

Grant Approval Memo



Grantee: Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc.
Request Amount: \$88,500.00
Project Title: FY27 Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation
Grant Term: 7/1/2026 to 6/30/2027
Trust Staff: Tina Voelker-Ross

Staff Analysis:

- What does this project do?

This project will support RurAL CAP to continue the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation project which supports the third and final year of an in-house Mental Health Consultant position. This consultant provides weekly support, in-classroom coaching for teachers, and individual and small group meetings with RurAL CAP staff in their Family Service Team which includes programs that service children and families including the Child Development Center, Parents as Teachers home visiting, and Little Haven (a drop-in childcare center housed at Safe Harbor Muldoon Transitional Housing facility). The consultant works with the family team and educators to increase competencies to support the overall social and emotional environment in the classroom and with the parents and families. The project works to build capacity, improve teacher expertise, and address the mental health support needs of children. This is year 3 of 3 of funding from the Trust to establish this position at RurAL CAP. Trust funds are for personnel (the mental health consultant position) and indirect costs.
- Who is receiving the funds?

RurAL CAP is a non-profit organization established in 1965 to improve the quality of life for low-income Alaskans. RurAL CAP has programs that cover early childhood development, victim services & wellness, housing, and community development. The early childhood programming includes the Anchorage Child Development Center for children between 19 months and 5 years old, Head Start & Early Head Start programs, Parents as Teachers home-visiting for prenatal women and families with children ages five and under, and a Teacher Apprenticeship program. While RurAL CAP has programming statewide, this project reaches staff in Anchorage, Haines, Mountain Village, and Toksook Bay.
- Why is staff recommending this project?

The project addresses an immediate workforce and service need in early childhood programs, particularly following the closure of Boys & Girls Clubs of Southcentral Alaska, which created additional pressure on childcare and afterschool providers. During the most recent reporting period, the consultant delivered 856 hours of direct support to 17 teachers across the Child Development Center and Little Haven, and educators reported increased knowledge, practical tools, and confidence in meeting children's needs. Case management requests also declined, indicating improved classroom functioning and earlier intervention. The project directly benefits Trust beneficiaries, especially young children with developmental disabilities, and supports secondary beneficiaries such as parents and caregivers. It enhances workforce supports in the early childhood arena as well as supporting educator retention. The initiative leverages Alcohol Tax funding from the Municipality of Anchorage and internal contributions from RurAL CAP's Child Development Center. Although this is the final year of Trust investment, RurAL CAP has committed to sustaining the Mental Health Consultant position beyond the grant period due to its demonstrated value and impact.

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- Will this be a multi-year project?
This proposal is for a one-year (12-month) grant project. This is the final year of 3 years of funding for this project to establish this position at RurAL CAP.

Trust Five Year Funding History

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Project Title</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Final Expended</u>
2026	Mental Health Consultation Project	\$88,500	Active	Grant ends 6/30/2026
2025	Mental Health Consultation Project	\$55,353	Closed	\$43,493
2024	Early Childhood Center-Based Mental Health Consultation for RurAL CAP Child Development Center and Head Start	\$88,500	Closed	\$30,017

Comp Plan Identification

<u>Area of Focus</u>	<u>Objective</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Area of Focus 1: Early Childhood & Youth	1.2 Ensure accurate identification and support of social-emotional needs for children and their families, congruent with their cultural identification	

Trust Focus Area Connection

<u>Budget Area</u>	<u>Strategy</u>	<u>Comments</u>
Early Childhood & Youth	Early Childhood - Ensure accurate identification and treatment of social-emotional needs for children, youth, and their caregivers	

Project Description (from grant application)

Rural Alaska Community Action Program, Inc., (RurAL CAP)’s Family Services team proposes to continue its Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation project and further the positive impacts of its in-house Mental Health Consultant position. This project works to build capacity, improve teacher expertise, and address the mental health support needs of its clients' children and families. The Family Services team houses an array of programs that serve children and families, including a Child Development Center, Parents as Teachers home visiting, and Little Haven (a drop-in childcare program housed at RurAL CAP’s Safe Harbor Muldoon Transitional Housing facility. RurAL CAP’s

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Mental Health team provides direct support across these related programs, among both service providers and service recipients.

