Sept. 6, 2012

Child Support: Achieving Better Outcomes for Children

NYC HRA OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT (OCSE)

OCSE Policy Conference

September 6, 2012 - CUNY Graduate Center

September 6, 2012

Dear Conference Participant,

Good morning and welcome to our 2012 Policy Conference–"Child Support: Achieving Better Outcomes for Children."

This year, we seek to build on the successes of our 2010 and 2011 Policy Conferences, which focused on the role child support plays in strengthening families. Building on the research findings in the "Fragile Families and Child Wellbeing Study", and having partnered with The Future of Children Project, our goal for those two conferences was to identify ways that we can more fully integrate formal child support services with programs that provide essential supports for both custodial and noncustodial parents. We hope that many of you had the opportunity to attend last year's conference or at least review our report summarizing the event. This year, we are pleased to broaden this meaningful discussion with a conference agenda designed to review, and identify, alternative ways to establish and enforce child support orders that promote communication, mediation, compliance, and family and child wellbeing. Our conference keynote speaker, Richard R. Buery Jr., President & CEO of The Children's Aid Society, will help us set the conference tone with his morning keynote address.

In our continued effort to connect more families to the child support program and increase the number of families with child support orders, we need to be open to discussing and exploring alternative approaches to how we conduct business. Towards that end, this year we will explore how other states approach establishing child support orders. In addition, we will explore the use of a "Problem Solving Court" approach to increasing compliance with child support and minimizing enforcement. During the morning plenaries, you'll hear from panelists representing the Georgia, Colorado and Texas child support programs, as well as leadership within the NY State Family Court and the NYC Mayor's Office. We will then offer an afternoon roundtable discussion, moderated by NYC Human Resources Administration Commissioner Robert Doar, on some of the key outcomes and themes from both morning plenaries. The roundtable will include Federal OCSE Commissioner Vicki Turetsky, NY State Family Court Chief Magistrate Peter Passidomo, and University of Texas Clinical Law Professor Cynthia Bryant.

Our conference isn't possible without your support. We hope you find the conference both informative and productive, and encourage your active participation as we put forth new ideas on ways to engage more families in the child support program and to help low-income non-custodial parents achieve compliance, establish financial stability and fulfill their child support obligations. Thank you for joining us today, and I look forward to a productive exchange of ideas and a successful conference.

Sincerely,

Frances Pardus-Abbadessa
Executive Deputy Commissioner
New York City Human Resources Administration
Office of Child Support Enforcement

NYC HRA OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT (OCSE)

2012 OCSE Policy Conference

Child Support: Achieving Better Outcomes for Children

September 6, 2012 - CUNY Graduate Center

Agenda

8:00 am **Conference Check-in and Continental Breakfast**

9:00 am **Welcome**

Robert Doar, Commissioner, NYC Human Resources Administration
Vicki Turetsky, Commissioner, Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement
Frances Pardus-Abbadessa, Executive Deputy Commissioner, NYC HRA OCSE

- 2012 Policy Conference Theme
- OCSE Accomplishments and Updates

10:00 am **Keynote** - Richard R. Buery Jr, President & Chief Executive Officer, The Children's Aid Society

10:30 am **Morning Break**

10:45 am **First Plenary Session:** *Alternative Approaches to Establishing Child Support Orders*

Despite studies showing the positive role child support has on reducing child poverty, not all families are ready or willing to establish child support orders. This poses a challenge to child support programs nationwide in serving the needs of children and families. The purpose of this plenary is to identify and discuss alternative approaches to establishing child support orders so as to engage both mothers and fathers in the responsibility of raising their children. This plenary session will also review national best practices, identify ways to connect more families to child support services and secure valuable feedback from the audience.

