



Child Support Report

OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

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Collaborations Take Hold in ND, MN To Decrease Unemployment, Increase Collections

By Elaine Blackman
CSR Editor

Eighteen months after the Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) rolled out a training curriculum called “Better Outcomes through Collaboration,” North Dakota and Minnesota are among the state child support programs reporting signs of its success.

The training curriculum was designed for state managers from Child Support, TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families), and Workforce Investment (Department of Labor), and demonstrates the advantages of working together to strengthen each program’s outcome to help client families. Now, new collaborations in the two states are offering hopes of increasing child support collections and helping more families achieve self-sufficiency.

In April 2005, North Dakota’s Child Support Enforcement Division co-launched a pilot project with Job Service North Dakota and the Southwest District Court to increase child support collections by addressing the unemployment and underemployment of noncustodial parents in the state’s Dickinson area.



To date, both employment and child support compliance increased after participating non-custodial parents received employment services, such as job-search, training, and job-placement follow-up. The caseworker also referred some noncustodial parents to local treatment providers to address substance abuse issues or mental health needs.

The average child support payment by the 32 participants increased from \$63.80 per month at the time of referral to \$202.94 per month just six months later. The nonpayment rate dropped to 13 percent.

In November 2004, Minnesota received its first “Better Outcomes through Collaboration” training to Hennepin and Ramsey Counties (the two largest) as part of the national rollout. As a result of this seminar, management from Child Support, Minnesota Family Investment Program, TANF, and the Department of Employment and Economic Development formed a collaboration workgroup that consists of state-level representatives and a trainer from each of the three programs.

After attending an OCSE Collaboration Academy in



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Help Available: Interpreters and Translations for CSE Customers

By Frank Fajardo
OCSE

Help is just a click (or few) away for child support enforcement (CSE) agencies seeking interpreters and translations for Limited English Proficiency (LEP) customers. The key is meaningful access to services, and this requires oral and written language assistance (free of charge) to LEP persons. It's based on the legal obligation to comply with the Title VI (Civil Rights Act of 1964) prohibition against national origin discrimination.

LEP.gov is a clearinghouse of information, tools, and technical assistance regarding LEP and language services, and is also available to individuals, advocates, and community organizations (<http://www.lep.gov/>). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services guidance provides examples, as well as policies, procedures, and other steps to ensure meaningful access by LEP persons (<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/lep/revisedlep.html>).

For data on the LEP population in your area, see the Census Bureau's Minority Links and click on one of the minority groups. Then look for Local Profiles under Social Characteristics: http://www.census.gov/acsd/www/sub_m.htm. You'll need that for the four factors the U.S. Department of Justice requires to assess the need for interpreters (<http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/cor/lep/DOJFinLEPFRJun182002.htm>).

On a related issue, services to undocumented immigrants, there are no residency or proof of citizenship requirements for access to IV-D services, and a state may not impose any. The OCSE guidance on the definition of *public charge* in immigration laws clarifies that the IV-D program is not a benefits program and

therefore not subject to restrictions on eligibility for programs in PRWORA (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pol/DCL/dcl9959.htm>).

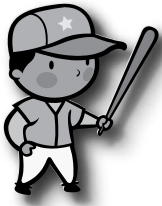
CSE offices have used the following options to help all customers understand services:

- Language identification flashcard
- Bilingual employees
- Contract for interpreted services
- Language Phone Line (150 languages at <http://www.language.com/>, free charged)
- Local community organizations
- Bilingual OCSE Web link for Hispanic Resources (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/fct/hispanic.htm>)
- Bilingual State Web sites for Arizona, California, Illinois, Texas, and Washington (see <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/extinf.htm>)
- Hispanic Web site for Florida New Hire Reporting (https://newhirereporting.com/fl-newhire_sp/default.asp)
- *Beehive.org*

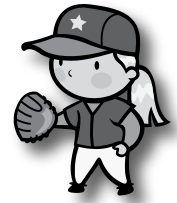
When considering translation and interpreters, keep in mind the following:

- Certification standards
- Local expectation for equal service
- Maintaining confidentiality and respect
- Availability of interpreters (such as staff vs. vendor, family/friends)
- Staff training in cultural literacy—knowing the language is not enough
- Compensation of staff
- Cultural considerations and competency
- Community outreach and visibility

For more information, contact Mr. Fajardo at ffajardo@acf.hhs.gov or 202-205-4554.



The Right Ballpark Milwaukee Picks Business Approach To Increase Rate of Collections



By Lisa Marks

*Milwaukee County, Wisconsin
Child Support Agency*

Milwaukee County is onto something. No, we haven't had a grand slam, but—in an effort to improve performance on collection of current child support, Wisconsin's largest Child Support Agency (CSA) has grasped an opportunity to employ an approach for making better business decisions using data, with impressive results:

Not only has the collection rate increased, but total support collected is \$500,000 higher than at this point last year, and we have reduced the amount that will be uncollectible in the future.

