



28 W. Market Street, Lincoln Biography Building
West Chester, PA 19382
610.696.8211 www.chescocf.org

CCCF COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grants

Per IRS Regulations, applicants must be charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c) (3) certification & cannot be individuals.

Background/Eligibility

The Community Foundation's COVID-19 Rapid Response Fund provides flexible resources to **Chester County nonprofits** that are disproportionately impacted by coronavirus and the economic consequences of this outbreak. This is designed as a flexible short-term response fund to provide relief for a variety of unexpected costs. We envision three funding priority levels:

- **Front Line Grants** fund community-based nonprofits that have increased demand for services due to COVID-19. These nonprofits have deep roots in community and a strong track-record serving people who are immediately and disproportionately suffering from this crisis. This includes services to financially vulnerable people who work in industries without sick leave &/or health care; homeless people; and health-challenged vulnerable people. Grants are intended to complement the work of public health officials and expand local capacity to address acute needs of the outbreak as efficiently as possible. These grants are NOT of the scale to support larger public institutions that are strained by increased demand for services. Examples of the types of nonprofits in most need of Front Line Grant Support, as service numbers rise: community-based health clinics; food bank & food pantries; meal delivery programs; homelessness programs.
- **Service-Challenged Grants** fund nonprofits that are modifying their in-person service delivery modes extremely rapidly due to COVID-19, and need assistance to do so. These nonprofits likely need additional assistance to upgrade sanitation protocols and obtain cleaning supplies & service personnel. This includes: youth centers, recreation centers, child care, senior services, adult day care, community-based education programs.
- **Collateral Damage Grants** fund nonprofits facing extreme difficulty because of lost revenue due to closures and cancellations, as well as other challenges.





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COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request

Date: March 25th, 2020

Contact Information

Organization Name: Camp Dreamcatcher, Inc.
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Phone: 610-925-2998
Website: <https://campdreamcatcher.org/>
FEIN: 23-2980323

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In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:

1. What geographic area is served?

Camp Dreamcatcher offers the only therapeutic camp program for HIV/AIDS impacted youth on the east coast. We serve children and families from Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and New York. We provide therapeutic support, programs and advocacy to all of the regions of Chester County throughout the year, are currently providing support to thirty-two vulnerable children in Chester County. *(If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)*

2. What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?

Children attending our programs are HIV /AIDS infected themselves, have an HIV/AIDS infected family member, or have lost a family member to AIDS. Our programs address the complex physical and emotional challenges faced by the families served by Camp Dreamcatcher. In addition to HIV/AIDS, 70% of the children served have experienced some form of abuse, 50% have lost one or both parents, and 25% have a mental health condition. 98% of the youth served live in low-income households and only 13% have access to therapeutic support in their own communities. 92% of the youth are African American, 3% Latino/Latina, 2% Caucasian, 1% Asian American and 2% Biracial.

We serve 130-140 children and their families throughout the year. Our programs include the following:

- One-week Therapeutic and Educational Camp Session August 23-29, 2020. We will provide 112 therapeutic, 50 educational and 160 recreational programs for 135 campers. Over 270 counselors, medical personnel, professionals and community members will volunteer during the week.
- Weekend Teen Leadership Retreats
- Mentoring Programs
- College Scholarship Program
- Holiday Adopt-a-Family Program
- HIV/AIDS Training, Education and Community Outreach
- Family Support and Advocacy

The Impact of COVID-19:

The (COVID-19) coronavirus will have a financial impact on our organization, increase the stressors experienced by families coping with HIV/AIDS, and will also impact the number of volunteers involved in our programs. Programs and fundraising events may need to be cancelled or rescheduled. The Strategic Planning Board Retreat scheduled for May 2nd & 3rd may need to be moved to an online format, and the Teen Leadership Retreat scheduled for June 6th & 17th for the 15-17-year-olds, may need to be rescheduled. Our annual Catching Dreams for Kids Fundraising Event is scheduled for May 30th, and may need to be rescheduled. This annual event raises between \$23,000-35,000 for the therapeutic camp session in August, and a loss or decrease in the event revenue will directly impact our ability to accept all of the children registered for the session. COVID-19 may also decrease the number of volunteers available for the camp session in August. Our Counselor Training may need to be moved to online training modules. Although 70% of the volunteers have been coming back for over ten years, they may be unable to take vacation time during the camp session due to the current shutdown.

Page Two

The families served by Camp Dreamcatcher are already faced with the challenge of isolation due to the stigma they experience due to HIV/AIDS, and they are reaching out to us for support. Many are experiencing understandable fears about their compromised immune systems, and increased vulnerability to contracting COVID-19. Through our recent contact with families we have learned that the support systems they rely on, like home healthcare aides, are not able to provide services during this crisis. Families are scared, and their emotional and physical resources of support are limited or restricted during this time. Many have lost their jobs, or their benefits have been impacted by COVID-19. Access to emotional and physical healthcare, public transportation to healthcare or to grocery stores or other essential businesses has been restricted.

How Camp Dreamcatcher is Responding to the Crisis:

We have been providing free therapeutic programs to children coping with HIV/AIDS for over twenty-four years, and recently there has been an increase in the number of families at risk of losing their homes and/or healthcare benefits, and also an increase in the number of children experiencing serious mental health issues and trauma. Often conditions like anxiety, suicidal ideation, family or community violence, addiction, abuse, eating disorders, depression, and self-harm are first identified through our programs.

We know that the stress of COVID-19 may impact individual and family dysregulation, increase anxiety and depression, increase unhealthy coping mechanisms like the use of drugs or alcohol, abuse and family violence. We are immediately responding to each request for support by offering counseling and support over the phone, and by creating action plans for families. Our main goal is to continue to provide emergency support and crisis intervention services to the children and families served by Camp Dreamcatcher. Our staff and volunteers have shipped food, clothing and supplies to families in dire need of these items. We have also purchased gift cards to the grocery stores located closest to the families and have sent them to the families. Our volunteers and staff have also provided support with homework and school projects.

3. How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?

Camp Dreamcatcher respectfully requests \$5,000 to support our emergency response services to the families served by our programs. The 2020 organizational budget is \$442,900, and Therapeutic and Educational Camp Session is \$114,750 of the total budget. The funding need is urgent and the funds will be used immediately.

These services include the following:

- We have created a donation drive to support purchasing food, clothing, toiletries and household supplies. We are shipping these items out at least 3-4 times a week to families. Currently, our camp counselors are donating funds and shipping items to families, and they do not have the financial resources to reach all of the families. Supplies to Chester County families will be dropped off, or shipped to their homes.
- Our staff and volunteers will reach out to each family to obtain a list of their physical and emotional needs. Crisis counseling will be provided by the Camp Dreamcatcher Therapeutic Team, and referrals will be made to local food pantries, social service agencies and healthcare providers.
- We will contact social workers and healthcare personnel working with our families to ensure that the children have access to healthcare and prescribed medications.
- Camp Dreamcatcher will assist families in updating and/or applying for Medicaid, CHIP, unemployment and other services during this crisis.
- Creating an online private and confidential platform and resource for the children and volunteers to stay in touch with each other during this time. 70% of the children and volunteers have been attending our programs for over ten years and have established a deep level of trust and open communication. For many of the children, our volunteers have been the most consistent support system in their lives, and providing a confidential and private space for support is extremely important during this difficult time.

Please email grants@chescof.org

This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request

Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit

501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation's website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources.

Grants will be processed a few times monthly.

We estimate mini-grants will range from \$500 to \$5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to grants@chescof.org.
Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.