

DARYL FOX: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome to today's webinar, FY 2021 Child-Friendly Family Visiting Spaces in Jails and Prisons Program, hosted by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. At this time, I'd like to introduce today's presenters, Jessa Wilcox, Policy Advisor with the Bureau of Justice Assistance, and Dr. Hilary Cuthrell with the National Institute of Corrections. I believe Jessa is going to be starting us off today.

JESSA WILCOX: Yes. Hi, Daryl. Thank you so much. And thank you all very much for participating in this webinar on BJA's Fiscal Year 2021 Child-Friendly Family Visiting Spaces in Jails and Prisons Program. As Daryl just mentioned, my name is Jessa Wilcox. And on this webinar, I will explain and describe the content of this solicitation and give you some information about the application process. I'm joined today by my colleague, Dr. Hilary Cuthrell, from the National Institute of Corrections. She is the subject matter expert on parent-child visitation in correctional facilities. And I am thankful that she is here with us today and will be leading the technical assistance portion of this project.

As you all likely are aware, BJA is part of the Office of Justice Programs at the Department of Justice. The Department of Justice is committed to advancing work that promotes civil rights, increases access to justice, supports crime victims, protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and the community. BJA's goal in the field is to provide leadership and services in grant administration and criminal justice policy development to support local, state, and tribal justice agencies achieve safer communities. Here is a brief agenda to give you a sense of what we will cover today. We have divided the content of this webinar into six separate sections. Hilary and I will give you an overview of this program, and then I will discuss federal award information, a few things to note on the allowable use of funds and required deliverables, application requirements and priority considerations, some brief additional information, and most importantly, how and when to apply. I'm going to turn it over now to Hilary.

HILARY CUTHRELL: Thank you, Jessa. Sure. So just to take a moment and center this work, it's important to be aware of the estimated population of children and families affected by incarceration. We know that there's an estimated 2.7 million children that--in the United States that have had an incarcerated parent at some point--actually, excuse me--right now. Or to put it another way, everyone--1 in every 28 children. We also know there's an estimated 5 million children that have had an incarcerated parent at some point in their lifetime. We know that parental incarceration is a disruption to parent-child relationships, which can be very traumatic and stressful for both children and families, so policies and practices that support parent-child relationships during a time of parental

incarceration can provide positive benefits to both parents and children. But these practices also benefit the community and those working in correctional facilities as well.

Next slide please. So let me just take a quick moment to provide a brief overview of the model practice document that will help guide the implementations proposed for this project. In 2019, BJA, NIC, and the Urban Institute published a model practice guide for parents in prisons and jails. The model practice document was created for people who can change and create policies and practices within correctional systems. The guide stems from research as well as collaboration with several subject matter experts. The practices outlined in the document hold promise for benefiting incarcerated parents and improving the lives of their children and families without compromising the safety and security in correctional facilities. Within the document, there are 10 model practices as well as a readiness checklist and a resource indicator for each practice. Access to the document is free and available to all. This model practice guide provided the basis for the Family Connections Project in which five pilot sites were selected, and each site implemented a number of the model practices while receiving 12 months of technical assistance. Jessa is now going to tell you about a new opportunity to continue this work.

JESSA WILCOX: Thank you so much, Hilary. And now getting into the heart of this program. BJA is pleased to provide federal dollars up to \$350,000 per award to assist applicants in creating child-friendly visiting spaces. Correctional facilities and agencies can use these funds for construction, renovation, or upgrades, as well as use the grant funds to assist in revising policies and practices that will support child-friendly visitation experiences. Please note that is--this solicitation does not require a match to use these federal funds. BJA expects applicants to use these funds to create child-friendly and family-strengthening visits--visiting spaces, policies, protocols, and cultures in correctional facilities; promote and increase staff capacity to create the model practices, which Hilary just mentioned, into the daily operations and cultures of correctional facilities; and identify and document innovative and promising practices in order to inform similar efforts across the nation. We are pleased that in addition to federal funds to help applicants reach their goals, we are able to offer technical assistance at no cost provided by the subject experts at NIC. And I'll turn it back over to Hilary to give an overview of what this TA can look like.

