

**POP's New Look**

Believe it or not, the Paternity Opportunity Program (POP) has been in existence throughout the state of California for over 11 years. During that time POP has grown from a program that received around 10,000 forms per year to over 10,000 forms per month! By the end of 2006, over 1.4 million paternity declarations had been filed through the program, establishing a legal father for each child.

Since the beginning, the POP logo representing the father-child relationship has symbolized the heart of the program and will continue to do so—with a little updating. POP will maintain the colors of past publications, while merging with the visual themes of DCSS graphics. These changes are the cornerstone for updating POP publications, starting with *POP Perspectives*, and moving on with favorites like the *Military Dads-To-Be*, *Who Can Witness* and *Error-Free* flyers.

For more information about POP publications, contact the State POP Team at 866-249-0773 or e-mail [ASKPOP@dcss.ca.gov](mailto:ASKPOP@dcss.ca.gov).



**PATERNITY  
OPPORTUNITY  
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**PATERNITY  
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**POP PERSPECTIVES**

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*Sharing Ideas*

**POP Summit 2007: Sharing Ideas**

2007 is starting off to be a very exciting year for the Paternity Opportunity Program (POP). The Department of Child Support Services hosted a statewide workshop for county POP coordinators on January 31, 2007. Led by the State POP Team, the day of sharing, networking and education was attended by POP coordinators from 45 California counties.

Several county coordinators presented best practices, and representatives from First Five California and Regional Perinatal Programs of California were on hand to help POP coordinators make the most of local contacts through their programs.

“Bringing county coordinators together at POP’s first Summit was a landmark event,” said State POP Analyst Elena Palmi. “Having so many knowledgeable people in one room sharing ideas and information is very powerful. This program is only going to get more successful, and best of all—it benefits California’s children.”

To find out more about the POP Summit, contact the State POP Team at 1-866-249-0773 or e-mail [ASKPOP@dcss.ca.gov](mailto:ASKPOP@dcss.ca.gov).

**A Message from ...**

**T. Maria Caudill,  
DCSS Assistant Director, Communications & Public Affairs**

Establishing paternity is an important gateway to obtaining critical services for children of unmarried parents, and essential to establishing parental relationships.

The success of California’s Paternity Opportunity Program depends on the work performed by professionals statewide who make a difference in kids’ lives every day.

We want to get the word out about this program that is so vital to kids. We’re proud to present

our new look—and we hope you like it. Please let us know if we can send you any of our updated POP publications. You can also find them on our website, [www.childsup.ca.gov](http://www.childsup.ca.gov)—just click on the POP button.

Please join me in 2007 as we work together to help children and families. Your efforts are much appreciated. Let us know how we can help you.





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## POP Perspectives



### State of the POP

#### Coming to a TV Near You!

A valuable tool in the POP information toolbox has been a video that informs unmarried parents of their rights and responsibilities prior to signing a declaration of paternity. Back in 1994, the first POP video, *Providing For Your Child*, was created by California State University Chico. It was a groundbreaking event that provided parents with consistent and accurate POP information.

In 2003, *The Power of Two*, created by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE), was adopted as California POP's parent video. In late 2006, the updated videos in English and Spanish were combined with the POP Training Video, and are now available on one DVD or VHS tape.

If you'd like more information about the new videos or haven't received your copy, contact the State POP Team at 1-866-249-0773 or [ASKPOP@dcss.ca.gov](mailto:ASKPOP@dcss.ca.gov).

#### What's Out/What's In for 2007

Blue is out and purple is in—for the new Paternity Declaration Form (CS909), that is. State POP Analyst Wanda Abney said, "The form may look different, but the content is basically the same except for the addition of a privacy statement about collecting Social Security numbers."

The form has been updated several times over the years, so changing the color makes it easier to tell which forms are current. Start the new year right and make sure your POP information is up to date—after you receive your new forms, just toss out the blue and use the purple.

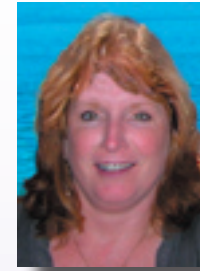
Orders can be sent directly to the Office of State Publishing (OSP) Fullfillment Services by fax at (916) 445-9134.

If you haven't received your new purple POP forms yet, contact the State POP Team at 866-249-0773 or e-mail [ASKPOP@dcss.ca.gov](mailto:ASKPOP@dcss.ca.gov).



