

FUNDING APPLICATION

GENERAL INFORMATION

Organization Information

Legal Name: Wonders & Worries, Inc.		Federal Tax ID#: 74-3012982		501(c)(3) Public Charity 509 (a)(1)	
Address: 9101 Burnet Rd, Ste. 205		City: Austin		State: Texas	
				Zip Code: 78758	
Website: www.wondersandworries.org		Fax: (512) 329-5757		United Way Funded: Yes	

Fiscal Year:

July 01 to June 30

Head Of Organization

Name: Alex Gabbi		Title: Executive Director	
E-Mail Address: alex@wondersandworries.org		Phone: (512) 329-5757	

Application Contact

Name: Donna Bueche	Title: Grant Writer	E-Mail Address: grants@wondersandworries.org	Phone: (512) 329-5757
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Has the organization applied to the Najim Family Foundation in the past and been declined?

No

Grant Amount Requested \$:	Total Project Budget \$:	Organization's Annual budget \$:
\$25,000	\$91,853	\$1,201,693

Mission Statement:

The mission of Wonders & Worries is to provide free, professional support for children and teenagers through a parent's serious illness.

PROJECT INFORMATION

Program / Project Title:

Illness Education and Coping Support for San Antonio Families

PROJECT TIMELINE

Start Date	End Date
07/01/2020	06/30/2021

Harvey E. Najim Family Foundation Priorities:

Mental Health

Program / Project Description:

Wonders & Worries opened in 2001 in Austin after our co-founder, a child life specialist working in a public hospital, met parents who were facing a serious illness, but who faced uncertainty about what to tell their children. Their worries reflected a gap in healthcare services that Wonders & Worries was created to fill.

Since then, Wonders & Worries has impacted the lives of over 9,250 individuals and 2,300 families. We have three offices in Austin, one in Williamson County, one in San Antonio, and plan to open in Houston this year.

In 2017, San Antonio families began receiving services from Wonders & Worries upon the request of the Children's Bereavement Center of South Texas (CBCST). The CBCST reached out to Wonders & Worries to fill an unmet need. The CBCST provide bereavement and grief support, and about 25% of their client families face an anticipated loss. To more effectively address the needs of families who faced a serious parental illness but not necessarily an imminent loss, the CBCST asked if we would consider collaborating with them.

In partnership with the CBCST and the START Center for Cancer Care, which provided--at no cost to us--space for a playroom and office in their Northwest San Antonio location, Wonders & Worries established a presence in San Antonio in July 2017.

Last fall, we reached a point where we could not add more clients without increasing the number of employees and, therefore, funding sources. We had served 355 individuals in two and one-half years, and our numbers were continuing to grow. To begin raising funds and growing our agency, we became an independent nonprofit in San Antonio on January 1, 2020. The full support of the CBCST and the START Center has made this possible. Graciously, the CBCST encouraged us to reach out to the Najim Family Foundation for financial support independently. Of course, we continue to tightly partner with CBCST from a clinical perspective.

For this request, we ask the Najim Family Foundation to consider a grant of \$25,000 to support our first full fiscal year as an independently operating nonprofit in San Antonio. This grant will help us continue to provide services at the START Center, who is continuing to provide us free space.

Data from the Texas Cancer Registry, along with nationwide cancer statistics, show us that an estimated 1,500 Bexar County families will face a cancer diagnosis by the end of this year. In addition to providing services for parents or caregivers with cancer (80% of our client families), Wonders & Worries also serves parents diagnosed with other illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes and ALS.

For children, a parent's serious healthcare crisis can be traumatic. Clinically, this experience is an adverse childhood experience or (ACE). ACEs can lead to adverse health outcomes and serious mental health issues if adequate support is not available. Serious parental illness affects families by producing emotions of confusion, anger, and fears of abandonment in children, and produces radical changes in their daily lives, which creates a disorienting home environment. Children may react to parental cancer by internalizing problems, withdrawing or becoming depressed, anxious and/or by developing post-traumatic stress symptoms. As Amy McGeady, former Wonders & Worries Board President notes, "I wish that this service had existed during my childhood, when my mother had ovarian cancer in the 1980s. I've spent many years healing the emotional scars of that time."