HILARY CUTHRELL: Great. So let me go ahead and tell you about some of the technical assistance opportunities that will be provided by the National Institute of Corrections in collaboration with BJA. So this is just a list of some of the technical assistance opportunities. We invite creative and innovative and progressive additional technical assistance collaboration as well. This is just a short list of ideas for you to get an idea of what sort of technical assistance we can provide. So we can help identify

community partnerships that can aid in creating opportunities and providing resources and services for incarcerated parents and their children, provide training for staff centered on parent-child wellbeing and the importance of these practices, assist in developing specific skills among staff such as family--child-friendly communication and awareness in visiting spaces, and assist in evaluating the intake and assessment process at your facility with a focus on identifying incarcerated parents, and providing resources and opportunities for parents during their incarceration.

Next slide please. We can create or update your facility's website to ensure it provides information and resources pertinent to families, assistance selecting and designing parent/family-oriented classes and programs, help create visitor lobbies and visitation spaces that are family-friendly for children and families, assist in reviewing current funding policies and procedures, identify opportunities for parents to communicate with people in systems that affect their children, and incorporate caregiver and children into programming and community support groups as well as re-entry planning. And, again, these are just some of the examples of the technical assistance opportunities that we can provide. I'm going to go ahead and pass it off to Jessa now.

JESSA WILCOX: Thanks so much, Hilary. So now I'm just going to dive into the nuts and bolts of this solicitation. BJA is looking to make five awards of up to \$350,000 each. And you'll see that there are two categories to apply for in this solicitation. Category 1 is if you intend to use the grant funds in jails and Category 2 if you intend to use the funds in prisons. BJA expects to make three awards in Category 1 and two awards in Category 2. The length of this program is 36 months. And eligible applicants are state, city, county, or tribal governments.

I'm going to cover a couple things to note about the allowable uses of grant funds and required deliverables. Because this program funds construction, renovation, or innovation of real property, I wanted just to note two things, that applicants who are requesting funding for these types of things, renovation or expansion projects, they must include in their application in the program narrative, first, whether the existing building proposed for improvements appears to be a viable structure for renovation and/or expansion with the design developed and approved by a qualified architect, engineer, or contractor. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure that using grant funds to renovate or modify the existing facility is justifiable. Also applicants must include documentation from the appropriate governing body authorizing the use of the facility for the purpose of renovation, expansion, or replacement. The documentation must specify the proposed facility or facilities and/or the area of land to be used for the project.

There are three deliverables required for this project. The first is a comprehensive, individualized, child-friendly family visiting implementation plan that will guide the grantees' activities through the life of this project. Sustainability will be a key area of focus of this plan. It's our expectation that the projects and strategies funded under this solicitation will, at a minimum, be sustained and perhaps be expanded after the grant period ends. Grantees will finalize this plan during the first six months of this award after the budget approval with the support of the TA provider.

The second is documentation of any renovation, construction, or physical plant modification plans. And finally, documentation of the work accomplished during the grant period. We expect that the grantees funded under the solicitation will carry out innovative and promising work, and that there will be a great deal to be learned from the efforts of the grantees. As a result, grantees are required to document the innovative and promising work completed through this program so that other practitioners can find the facilities and agencies can learn and benefit from it.

Moving on to section four, we want to make note of several application requirements and priority considerations that are included in this solicitation. You go to page 7 of the solicitation, you can find all of the application requirements. But just to note, to even be considered for funding in our peer review model, each application must include a program abstract, program narrative. And the program narrative will include a description of the issue, project design and implementation, capabilities and competencies of the agency applying for grant funds, and a plan for collecting data required for the solicitation's performance measures. Also a budget detail worksheet and budget narrative. And, finally, executive-level letters or letter of commitment from the agency that is proposed to receive the funding. Strong commitment and support to the leadership is a requirement of and a prerequisite for successful efforts under this grant. As a result, all applicants must submit to BJA a letter on official agency letterhead that demonstrates the commitment of agency leaders to support the efforts under this grant program. When BJA reviews your applications and when the peer reviewers review your applications, different weight is given to each section of the narrative and supporting materials. Please note the different weights on this slide. And you can also find it on page 10 of the solicitation.

