

RECOMMENDATION:

That the First 5 Lake Commission review and approve the MOU with Mother-Wise for the 2019-20 fiscal year.

BACKGROUND:

On November 14, 2018, F5LC approved a one-time grant request for the Mother-Wise program in the amount of \$47,919 for the period of January 1-June 30, 2019. On May 8, 2019, F5LC approved an extension through June 30, 2020 for the use of these funds.

Since January, the Mother-Wise program director has been taking steps to set up Mother-Wise as a California nonprofit business as well as pursuing 501c3 tax exempt status. The program is expecting to be set up as a nonprofit business before the end of June which means that the relationship between First 5 Lake and the Mother-Wise program will need to change, making an MOU necessary.

Previous to this, Mother-Wise has existed as a community service program under the umbrella of First 5 Lake County. Each person conducting program activities has been doing so as an independent contractor of F5LC and the program expenses for rent, electric, internet, and materials/supplies have been paid monthly by F5LC and reimbursed by Lake County Department of Behavioral Health (DBH) quarterly as part of the grant they awarded to F5LC for this purpose.

Once Mother-Wise is identified as a CA nonprofit business, this newly formed entity will receive the grant award directly from DBH and will pay all of its own bills, and rather than F5LC holding the program funds in its account F5LC will make grant award payments to Mother-Wise directly.

This MOU is meant to set the roles and responsibilities of the parties involved.

FISCAL IMPACT:

No additional fiscal impact will occur as a result of this MOU.

STAFF COMMENTS: This MOU is in the same format as the MOU that was approved by F5L for its previous emergency grant to Redwood Community Services for The NEST program in FY 2017-18.



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is by and between the **First 5 Lake Commission (F5LC)** and **Mother-Wise (MW)** for the purposes of setting forth the roles and responsibilities of the parties related to the Mother-Wise program grant.

WHEREAS in 1998, the California voters passed Proposition 10, the California Children and Families Act (The Act) which established the California Children and Families Commission also known as First 5 California; and

WHEREAS the Board of Supervisors of Lake County has established, pursuant to The Act and Lake County Ordinance Number 2591, the Lake County Children and Families Commission also known as First 5 Lake County (F5LC); and

WHEREAS, F5LC desires to create and implement a comprehensive, collaborative and integrated system for the purposes of promoting, supporting and improving the early development of children from the prenatal stage to five years of age; and

WHEREAS, MW has successfully proposed its program as a strategy and service which furthers the Vision, Goals and Objectives in the F5LC Strategic Plan; and

WHEREAS, F5LC, on November 14, 2018 voted to partner with MW in this program by conditionally approving the award amount of \$47,919 for the period of January 1 – June 30, 2019; and

WHEREAS, F5LC, on May 8, 2019 voted to extend the length of time for MW to expend this award through June 30, 2020; and

WHEREAS, MW will become a California nonprofit business by June 30, 2019; and

WHEREAS, the parties desire to set forth the roles and responsibilities corresponding to the remainder of this award;

NOW THEREFORE, F5LC and MW agree as follows:

1. **Roles and Responsibilities:** It is hereby agreed by and between the parties as follows:
 - a. MW will, from January 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020, provide its programs and services (*see attached **Scope of Work***), to qualifying residents of Lake County.
 - b. MW will align the work of its program to incorporate the five Protective Factors for families: enhancing parental resilience, developing social connections,

building knowledge of parenting and child development, offering concrete support in times of need, and fostering social and emotional competence of children.

- c. MW will make every effort to secure adequate funding for the 20-21 fiscal year and/or cut expenses for the program in order to sustain the program beyond the end of the term of this MOU.
- d. MW will provide written quarterly demographic, progress and financial reports to F5LC within 15 days of the end of each quarter (**reporting templates will be provided**).
- e. MW staff will attend the regular meetings of the Commission on September 25, 2019; and January 8, 2020 to give an update to Commissioners on: current status of the program, any changes being implemented in the program, updated plans for the funding of the program, and to answer Commissioner questions.
- f. MW will return any unspent funds granted for the program by F5LC, no later than July 31, 2020.
- g. F5LC will issue a check to MW for half of the remaining grant award amount upon the execution of this MOU to be used in accordance with the **attached budget**.
- h. Following the satisfactory program update given by MW staff at the regular meeting of the Commission on September 25, 2019, F5LC will issue a check for the remainder of the grant award.
- i. Both MW and F5LC will promote the program in the community.

