

YOUTH-LED MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA REDUCTION MINI-GRANT PROGRAM

Request for Proposals

IMPORTANT DATES

Request for Proposals Released.....	October 6, 2025
Application Due.....	October 24, 2025
Awards Announced.....	October 31, 2025
Invoice and W2 due.....	November 7, 2025
Project Period Begins.....	November 17, 2025
Project Period Ends.....	May 22, 2026
Project Report Due.....	June 8, 2026

INTRODUCTION AND MINI-GRANT GOALS

One in five people in the U.S. experiences a mental health disorder in their lifetime. It could be serious depression, anxiety, psychosis, an eating disorder, or any of several common conditions, all of which are treatable. Mental health disorders are common. Recovery is possible. Treatment works.

Yet, because of the stigma associated with mental illness, people are often reluctant to admit that they, or someone they care about, have a mental health problem, fearing the disapproval, misunderstanding and discrimination that could result from such a diagnosis. Sadly, this stigma keeps people from seeking help, especially at the early onset of illness, when treatment can be most effective.

Eliminating stigma requires a change in the way we talk and think about mental illness in our culture. Young people can be a very powerful driving force behind this kind of positive culture change.

This mini-grant program will fund youth-planned, youth-led projects to reduce stigma among their peers. The program’s goals are to:

1. Empower youth to reduce the stigma of mental illness in their communities and focus on suicide prevention.
2. Educate youth on facts regarding mental illness, including how to recognize it and seek help for oneself or others; and
3. Educate young people in ways they can promote their own and others’ mental health.

This mini-grant program is funded by a regional suicide prevention grant from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services. The Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board is the fiscal agent on the grant and is administering the mini-grant program.

MINI-GRANT ELIGIBILITY, REQUIREMENTS, AND FUNDING AVAILABILITY

The following types of organizations are eligible for mini grants:

- Non-profit organizations with a 501(c)3 designation from the Internal Revenue Service, or youth groups affiliated with one.
- Youth-serving groups affiliated with Fairfax County Public Schools.

- Public agencies other than the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board.

Additionally, applicants must:

- Serve youth from Fairfax County, the City of Fairfax, and/or the City of Falls Church.
- Propose a project that is planned and implemented by youth. Adults can serve as mentors or sponsors but cannot be project leaders or facilitators.

A total of \$6,000 is available for the mini-grant program. Applicants may request up to \$1,000. It is anticipated that the average award will be between \$500 and \$1,000. Funding may not be used for salaries or other personnel costs.

While previous awardees will be eligible to receive mini-grants, applicants who have not received mini-grants in the past will receive priority.

MINI-GRANT APPLICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

To apply for a grant, email an application to csbprevention@fairfaxcounty.gov. An application form is attached, but it is recommended that applicants create an application in Word (or a similar word processing software) that responds to the questions on the application form. Contact us to receive the application in Word format. The document should be saved and submitted in .pdf format. An application should be no longer than three pages. Applications must be received by 11:59 p.m. on October 24, 2025.

Applicants should receive an acknowledgement that their application was received via email within one business day.

Applicants will be notified of their status by October 31, 2025. **Project Invoice and W2 will be due 1 week after notification of grant award (W-9 is NOT needed if the lead is a FFX County Government entity).** Awardees can begin project implementation as soon as November 17, 2025. Projects must be completed by May 22, 2026. Projects do not need to be implemented throughout the entire project period; and once completed you can submit the final report. (For example, they can take place over the course of one week.) Projects can be implemented in school or community settings.

Awardees will be required to submit a short final report by June 8, 2026. The report will include a narrative of the project, copies of any materials or pictures the project team wants to share, the number of youths reached (served) by the project or its various elements, and a description of the project's outcomes.

CRITERIA

Proposals will be scored based on the following criteria:

- Likely effectiveness – the extent to which the project is likely to achieve the mini-grant program's goal of reducing the stigma of mental illness and focusing on suicide prevention among youth with a plan to measure or demonstrate effectiveness.
- Creativity – the extent to which the project reflects originality and resourcefulness.
- Reach – the number of youths served by the project.
- Replicability – the extent to which the project could be implemented in other locations and/or in the future.
- Youth Implementation – The extent to which youth are acting in leadership roles during the implantation of the project.



Applicants who have not received a mini grant in the past will receive an additional 10 points.

Proposals that do not clearly specify how young people will lead the planning and implementation of the project will not be considered.

Proposals will be reviewed and selected by representatives from the Fairfax County Promoting Mental Health Team and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board. This team is a committee of the Partnership for Healthier Fairfax and is coordinating the implementation of the Northern Virginia Suicide Prevention Plan in Fairfax County.

An effort will be made to ensure geographical diversity among awardees.

CONTACTS

Please email requests for Word document versions of the application and questions regarding the mini-grant program to: csbprevention@fairfaxcounty.gov.

YOUTH-LED MENTAL HEALTH STIGMA REDUCTION MINI-GRANT PROGRAM

Application

Applicant Information

1. Applicant name:
2. Applicant address:
3. Applicant web URL:
4. Contact person name:
5. Contact person title:
6. Contact person email:
7. Contact person phone:
8. If contact person is a youth, please provide the name, title, email, and phone of an adult who will serve as the applicant's fiscal manager if awarded:

Project Information

9. Project title:
10. Estimated number of youths reached (served) by the project:
11. Provide a short narrative describing the project, including where the project will be implemented:
12. Describe how the project will lead toward reduced stigma regarding mental illness among youth:
13. Describe how youth will be involved in the planning and implementation of the project:
14. Will the project be implemented by an existing youth club or group? If yes, please provide the name and a short description of the group:
15. Will the project utilize social media to help with messaging and promotion? If yes, please provide a short description, including account names.
16. Provide a timeline for the project:

Budget Information

17. Please itemize your budget using the format below:

(Not to exceed \$1,000. Personnel costs are not allowed. See example budget below.)

Item	Quantity	Unit	Cost per Unit	Total
Total				

18. Provide a short description of how each item in the budget will be used:

Commitment

By signing this application, I/we agree to the following:

1. If there is any planned media coverage, press releases, or publications regarding this project, we will recognize the support by “This event/message/activity is funded by the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board as a program of the Northern Virginia Suicide Prevention Plan, made possible by a grant from the Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services.”
2. We will use the mini grant funding as proposed in our application.
3. We will expend no mini grant funding beyond May 22, 2026.
4. We will submit our final report no later than June 8, 2026, using the template to be provided to awardees.

Contact Name:

Contact Initials:

Initialing serves as an electronic signature. You are signifying that you have read and agree to the commitment paragraph above.

Example Budget:

Item	Quantity	Unit	Cost per Unit	Total
T-shirts	20	each	\$7.00	\$140.00
Pencils	10	box	\$3.00	\$30.00
Total				\$170.00