

Memorandum of Understanding for OJJDP FY 2022 Reducing Risk for Girls in the Juvenile Justice System

Grants.gov Opportunity Number: O-OJJDP-2022-171217

-between-

McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility ("Mart Facility") of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department ("TJJD")

-and-

Girls Empowerment Network ("GEN")

Background:

Girls Empowerment Network ("GEN") has an interest in providing more services for girls who are currently involved in the juvenile justice system, and as such was successful in being awarded funding from OJJDP for their June 2022 "Reducing Risk for Girls in the Juvenile Justice System" RFP toward this ambition. Originally when applying in early 2022, GEN had attached the Ron Jackson State Juvenile Correctional Complex in Brownwood, Texas as the public juvenile justice agency at the local or state level for this application with its own MOU, and the program vision was to lead services with the girls in population virtually.

However, in the period of time from when the original proposal was submitted until it was successfully funded/contracted by OJJDP in October of 2022, TJJD staffing demanded that their relevant girl population be relocated to McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility ("Mart Facility.") GEN proceeded to lead all collaborative activities required to run the pilot year of programming from October 1, 2022 through September 30, 2023. As is common with pilot projects, plans were adapted as new information made the necessary next steps clearer. Next steps included recruiting, hiring, and training new staff with programming expertise to lead the pilot and collaborative activities. This position newly supported by GEN is called the Juvenile Justice Program Facilitator (JJPF). Simultaneously, GEN learned virtual services were not possible at the Mart Facility, and planning to run services in person instead went underway. Two group cohorts were successfully completed at the Mart facility. Between the two cohorts, a need to right size the group was identified which prompted the delivery of a Direct Service Orientation for Mart staff for better understand what we do, how we do it, and why we do it. Additionally in year two, partnerships with local school districts were established to deliver services at their respective alternative schools and disciplinary alternative education programs (DAEP). By the end of year two, 121 girls were served throughout 12 groups over 97 sessions. Our evaluations show statistically significant impact in all the domains of our 6 Cs of Self-Efficacy: coping skills, confidence, communication, critical thinking, collaboration, and creativity.

In year three, we intend to continue our impact by expanding our facilitation capacity and completing a curriculum enhancement process to ensure that adapted services would be appropriate to meet this population's needs.

Terms:

Once signed by all parties, this Memorandum of Understanding will become effective October 1, 2024, and shall remain in effect through September 30, 2025. This period of time represents the third contract year of the original 36-month award extended from OJJDP to Girls Empowerment Network. This contract may be renewed for one (1) additional term of one (1) year, provided that all named parties agree in writing through contract amendment to each renewal. Any renewals shall be on the same terms and conditions, including any approved changes.

This agreement is subject to amendment and/or cancelation by GEN or TCJPD if either party is unable or unwilling to the responsibilities and parameters outlined here. As the lead, funded entity, GEN reserves the right to request MOU changes or termination with 30-days written notice required to any named parties. As the lead administrator of this OJJDP funding and contract, Girls Empowerment Network will serve as the accountability entity in the collaborative. Failure to uphold agreed upon responsibilities by parties in this Memorandum of Understanding should first be addressed through timely, direct, and positive communication of the concern to constitute a warning of the concern. Should the warning not result in improved positive partnership in the collaborative as outlined below, the notice of a terminated MOU will be sent to the appropriate signatories/agency points of contact.

Goals & Objectives:

As stated in the formal solicitation document, O-OJJDP-2022-171217, the goal of this program is to reduce risk factors and promote protective factors for girls who come in contact with the juvenile justice system, and place them on a path toward success, stability, and long-term contribution to society.

For the third year of the collaborative bound by the timing of this MOU, GEN is required to deliver the following objectives through formal reporting to OJJDP by September 30, 2025:

- Reach an additional 16-36 girls in 2-3 new program groups run

- Identify 2-3 new program host partners to reach additional girls who are in juvenile justice related settings but not incarcerated at Mart. Appropriate approved locations include but are not limited to:
 - Texas-based Alternative Education Placements through local school districts
 - County/city/precinct courts
- Reach a combined total of 100 unduplicated adolescent girls during the period of time bound by the second contract year across all of the host partner locations, by 9/30/25.
- For girls served, run comprehensive evaluation systems to demonstrate increased self-efficacy and related protective factors in at least 75% of girls served.