2. Timeline: The roles and responsibilities described above coincide with the 2019-20 fiscal year (July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020).

We, the undersigned have read and agree with this MOU. Further, we have reviewed the attachments and approve the proposed collaboration as detailed.

By _____

Brock Falkenberg, Chair

First 5 Lake County

Date _____

By _____

Jaclyn Ley, Executive Director

Mother-Wise

Date _____

November 5, 2018

Carla Ritz
Executive Director
First 5 Lake County
1950 Parallel Drive
Lakeport, CA 95453

RE: Mother-Wise Funding Request

Dr. Ms. Ritz,

If every mom is at risk of Perinatal Mood and Anxiety Disorders (PMAD), then it follows that each year, 600-700 babies in Lake County are also at risk of disrupted mother-infant attachment. That simple connection was the original concept behind Mother-Wise – the spark that started our flame. Eight years on, and our fire has been harnessed into a force powerful enough to change and save lives. First 5 Lake was with us the whole time, and we are grateful for your continued support as Mother-Wise develops.

As you know, Mother-Wise encountered a funding shortfall this year as program growth accelerated beyond expectations. The attached proposal requests \$47,919 to cover contractor costs for the remainder of this year, and additional funds to cover some unmet program needs in the near term. The request represent our emergency needs, which are significantly less than what we need to adequately serve the demand we see in Lake County. At this time, our intention is to keep the program viable until alternative funding sources can be secured.

I apologize for the urgency of this request, as this is not the situation I expected to be in. Thank you for the work you do to keep Mother-Wise, and so many other projects, successful. As always, please call me at (707) 349-1210 if you have any questions or concerns.

Thank you,

Jaclyn Ley
Program Director
Mother-Wise
180 N. Main Street
Lakeport, CA 95453

Program Narrative

Project Abstract

Program participation continues to increase as our reputation spreads, and it is now apparent that Mother-Wise is ready for the next step in its development. Essentially, this boils down to a need for more funding options and sources. The Mother-Wise team is working on a plan to become either an independent non-profit or part of a collaborative non-profit entity, but the program has some more immediate needs before expansion is possible.

Mother-Wise started in 2010 with a Proposition 63 (Mental Health Services Act - MHSA) grant through the Lake County Behavioral Health Department. The program has been almost entirely dependent on this grant ever since. MHSA grant amounts are re-evaluated every three years, and, despite impressive program growth and success, Mother-Wise was inexplicably left out of the planning process, and thus was not considered for a funding increase in the latest plan, meaning the program will not receive a significant funding increase (if any) from this source in the coming three years. This sets up an untenable situation, as the program's budget must increase considerably to keep up with demand. The following proposal is an emergency request to help the program survive, with minimal changes, until a restructuring plan can be implemented to put Mother-Wise ahead of its growth curve.

Agency & Staff Qualifications

Home Visiting/Volunteer Coordinator: Maintains communication with volunteers as they go through the process of training, matching, and home visits with moms. Also recruits new volunteers whenever possible, and assists the Program Director with the training process. The home visiting coordinator also maintains direct contact with the moms participating in the home visiting program to ensure their satisfaction. Prior to her retirement, the current contractor worked as the MHSA Program Manager for Lake County through the Lake County Behavioral Health Department. Her knowledge and professionalism are great assets to the program.

Outreach Coordinator: Builds relations and improves awareness of PMAD and program activities through face-to-face interactions with health professionals, agencies, potential volunteers, and special event participants. The current contractor was a Mother-Wise program participant. She continues to work for Lake Family Resource Center concurrent

with her work with Mother-Wise, and her established presence in the local network of support services is extremely valuable for her position.

Social Media and Engagement Specialist: Maintains our presence on Facebook with daily posts, event pages, and promotional material, moderates (enforces rules) in our private Facebook Moms Group, fills in as needed at special events. The current contractor was a Mother-Wise program participant, is well-liked by the moms, and has a background in graphic design.