In a 2019 report issued by The Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute (MMHPI), researchers note that most families in San Antonio--and in Texas in general--do not seek behavioral health care for their children because the services are "siloed," not integrated into primary care services, and not well understood. The researchers advocate for a behavioral health care system whereby the mental health needs of children are detected earlier and addressed before the symptoms worsen. Wonders & Worries prevents the negative psychosocial outcomes in children by leading them through our evidence-based and copyrighted six-session Illness Education and Coping Curriculum. By participating in the curriculum, children can expect to gain:

- 1) Age-appropriate understanding of illness, treatments and side effects;
- 2) Strategies for identifying and expressing feelings related to changes in the family;
- 3) Skills for coping with stress, anger, sadness and fear; and

4) Connections to peers sharing similar experiences.

Wonders & Worries' child life staff, pediatric healthcare professionals who are clinically trained in the developmental impact of illness and injury, deliver the six-session curriculum individually, in English or Spanish, to children ages 2 - 18.

Our child life team also offers check-in sessions for children who have completed the six-session curriculum, anticipatory grief support for existing clients, parent support and consultations, and numerous educational opportunities for professionals. Additionally, for families facing the imminent death of a loved one, we provide short-term support after the death, at which point, we transition the family to the CBCST, who provides support to the family after the loved one has died.

This coming year, we anticipate providing services for 275 individuals in San Antonio. Over the last fiscal year, our San Antonio client base grew by 40%, so we know we can do more, but we need your help to make this a reality. We are currently at capacity and require additional staff to service new demand. Thank you for considering our request and providing an opportunity to grow our services in Bexar County.

Evaluation Plan:

Internally, to measure the success of our Illness Education and Coping program, we distribute surveys twice per year to new clients. Surveys are in Spanish and English. Success is reached when 80% or more of survey respondents show improvements in their ability to parent around the illness; their ability to manage stress; and their overall satisfaction. We also anticipate that at least 70% of survey respondents will report that the anxiety of their child has been reduced after receiving services.

Our six-session curriculum has been proven effective by research. In 2019 researchers at University of Texas' Steve Hicks School of Social Work completed a randomized, controlled trial of 50 Wonders & Worries' families. Data from the study revealed that participation in our program improved parenting skills and confidence, the family's emotional well-being, and children's behavioral-emotional adjustment while decreasing parents' concerns about the impact of their illness on their child.

Plans to sustain project beyond the term of this request:

Wonders & Worries has a comprehensive development plan which provides a diversified, stable, and sustaining source of revenue. Through this diversification, we provide opportunities for donors to contribute in a variety of ways and giving levels. Our development plan includes a planned giving program, an endowment, monthly giving options, grants, and corporate sponsorships. Further, we are exploring alternate sources of revenue from non-traditional fundraising sources, such as earned revenue from our Registered Wonders & Worries Provider program, a training program whereby professionals become certified to provide the Wonders & Worries six-session curriculum in their own community. Also for professionals, we have an online continuing education unit (CEU) available for a fee. Finally, we are working on an activity kit which will be available for purchase and delivery to families throughout the United States who are struggling with a serious parental illness but are unable to attend our in-person services.

Children Impacted:

How many unduplicated children will the TOTAL PROJECT INITIATIVE impact?

165

How many unduplicated children will NFF REQUESTED FUNDS impact?

83

Please provide the percentage of each group below that will be served by the project in which funds are being requested. Do not leave any area blank. If that specific group will not be served, include zero. The percentage should total 100%.

A. Population Served Age		B. Population Served Ethnicity	
Infants (0-5)	4%	African American	1%
Children (6-13)	64%	Asian American	3%
Young Adults (14-18)	32%	Caucasian	37%

TOTAL:	100%	Hispanic/Latino	44%
		Native American	0%
		Other and Define	15%
		TOTAL:	100%

City Council District for Which Children are Being Served:

District8

Line item Budget:

Line Item Description	Total Project Funds Allocation	Najim Funds Allocation
Employee Expenses (direct salaried staff to provide services to clients and outreach into the community)	\$53,919	\$17,793
Payroll Taxes & Benefits (including health/life insurance)	\$10,784	\$3,559
Contract Labor (hourly staff - weekend / evening support)	\$18,460	\$2,398
Advertising & Promotion (media, design, promotional items)	\$3,000	\$0
Information Technology (laptops, software subscriptions)	\$2,190	\$0
Office Expense (paper, toner, and miscellaneous supplies)	\$500	\$0
Printing & Publications	\$500	\$0
Program Supplies (includes supplies for coping kits/memory boxes/other activities, books related to illness and grief for children and parents [ex. Chill & Spill], and snacks/water)	\$2,500	\$1,250
TOTAL:	\$91,853	\$25,000

OTHER FUNDING RESOURCES

For Project being Requested: Funding sources and amounts, pending and committed.

