

**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.***

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit www.chescocf.org

Date

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Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities Environment/Animal Welfare
 Education
 Health Human Services

Mission: Minding Your Mind’s primary objective is to provide mental health education to children, adolescents, teens, young adults, their parents, teachers, and school administrators. Our goal is to eliminate the stigma and destructive behaviors often associated with mental health issues and promote help seeking behavior in youth through education. Issues discussed include, but are not limited to, self-harm, violence, substance abuse, bullying, eating disorders, unhealthy relationships, and in the worst case suicidal ideation. Education is the key to any type of change in perception or behavior. Our programs, aimed at students and the adults in their lives, help individuals learn ways to identify symptoms of mental health issues, assure them they aren’t alone in their feelings, and provide language they can use to ask for help sooner rather than later, thus averting crisis.

Geographic Area Served All Chester County

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

Annual Budget \$1,600,000 _____ # of Full-Time Equivalent
Paid Staff _____ 7 _____
_____ 70 _____ % of budget for program expenses _____ 9 _____ # of Board Volunteers
_____ 25 _____ % of budget for administrative expenses _____ 100 _____ # of Active
Non-Board Volunteers

_____5____ % of budget for fundraising expenses _____1,500____ # of Volunteer
Hours
100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources: Fall appeal, Celebration of Life Special Events, Jack Satter Foundation

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building ___ or General Operating ___yes___

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$10,000_____

Proposal Summary: **Minding Your Mind respectfully requests a grant of \$10,000 to underwrite the cost of up to 20 Mental Health Education Programs in Chester County**

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness : Minding Your Mind (MYM), a successful Pennsylvania-based nonprofit was founded in 2007 in response to the void in mental health education. We offer a comprehensive menu of mental health education programs aimed at students in kindergarten through college, their parents, teachers, and caregivers. What started as a grassroots organization with fewer than 30 programs in our first year has grown to become the largest provider of mental health education programs in eastern Pennsylvania and beyond. Our evidence-based programs move away from crisis-based response to prevention through education. In our first year, we presented to 3,000 students and by the end of 2020 we reached our 1,000,000th individual. Last year despite the COVID 19 crisis, Minding Your Mind delivered 1,437 programs to students, their teachers, parents and caregivers. We received countless letters of gratitude from our community as we worked to address the emotional and mental health issues that were highlighted and intensified by the crisis.

2. Funding request

Open dialogue regarding mental health is a focal point among school counselors, teachers, and administrators across the country. Two out of three people with a mental illness never seek help. While schools are increasingly aware of the importance of discussions about mental health, they face the overwhelming challenge of meeting the academic, physical, and emotional needs of their students with limited resources. Most schools do not have the additional staff, capacity, or budget to offer mental health education to their student body. Additionally, suicide prevention training is mandated in many states in our service area. The mandate directs schools to provide up to four hours of suicide intervention training for all teachers and staff every two years. In most cases, these mandates are unfunded and the schools must finance the training from their annual operating budgets. Minding Your Mind is authorized to facilitate training of the two programs listed in the Best Practice Registry for Suicide Prevention Education. Through grants and individual support, Minding Your Mind helps ensure that staff and teachers are trained in student crisis identification and intervention.

When the Covid-19 crisis caused schools to close, we knew it would be a very different year. Minding Your Mind was in a position to serve our constituents in new ways and with new programs. We quickly created timely programs that would help guide them through this unprecedented time. We addressed new life stressors and utilized new technical teaching formats, maintaining personal interactions while social distancing. Our staff adapted to the constantly changing challenges facing students during this very uncertain time. By year-end, we successfully completed 1,437 programs despite the challenges presented by the pandemic; the most in the history of our organization.

One thing is certain: the need for mental health education has never, ever been greater. The data surrounding teen mental health in this crisis is extremely alarming. In the CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report of August 14, 2020, it showed that **25.5% of respondents aged 18-24 seriously considered suicide in the past month.**

A survey conducted in 2020 by **Harris Poll for the National 4-H Council** had these **key takeaways:**

- **7 in 10 teens have experienced struggles with mental health during the COVID-19 crisis**
- **55% of teens say they've experienced anxiety, 45% excessive stress, and 43% depression** These two statistics jumped out at us:
- **82% of teens are calling on America to talk more openly and honestly about mental health issues in this country**
- **79% of teens surveyed wish there was an inclusive environment or safe space for people in school to talk about mental health** The need for mental health education, support and guidance is clear and young people are asking for help. As schools begin to reopen this fall, we will continue to offer our web based and live-streamed programs as well as our in person programs. We are most excited to be returning to in-person programming upon the schools' requests. Our speakers are re-energized as they prepare to return to the classrooms. We anticipate a very busy year and have already received 100 invitations for next school year as of this writing in early August.

Minding Your Mind offers a comprehensive menu of Mental Health Education Programs for students age K-college age and the adults in their lives, throughout Chester County. They are as follows:

Kind Minds: Emotions, Kindness & Empathy for Children - Serving students in grades K-4, Kind Minds shows children how to engage in kind acts through discussions, role play, and interactive activities. The primary goal of Kind Minds is to cultivate positive reactions while providing children with the tools they need to create meaningful connections, leading to consistent emotional wellness.

