

Writing Example - Grant



Project/program title

Enter the name of your project/program. For operating requests write "general operations of the organization."

In Times of Need

Description of request

Provide a brief description of the request in one or two sentences.

When families are in crisis situations, they often do not know where to turn and need help immediately. This funding would allow Mothers Helping Mothers to assist these families with emergency housing assistance, bill payment or food costs to help them get through a very tough time.

Purpose

Describe the need being addressed. Please do not exceed 2,000 characters or your entry will be truncated.

In addition to the daily mission of the organization, calls come in on a regular basis from families in crisis situations. Most of the time, they are recommended to us from another organization that is not able to help. When special needs families fall through the cracks, or the agency they are working with encounters too much red tape to meet a need, they turn to Mothers Helping Mothers.

One week, Mothers Helping Mothers might be helping a mom with a special needs baby needing a certain kind of bed rails. The same day another call might come in from a mom with cancer who needs a small cot for her bedroom so that her child can sleep near her. Because Mothers Helping Mothers is a small organization, there is no red tape and urgent needs can be met quickly. Another family had a three-year-old suffering from epileptic seizures brought on by the heat. This family was placing a chair for the little boy in front of the open refrigerator door. When the organization heard about the need, emergency funds were used to purchase a window air conditioning unit for the child's room within a few days.

Mothers Helping Mothers frequently receives calls directly from other agencies who are unable to help clients, hoping that the call be the answer for a family in need. YMCA family services recently requested a reclining highchair for a child with medical needs that could only swallow in that position. When a representative delivered the highchair for the caseworker the next day the question was asked, "Why did you come to us?" The caseworker said that the paperwork required to purchase this special highchair would have taken weeks if not months. In another situation, a call came in from a case worker at Children's Medical services who is helping a single 19-year-old mother with a baby with severe medical problems. Because of this baby's tracheotomy, the mother needed to carry medical equipment with him. The mother was concerned about a medical appointment that she had in a week in St. Petersburg. Even with medical transportation for him, the mother needed a stroller that could hold the equipment as well. Mothers Helping Mothers purchased a double stroller for her as well as a crib because he does not have one and had it to her immediately.

Unfortunately, the organization does not always have the financial resources to meet all of these situations. It is heartbreaking to turn a family away.

Description of activities

Describe the request's activities providing detailed information about how it will address the stated need and the impact achieved, including the number of individuals served and the number of hours participants are involved. Please do not exceed 6,000 characters or your entry will be truncated.

Mothers Helping Mothers addresses the needs of at-risk families in our area who often bring a new baby home to a residence that has nothing for the child. The organization is also a resource for families who cannot purchase new diapers, clothing or beds for their children. It is a struggle for many families to make ends meet, pay the electricity bill and put nourishing food on the table. By receiving a donation from Mothers Helping Mothers, a little bit of the burden that comes with the financial stress of a family is relieved. In addition to ensuring that children have a safe and comfortable environment and meeting the basic needs, Mothers Helping Mothers also gives the mother much needed assistance. In addition to supporting with basic needs, the mother feels emotional support knowing that the community really does care about her and her family. Currently, there are no other organizations in the area that provide these services.

The goal of Mothers Helping Mothers is to make a difference in the life of a needy family by providing them with necessities that they would not be able to purchase otherwise. The organization also goes beyond that primary mission to help families get things that they may need in crisis situations. To reach this goal, Mothers Helping Mothers recruits volunteers for the storefront location to ensure that donations are sorted and put out in a timely manner. Volunteers assist customers when they enter the doors and often hold babies so that mothers can shop in their allotted time. Records are also carefully kept of all clients and when they have received since there are limits to ensure that the system is not compromised. In addition, everyone encourages customers to bring back the items once they are done using them so that others can use them. Mothers Helping Mothers really believes that the recycling of goods will instill in clients a willingness to give back to the community and help others. In addition to the regular storefront tasks of volunteers, the organization is also always looking for funding to ensure that we can help as many families as possible.

Sustainability plan

How will the organization and/or request activities be sustained? Describe the overall sustainability plan for your organization and/or your project/program in terms of staffing and finances. Please do not exceed 3,000 characters or your entry will be truncated.

The organization has been run for over 20 years on the spirit of volunteers who really want to make a difference in the lives of families in the Sarasota community. Since the organization's inception, there have been no paid staff. For this reason, all the money raised goes into serving clients and keeping the doors open. Mothers Helping Mothers has run in a very conservative manner from the moment the organization opened its doors.

Plans for the long-term sustainability of Mothers Helping Mothers are already underway since this is the twentieth consecutive year offering the program. The Board of Trustees and volunteers are committed to making this program a viable part of the community each year. The current donor base as well as the prospects in the community to underwrite this program every year is currently being examined and the organization is certain that the financial resources will be attained to run this program. Mothers Helping Mothers also has reserves that would run the organization for three years if needed. This long-term planning shows that the board and volunteers are committed to running the organization for years to come.