- Moderator: Cynthia Bryant, Clinical Law Professor, University of Texas
- Presenters:
  - Alicia Key, IV-D Director, Texas
  - Robert Prevost, Division Manager, Arapahoe County Child Support Division, Colorado
  - Robert Mulroy, Deputy Chief Magistrate, NYS Family Court
  - Alan Farrell, Citywide Fatherhood Coordinator, NYC Office of the Mayor

12:15 pm **Lunch**

1:15 pm **Second Plenary Session:** *A Problem Solving Court Approach to Increasing Compliance with Child Support*

Employment plays a critical role in a noncustodial parent's (NCP) ability to financially contribute to his or her child's development, and lack thereof can serve as a barrier to an NCP's involvement in his or her child's life. Successful workforce development programs strike the right balance between identifying sustainable employment opportunities and providing needed social support services. Unfortunately, despite efforts to connect NCPs to employment, too many still face challenges in remaining compliant. This plenary session will highlight OCSE's successes using a Problem Solving Court approach, review our efforts to engage "hard-to-reach" NCPs, and highlight the successes and challenges faced by similar Problem Solving Court programs nationwide. Finally, this session will provide an opportunity to secure necessary feedback from audience members who work directly with NCPs.

- Moderator: Alfred Siegel, Deputy Director, Center for Court Innovation
- Presenters:
  - Sarah Reckess, Judicial Branch Problem Solving Initiative, Syracuse
  - Tanguler Johnson, Director of State Operations, Georgia Office of Child Support Services
  - Nicholas Palos, Support Magistrate, NYS Family Court

2:45 pm **Afternoon Break**

3:00 pm **Roundtable**

This roundtable will discuss the feedback and recommendations coming out of the morning and afternoon plenaries. The roundtable panel will include local and national child support leaders, and provide a rich opportunity to discuss the common challenges and complexities that OCSE and other child support agencies face in working to develop a program that is responsive to the comprehensive needs of families. Roundtable panelists will have an opportunity to respond to audience feedback, and promote transparency and understanding among all stakeholders.

- Moderator: Robert Doar, Commissioner, NYC Human Resources Administration
  - Cynthia Bryant, Clinical Law Professor, University of Texas
  - Vicki Turetsky, Commissioner, Federal Office of Child Support Enforcement
  - Peter Passidomo, Chief Clerk, NYC Family Court

4:00 pm **Closing Remarks** – Frances Pardus-Abbadessa, Executive Deputy Commissioner, NYC HRA OCSE

CONFERENCE SPEAKERS

Keynote

Born and raised in the East New York section of Brooklyn, New York, the son of a retired New York City public school teacher and a retired lab manager, **Richard R. Buery, Jr.** has dedicated his life to improving educational opportunity and life outcomes for young people in America's most disadvantaged communities.

In October 2009, Mr. Buery was named the 10th President and Chief Executive Officer of The Children's Aid Society. He is the first black leader of Children's Aid and the youngest since Charles Loring Brace founded the agency in 1853. Children's Aid is an independent, non-profit organization established to serve the children of New York City. Its mission is to help children in poverty succeed and thrive by providing comprehensive supports to children and their families in targeted, high-need New York City neighborhoods. Children's Aid serves New York's neediest children and their families with a network of services and programs that support children and families from before birth through young adulthood.

Mr. Buery previously co-founded and served as Executive Director of Groundwork, Inc., a non-profit organization serving the children and families of Brooklyn public housing developments. Groundwork was the third non-profit organization Mr. Buery founded. While still an undergraduate at Harvard, he co-founded the Mission Hill Summer Program, an enrichment program for children in the Mission Hill Housing Development in the Roxbury section of Boston. More recently, he co-founded and served as Executive Director of iMentor, a technology education and mentoring program that each year connects New York City middle and high school students with professional mentors through both online and face-to-face meetings. Already one of the largest youth mentoring organizations in New York City, iMentor is currently undergoing a national expansion.

A graduate of Harvard College and Yale Law School, Mr. Buery has a background in law, education, and politics. Prior to founding iMentor, Mr. Buery was a staff attorney at the Brennan Center for Justice. He also served as a law clerk to Judge John M. Walker, Jr. of the Federal Court of Appeals in New York City; a fifth grade teacher at an orphanage in Bindura, Zimbabwe; and Chief Political Officer and Campaign Manager to Kenneth Reeves, the Mayor of Cambridge, Massachusetts. He has also served as an adjunct lecturer at the Baruch College School of Public Affairs.

