

	LiGHT Grant Application 2026	
	2026 LiGHT Grant Cover Form and Guidelines	

Name of individual, group or organization: Helping Hands

Contact name(s): Makinzi James, Programs Coordinator

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Name of the program as it would appear on the grant award: Helping Hands' MomTime Community Group

Describe who the grant award will serve and approximate number affected: This grant will support mothers engaged in our women's community group, MomTime. A community group created in response for a growing need for trauma-informed, relationship centered spaces for women navigating vulnerable or transitional life stages. Many participants in this program find themselves in vulnerable circumstances, having encountered trauma and striving to overcome generational cycles.

Dollar amount requested: \$1,200

Would the program be offered if only a *partial* grant from LiGHT is made? Yes

Summary paragraph of the grant award requested:

➤ May be utilized for part of the presentation.

MomTime provides women with a supportive, year-round community where they can build relationships, develop practical life skills, and grow together. Led by a dedicated facilitator, the program combines educational opportunities, guest speakers, hands-on activities, creative expression, and community outings that encourage meaningful connections beyond weekly meetings. Consistent engagement helps women combat isolation, loneliness, and self-doubt while supporting personal development, emotional well-being, and greater self-sufficiency. MomTime creates a space where women can build confidence, strengthen relationships, and continue moving forward as they heal and overcome challenges.

Project Narrative

Community Need

MomTime was created in response to the need in our community for trauma-informed spaces where women, particularly those in vulnerable or transitional life stages, can access support, connection, and resources for healing. Many women served by Helping Hands face complex challenges such as trauma, poverty, single parenthood, limited access to mental health resources, and a lack of social support. These circumstances can increase the risk of depression, anxiety, and PTSD while making daily responsibilities, healthy relationships, and long-term goals more difficult to manage.

Unaddressed trauma and isolation can affect every area of a woman's life, including her ability to parent, maintain relationships, achieve stability, and care for her emotional and physical well-being. Women need safe opportunities to develop supportive relationships, build confidence, and experience a sense of belonging without fear of shame or judgment. This need becomes especially significant for women who have experienced instability, betrayal, or trauma and may struggle to trust others or establish healthy connections.

Helping Hands has seen the value of consistent community as MomTime has grown and more women have participated. The continued growth of the group has required us to adapt some traditions and activities to accommodate more women while preserving the familiarity and consistency that participants value. This growth reflects an ongoing need for spaces where women can develop meaningful relationships and experience encouragement from others who understand their challenges.

Women need supportive relationships and a sense of community to help them move toward healing and greater self-sufficiency. Access to consistent, safe relationships can help women reduce isolation, build resilience, and develop the confidence needed to navigate challenges and pursue long-term stability.

What will be Done

Helping Hands will provide MomTime as a year-round, trauma-informed community group for women. A dedicated facilitator will lead weekly gatherings that combine education, practical life skills, creative activities, relationship-building, and opportunities for shared experiences. Guest speakers will address topics that support women's personal growth, while hands-on activities and group outings will provide opportunities to learn, connect, and build confidence. MomTime will intentionally incorporate traditions and familiar activities that give women consistency and something to look forward to throughout the year. As participation grows, Helping Hands will adapt activities and traditions to accommodate a larger group while preserving the familiarity and consistency that make MomTime meaningful.

Complete all requested items below:

- 1) This Cover Form
- 2) Project Narrative, 1-5 pages typed, including:
 - What need in the Community will this program address? Give evidence to substantiate your request. (i.e. data, letters of recommendation, etc.)
 - What do you want to do?
 - What is your timeline?
 - What results do you expect?
 - If partnering with other organizations, please list.
 - Describe the program and tell how the funds from the grant will be used based on your budget
 - Signature page: To include endorsement of the project or program by the requesting agency's Board of Directors. This page must include a signature of the Board president.
- 3) Detailed budget

Timeline

At Helping Hands, our MomTime community group operates on a weekly basis throughout the entire year, providing ongoing support without a set end date. Open to all women and mothers, regardless of age, ensuring inclusivity the program offers women ongoing opportunities for connection, encouragement, and growth. Grant funding will support the continuation of weekly gatherings while providing additional opportunities for special activities, outings, and traditions throughout the year.

Expected Results

MomTime is expected to strengthen women's relationships, support systems, confidence, and sense of belonging. Participants will develop friendships that extend beyond weekly meetings and create support networks they can rely on within their broader communities. We have already seen this develop as women increasingly encourage and support one another outside of MomTime activities, demonstrating the lasting relationships that can grow from consistent connection.

Participation is also expected to continue growing as women experience the value of the group and invite others into the community. In 2025, MomTime served 28 different women through 232 visits. So far in 2026, 24 different women have participated through 198 visits, already approaching the previous year's total of 232 visits. Continued engagement will indicate that women find value in the relationships, encouragement, and consistency MomTime provides.

MomTime is also expected to increase women's engagement with other Helping Hands services. Women who build confidence and trust through MomTime may feel more comfortable participating in additional programs when they see friends and peers engaging in them. Increased participation across Helping Hands will create additional opportunities for women to access education, resources, and support that contribute to greater stability and self-sufficiency.

Ultimately, MomTime will help women move from isolation toward meaningful connection and from self-doubt toward greater confidence and resilience. The program will measure success through participation, continued engagement, relationship development, and increased connection to other Helping Hands services.

Other Partnerships

For 2026, we have received \$7,000 from Mary Cross Tippmann Foundation to help cover our MomTime Facilitator's salary and the cost of rent for our current MomTime program space. Additional partners include mentors and volunteers, guest speakers, and food and material donations.

Program Description and Fund Usage

Grant funds will specifically help cover the costs of outings, events, and hands-on activities that have become meaningful traditions within MomTime or provide opportunities to create new traditions together. Funding will support experiences such as the annual breakfast outing, pool

party with food, Fort Wayne Farmers' Market trip and a shared meal, and BINGO. These familiar activities give women something to look forward to and create shared experiences that strengthen relationships and a sense of belonging. As participation in MomTime grows, some traditions have needed to be adapted to accommodate more women while maintaining the familiarity and consistency that participants value.

Funds will also support activities that can become new traditions within the group, including meal preparation classes, dessert and cookie decorating, pottery making, and seasonal and creative crafts. These activities give women opportunities to learn, create, and participate alongside one another while building memories and connections. Supporting these experiences allows Helping Hands to continue investing in the traditions that women have come to value while creating new opportunities for connection, celebration, and community. Grant funding will help ensure MomTime can remain a consistent and welcoming part of women's lives throughout the year.

Budget	
<u>Item</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Outings and Events (Breakfast outing, Pool Party with food, Ft. Wayne farmer's market & meal, BINGO)	\$650
Activities (meal prep class, dessert and cookie decorating, pottery making, crafts)	\$550
TOTAL	\$1,200

Applicants Signature: Makin James

Board President Signature: Zoe Sander (Lane Sander)



To whom it may concern,

I have been attending MomTime for the last eight years. I first started going when I was pregnant with my fourth child after just moving back to Bluffton. At first I came for the resources MomTime helped to provide, like diapers, wipes, clothes etc. I quickly realized it was more than just a place to get resources, it became my community. At MomTime I have made so many life long friendships with the other women who attend and I now have people who I know are always in my corner. Being a mom of five I thought I knew everything I needed to know about raising children, but with attending MomTime I have learned so many things that have helped me connect with my children more and become a better mother. It's an amazing place to come to once a week and share our struggles, joys and thoughts. I am always telling everyone I can about MomTime and how they have always been there for me when I am down and there to celebrate with me in my success.

- Helping Hands' client and MomTime attendee