Mothers Helping Mothers is fiscally strong and scrutinizes spending. The program is appreciative of a very active donor base of supporters who contribute core funding each year. Revenues are raised from individual contributors, corporate sponsors, and local grants and new sources of funding are always being cultivated.

Challenges

Describe the challenges to the success of the activities in the proposal and how these factors could be overcome. Please do not exceed 2,000 characters or your entry will be truncated.

The main challenge that Mothers Helping Mothers faces in achieving success is lack of funding. The items needed in emergency situations are often not in the storefront location. These specialized items must be purchased which requires funding. In addition, some of the emergency assistance that is needed by clients is often paying rent after a fire or purchasing food in a crisis. Receiving additional funding would help Mothers Helping Mothers overcome these challenges and be able to help more people in need.

Goals

State the specific goals and expected outcomes/success indicators of the requested project/program/organization, including how you plan to meet these goals and outcomes. Include a timeline for accomplishing your goals for the term of the grant request. If this is an existing program, state the outcomes of the most recent year of the project/program/organization. Please do not exceed 3,000 characters or your entry will be truncated.

The main goal of the project is to help families in the most desperate situations. Because these situations are handled on a case-by-case basis the expected outcomes are always different. The one thing that remains the same though is the hope that Mothers Helping Mothers can assist families in need and help them to get out of desperate situations. Since this is an ongoing project, there is no set timeline. When a need arises with a family, Mothers Helping Mothers is there to assist them and help them to get back in a stable situation.

The hope is that all situations turn out like the success stories below:

Mothers Helping Mothers was contacted by a family who recently had a fire in their house. Due to the high crime rate area they lived in, they had not been able to purchase renter's insurance. The landlord did have insurance to cover the structure, but beyond that, they had some loss and damage to personal items. The Red Cross provided housing for the first week of having their home repaired, but they had 19 more days until they would be able to move back into the home. They had nowhere to go. The organization was able to put them up in a hotel for these 19 days, and, in addition, we were able to help with the replacement of the damaged items from the fire. The family was so happy to have somewhere to stay, and to know that an organization listened to their needs and acted on them.

A mother came in the other day with her 4-year-old son. She is in her forties and she is due to have another baby in April. Her husband, who had been traveling on and off over the years, came home and left her for another woman in July. She was laid off from her day job and was unable to continue with her second job... she needed to be home in the evenings with her daughter now, as a single parent. Her house is being foreclosed on, and all the baby items she had stored in a shed became rat infested. She came to Mothers Helping Mothers, alone and in tears, not knowing where to turn. The organization was able to give her items for the baby, including diapers, clothing, a new car seat and a bassinet. She could not believe there were people whom she had never met who wanted to help her.

A young couple living by an elementary school came to Mothers Helping Mothers. We had helped them in 2006, and they never forgot it. He works as a computer repair/motherboard technician and had recently found this great job. Unfortunately, they withheld the first two weeks of his salary. His wife works as a waitress. They have two little children who walk to school every day, and a new baby. They received an eviction notice from the landlord after missing only one month's rent. They did not want to lose this house close to the school and move their family. We were able to help them with rent, gas gift card (he needs to drive a large truck to carry his equipment) and a grocery store gift card. They both cried and cried-- happy tears, because this burden they had been carrying was lifted from their shoulder.

Measurement Tools

Describe in detail how your organization will measure and monitor success for the project/program/organization. Please do not exceed 3,000 characters or your entry will be truncated.

Because of the delicate nature of this funding, we do not always have the opportunity to measure success with a survey or questionnaire. Mothers Helping Mothers tries to maintain the confidentiality of those assisted in emergency situations because it is such a trying time for the families. When a family loses everything in a fire or needs assistance with mortgage payments because of a recent layoff, Mothers Helping Mothers is there to help. Being able to assist in these desperate situations is success. Without Mothers Helping Mothers, these people often have no other place to turn for immediate help. While other organizations may take weeks or months to eliminate the red tape and be able to help, Mothers Helping Mothers can often extend assistance the same day. Because of the extensive screening process for this assistance, Mothers Helping Mothers is confident that the organization is making a difference in the lives of families in the most desperate situations. To ensure that the money is allocated to the correct entities, the organization never gives money directly to the client. Instead, the money is given to the organization where the bill is to be paid.

There is nothing that feels more successful than seeing a family in a desperate situation feel relief after receiving help from Mothers Helping Mothers. These families often come back to say “thank you” once they have gotten back on their feet. Knowing that the family came to the organization with such a great need during an uncertain time in their life and we were able to “be the messengers” and pass along desperately needed assistance with grant money from the generosity of others...this is success.