Support Types:
Equipment, Supplies, and Materials and Physical Environments

“Our goal is to provide a fun and safe learning environment for the children in our care, while encouraging social, emotional, intellectual, and physical development. Children in our program receive quality personal and individualized care in a warm and loving home, where they can feel safe and happy and can begin to build confidence and a positive self-image.”

Creating a safe environment
“It is extremely important for us to make our families feel comfortable and confident in our decision to reopen and with this grant we will be able to accomplish that goal.”

Purchases will include:
- Personal protective equipment such as individualized child-sized masks, an outdoor hand-washing station that will allow families and children to wash their hands prior to entering the home, a hand sanitizer sanitizing station for children to utilize throughout the day, touch-less wall soap dispenser, touch-less wall paper towel dispenser, touch-less sink faucet, hand sanitizer and disinfectant wipes
- Learning materials such as educational activity sets, art supplies (individual art supply boxes, markers, crayons, colored pencils, scissors, glue, etc.), individual activity lap trays, puzzles, books (that express the importance of hand washing and staying healthy), educational materials, seating rugs that allow children to spread out (instead of sitting on one big circle time rug), dramatic play dolls and kitchen play food sets (so each child can individually play with a doll/play food instead of sharing), manipulative sets such as magna-tiles, table blocks, etc., additional ride-on/push & pull toys for outside play so that children are not sharing the same 2 ride-on/push & pull toys, additional water tables and sensory bins so that children can practice social distancing while still participating in these activities

“The grant funds will also be utilized for the physical environment. This will allow us to make a short-term environmental improvement to safely care for children amid regulatory capacity limits and social distancing requirements. We plan to purchase an air purifier that removes 99.97% of allergens and pollutants as small as .3 microns. This will ensure that the air quality is adequate for the children in our care and will help reduce the transmission of viruses throughout the childcare. We also plan to purchase two plexiglass sneeze guard barriers/shields for tabletops. Since we do not have enough space to spread out the children while eating and doing crafts at the tables, these sneeze guards will provide protection for the children while sitting at the tables.”
Support Types:
Equipment, Supplies and Materials and Professional Services

“We take our service to our families and community seriously. Each day we are making efforts to ensure that are children are thriving in a loving, healthy, and peaceful environment.”

Serving vulnerable populations
“Little Duckling understands that stable, affordable child care is essential to a family’s economic stability. Parents have to be able to work to provide for their children, and when they work, they want to know their children are being cared for in a safe, loving environment. This should be the goal, no matter the economic background of the family.”

Creating a safe environment
“The Come Back Strong Fund will allow Little Duckling to purchase equipment, supplies and materials to help staff and children feel like our environment is safe enough to survive and even thrive in during this pandemic.”

Purchases will include:
- Learning materials for each child, such as art, manipulative, blocks, books, puppets, math and other materials that would be personally used by each child each day
- Furniture such as tables and chairs to be able to social distance students
  “Our current seating arrangements don’t allow for safely social distancing due to lack of enough tables and chairs. We would like to be able to sit our students 6 feet apart, which has been suggested by the CDC.”
- Food carts and food storage units to help keep food safe from contamination

Supporting mental health
“Our employees have had stressful experiences due to COVID-19. Stress during disease outbreaks can include fear and worry about their own health and the health of their loved ones. It can also cause changes in sleep and eating patterns, and even increase the use of alcohol and tobacco products. Little Duckling would like to provide our employees with mental health services. These are services that they don’t have the extra funds for or services their insurance does not cover. The mental health services would also help to ease the anxiety of coming to work every day putting themselves and their families at risk. Although they are passionate about caring for and educating children, it would give them an extra boost and allow them to know that we care about their mental health in addition to their physical health. The mental health professionals could also teach them better ways to cope with stress and anxiety and relieve them of the idea of having to carry it all to work with them.”
We believe that each child should be provided with experiences that enhance self-esteem, which is essential in the adjusting, exploring and growing stages of child development. This approach ensures that each child’s learning experience will be nurtured at the proper pace and will give them a strong educational foundation for a bright future."

Responding to Community Need
“In late March, a local childcare ministry closed about 8 miles from us due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the property and building has since been sold. The childcare ministry had enrolled upwards of 130 students (0-5 age range). We were able to help essential workers from the closed site find placement for their children at STEAM Academy even though we were not convenient to their location. Many families in our community are struggling to find quality care.”

Creating New Seats
“With the challenges all childcare providers are facing during COVID19, it is important to ensure that quality programs are available to all families. The grant funds will help maximize the space at the new site and allow new seats that otherwise would not be available to children.”

Grant funds will be spent on build-out of non-classroom space including new:
- Room walls
- Floor coverings
- Classroom furnishings

This site will open in fall 2020 with a planned capacity of 158 students in the 0-5 age range.