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STATE OF CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD



Beth Bye
Commissioner

November 24, 2020

Dear Colleagues and Partners in This Work,

In these difficult times, I want to thank you for your resiliency and dedication to serving the children and families of Connecticut. As the Covid-19 public health situation continues to bring uncertainty into multiple aspects of life, I want to acknowledge the complications this creates for your staff, your programs, and your organization. Given the recent uptick in cases and the state's reversion back to Phase 2 of opening plans, it is clear that these disruptions will continue for the foreseeable future.

These realities have also added challenges to OEC's vision to transition home visiting services further upstream to support the youngest of children. In particular, we have concerns about older children who continue to exhibit distress which is unfortunately exacerbated by the pandemic. We recognize that parents may be hesitant to reach out and are concerned that their children aren't receiving the development opportunities that they need. A sense of isolation frequently surfaces in conversations we've had, and this has been made harder for parents during this time.

OEC's objective remains to connect with families at the earliest possible stage to prevent behavioral health challenges later in the child's development as outlined in the RFP. However, this early intervention is not always possible, as highlighted during this pandemic. OEC expects awarded providers to work with families that connect with the system at a later stage and who may face acute behavioral health challenges, particularly with preschool aged children. In order to assure support for these children and families, the RFP has been modified to make clear that families will be connected to the appropriate level, intensity and duration of home visiting services throughout the state.

On OEC's website and BizNet, a revised RFP has been posted with track changes to highlight these edits. OEC will also extend the LOI and proposal deadlines by a few weeks to give the provider community an opportunity to react to these clarifications. For those respondents who have already submitted LOIs and would like to make a revision, you can resubmit up until the new LOI deadline.

Thank you again for your service to children and families in Connecticut and your continued flexibility during these challenging times. We look forward to partnering with many of you in building a home visiting system that meets the needs of families across the state.

In partnership,

Commissioner Beth Bye