The approach to which we owe this success is called Six Sigma, a methodology originally developed at Motorola for improving manufacturing quality. In June 2005, Milwaukee-area business leaders brought the concept to County

Executive Scott Walker's attention. Though Six Sigma methodology had not been widely applied to public sector agencies, it had proven successful in Fort Wayne, IN. There, Mayor Graham Richard and his staff agreed to share their experience with Milwaukee County based on the DMAIC Methodology: Define, Measure, Analyze, Improve, and Control.

Milwaukee County obtained assistance from Milwaukee School of Engineering, the Business Excellence Consortium (MSOE-BEC), and Steve Fleming from SigMax Solutions. (MSOE-BEC and SigMax Solutions partner with businesses of all types taking a very practical approach to process improvement and problem solving.) This approach to Six Sigma has been successful in delivering quantifiable results in all types of business situations.

Out of the Bullpen

For Milwaukee's first project, we defined the high-level problem: The current support collection rate is stagnant.



Standing, from left: Lisa Marks, Jacqueline Sargent, Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker, Beverly Ferrin, and Tammy Kruczynski. Sitting, from left: Tamara Cantrell, Janice Reed, and Crystal Walton

We examined data from our case-load to define payer status:
0 = no current monthly financial obligation or support order;
1 = regular payer: money is received every month towards a current support order;
2 = sometimes payer: money is received sporadically over a year towards the current support order; and
3 = never payer: a current support obligation exists, but no

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This Just In From KY and VA

Print Ads Lead to Parents Who Owe Child Support



When Jefferson County Attorney Irv Maze first published names of noncustodial parents in the local newspaper, he didn't know quite what to expect. Now, says Mr. Maze, "the effort has exceeded our most optimistic projections."

In this Kentucky County and in the State of Virginia, the locate technique first borrowed from FBI practices has led to the whereabouts of hundreds of harder-to-find noncustodial parents, as well as hundreds of thousands of dollars in back-owed support for their children.

As of May, nearly a year after the Sunday, July 31, edition of the Louisville Courier-Journal carried the list of Jefferson's 1,000 most seriously delinquent parents, child support collections have totaled some \$726,500. The agency has received home addresses for 1,115 noncustodial parents, found 414 employers, and sent 416 wage assignments.

The newspaper insert requested the public's assistance in calling a telephone hotline, but even prepublication publicity brought calls—"primarily from noncustodial parents who thought they would be on the list," says Mr. Maze. Since publication of the insert, more than 600 calls have come in.

Similarly, the Virginia Division of Child Support Enforcement last August began the Capias Project, with the primary focus on requesting public assistance for those cases where a

capias had been issued by a court for failure to pay or appear. The agency placed *most-wanted*-style full-page ads in Virginia newspapers titled "Have You Seen These Parents?" The ads featured a photo, name, and amount owed for hundreds of parents, with a toll-free number and offers for rewards of up to \$1,000 to entice the help of readers.

"We identified a large group of noncustodial parents who were evading the best efforts of DCSE, the courts, and local law enforcement," says Carol Vanderspiegel, Assistant Director-East.

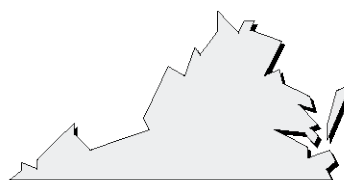


As of May, six ads have led to 317 parents profiled, 122 arrested, and \$129,331 collected through immediate lump sums. Expected is an additional \$150,100 (of which some has been collected) through wage withholdings as a result of the ads.

In several cases, the project enhanced alliances with local law enforcement. In others, the project prompted custodial parents to take out their own ads in newspapers on the noncustodial parents in their cases.

As in Jefferson County, Ms. Vanderspiegel says Virginia's ad campaign "was successful beyond our expectations in securing child support and in bringing the general issue of child support to the limelight." **CSR**

—Elaine Blackman





'From a Grassroots Inspiration' Training Event Closes Gap For D.C. Fatherhood Initiative Vendors

By **Angela Thornton Harvey**
Washington, D.C. Child Support Services Division

Staff in Washington, D.C.'s Child Support Services Division (CSSD), in the Office of the Attorney General, is still basking in rave reviews since presenting a "Train the Trainers" event in late April to vendors associated with the citywide Fatherhood Initiative.

"I learned more about child support in 2 hours than I've been able to understand in 4 years," represents comments from the 25 vendors who took-in all aspects of Child Support Services. About 25 CSSD managers and supervisors also were there to address the vendors' concerns directly—and were introduced via photos on the big screen by training coordinator Shirley Payne.

The training event grew from a grassroots inspiration among CSSD, service providers, and David Ross and Joi Yeldell from the District's Department of Human Services Grants Management Office to bring the child

support experts face-to-face with vendors who serve the community. All agreed that child support is a huge issue in the District and the nation, and that vendors' misconceptions about child support processes, such as voluntary paternity establishment, should be addressed.



