

Friends Foundation for the Aging

**Year-end Report & Reapplication Proposal Form**

(limit 3 pages)

Date: 3/14/2024

Organization: Friends Home in Kennett

TIN & Formal organization name: 23-0604260

Friends Boarding Home of Western Quarterly Meeting

Contact name, phone, email: Wright Horne, (609) 774-3049, whorne@fhkennett.org

Amount requested: \$10,000

Project title:

Original title: "Health & Wellness for Aging Adults". After consultation with Susan Hoskins, the thrust of the project became "Montessori Lifestyle and Wellness" due to the work Friends Home had done over the past few years to integrate the Montessori principles into all our programming, with assistance from FFA, for which we are very grateful. Here is what Christine McDonald, our Executive Director, said: "Thank you for giving us this challenge because it has really widened our thought process and we have some wonderful ideas we are putting into motion with these grant monies."

Please answer the following questions clearly and concisely:

1. What is the problem you identified? Has it changed?

Reinterpreting and reimagining an entire stage of living, initiating the changes at Friends Home that this reinterpreting and reimagining would dictate. This stage is now known as "old age". And it's not really about age. It's about function. Residents who are actively engaged seem to be happier, have an easier time socializing with people, and are looking physically healthier. At Friends Home, our goal is to help our residents make the most of their abilities and situations. In fact, the later years of our lives are a new opportunity for growth and fulfillment, and we need to look at this stage differently.

We still see the main issues that confront our residents as being the slow but inevitable loss of mental acuity, and also isolation.

Overlaying the Montessori principles onto the concept of Wellness – the 7 pillars of wellness, described below - changed this to some extent.

2. What actions did you take to address the problem?

We began to realize that this new approach should recognize our residents' ability to understand, accept, and act upon their capacity to lead a purpose-filled and engaged life. This new approach of ours fits with the concept of "wellness" and the 7 pillars of health - Physical, Mental, Emotional, Vocational, Environmental, Spiritual, Social - and challenged us to think how we would meet the health needs in our community. We instituted new programming that fit this new paradigm. We became more proactive in suggesting new approaches to our residents, as we began to customize our activities for each of them.

3. What did you learn? Will you make any changes in the coming year?

We learned that this new Montessori Lifestyle and Wellness combination suited our residents better. We were able to shift staff roles from designing and delivering large group programs to the role of 'engagement coach' with the purpose of helping each client to live the life that they chose to live.

4. How have you engaged any partners/collaborators in implementation or funding? Have you considered how to sustain the program?

We have expanded our grant applications for the therapy portions of the activities. We use local instructors/facilitators for programs. We will reach out to other funders for help going forward.

5. How do you know your actions had an impact? Please describe those who participated, outputs and outcomes. Stories or photos are welcome.

We were concerned when we first made application for this program that we would have difficulty measuring impact and outcomes. We developed a form that would track changes in each of the seven pillars, but because of staff changes (our Montessori facilitator left in early 2023, and our current one started in October) we were not successful in implementing its use. This is an area for improvement for the coming year.

6. Is there anything else you would like FFA to know about this project?

Any organization that is thinking about implementing either the Montessori Lifestyle or a Health & Wellness program should consider combining them, as we did with the help and encouragement of FFA.

7. Feedback on your interaction with FFA would be helpful. Are there ways we can help beyond the grant?

We have been very appreciative of the efforts of FFA reaching out to Friends Home to check on progress, and to offer ideas to improve our original concepts and to make them more relevant. Our staff is brainstorming the best way to merge the 7 pillars of health and wellness with our Montessori Lifestyle program. We love this approach and thank you for facilitating this collaboration between our programs- brilliant idea!

Budgets and use of funds attached.

Has your 501c3 status changed? No.