Group Facilitator: Leads discussions about relevant topics during weekly in-person groups at the Mother-Wise office in Lakeport. Ideally, this work would be duplicated in Clearlake, where our services are currently lacking. This contract is unfilled at this time, and will remain so until budget shortfalls are resolved. Meanwhile, the Program Director is filling the role.

Program Director: Maintains program vitality through interactions with moms, supporters, volunteers, and professionals, while minding all of the details that make the program run smoothly, including referral follow up, data entry, cleaning the office, setting up and cleaning up after events, maintaining the mom to mom closet, and much more. Also fills in for missing/absent contractors, as needed. The current Program Director has a strong work ethic and is driven to make the program succeed. She has attended numerous trainings, seminars and meetings to become Lake County's leading expert on PMAD. She also has extensive training on suicide prevention and intervention (ASIST and QPR), cultural competency, and strengthening families' protective factors framework. Her background includes office management, including exceptional customer service, which she integrates into Mother-Wise to make the best possible experience for moms and maintain program integrity.

Proposed Program Implementation

The primary goal of Mother-Wise is to improve prevention and early intervention of perinatal mood disorders (PMAD), leading to better outcomes for moms and babies. This goal is accomplished through the Mother-Wise mission, which is to help new moms understand that if they get depressed, they are not alone, they are not to blame, and effective resources are available to help them. As an innovative program, services are research informed and guided by the Strengthening Families Protective Factors.

PMAD is a broad term for a spectrum of afflictions that can have devastating effects on moms, babies and families. Any mom can develop a PMAD, and most informed estimates

put the prevalence at 20% of all moms. Postpartum depression is the most familiar form of PMAD, but a broad range of symptoms and effects can range from subtle to deadly. Suffering can be immense, with the potential to affect mother-infant bonding or worse. Mothers and families can be torn apart when PMAD is left unrecognized and/or untreated.

Mother-Wise began with a good idea and a plan to start small – helping a few moms connect with volunteers to prevent or reduce the effects of PMAD. Eight years later, we know a lot more about what Lake County’s moms need, and Mother-Wise has grown into a leading community resource for moms and their families.

Mother-Wise offers several levels of direct support, allowing moms to customize their experience with as much or as little help as they need. The most intensive support comes through a volunteer-based home visiting service, where trained volunteers provide companionship to moms in their own homes. Next, Mother-Wise hosts popular weekly Mom Groups in the Mother-Wise office highlighting necessary skills and information for new parents. The groups provide a safe, non-judgmental space where moms gather to make friends and share their ideas, experiences, and needs. Further support comes through social media, particularly Facebook, where the program maintains a public “main page” for community-wide general information, like wellness tips and events, and a private Moms Group where moms interact and help each other directly. The latter is a very effective means for sharing information and physical items, with the only required investment being a small amount of time to share posts and moderate the group interactions (negative comments and selling items are prohibited). Finally, Mother-Wise facilitates sharing of gently used items and supplies with a Mom-to-Mom closet. This service helps moms avoid or reduce the stress of unmet physical needs, while offering many opportunities for Mother-Wise to meet and engage with moms and their supporters in the community. Such interactions often lead to more participation in the program.

Mother-Wise works closely with local government agencies, hospitals, therapists, volunteers, businesses, and the moms themselves, with the aim of reducing stigma and improving access to services. The Program Director trains Mother-Wise partners in non-judgmental support, PMAD recognition (including the importance of screening), and the Mother-Wise system. These trainings emphasize collaboration, with Mother-Wise serving as a bridge that connects moms with Lake County’s varied resources. Mother-Wise gives and receives referrals from many of the county’s service providers, while working closely with certain programs, like the NEST, to reach higher-risk populations.

Mother-Wise is partnered with both of Lake County's local hospitals to give presentations about PMAD and Mother-Wise, as part of their monthly Safe Sleep classes. These classes are an ideal opportunity to speak to a target audience of moms, while the program implicitly benefits from the prestige of being official presenters.

