



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

# RFP Response Form

## RFP for the Development of an Enhanced and Comprehensive Reentry System

### PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: Amachi Pittsburgh

[Click here to enter text.](#)

Authorized Representative Name & Title: Anna Hollis-Kander, Executive Director

Address: 1830 Forbes Avenue, Second Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Website: [www.amachipgh.org](http://www.amachipgh.org)

Legal Status:  For-Profit  Nonprofit  Sole Proprietor/Individual  Partnership

Women Owned:  Yes  No

Minority Owned:  Yes  No

If yes, select the ethnicity:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native  | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or of African decent       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hispanic or Latino/a              | <input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Western Asian/Middle Eastern      | <input type="checkbox"/> East Asian/Far Eastern           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> South Asian/Indian (Subcontinent) | <input type="checkbox"/> Southeast Asian                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-racial                     |

Self-Describe:

Faith Based:  Yes  No

Partners included in this Proposal: [Click here to enter text.](#)

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific.* DHS E-mail

### PROPOSAL INFORMATION



## **RFP for the Development of an Enhanced Comprehensive Reentry System**

Board Chairperson Email: [REDACTED]

Partners included in this Proposal: [Click here to enter text.](#)

### **REFERENCES**

Provide the name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization. *Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references. [Click here to enter text.](#)*

**Elizabeth Miller, MD PhD FSAHM, UPMC Children's Hospital**

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

**LaTrenda Sherrill, Common Cause Consultants**

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

**John Wetzel, Former Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Corrections**

Phone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

### **CERTIFICATION**

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, as applicable:

I have read the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts and the requirements for DHS Cyber Security, EEOC/Non-Discrimination, HIPAA and Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law.

By submitting this Proposal, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

Choose one:

My Proposal contains information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information and I have included a written statement signed by an authorized representative identifying those portions or parts of my Proposal and providing contact information.

OR

## RFP for the Development of an Enhanced Comprehensive Reentry System

My Proposal does not contain information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information.

### ATTACHMENTS

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. Attachments do not count towards the page limit for your Proposal.

- Sample Staffing Plan (*please provide a staffing plan for each service proposed*)
- Sample Curriculum (*only for Proposers of Curriculum-Based Programming*)
- Sample Activities Schedule (*only for Proposers of Activities-based Programming and Resource Coordination*)
- Letter(s) of support from a community-based organization/individual
- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
- MWDBE and VOSB documents (*see Sections 6.1 and 6.2 of the RFP for more details*)
- W-9

### REQUIREMENTS

Please respond to the following. **All Proposers must complete the Organizational Experience, Organizational Capacity and Budget Sections. Please complete these sections only once, regardless of the service(s) proposed.** The score from these sections will be added to the score for each service proposed. The maximum score that a Proposal can receive in each category of service is:

- Recovery-Oriented Cognitive Therapy (CT-R) Courses Facilitation = 95 points possible
- Curriculum-based Programming = 105 points possible
- Activities-based Programming and Resource Coordination = 80 points possible

Complete only the sections for the service(s) you wish to propose. Services not included in your Proposal may be left blank. Please stay within the page limit listed at the top of each section.

*All Proposers must complete these sections. Your response to this section **must not exceed 5 pages.**\*\**

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE: We struggled to manage formatting issues with this document (blank pages/content split between pages) but have kept our actual responses in this section to 5 pages. Due to formatting issues, it prints on 6 pages**

#### **Organization Experience (30 points)**

1. Describe your organizational experience and success working in difficult settings with high-need individuals and/or communities with diverse identities, especially current or former justice-involved individuals. (10 points)

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Amachi Pittsburgh was established in 2003, specifically for the purpose of addressing the unique needs of a justice-involved, high-need population from marginalized neighborhoods in Allegheny County with high poverty, violence, crime, and incarceration rates. These communities are defined as extreme/high need by the Department of Human Services. In accordance with our mission statement, we seek to empower, nurture, and protect those most vulnerable to the criminal justice system. We work to amplify the voices of youth & families; activate a community of support; and advance policy & practice to drive equity and justice. Our robust program model is holistic, trauma-responsive, and strengths-based, leveraging individual, family and community assets to help empower children along with parents/caregivers--both incarcerated as well as custodial--to break the intergenerational cycle of imprisonment and reduce recidivism amongst parents returning home. Our success rate with disrupting intergenerational incarceration has been documented at **92%**. Our family strengthening and reunification services in correctional facilities and community help to strengthen family ties that help reduce trauma and recidivism, promote healthy family functioning, and lead to positive life outcomes. We have contributed to reduced recidivism as evidenced in the Urban Institute's 2014 report, *Evaluation of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative Reentry Programs*, where Amachi served as a family support partner when ACJC launched reentry programs in 2010. In addition to the Allegheny County Jail, we have delivered services to seven Pennsylvania State Correctional Institutions and community corrections facilities. The following are activities we've hosted:

- Facilitation of parent-child visits and reunification process; incorporated Virtual Reality experiences into a special pilot project with SCIs--something we would love to pilot at ACJ as well if permitted.
- Amachi Saturdays at the ACJ Family Activity Center to prepare children/families for visits, facilitate activities during visitation as needed, and debrief afterwards. Families were also recruited and engaged in community-based activities including retreats.
- Workshops, case management support, home visits, community events, and a variety of enriching, skill-building activities for custodial parents/caregivers, children and family members.

The difficulties and systemic barriers associated with serving justice-involved individuals and families are well documented and widespread with compounding effects. Thus, the design of the Amachi model is partnership-based to capitalize on the power of meaningful relationships and the synergistic impact of collaboration while leveraging a diversity of resources and areas of expertise amongst partners. Working strategically in partnership with our constituents, faith- and community-based organizations, and stakeholders across systems, we've established a 20-year record of successfully navigating difficult settings not only serving a high-need population directly but also representing our constituents in system reform initiatives at the local, state, and national levels.

