

## HEALTH FIRST INDIANA



Lake County Health Department  
2900 West 93rd Ave., Crown Point, IN 46307 | Phone: 219-755-3655

### HEALTH FIRST INDIANA GRANT APPLICATION

Under Indiana law, the Lake County Health Department (“LCHD”) is empowered to grant money from their allocated Health First Indiana (“HFI”) funds to external organizations which agree to complete Core Public Health Services (“CPHS”) and work toward completion of the required Key Performance Indicators (“KPIs”).

**Health First Indiana Website:** <https://www.in.gov/healthfirstindiana/>

Public health services are most effective when provided by local health departments (LHDs) that are positioned to meet the needs of their communities. These core services outline the initiatives and activities at the heart of public health that are the critical framework of any local health department. Some are required by law, and some are offered by many health departments. Every Hoosier deserves access to these foundational public health services no matter where they live.

LHDs, with support from partners and community stakeholders, determine needs of the community, and implement accessibility strategies, including addressing social determinants of health, in all aspects of planning, operations, and core services. The Indiana Department of Health surveyed each local health department to determine how these core services are provided across Indiana. Click below to see a snapshot of each core service.

Please fill out the attached proposal in its entirety and include any necessary and appropriate documents.

- The KPI’s listed throughout this proposal application are not comprehensive. They are current guidelines and metrics that have been enumerated by the Indiana Department of Health (IDOH), however, they are in flux.
- If your program fills the purpose as enumerated in the “Purpose” chart of Section 2 below, but the deliverables from Appendix A do not match up directly with your program metrics, list them separately under the “Deliverables” section of this application.

Lake County Health Department

**1. ORGANIZATION**

1.1 Name of Organization: Mental Health America of Northwest Indiana

1.2 Contact Name and Title: Andrea Sherwin, President & CEO

1.3 Address: 5311 Hohman Ave. Hammond, IN 46320

1.4 Phone: 219-937-7733 ext. 105

1.5 Fax: 219-736-7998

1.6 Email: ashwerwin@mhanwi.org

**2. PROGRAM**

2.1 Name of Program Proposal: I'm Thumbbody Special

2.2 Program (Mission) Statement: The mission of MHANWI is to transform our community through proven programs that educate, empower, and strengthen the way individuals and families function for life. MHANWI understands the best way to address bullying is to stop it before it starts. I'm Thumbbody Special (ITS) helps raise awareness of bullying within the school community while promoting self-esteem and conflict resolution. Partnering with teachers and students to address bullying helps sustain prevention efforts over time.

2.3 Program Overview: Prevention research is clear and indicates the need for character education as a means of preventing child abuse, neglect, school violence and bullying. MHA National reports that one-third of U.S. students experience bullying, either as a target or a perpetrator (Journal of the American Medical Association); more than 70 percent of teachers and students have witnessed bullying in their schools (www.stopbullying.gov). I'm Thumbbody Special is presented to 3rd grade students in classrooms in Northwest Indiana, encouraging children to see differences as valuable while promoting respect for self and others to reduce bullying.

**2.5 Project Work Plan** – Includes an outline of how the program is created/adopted, implemented, and executed, and any relevant timelines.

Mental Health America of Northwest Indiana (MHANWI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to overall wellness through personal and family support while remaining committed to our core principle of advocating on behalf of those experiencing emotional challenges. We lead from a foundation built on **prevention and empowerment** of vulnerable adults and children through education, referral, and advocacy. As an affiliate of the national Mental Health America organization, we adopt the philosophy of **#B4Stage4**, which stresses the importance of preventing/addressing mental health issues and adverse experiences early in life.

Our mission is to transform our community through proven programs that educate, empower, and strengthen the way families and individuals function for life. We currently have 13 programs that serve the Northwest Indiana community (Lake and Porter County). Over 90% of these programs are offered at **no cost** to those who receive our services. We proudly serve some of the **most vulnerable homes and populations** in Northwest Indiana and are grateful to be able to do so through generous funding that ensures critical help for those most in need. Each of our programs falls into one *or more* of five main categories of support: *Home Visitation, Infant and Maternal Health, School Programming, Adult Mental Health Support, and Workplace Mental Health*. With a strong foundation in **prevention and early intervention**, MHANWI programs stress the importance of preventing or addressing mental health issues *early in life* for the best possible outcomes (**#B4Stage4**). Much like a physical health condition, we don't want to wait until Stage 4, when there is much less we can do to heal the illness. *It is our goal to take action before or at the first sign of distress*. This philosophy informs our programs that support children and families through evidence-based **home visitation**, such as Healthy Families, Parents as Teachers, and Empowering Teens as Parents; as well as through **support groups** such as Mothers & Babies. These programs seek to identify and help mitigate risk factors associated with **Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**. These are potentially traumatic events that occur in childhood, including violence, abuse, and growing up in a family with mental health or substance use problems. Toxic stress from ACEs can change brain development and affect how the body responds to stress. ACEs