The Program Director and her husband also host a weekly radio program, called Mom Matters, on the local community radio station. The main topic for each program is the same as that week's discussion topic in the Mom Group, allowing moms to listen and participate from home if they cannot come to the group or wish to discuss the topic further. While it is never possible to know exactly who is listening, the radio broadcast presumably reaches a wide audience, serving as a very effective means of spreading the Mother-Wise message. The main goals of the radio program are to provide accurate information and reach new program participants and supporters. In the spirit of community radio, the Program Director and her husband volunteer their time for Mom Matters. The topic material is already in order for the Mom Group, so Mother-Wise does not incur any costs for this project.

One of the keys to the program's success is a personal, "non-agency," approach that makes moms feel comfortable, welcomed, and appreciated. Mother-Wise performs as a catalyst to link moms with the support they need, sometimes before they even realize they need it. The program has so many aspects that it is difficult to describe in brief, but several participants have best described Mother-Wise as a feeling – the feeling of security that comes from real support and knowing they are not alone. The flexibility and responsiveness of Mother-Wise appeals to moms, especially compared to some other agencies where their interactions are often more rigid, and only available during business hours. Mother-Wise services are available to ALL pregnant women and new moms in Lake County with babies under 12 months, free of charge. The program never turns anyone away, and has helped several dads and grandparents, as well as hundreds of moms, babies and toddlers.

The Program Director is the only contractor who has been with the program since the beginning. Although her position is contracted for part-time work, this year she was forced to take on more hours to meet the increasing demands of the program. This adaptation means the budget will be depleted earlier than planned, and she will run out of hours mid-year unless the program can secure more funding.

Similar to the Program Director, the current budget does not have enough money to continue the Outreach and Engagement contracts past early 2019, even at their current rate of only 5 hours per week each. One of the main goals of this proposal is to retain

these contractors, as the program needs their help more than ever. Part of this proposal is to increase their available hours to align with the program's growth.

The Outreach and Engagement contractors both participated in the program as moms, so they know the value of the program and believe strongly in their work. Their contracts were originally combined into one position, but after finding both women uniquely qualified, the contract was split with the intention of building a stronger team while looking forward to growing demand. At the time, there was also a presumption that program success would be recognized with more funding, and thus more hours would be available for all positions. However, that scenario did not materialize and now we have an emergency situation.

All of the current contractors bring unique talents and experience to the team, which is the strongest, most motivated group of contractors the program has ever had. Limited staff time barely allows time to focus on anything other than immediate program needs, which too often stifles their ambitions. They have been patient, but the program needs the money to let them work.

Data collection has generally been very good all along, but data compilation and analysis has been a persistent weak point for the program. This proposal also requests funding for a one-time evaluation of program data from an outside source, providing staff and supporters a clearer picture of where the program has been, where it is now, and where it needs to go. This evaluation should also improve the program's data system by showing any excesses, redundancies and shortfalls in collection.

This proposal also requests funding for two new part-time contracts – a Computer Specialist and an Office Helper. In the program's current structure, the Program Director performs many essential duties that are peripheral to her contract. For the first several years, these duties took an insignificant amount of her budgeted time. Now, however, the Program Director needs more help with the many routine and spontaneous needs that arise. For example, when reports are due, it is a poor allocation of her time to clean the office or deal with donations, but there is often nobody else to do these tasks that are time-sensitive, so she ends up doing them first and administrative work gets delayed.

The Office Helper role will be some of the less-specialized tasks that the Program Director does currently, including setup and cleanup for groups and special events, carpet cleaning, greeting visitors to the office, answering the phone, and assisting with donations. Removing these tasks from the Program Director's list will allow her to focus on more

important tasks related to growing and maintaining the program, like attaining non-profit status.

Similarly, a computer specialist would relieve some of the burden of data processing from the Program Director and potentially streamline the process and improve analysis. This addition should enable prompt reporting and a data set that is up-to-date and available. The computer specialist will also be tasked with the design and maintenance of a program webpage to boost the program's image. Ideally, one person could handle both office and computer tasks, but finding the right person for this role may be difficult, which is why the position could also be split into two.

Mother-Wise has never had a program telephone number other than the Program Director's personal cell phone, and faxes are received at her residence. While this is a sure sign of her dedication, it is not the best scenario for the Program Director or the program. This proposal requests funding for an office phone line. Besides allowing the Program Director to fully disconnect from her role occasionally, having a central line will also allow other contractors and/or volunteers to field calls during business hours and check for messages during off hours or when the Program Director is away on vacation.