We hire individuals with lived experience, maintain routine feedback loops (focus groups, one-on-one interviews, surveys, etc.) to measure client satisfaction, and learn from our program participants/community. Both adults and youth routinely report high ratings of our programming, events, and staff. Additionally, we ensure all team members receive ongoing trauma-based training and professional development. With certification in the Sanctuary® Model, we operate through a trauma-informed, evidence-supported organizational blueprint that promotes safety and recovery from adversity through the active creation of a trauma-responsive community. Because trauma is pervasive in the human experience broadly, the focus is not only on individuals, children and families who seek services, but equally on the people and systems who provide those services. Thus, Sanctuary® is integrated into our programming and offered throughout our network.

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Finally, we empower constituents to champion their own cause, become civically engaged, and impact systems level change using their powerful voices and compelling stories. We have trained and engaged youth and parents/caregivers, including the formerly justice-involved, in a host of educational efforts including presenting at conferences and public hearings, developing informational materials; and implementing a public awareness and advocacy campaign called Victims No More, in partnership with Denny Civic Solutions.

Though Amachi does not engage in lobbying, the campaign compelled PA Department of Corrections and the legislature to establish the First Chance Trust Fund (FCTF) through groundbreaking legislation. FCTF provides scholarships and support for students impacted by familial incarceration.

Amachi is recognized as a highly respected voice, thought leader, and active collaborator not only directly serving justice-involved families, but also representing their unique needs through reform-focused initiatives locally, statewide and nationally, including but not limited to:

- University of Pittsburgh Institute of Politics' Criminal Justice Task Force & Community Progress Panel, each of which released comprehensive reports.
- PA Commission on Crime & Delinquency, Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Committee of (Governor Wolf appointment); Adult & Juvenile Racial & Ethnic Disparities Subcommittees; First Chance Trust Fund Planning Committee
- Co-chair, Advocacy Subcommittee of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative (2016-2018); Partnered with Denny Civic Solutions to develop Driven to Work Campaign, supported by The Pittsburgh Foundation.

Since inception, Amachi has received numerous awards, national recognition, and most recently, the 2024 Impact Award for its significant impact on system change, judicial improvement, service delivery, and youth/family support. Amachi was selected for this honor by the organizers of Pennsylvania's 2024 Children's Interagency Conference including DHS.

2. Describe your organizational experience and success in building trust in the communities within which you work, including at least one letter of support from a community-based organization/individual. (10 points)

Amachi has established itself as a trusted and valued community member primarily by maintaining a consistent, visible, and reliable presence in the lives of our program participants and in their neighborhoods. Our approach is straightforward: we show up and follow through on our promises. The Amachi model is anchored on a foundation of relationship- and trust-building, leveraging formal partnerships with faith- and community-based organizations as well as schools right where our children and families live. Working with resident leaders who know their neighbors, and capitalizing on existing trusted relationships gives us a pathway to connect quickly with families in need, focusing on addressing their immediate concerns rather than reinventing solutions. For instance, we have collaborated with Project Angel Tree, a program of Prison Fellowship Ministries. Angel Tree partners with faith-based institutions to deliver gifts to children with incarcerated parents during the holiday season, and we follow by reaching out to families and offering quality programming throughout the year. This partnership enables us to connect with families directly through their prior trusted relationship with Angel Tree. We begin with visits to understand their strengths and needs, and then connect with the partners to recruit mentors and volunteers, crucial to supporting our ongoing work. Similar partnerships and strategies are employed with schools and various neighborhoods including in the Mon Valley and South Side. (See letters of support.) We also apply the same person-centered approach when working

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with incarcerated parents to show that we value their personal stories, experiences, and needs without judgment. Everyone has a meaningful story and a legitimate need for support.

Beyond making initial connections, our sustained engagement with youth, families, and communities has fostered enduring trust. We demonstrate care and value in multiple ways, acknowledging the stigma associated with familial incarceration. We prioritize learning from those we serve as experts with lived experience, incorporating their ideas, addressing their concerns, and meeting their specific needs. In addition, we integrate current and former program participants into our team through internships and employ full-time staff who reflect the diversity of race, ethnicity, culture, and experiences of the communities we support. By embedding supportive systems directly into our program design and committing to consistent community presence, we ensure that we build and maintain trusting relationships. Based on participant surveys, justice-involved parents, families, and communities trust our unwavering dedication to serving as a beacon of hope and haven in their lives.

### **3. Describe your organizational understanding of trauma-informed approaches and explanation of how trauma-informed approaches will manifest in the Proposer's program(s) and/or when working with program participants. (10 points)**

Amachi Pittsburgh invested in a three-year, intense trauma-informed training and implementation process to become certified in the Sanctuary® Model, a blueprint for organizational change which, at its core, promotes safety and recovery from adversity through the active creation of a trauma-informed community. A recognition that trauma is pervasive in the experience of human beings forms the basis for the Sanctuary Model's focus not only on the people who seek treatment, but equally on the people and systems who provide that treatment. The model is comprised of three primary components that shape our trauma-informed approaches and how these approaches manifest in our programming:

- Theoretical philosophies drawn from trauma, systems, and business theories, form the underpinnings of the model.
- Trauma-informed shared language.
- A set of practical tools, known as the Sanctuary Tool Kit.

