

2010 Basic Needs Funding Application

APPLICATION IS BY INVITATION ONLY

Contact Information

Organization Name: Direction Service, Inc.
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Organizational Information

Mission Statement: Helping people with special needs live the fullest lives possible.
No. of Employees: 34 **FTE:** 22.75
No. of Volunteers (annually)/Volunteer Hours (annually): 25 / 1150
Name of Executive Director Marshall Peter
Name of Board President Mark Herring, MD **Term Ending Date** TBD
Number of members on Board of Directors: 16
Total Agency Budget: \$1,688,662 **Fiscal Year End:** 06/30/2010
Geographic Service: Lane County
Unduplicated Lane County Residents Served Last Year 645 individuals and their families
Has your organization been previously funded by UWLC? No Yes, **Year(s)** 15+ years

Proposed Service(s): Name of Proposed Services: Case Management: People With Disabilities

Basic Needs Services: (check primary use of funds)

Geographic Service Area within Lane County

- Food** (hunger relief and nutrition) _____
- Shelter** (emergency housing and homelessness intervention) _____
- Healthcare** (emergency and basic health services) _____
- Safety** (domestic violence and child abuse intervention) _____
- Access to Basic Needs** (information & referral; transportation; advocacy) _____

All of Lane County

Annual Funds Requested: \$25,000.00

1. Proposed Services Summary:

There are many analogies and descriptions about parenting. If parenting can be described as a journey, then parenting a child with a disability might be described as a journey that's been hijacked and detoured to an unknown land with a different language and different customs. The travelers (or the family) desire the same things for their journey but may now lack the information and expertise necessary to make that happen. Many families of children with disabilities need help understanding their options, making decisions and effectively identifying and engaging needed services, as well as the very nature of the disability (or the "language"). Having a guide that understands and is familiar with the language and customs of this new place can be crucial to the success of the journey.

The mission of the Direction Service Family Support and Service Coordination program is to assist these families on their journey and to help their children with special needs to live the fullest lives possible. Family Service Coordinators all have advanced training and degrees in special education, are knowledgeable about a wide range of disabilities, have a clear understanding of special education practices and laws, and keep up with current research in these areas. They have an excellent working knowledge of the local service delivery system, and know who to call and how to engage agencies to work together in support of the family. There are currently 4 (.25 volunteer) full-time equivalent (FTE) Family Service Coordinators working with approximately 1500 families enrolled in the Family Support and Service Coordination program.

The Family Support and Service Coordination program strengthens and empowers individuals with disabilities and their families, helping them meet their basic needs and achieve their highest levels of independence. The FSSC program provides families with an advocate who listens to their concerns, needs, and preferences. Based on the family's values and priorities, and drawing to the maximum extent possible on the family's energy and efforts, needed resources are engaged and coordinated. Family Service Coordinators specialize in helping to stabilize and promote the health, well being, and safety of these often weary and demoralized families. As a result, families experience lower stress and frustration levels because navigating the complex and confusing human service, social service and special education systems becomes more manageable. Comprehensive family support systems are built as Family Service Coordinators accompany families across settings and services.

For more than 33 years, Family Service Coordinators at Direction Service have put the pieces together for these families, helping them to maintain their stability and live the most normal and productive lives possible. Direction Service maintains complete and up-to-date information on over 500 community resources and services. The Family Support and Service Coordination program is a critical safety net in Lane County for families of children with disabilities. The program strengthens and empowers disadvantaged families and persons with disabilities by providing an expert system guide who:

- assists them to understand, access and coordinate formal and informal services and supports to meet basic life needs such as food, housing, medical care, respite, and job placement;
- ensures child and family needs are met in a timely manner, without costly duplication and confusion, and before more expensive services are required;
- arranges and, as necessary, attends school, medical, mental health, and other important meetings with families, ensuring that their voice is heard and promoting cost-saving collaboration across providers;
- provides encouragement, emotional support and continuity leading to families feeling less isolated and more in control of their lives;
- helps reduce the likelihood that children and youth will experience the abuse and neglect that all-too-often is the byproduct of overwhelmed, under-supported families.

Family Service Coordinators specialize in knowing what programs are available and how to make successful connections between families and providers. As publicly supported resources have become increasingly scarce, Direction Service has increased their focus on helping families to inventory their own personal resources and to access informal support networks that lead to interdependent rather than dependent relationships.

