

TO: Juvenile Welfare Board Members

FROM: James E. Mills, Executive Director *JEM*
Vicki L. Sprague, Senior Research Consultant *VS*

Requested Action

The Board is requested to approve the award of a contract to Rowlette Research Associates, Inc. to conduct the local evaluation of Pinellas Safe Start that is required as a condition of the federal OJJDP Safe Start award.

Options

1. Approve the request
2. Select a different vendor.
3. Any other action as determined by the Board

Recommended Action

Award contract for Safe Start local evaluation to Rowlette Research Associates, Inc., and allocate up \$99,917 for FY 2001-2002, and budget \$9,083 for one month of FY 2002-2003 for the evaluation of Phase II (early implementation) of Pinellas Safe Start.

Source of JWB Funds

Pinellas Safe Start federal grant funds.

Fiscal Impact

For FY 2001-2002 the Contracts and Grants, Safe Start budget will be reduced from \$840,150 to \$740,233. For subsequent phases of the project, 10% of the OJJDP award (or the amount required by OJJDP) must be budgeted for the local Safe Start evaluation.

Narrative

Pinellas Safe Start is a multi-year demonstration project funded by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The purpose of the Safe Start is to develop and implement a countywide response and prevention system to protect young children (age 0 to 6) from exposure to violence as victims or witnesses. Phase II of the project began on May 1, 2001, and ends on October 31, 2002, overlapping three JWB fiscal years. See attached overview for details of project phases and funding.

A major component of Safe Start as funded by OJJDP is evaluation. The overall evaluation effort is intended to document and assess the initiative as it develops, and to become an integral part of the initiative by measuring progress, suggesting adjustments, and keeping the initiative outcome focused. The evaluation of the Safe Start initiative includes a cross-site process evaluation, a cross-site impact evaluation, and local impact evaluations.

During Phase I of Pinellas Safe Start, local evaluation activities were conducted by the University of South Florida (USF), College of Public Health, James and Jennifer Harrell Center for the Study of Domestic Violence. A preliminary evaluation plan for Pinellas Safe Start was delivered by the Phase I evaluation team and submitted, along with other required deliverables, to OJJDP in March 2001.

On July 18, JWB released a Request for Proposals (RFP) for the evaluation of the implementation and sustainability phases of Pinellas Safe Start. A total of three (3) proposals were submitted by the August 31 deadline. A review team consisting of representatives from the Research and Evaluation Center, Pinellas Safe Start, and a faculty member from a local university rated the proposals and met to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal. The names of the organization submitting proposals, the location of each organization, and the total and average scores received by each proposal is presented below.

1. Rowlette Research Associates, Inc., Tampa, FL (Total Score: 370; Average Score: 74.0)
2. Evaluation Systems Design, Inc., Tallahassee, FL (Total Score: 341; Average Score: 68.2)
3. Florida Research Institute, Gainesville, FL (Total Score: 287; Average Score: 57.4)

Members of the review team conducted interviews with the applicants receiving the highest ratings. After careful consideration of all available information, the review team reached consensus with regard to the selection of Rowlette Research Associates, Inc. as the candidate to recommend for the award of this contract. The review team recommends Rowlette Research Associates, Inc. as for the Pinellas Safe Start Evaluation for the following reasons:

- The Principle Investigator (PI), Ronna Rowlette, Ph.D., and the Co-Principle Investigator (Co-PI), Leigh Nations, MPH, will contribute a significant amount of time to the evaluation and offer directly related skills and experiences;
- The PI and Co-PI, along with additional research consultants, will be available to observe and participate frequently in a wide variety of Pinellas Safe Start activities;
- The proposal was the most responsive to the evaluation priorities identified by OJJDP;
- Multiple research methods were proposed that were appropriate and rigorous;
- The proposed evaluation will utilize a strong technical component that will include web-based survey tools;
- Research activities will also include the development of tools and methods for evaluating Pinellas Safe Start's training and community involvement activities;
- The candidate demonstrated a strong capacity and focus on evaluating Pinellas Safe Start from a system perspective.

The evaluator for Pinellas Safe Start will implement a research design that assesses the nature and strength of collaboration, system effectiveness, short and long-term outcomes measured at the community and individual levels, effectiveness of new intervention and/or prevention strategies as measured through quasi-experimental research designs, and the ability of Pinellas Safe Start to meet its strategic implementation goals and objectives. The evaluation will be conducted in collaboration with Pinellas Safe Start representatives, participating agencies, and other stakeholders to satisfy the evaluation requirements of OJJDP and JWB.

Staff Resource Persons: Vicki L. Sprague, Senior Research Consultant
Judith Simpson, Project Manager, Pinellas Safe Start

Pinellas Safe Start

Project Description

- Pinellas County is one of nine sites to receive a demonstration grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). The grant is renewable for up to five and one half years of funding. The grantee and fiscal agent is the Juvenile Welfare Board (JWB.)
- Overall purpose: Develop and implement a county- wide response and prevention system to protect young children (age 0-6) from exposure to violence as victims or witnesses.
- This is a highly collaborative project involving many public and private agencies and community organizations in Pinellas County.
- To qualify for multi-year funding, a detailed strategic plan, implementation plan, evaluation plan and budget were completed and submitted to OJJDP on March 2, 2001.
- The National Center for Children Exposed to Violence (www.ncccev.org) provides technical assistance to Pinellas and other Safe Start demonstration sites.

Key elements of the plan

- Training for law enforcement, health, early childhood, court and other personnel about the developmental impact of violence on young children, and how to prevent and reduce the impact.
- Promoting community awareness and involvement to protect children from violence exposure.
- Neighborhood based prevention and intervention services and partnerships.
- Crisis response through utilization of victim advocates and on-call child advocates.
- Centralized resource and referral service: The Safe Start Partnership Center.
- Collaborative development of common practices across services and systems.
- Collaborative system review and improvement, resource development and advocacy.
- Local and national evaluation

Proposed time frame and activities for Phase II

- Phase II start date: May 1, 2001
- Review & update membership and committee structure: April-October, 2001
- Develop interagency training calendar: September, 2001
- Identify neighborhoods for development of teams and services: April-October, 2001
- Hold community meetings to disseminate Safe Start Plan: Fall, 2001
- Develop network of mental health and other family support providers: Fall, 2001
- Develop common forms, protocols and standards for providers: June, 2001-May, 2002
- Award funding for Safe Start Partnership Center through RFP process: January, 2002
- Award funding for community based pilot projects: Spring, 2002
- Start-up Safe Start Partnership Center: May, 2002

Staffing

- Project Manager: Judith Simpson (727) 547-5666
- Community Involvement Specialist: Veronica Ettel (727) 547-5667
- Secretary: Carol Tryon (727) 547-5668
- Local Evaluator: TBD

Funding: Total estimated funding = \$3,000,000 +

Phase	Project year	Date	Activity	Amount
I (12 mos)	1	5/1/00-4/30/01	Assessment & Planning	\$249,584
II (18 mos)	2	5/1/01-10/31/02	Initial implementation	up to \$1,090,000
III (36 mos)	3	11/1/02-10/31/03	Full Implementation	up to \$670,000
	4	11/1/03-10/31/04	Sustainability	less than \$670,000
	5	11/1/04-10/31/05	Sustainability	less than \$670,000