



Child Support Report

OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

Vol. 28, No. 12

December 2006



A Site Worth Seeing in Texas Online Directory Connects Parents to A&V Help

By Anita Stuckey

Texas Office of the Attorney General

A new Internet tool—possibly the first of its kind in the child support arena—is now available on the Texas Office of the Attorney General (OAG) Child Support Web site to help parents with child custody and visitation disputes stay involved in their children’s lives.

The online Access and Visitation (A&V) Directory is a compilation of programs across Texas designed to facilitate shared parenting among unwed parents and/or after separation or divorce. Through this directory (www.oag.state.tx.us/child/access/), the Texas OAG’s Office of Family Initiatives (OFI) offers child support staff, parents, counselors, and others easy access to more than 40 providers of A&V services statewide.

Visitors to the site can search the directory by zip code, county, or service provided. The site includes an interactive map with details about the programs in the directory and a link to each

program’s Web site. This enables parents to make an informed choice when selecting the type of provider and which services best fit their needs.

The Access and Visitation Hotline (funded through the State’s A&V grant) assists callers

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The Commissioner’s Voice

I’ve been fortunate during the past year to have had the exciting opportunity to visit many State conferences and to have met so many State and local child support professionals and members of



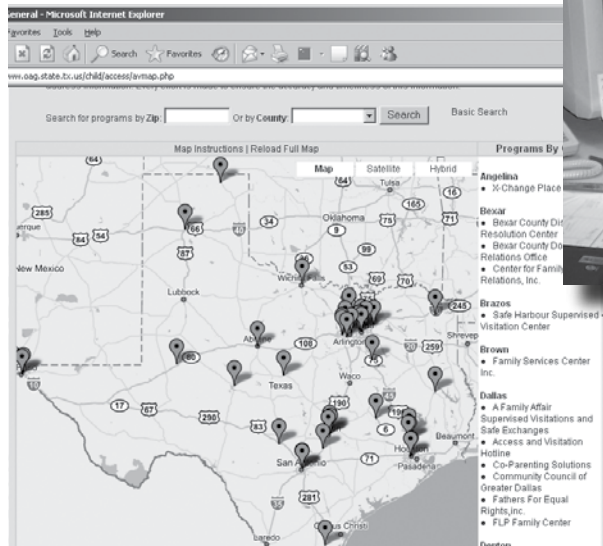
the community who serve as our valuable partners. I look forward to continuing our work together in 2007 on behalf of children and families. Along with OCSE staff in Washington, D.C., and throughout the Regions, I wish all of you a bright holiday season and a happy new year!

Margot Bean

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*Child Support Report online:
www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse*



Ellen Payne, above, worked behind the scenes in helping to create and start up the Access and Visitation Directory on the Texas Office of the Attorney General Child Support Web site. The site includes a map, left, that points out A&V locations throughout the State. The site received more than 27,000 visits during a recent two-month period.

requesting legal information about child access and visitation issues. The hotline attorneys use the directory to inform callers about A&V providers and the range of services available in their area.

Providers listed in the directory are required to provide one or more of these services: alternative dispute resolution, including coparenting facilitation and mediation; counseling; education; parenting plan development; visitation enforcement, monitoring, supervision, and neutral dropoff and pickup; or development of guidelines for visitation and alternative custody arrangements.

The list of providers includes grantees funded through Texas' A&V grant, local governmental entities such as domestic relations offices and dispute resolution centers, community- and faith-based providers, as well as private mediators, coparenting facilitators, and counseling providers.

As the history goes, in 2004, Texas was one of three States (with Colorado and Tennessee) to participate in a Federal OCSE-funded project

to assist States in planning for the most effective use of A&V funds. As part of this study, Michael Hayes, Director of OFI's Family Strengthening Initiatives, conducted a survey of how child support workers addressed A&V questions. About 92 percent of the staff indicated they would refer callers to community or other resources offering A&V services.

The Web site, created by OAG staff and located on each officer's desktop, fills the need for staff to be able to respond directly to the customers. OFI staff maintains the site and responds to customer comments and concerns.

More than 27,000 visitors viewed the site between Aug. 1 and Oct. 31 this year. The A&V coordinator gets frequent calls from online users requesting A&V services, and many say they are delighted with the map and find it helpful in making a decision about providers in their area. The directory will soon be available in Spanish.