As a part of the implementation and certification process, all elements of Sanctuary were integrated into Amachi policies, procedures, and everyday practices; programming and curricula; communication materials and platforms including website and social media; and external engagement. This means that if Amachi is fortunate enough to be awarded a contract to participate in the ACJC Enhanced Comprehensive Reentry System, we will integrate Sanctuary education as an enhancement to our curriculum-based programming. The beauty of the model is that it is not a manualized protocol but rather an organic process incorporated into existing programming/curriculum, so no additional or separate sessions are required. All Amachi staff receive comprehensive training, board members receive orientation, and staff provide education and tool kits for stakeholders throughout our network--youth, families, adults, mentors/volunteers, and partners across systems--with the goal of creating a trauma-informed culture in communities, schools, correctional facilities and other work settings. Through our programs, we acknowledge how environmental and social factors contribute to adversity and trauma for individuals. With respect to incarcerated parents, we know that the actions, behaviors, beliefs, and experiences (especially related to mental health) that lead to imprisonment, often stem from accumulated traumatic experiences. In turn, familial incarceration itself becomes a traumatic experience for the children and families on the outside, and without adequate understanding and tools, individuals unintentionally perpetuate the effects of trauma from one generation to the next leading to generational cycles discussed in a previous section of this proposal.

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Sanctuary introduces a fresh perspective, positive mindsets, and a tool kit that offers people protective measures as they navigate the impacts of involvement with the justice system. For example, rather than asking a client, "What is wrong with you?" we shift to, "What happened to you?" Or we invite a conversation about the individual's experiences in life to learn about beliefs, attitudes and emotions they carry with them. The model also upholds seven commitments to support healing from trauma: nonviolence, emotional intelligence, social learning, democracy, open communication, social responsibility, and growth and change—each of which we explain and provide on safety cards. In the spirit of Sanctuary, each interaction with program participants--whether a parenting class or a one-on-one meeting--begins with a check-in to level set and foster emotional regulation, establish or recall a goal for the day (to promote forward thinking and resilience), and identify at least one person within their support system to reinforce that they are not alone while encouraging them to ask for help when needed. By normalizing trauma-informed approaches and the whole idea of seeking support and healing, we aim to open doors to new opportunities for our constituents to thrive. Our goal is to promote safety and recovery from the chronic stress, trauma and adversity inherent in communities plagued by violence, poverty, incarceration, unemployment, cultural and racial disparities, and political marginalization. We recognize how these experiences can breed a sense of anger, hopelessness or even desperate measures just to survive.

Overall, Amachi's trauma-informed programming seeks to effectively address individual emotional, mental, and physical well-being and contributes to healthier communities by fostering emotional regulation, conflict resolution skills, and overall resilience. Following are core outcomes: Improved Mental and Physical Health; Enhanced Relationships; Reduced Violence and Conflict; Personal Empowerment; and Community Well-being

### Organization Capacity (15 points)

4. Describe your organizational capacity to recruit, retain and supervise high-quality, diverse staff, including individuals with lived experience with justice system involvement. (5 points)

In 2021, Amachi adopted a new five-year strategic plan that prioritizes and centers **people** as most our valuable assets. We began implementation with a focus on our number one strategic goal of ensuring Amachi is a model place to work, learn and grow. We engaged an expert HR consultant who worked with Amachi staff and our Sanctuary® Model trainer for two years to increase our capacity to attract and retain high-caliber staff; strengthen infrastructure; solidify staff and agency protocols; and support the implementation of the Sanctuary, which is designed to increase staff support, emotional and mental health, and retention. The following list outlines primary objectives that were achieved:

- Audit of staffing structure, roles and compensation.
- Revamped staffing plan including job descriptions based on all four goals in the strategic plan, ensuring efficient and effective workflow, staff advancement opportunities, special team building activities, and ongoing professional development.
- Candidate sourced newly developed leadership and additional program staff roles.
- Enhanced staff and board onboarding protocols.
- Updated policies and procedures as well as supervision and performance evaluation protocols based on best practices and integrating elements of the Sanctuary® Model.
- Implemented staff, client and stakeholder satisfaction surveys to monitor progress; identify areas for training, development, and retention; and support continuous learning.

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- Instituted annual stay interviews designed to level set team members at the beginning of each year, understand what motivates staff to stay, and address areas of vulnerability for attrition.

Two new director positions were specifically developed to support strategic goals and enable us to internally sustain new protocols and practices at the conclusion of the HR consultant 's engagement. As noted in a previous section of this proposal, it has always been Amachi's practice and intention to hire individuals including youth and former program participants with justice-involved lived experience and who represent the diversity of the communities we serve, as this is a fundamental tenet and core value embedded in our mission. In addition to frontline workers, fifty percent of our leadership team represents families we serve.

5. Provide a sample staffing plan for providing sufficient coverage at all times with an appropriate number of staff who have appropriate responsibilities and levels of experience. (5 points)

Staff assigned to this project have experience working with this population for several years and have a passion for this work. We anticipate 1 FTE to be covered by two team members to ensure that at least one is always available to facilitate. Staff will receive support as necessary by an assistant. We will work with ACJC to access the number of sessions we are able to host weekly and establish a more detailed plan accordingly.

6. Referencing *Section 2.1 Collaboration with Beck Institute*, describe your organization's plan to work with Beck Institute and strategies for agency-specific staff training, supervision and quality assurance. (5 points)

Amachi is fully committed to collaborating with Beck Institute with an expectation to improve client outcomes and ensure sustainable growth and quality assurance in service delivery.

### Partnership with Beck Institute:

- **Consultation and Training:** Amachi will engage Beck Institute for consultation and tailored training sessions. This will include participation in training to become a champion of CT-R. We will engage our learning manager to incorporate relevant CT-R training into our existing learning protocols.

### Staff Training:

- **Initial Training:** Conduct initial training sessions where staff members learn the core principles and practices of CT-R as per Beck Institute's methodology.
  - **Ongoing Education:** Amachi is committed to maintaining a continuous education that includes advanced training modules, discussions, and updates on the latest research and techniques from Beck Institute.
- Onboarding:** Any relevant webinars, trainings or courses will be built into onboarding for any new staff as needed.

