

Request for Funding: APEX Program Summer Camp

HISTORY:

The DeKalb Community Service Board (DeKalb CSB) is a premier public, nonprofit provider of community-based behavioral health, substance use, and developmental disability services for adults and children. ***Our mission is to provide the right service, for the right person, at the right time.*** We envision a community in which disabilities no longer limit potential.

With over 20 locations, DeKalb CSB provides quality, individualized services ***focusing on recovery*** and helping individuals ***achieve their fullest participation within the community.*** DeKalb CSB has served the citizens of DeKalb County and metropolitan Atlanta since 1994.

STATEMENT OF NEED:

Poverty has a profound effect on a child's mental health. Chronic exposure to poverty increases their risk of mental disorders such as depression and proposes behavioral risks such as substance use, early sexual debut, and criminal activity.

Last year, 99.7% of the children and adolescents that we serve in the DeKalb DCSB's School-Based Mental Health Services Program (APEX) received public aid for services. Because of the socioeconomic, cultural, and individual barriers and the stigma surrounding seeking mental health services for the black, indigenous, and people of color population, our low-income families are least likely to be connected to quality, accessible mental health services (NAMI, 2022).

The APEX Program exists to enhance the learning environments of schools by removing barriers to learning and actively promoting the emotional well-being of students through effective mental health promotion and intervention in schools. Our staff and clinicians have successfully engaged students and families at the partner schools for the last six years during the school year.

A fully licensed therapist is staffed in each school to provide individual, group, and family counseling to children referred for services. The school-based therapist conducts prevention activities, including classroom presentations, teacher support, parent education, and mental health consultation. The therapist responds to crises and critical incidents within the school, including potential suicidality reports. The therapist serves as a counseling team member and participates in committees as the staff mental health professional.

THE APEX PROGRAM SUMMER CAMP:

Children and adolescents continue to need educational enrichment and behavioral health services when they are out of school on summer break. Educational and social emotional learning loss occurs during this season. Lapses in services could negatively affect a child's academic success and behavioral health goal progression and can result in poor academic and behavioral health outcomes. Considering COVID-19 environment, it is vitally important that we provide an opportunity to continue engagement in services throughout the summer break.

In addition, many children drop out of services over the summer due to a lack of transportation and/or engagement in treatment. Parents frequently complain about not having camp opportunities because of funding, lack of transportation to camps, and an absence of staff that can help manage their child's emotional and behavioral needs.

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The self-funded APEX Program Summer Camp answers these needs by hosting an innovative, enriching social and emotional learning curriculum for children at their school alongside traditional camp activities and educational enrichment. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) provides self-management skills, and relationship-building skills, and teaches self-awareness and social awareness. Outcomes include improving children’s social-emotional skills, attitudes about self and others, connection to school, social behavior, and academic performance. SEL can also reduce a students’ issues with their conduct and emotional distress (Payton, et. Al., 2008).

FUNDING REQUEST:

The DeKalb Community Service Board requests \$25,000 per year for four years, totaling \$100,000, to support the APEX Program Summer Camp for children aged 7 to 13. This summer the camp will operate from June 6th to July 14th. The CSB currently funds the staff positions through the DBHDD APEX grant and other State funding sources. We are requesting funding for the portion of the program not covered by the DBHDD APEX grant. (See the attached budget.) Your donation will help us provide access to critical behavioral health services and summer learning and enrichment for at least 30 children from low-income communities in DeKalb County, Georgia.

DeKalb CSB requests funding under Sections 2001 and or 2707 of the American Rescue Plan. The American Rescue Plan Section 2707 supports funding for community-based funding for local behavioral health needs to address increased community behavioral health needs worsened by the COVID-19 public health emergency. Section 2001 reserves funds to address learning loss through the implementation of evidence-based interventions, such as summer learning and summer enrichment. Through our APEX Program Summer Camp, we are answering the need to provide community-based behavioral health services and summer learning and enrichment.

IMPACT:

The APEX Program Summer Camp is making a positive impact on the emotional well-being of children throughout DeKalb County. Families often have difficulty finding affordable summer camp activities that provide emotional and behavioral support to their children. We provide six weeks of free and accessible educational enrichment, therapy, and summer camp activities for children in low-income communities in critical need of our services. In 2019, we served 29 students in person, 66 virtually in 2020, and 26 students in 2021 in person.

Join us in helping children and adolescents continue to maintain behavioral health goal progression and build on the academic and social-emotional learning skills learned during the year, thereby improving their emotional and behavioral outcomes. Help us prepare them for the next school year without the economic burden of mental health services for children and alleviate the barriers to learning.

If you have any questions or need any additional information, don't hesitate to reach out to our Business Development Manager, Toni Dixon, at tonid@dekcsb.org or by phone at 404.508.6413. We are grateful for your time, and thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

Fabio van der Merwe
CEO



DeKalb Community Service Board, P.O. Box 1648, Decatur, GA 30031

“Helping Make Brighter Tomorrows”



APEX Summer Program

Personnel Cost	<u>COST</u>
* Licensed Therapist (Salary + Benefits)	\$ 11,984.85
* Licensed Therapist (Salary + Benefits)	\$ 10,380.79
* Licensed Therapist (Salary + Benefits)	\$ 9,950.84
* Licensed Therapist (Salary + Benefits)	\$ 9,498.32
* Licensed Therapist (Salary + Benefits) (40%)	\$ 4,522.99
* Program Director (20%)	\$ 3,298.44
<i>Personnel Total</i>	\$ 49,636.23
Other Operating Cost	
Staff / Client Travel	\$ 7,000.00
Client Food Cost	\$ 7,000.00
SLE Curriculum	\$ 3,000.00
Client Activities	\$ 3,500.00
Client Supplies	\$ 2,500.00
Educational Enrichment (Teacher Support)	\$ 2,000.00
* Staff Training	\$ 500.00
* Computer Software	\$ 1,000.00
* Computer Equipment	\$ 933.57
<i>Other Operating Total</i>	\$ 27,433.57
<i>Program Cost</i>	\$ 77,069.80
* Funded by DeKalb CSB	\$ (52,069.80)
Funding Request	\$ 25,000.00