2. Target Population:

Direction Service assists children and youth (birth-21) with the full range of disabilities throughout Lane County. Most clients are poor and receive some form of public assistance. Only a small percentage of families report having incomes higher than 150% of the poverty level. Direction Service has experienced a very significant increase in families who have children and youth with Autism and Emotional Behavioral Disorders. Many of these children have very challenging behaviors and their families have especially complex needs. They are typically involved with multiple service systems and require supports and services that are highly individualized.

The problems that all families face are even more serious when geographic location and/or cultural/linguistic barriers are added. Families who live in rural areas often must travel to the city to work with agencies and organizations. This has become even more onerous as families face extreme financial challenges. For families who have linguistic barriers, the complexity of the system is further exacerbated especially if there are concerns regarding immigration status. In response, DS has targeted outreach efforts to the Latino and rural communities in Lane County. Last year, services were provided to 36 newly-referred Spanish-speaking and 62 newly-referred rural clients.

3. Need:

Families of children with disabilities regularly experience a myriad of emotions including shock, denial, anger, sadness, fear, guilt, shame, confusion, isolation, powerlessness, disappointment and rejection. While each family is unique, one common thread is that families who have children with disabilities face daily stresses, and have daily needs, that far exceed those of families with typically developing children. It has been documented that families with children and/or a member with disabilities face more problems than families without. In combination, the challenges and demands become even more unmanageable. The increased emotions that many families experience can hinder their ability to deal with stress and manage even the most basic routines of daily life. In the 2009 United Way Community Assessment respondents reported the highest level of child emotional/behavior problems in their children since 1996. Families with children with disabilities are among the most vulnerable and are particularly hard hit by reductions in community services and supports.

In addition to ongoing emotional challenges, families of children with disabilities must negotiate confusing and complicated human and educational service systems, shopping from place to place, piecing together a blend of services that will meet their child's needs. In the process, they may receive conflicting information, follow mistaken leads, contend with confusing eligibility criteria, and struggle through baffling application processes. As an example, the special education system is remarkably complex. Attempting to participate in developing their child's educational program can be overwhelming and intimidating, especially in meetings, amidst a large group of professionals speaking unfamiliar educational jargon. Additionally, differences of opinion between parents, educators and other service providers can impede their ability to work together and further emotionally drain already overwhelmed parents who view every interaction as being critically important to their child's well-being.

In addition, families of children with disabilities face financial stresses well beyond those faced by families of nondisabled children. The 2009 Community Assessment reported that households earning less than \$50,000 per year express increasing problems affording basic living expenses. The cost of raising children with disabilities is even higher, with more money spent on medical care, therapies, equipment, transportation, specialized childcare and other needed services. There are fewer after-school, social, recreational and community programs that meet the needs of these children, so families must spend more time locating or doing without vital services. In cases where the services are not there, parents may need to take time off work or even quit their jobs to care for their children.

The Community Assessment also states that "studies have shown that parents under financial strain are less involved with their children leading to failure in school, aggressive behavior, and delinquency." Additionally, increased stress and isolation, combined with a lack of access to needed services, can lead to abusive or neglectful behavior. A study published in 2000 by Oregon Health Sciences University found that when compared to other children, children with disabilities are 1.6 times more likely to be physically abused, 2.2 times more likely to be sexually abused, and 1.8 times more likely to be neglected.

4. Service Goals:

Through the Family Support Program families of children and youth with disabilities will:

- Experience reduced stress and frustration levels leading to a reduction in abusive behavior;
- Receive parent education and training specific to their situation and their child's special needs;
- Be better able to access services (including behavioral consultation, mental health services, health care, prescription medication, food, shelter and clothing), training and information they need to enable their family to function successfully in our community;
- Become more self-reliant (i.e., able to understand their options and make decisions), decreasing their need for assistance to effectively meet their families' needs; and
- Be more successful at school and in the community and ultimately more likely to achieve their full potential.

Family Service Coordinators achieve these objectives through the provision of emotional support; information and education; assessment of family needs and assets; initiation and coordination of services; communication with service providers; continuing needs identification as child and family circumstances change; and ongoing support. In the last year 76 foster children with special needs received support from Direction Service in addition to the 645 children and youth who were not in the State's custody. Continued support from the United Way is being sought to address this vital effort.