There's also several priority areas for this solicitation. Priority consideration is one of the many factors that OJP considers when we're making funding decisions, and it is in no way a guarantee of an award. In FY 2021, OJP will give priority considerations to applications that demonstrate ways in which their projects will advance work that promotes civil rights, increases access to justice, supports crime victims, protects the public from crime and evolving threats, and builds trust between law enforcement and

the community. In addition, if applicable, OJP will give priority considerations to applicants that demonstrate that the individuals who are intended to benefit from the requested grants reside in high-poverty areas or persistent-poverty counties. Please see the solicitation for more details on how to apply for the priority considerations.

And now some brief additional information that may be useful. Each solicitation outlines all the elements of the application in a section called Application and Submission Information. And you'll find a checklist at the end of the solicitation that we recommend that you use to ensure that you've required all of the required items. Finally, if you are a law enforcement agency that runs detention facilities, for example a jail, you must be certified by an approved independent credentialing body or have started the certification process to be eligible for FY 2021 DOJ discretionary funding, which includes the funding available in this program. The certification requirement also applies to proposed subawardees. To become certified, the law enforcement agency must meet two mandatory conditions. First, the agency's use of force policies adhere to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, and two, the agency's use of force policies prohibit chokeholds, except in situations where use of deadly force is allowed by law. This is a new requirement, and if you have questions or you want more detailed information, please visit the link. It's cops.usdoj.gov/SafePolicingEO.

And now we've reached our last section, how and when to apply. As you may be aware, OJP has switched from its old Grants Management System to the new JustGrants system for application, submission, and award management. JustGrants offers several submission enhancements, including a streamlined end-to-end process, which enables applicants and grantees to move seamlessly through the full grants management lifecycle. It gives applicants and award recipients new ways to manage their own entity information and that of users in the system. And it allows for new roles like a new entity administrator role that is assigned to the user who creates the SAM.gov account. One thing to note is that this system requires a longer lead time than in past years. So please do plan in advance.

There's two steps to the application process. In step 1, applicants must submit an SF-424 and SF-LLL at Grants.gov. The deadline to complete step 1 is July 12, 2021. And you must complete this stage before you go on to complete step 2. In step 2 of the process, applicants submit the full application, including all attachments, at JusticeGrants.usdoj.gov. This due date is July 26, 2021. We want to make sure that this new process of using JustGrants to apply is as smooth and easy as possible. One key resource to help you apply is the application mechanics of eLearning videos. By viewing the eLearning videos, job aids, DOJ application checklists, and other resources, applicants will have all the information needed to successfully navigate the mechanics

of submitting an application. There are live links on this site, and the presentation will be posted on BJA's FY 21 Funding Opportunity page. And this slide includes the DOJ application submission checklist. This checklist includes how to prepare to apply; completing the abbreviated application in Grants.gov; entity onboarding and JustGrants access; completing, reviewing, certifying, and submitting your application in JustGrants; and other helpful user tips. Here we have included some additional resources you might consider accessing as you work through your application. You can access recording and the slide deck from previous webinars. You can refer to the JustGrants Training Application Submission page for additional information on the application submission process. And bookmark the JustGrants Training page for updates. Yes, our main word of advice is just give yourself plenty of time when you are using our new system.

If you find that you need some help, here is some important contact information. For technical assistance with submitting the SF-424 and SF-LLL in Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov customer support hotline, or the web page, or the email, which are all listed on this slide. The support hotline operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, except on federal holidays. For assistance with submitting the full application in the JustGrants system, contact the JustGrants service desk. The service desk operates 5 a.m. to 9 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, Sunday, and federal holidays. Finally, for assistance with any unforeseen Grants.gov or JustGrants technical issues beyond an applicant's control that prevent it from submitting its application by the deadline or any other requirements in this solicitation, contact the National Criminal Justice Reference Service's Response Center. And the contact information again is on this slide. The Response Center hours of operation are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, and 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. eastern time on the solicitation close date.