are linked to **chronic health problems, mental illness, and substance misuse** in adulthood. MHANWI's commitment to children and families has resulted in making us the **largest home visiting parent education agency in Northwest Indiana.**

Because the work we do so closely connects us with families and their young children, we feel strongly about our responsibility to support the State's efforts to **promote student health and wellbeing.** Our national affiliate encourages families to work with their local MHA affiliate to make sure that schools treat bullying as violence and help them develop programs to prevent bullying and promote safe school environments. *I'm Thumbbody Special* is an excellent resource toward this end.



*I'm Thumbbody Special* helps elementary school students **develop life skills** to make decisions, resolve conflicts, and cope with challenges. The program focuses on mental health, self-identity, feelings and emotions; talking to a trusted adult, seeing differences as valuable, and fostering respect for self and others to reduce bullying. The thumbprint logo was chosen as it represents the uniqueness of each individual - just as no two thumbprints are alike, no two people are alike.

*I'm Thumbbody Special* builds healthy self-concepts; instills feelings of self-worth, individuality and responsibility; develops an understanding of each person's unique skills and interests and the value of their differences, strengths and individuality; and enhances self-awareness. The interaction with the students includes a discussion on the positive value of difference and how to change negative thoughts to positive thoughts.

MHANWI has been facilitating *I'm Thumbbody Special* in classroom settings for over 15 years and shifted quickly to develop a virtual option in 2020. Our Program Specialist works with teachers and students to demonstrate how to work together as a group, understand personal differences, resolve conflict, and handle peer pressure. By making it clear that in spite of differences, we are all alike in many ways, this program helps students accept and value differences among them, which leads to better impulse control and a reduction in conflicts. Building a strong sense of self-worth through *I'm Thumbbody Special* **empowers children to reject destructive behavior and embrace diversity and community.**

Teacher feedback is important to the success of the program. In 2023, following a presentation to students in Cedar Lake, IN, teachers noted, “The students were engaged the whole time and enjoyed figuring out their thumbprints,” “I know the ‘Thumbprint’ conversation will continue for days to come!” and “The kids received a good message while having a good time.” Participating children also completed a survey, in which **95% of students agreed that they were satisfied with the program and would like to have another presentation for their class in the future.**

MHANWI served 1,178 students through *I’m Thumbbody Special* in the 2023 calendar year.

Unfortunately, due to funding cuts at the local level, MHA will only be able to serve a fraction of schools requesting this long standing program, unless new funding can be secured soon.

MHANWI has partnered with school systems throughout Lake County, including some of our more vulnerable communities, to bring the popular *I’m Thumbbody Special* program to students. All public and private schools in Lake County are invited to participate by scheduling *I’m Thumbbody Special* presentations for their 3rd grade classrooms. In the past two years, we’ve served the following school systems: **Crown Point, East Chicago, Griffith, Hammond, Hanover Central, Highland, Merrillville, Tri-Town (Lake Central School System), and Whiting.** Due to limited funding, not all schools that show an interest each year receive services; services are completed on a first come, first schedule basis as time and funding allows.

The recent global pandemic necessitated that organizations identify innovative and flexible strategies to engage participants. In addition to providing Thumbbody Special programming face-to-face in the school setting, we are pleased to offer the flexibility of a virtual presentation if that better meets the needs of the school. At the preference of each district, MHANWI will continue to offer both virtual and in-person sessions to meet the needs of students and educators. MHANWI staff have developed *I’m Thumbbody Special* program kits to distribute in the classroom, and coordinate with teachers to supplement with a fully interactive webinar.

To measure success and monitor results, MHANWI conducts post-program surveys among teachers and students to gauge student learning around self-confidence, self-esteem and how to get along better with others. Building a strong sense of self-worth through *I’m Thumbbody Special*, enables children to reject destructive behavior and emerge as successful adults.

