

**American Rescue Plan State Fiscal Recovery Fund Recommendation
Cover Sheet**

Please submit this document with any recommendations for funding from Rhode Island's allocation of federal fiscal recovery funds available through the American Rescue Plan Act. This information will be made available to the public along with any detailed documents submitted that describe the proposal. It is encouraged that such documents identify clear goals and objectives and quantifiable metrics.

This is not a formal request for funds, and submission of recommendations does not guarantee a response, public hearing, or appropriation from the General Assembly.

Name of Lead Agency: J. Arthur Trudeau Memorial Center

Additional agencies making recommendation (if applicable): NA

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Brief Project Description (attachments should contain details)

Expansion of services for children with Autism

Total request: \$ 5,000,000.00

One-time or Recurring Expense? One-time

ARPA Eligibility Category (check all that apply) – See link for further information

<https://www.rilegislature.gov/commissions/arpa/commdocs/Treasury%20-%20Quick-Reference-Guide.pdf>

- Respond to the public health emergency and its economic impacts X
- Premium pay to eligible workers _____
- Government services/state revenue replacement _____
- Water/sewer/broadband infrastructure _____



J. Arthur Trudeau Memorial Center ARPA Funding Request

Executive Summary

The J. Arthur Trudeau Memorial Center (the Trudeau Center) respectfully requests **\$5,000,000.00** in American Rescue Plan State Fiscal Recovery funding for the expansion of services for children with Autism and developmental delays. This would be achieved with the purchase/lease and subsequent build-out of a suitable building in the northern part of the state where our ABA Center-Based Program, Pathways Strategic Teaching Center and a possible satellite for our Early Intervention program could expand and increase our daily census of students and program participants.

Background

Founded in 1964, the Trudeau Center's mission is to promote an enhanced quality of life for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

The Trudeau Center was created out of a necessity and belief that people with disabilities should be allowed full citizenship within their own communities. The agency strives every day to provide comfort, compassion, education, enrichment, and support to disabled individuals of all ages and abilities.

The Trudeau Center employs over 400 people and offers the following services to its more than 1000 children and adult program participants:

Trudeau's Children's Services

- ABA Center-Based Program
- Pathways Strategic Teaching Center (School program for autistic children)
- Early Intervention
- Home-Based Children's Services

Trudeau's Adult Services

- Community Support Services
- Employment Concepts
- Group Homes for Adults with Disabilities
- Self-Directed Services
- Shared Living Arrangements



Please note that this request for funding includes a brief explanation of the services that Trudeau's Pathways Strategic Teaching Center and ABA Center-Based Program offers children with disabilities, along with the Trudeau Center's reasons for wanting to broaden these programs' reach to a larger geographical area and to more children and families.

The Programs

Pathways Strategic Teaching Center

In 1998, the Trudeau Center established Pathways Strategic Teaching Center, a comprehensive education and treatment program servicing individuals with autism and other related developmental disabilities ages 5-21. For 23 years Pathways has successfully used scientifically validated teaching strategies to improve the lives of children with autism, and their families. With school programs located in Coventry and Warwick, Pathways educates students from all over Rhode Island as well as a small number of students from Massachusetts and Connecticut.

Fully approved by the Rhode Island Department of Education, Pathways offers an intensive, highly acclaimed education and treatment program through a cadre of professionals including board certified behavior analysts, special education teachers, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, physical therapists, adaptive physical education teachers, and registered behavior technicians.

Pathways is currently limited to accommodating approximately 85 students, depending on the clinical need of the population. The school has a waiting list of numerous students from multiple school districts seeking entry, with a consistent referral-base. The current school setting does not have the space to accommodate the number of referrals received and a new location or enhanced space footprint would allow Pathways to serve more students to achieve their academic potential.

ABA Center-Based Program

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is a therapy based on the science of learning and behavior and it involves many techniques for understanding and changing behavior. The Trudeau Center's children's programs, as well as are rooted in a deep understanding and practice of ABA. In 2021, the Trudeau Center expanded its ABA Center-Based Program to answer the need for in-person treatment.

Trudeau's ABA Center-Based Program supports children aged 2 and 7. The program has grown dramatically in the past year, which has led to branching out classrooms into any available space. The space limitations at the current facility will prohibit the growth at our current pace.



The Trudeau Center has a waiting list for children to enter the program and continues to receive referrals across a variety of sources. An added location would allow our ABA Program to engage more young children in ABA treatment that will shape the trajectory of the rest of their lives. The early engagement in ABA treatment is critical for young children so the longer they wait on waiting lists, the longer they live without access to quality ABA treatment.

The Request

The Trudeau Center seeks ARPA funding to expand both our Pathways Strategic Teaching Center and our Center-Based ABA Program. As the COVID pandemic is now in an endemic state, the agency is shifting from a staffing challenge to a constricted-space challenge across many of our children's service programs. The Trudeau Center would use \$5,000,000.00 in ARPA funding to lease or purchase a building in the Providence County area so that the agency may broaden its reach and extend services to children and families who need support. Monies would also be used to build-out and equip this property with specialized program, classroom, and recreational space.

With Applied Behavior Analysis as the primary treatment modality for both Pathways and the ABA Center-Based Program, these two successful programs could co-exist under one roof quite harmoniously and successfully. In addition, the Trudeau center could entertain expanding its Early Intervention services (for infants and toddlers from birth to age three) to this new facility (and northern RI as well) if there is space to do so and there is a need in this community.

Final Words

The pandemic has been especially hard on children diagnosed with Autism and other special needs. Further, waitlists for state-offered programs such as Early Intervention and home-based services have delayed children from getting services they need while placing an added burden on their families. The Trudeau Center, with more than five decades of experience in supporting adults and children with developmental disabilities is prepared to help. The expansion of Trudeau's ABA Center-Based Program and Pathways Strategic Teaching Center would help take some pressure off the system by allowing our agency to increase its census by working with children in the northern part of the state.

On behalf of all those supported by the J. Arthur Trudeau Memorial Center, we thank you for your consideration of this important request.