Finally, we ask and we hope that you want to stay connected, and so here are some ways to stay connected and make sure you are aware of what's happening with BJA and all of the relevant funding opportunities. Just one more slide with some more websites for funding opportunities to help you. And, finally, we just want to thank you again for listening into this webinar. Please note the application deadlines of July 12 for Grants.gov and July 26 for the full application in JustGrants. And now Hilary and I can stay on for a little while and answer any questions that the attendees have. So, Daryl, I'll turn it over to you.

DARYL FOX: Thanks, Jessa. And just a reminder, the slides, the transcript, and the recording from today's webinar will be posted to the BJA website within approximately 5 to 10 days. So you can go back and reference this as you need to, either for links,

contact information, or information about the solicitation itself, and so definitely keep a lookout for that. First question is “Can juvenile facilities apply? Are they eligible?”

JESSA WILCOX: Yeah. The eligibility is for state, local, city, and tribal agencies.

DARYL FOX: “Regarding the authorization for real property use and design from a certified contractor, does that have to be ready and sent with the submission or once it’s awarded?”

JESSA WILCOX: It is a part of the submission and part of the application. If they’re not able to get it fully done in time, it will be something that we would put a hold on the budget award before making the award. So there would be a hold before it was approved, but you could still submit it if you need to.

DARYL FOX: “Regarding JustGrants, is there a separate user access password in JustGrants if there’s already one set up in Grants.gov for a particular applicant?”

JESSA WILCOX: Daryl, I’m not sure. Can you answer that one?

DARYL FOX: I want to say, yes, that would be a separate entity as it is a separate system, but I would definitely encourage the question--the person who asked that question to the JustGrants website. Their information is here. 833-872-5175. You can also email them at JustGrants.Support@usdoj.gov. But I do believe those are separate entities and will require separate user IDs and passwords, because the user or the submitter may be different for each. One person did ask for the address--URL where the PowerPoint will be posted. Our host will be entering that into the chat. So look out for that. He’ll provide you the link on the BJA website for that. Next question is “Is the award limited to one facility within an agency or can it be several facilities within one agency?”

JESSA WILCOX: It can be several facilities within an agency. That is fine.

DARYL FOX: And regarding eligibility again. “Are universities eligible to apply or partner with other agencies?”

JESSA WILCOX: They cannot be the applicant but they could be a subrecipient for the applicant.

DARYL FOX: “As a county, do we need board authorization prior to the application?”

JESSA WILCOX: I'm sorry. I'm not sure what they're county--I think that would be something they would have to look and see with their county.

DARYL FOX: "Do we need a physical location identified during the application? We have two sites that are currently considering."

JESSA WILCOX: I think that would be okay. I think, in the narrative, they would just have to explain, you know, why they are still considering both of these sites and how the program funds would be used, you know, for each site.

DARYL FOX: "Is the \$350,000 for the life of the award period, three years, or is that per year?"

JESSA WILCOX: That's for the life of the award period.

DARYL FOX: Another one regarding eligibility. "Can a community-based correctional facility or a halfway house apply?"

JESSA WILCOX: You know, I'm sorry, I think actually we'll have to get back to you on that because we have like--I don't know. Hilary, I'm not sure if you have an answer to that or if we should just get back to it. I want--I just want to make sure I don't misspeak.

HILARY CUTHRELL: Yeah. So I would--let's just parking lot that question and we can get a firm answer, but I would suggest going back to the application and just verifying that it is a state or local facility, but we can get clarification on the community--the community-type facility.

DARYL FOX: And for that person that did ask that, I would also recommend if you could just perhaps enter that question to the OJP Response Center, to the email listed here, grants@ncjrs.gov. They'll be able to perhaps assist directly or they'll work with Jessa and Hilary on an answer for that. So just to get that logged in, I probably recommend to definitely email grants@ncjrs.gov with that question. Thank you.

JESSA WILCOX: Thanks, Daryl. That's great.

DARYL FOX: "Can the grant cover any psychoeducational classes, case management, or clinical support for incarcerated caregivers and their families or must this strictly be used for physical renovations?"