Increasingly, educators and mental health professionals are recognizing the critical role resiliency plays in a child's ability to achieve his or her social and academic potential.

2023 Year End Lake County-Wide Data for I'm Thumbody Special Programming

- 1,178 students educated on bullying prevention/mental health promotion
- 74 teachers provided resources for bullying prevention/mental health promotion
- 9 participating school systems
- 98% of students show an increase in knowledge of self-esteem.
- 99% of students believe the information gained from Thumbody will help their peer relationships.

**Timeline:** *I'm Thumbody Special* is an ongoing program at MHANWI, which will allow us to execute quickly, if funded. This timeline is based on Q1 beginning 11/1/24 and may need to be adjusted based on actual start dates. ITS is school-based; some activities are time bound based on school parameters and participation.

Quarter 1(Dec-Feb)

- Convene ITS Planning Meeting for Director/Specialists
- Review school outreach efforts/waitlist for programming
- Contact schools on waitlist to schedule for 2024/2025 school year
- Present ITS programming virtually and in person
- Collect/manage data for outcomes reporting
- Complete required funding/evaluation reports
- Monitor supplies/inventory
- Order materials needed for presentations

Quarter 2 (March-May)

- Present ITS programming virtually and in person with scheduled 3rd grade classes
- Communicate with school personnel to schedule sessions for additional elementary schools

- Collect/manage data for outcomes reporting
- Complete required funding/evaluation reports
- Monitor supplies/inventory
- Review quarterly reporting & create any necessary improvement plans

Quarter 3 (June-August)

- Analysis for Data for 2024-2025 school year.
- Communicate with school personnel to schedule sessions for 2025-2026 school year.
- Complete required funding/evaluation reports
- Monitor supplies/inventory
- Review quarterly reporting & create any necessary improvement plans

Quarter 4 (September-November)

- Present ITS programming virtually and in person with scheduled 3rd grade classes.
- Communicate with school personnel to schedule sessions
- Collect/manage data for outcomes reporting
- Complete required funding/evaluation reports
- Monitor supplies/inventory
- Review quarterly reporting & create any necessary improvement plans
- Compile year end data
- Begin reaching out to schools to schedule for new school year

**1'm Thumbody Special Team Credentials:**

**Wendy Hensley MPA, IMH-E (IV)**, Senior Director of Programs & Partnerships, provides management oversight for this program. Wendy holds a Masters of Public Affairs and a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology from Indiana University Northwest and has over twenty years of experience administering child abuse prevention programs. Wendy is also endorsed as an Infant Mental Health Mentor, awarded by the Infant Mental Health Alliance. She is a National Trainer for Healthy Families America and is dedicated to strengthening and expanding parent education and family wellness services throughout the region. She has been active on numerous task forces, committees, and boards, including Prevent Child Abuse Lake County, Lake County Community Action Team,

and the statewide Child Abuse Prevention Framework Advisory Team. Wendy is a member of the MHANWI Management Team, reporting directly to VP of Operations, Kim Smith.

**Vickie Rainwater, BA, IMH-E® (II), Program Specialist** has 23 years of experience working with diverse populations. She manages our *Infant Safe Sleep, Smoke Free Moms, and I'm Thumbody Special* programs. Vickie is a trained *Tobacco Treatment Specialist* through the University of Massachusetts; a Certified Parent Educator / Supervisor; and is endorsed in Infant Mental Health and Adult Mental Health First Aid. She is a member of the Indiana Early Learning Advisory Council, Indiana Perinatal Quality Improvement Collaborative, Indiana Healthy Opportunities for People Everywhere (IHOPE) - Education Matters Committee, Lake County Community Tobacco Prevention & Cessation Coalition, Rethink Tobacco Indiana, and Community Advocates of Northern Indiana.