For further information, please contact A&V Coordinator Anita Stuckey at 512-460-6437 or anita.stuckey@cs.oag.state.tx.us. CSR

New Publications Offer Help For Outreach to Prisoner, Reentry Populations

It isn't news to child support professionals that a significant number of incarcerated parents have child support obligations. In addition, studies have shown that children of incarcerated parents are vulnerable to a variety of negative outcomes; for example, they are more likely to become recipients of public assistance or to become involved with the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Incarcerated parents have responded positively to child support outreach efforts, especially for order modification assistance. Finally, a substantial percent of child support arrears is held by incarcerated and recently released obligors.

For these reasons, State and local child support programs and organizations have, in recent years, offered more services to parents in prison settings and to those re-entering society—with promising results.

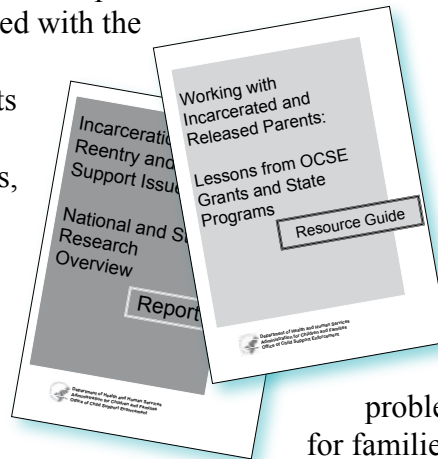
In a new resource guide, OCSE highlights 10 such projects—Section 1115 and SIP demonstration grant projects, as well as promising

State and local child support projects—to help child support professionals plan outreach efforts for the prisoner and reentry populations.

The guide includes sample forms, including a memorandum of understanding, a modification request, and other outreach materials and regulations.

Another new publication offers a synopsis of reentry research from sources including the Bureau of Justice Statistics, Urban Institute, and the Vera Institute of Justice. This report also summarizes several collaborative efforts that address the problems of incarceration and reentry for families and children.

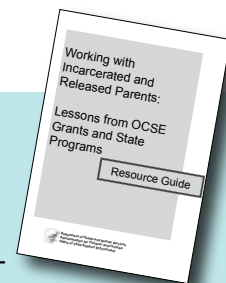
To view both publications, the Resource Guide and the Research Report, log on to <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cse/pol/DCL/2006/dcl-06-31.htm>, then click on the link to the publications. To order copies of the publications, contact the OCSE Reference Center at 202-401-5605 or mdbutler@acf.hhs.gov. **CSR**



Inside the Guide

The Resource Guide offers building blocks to help child support agencies create a program that successfully provides services to the prisoner and reentry populations, including:

- Conduct periodic automated data matches with DOC and other criminal justice agencies to identify inmates with child support involvement and their release dates;
- Build partnerships with the judiciary, the correctional system, one-stop reentry programs, etc., to develop strategies to work better with this population;
- Train correctional staff and communicate with incarcerated parents through presentations, videos, print materials, etc.;
- Simplify modification request forms and expedite the modification process;
- Develop policies to settle or reduce arrears accruing during incarceration.



Osage Nation Names Child Support Director

By Deborah A. Yates
Osage Nation

Rusty Creed Brown, JD, was recently appointed to lead the Osage Nation Child Support Services program through the start-up phase toward becoming a fully comprehensive Tribal IV-D Child Support Program. Brown is an Oklahoma native, a citizen of the Delaware Tribe of Indians, and has served as an Associate Judge for the Delaware Tribe of Indians for the past two years. Until recently, Brown also served as the Osage Nation's Natural Resource Specialist.

Brown joins Deborah Yates (Osage/Potawatomi) and Gregory Kidder (Osage/Pueblo) in launching the program. Tasks include ensuring Osage Nation child support codes and policy and procedures receive Osage Nation executive and congressional approval in the next several months. Osage Nation Child Support codes, policy, and procedures must also conform to the requirements of 45 CFR, Part 309, Final Rule on Tribal Child Support Enforcement Programs.

At the same time, Delana Taylor (Wichita/Navajo), a Chickasaw Nation Child Support

Specialist, has moved to the Osage Nation's campus to offer her assistance and ensure a smooth transfer of child support cases to Osage Nation Child Support Services.