JESSA WILCOX: It does not have to strictly be used for renovations. If you--I would just, you know, look at the language in the solicitation, but, no, it doesn't--it doesn't have to be for renovations.

DARYL FOX: "Can someone from TA assist in establishing the cost of creating quality training for correctional staff?"

JESSA WILCOX: Hilary, I'll let you take that since it's a TA question.

HILARY CUTHRELL: Yes. Daryl, sorry, could you repeat that?

DARYL FOX: Yeah. "Is there assistance in establishing the cost of creating quality training for correctional staff?"

HILARY CUTHRELL: Yes. So technical assistance would be happy to assist in that endeavor. Some of the training we can deliver would be something that would be stemming from the model practice document that would provide assistance and sort of support for staff. But if they were--if there was a specific parenting program, coaching program, or an existing curriculum out there that you all were interested in, we could help sort of navigate that system and provide support for receiving that curriculum or program specifically. But I will say, in the past, what we've been able to do is really pull a number of different subject matter experts together and create a training or a curriculum to be delivered to staff and administrators that support and tailor to the specific nuances of your correctional facility and the--essentially, the topics and concepts that are most important to you, as they pertain to the initiatives that are being implemented. So the long and short answer is we can absolutely aid in assessing and assisting you with tracking down a specific curriculum or a program as it pertains to parents of--parents that have children while they're incarcerated within your facility and/or we can actually create training and/or a program that can be delivered based on your needs and what it is that you would like to see delivered to your facility. So it's kind of like a collaborative endeavor.

DARYL FOX: Next question is "Are there standard performance measures required for this grant in the form of an evaluation?"

JESSA WILCOX: There's not a formal evaluation. There are performance measures which will--are explained in the solicitation, or there's a link in the solicitation where you can find out more information, but there's no formal evaluation that will be done.

DARYL FOX: "Is there explanation/clarification on the involvement of DOJ regarding progress after the grant ends?"

JESSA WILCOX: Yes. You can find that in the solicitation, and it's on page 5 of the solicitation. And this is in accordance with DOJ real property standards, so this is for any time grantees use federal funds on property. So I'll just direct you to page 5, the bottom of page 5.

DARYL FOX: "Can funds be used to cover salary for a project coordinator that will continue to function as the visitation coordinator?"

JESSA WILCOX: Yes. I think that would be an acceptable use of funds.

DARYL FOX: "Will there be more grants similar to this in the future?"

JESSA WILCOX: That is--we hope so. You know, we're dependent on Congress' appropriation. So we hope so, and we hope that if there's really a good response to the solicitation, it helps us make the argument that this is something that's really needed and desired by the corrections field.

DARYL FOX: "Can we partner with a local nonprofit with these funds to provide parenting education?"

HILARY CUTHRELL: Yes.

JESSA WILCOX: Yup. They can be a subrecipient. I'm sorry, go ahead, Hilary.

HILARY CUTHRELL: No. Just--you hit the nail on the head. They can be a subrecipient.

DARYL FOX: "Can the grant be used to fund dissertation that is being conducted in partnership with a statewide virtual visitation facility?"

HILARY CUTHRELL: That's an--that's a--that's a...

JESSA WILCOX: Yeah, go ahead.

HILARY CUTHRELL: I would say that would kind of come up in terms of information sharing in data. In terms of funding, I will hold my answer and refer to Jessa. But I think that would be site-specific, and--in order to answer sort of what data and statistics were

being collected and how they were utilized. In terms of funding, Jessa, I'll have you answer that question.

JESSA WILCOX: Right. It would have to be--I mean, again, as a subrecipient, but it would have to--somehow the applicant would have to tie how that furthers the objectives and the goals of this program. So if they could make that strong connection then they can make an argument for it. But it's hard to know just from this question if they'd be able to.

DARYL FOX: "The grant is for 36 months. Does that mean the completion of the family-friendly visiting space must be completed within that timeframe?"

JESSA WILCOX: It has--it depends on what the applicant puts in their application. So the--you know, the applicant should submit a narrative and a budget for 36 months and explain what they believe that they can accomplish within the 36 months with the grant funds and with the technical assistance provided by NIC.

