

# 2026 WOMEN UNITED GRANT APPLICATION FORM

## Organization Information

**Organization Name**

Second Grace

**EIN**

85-0858025

**Project Name**

Second Grace

**Address**

105 E Washington St, Suite 102  
Elizabethtown, Pennsylvania 17022  
United States

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**Executive Director / President (If different)**

Candace Abel

## Eligibility Criteria

**Is your organization a registered nonprofit organization with an official letter of determination of 501c3 status from the Internal Revenue Service?**

Yes

**Has your organization operated in Lancaster County for at least one year (operating in Lancaster before July 1, 2025)?**

Yes

**Does your organization or program you are requesting funding for in this application serve primarily women and/ or teen girls?**

Yes

**Does your organization provide services to families at or below the ALICE threshold in Lancaster County?**

Yes

**Is your organization delinquent on any state or federal debt?**

No

**Does your organization share United Way's view of collaborative and inclusive service to the entire community, without excluding anyone on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, ethnicity, national**

**origin, age, disability, sexual orientation, or any other factor not relevant to a person's eligibility for service or ability to contribute?**

Yes

**Has your organization update your listing with PA 211 in the last 12 months?**

Yes

## **Application Elements**

### **Executive Summary**

Second Grace is a grassroots nonprofit founded in 2020 by Candace Abel to support at-risk single mothers in Lancaster County, particularly those impacted by the child welfare system. Through a two-year pilot program, Second Grace advances mental health and emotional well-being by providing trusted mentorship, consistent relational support, and access to critical community resources. By walking alongside mothers with compassion and accountability, the program reduces isolation, strengthens parenting confidence, and promotes stability for both women and their children. Second Grace helps break cycles of custody loss and foster care involvement, empowering women to build healthy, resilient futures for their families.

### **Organization Description**

Second Grace is a grassroots nonprofit with a bold mission: to walk alongside at-risk single mothers, particularly those touched by the child welfare system, and offer the support they need to thrive. Through a unique two-year pilot program, we provide a three-pronged approach: trusted mentorship, access to vital resources, and real-world readiness. Whether it's moral support, a ride to work, or help navigating parenting challenges, Second Grace is about showing up, consistently, compassionately, and without judgment, so these moms can build confident, stable futures for themselves and their children.

Candace Abel founded Second Grace in 2020 when she saw an unmet need for young single mothers in the child welfare system. As an adoptive mother, Candace knows first-hand the life-long struggles young people face when they grow up without consistent, safe, and loving family support. Second Grace provides the opportunity to break the cycle of moms losing custody of their children, which leads to more children who grow up within the foster care system and inconsistent living situations. Through hard work and community support, we believe underserved moms have a better chance at building a positive future.

### **Commitment to Equity**

Second Grace serves at-risk single mothers in Lancaster County, with a particular focus on young women impacted by the child welfare system. The majority of the mothers we serve are low-income, many are women of color, and most are navigating housing instability, limited educational attainment, underemployment, and histories of trauma. Many are parenting young children without consistent family support, and some face transportation barriers, mental health challenges, or involvement with county agencies. While geographically rooted in Lancaster County, our community is defined by shared lived experience: single motherhood under economic stress and system involvement.

Serving this community advances equity by addressing disparities highlighted in the Lancaster County Racial Equity Profile, which identifies gaps in income, housing stability, and child welfare involvement that disproportionately impacts families of color and young women. By providing long-term mentorship, mental health support, and access to resources, Second Grace strengthens protective factors and reduces isolation. As a grassroots organization rooted in relationships, we elevate community voice by centering each mother's goals, incorporating participant feedback, and adapting programming to reflect lived experience, empowering young women to build stable, healthy, and self-sufficient futures.

## **Proposal Details**

### **Main Priority Area**

Women's and/ or Teen's Health

**Grant Dollar Amount Requested**

\$20,000.00

**What percent of the overall project budget is covered by the Women United grant?**

40

**Will this program/project start or continue to operate if you do not receive 100% of the funding requested?**

Yes

**Project Description**

Second Grace proposes to expand our existing two-year mentorship program to further strengthen mental health and emotional well-being for at-risk mothers ages 18–25 in Lancaster County.

**Why:** Young single mothers impacted by poverty, trauma, and system involvement often experience chronic stress, isolation, anxiety, and depression. Without consistent emotional support, these challenges can affect parenting, employment, and long-term stability. In Lancaster County, disparities in income, housing security, and access to care intensify mental health risks for young women, particularly mothers of color. There is a clear need for relationship-based, preventive mental health support that is accessible, consistent, and stigma-free.

**What:** Second Grace will expand its structured mentorship model, providing one-on-one, trauma-informed mentoring relationships; monthly wellness gatherings focused on community, emotional resilience, and healthy coping skills; and warm referrals to trusted community partners for professional mental health services and additional supportive care when appropriate.