The comprehensive Chickasaw Nation Tribal Child Support Program has been handling cases within the Osage Reservation through a cooperative agreement between the two Tribes. The Chickasaw Nation has provided much support in helping the Osage Nation program get started and an invaluable service to the Native American families within the Osage Reservation.

Brown says he is looking forward to his new position and the opportunity to serve Native American families. "It is important to ensure the safety and support of our children; it is the children that will become the future leaders of our Tribal Nations," says Brown. "I also look forward to the Osage Nation's program becoming comprehensive; our team is working hard to get everything in place for a smooth transition."

For further information, please contact Rusty Brown at rbrown@osagetribe.org or 918-287-5551. **CSR**



From left: Gregory Kidder and Deborah Yates, Osage Nation Research & Development Team; Delana Taylor, Chickasaw Nation Child Support Caseworker; and Rusty Creed Brown, JD, Director, Osage Nation Child Support Services

Tribal Child Support Programs: 35 and Counting



OCSE now funds 35 Tribal IV-D Child Support Enforcement Programs. The first section below lists the nine original comprehensive Tribal programs and directors; the second includes the 26 Tribal programs and directors that have been awarded OCSE start-up funding since publication of the Final Rule on Tribal Child Support Enforcement Programs (45 CFR, Part 309) in March 2004.

Comprehensive Programs

Navajo Nation—Pierette Baldwin-Gumbrecht

Chickasaw Nation—Cassandra McGilbray
Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux—Harry Buckanaga

Port Gamble S'Klallam—Maria Tran
Lummi Nation—Tanisha Canzater

Puyallup Tribe of Indians—Linda Tresaugue

Lac du Flambeau—Terry Hoyt
Forest County Potawatomi Community—Jacquelyn Pische

Menominee Indian—Jennifer Gauthier

Start-up Programs

1) Central Council Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes (AK)—Eddie Brakes

2) Osage Nation (OK)—Rusty Creed Brown

3) Cherokee Nation (OK)—Tracy Little Dave

4) Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation (WA)—Ricard Tupling

5) Confederate Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (OR)—Cathy Sampson-Kruse

6) Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska (NE)—Lola Reynolds

7) Quinault Indian Nation (WA)—John Baller

8) 3 Affiliated Tribes (Mandan, Hidatsa and Arickara Nation) (ND)—Bill Woods

9) Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians (MN)—Collette Maxwell

10) Oneida Tribe of Indians (WI)—Lisa Schwartz

11) Keweenaw Bay Indian Community (MI)—Tami Lorbecke

12) White Earth Nation (MN)—The Honorable Anita Fineday

13) Muscogee (Creek) Nation (OK)—Roger Wiley

14) Nooksack Indian Tribe (WA)—Ed Wurtz

15) Pueblo of Zuni (NM)—The Honorable Sharon Begay

16) Ponca Tribe (OK)—Anna Primeaux

17) Penobscot Nation (ME)—George Tomer

18) Kickapoo Tribe (KS)—Sylvia Barnett

19) Mescalero Apache Tribe (NM)—Dennis Pilcher

20) Kaw Nation (OK)—Amy Oldfield

21) Comanche Nation of OK—Gene Pekeh

22) Modoc Tribe of OK—Jerry Sweet

23) Klamath Tribes (OR)—Marla Cummins

24) Tulalip Tribes (WA)—The Honorable Stanley G. Jones, Tribal Chairman

25) Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Inc. (AK)—Ken Selby, Human Services Director

26) Northern Arapaho Tribe (WY)—The Honorable Richard Brannan, Chairman

National Hispanic Work Group Up and Running



The first meeting of the National Hispanic Work Group, held this August in Washington, D.C., included, clockwise, from top left, Arlene Krohmal, District Manager, Arlington CSE Office; Stephanie Gonzales, IV-D Director, Santa Fe, NM; Frank Fajardo, OCSE chair of the work group; Clive Dorvil, CSE, Washington, D.C.; and Socorro Leos, Child Support Associate Judge, Hidalgo County, Edinburg, TX.

To ultimately help child support program and judicial staff in their efforts to reach out to Hispanic/Latino communities, OCSE has launched a national work group with plans that include defining barriers to outreach, developing marketing strategies, and identifying opportunities for collaboration among all stakeholders to help children and families.

The work group members represent 18 States and include staff from program offices, courts, community- and faith-based organizations, and national Hispanic organizations. Members represent States with little experience serving diverse populations, but with such populations increasing, as well as States with considerable experience in providing services to the Hispanic community.