In the most recent reporting period of the project (July - December 2025), 856 hours of direct support were provided to 17 teachers across the Child Development Center and Little Haven by the Mental Health Consultant position. This support includes in-classroom coaching, individual meetings, small group meetings, and reflection hours. Ten (out of ten teachers on whom data was collected) teachers reported an increase in their knowledge of applicable skills and tools to help them in the classroom (data from the previous reporting period). Additionally, there was a dramatic reduction in case management requests from the 2025 February-June reporting period to the 2025 July-December reporting period. The project's mental health consultation supports in that year lead to an overall decrease in case management requests. There is a demonstrated and great need for the continuation of the internal Mental Health Consultant position. The closure of Boys & Girls Club of Southcentral Alaska in Anchorage has put an additional strain on teachers and staff providing afterschool childcare and resources, making this project more pertinent than ever.

This project will continue to build teacher capacity and ability to meet the growing needs of all children and families in our program areas. The model provides an onsite consultant three to four days a week, delivering services through in-classroom coaching and individual & small group meetings/reflections with the previously mentioned Family Services programs. Through coaching and feedback sessions, teachers and other provider staff learn how to support the overall social and emotional environment in their classrooms and with their clients, including specific strategies to address identified needs. The Consultant does not provide any direct clinical services, but supports staff and teachers to make referrals, as needed, to appropriate additional services that cannot be met within the program. The proposed Early Childhood Center-Based Mental Health Consultation Project focuses, among beneficiary groups, on those with developmental disabilities as well as on secondary beneficiaries.

The service area of this project is identified as statewide as the listed Family Services programs are in the communities of Anchorage, Haines, Mountain Village, and Toksook Bay. The project will serve staff of RurAL CAP programs and, in turn, benefit the children and families they serve.

The project considers the following its (2) main outcomes:

1. Early childhood educator capacities in teaching social emotional skills are improved. Educators are equipped to respond to challenging behaviors and better meet the needs of children and families in their care.
2. A reduction in early childhood educator stress and burnout through hands-on coaching and training in an area of reported high need. This will lead to greater teacher retention. Among the beneficiary groups, a focus will be placed upon those experiencing developmental disabilities and delays.

Grantee Proposed Evaluation Measures (from grant application)

The project considers the following its (3) main performance measures:

1. The number of hours of total service provision provided by the mental health consultant, including in-classroom coaching, individual meetings, small group meetings, and reflection hours.

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2. The number and percentage of teachers and staff who increased their knowledge of applicable skills and tools to help them in the classroom.
3. The percent reduction in case management requests from FY25 to FY26, if applicable.

RurAL CAP intends to evaluate the implementation of this project and measure its success and achievement through the following:

To meet datapoint 1 and measure the quantity of work delivered, RurAL CAP will track the number of hours of total service provision provided by the Mental Health Consultant. This is to include the aforementioned in-classroom coaching, individual meetings, small group meetings, and reflections.

To meet datapoint 2 and measure project success and efficacy, data will be collected from the immediate target recipients of this project's activities, the staff of the Child Development Center, Little Haven, and Parents as Teachers. This will be measured through monthly knowledge checks and annual staff surveys conducted with all relevant staff, tracking answers related to acquired skills and tools, job satisfaction, and job-related stress.

To meet datapoint 3 and measure the project's wider impact in bettering conditions for Trust, secondary, and other beneficiaries, RurAL CAP will track the number of case management requests across the year to track how the project's mental health consultation supports lead to an overall decrease in case management requests and reflect the community-wide benefit of mental health service provision.

Proposed Project Performance Measures (developed by the Trust)

How much did you do?

- a. Number (#) of hours of total service provision provided by the mental health consultant, to include in-classroom coaching, individual meetings, small group meetings, and reflection hours.
- b. Number (#) of teachers and staff coached during the reporting period, broken down by the program (Anchorage CDC and Little Haven).
- c. Number (#) of Parents as Teachers coached during the reporting period.
- d. Number (#) of case management requests during the reporting period.