The recipient of many honors and awards, Mr. Buery was a 1992-1993 Michael Clarke Rockefeller Fellow. In 2000, he was named one of Ebony Magazine's 30 Leaders of the Future Under 30 and in 2009, was named one of Crain's New York Business' 40 Leaders of the Future Under 40, in recognition of his contributions to the life of New York City. He has also received the Mary McLeod Bethune Recognition Award from the National Council of Negro Women; the Extraordinary Black Man Award for Humanitarianism from the United Negro College Fund, and the inaugural outstanding alumnus award from the Phillips Brooks House Association at Harvard College. Mr. Buery has been honored by the Rush Philanthropic Arts Foundation, the Brooklyn Borough President, and others. He lives with his wife Deborah, a law professor, and his two sons, Ellis and Ethan.

Cynthia Bryant is Clinical Professor of Law at the University of Texas School of Law, where she teaches mediation and dispute resolution, as well as directs the Law School's Mediation Clinic. Prior to joining the University of Texas School of Law, she served as Deputy Attorney General for the Texas Attorney General's Child Support Division and as IV-D Director for Texas. She also served as an Assistant Attorney General in the Child Support Division, Director of Litigation, and Director of Field Operations in the Texas IV-D program. In 1980, she co-founded the Children's Rights Clinic at the University of Texas School of Law, and later taught, wrote, and practiced law there.

Ms. Bryant has served on the Board of Directors of the National Child Support Enforcement Association. She also received the State Bar of Texas Child Abuse and Neglect Committee's Forshey Award, the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement's Commissioner's Award, and the federal Administration for Children and Families' Regional Administrator's Leadership Award.

Ms. Bryant received her J.D. from the University of Texas School of Law in 1976.

Robert Doar was appointed Commissioner of the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA) in 2007 by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg. As chief executive of the largest local social services agency in the country, Mr. Doar administers more than 12 major public assistance programs, including temporary cash assistance, public health insurance, domestic violence assistance, child support services, and adult protective services.

Mr. Doar's "work first" emphasis has seen nearly 350,000 individuals placed into employment, and he has successfully promoted the expansion of programs that help people stay out of poverty, including food stamps, the earned income tax credit, and Medicaid. New York City children now have the lowest poverty rate and the lowest medically uninsured rate of the eight largest U.S. cities. In addition, Mr. Doar is a leading advocate in combating fraud; pursuing revenue reimbursements in government assistance programs; and promoting responsible fatherhood, both through increased efforts to collect child support and through initiatives such as NYC DADS, which encourages fathers to take an active role in their children's emotional lives.

Alan S. Farrell was appointed New York City's first Fatherhood Services Coordinator in September 2010 and serves out of the Office of the Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services. In this position, he is responsible for planning and implementing NYC DADS - The Mayor's Fatherhood Initiative, where he works with over a dozen City agencies to maximize opportunities to engage fathers in the lives of their children. Mr. Farrell has also been instrumental in launching the CUNY Fatherhood Academy, the City's first ever community college-based effort to support the growth and development of fathers, as well as the Parent Pledge Project, a community-based mediation pilot designed to help parents develop voluntary agreements and child support orders.

Mr. Farrell received a B.A. in African American Studies with a concentration in Literature from Oberlin College. He also received an M.S. in Urban Policy Analysis and Management from The New School's Milano School of International Affairs, Management, and Urban Policy, as well as an M.A. in Urban Missions from Westminster Theological Seminary/City Seminary of New York.

Tanguler Gray Johnson is Director of State Operations for the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) in Georgia. She provides leadership and oversight for DCSS's Contact Center, Director's Communication Group, Financial Support Team, Policy and Paternity Unit, and Outreach Programs, which include the Fatherhood Program, Community Outreach, and Problem Solving Court. Mrs. Johnson spearheaded DCSS' Rapid Process Improvement (RPI) Initiative, which resulted in the reduction of a 71-day establishment process to same-day service. In November 2007, Governor Sonny Perdue awarded DCSS the Governor's Customer Service Improvement Initiative Award and DCSS' RPI Implementation Team also won the Commissioner's Award for High Performance at the 18th Annual Child Support Enforcement Conference in Washington, D.C.

Mrs. Johnson has over 16 years of experience with DCSS and has served in many capacities there, including accounting, as Customer Service Director/RPI Champion, and as Region 8 Manager. She also served as Operations Manager with MAXIMUS Child Support Services for three years.