## In the Spotlight

### Marlene Brawner



For the past three years, Marlene Brawner has been the POP Coordinator for Calaveras County; and for the past year she added Amador and Alpine counties. These three counties make up the Central Sierra Child Support Agency, serving parents and children throughout the region.

Marlene and staff have developed great relationships with the area's hospitals. "If there is ever a question, the hospitals feel free to contact our office," she reports.

Even when children are born at home with a midwife (or the dad in one case in San Andreas), Marlene is ready to answer parents' questions about POP and help them complete the forms.

Marlene is married with four children and is very involved with church, family and friends.

Thank you Marlene and Central Sierra for being the "central" POP contact in the Sierra Region.

## POP Perspectives

[askpop@dcss.ca.gov](mailto:askpop@dcss.ca.gov)

### FROM THE ASKPOP INBOX...

Every day parents send probing questions to the POP Team through the ASKPOP E-mail address. Below are questions and answers taken straight from the POP inbox:

**Q** *I am the noncustodial parent of an out-of-state child and I have a question regarding birth certificates. If I signed the birth certificate as the father, do I still need to file for POP? I am a bit confused and lost because my ex is trying to keep me from seeing my daughter. We do not have child support set up nor visitation rights. I would appreciate any help that you could give me. Thanks.*

**A** Effective January 1, 1997, a Declaration of Paternity or a court order establishing legal paternity was required by California Law in order for the father's name to appear on the birth certificate (for unmarried parents only).

Please note that in California, the birth certificate establishes the IDENTITY of a person and DOES NOT establish paternity. You can complete the Parents Request Form to see if there is a Declaration on file for your child. If there is, you will receive a certified copy of the Declaration free of charge.

**Q** *My fiance and I need the Declaration of Paternity form for our son who was born at home so we can put dad on the birth certificate. Can we have one sent to our home? Do we have it notarized and then give it to the local child support agency, or do we bring it with us to the Health Department when we register his birth?*

**A** We can mail a form to you which you can have notarized, or you can get one from your local child support agency or Health Services department. Either agency can witness the form for you free of charge.

**Q** *My boyfriend will be deployed to Iraq prior to the birth of our son. Can you email the Declaration of Paternity form so he can acknowledge paternity ahead of time?*

**A** The Declaration of Paternity form cannot be E-mailed, but we can mail one to you. Be sure the witness states they are witnessing dad's signature only. After the child is born and you have completed the rest of the form (including your signature and witness), attach a copy of his military orders and send it to the address provided.

**Q** *I am an American citizen living in Germany. I believe I fathered a child who lives in California. Can I file a Declaration of Paternity form even though I am not in the United States?*

**A** You can complete the form, but your signature must be notarized since you are out of state. If mom is still in California, you must send her the form after you complete your portion.

**Q** *How will I know if and when the Declaration of Paternity was received?*

**A** Because we receive over 500 Declarations per day, we do not acknowledge receipt. To find out if your Declaration is on file, you can submit a Parents Request Form (found on the DCSS website, [www.childsup.ca.gov/Program/POP/Requestdecl](http://www.childsup.ca.gov/Program/POP/Requestdecl)), and we will send you a certified copy free of charge.



Cedars-Sinai  
Medical Center

## FOCUS ON ... Cedars-Sinai Medical Center ★

### Michelle Calaguas, Alicia Stratton, & Estelita Carlos, POP Coordinators

Located one block away from Beverly Hills, Cedars-Sinai Medical Center (CSMC) is "the choice of the stars" when it's time to deliver their babies. With 500–600 births per month, a team of POP Coordinators is on duty at CSMC—and Michelle Calaguas, Alicia Stratton and Estelita Carlos love their jobs.

"Every person that comes in has a different and individual story. I get to meet lots of interesting people who are in a good mood—most of the time. There's never a dull moment!" said Michelle. The three explain the POP program to parents, answer their questions, and witness the parents' signatures before sending the forms to the state POP.

Professionalism and sensitivity to privacy are key for this team when dealing with high profile parents. And their dedication to their jobs and to POP has helped countless children in the Los Angeles area.

When off duty, Michelle loves to hike, golf and bike; Alicia can be found gardening; and Estelita loves to sing. Thank you, ladies, for your hard work and dedication—you're our "POP Stars"!

### New POP Team Member Scott Mills



Please join us in welcoming Scott Mills to the POP Team! Scott joined the unit on January 16th and has begun to familiarize himself with the many facets of the program.

Coming from the DCSS Quality Assurance Branch, Scott brings with him years of child support knowledge and valuable contacts from several Northern California counties. Scott's fresh perspective brings a welcome balance to our team.