**How:** Each mother is matched with a trained mentor who commits to consistent weekly contact and individualized goal setting. Mentors receive training in trauma-informed care, boundaries, cultural humility, and resource navigation. We incorporate regular check-ins, wellness assessments, and participant feedback to guide support plans. By combining trusted relationships, skill-building opportunities, and coordinated referrals, this project advances the priority goal of improving mental health outcomes and strengthening protective factors for women and teen girls.

**Collaboration**

Yes, Second Grace intentionally collaborates with other organizations to strengthen outcomes for young mothers in Lancaster County. We partner with local agencies, churches, mental health providers, and community-based service organizations to ensure our program is responsive to evolving community needs. These partnerships allow us to deliver holistic, individualized support without duplicating existing services.

Second Grace serves as a connector and advocate, helping mothers navigate complex systems such as housing assistance, workforce development, childcare support, healthcare, and counseling services. Rather than operating in isolation, we coordinate closely with trusted community partners to ensure participants receive the right mix of services at the right time.

This collaborative model strengthens continuity of care, reduces barriers to access, and promotes shared accountability across organizations serving vulnerable women. By walking alongside mothers and coordinating support, Second Grace ensures they do not have to navigate fragmented systems alone. Through this aligned, community-based approach, we help young women meet immediate needs while building the stability, confidence, and long-term self-sufficiency necessary for lasting mental and emotional well-being.

**Implementation Plan**

Second Grace will implement this expanded mental health and emotional well-being initiative in Lancaster County through a structured, relationship-based model over a two-year program cycle.

**Participant Identification and Enrollment:** We will receive referrals from community partners, churches, and local agencies. Each prospective participant will complete an intake process that includes a needs assessment, goal-setting session, and baseline wellness evaluation.

**Mentor Recruitment and Training:** We will recruit and screen volunteer mentors and provide structured training in trauma-informed care, cultural humility, boundaries, active listening, and resource navigation. Ongoing quarterly trainings and peer support meetings will ensure quality and consistency.

**One-to-One Mentorship:** Each mother will be matched with a trained mentor who commits to weekly contact (in-person and/or virtual). Mentors will provide emotional support, encouragement, accountability, and practical assistance aligned with individualized goals.

**Monthly Wellness Gatherings:** We will host workshops focused on stress management, healthy coping skills, parenting confidence, financial literacy, and self-care to strengthen emotional resilience and peer connection.

**Resource Coordination and Referrals:** Staff will coordinate warm referrals to community-based services, including mental health providers, housing resources, employment programs, and childcare supports.

**Ongoing Monitoring and Evaluation:** We will conduct regular check-ins, track participant progress toward goals, gather feedback, and evaluate outcomes related to emotional well-being, stability, and self-sufficiency to ensure continuous program improvement.

## **Outcomes & Evaluation**

If awarded this grant, Second Grace will expand its mental health and emotional well-being programming for at-risk mothers ages 18-25 in Lancaster County by deepening one-to-one mentorship, structured wellness programming, and coordinated resource support. Over a 12-month period, we anticipate serving 15 to 20 young mothers through consistent, trauma-informed mentoring relationships. Our primary goal is to strengthen emotional resilience, reduce isolation, and increase parenting confidence while helping participants move toward greater personal and economic stability.

We expect that at least four out of five participants will demonstrate measurable improvement in emotional well-being, as indicated by pre- and post-program self-assessments that measure stress levels, coping skills, and perceived support. A similar proportion will report increased confidence in their parenting and a stronger sense of connection to supportive relationships. In addition, at least three out of four participants will successfully access one or more community resources, such as counseling, housing assistance, childcare support, or workforce development services, through guided referrals. Most participants will make documented progress toward at least one self-identified goal related to employment, education, or stable housing.

As a result of these services, mothers are expected to experience reduced stress, healthier coping strategies, and stronger support networks. This stabilization improves the overall well-being of their children by promoting safer, more consistent home environments and reducing the likelihood of crisis or system involvement.

We will evaluate outcomes through clearly defined program metrics, including enrollment and retention rates, frequency of mentor-mentee contact, completion of wellness workshops, referral follow-through, and documented goal progression. Emotional well-being will be assessed at intake, quarterly intervals, and program completion using standardized self-assessment tools. Participant surveys and feedback sessions will provide qualitative insight into lived experience and program effectiveness. Data will be reviewed regularly to measure impact, ensure accountability, and guide continuous improvement.

## **Documents**

### **Required Documents**

- [2024-990.pdf](#)
- [Annual-Audit-Statement-PDF.pdf](#)

- [Board-of-Director-Roster-PDF.pdf](#)
- [2G-Budget-2026-to-2028-PDF.pdf](#)
- [501c3-Paperwork-3.PDF.pdf](#)