DARYL FOX: "Is food an allowable cost within this grant?"

JESSA WILCOX: I'm sorry, Daryl, can you repeat that please?

DARYL FOX: Yeah. "Is food an allowable cost within this grant?"

JESSA WILCOX: Oh, food. I mean, again, I think I would just look at the language of the solicitation, and if you could connect it to the goals and objectives of the solicitation, then there could be an argument that it would be allowable.

DARYL FOX: "Are there any methodological restrictions on the evaluation?"

HILARY CUTHRELL: Daryl, I can't think of any.

JESSA WILCOX: Yeah. No. Same.

DARYL FOX: This particular person--"We have both jails and prisons under our department within our state. Are we able to apply for both categories?"

JESSA WILCOX: Yes. I think so. Just, you know, make sure that your application for jails is specific to the jails and prisons is specific to the prisons.

DARYL FOX: So it may have been asked in a different way earlier but it's worded a little differently. "Can the grant cover more than one county and multiple facilities?"

JESSA WILCOX: Would--so would this be to--if this is two government, two county agencies applying together, one would still need to be the lead applicant and then there could be a subrecipient relationship, but there can only be one lead applicant in this solicitation.

DARYL FOX: "Can you speak to any age restrictions on the children of the incarcerated parents?"

HILARY CUTHRELL: There wouldn't be a restriction on the age of the children identified. We specifically cater--or we specifically designed our implementation strategies for children under the age of 18. So as long as with--as it's within that range, that's typically our target population. And we just sort of narrow in on that age range just because if we go out beyond that, it may be difficult to tailor our specific programming, or instruments, or physical spaces beyond that into adulthood. So up to 18. 0 to 18.

DARYL FOX: "What do you define as upgrades of child-friendly family visiting spaces?"

HILARY CUTHRELL: Jessa, I can give this a shot, and then please feel free to weigh in. If you take a look in the model practice document, we provide a number of different examples of how sort of giving an update to one's physical space in terms of visitation lobbies and visitation spaces. And we invite everyone to be, you know, creative, think outside of the box. So that could mean anything from finding space in an outdoor area of your facility and creating maybe an outdoor space for children and families to connect or have enhanced family visits, which we typically sort of describe as not just sort of a visit where the family is sort of sitting in a typical visitation space but rather engaging and interacting and having--maybe sharing an activity together.

So it could mean something along the lines of sort of extending or expanding the space and identifying new, you know, physical space to let that sort of play out. But it could also be--you know, if you go back to the model practice document, we give really great examples of facilities that have implemented changes such as redesigning the space as it--sort of as it is. So painting the walls, creating sort of like book nooks. We had one site that, you know, put a--put a tremendous amount of sort of like decals and fun activities for kids to utilize and play with as they are visiting their parents. Creating bookshelves, crayons, coloring books, things of that nature. All the way to, like I said, some of these enhanced visitation spaces. We've worked with facilities that put on a dance, and created space for, you know, the DJ and a pizza party and things like that. So it's really,

you know--you know, we're open, and I think Jesse would agree with me, to sort of getting creative with it. And, you know, starting from--we want to meet you right where you're at and expand upon that and assist you in whatever way we can to really capitalize on this opportunity and make this space, you know, age-appropriate and family-friendly for all families. So kind of take that and run with it, if you will. And, Jessa, please reel me back in if I've gone too far, but that's kind of where we're at.

JESSA WILCOX: No. That's perfect. So like, you know, your incarcerated population better than we do. So if this is what you think would, you know, make--really enhance the visiting spaces, then you should put that in the narrative and really make that argument. So no need to reel you in, Hilary, at all.

DARYL FOX: "Are incarcerated grandparents eligible under this program?"

HILARY CUTHBERT: So, in the past, we have specified--we have identified individuals at correctional facilities that personally identify as parental guardians of biological or nonbiological children, so I would argue that, you know, we would leave that up to the correctional facility to sort of identify who is taking a parental role, and kind of go from there. If there's a grandparent that identifies as the, you know, current caregiver, primary caregiver, informal--informally or formally, I would see that as considered a parental figure for a child. But, again, that's--you know, we would definitely work with each site specifically in identifying, you know, parents that would be utilizing the resources in that space.