Annual measurable performance indicators and outcomes of the Family Support Program will include:

- 170 newly referred and 425 continuing children and their families will receive case coordination and advocacy.
- 90% of responding families will report improved ability to access available services, training and the information they need to enable their child to function successfully.
- 90% of responding families will report improved self-reliance and decreased need for assistance to effectively meet their families' needs.
- 90% of responding families will report receiving services in a family-friendly, respectful and culturally competent manner.

5. Community Return on Investment:

The 2007 Funding Summary Report for Direction Service stated: "Direction Service is able to provide amazing services and utilizes every dollar efficiently and productively." Nothing has changed, unless it is that the statement has become more true.

The proposed United Way investment of \$25,000 yields the following important returns:

- Reduction of inappropriate referrals, costly duplication of services, and the demand for more expensive services through careful planning and service coordination.
- Leverage of a broad array of additional funding that matches every United Way dollar with more than ten dollars in support from other community funders.
- Increased likelihood of positive outcomes for children and youth with disabilities which results in a higher probability they will be productive adults.
- Prevention of small problems growing into larger ones as a result of the rapid response, proactive planning and early intervention that families receive.
- Improved service delivery systems as a result of staff expertise and participation in workgroups, strategic planning processes and feedback loops. The collaborative problem-solving model utilized in family support is also extended to agencies and service providers to better equip them to meet the needs of children and youth with disabilities and their families.

Direction Service also provides its funders:

- A small staff of highly-educated, highly-trained, highly-capable and extremely dedicated individuals willing to work very hard for non-competitive wages.
- Over 33 years of well-developed, laser-focused and extremely productive methodology that allow for the successful management of preposterously large numbers of very complex cases and an ever increasing demand for service.
- Privileged access to resources based on longstanding relationships enabling unique solutions to vexing system challenges. For example, the agency has garnered positive relationships with specialists and physicians that have allowed families to access timely pro-bono services.
- An ongoing partnership with the U.S. Department of Education that provides technology and infrastructure that creates greater organizational efficiency.
- An institutional memory that contains extensive knowledge of strategies, best practices and available resources that is utilized not only in service of children and families, but also to support other human service network staff.
- A network of committed volunteers who, along with frequent practicum students, donate an estimated 1150 hours of assistance annually and provide other free services including legal services, public relations, marketing and graphic design.

6. Organizational Capacity:

Direction Service is a multi-program family support agency that began in 1977 at the University of Oregon. After five years of federal funding, the organization established itself as a private nonprofit corporation where it now enjoys a broad base of local, state and federal support. The Family Support and Service Coordination Program is the cornerstone of Direction Service. This program provides support and service coordination to families of children with disabilities. Additionally, Direction Service's other programs include: Information Services; CADRE – The National Center on Dispute Resolution in Special Education; and the Direction Service Counseling Center.

Direction Service has a legacy of over thirty years of service to children and youth with disabilities and their families. Many of the staff and members of the Board of Directors are parents of children with disabilities and some have been recipients of agency services. The Counseling Center is a licensed out-patient mental health facility. Direction Service enjoys an excellent reputation and a broad base of community involvement and support.

The organization has an active volunteer Board of Directors that is chaired by a neurologist who is also the parent of a child with disabilities. Members include representatives from PacificSource, LIPA, Lane Community College, Lane Education Service District, Lane County Commission on Children and Families, Oakridge School District and The University of Oregon. Direction Service receives generous support from individual and organizational donors including recently being selected as a Rotary Duck Race participant based on our efforts to reduce the abuse of children with disabilities. Direction Service has built this wide range of community support since its inception in 1977 and continues to develop other sources of funding. In the present funding environment, funds are desperately needed to maintain current programs and levels of service.

7. Goal Alignment:

Direction Service shares the United Way goal of advancing the common good. Within education systems, it is understood that students whose basic needs are not being addressed have decreased success and poor school and vocational outcomes. Family Service Coordinators assist families to get their basic needs met and support children and youth experiencing success at school. Through this model of service Direction Service addresses the three core building blocks of education, income and health identified by United Way.

The performance measures used to measure the efficacy of the program demonstrate this alignment.

