenting education sessions. Guidelines similar to the ones referenced in Answer #72 will be provided during the contracting process.

**74. Question:** Is there an allowable or suggested cost range per youth served or an expected cost per mentoring match?

**Answer:** No, there is no funding amount allocated to each participant or an expected cost per mentoring match. As stated in the RFA on page 25, the requested funding needs to be consistent with the scope of services, reasonable, and cost effective. Cost-effective is defined in the RFA on page 15 as the minimum amount of grant fund resources being used to achieve desired work plan goals and objectives.

**75. Question:** What kind of documentation is needed for the match for audit purposes to ensure that it would be the correct valuation?

**Answer:** You should refer to the appropriate OMB Circular for documentation requirements. For example, Federal OMB Circular A-110 states that records for a match must be kept exactly as if the cost were charged to the grant. NYSDOH will provide awardees with additional information during the contracting process.

**76. Question:** If a collaborating organization is providing rental space, how is the valuation of that space determined as part of the match?

**Answer:** The value should be determined based on the fair market value similar to costs charged to the grant.

**77. Question:** If we are using subcontractors, do we need to provide detailed budgets?

**Answer:** Yes, detailed budgets for subcontractors need to be included in the application.

**78. Question:** If we offer similar programming as what is outlined in the RFA and want to combine efforts into one program, can that count toward the matching fund requirement?

**Answer:** No, funds that the applicant is already using to pay for an existing program cannot be used for the matching funds requirement.

**79. Question:** If we have a Vendor Responsibility Checklist on file. Do we have to submit one as stated in the RFA on page 36?

**Answer:** No, the Vendor Responsibility form does not need to be submitted with the STYA application if the form was submitted within the past six months.

**80. Question:** The RFA states that the maximum cash award is \$170,509 per year. Is the 43% match in addition to that figure? For example, if we were awarded the full amount we would need an additional \$128,629.59 as our in-kind, making the annual budget \$299,138.59?

**Answer:** The maximum STYA annual grant award of \$170,509 represents the State share of 57% of the total STYA project cost. Based on the federal funding requirement, the applicant must demonstrate the ability to fund at least 43% of the project's total cost in-kind. In this example, the total cost of the STYA project would be \$299,138; of this total,

57% (\$170,509) would be funded by the NYSDOH STYA grant, and the remaining 43% (\$128,629) would be funded by the applicant in-kind.

**81. Question:** What are the criteria for matching funds?

**Answer:** Page 24 of the RFA provides the following guidelines for matching funds:

- Applicant must provide a 43% match for funding provided through this RFA comprised of local funds, which can come from local government dollars, private dollars (such as foundation dollars), or in-kind support;
- Match **cannot** come from state or federal sources and may not be used as a match on any other grant;
- Match may include, but not limited to the following: personnel costs, volunteer and/or staff donated time, facility space/estimated and/or actual room rental, travel, audio visual equipment use, other equipment purchased and used to support the project, office supplies and any materials for abstinence only education, donated items/incentives from local businesses, organizations or individuals, and/or cash match.

**82. Question:** Would expenses related to people in mentoring roles be an allowable cost for the match?

**Answer:** Yes, this would be an acceptable cost for the match.

**83. Question:** Can I use the amount of the grant received from a foundation this year for the match? Since the grant was received in May would the match apply for half of the grant year?

**Answer:** Yes, a grant received from a foundation could be used as a match provided all other requirements for matching funds are met. The amount must be prorated to reflect the portion of the STYA contract year it covers. If the grant is discontinued, an alternate source of matching funds would need to be reflected in the budget.

**84. Question:** Funds for our current programming received a substantial cut this year that resulted in decreased staffing. However, I am still providing all the services. Can the current allocation for parent education in that program be counted towards the match?

**Answer:** No, funds that you are currently receiving from another source to implement other program's activities cannot be used for the match.

**85. Question:** Would the following type of expenses be considered allowable costs for the match requirement (bus transportation, tickets, and fees)?

**Answer:** Yes, donation of services or activities can constitute a match. Either cash or in-kind contributions of goods, property, services, or combinations of these, can qualify for and meet matching share requirements, as long as they are not paid for through State or

Federal sources or used as a match on another grant. If for example your agency purchases tickets with other than, state or Federal funds to be used for the STYA program; or arranges to have them donated for the STYA program, the fair market value of the cost of those tickets can be used as part of the in-kind match.