JESSA WILCOX: Yup. And one of the objectives is to create family-strengthening cultures in correctional facilities. And for many families, the grandparents are really an important figure, so I agree with Hilary. I think that would be fine.

DARYL FOX: "Could funds be used to purchase tablets to facilitate increased interactions with schools and children? Our internet is poor in our facility. Could the grant be used to improve the Wi-Fi or for the use of tablets for live streaming?"

HILARY CUTHRELL: So, Jessa, I'll let you touch on the funding part of that or the financial aspect of that question, but we encourage as many forms of contact and communication as readily available in any correctional facility. I've worked with a number of facilities that really have to do a lot of troubleshooting around, you know, having--sort of overcoming the barriers that exist within very thick and sturdy physical spaces, meaning the walls of the institutions, in order to get you know, Internet access and stable access to permit those forms of communication, but, you know, it can be done. And so I--that is definitely within the realm of the scope of this project is

navigating and finding creative ways for children to connect with their parents, whether it is on tablets, whether it's through the phone, contact visit, or enhancing, you know, the visitation that is currently provided. So with utilizing tablets or any other forms of communication, this could be--you know, again, I'll leave it up to you all to kind of get creative with it. But, you know, finding creative ways for children to stay connected to their parents, outside of the scope of Plexiglas, contact visits, and phone calls, I think, is absolutely within the realm of meeting the needs of children and families, especially in light of the pandemic, which really put a barrier to the contact and communication which is critical between children and their families. And then, Jessa, if you want to speak to the funding part around that, I will kick it over to you.

JESSA WILCOX: Sure. Yes. Several corrections facilities and different BJA-funded projects have been really relying on tablets for lots of different things, so that is a common thing that BJA funds, and it's definitely within the scope of this. And I love hearing thinking about trying to stay more connected with the child--like a child's school. I think that's really important as well.

DARYL FOX: Question within the same one, "Do we need to have the commitment from the other community partners by the deadline?"

JESSA WILCOX: That is not a requirement to the application. You don't have to--you know, send in like a signed letter. But if you are planning in your budget for subrecipients, it would be helpful to know that they are on board. It just goes to the strength of your project.

HILARY CUTHRELL: And I would also add that, you know, as long as you identify that entity, part of the technical assistance is providing assistance to strengthen that partnership and find ways in which collaboration could be utilized to its fullest strength. So if this is just kind of a new partnership, that is, you know, totally fine. We can, again, assist you in sort of capitalizing on the partnerships and making the collaboration as strong as possible as we, you know, deliver the technical assistance with--within this program.

DARYL FOX: "Can the grant be used to increase information sharing in other languages or translation services on our website specifically?"

JESSA WILCOX: Definitely. Right. That would definitely assist in revising practices, policies that support child-friendly visitation experiences. So I would say yes. Hilary, I don't know if you have...

HILARY CUTHRELL: Absolutely.

JESSA WILCOX: ...a different take or...

HILARY CUTHRELL: Absolutely.

JESSA WILCOX: Okay. Great.

HILARY CUTHRELL: I think the need is there. And I--this--yeah. It's a very important aspect of increasing communication, so absolutely.

DARYL FOX: That's all the questions in the queue at this time. Once again, if you do have a question, you can please enter it at the bottom right hand side, the three dots. Select Q&A, send that, and our presenters will be glad to answer it. Again, if you do have any questions regarding Grants.gov, JustGrants, or just programmatic requirements regarding a solicitation, you can jot down these numbers and emails here for Grants.gov, JustGrants, and the OJP Response Center. Another question has come in. "We are not sure of a physical location as of yet. Do we need it to apply?"