### Quality Assurance:

- **Protocol Adherence:** Amachi will develop and implement protocols based on Beck Institute's guidelines to ensure consistency and quality in focusing on areas that individuals face regarding reentry.
- **Outcome Monitoring:** Amachi will assist Beck Institute staff in collection of outcome measures to evaluate the impact of CT-R in the ACJ Reentry System.
- **Evaluation and Feedback:** Regularly evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership with Beck Institute and gather feedback from staff to make continuous improvements.

## RFP for the Development of an Enhanced Comprehensive Reentry System

### Curriculum-based Programming (50 points)

*Complete this section only if you are proposing to provide this service. If you are proposing to provide programming for multiple service areas, your responses must address each program proposed. If you are not proposing this service, please leave this section blank. Your response to this section **must not exceed 7 pages** per service area proposed.*

1. Provide a clear statement about why your organization is interested in developing and facilitating Curriculum-based Programming in the chosen service area(s) and how it aligns with the Proposer's mission or current work. (5 points)

Amachi Pittsburgh exists to help make justice-involved individuals, children and families whole. We galvanize volunteers, faith- and community-based partners, policy makers, and other stakeholders in efforts to build a community of support, increase social networks, and increase our collective impact. We are deeply concerned about the underlying trauma, adversity and broad-scale systemic factors—economic, political and social—that render people of color, economically disadvantaged people, and those struggling with mental health issues most vulnerable to a life behind bars and/or a life on the outside encumbered with the compounding effects of having a loved one behind bars. We recognize the innocence of the children left behind and the families who bear the burden of compensating for an absent parent, and we know the devastation absent parents face as a result of incarceration. It is both fundamental to our mission and substantiated through our 20 years of experience that delivering high-quality, person- and family-centered, strengths-based, trauma-informed programming is not only effective but essential and empowering for our constituents to recognize and utilize their personal agency to transform their lives. The benefits extend far beyond into communities and systems as successes validate and catalyze systems reform.

While we have facilitated parenting curricula for many years, we believe enhancements related to the Sanctuary model and innovative technology in community (and at ACJ as permitted) will go a long way to better engage participants quickly and capture their attention given the relatively short period that we would have a captive audience within ACJ.

2. Describe your organizational experience and success in implementing an evidence-informed program, intervention and/or service to model fidelity. (5 points)

Amachi Pittsburgh has successfully implemented evidence-informed programs listed below to model fidelity by participating in trainings, implementation activities, technical assistance, and fidelity checks.

- 1) As an agency, Amachi was founded as one of 300 implementations nationally of the Amachi Model, developed based on research substantiating the power of mentoring as a vehicle to producing positive youth outcomes. Amachi specifically targets those impacted by parental/familial incarceration and leverages resources and volunteers through faith- and community-based partnerships. We fleshed out the model here in Pittsburgh to incorporate family strengthening and reunification support as well as advocacy and leadership development to employ a more holistic, family-centered approach, and to be a partner in effectuating systems change.

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- 2) Strong African American Families (SAAF), a SAMHSA evidence-based curriculum developed at the University of Georgia to advance the well-being of African American families by strengthening family dynamics, parenting processes and youth competencies. The program engages parents and their early adolescent children in a 7-week series of interactive, educational workshops. We facilitated this program as a 4-year project.
  - 3) Parenting from the Inside & 24:7 Dad® Programs are curricula for incarcerated parents. We currently facilitate the former at ACJ for incarcerated mothers.
  - 4) The Sanctuary® Model, a blueprint for organizational change which, at its core, promotes safety and recovery from adversity through the active creation of a trauma-informed community. A recognition that trauma is pervasive in the experience of human beings forms the basis for the Sanctuary Model's focus not only on the people who seek treatment, but equally on the people and systems who provide that treatment.
3. Describe your organization's proposed approach to the design of the curriculum, including a sample curriculum, for the proposed service area(s) and any pathways to complementary community-based programming. (20 points)

The first step Amachi would take for initiating programming within the ACJ is conducting a needs assessment and engagement session with those we will serve. This includes conducting surveys, focus groups, and interviews with ACJ staff, incarcerated individuals, and their family members to identify gaps and needs. This approach ensures that we can establish an inclusive curriculum that is relevant and comprehensive for our participants.

For the curriculum framework, Amachi utilizes evidence-based programs designed to support incarcerated individuals. The curriculum is tailored to our audience, addressing specific needs such as those of mothers, fathers, and emotional management. Our focus is on mastering skills and competencies rather than the duration of our interactions. Each session lasts at least one hour, and we aim to be at the jail daily from Monday through Friday. We place great emphasis on critical thinking, communication, anger management, and relationship building and maintenance.

Each curriculum includes an outline and detailed lesson plans, with clear objectives, instructional strategies, and assessment methods. Once implemented, Amachi gathers feedback and makes necessary adjustments. Although changes are not made during a session, each cohort is given the opportunity to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement. Amachi aims to create a dynamic and responsive curriculum that meets the needs of individuals and prepares them for future success.

A sample of one session is attached to this proposal. Weekly there would be a formal learning of parenting support and emotional management. Daily, the activities would be reflective and surrounding that week's lesson content. For the sample attached to this proposal, the daily activities would include: the creation of the safety and self-care plan, creative writing and discussions, journaling, self-awareness material completion, etc.

