

***PROPOSAL FOR
RFP 25-02
MENTAL HEALTH SCREENING IN SCHOOLS GRANT***

CONTRACTOR: THE FAMILY CENTER AT MONTCLAIR, LLC
*7 Pierson Place
Glen Ridge, NJ 07028
(973) 857-5333*

The Family Center at Montclair is an independent clinic, licensed by the State of New Jersey which was established in 2002. We have been proudly providing mental health services to most of the states 21 counties. Our mission is to provide effective and efficient mental health services to children, adolescents, teen and adults regardless of race, national origin, religion or economic status. Our staff includes NJ licensed psychotherapists, and psychiatrists.

We currently work with The Union Township Board of Education providing mental health screenings. Should a student make a statement of self-harm or harm to others we work tirelessly with educators and counselors to provide needed services as well as psychiatric evaluations for their child study team.

PURPOSE:

Implementation of depression screening programs identifying students in grades 7 thru 12 who are at risk of depression and related symptoms.

TERM OF SERVICE:

2026-2027 School year. The Family Center at Montclair provides services 12 months of the year; therefore, staff and administration will be available from July 2026- December 2026 to work with The Township of Union Public Schools in the planning and coordination for the depression screening to be implemented. Start date for the actual screenings will be sometime in Sept. 2026 to be decided by The Township of Union Board of Education and The Family Center at Montclair. During the time between July 2026 and December 2026. The Family Center at Montclair will work with the Township of Union Board of Education to develop clear protocols for the collection, consent and implementation of the project.

PROCESS:

The Union Board of Education is to educate parents as to what the depression screening is and send out permission slips for parents to sign and indicate if they wish their child to participate and if they want the screening to take place during school hours or after school when the child is at home. Once permission slips have been obtained from parents and or guardians, The Family Center at Montclair will collaborate with the Township of Union Board of Education to devise a grade level schedule to administer the screening. This schedule will include hours during the school day ; For 1-99 students, Screenings will take place virtually on Doxey.Me video platform which is HIPPA compliant . In person screenings will take place if more than 99 students are to

be screened. If less than 100 students are to be screened, The Family Center at Montclair will send to the school the link to this portal on the day the screenings are scheduled and students will sit at a computer provided by The Township of Union Board of Education to interact with the screener. If screenings are done in person, a room which is private will be assigned in each school by The Union Board of Education. The screener (a licensed Professional Counselor) will administer the screening tool, score it, and record the results on the screening form. If a student scores in a range indicating they are suffering from the symptoms of depression, the screener will develop a safety plan with the student and a copy of the plan will immediately be texted, e-mailed or given in person to the student, school and/or parent or guardian. Furthermore, for those students at high risk for depression, the screener will notify the Township of Union Board of Education and the student's parents with recommendations for treatment. A record of these recommendations will be sent to both the parent and The Township of Union Board of Education. All documentation (screening form, record form, safety plan (if needed), and recommendations for further treatment (if needed) will be signed by the screener and sent to The Township of Union Board of Education so they may be forwarded it to the NJDOE.

SCREENER:

The Family Center at Montclair will assign Joyce Mierzejewski MA NCC MAC ACS LPC to administer the depression screenings for The Township of Union Board of Education. Ms. Mierzejewski holds a Masters in Counseling with a specialization in Marriage and Family Therapy. She is National Board Certified, certified as a Master Addictions Counselor, National Board Certified Clinical Supervisor, Licensed Mental Health Counselor in Florida, and a NJ Licensed Professional Counselor. Ms. Mierzejewski was vetted with the NJDOE when The Family Center at Montclair contracted with The Township of Union Board of Education to provide emergency screenings. Ms. Mierzejewski has over 30 years of experience working with children, adolescents and adults in the mental health field. Should a great number of students opt in for the depression screening, additional Licensed Professional Counselors will also be assigned to administer the screenings.

SCREENING TOOL:

The depression screening tool to be administered to students grade 7 through 12 will be Reynolds Adolescent Depression Scale which is on the NJDOE's list of approved screening tools. The RADS-2 is appropriate for ages 11-20 years. This falls within the age groups for grades 7-12. The screening takes approximately 10-15 minutes to administer, and 10-20 minutes to score. The tool measures 4 basic dimensions of depression: Dysphoric Mood, Anhedonia/Negative affect, Negative self-evaluation and Somatic complaints. The Safety Plan template to be used will be SAFE-T form developed by SAMHSA. A copy of this template will be provided to the Township of Union Board of Education. The SAFE-T Patient Safety Plan includes 6 steps and includes: 1. Warning signs of depression, 2. Coping strategies to use, 3. People and social settings that provide distraction, 4. People to ask for help, 5. Professionals and agencies to contact during a crisis, and 6. How to make the environment safe. The Family Center at Montclair has obtained a copy of "Using Mental Health Screening in Schools" NJDOE Division of Educational Services January 2024. It will develop the depression