PROJECT - PENDING

Funder Name	Amount Requested
Kronkosky Charitable Foundation	\$37,500
TOTAL:	\$37,500

PROJECT - COMMITTED

Funder Name	Amount Requested
START Center for Cancer Care - In kind gift (rent)	\$18,000
TOTAL:	\$18,000

Other funding sources and amounts, pending and committed not specific to this request.

ALL OTHER ORGANIZATION REQUESTS - PENDING

Funder Name	Amount Requested
Brown Foundation	\$25,000
Lind Family Foundation 5,000	\$5,000
Fondren Foundation	\$25,000
Elkins Foundation	\$25,000
Northwest Austin Rotary Club	\$2,000
Sterling-Turner Foundation	\$25,000
Texas Stars Foundation	\$5,255
United Way Wilco	\$15,000
Lola Wright Foundation	\$16,636
Telecommunications and Regulatory Affairs - City of Austin	\$2,500
Moody Foundation	\$30,000
Livestrong Foundation	\$125,000
TOTAL:	\$301,391

ALL OTHER ORGANIZATION REQUESTS - COMMITTED

Funder Name	Amount Requested
Insperty	\$5,000
Lowe Foundation	\$40,000
Alice Kleberg Reynolds	\$35,000
William Stamps Farrish Foundation	\$40,000
United Way Williamson County	\$5,000
Carol Rylander	\$6,000
Wells Fargo Advisors	\$3,500
Jonathan Davison	\$4,500
Greystar Real Estate Partners	\$2,500
Laurence Tokaz, M.D.	\$13,500
Melissa Hicks	\$3,600
James and Laurie Heinsteins	\$10,000
Nana and Michael Haney	\$1,500
TOTAL:	\$170,100

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

What percentage of your board contributes financially to the organization?
94%
If Board giving is not at 100%, please explain why?
One of our board members who has volunteered, donated, and served as a board member since 2010, rolled off the board in 2019, and chose not to contribute financially the last year.
How are board members expected to participate in your organization?

The following expectations are set forth for all Board of Directors members during their two-year term:

Competence - members are expected to serve on standing committees and/or task forces that are complementary to their skill set.

Contacts - members are expected to proactively introduce other members of the community to Wonders & Worries who could help us through volunteerism, funding, committee service, raising awareness or other engagement.

Commitment - members are expected to participate in at least one Wonders & Worries event per year. Participation in an event also means engaging their community/network of friends and encouraging them to attend as well. This also satisfies their financial commitment.

We currently have a 21-member Board. Most live and work in Travis County but we are recruiting representatives from San Antonio, and once they are confirmed, we will begin rotating the geographic host location for our quarterly Board meetings.

LIST OF BOARD DIRECTORS

Name & Office Held	Corporate Affiliation
Brent Metschan (Board President)	Sales Director, Vertebrae, Inc.
Jim Weinstein (Board Treasurer)	Data Foundry
Kim Akel	Director, Physician and Community Relations, St. David's Healthcare
Meredith Bagan	Community Volunteer
Tom Bogardus	Mulberry Real Estate Partners
Lindsey Boyd	Khoros
Kristen Doyle, JD	Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas, University of Texas
John Gillis, PhD	President, LeadershipX
Steve Goldsmith	Atlassian
Morgan Grigsby, JD	Grigsby Petroleum
Kelly Hyde	Community Volunteer
Nicole Julian	Community Volunteer
John Lebowitz, MBA	Community Volunteer
Meaghan Mooney, RN, BSN, OCN	RN Patient Navigator, Seton Healthcare Family
Sarah DeRocher Moore	Chief Marketing Officer, SourceDay
Suzanne Soares	Director of Account Management, Shelton-Keller Group
Melissa S. Sykes, JD	McGinnis Lochridge
Courtney Yau, MD	Physician, Texas Oncology

Signature

Alex Gabbi