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4. Describe how your organization intends to facilitate the curriculum for the proposed programming for each proposed service area(s). (5 points)

Working in the Relationship Building and Maintenance service area, Amachi will facilitate parenting classes for incarcerated parents at the Allegheny County Jail on any days from Monday through Friday that ACJ staff has established for us, with each cohort running for up to six weeks. The first class of each week will follow an established lesson plan with scheduled activities for one hour per day. At the end of the course, a letter of completion will be provided to all participants who attend all sessions. To accommodate individuals who may be discharged before completing the program, as well as family members outside the facility, we will also offer Saturday classes. Amachi understands the importance of serving the entire family to mitigate the harmful effects of parental incarceration on children and to support a parent's ability to feel included in a unified family.

5. Describe your organization's intended outcomes for proposed programming and associated measures of success (5 points)

Staff will work with ACJC to finalize intended outcomes external, independent evaluation partners to track engagement and effectiveness through participant focus groups, surveys, and/or other methods measuring their increase in knowledge, understanding and skills to address trauma, improve mental health, and prevent violence; utilize the Sanctuary Model toolkit; and engage in promoting a culture of wellness and caring amongst their peers, families, and within community. Also, Amachi staff includes a data analyst who advises, develops, and monitors evaluation and data collection methods throughout the organization. This staff person will manage the outcomes and progress of this initiative.

Within the jail, the cohort will operate as a closed group, meaning that all graduating students will have attended the full run of classes. In the community, however, we will operate as an open group, meaning that participants may vary from session to session. This is in line with our commitment to providing a continuity of care based on individual needs.

Our success will be measured in lesson wrap-up questionnaires evaluating comprehension, as well as by feedback surveys and resilience assessments once the class has concluded. We intend to create an enhanced understanding and practice of safety and self-care for all participants and improved emotional insight through guided reflections and mindfulness exercises. Participants will demonstrate improved stress management for themselves and improved emotion coaching for their children.

### **Goal 1**

Incarcerated parents and constituents in community are more trauma-informed and educated about quality programming and support services

### **Goal 2**

Incarcerated parents, youth, families, and community members will be equipped with Sanctuary Model tools

### **Goal 3**

Incarcerated parents increase support to and relationships with their child(ren)

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Amachi will measure the impact of our outreach program through a range of qualitative and quantitative data collection. Data collection will include pre- and post-survey instruments, focus groups, and record keeping about participation in activities. Our targeted outcomes are:

- 100 parents are better equipped to support children's development and academic achievement
- Referrals provided to mental health or other services
- 50% of individuals are better equipped to recognize and manage mental health.
- 250 constituents create and adopt Sanctuary tools (e.g., safety plan, self-care)
- 250 individuals will increase their knowledge and understanding of trauma and supports offered by Amachi or other service providers

6. Describe the evidence base supporting your organization's proposed programming and explain how the programming will achieve the intended outcomes. (10 points)

Amachi's proposed curriculum will be based both on the Sanctuary® Model's trauma-informed framework for community-building and healing and on the work of Dr. Ann Booker Loper, clinical psychologist and author of Parenting from the Inside. Parenting from the Inside employs the basic tenets of cognitive behavioral therapy and guided discussions to promote better emotional regulation and increased reflective functioning. Students learn and practice communication skills to maintain strong relationships with children of all ages during and after their incarceration. The Sanctuary framework teaches both trauma and resilience, building an empathetic understanding of the past and developing positive strategies to cope with the future. Because Parenting from the Inside is a series of lessons and Sanctuary is a way of thinking, students will leave their time with Amachi equipped with both concrete strategies and a philosophical understanding of how their parental relationships can thrive.

### **Financial Management and Budget (10 points, not included in page count)**

*All Proposers must complete this section. Budgets and budget narratives must reflect costs for all services proposed.*

1. Attach a detailed line-item budget of the costs associated with all proposed strategies, including staff salaries, matching funds, and total expenses and revenues. (5 points)
2. Provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in the proposed line-item budget. (5 points)

<b>Position Title</b>	<b>Staff Name</b>	<b>Education and Experience Qualifications</b>	<b>Responsibilities on the project</b>	<b>Percent FTE</b>
Executive Director	Anna Hollis Kander	BA from Howard University and over 25 years of executive leadership experience.	Responsible for strategic direction and oversight of all organizational initiatives.	5
Director of Strategy and Operations	David Allen	BA from Duquesne University and over 15 years of experience. Certified in Effective Black Parenting training.	Responsible for day-to-day program operations, including program oversight, and quality assurance.	25
Manager of Community Impact	Samantha Monks	Over 10 years using trauma informed strategies working with diverse and vulnerable populations. MID degree from University of Pittsburgh.	Responsible for monitoring the program effectiveness and tracking outcomes.	45
Learning Manager	Nina Sabak	Content design and development of curriculum. MA	Responsible for curriculum development and dissemination that addresses the unique needs and barriers to care for the defined populations. Oversees all aspects of trauma-informed program facilitation and activities related to project integration. Also completes training at ACJ.	50
Outreach Coordinator	Sara Hammell	Has worked in child welfare over 5 years. Personally impacted by the system.	Serves as back-up support to the facilitation of all activities conducted at the ACJ.	50
Family Engagement Specialist	Caprice Scott	Worked in child welfare and the educational system over 5 years. BA from Cheyney University. Lived experience as a custodial parent impacted by incarceration.	Responsible for overall support of the families inside and outside of ACJ. Provides resources and workshops in the community.	50

## Taking Care of Your Feelings

Being a parent in jail is hard. In fact, being separated from your children may be the hardest thing you're experiencing right now. Over the coming weeks, we'll discuss ways to keep your connection strong, but we're going to start by exploring **safety** and **self-care**. These are ways to take care of yourself and your own feelings. After all, healing starts with you. It's hard to give to others when you're running on empty.

**Everyone** experiences stress during their lives. Stress shows up in our minds, bodies, and actions in a number of ways that we can predict and prepare for. Think about the fight, flight, freeze, or fawn responses. Do any of them sound familiar to you?