2.4 Program and Scope for Selected Core Service - check one or more:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Item	Name	Scope
	A.	Tobacco and Vaping Prevention and Cessation	Preventing and eliminating risk of disease due to tobacco use and vaping.
	B.	Trauma and Injury Prevention	Preventing harm due to injury and substance use and facilitating access to trauma care.
	C.	Chronic Disease Prevention	Preventing and reducing chronic diseases such as obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, and cancer.
	D.	Maternal and Child Health	Services focused on the health and well-being of mothers, children, and families, including prenatal care.
	E.	Fatality Review	Analysis of data and potential causes of child deaths, fetal and infant mortality, and suicide/overdose fatality.
	F.	Lead Case Management and Risk Assessment	Ensuring all children have access to blood lead level testing and appropriate clinical and environmental services if necessary.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	G.	School Health Liaison	Assisting schools with resources to promote whole student health.
	H.	Access and Linkage to Clinical Care	Facilitating access to essential healthcare services for all members of the community.
	I.	Infectious Disease Prevention and Control	Monitoring and managing the spread of diseases within a community.
	J.	TB Prevention and Case Management	Preventing the spread of tuberculosis and ensuring appropriate access to care and resources for those who have TB.
	K.	Immunizations	Providing vaccinations to children and adults to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.
	L.	Health-Related Areas during Emergencies or Disasters	Planning and coordination for responding to public health emergencies and disasters.
	M.	Vital Records	Providing accurate documentation of births, deaths, stillbirths, fetal deaths, adoptions, and biological parentage.
	N.	Food Protection	Ensuring safety of food at the grower, wholesale, and retail levels.
	O.	Environmental Health	Ensuring the safety of the physical environment to protect public health.

2.5 Project Work Plan – See attached, which includes an outline of how the program is created/adopted, implemented, and executed, and any relevant timelines.

2.6 Deliverables – See attachment.

2.7 Reporting Format – Separate document attached, see Appendix A and sample below.

2.8 Reporting Frequency: If no required format and frequency is prescribed by LCDH, MHANWI will provide quarterly updates on deliverables as described in Section 2.6 as well as successes and challenges of the project in conjunction with required KPI reports to our CEO and Board of Directors, which occurs in April, July, October and January.

3. FINANCIALS

3.1 Total Amount Requested: \$25,000

3.2 Breakdown of Amount Requested – See Attachment.

3.3 Proposed Schedule of Payments – See Attachment.

**APPENDIX A**

**(Edited by MHANWI Removing Core Service Categories Not Applicable to Our Program Scope)**



**A. School Health Liaison**

Over 1 million students attend K-12 schools in Indiana, and school health liaisons support schools across the state. Research shows that healthier students learn better and have greater academic success, leading to a lifetime of better health outcomes. Providing access to health services, such as vision, hearing and dental screenings, while limiting youth risk behaviors, supports community, physical, and intellectual development that can continue into adulthood.

**KPI**

Number of counties partnering with schools, based on community need, to implement wellness policies and comprehensive strategies to promote student health.

LCHD is seeking to partner with schools, based on community needs, to support school wellness policies and promote comprehensive strategies to improve student health.

**DELIVERABLES AND REPORTING: SAMPLE**

Item	Name	Scope
G.	School Health Liaison	Assisting schools with resources to promote whole student health.
	Deliverable	Metric: Screenings
	[Deliverable]	Value
		Number of children receiving vision screening through support of liaison
		[Number of people]

**SCHOOL HEALTH LIAISON METRICS**

**Metric: Screenings**

- Number of children receiving vision screening through support of liaison
- Number of children receiving hearing screening through support of liaison
- Number of children receiving oral health screening through support of liaison

**Metric: Education**

- Number of schools requesting support with mental health education, resources through school liaison
- Number of children receiving supplemental nutrition education programming at school (such as CATCH or GOAL)
- Number of students receiving tobacco and vaping cessation education through LHD/school liaison
- Number of schools in county with supported evidence-based anti-bullying programs and groups that support student mental health (e.g., Bring Change to Mind)

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3.2 Breakdown of Amount Requested -

**SCHOOL HEALTH LIAISON - I'M THUMBODY SPECIAL:**

<b>MHANWI - Health First Indiana Funding Request to Lake County Health Department</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
<b>It's Anti-Bullying Program Expenses:</b>	<b>Amount:</b>
Personnel Salaries (includes emp. taxes -10.20%)	\$12,068
Fringe (health, vision, dental, STD, LTD, 3% Retirement)	\$1,978
Supplies (Ink pads, Thumbprint cards, consumables)	\$7,468
Travel (Mileage Reimbursement)	\$735
Marketing/Outreach	\$1,500
Other: Admin/Indirect (10%)	\$1,250
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>

**Budget Narrative - I'm Thumbody Special - Bullying Prevention Programming:**

**Personnel Salaries (includes Employee Tax): (\$12,068):** Supports 6 hours per week (0.15 FTE) for Lead Facilitator Vickie Rainwater providing self-esteem and bullying prevention workshops to 3rd grade classrooms throughout Lake County. Also includes 1 hour per week for Director of Programs and Partnerships providing oversight and coordination of data analysis and reporting, and partnership building.