Angela Thornton Harvey, right, D.C.'s Chief of Paternity and Outreach, with Margaret Price, Chief of Enforcement

The vendor attendees included representatives from the Arch Training Center Inc., Greater Washington Urban League, Healthy Families Thriving Communities Council, Hope Foundation, Reaching Inside for Self Esteem, Reintegrating Alternatives Personal Program, and the United Planning Organization.

Vendors have said that the personal interaction with CSSD managers about all types of cases humanized the issue of child support. (At times, it played more like Oprah comes to CSSD.) The icing on the cake: CSSD was invited to repeat the training program this fall at a conference for staff in human services agencies. [CSR](#)

Ms. Harvey can be reached at 202-724-2114 or angela.harvey@dc.gov.



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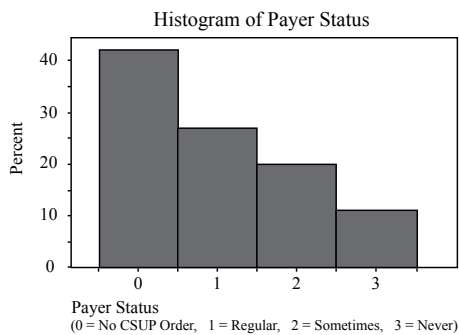
Chicago in July 2005, the Minnesota work-group developed a 6 ½-hour presentation about the benefits of forming the collaboration, which they now offer to other interested Minnesota counties and at conferences. Ten seminars are set for completion by this July.

“Minnesota counties have identified numerous benefits for hosting a collaboration workshop,” says child support training coordinator Taylor

Edmondson. “But by far the most rewarding identified benefit has been that it reminds them that they have an equal responsibility, along with the customer, in assisting families toward self-sufficiency.”

For further information about the North Dakota project, contact State IV-D Director Mike Schwindt at soschm@state.nd.us or 701-328-7501; in Minnesota, contact Taylor Edmondson at taylor.edmondson@state.mn.us or 651-296-3695. [CSR](#)

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payments have been received over the past year—not even tax intercept.

The chart demonstrates regular payers far outnumber never payers. However, the effect of an order versus no payment was severely impacting our performance rate. Milwaukee County needed to focus resources to move never payers into regular or sometimes payers to achieve the greatest success.

Changing the Plays

Milwaukee County already had a process for dealing with incarcerated payers, but it was not fully utilized. Based on sample data, we estimated approximately 20,000 cases existed that did not meet federal case-closure criteria, but continued to charge current support, accumulate arrears plus interest, while a payer was incarcerated. The debt accumulating to incarcerated payers is prohibitive to successful

re-entry, encourages the payer to hide, interferes with family relationships, and collection becomes unmanageable.

Using partner agencies, Milwaukee County increased its efforts to reach out to incarcerated payers by offering to help modify their order if: the other parent agreed, the mother or child was not the victim of the crime, or the crime was not a felony nonsupport. Upon release from prison, the financial obligation will remain held open for 60 days, allowing the payer to obtain successful employment and re-entry.

As of this April, results show: 2,100 cases reviewed; overall 22 percent of custodial parents agree by stipulation; 1,137 orders held open by hearing; and a more than \$1,900,000 annual reduction in uncollectible orders.

While we have not won the world series of child support performance yet, we continue to bring home better stats with each run. And this is just our first inning for Six Sigma projects—up-to-bat missions include: improving call-center performance, moving sometimes payers to the regular-payers category, expanding medial support collections, and increasing payments toward arrears. [CSR](#)

For additional information, contact Lisa J. Marks, Deputy Director, at 414-278-5239 or lmarks@milwcnty.com.

ERICSA Shines 'Rays of Hope' on Conference-Goers

By Cyndy Lucas
ERICSA President-Elect



The 43rd Annual Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Association (ERICSA) conference was held April 23-27 in Clearwater Beach, FL. The event attracted more than 400 attendees from across the United States, plus Canadian and tribal representatives.

With the theme "Rays of Hope: Brightening the Lives of Children," the conference featured an opening plenary session by OCSE Commissioner Margot Bean, plenary sessions on the Deficit Reduction Act and ERICSA's interstate initiatives, an entertaining mock trial, and 41 separate workshops. Workshop topics ranged from interstate and international case law and UIFSA processes and scenarios, to positive motivation, to arrears management and prison outreach.

This year's conference also included many opportunities for networking, and brown-bag lunch sessions on healthy marriage, visitation and access, and careers in the child support field.

The 2007 ERICSA conference is scheduled for May 6-10 at the Marriott Norfolk Waterside in Norfolk, VA. [CSR](#)



From left, Cyndy Lucas, ERICSA President-Elect, Rob Velcoff from New York, and Diane Sinkus from Penn State, after an Advanced UIFSA Scenarios Roundtable.



J. Gordon Moseley, ERICSA Immediate Past President, left, receiving the Felix Infausto Award, is shown with ERICSA President Jeff Ball. ERICSA presents the award each year to recognize a valued member who demonstrates the highest quality of outstanding leadership and contributions to ERICSA.