<b>Fight</b>	<b>Flight</b>	<b>Freeze</b>	<b>Fawn</b>
Responding with aggression, whether physical or verbal	Removing yourself from a situation by leaving or changing the subject	Being unable to move or respond because you're overwhelmed	Trying to please someone to avoid more conflict

What happens to your **body** when you feel stressed out? Here are some examples.

- Higher heart rate
- Sweating
- Muscle tension
- Headaches
- Change in appetite
- Fatigue

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What about your **emotions**?

- Irritability
- Depression
- Anxiety
- Anger
- Sadness

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Our **thoughts** can change, too. We don't think very clearly when we're under stress, and things may seem much worse than they actually are. Something that *feels* very true can be wrong.

What negative thoughts come to mind when you're stressed out?

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Last but not least, stress affects our **actions**. We might do things that make us feel better in the short term but worse in the long term, like drinking or using. We might act out of panic or anger and say or do things we don't really mean. Imagine the last time you were really stressed out like you're watching a movie: what would you see?

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Stress can be a cycle. Imagine this:

1. Something stressful happens.
2. You think, "I'm a lousy mom."
3. That thought makes you feel sad.
4. When you are sad, you go to sleep.
5. Since you are asleep, you can't work on the problem.
6. When you wake up you think, "I'll never fix this."
7. Something stressful happens...

Can you see how this keeps going?

**Discussion:** Mary has been waiting for a visit from her daughter, Tanya. Her mother brings Tanya late, and there are only 30 minutes for them to spend together.

How does stress change Mary's

- Body?
- Emotions?
- Thoughts?
- Actions?

What would you tell Mary to do?

## Ways to Cope

Remember: taking care of yourself means you can take care of your kids. So the first step is to get calm and focused. Here's an acronym you can use to get started.

### MOM-OK

**MO** – Mellow out

**M** – What is on my mind?

**O** – What are other, better thoughts?

**K** – What is best for my kid(s)?

### Mellow Out

What are some things you can do to relax and recharge? Taking a deep breath can help. So can meditation, journaling, or moving around. You can interrupt the stress cycle by changing what you're doing or thinking. It goes both ways! Stress affects body, mind, and behavior, but you have control, too.

For example: your son forgot to call, and you're very angry. Your heart is pounding and you can feel your face getting red. What are some actions you can take right now to help bring yourself back to center?

### Mind

When you started feeling stress, what was the first thing that crossed your mind? It was probably something negative, and that's okay! Just take a moment to observe your thoughts without judging them. Your feelings are real, even if the situations they're describing aren't. Are you angry, sad, or confused? Do you feel guilty or ashamed? Try writing down and naming your thoughts. You have power over them.

*Right now, I feel...*

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### Other Thoughts

This is when you get to take a look at the thoughts you identified before and talk back to them. What is the evidence that those thoughts aren't true? What other explanations are there for what you're feeling and experiencing? If your thoughts *are* true, what can you do to cope with them?

One common response to stress is **catastrophizing**: imagining the worst possible outcome. Just recognizing that this is happening can go a long way toward helping you feel calmer and more in control.

Some other questions to ask yourself:

- What's the best that could happen?
- What will happen if you keep thinking like this?
- What could happen if you change the way you look at this?

Think about that forgotten phone call, and compare these thoughts:

"He doesn't respect me."

*or*

"It's baseball season, and he gets forgetful when he's tired. We will talk soon."

### **Kid(s)**

Last but not least, remind yourself:

- "This is not about me – it's about what I need to do for my child."
- "Many children act this way – I need to be patient."

Keep communication open and positive, even when you're upset. While we're stressed out, we think of ourselves – and that's natural! But you are a parent, and your children will be affected by what you do. Stop and think of what you **want** to do, what you **need** to do, and what is actually best for your **kids**.

### **Safety and Self-Care Plans**

One great way to take care of your feelings is to make a safety or self-care plan. We'll talk more about what those terms mean in future lessons, but for now, think of them this way:

- **Safety** means feeling free to be who you are, and not worried that something bad will happen. It can be physical, mental, social, or moral.
- **Self-care** is what we do on a regular basis to stay connected with ourselves and our emotions.

So a safety plan is a list of things you can do to make yourself feel free and safe right where you are. Take a few minutes to think about what helps you get centered. Music, meditation, freewriting, counting exercises, and deep breathing are all examples.

And a self-care plan is a list of things you **will** do and will **keep** doing so that you're better equipped to face stress whenever it comes up. Think of the habits that make you feel in calm and in control. Talking to a friend, journaling, and making time for art can be self-care activities.

On the following pages, you will find templates for making your own safety and self-care plans. Keep them in a safe place and refer to them when you're feeling stress, or anticipating feeling stress.

# SAFETY PLAN

Name:

1

2

3

4

5



## Amachi Pittsburgh

Safety plans help us stay grounded during hard times.

They're a way to manage bad feelings and avoid unsafe behavior.

If you are struggling, choose one of the five actions on the other side.

[amachipgh.org](http://amachipgh.org) | [@amachipgh](https://twitter.com/amachipgh)

# SELF-CARE PLAN

Name:

1

2

3

4

5



## Amachi Pittsburgh

Self-care plans help us treat ourselves well every day.

We can build resilience and stay grounded in the ways that matter to us!

Follow this plan regularly--not just when you are stressed out!