Stories Over Stigma: Our professionally-trained young adult speakers provide educational programs built around lived experiences. By far our most requested

offering, students hear stories of hope and recovery from young adult speakers who successfully and productively cope with their own mental health challenges.

Mindfulness: Taught by one of our expert mindfulness facilitators, this program can be scheduled in various ways to best meet the needs of a school. This training introduces the benefits of mindfulness and teaches individuals specific practices which promotes productivity, reduces stress and anxiety, and teaches the value of focus and resilience.

“Just Talk About It”: An introductory mental health education program for adults hosted by a clinician that features a young adult speaker. “Just Talk About It” will educate participants to look beyond stigma and notice warning signs of stress, anxiety, depression, and crisis.

QPR Gatekeeper Training for Suicide Prevention: Suicide prevention training that teaches adults to specifically identify and take action when encountering someone in crisis.

This coming school year promises to continue be challenging and unpredictable. In anticipation of what schools will be facing, we created: **Minding Your Mind: ONLINE**. Through this service, we are able to provide programs and supporting material that can be delivered in a variety of ways to accommodate all types of learning plans. These comprehensive mental health education programs can be delivered virtually, live or on-demand, coupled with newly developed material that address timely issues, and instructional materials to support all of it. **Minding Your Mind: ONLINE** is a registration-based platform that exemplifies Minding Your Mind’s core values and unique approach to mental health education while allowing for ease of implementation regardless of the school setting. Through web-based foundational mental health education, students can continue to learn from our Young Adult Speakers about the signs and symptoms of mental health conditions, as well as coping skills to manage many of life’s inevitable difficulties. This offering greatly enhances our in person programs and can serve as an ongoing source of support for schools and community groups.

We have reached hundreds of thousands of students, teachers, and parents. All program growth has been through word of mouth and teacher testimonials; Minding Your Mind does not spend money on direct marketing. We have been able to expand our fundamental programs with our young adult speakers and develop new programs to address a broader range of issues, all the while maintaining the high fidelity of our flagship programs. This has been accomplished with a commitment to continue providing our programs free of charge We are devoted to these founding principles and have increased our fundraising efforts in order to accomplish this goal. We will continue implementation of an evaluation program that seeks to comprehensively measure the impact Minding Your Mind’s programs and services have on students’ emotional outcomes. We are working with teachers and other educational stakeholders to better understand how Minding Your Mind’s programs and services foster improvements. in qualitative emotional outcomes, like increased comfort level in discussing mental wellness.

Our evaluation plan includes feedback surveys that assist in identifying trending issues and frequent comments to inform program improvement and implementation. We continue to ask student participants, their parents, and our educational and community

partners for their feedback, while working with all of our key constituents to obtain data on changes in attitudes and behaviors as they relate to stigma reduction and help-seeking behavior.

Support for this request will ultimately result in improved student confidence and resilience that will enable them to thrive. Parents will be supported with tools and resources they need to effectively advocate for their children. Educators will have gained the knowledge, skills, and language to recognize, persuade and refer students who may be experiencing a mental health issue, thus averting a major crisis. With the proper tools and supports, students who struggle with mental health issues will recognize they are not alone and become more willing to discuss their struggle with trusted peers and/or adults.

Minding Your Mind respectfully requests your support in the amount of \$10,000. This grant will underwrite the cost of up to 20 school programs in Chester County. As stated earlier just two years ago the CDC released a report that reveals that the number of suicides in the U.S. is now double that of homicides. The widespread nature of the increase, in every state but one, really suggests that this is a national problem hitting most communities. In half of the states, suicide among people 10 years and older increased. Suicide is now **a legitimate public health crisis**. Like other issues that have come before, education is the key to treatment and prevention. Minding Your Mind programs are statistically proven to reduce stigma and increase help-seeking behavior. Asking for help can save lives. Now more than ever we are reminded of the importance of our good work in the community and our ability to affect change but there is much work to be done. The COVID 19 crisis has been described as a Mental Health Tsunami. The impact of the isolation, stress and uncertainty of the pandemic has further heightened the need for the education and support services that we have to offer.

Minding Your Mind continues to grow and thrive. We continue to attract new schools and community groups. The majority of Minding Your Mind's programs are provided free of charge to the schools or organizations requesting them. While hosting groups or schools are invited to make a donation to Minding Your Mind, we do not decline presentations due to an inability to pay. Because of this policy, the majority of Minding Your Mind's financial support is derived from fundraising events, personal donations, and charitable grants. Since March of 2020 we have been unable to hold in person events that have typically raised \$250,000 in total revenue. We need your help more than ever before. Minding Your Mind is committed to our goal of providing premier mental health education programs and to a willingness to continually grow and innovate to anticipate and meet the evolving needs around mental health education. Community investment in our work is vital. As such, we truly value your generous investment, and thank you for your consideration.