

# I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

*One page only. This page will be shared electronically with Grant Panel Members & Fund Advisors.*

*Note: If Philanthropy Network's Common Grant Application is used, CCCF's Summary Sheet MUST accompany application.*

**Date: 9/13/2021**

## Contact Information

Organization Name: **A Child's Light (ACL)**

Address: **1251 Wisteria Drive, Malvern, PA 19355**

Phone: **610-405-2968**

Website: **www.childslight.com**

Year Incorporated: **2019 through TheRADARProject.org**

FEIN: **811896477; Entity #7150493**

ED/CEO Name: **Leslie Holt**

ED/CEO E-mail: **achildslight1@gmail.com**

Board Chair Name: **Margaret Gusz**

Board Chair Approval (check here):

Primary Contact Name: **Leslie Holt**

Primary E-mail: **achildslight1@gmail.com**

**Note: Charity name change filed July, 2020. Still in start-up mode due to pandemic impact.**

## Organization Information:

### Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Education

Health

**Human Services**

Religion

### Mission:

**A Child's Light (ACL) provides immediate mental health support for children and adolescents, ages 2-to-18, who have experienced severe trauma on the first step of their healing journey.**

**Geographic Area Served** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):

**Chester County**

### Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

**2019-2020: 26 children, 70% Non-Caucasian and 30% Caucasian.**

**As of August, 2021: 30 children: 33% Caucasian, 27% African American, 20% LatinX, 7% Mixed Race, 10% Native American, and 3% European.**

<b>Annual Budget \$</b> <u>187,500</u>	<u>1</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>28</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>8</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>67</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>5</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>5</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>480+</u> # of Volunteer Hours

100 % total

**Top 3-5 funding sources:** Grants, Civic Organization Fundraising Donations, Individual Donations

**Is this grant proposal for:** Capacity Building  or General Operating

### If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

Mission, Vision & Strategy  Governance & Leadership  Partnerships & Collaborations

Fundraising, Development & Marketing  Technology Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation:** \$ 4,500

### Proposal Summary:

**ACL is requesting funding for board development training. A solid foundation is critical for a new organization with passionate although inexperienced leadership. ACL also needs to create a strategic plan. The cost for the initial training engagement with Lou Beccaria and Connie Carter is \$2,000. The cost for a second engagement with them for work on developing an initial strategic plan is \$2,500.**

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.*

### 1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

A Child's Light's innovative work with children was recently recognized by PA Senator Pat Toomey.

ACL provides immediate mental health support for children and adolescents, ages 2-to-18, who have experienced severe trauma. We follow best practices and fund specially trained trauma-informed therapists so that children receive the resources and tools to help them shift their severe trauma experiences to be a part of their past and not a part of their future.

By negotiating a fee for a therapist and funding the up-front payment of 3 months/12 sessions, whichever is completed first, ACL is able to ensure that each client will have a strong, supported, professional, and high-quality introduction to mental health treatment.

The success of our program is that it relies on dedicated therapists who recognize how important early intervention can be with young trauma clients to positively impact and re-direct the trajectory of their lives. With extensive clinical experience, these therapists diagnose a client, typically within a two-week period. The intent is to expedite care and by-pass typical road blocks to give quick access to psychological support. With or without later participation in the county's Child Protective Services (CPS) process, the mental health care resources we provide help to heal, build positive self-esteem, improve scholastics, cease self-harm, and most importantly, stop the need for self-medication with alcohol and/or drugs.

Our therapy services include Talk Therapy, Parent-Child Interactive Therapy (PCIT) and Equine Therapy for adolescents. Future programs include Art Therapy and Martial Arts empowerment.

PCIT allows very young children to enter therapy accompanied by their parent/caregiver. This type of therapy was developed in 2010 for children ages 2-to-7 and is now considered best practice. Although not yet available through county providers, PCIT is a critically important resource for foster/kinship parents if they are caring for a young child who has experienced trauma. In very young children, their neural pathways often allow for the reversal of damage to their brains. This neuro-plasticity enables a young child to absorb positive experiences almost as well as negative ones; the earlier this process is begun, the faster and longer-lasting the healing.