[amachipgh.org](http://amachipgh.org) @amachipgh

Budget Category		Year1	Year2	Total Budget	
Personnel	Personnel	\$61,000.00	\$66,000.00	\$127,000.00	2 staff 1 member 40% 1 member 60%, supervisor 25%
Client Expenses	Activities	\$6,500.00	\$7,400.00	\$13,900.00	activities for 7 class and 15 individuals: journals, mindfulness activities, coloring supplies/sheets and snacks
Client Expenses	Supplies	\$7,450.00	\$8,375.00	\$15,825.00	materials, books and office supplies. Birthday/holiday gifts from the incarcerated parents
Client Expenses	Client Transportation	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00	\$5,000.00	travel assistance for families participating with Amachi. \$7 for bus passes as needed and \$10 Uber cards/gas cards for family as needed.
Operating Expenses	Staff Travel	\$1,100.00	\$1,100.00	\$2,200.00	2 staff traveling to ACJ @ .66 per mile
Operating Expenses	Communications	\$5,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$8,000.00	Poster boards to hang in the common areas of the ACJ. Flyers to distribute to families visiting. Professional development and trainings
Client Expenses	Client incentive	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$25 for 120 families per year Examples: gift cards for Christmas, stipends to attend the classes or \$20 for 300 families
Administrative	Indirect	\$12,982.50	\$13,706.25	\$26,688.75	15% fee of budget per year
	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$99,532.50</b>	<b>\$105,081.25</b>	<b>\$204,613.75</b>	

2 Year Budget	
Administrative	\$26,688.75
Client Expenses	\$40,725.00
Fixed Assets	\$0.00
Operating Expenses	\$10,200.00
Personnel	\$127,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$204,613.75</b>



Infinite Lifestyle  
**Solutions**

June 18, 2024

Allegheny County Department of Human Services  
Human Services Building  
One Smithfield Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my distinct pleasure to express earnest support for Amachi Pittsburgh's proposal to Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) on behalf of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative (ACJC), to provide enhanced curriculum-based programming in the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ). I have seen firsthand the positive impact that comprehensive support can have on incarcerated individuals, their families, and the broader community. Amachi's successful 20-year track record in this arena is impressive, outcomes-based and validates the agency's ability to further this work.

Amachi has demonstrated a deep commitment to helping reduce recidivism and enhance the lives of those affected by incarceration as an active collaborator with ACJC over the years, serving as a partner in ACJC's initial reentry programs launched in 2010, and continuing today with evidence-based support for incarcerated parents and their families. The agency's unique, robust program model is holistic, trauma-responsive, and strengths-based that leverages individual, family and community assets to disrupt intergenerational incarceration with a 92% success rate.

Infinite Lifestyle Solutions was fortunate to partner with Amachi on a special project related to the ACJC reentry program in 2023. We were able to synergize our respective resources to implement a uniquely designed project focusing on strengthening parent-child-family relationships with a host of creative community-based activities as well as evidence-based parenting curriculum for parents at ACJ. We offered weekly support, events, and empowerment courses to all participants. The invaluable reward came from the positive feedback we received from program participants.

I am pleased that Amachi seeks to partner again with DHS and ACJC to enhance their curriculum-based programming with innovative technology and the Sanctuary® Model, a trauma-informed, evidence-supported framework designed to create and maintain a nonviolent, democratic, and productive community to help individuals heal from trauma. Together, these components are crucial for fostering a supportive environment that encourages personal growth, strengthens family bonds, and equips participants with tools to recognize and enhance personal agency.

For these reasons, I fully endorse Amachi Pittsburgh and, respectfully, urge you to approve the agency's proposal to offer enhanced curriculum-based programming in the Allegheny County Jail and community. I am confident that Amachi will continue serving as an engaged, collaborative partner with DHS and ACJC, and expand its proven outcomes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Cecelia Ware". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

Cecelia Ware  
Executive Director



320 BROWNSVILLE ROAD  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15210  
412-431-2236  
BRASHEARASSOCIATION.ORG

June 18, 2024

Allegheny County Department of Human Services  
Human Services Building  
One Smithfield Street  
Pittsburgh, Pa 15222

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Amachi Pittsburgh's proposal to Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) on behalf of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative (ACJC), to provide enhanced curriculum-based programming in the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ). I have seen firsthand the positive impact that comprehensive support can have on incarcerated individuals, their families, and the broader community. Amachi's successful 20-year track record in this arena is impressive, outcomes-based and validates the agency's ability to further this work.

Amachi has demonstrated a deep commitment to helping reduce recidivism and enhance the lives of those affected by incarceration as an active collaborator with ACJC over the years, serving as a partner in ACJC's initial reentry programs launched in 2010, and continuing today with evidence-based support for incarcerated parents and their families. The agency's unique, robust program model is holistic, trauma-responsive, and strengths-based, leveraging individual, family and community assets to also disrupt intergenerational incarceration with a 92% success rate.

I appreciate that Amachi seeks to partner with DHS and ACJC to enhance their curriculum-based programming with innovative technologies, including the Sanctuary® Model, a trauma-informed, evidence-supported framework designed to create and maintain a nonviolent, democratic, and productive community to help individuals heal from trauma. Together, these components are crucial for fostering a supportive environment that encourages personal growth, strengthens family bonds, and equips participants with tools to recognize and enhance personal agency.

The Brashear Association is thrilled to have had the opportunity to partner with Amachi in addressing a significant gap by providing high-quality programming and resources to youth in the Knoxville area of Pittsburgh. Both children and staff could always count on their presence and positive energy as youth were struggling to cope with violence amongst their peers and neighborhoods.