The members are taking a two-pronged approach by enhancing efforts in their State and local offices, and working in subgroups on strategies, resources, tools, and training for local offices. The group plans to hold monthly

conference calls and meet twice a year, and to broadly distribute their products.

One such product will be an update to the OCSE Guide for Hispanic/Latino Customer Service. This guide includes strategies, resources, tools, and training for targeted grassroots Hispanic outreach activities with media and community- and faith-based organizations.

OCSE will support the group in developing a strategic plan, conducting a needs assessment in selected States, surveying available resources to establish a clearinghouse, searching HHS programs for sample leveraging of funds with private and nonprofits, and preparing a sample technical assistance package.

The work group later plans to focus on other bilingual communities, including Asian.

To learn more about the Hispanic work group, please contact Frank Fajardo in OCSE, 202-205-4554 or Frank.Fajardo@acf.hhs.gov. **CSR**

Persistence Tips the Scale in Centre County, PA

By Ann Marie Oldani

Pennsylvania Child Support Program

In a case that's been tough to enforce for both Pennsylvania and California child support agencies, the Centre County Domestic Relations Section in Bellefonte, PA, recently received a record collection of \$60,510.24. The last of three lump-sum child support payments on this case amounted to \$30,000. The total included about \$120,000 in arrears; arrears totaled \$86,000 in August 2000, when California registered the order for enforcement in Centre County.

As luck would have it, about a year ago, Centre County Enforcement Officer Timothy Weight got a tip from the plaintiff (custodial parent), who still resides in California, that the defendant (noncustodial parent) might have received an inheritance from his mother's estate. Officer Weight confirmed this when he reached the defendant's brother, the executor of the estate. The court next entered an order to intercept proceeds from the distribution to the defendant.

Then, in a turn of events, and thanks to the officer's aggressive followup actions, the local court held several contempt hearings to ad-



Donald Gampe, left, Domestic Relations Assistant Director, and Enforcement Officer Timothy Weight leaf through a small portion of the reports from a case that gained Centre County its largest collection.

dress the executor's failure to comply with the intercept order. The executor had failed to file the estate in a timely manner, resulting in fines and penalties levied by the State. As a result, however, the final distribution to the defendant was reduced.

This case demonstrates that the best contact for child support authorities may be the plaintiff, and that keeping communication open across state lines can be crucial. It also indicates that extra efforts by an enforcement staff can be rewarded by large collections and positive outcomes. **CSR**

Research to Assess Fatherhood Services

Three research grants of potential interest to the child support community have been awarded by ACF's Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation under its Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage Research Initiative.

The purpose of this initiative is to evaluate services to promote responsible fatherhood through encouraging and supporting healthy

marriages between low-income parents. The studies use an experimental research design to test the effectiveness of approaches to helping interested low-income fathers and couples understand the importance of two-parent families for child well-being, helping couples achieve their desire for a healthy marriage and sustain those marriages, and helping fathers develop the skills to be responsible parents.

See **RESEARCH**, next page

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Health and Human Services**

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RESEARCH, *from previous page*

One project will assess the effectiveness of an eight-week marriage education curriculum designed for low-income individuals and couples in promoting investment in healthy marriages by fathers and teaching skills to lead to positive parenting outcomes. The evaluation will assess whether efficacy of the treatment depends on whether couples or individuals participate.

A second project will assess the effectiveness of the marriage education curriculum entitled Couples Together Against Violence in reducing low-level situational violence, strengthening marriage/relationships, and increasing father involvement. The evaluation will aim to identify the mechanisms responsible for decreases in domestic violence.

The third project will assess the effectiveness of the curriculum entitled Program for Strong African American Fathers, a course of six in-home sessions for couples focused on marriage and parenting. The evaluation will assess the program's affect on African American fathers living in rural Georgia in strengthening marriage and increasing father involvement.

Each project is supported by a five-year grant. [CSR](#)

Child Support Report

Child Support Report is published monthly by the Office of Child Support Enforcement, Division of Consumer Services. We welcome articles and high-quality photos. We reserve the right to edit for style, content, and length. Contents are for informational purposes only; no official endorsement of any practice, publication, or individual by the Department of Health and Human Services or the Office of Child Support Enforcement is intended. Use of this material is welcomed; please identify *Child Support Report* as the source.

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