**Fringe: (\$1,978)** Cost of health, dental, vision, life, Short & Long term disability and retirement match benefits of program team, based on current premium as percentage of gross wage.

**Supplies: (\$7,468)** Includes the purchase of ink pads, thumbprint cards, magnifying glasses, pencils, stickers, printing workbooks and outcomes surveys for each 3rd grade student. Kit estimated at \$4 per student x 1,500= \$6,000. Also includes the purchase of a new laptop and monitor - \$1,200, and general office supplies = \$268.

**Travel: (\$735)** Mileage Reimbursement for staff travel onsite to schools for facilitation of session with 3rd grade classes, and to partnership meeting, calculated at 1,500 miles x 0.49/mile.

**Marketing/Outreach: (\$1,500)**: Purchase of promotional items, brochures, rack cards, business cards, for outreach to local school districts promoting anti-bullying and positive self-esteem messaging.

**Other: Admin/Indirect (10%)**: Supports a portion of general administrative support dedicated to this project including finance, payroll, human resources, and IT support.

### 3.3 Proposed Schedule of Payments:

MHANWI would work with whatever the preferred schedule of payments is most convenient for the Lake County Department of Health. MHANWI has worked with upfront funded grants that require periodic spenddown reporting as well as reimbursement grants that require back-up of expenditures and invoices for costs already incurred against a contract total amount. Per board policy, MHANWI holds a small operating surplus of general funds in order to cover operational costs in the occurrence of delay of payment from a funding source to ensure program sustainability.

Ideally, quarterly or bi-annual upfront payments with spenddown tracking would be ideal in order to more efficiently manage cash flow and implementation of planned activities without the potential cash flow delay of a reimbursement payout arrangement. Our internal controls for fiscal management of this grant will include monthly spenddown tracking regardless of the payment arrangement to ensure good fiscal stewardship. We will work within whatever guidelines and systems prescribed by the Lake County Department of Health for this funding.

**2.6 DELIVERABLES AND 2.7 REPORTING:**

MHANWI's *I'm Thumbody Special* program addresses metrics in the following Core Public Health Service Category:

Item	Name	Scope
G.	School Health Liaison	Assisting schools with resources to promote whole student health.
Deliverable	Metric: Training	Value
I'm Thumbody Special student/parent packets	Number of schools requesting support with mental health education, resources through school liaison ( Data - 75 potential elementary schools in Lake County)	Estimating 8 districts.
I'm Thumbody Special School Presentations	Number of schools in county with supported evidence-based/evidence informed anti-bullying programs and groups that support student mental health	1,500 3rd grade students
Learn skills in bullying prevention	Percentage of students indicating ITS will help them with their peer relationships Percentage of students indicating an increase in knowledge	90% 90%
Teacher support and efficacy	Percentage of teachers highly satisfied with the program	90%

**Review of Metrics lifted from Appendix A in Application Document:  
 Selected Deliverables and related Metrics Address School Health Liasons:**

- X Number of schools requesting support with mental health education, resources through school liaison
- X Number of schools in county with supported evidence-based anti-bullying programs and groups that support student mental health (e.g., Bring Change to Mind)
- X \*Other – please add your own metric \*only if it aligns with the scope and KPI of the Core Service.

**2.7 REPORTING FORMAT:**

Evaluation has been integral to the success of MHANWI programming since its inception. MHANWI uses its considerable programmatic expertise with families and their children, as well as support from national, evidence-model organizations, to achieve measurable results. Data for this project will be collected at service intervention for each participant, through teacher report and will include gathering of demographic information including residence, race and ethnicity, and age. Participants receiving *I'm Thumbody Special* will also complete a feedback survey to capture overall satisfaction as well as reported intention of participants to implement learned strategies. Data is collected, correlated and presented by the I'm Thumbody Special Coordinator to the Program Director and VP of Operations for KPI impact tracking and performance outcomes analysis. Information is utilized to inform reporting to funders as well as program CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) planning. Reporting on deliverables outlined in the table provided above in Section 2.6 will be provided to the Lake County Department Health First Indiana as per funder directive. If no required format and frequency is prescribed by LCHD, then MHANWI will provide quarterly updates on deliverables, successes and challenges of the project in conjunction with required KPI reports to our CEO and Board of Directors, which occurs in April, July, October and January for each preceding quarter.