**BRASHEARCARES**  
320 BROWNSVILLE RD  
PITTSBURGH PA, 15210  
TELEPHONE (412) 431-2236

**SOUTH 20TH STREET**  
1926 SARAH STREET  
PITTSBURGH PA, 15203  
TELEPHONE (412) 431-0591

**HENRY KAUFMANN CENTER**  
2201 SALISBURY STREET  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15210  
TELEPHONE (412) 431-0557

**NEIGHBORHOOD  
EMPLOYMENT CENTER**  
730 E. WARRINGTON AVE  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15210  
TELEPHONE (412) 390-3588

The value Amachi Pittsburgh brings to Allegheny County—whether in ACJ, communities or schools—is widely recognized, as evidenced by their numerous awards and testimonials such as mine. As such, I fully endorse the agency and, respectfully, urge you to approve its proposal to offer enhanced curriculum-based programming in the Allegheny County Jail and community. I am confident that Amachi will continue serving as an engaged, collaborative partner with DHS and ACJC, and expand its proven outcomes.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "A. Matthews".

Andrea M. Matthews  
Executive Director



# COUNTY OF ALLEGHENY

## OFFICE OF THE CONTROLLER

104 COURTHOUSE • 436 GRANT STREET  
PITTSBURGH, PA 15219-2498  
PHONE (412) 350-4660 • FAX (412) 350-3006  
allegheycntroller.com



Department of Human Services

Allegheny County

1 Smithfield Street

Pittsburgh, PA 15212

Tuesday, June 18, 2024

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing to express my enthusiastic support for Amachi Pittsburgh's proposal to Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) on behalf of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative (ACJC) to provide enhanced curriculum-based programming at the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ). I have seen firsthand the positive impact that comprehensive support can have on incarcerated individuals, their families, and the broader community. Amachi's successful 20-year track record in this arena is impressive, outcomes-based, and validates the agency's ability to further this work.

Amachi has demonstrated a deep commitment to helping reduce recidivism and enhance the lives of those affected by incarceration as an active collaborator over the years, serving as a partner in ACJC's initial reentry programs launched in 2010. As of 2023, the agency also began administering Parenting Inside Out — an evidence-based cognitive-behavioral parent management skills training program — in tandem with family visitation support and a wide range of complementing activities for children, custodial parents / caregivers, and families. Amachi's unique, robust program model is holistic, trauma-responsive, and strengths-based, leveraging individual, family, and community assets to disrupt intergenerational incarceration with a 92% success rate.

In February 2023, my office released the *Performance Audit Report on the Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) Children of Incarcerated Parents Programs*. The report included recommendations to increase the level of support for this population, understanding their critical needs. I am thrilled that DHS, Amachi, and ACJ have responded promptly and partnered to initiate programming under the Extended Family Support project. Not only did Amachi successfully meet the project's objectives, but also continued providing curriculum-based programming after the project's conclusion, albeit on a limited basis. Further partnering with Amachi will enable its team to enhance and increase the level of support both at ACJ and in the community while contributing to the achievement of ACJC's goal for a comprehensive Reentry System.

We certainly know that the value Amachi brings is widely recognized as evidenced by multiple awards — most recently, the 2024 Impact Award for its impact on system change, judicial improvement, service delivery, and youth / family support. Amachi was chosen by organizers of the Pennsylvania's 2024 Children's Interagency Conference, including DHS.

For these reasons, I strong support Amachi Pittsburgh and its proposal. I am confident that the organization will continue serving as an engaged community partner with DHS and ACJC, leveraging its unique expertise to positively impact incarcerated parents, their families, and our community at large.

Sincerely,

Corey O'Connor  
Allegheny County Controller



305 East Eighth Ave.  
Homestead, PA 15120-1517  
412-464-4000  
412-464-1750 (Fax)

435 McKean Ave.  
Charleroi, PA 15022-1527  
724-565-8040  
[www.monvalleyinitiative.com](http://www.monvalleyinitiative.com)

Ms. Erin Dalton  
Director  
Allegheny County Dept. of Human Services  
One Smithfield Street  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

June 18, 2024

Dear Ms. Dalton,

I am writing to express our support for Amachi Pittsburgh's bid to Allegheny County Department of Human Services (DHS) on behalf of the Allegheny County Jail Collaborative (ACJC), to continue the facilitation of enhanced curriculum-based programming in the Allegheny County Jail (ACJ). MVI has seen firsthand the positive impact that comprehensive support can have on incarcerated individuals, their families, and the broader community. Amachi's successful 20-year track record in this arena is impressive and validates the agency's ability to further this work.

Amachi has demonstrated a deep commitment to helping reduce recidivism and enhance the lives of those affected by incarceration as an active collaborator with ACJC over the years. The agency's unique, robust program model is holistic, trauma-responsive, and strengths-based that leverages individual, family and community assets to disrupt intergenerational incarceration with a 92% success rate. At the Allegheny County Jail specifically, Amachi has been administering Parenting Inside Out—an evidence-based cognitive-behavioral parent management skills training program—in tandem with family visitation support and a wide range of complementing activities for children, custodial parents/caregivers, and families.

We appreciate that Amachi is seeking to partner with DHS & ACJC to enhance their curriculum-based programming with innovative technology including Virtual Reality as well as the Sanctuary® Model, a trauma-informed, evidence-supported template for system change based on the active creation and maintenance of a nonviolent, democratic, productive community to help people heal from trauma. All taken together, these components are vital for fostering a supportive environment that encourages personal growth, strengthens family bonds, and continues to provide participants with tools to recognize and strengthen personal agency.

We are pleased to partner with Amachi in the Mon Valley area as the organization fills a significant gap by providing high-quality programming and resources. Staff are focused, respond promptly, and we can always count on their presence and positive energy.

For these reasons, we endorse Amachi Pittsburgh and, respectfully, urge you to approve the agency's proposal to offer enhanced curriculum-based programming in the Allegheny County Jail and community. We are confident that Amachi will continue serving as an engaged, collaborative partner with DHS and ACJC, and expand its proven outcomes.

Sincerely,

  
Laura R. Zinski  
CEO



MVI prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, religion, color, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, national origin, political beliefs, marital, family, disability or military status.