### 2. Funding request

#### • Description of key initiatives

In 2019-2020, we helped 26 children: 70% Non-Caucasian, 30% Caucasian. For 2021, we're supporting 30 children: 33% Caucasian, 27% African American, 20% LatinX, 7% Mixed Race, 10% Native American, and 3% European. We project that we'll serve 45+ children by year end.

We recently opened a small office in Kennett Square to have a presence in the local community and build awareness of our services. We plan to open additional walk-in centers to offer visible and available resources throughout the county. Our goal is to have 4 locations by end of 2022.

We're increasing our Spanish-fluent and multi-lingual therapists. We're also expanding our dialogue with county community groups such as CASA, GrandFamilies, CVIM, and Migrant Education Program. Our initial goals are to increase our trauma-trained therapists by 50%, from 18 to 27, and to increase the number of children we serve annually by 100%, from 30 to 60. *Note: We are working towards meeting our goals, and as of 9/13/2021, we have 33 clients and 22 therapists.*

**• Specific needs & issues to be addressed**

The traumas children endure include a range of issues that are hard to talk about: parental neglect; malnutrition; family dysfunction due to alcohol and drug addictions; physical abuse; and sexual abuse including rape.

ACL seeks to expedite support and overcome the range of challenges inherent in the local systems. Challenges include delays in access to county-provided services, limitations on available therapies and best practices, and specialty needs of younger children combined with overall high costs.

Collaborating with many agencies and individuals, ACL is part of a team seeking to confirm and support a child exposed to life-changing trauma. When a problem is first detected by a parent/caregiver, guidance counselor, teacher, concerned family member or police officer, we can provide funding for early intervention and treatment.

With mental-health support, guidance counselors reported improved scholastics and interpersonal relationships at school. Children and youth report fewer impulsive behaviors and lessened desire to self-harm and self-medicate. Overall, parents/caregivers report that their children appear less depressed, have less anxiety, are more motivated to engage in family activities, and reach out to new friends.

The communities where the clients live also experience a positive impact. Early therapy helps inform life skills such as anger management, impulse control and emotional intelligence. Studies show that these children and youth remain in school, have less contact with law enforcement, make healthier life choices, are more able to visualize future success, and are motivated to attempt new challenges.

These positive outcomes promote a positive direction—away from incarceration, medical disability, inability to hold a job, hospitalization/rehabilitation for substance abuse, and homelessness. This ultimately produces significant savings at local, state and federal levels.

ACL is investing in our children and putting them, and our community, on a path towards a healthier and more stable society.

**• Why it is important to fund this now**

A strong board is critical to ACL's success in meeting our goals to reach more children—and more quickly—to help them on their journey to heal. There is a tremendous need in our society for early support and that need is expected to continue to grow due to the impact of the pandemic.

We want to “get off on the right foot” and implement a solid leadership foundation for the organization.

**• How impact & results will be demonstrated**

Beyond defining the roles of the board and individual board members, fundamental tools and formal documents need to be put in place for proper governance and leadership.

### III. ATTACHMENTS

*E-mail or mail this support information*

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
3. Most recent annual report & financial statement, audited if available
4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date
5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.

**As a new organization, ACL does not yet have a strategic plan. We hope to receive funding to work with Lou Beccaria and Connie Carter on board development in early 2022. We will address organizational oversight needs at that time and hope to also secure funding for a second, follow-up engagement for ongoing governance support and specifically doing a strategic plan.**

- Use this form @ [www.chescof.org](http://www.chescof.org) to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to [grants@chescof.org](mailto:grants@chescof.org)**
- Proposals are considered "complete" when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments**.
- Proposals are shared electronically and online with Fund Advisors, Donors & Grant Panels.
- Per IRS Regulations, applicants must be charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) certification & cannot be individuals.

Please contact Grants Administrator Kevin Baffa at  
(610) 696-8211 [grants@chescof.org](mailto:grants@chescof.org) with questions.