She received her B.A. in Accounting from Valdosta State University.

Alicia Key was named Deputy Attorney General for Child Support for the Texas Office of the Attorney General in January 2007, where she has served as the Child Support Director since her appointment on December 1, 2004. She returned to the OAG from the Office of Court Administration, where she served as Administrative Director from 2002 to 2004. Before that, Ms. Key worked for over 12 years in the child support program in Texas, beginning as Title IV-D Master for the Eighth and Ninth Administrative Judicial Regions in 1989. Joining the Attorney General's Office in 1992, she served as the managing attorney of an Austin field office, and then as General Counsel of the Child Support Division from 1999 to 2002.

Ms. Key has been a guest commentator for Sampson & Tindall's Family Code Annotated annually since 1997, as well as a member of the State Bar of Texas Family Law Section Formbook Committee since 1999. She is past President of the National Council of Child Support Directors and is a board member of the Western Interstate Child Support Enforcement Council.

Robert Mulroy is Deputy Chief Magistrate for the Family Court of the State of New York. He served as a Support Magistrate in the Bronx County Family Court from 1996 until his appointment as Deputy Chief Magistrate in 2010. Mr. Mulroy has presented many Continuing Legal Education lectures and trainings throughout the State of New York, including talks for the Office of Court Administration, New York County Lawyer's Association, Appellate Division First Department Office of Special Projects, National Child Support Enforcement Association, and In Motion. He has also taught at Mercy College, Berkeley College, and Lehman College.

Mr. Mulroy graduated from Fordham Law School in 1983. He was admitted to practice law before the courts of the State of New York and the Federal Court for the Southern District of New York in 1984.

Nicholas Palos is a Support Magistrate with the New York State Family Court in Kings County (Brooklyn), where he is responsible for hearing the full spectrum of support cases, including those brought under the Uniform Interstate Family Support Act. Prior to this role, he served as a Support Magistrate with both the Citywide Child Support Enforcement Team and New York County (Manhattan) Family Court; the Court Attorney for Judge Susan Larabee; and as an attorney with HRA's Family Law Litigation Unit.

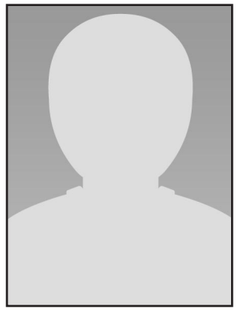
Mr. Palos currently serves on the Child Support and Paternity Advisory Committee of the Administrative Judge of the Family Court in the City of New York, as well as the Board of Directors of the National Child Support Enforcement Association. He also served as President of the New York State Magistrate's Association from December 2003 to May 2005.

Mr. Palos was awarded a B.A. in Theology Magna Cum Laude from Fordham University and a J.D. from Fordham's School of Law. He is admitted to the New York State Bar, as well as to practice before the U.S. Supreme Court.

Frances Pardus-Abbadessa is the Executive Deputy Commissioner of the New York City Human Resources Administration's Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). OCSE manages the child support program in NYC, working to ensure that noncustodial parents share the responsibility of supporting their children. The agency's approximately 850 staff members provide an array of services, including locating absent parents, establishing paternity, collecting support, and modifying and enforcing child support orders. In addition, they develop and oversee programs that raise awareness of the ways in which formal child support benefits both custodial and noncustodial parents, which increases parental compliance with the program.

Before coming to OCSE in 2004, Ms. Pardus-Abbadessa began her career in NYC HRA in 1986 as a budget analyst and worked her way up to the position of Executive Deputy Administrator of the HRA Finance Office, where she was responsible for ensuring the integrity of the agency's finances and its annual budget of more than $5 billion.

She received a B.A. from Syracuse University, majoring in Political Science and American Studies; and in 1986, was awarded an M.A. in Public Administration from New York University's Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service.



Peter Passidomo was appointed Chief Clerk of the New York City Family Court in 2009, where he hears more than 250,000 petitions each year. He also serves as Co-Chair of the Family Court Advisory and Rules Committee, which drafts court rules and legislation that affect family court. Mr. Passidomo was appointed Vice-Dean of the NYS Judicial Institute in 2006, which is charged with training New York's 1,200 State judges, 2,000 court attorneys, and 2,000 town and village judges. In 2003, he was appointed Chief Magistrate of NYS Family Court, where he oversaw the State's 120 support magistrates and 50 court attorney-referees, who hear more than 350,000 cases filed in family court each year. Prior to this appointment, Mr. Passidomo served as Chief Court Attorney of the NYC Family Court, as well as Family Court Hearing Examiner (the title has since been changed to Support Magistrate).