Girls Empowerment Network (GEN)

Names and emails of designated GEN staff points of contact for this MOU:

- Ami Kane, ami@girlsempowermentnetwork.org (contract details, administration, management)
- Angela Montijo, angela@girlsempowermentnetwork.org (program details, collaborative staff lead, host location relationships)

GEN will continue to serve as the lead agency in the collaboration. The agency's responsibilities include:

- Administer and oversee the funding contract and all related MOUs,
- Set aside subawardees' funding from the OJJDP contract as dictated below under EAF and IJWA's sections and ensure a clear process for timely payment of subcontracted and invoiced services,
- Pay subcontractors \$100/hour for services rendered,
- Lead collaborative planning meetings as appropriate for all entities; manage the 12-month contract project milestones, set corresponding goals, and keep team accountable,
- Provide TJJD with information on visitors to the group at least four weeks before the visitors' attendance to ensure TJJD has sufficient time to conduct proper background checks,
- Work with all collaborators to refine additional agreements and program adaptations across the funding contract duration,
- Oversee continued implementation and enhancement of services for girls in the juvenile justice system,
- Run appropriate evaluation and monitoring of the project,
- Reach out to additional public juvenile justice agencies at the local or state level to expand programming with their girls or at their facilities,
- Deliver services to girls,
- Track girls' attendance and progress,
- Provide consistent, clear, and meaningful communication and leadership of the collaborative,
- Provide monitoring reports back to all interested parties, and
- Other duties as needed for successful contract administration.

McLennan County State Juvenile Correctional Facility ("Mart Facility") of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department ("TJJD")

Names and emails of designated TJJD staff points of contact for this MOU:

- Erin Nemons, erin.nemons@tjjd.texas.gov (Manager of Institutional Clinical Services)
- James Rogers, james.rogers@tjjd.texas.gov (Assistant Superintendent)

Mart Facility will continue to serve as the primary program location. Requested responsibilities include:

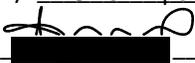
- Open, on-going communication with the collaboration, and immediate notification of changes/issues/concerns that arise at the facility or with the girls in population,
 - To be facilitated through check-in and check-out process with at least one staff member who is an active participant as the group's co-facilitator
 - Check-in could look like meeting the facilitator at the entry point to escort to classroom at least 5 minutes prior to the start of group to allow time to settle into space
 - Check-out could look like drop off the facilitator at the exit point while incorporating time to briefly discuss successes and areas of growth from the session
- Remove all reasonable barriers for entry to the facility:
 - for the facilitator, this includes PREA processing and approval for seamless entry along with group-dedicated staff escort at the ready at check-in area/OIG.
 - for visitors (ie. Power Chats and intern observations) this includes the approval process to be completed in advance
- Assist in the intake process by
 - Identifying girls between ages 13-18 who will be at the facility for at least 10 weeks to ensure participation from

start to finish; MLOS should be at least 2.5 months out from group start date

- Completing GEN intake form that captures youth demographic information
- Selecting at least 24 girls across the year for participation in the program,
- Scheduling and ensuring ease of access to facilities for GEN staff and appropriate programming space, that is equipped with chairs and air-conditioning.
- Ensuring adequate supervision and participation for the services, in a way that ensures that girls are able to feel comfortable and meaningfully engaged in program activities,
 - rightsizing abiding by the 1:8 ratio as outlined in Texas Administrative Code Title 37 Part 11 Chapter 343 Subchapter C Rule §343.434
 - Limitation of distractions within the programming space
- Provision of snacks at every group session
- Providing sole-supervised staff to attend each group session and making all reasonable efforts to ensure this staff remains consistent across the group's duration.
- Allow appropriate evaluation to occur and assisting with survey completion among girls and staff including pre- and post-surveys, and
- Other duties as needed for successful program creation, piloting, and evaluating.

Signature and Date

The parties hereby agree to the terms and conditions set forth in this agreement and such is demonstrated throughout by their signatures below:

Name: Angela Montijo
 Title & Entity: Juvenile Justice Program Facilitator
 Girls Empowerment Network
 Signature: 
 Date: 10/8/2024

Name: _Shandra Carter
 Title & Entity: Executive Director
 Signature: 
 Date: _10/9/24