

OCSE's On-Going Demonstration Grants re: Increased NCP Access = Increased Child Support

Colorado Division of Child Support Enforcement—Section 1115 Demonstration Grant

“Integration of Access and Visitation and Child Support Enforcement”

The Colorado Division of Child Support Enforcement proposes to demonstrate the impact of providing access and visitation services on child support collections. Colorado plans to place a Child Access Specialist in each of three county child support offices. The specialists will be responsible for screening parties to determine the scope of their access and visitation issues, assess what services would be most effective to address these issues, then link parties to the services in the community or provide some direct services themselves.

Using experimental and control groups, the project will test the effectiveness of providing services to address access and visitation issues reported by parties with child support enforcement cases. Quantitative and qualitative data will be collected on processes and outcomes to determine intervention impacts on child support payment performance by obligors, factors that enhance or deter success, and implementation considerations.

Office of the Attorney General of Texas, Division for Families and Children-- Section 1115 Demonstration Grant

“Ensuring Access, Encouraging Support: Testing Approaches to the Integration of Access and Visitation Services with Child Support Case Processing”

The Division for Families and Children of the Office of the Attorney General of Texas (OAG) proposes to conduct a demonstration and evaluation project to test strategies to increase child support collections by addressing problems of child access and regular visitation in nonpaying child support cases. The project's goal is to test the effectiveness of addressing access and visitation issues in nonpaying child support cases in order to promote child support payment and to increase parent-child contact.

In this project, the OAG will identify nonpaying cases with a minor-aged child of ten or younger, no domestic violence issues or serious substance abuse issues, and parents who reside in Harris and/or adjacent counties. Targeted parents will

be mailed a simple letter encouraging them to contact the Harris County Domestic Relations Office to obtain assistance with access and visitation if these factors are contributing to nonpayment. Parents who respond will be randomly assigned to two groups. One group will be sent a packet of educational and informational materials on visitation orders in Texas and tools for managing and enforcing them. The second group will be referred to the Access/Visitation Enforcement services of the Harris County Domestic Relations Office where they will receive a free consultation with an attorney followed by free mediation services. If mediation is unsuccessful or the other parent will not cooperate, they will receive free legal services to enforce visitation orders. Parents in this high-level treatment group would also have educational programming available to them on issues including co-parenting and relationship building.

The proposed project will be evaluated by the Center for Policy Research (CPR) and will include both qualitative and quantitative components. The qualitative evaluation will document the process of identifying and notifying suitable cases for access and visitation treatments, screening for problems, and providing low and high-level services. The outcome evaluation will require the random generation of low and high – level treatment groups and the collection of baseline and follow-up information for parents in both groups.

**Florida Department of Revenue/Child Support Enforcement Program—
Section 1115 Demonstration Grant**

**“Impact of Mediation on Non-Compliant Non-Custodial Parents Who
Indicate Reason for Nonpayment Relates to Access and Visitation Issues”**

The Department of Revenue’s Child Support Enforcement Division proposes to partner with Miami-Dade County’s Eleventh Judicial Circuit Court to create a new Family Division Section within the court system to address access and visitation issues in addition to paternity and child support issues. Eligible parties will be randomly referred, for comparison purposes, to an Intake Specialist who will administer a questionnaire, update the parties’ locate information, provide information and education about parenting classes, play a video addressing co-parenting issues, and refer parties to mediation services.

Two hypotheses will be tested. The first is that the associated hearing process and increased services will increase non-custodial parent involvement with their children to a statistically higher level than the comparison group. The second is that increased access and visitation will increase compliance with child support orders.

**Georgia Department of Human Resources Office of Child Support
Enforcement—Section 1115 Demonstration Grant**

“Integration of Access and Visitation and Child Support”

The Georgia Department of Human Resources Office of Child Support Enforcement proposes to enhance and integrate further and existing Access and Visitation (AV) project with an overarching goal of increasing child support collections and medical support. It will focus specifically on 200 fathers who do not pay child support or resent paying support due to lack of parenting time with their children. Those cases which have a prior association with domestic violence will be screened out. The project will provide appropriate AV services, including locate information on children if needed.

This effort will be launched in five Atlanta metropolitan counties and will measure child support payment outcomes and payments for 100 noncustodial parents who receive intervention services. The results of this group will be compared to a control group of 100 noncustodial parents who do not receive AV services.

**Tennessee Child Support Enforcement Division – Section 1115
Demonstration Project**

**“Testing Approaches to Developing Amicable Family Relationships Among
Unmarried Parents.”**

This three-year grant responds to Priority Area 1: *Reduce intervention and use of adversarial or formal proceedings while increasing financial security for children born out of wedlock.* The grantee will work with the Administrative Office of the Court (AOC) to identify unmarried parents with access and visitation (AV) concerns and provide them the necessary services to enhance parental relationships, parent-child contact, and to avoid adversarial proceedings. A parenting specialist (PS) will be placed in each of three child support offices in Nashville, Chattanooga, and Jackson/Lexington/Henderson area, representing both urban and rural judicial districts. Unmarried parents with access and visitation issues will be identified and randomly assigned to either a low-level treatment (receive a packet of information and referrals) or a high-level treatment (in-depth needs assessment, case management, educational programs facilitated by PS, and other service referrals). A random assignment outcome evaluation will compare payment activity, paternity acknowledgement, established child support orders, and enforcement actions across the two treatment groups.