



THE RAPIDES FOUNDATION

Healthy Behaviors Initiative Strengthening Families Grant

Submission deadline: Friday, January 17, 2025, 4:00 p.m. CT

I. Overview

The mission of The Rapides Foundation is to improve the health status of Central Louisiana. The Rapides Foundation focuses its work in three strategic areas:

- Healthy People, to improve access to healthcare and promote healthy behaviors;
- Education, to increase the level of educational attainment and achievement as the primary path to improved economic, social and health status; and
- Healthy Communities, to improve economic opportunity and family income, and enhance civic and community opportunities for more effective leaders and organizations.

Through this Request for Proposals (RFP), The Rapides Foundation seeks to prevent substance and alcohol abuse by funding organizations to implement the evidence-based family skills training program, Strengthening Families Program 7-17 (SFP) in the following parishes: Allen, Avoyelles (except Bunkie), Catahoula, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Rapides, and Vernon. Funding is up to \$100,000 for one year.

II. Background

Substance and alcohol abuse and its related problems are among society's most pervasive health and social concerns. Excessive alcohol use was responsible for about 178,000 deaths in the United States each year during 2020-2021 (CDC). Alcohol consumption can lead to alcohol dependence and abuse, contribute to a number of diseases and mental and behavioral disorders, and may lead to increased risk of health problems such as injuries, violence, liver disease and cancer. In addition, drinkers and their families are subject to social harm, such as family disruption, problems in the workplace (including unemployment), criminal convictions, and financial problems.

In Central Louisiana, 19.6% of adults are excessive drinkers which includes heavy and/or binge drinkers (Heavy Drinkers: men reporting 2+ alcoholic drinks per day or women reporting 1+ alcoholic drink per day in the month preceding the interview. Binge Drinkers: men reporting 5+ alcoholic drinks or women reporting 4+ alcoholic drinks on any single occasion during the past month.)

According to The Rapides Foundation's 2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 58.8% of service area high school students have ever tried alcohol and 22.8% first tried alcohol prior to age 13. Alcohol remains the drug of choice among America's adolescents, with rates of current (i.e., past year) use more than nicotine, vaping, cannabis use, and illicit drug use (NIDA 2022). Because drinking is so pervasive in this group, underage alcohol use proves even more difficult to prevent than other drug use. One of the most effective ways to lessen the costs associated with alcohol abuse and alcoholism is to prevent people from starting abusive drinking patterns, including underage drinking. Because people drink for different reasons and under a wide variety of circumstances, prevention efforts must address an array of problems associated with that range of drinking experience. Providing young people with tools they can use, such as ways they can say no to drinking, and changing their family or community dynamics can help prevent or at least delay alcohol use.



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Illicit use of drugs such as heroin, marijuana, cocaine, methamphetamines and opioids is associated with serious consequences including injury, illness, disability, and death as well as crime, domestic violence and lost workplace productivity. In 2021, 106,669 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States with opioids accounting for 75.4% of all drug overdose deaths (CDC 2021). Current rates in the Foundation service area are 24.7 deaths per 100,000 versus 29.2 in Louisiana and 21.0 in the United States. In Central Louisiana, 3.1% of The Rapides Foundation service area adults acknowledge using an illicit drug in the past month. Among Cenla high school students, usage ranges from as high as 27.6% for marijuana to as low as 7.3% for any injected illegal drug use.

The Strengthening Families Program is a science-based family skills training program designed to increase resilience and reduce risk factors for behavioral, emotional, academic and social problems. SFP builds on protective factors by improving family relationships, parenting skills, and improving the youth's social and life skills.

Strengthening Families Program Anticipated Outcomes:

- Decreased use and intention to use alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.
- Enhanced children's protective and resilience factors by improving children's social and life skills, peer resistance, and communication skills.
- Improved parent/child attachment and family relations, communication, and organization.
- Improved adults' parenting skills, reductions in excessive punishment or lax discipline and improvements in parenting self-efficacy,
- Reduced youth behavior problems (i.e., substance use, conduct disorders, aggression, violence, and juvenile delinquency) as well as reduced emotional problems such as depression and psychosomatic disorders.

III. Program Requirements

Over a project term of one-year, offer the SFP 7-17 curriculum, an 11-session class curriculum with lessons for Parents, Teens (12-17) and Children (6-11). A planning period of 3 to 6 months is anticipated followed by implementing cohorts throughout the following months with the following requirements:

- Provide a Program Coordinator to oversee the grant project. Responsibilities include: referrals and recruitment, supervision of staff, payroll and budget, logistics (childcare, transportation, meals, space).
- Identify a minimum of six Family Coaches (2 each for the parent, teen, and child classes) to implement the Strengthening Families Program
- Recruit 8-12 families in each cohort. A cohort should not exceed 12 families. It is permissible to offer multiple cohorts at the same time, however, cohorts must be taught in separate spaces.
- Lessons will be taught sequentially, no less than one time per week (excluding holidays).
- Student, parent, and family training will be provided in a two-hour lesson beginning with a family meal.
- Offer makeup classes. To complete the program families must complete at least 7 sessions. Makeup classes must be offered before the next lesson is taught. Makeup sessions can be offered in one of 3 ways: giving a family the Strengthening Families Program DVD or link to videos with families completing an end of lesson quiz or Family Coaches offer a virtual or in-person make up session.