How well did you do it?

- a. Provide a narrative that describes the project timeline, activities, successes, challenges, and any lessons learned during the reporting period. Include a brief synopsis of the entry and exit survey data conducted with relevant staff and Parents as Teachers.
- b. Number (#) and percentage (%) of teachers and staff who increased their knowledge of applicable skills and tools to help them in the classroom.
- c. Number (#) and percentage (%) of teachers and staff who increased their job satisfaction since participating in the program.

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Is anyone better off?

- a. Number (#) and percentage (%) of teachers and staff who had a reduction in their job-related stress level since participating in the project.
- b. Percent (%) reduction in case management requests from FY26 to FY27, if applicable.
- c. Statements from three teachers or staff that describe how the tools and skills learned over the course of the project have helped their preparation for the classroom.

Sustainability (from grant application)

The Family Services Mental Health Consultation team is supported by additional funding and will continue after the Trust's funding has ended. Funding from the Trust would continue the project's impact on the children and families served and provide long-lasting skills and support for early childhood educators interacting with Beneficiaries. Support for the project comes from additional funding sources, including Teacher Apprenticeship funding and Supportive Housing. At the conclusion of the cumulative three-year project, RurAL CAP will assess the needs of program staff and children and families, identifying the best way forward in propagating the project's benefits to a wider body of client children and families. RurAL CAP continues to maintain and build strong partnerships with related organizations and funders to support the growth of early childhood mental health consultation in our community.

RurAL CAP's Family Services Programs are supported by a 4 FTE Grant Development team of experienced grant writers who identify funding opportunities, develop proposals, and secure grant funding. The program will search for and secure additional funds to support the continuation of this project.

Who We Serve (from grant application)

The proposed Early Childhood Center-Based Mental Health Consultation Project focuses, among beneficiary groups, on those with developmental disabilities as well as on secondary beneficiaries. Through the mental health consultation and training services led by the in-house mental health consultant, these beneficiaries are better served by the staff they engage with and who directly serve them and their children.

By providing coaching and training to early childhood educators, this project benefits all children and families in the programs by enhancing the quality of care and services. This helps to create a more inclusive and supportive environment for all children and is especially impactful for children experiencing extra needs or delays and disabilities in general childcare and home settings. Educators are better equipped to meet the social, emotional and behavioral health needs of all children and families and provide more nurturing and inclusive environments that establish a foundation of learning and development during the early childhood years.

The goal of this project is to continue drawing on the lessons learned from the ongoing project and perfecting a framework that benefits children and family clients across RurAL CAP's Family Services programming, further enhancing collaborations between mental health and education/childcare providers.

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Estimated Numbers of Beneficiaries Served Experiencing (from grant application)

Developmental Disabilities:	20
Secondary Beneficiaries (family members or caregivers providing support to primary beneficiaries):	50

Project Budget (from grant application)

Personnel Services Costs	\$81,043.96
Personnel Services Costs (Other Sources)	\$25,974.76
Personnel Services Narrative	<p>Annual Personnel cost for Mental Health Trust Consultant: \$83,218.30 salary plus \$23,800.44 in fringe for a total of \$107,018.74. RurAL CAP's current fringe rate is 28.6%.</p> <p>The Municipality of Anchorage Alcohol Tax Prevention grant is covering \$10,000.00, which includes fringe.</p> <p>Child Development Center is covering \$15,974.76, which includes fringe.</p> <p>AMHTA is covering \$81,043.96, which includes fringe.</p>
Other Costs	\$7,456.04
Other Costs (Other Sources)	\$0.00
Other Costs Narrative	Indirect Costs - RurAL CAP's Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate is 9.2%

Other Funding Sources (from grant application)

Municipality of Anchorage (Alcohol Tax Prevention Grant) - Secured	\$10,000.00
Child Development Center- Secured	\$15,974.76
Total Leveraged Funds	\$25,974.76