This proposal seeks additional funding for a new laptop computer that will remain in the office and be utilized by program staff for Mother-Wise business. The Program Director was authorized to purchase a laptop computer several years ago with unallocated Mother-Wise funds. She still utilizes this computer occasionally for word processing, but it no longer has internet capabilities and thus is of limited value. Instead, she primarily uses her personal laptop that is newer and fully functional. The other contractors also do not have computer access at the office unless they bring their personal computers along, which they never have. A dedicated office computer will provide a central location for data entry, word processing, graphic design, and outreach. Even if most work of this work is done elsewhere, the program will benefit from the ability to collaborate on projects while viewing and editing in real time, as a team.

Evaluation:

Mother-Wise uses and promotes the Edinburgh Postnatal Depression Screening Tool to obtain evidence-based information regarding a mom's mental state. This screening is easy to use, available in many languages, and validated for pre and postnatal use. Comparison between screenings shows changes and provides a record of a mom's mental health over time. Moms who participate with Mother-Wise generally show stable or improved scores on consecutive screenings. Declining Edinburgh results give staff a

reason to implore a mom for any circumstances that can be helped, or the potential need for outside services, including therapy. The screening also indicates suicidal thoughts, which opens the door to potential life-saving measures. Of course, this tool depends on honest answers, so it is important to make moms feel safe and comfortable before they take the screening.

Prevention is notoriously difficult to measure and Mother-Wise is working on improving data collection for outcomes. Numerous testimonials from moms indicate that Mother-Wise is changing, and even saving, lives, but those are usually only received from satisfied moms. While intake surveys are generally easy to implement, exit surveys are much more challenging because there is no official end date for moms in the program, and they are free to come and go as they please. With more time the program director, with the help of other contractors, can implement an end-of-year/program survey to determine if moms feel better supported and prepared for their new role as a result of the support they receive from the program.

Diversity of Funding and Sustainability

MHSA funds are slated at the current level for the next three years, but that is not enough to sustain the program as it stands now, let alone after three more years of growth. The overall purpose of this funding proposal is to sustain Mother-Wise while it transitions to a non-profit corporation. Once that happens, the program will be eligible for funds it cannot currently access. Meanwhile, staff is working on another funding proposal for First 5 Lake's next RFP to strengthen the program's role in Lake County's communities. That proposal will include a Spanish-speaking Moms Group (led by a Spanish-speaking facilitator), a satellite office in Clearlake for drop-ins and groups, an Early Childhood Education contractor, a second weekly group in Lakeport, and clinical consultation hours for staff during crises.

Despite the current funding challenge, Mother-Wise is a rising star. The program is sure to change shape as it grows, but it already has elements of a successful model with potential applications beyond Lake County, even if only in rural areas. Once things settle down this year, staff plans to produce a manual to maintain consistent, high-quality service over time, and allow duplication of the Mother-Wise system in other communities.

MOTHER-WISE PROGRAM

BUDGET FY 2018 - 2019

Activity	Unit Cost	Hours		Net	Total Costs
	/Hr	/Wk	/Mo		
Program Director	24.00	40			\$49,920.00
Home Visiting/Volunteer Coordinator	20.00	10			\$10,400.00
Support Grp Facilitators	18.00	4			\$2,448.00
Outreach Coordinator	18.00	10			\$9,360.00
Engagement Coordinator	18.00	10			\$9,360.00
Computer Specialist	15		20		\$3,600.00
Office Person	15	18			\$9,450.00
Evaluator					\$3,500.00
TOTAL CONTRACTOR COST					\$98,038.00
	Unit Cost	Miles		Net	
Logistical Support-Rent/Utilities/Insurance				\$11,000.00	
Materials & supplies				\$3,000.00	
Communications-Phone and Internet				\$2,300.00	
Equipment-Laptop/Software/Phone&Fax				\$1,750.00	
TOTAL ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS					\$18,050.00
TOTAL PROGRAM COSTS					\$116,088.00
Revenue Sources					
Prop 63 PEI					\$65,000.00
Childrens Council					\$3,000.00
Jenny's Light					\$169.00
TOTAL REVENUE					\$68,169.00