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- Track family attendance and completion.
- Manage program logistics such as arranging childcare, transportation, meals, janitors, space.
- Print and provide families with the Strengthening Families curriculum including worksheets.
- Ensure all program staff are trained in authorized Strengthening Families Program 7-17 curriculum training.
- Ensure all program staff are trained on mandatory reporting and referral resources.
- Recruit families to participate.
- Retain family participation by providing incentives and support.
- Conduct program evaluation using the Strengthening Families Program. The Strengthening Families Program must be contacted at the beginning of a cohort to implement the survey tool for the last lesson. Strengthening Families Program will provide a report.

IV. Eligibility Requirements

The Foundation invites faith-based, nonprofit and government organizations that work with families with children between the ages of 6-17 or directly with youth between the ages of 6-17 to apply for funding to implement the Strengthening Families Program.

The primary applicant (grant fiscal agent) must meet all of the following requirements:

- Classified as a Section 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization under the Internal Revenue Code or a governmental entity.
- Cannot be a private foundation under Section 509(a).
- Must be an organization seeking funding support for projects restricted to the following parishes: Allen, Avoyelles (except Bunkie), Catahoula, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Rapides, Vernon.

V. Funding Guidelines and Grant Terms

Funds up to \$100,000 for a 12-month (April 1, 2025- March 31, 2026) period are available. The Foundation will consider only one application per organization and funding must align with the project needs and the mission of the project organization. Applicants are encouraged, but not required, to secure matching funds and/or in-kind support.

Grant funding may be used for:

- Program Coordinator pay.
- Family Coaches pay.
- Childcare Workers pay.
- Strengthening Families Program Authorized Training: staff time and training fees.
- Program Materials & Supplies: for items such as Strengthening Families Program curriculum, handouts, etc.
- Program Equipment: such as a laptop and projector to implement curriculum.
- Participation and Graduation Incentives and Program Support to remove barriers for participation.
- Marketing and Promotional Materials: for items such as flyers, posters, yard signs, social media marketing, etc.
- Convening & Facilitating: for family meals and location rental.



- Evaluation Services: for Strengthening Families surveys and evaluation reports.
- Indirect cost rate (not to exceed 10%).

Grant funds may not be used for:

- Lobbying or political programs or events.
- Activities, projects, or programs exclusively benefiting members of sectarian or religious organizations.
- Biomedical, clinical or educational research.
- Direct support to individuals or endowments.
- Funding that supplants existing sources of support.
- Individuals, including patient assistance funds.
- Social events or similar fundraising efforts or telethons.
- Projects outside of the Foundation’s service area.
- Direct funding for medical or social services already funded through existing third-party reimbursement sources.
- Operating expenses not used for significantly expanding the services of ongoing organizations.
- Vans or other vehicles.
- Building purchase or renovation.

Review Process and Additional Considerations

These funding opportunities are limited and are offered on a competitive basis; therefore, it is possible not all applicants will receive funding. Competitive proposals will have a budget that is appropriate to the size of the population impacted. We reserve the right to award less than the amount requested. We reserve the right to not award any grants through this Request for Proposals.

A review committee will evaluate all eligible applications based on alignment with the purpose of the Strengthening Families Grant and will make recommendations for final decisions by The Rapides Foundation’s Board of Trustees. Reviewers may recommend whole or partial funding of a project. The review committee may use geographic distribution, size of impact/reach, applicant’s history as a grantee when making their decisions. The Rapides Foundation will notify applicants, both successful and unsuccessful, in writing.

VI. Timeline for Submission

Proposals are accepted using the Foundation’s online application process only. The application is located on the Foundation’s website at www.rapidesfoundation.org under the “Grants” tab. Online deadline submission is no later than 4:00 p.m. on the date listed above. In fairness to all applicants, late or incomplete submissions are not considered.

Proposal Due Date	Friday, January 17, 2025
Notification of Selection	Monday, March 10, 2025
Grant Term	April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026



Please note, the proposal must be fully submitted by the deadline; therefore, you must begin uploading documents prior to 4:00 p.m. on the day of the deadline. We suggest you allow a minimum of three hours for the upload process.

Pre-submission Consultation

Prospective applicants are encouraged to schedule a call with the Healthy Behaviors Initiative Program Officer to discuss alignment and feasibility of their proposal before submission. Contact Dallas Russell at dallas@rapidesfoundation.org to request a meeting. Please schedule the meeting at least two weeks prior to the submission deadline.