- Families will report improved ability to access training and the information they need to enable their child to function successfully. **Education**
- Children will be more successful at school and ultimately achieve their full potential. **Education**
- Families will be assisted to access specialized medical services their children require. **Health**
- Family stress will be reduced leading to healthier parents and children. **Health**
- Families will report improved ability to access available services. **Education, Health**
- Families will be assisted to complete applications for public financial and housing assistance. **Income, Health**
- Families will report improved self-reliance and decreased need for assistance to effectively meet their families' needs. **Income**

8. Collaborations:

Direction Service understands the crucial network of human services throughout Lane County and maintains collaborative working relationships with provider agencies while advocating for the needs of families. Without the positive regard and reputation that Direction Service has created throughout the community, the cohesive coordination of services would be much more challenging, time consuming and would result in fewer families being effectively served.

Direction Service is an involved member of a number of community networking initiatives, taskforces and safety nets including the Lane County Human Services Network, United Way Agency Director's Organization, The Survivability Collaboration (a partnership with Lane County Department of Children and Families, WomenSpace, Sexual Assault Support Services, Lane Independent Living Alliance, Siuslaw Outreach Services, and Cottage Grove Community Sharing), United Way's 2-1-1 Initiative, Parent HelpLine, The Fern Ridge Safety Net, and The Lane Early Intervention Council. The Executive Director is on the 100 % Access Steering Committee and is the Chair of The Eugene School District Equity Committee and The Community Mental Health Consortium. He has previously served on The Boards of Directors of Oregon Research Institutes Community and Evaluation Services, United Way of Lane County, The Eugene Family YMCA, Head Start and Sheltercare and been a member of The City of Eugene Human Rights Commission and The Oregon Disability Commission.

Direction Service will continue a tradition of innovation and leadership within the human service community through existing partnerships and continued involvement as an active and influential partner in system enhancement work groups and other collaborations. Additionally, staff will continue to provide information and referral services to agencies and explore potential partnerships. For example, Direction Service has recently partnered with PacificSource to focus on improved access to health care for children and youth with disabilities and also considering additional collaborations that would improve access and responsiveness to the Latino community.

9. Alignment of Services with Values:

United Way of Lane County (UWLC) is committed to "energizing and inspiring people to create meaningful and tangible impact in our community by focusing on improving lives, strengthening communities and producing real, lasting change". The long existing relationship between UWLC and Direction Service demonstrates the similarities in mission and values. Direction Service has long provided assistance to the most vulnerable members of our community through a unique blend of specialized service, advocacy and collaborative problem-solving. Along with ensuring that children and youth in Lane County receive appropriate educational opportunities and live their lives with the maximum amount of independence, Family Service Coordinators assist families in accessing vital health services, adequate shelter, clothing and food. This holistic approach to service coordination improves the quality of life for the individual and the overall health of the community. Direction Service engages members of the human service network in collaborative teaming that creates capacity and lasting impact and results in increased accessibility of services and reduces costly duplication. Much like United Way, Direction Service's legacy is measured in the changed lives and realized dreams that are the byproduct of a caring and concerned community wrapping around the lives of those who struggle, but still aspire.

Basic Needs Application

Proposed Services BUDGET

(fill in the green cells)

Agency Name:

Direction Service, Inc.

Proposed Services:

Case Management: People With Disabilities

	Prior 12 Months	Future 12 Months
REVENUE/SUPPORT		
United Way Funding/Request (do NOT include Donor Designations)	\$19,030.00	\$25,000.00
Public Support: Contributions/Fundraising Events (include Donor Designations)	\$26,629.00	\$33,562.00
Government Funding	\$160,976.00	\$121,687.00
Foundation/Corporation/Other Grants or Major Gifts	\$12,112.00	\$75,763.00
Program Service Fees or Membership Dues		
Other Revenue - Includes \$7861 from Reserves	\$13,760.00	\$4,400.00
Total Revenue	\$232,507.00	\$260,412.00
	Estimated	Actual
EXPENSES		
Personnel Related	\$190,550.00	\$217,034.00
Client Assistance	\$2,773.00	\$2,000.00
Other Direct Program Expenses	\$10,994.00	\$10,023.00
Administrative Overhead	\$28,190.00	\$31,355.00
Total Expenses	\$232,507.00	\$260,412.00
NET (should be zero)	\$0.00	\$0.00

What percent of your agency budget do these proposed services represent?	16%	15%
What percent of your agency revenue is the United Way request?	1%	1%
Number of employee FTE's (full-time equivalents) in proposed services?	4.70	4.70
Percentage United Way request to overall proposed services revenue	8%	10%
Administrative overhead percentage applied to proposed services	14%	14%

Completed by:

Jesse Hart - Dir. Of Administration