HILARY CUTHRELL: I think the way that I would answer this, and, Jessa, BJA is reviewing the applicants, so, you know, please feel free to weigh in. But I would argue that if you had support from maybe however many institutions you had support of at the time of your application and you have that in writing, maybe part of this process and implementation is deciding where best to situate the family-friendly visitation and some of the implementations. I will say in the past, as Jessa mentioned before, we have worked with, you know, a larger system, more than just one actual physical facility. So I would argue that if you have a commitment from the facilities that are under consideration and you make an argument as to why one of those or each of those would be beneficial in receiving this opportunity, I don't see why it wouldn't be considered. And I'm going to take it over to Jessa.

JESSA WILCOX: Yeah. That would be fine for the application. Basically, probably what would happen where there might be a hold on some of the grant funds. You know, you'd be awarded but there would be a hold remaining until--especially, if you're going to be renovating or expanding, until we know we had that. Then, you know, you can work with the TA provider. Once you identify something on the ones that was approved, then the hold would be removed on those grant funds to begin that renovation or expansion.

DARYL FOX: "Can bonding trips be part of this grant due to the length of time that many of these children have not seen their parents?"

HILARY CUTHBERT: So as that question reads, I think we would have to define bonding trips. The way that I read it, bonding trips were sort of a connection in terms of--maybe expanded time of visitating--of visitation and sort of spending time together would fall under the category of enhanced visits. And so we're absolutely open to any and all creative ways of thinking of connecting children with their parents. So that could mean, you know, there are--there are such amazing, innovative ways of doing that that currently exist around our country in both jail and prison facilities. But those sort of bonding opportunities that exist for a lengthy amount of time can kind of play out in different ways. I've seen them play out in like a weekend trip, you know, a camping kind of excursion. I've seen it played out in like a carnival setting over the course of a couple of days or a fair over the course of a couple of days. And, of course, that has--requires a tremendous amount of partnership building and resources from the community in collaboration with the facility. So, again, I would argue to make it as creatively possible for children to reconnect with their families. And we definitely recognize that there are several children out there that have lost contact with their--with their incarcerated parent or maybe have not been physically present in their lives, so the extended amount of time that children can spend with their families, especially indicated in your question, is something that we would absolutely support.

DARYL FOX: This one was asked a little earlier in a different manner. Just to verbalize again, "Do we need county board resolution to apply for this grant?"

JESSA WILCOX: I guess--I'm sorry. I'm just not quite--are they saying this like, in particular, this grant as opposed to any grant, or are they just saying in general? I'm sorry. If--just to ask if they could clarify.

DARYL FOX: Yeah. If you could just clarify that question again, for that person that did ask that, we'd be happy to take a look at it and expand on that.

JESSA WILCOX: Thanks.

DARYL FOX: That seems to be all that's in the queue at this time.

JESSA WILCOX: Yeah, I mean, if they're talking about the authorization for real property use perhaps, I mean, that--I mean, that was--you just need to submit documentation from the appropriate governing body authorizing the use of this facility for the purpose of renovation, expansion, or replacement.

DARYL FOX: And the clarification is, "Does the county need to provide a resolution of support or additional funding to apply?"

JESSA WILCOX: They definitely do not need to do additional funding. We do require a letter from like the agency head. So, for example, if the count--I guess, like the local county oversaw the jails and they were the agency head, then yes. But it wouldn't have to be a resolution. I'm sorry. I'm not sure if I'm--if I'm missing it. But if they want to submit it in writing, then we could do a back and forth. That might be a little bit more helpful.

DARYL FOX: That seems to be all the questions in the queue at this time. Do you want to hang on a couple more minutes to see if anybody has anything else?

HILARY CUTHBERT: I was just going to reiterate to please feel free to reach out to myself or Jessa if you have any clarifying questions or need to be redirected to the resources or the application information, we're happy to help you.

JESSA WILCOX: Yes. If you have questions for me, please submit them through the grants@ncjrs.gov Response Center, just so they can be documented and made publicly available.

DARYL FOX: Okay. That seems to be all that's in the queue. So with that, on behalf of the Bureau of Justice Assistance and our panelists today, I'm going to thank you for joining today's webinar. This will end today's presentation.

HILARY CUTHBERT: Thank you.

JESSA WILCOX: Thanks, everyone. Thanks, Daryl.