VII. Accountability, Reporting, and Site Visits

If awarded, grantees agree to the following activities and time commitments:

Activity	Description	Frequency
Virtual Meeting	Informal project update meetings	Monthly except for when other activities are scheduled that month.
Capacity Building	Support from Healthy Behaviors Program Officer in relevant topics as the project is implemented.	As needed.
Site Visit	On-site meetings and tour of project activities.	Minimum of one.
Interim and Final Written Reports	A report template is provided and consists of a narrative, budget worksheet, supporting documents and workplan update.	Thursday, July 31, 2025 (interim) Friday, January 30, 2026 (final)

VIII. Proposal Narrative

All applicants are required to answer the following questions in the online portal as well as upload the required documents, utilizing provided templates where noted.

1. **Organization Overview** (enter directly in the grant portal)
 - a. Organization name.
 - b. Name, title, phone number and email address of the proposed project coordinator or key contact person from the applicant organization.
 - c. Project title.
 - d. Requested funding amount.
 - e. Total Project amount.
 - f. Geographic location served.
 - g. Intended project period starting no sooner than the dates listed above.
 - h. Brief program description. (Example: ORGANIZATION proposes to reduce substance and alcohol misuse in CITY/PARISH by offering # of cohorts of the Strengthening Families Program to # of families.)

2. Organization Information

- a. What target population (include key demographics) do you currently work with and in what geographic location? How many families/individuals do you currently serve per year?
- b. Briefly describe all programs/activities your organization currently offers.
- c. Why do you think adding the Strengthening Families Program to your organization is a good fit?

3. Proposed Program

- a. When, where, and how do you propose implementing the Strengthening Families Program? Make sure to include months the program will be offered, the location of where the sessions will be taught and who will be implementing the program.
- b. Describe how onboarding/training will be provided for staff including: Strengthening Families Program, mandatory reporting, resource referrals, and organization policies.
- c. Describe your target population and how many families you intend to serve each cohort and how many cohorts you will offer for the year.
- d. How do you know the families you intend to serve will participate in the program?
- e. Describe how you would recruit families to participate. Explain your marketing plan including what tools will be used, who the target audience will be and what materials will be developed.
- f. Describe how you would retain families to complete the 11-week Strengthening Families Program. Include what supports you will offer, what kind of incentives you will award and at what milestones.
- g. How will you offer makeup classes and who will be responsible for ensuring families complete the makeup session?

4. Proposed Partnerships

- a. Provide information on any committed or intended partnerships that will support this program including: organization name, the sector they represent (e.g., public health, law enforcement, education, church, etc.), and the perspective/skill they will contribute to the project.

5. Project Development and Support

- a. Identify and describe qualifications and related experience of key personnel who would direct/oversee and implement the grant-funded activities.
- b. Outline the responsibilities of each staff that would be involved in implementing the Strengthening Families Program.
- c. What (if any) previous work has the applicant organization and partners done (individually or together) to address substance and alcohol abuse prevention.

6. Resource Adequacy

- a. Describe any current resources your organization has that would support implementing the Strengthening Families Program.



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- b. What additional resources (outside of Foundation funding) are needed to successfully implement the Strengthening Families Program and how does your organization plan to address those needs?
- c. Describe your organization's capacity to add this program to your organization's offerings.

7. Program Impact

- a. What is the intended impact of your project by the end of the grant period and how will you measure it?

8. Budget Narrative

- a. Provide a budget narrative describing how you propose to use the funds in each line item.

9. Attachments- Upload in the grant portal

- a. Work Plan/Timeline: (use provided template) list the major activities, timeline, person responsible and expected outputs.
- b. Budget Worksheet: (use provided template) complete the Excel worksheet to reflect requested funds and any in-kind/match.
- c. Applicant organization's 501(c)(3) or government entity exemption determination letter.
- d. Your organization's most current 990, annual audit or financial report.
- e. A list of applicant organization's board members. Include member name and address, professional/community affiliations and board tenure.
- f. Signature Page
- g. Supporting Documents (optional) such as staff resumes or short bios, job descriptions for anticipated staff, community feedback such as surveys, summary of interviews, etc.

IX. Additional Considerations

The Foundation reserves the right to:

- Request additional information from any or all applicants.
- Meet with applicants to ensure full understanding of, and responsiveness to, the application requirements.
- Request modifications to a respondent's application prior to final award to ensure alignment of project elements with the core values, mission, and operating standards of the Foundation.
- Reject any or all applications submitted.

Funded organizations are required to submit a grant agreement (contract) and a board resolution affirming commitment to the grant-funded project by the board of directors.

For questions related to this funding opportunity:	For assistance with submitting the online proposal:
Dallas Russell, Program Officer	Courtney Keys, Program Assistant
dallas@rapidesfoundation.org	courtney@rapidesfoundation.org
Direct: 318.767.3005	Direct: 318.767.3013
	Main lines: 318.443.3394 or toll-free 800.994.3394

X. Resources

For more information on the Strengthening Families Program please visit their website <https://strengtheningfamiliesprogram.org/>