Mr. Passidomo is an Adjunct Professor of Law at Pace University School of Law in White Plains. He received his B.A. from the State University at Albany in 1982, and his J.D. from Fordham Law School in 1985.

Bob Prevost is Division Manager of Child Support for the Arapahoe County of Colorado Department of Human Services, where he oversees an award-winning team working to ensure that children receive the support they deserve from both parents. He joined Arapahoe County in 2009 as an Intake Supervisor, prior to being named Division Manager in 2010. Under Mr. Prevost's leadership, Arapahoe County helped to create and pilot the state's online application process, create an automated arrears calculation program, and implement an early intervention process that helps parents to identify and overcome barriers to meeting their child support obligations.

Mr. Prevost began his career in child support in 1992. He spent eight years as a generalist and nine years as Division Manager in Morgan County. He has served as president, moderator, and member on several community and government boards. He and his wife, Kim, have twin daughters, Megan and Mikayla.

Sarah Reckess is a Senior Associate with the Center for Court Innovation's Syracuse, New York office. She oversees the Onondaga County Parent Support Program, an innovative problem-solving court model that links non-custodial parents to employment services and training. Before joining the Center, Ms. Reckess provided legal assistance at Legal Services of Central New York and the Syracuse Medical-Legal Partnership. She also served as Interim Director at the Family Law and Social Policy Center at Syracuse University College of Law.

Ms. Reckess received her B.A. from Mount Holyoke College, her M.A. from the University of Nevada - Reno, and her J.D. from Syracuse University College of Law.

Alfred Siegel is Deputy Director of the Center for Court Innovation, an independent non-profit organization that provides technical assistance to national and international jurisdictions that are considering the implementation of community justice and problem-solving court projects. He directed the design and implementation of many of the Center's problem-solving court projects, including the Red Hook and Harlem Community Justice Centers; Bronx Community Solutions; and alternatives to juvenile detention and placement in Queens and Staten Island. Mr. Siegel is currently directing the planning for the Center's newest project, a community court to be located in Brownsville, Brooklyn, which will focus on juveniles and adolescents.

Mr. Siegel served as a member of Governor David Paterson's Task Force on Transforming New York State's Juvenile Justice System and as chair of its sub-committee on Reentry and Alternatives to Placement. Prior to joining the Center for Court Innovation, he was Deputy Commissioner of New York City's Probation Department, an Inspector General for the City's Department of Housing Preservation and Development, and an Assistant District Attorney in Bronx County.

He received a master's degree from New York University and his J.D. from Rutgers University.

Vicki Turetsky is Commissioner of the Office of Child Support Enforcement at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families. In this capacity, she oversees the child support program operated by each state and many tribes, and brings to the position more than 25 years of experience as a public administrator and advocate for low-income families, as well as nationally recognized expertise in family policy. She has been instrumental in efforts to boost child support payments to families, as well as establish realistic policies that encourage noncustodial parents to work and become active parents.

Prior to her current appointment, Ms. Turetsky served as Director of Family Policy at the Center for Law and Social Policy, where she specialized in child support, responsible fatherhood, and prisoner re-entry policies. She has also held positions with the U.S. Corporation for National and Community Service, Union County Legal Services in New Jersey, the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. The author of numerous publications, she was a visiting lecturer at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University and has received several national awards.

She received her B.A. from the University of Minnesota and her J.D. from the University of Chicago Law School.

Save the date!

