



## OFFICE OF RACIAL EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE


Marc Elrich  
County Executive

Tiffany Ward  
Director and Chief Equity Officer

### MEMORANDUM

July 26, 2022

To: Jennifer Bryant, Director  
Office of Management and Budget

From: Tiffany Ward, Director  
Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice 

Re: Racial Equity Impact Assessment (REIA) for Supplemental Appropriation (SA) #23-03  
FY23 Montgomery County Government, Department of Health and Human Services,  
Therapeutic Nursery Program

- I. **FINDING:** The Office of Racial Equity and Social Justice (ORESJ) finds that Supplemental Appropriation #23-03 FY23 Montgomery County Government (MCG), Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Therapeutic Nursery Program addresses educational inequities affecting preschool children ages 3 to 5 years old who are experiencing mental health behaviors including trauma, anxiety, and other emotional developmental delays. Based on the information provided, it is unclear to what extent activities under this supplemental appropriation will advance equitable outcomes for low-income children and families and those identified as Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), who experience disparate access to mental and behavioral health services.
- II. **BACKGROUND:** The purpose of Supplemental Appropriation #23-03 FY23 Montgomery County Government Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), Therapeutic Nursery Program is to support a needed funding increase at the Lourie Center for Children's Social & Emotional Wellness, allowing the program to go from a partial, to a full day Therapeutic Nursery Program. Specifically, the grant funds will assist in covering administrative services, transportation services, educational services, and therapeutic support for preschool children. Supplemental information provided with the request also states that families of the children served will also benefit from the program, in that family therapy and supports will also be provided in an effort to help their children be successful

both in school and at home, with a target goal of ensuring that these children are kindergarten-ready by program completion.

ORESJ has previously documented inequities in educational opportunity and resources impacting Equity Impact Assessments students' kindergarten readiness in Montgomery County in the following Racial (REIAs):

1. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-24 High Quality Early Childhood Inclusion  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-24.pdf>
2. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-66 Martha B. Gudelsky Center  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-66.pdf>
3. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-77 ARPA IDEA Part B1 Grant and SA#22-78 ARPA IDEA Part B2 Grant  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-77and22-78.pdf>
4. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #22-75 ARPA IDEA Early Intervention Grant  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/22-75.pdf>
5. REIA of Supplemental Appropriation #23-04 IFSP Infants and Toddlers Grant  
<https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/ore/Resources/Files/23-04.pdf>

While the REIAs referenced above provide extensive background information on inequities in early educational opportunities in the County, ORESJ recommends reviewers consider the following in efforts to mitigate disparities in early childhood settings serving children and families experiencing mental and behavioral health disorders:

- While children and families served by the Lourie Center for Children's Social & Emotional Wellness represent the highest level of need as they may have been expelled from more mainstream childcare facilities, efforts to engage those who are hardest to reach – families involved in the child welfare system, those experiencing homelessness or those living in areas with high concentrations of poverty – should be prioritized.
- Engage in culturally competent outreach and consumer education prioritizing low-income and BIPOC children and families, highlighting that cost is not a prohibitive factor in enrollment as services offered by the Center are provided at no cost to families.
- Partner and engage with families and communities in ways that are linguistically and culturally responsive to low-income and BIPOC children and their families where they live; and
- Make earnest investments in the recruitment, training and retention of a qualified, effective and culturally responsive childcare workforce equipped with the skills to work with low-income and BIPOC young children with mental and behavioral health needs.

cc: Ken Hartman, Director, Office of Strategic Partnership, Office of the County Executive  
Raymond Crowel, Director, Department of Health and Human Services