2013 OCSE Policy Conference
October 22, 2013
CUNY Graduate Center
New York City

NYC
Human Resources Administration
Department of Social Services
Office of Child Support Enforcement

CUNY The City University of New York
School of Professional Studies

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Frances Pardus-Abbadessa,

Executive Deputy Commissioner

NYC Human Resources Administration

Office of Child Support Enforcement

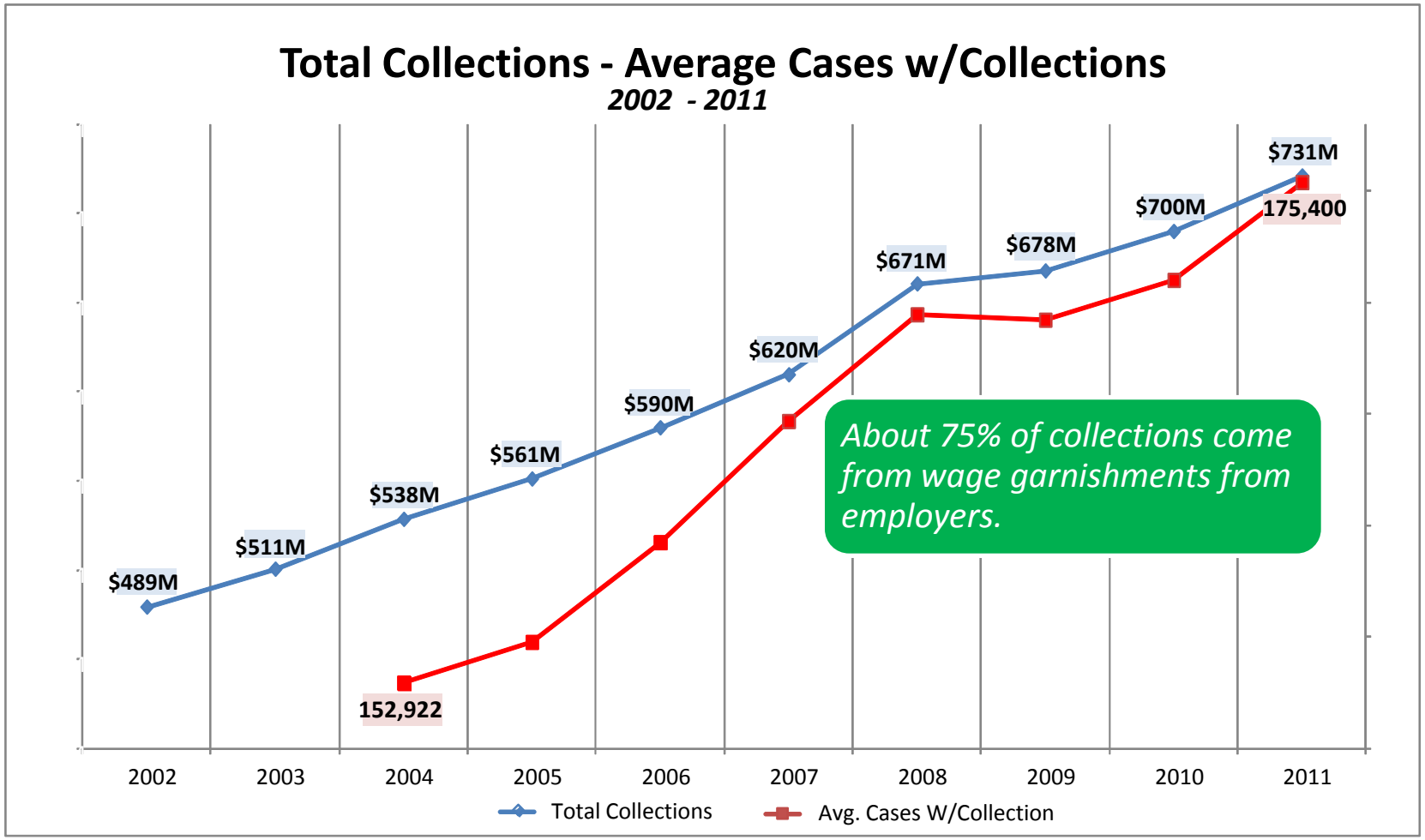
Overview

- The Child Support Program & What We Have Achieved
- What we know about children who grow up in poverty and without a father actively involved in their lives
- Brief overview of the Child Support Program
- What we hope to accomplish today?

The Child Support Program: What We Have Achieved

- The child support program is one of the strongest anti-poverty programs in the nation, lifting millions of children out of poverty.
- In 2007, nation-wide, child support represented 40% of family income for poor mother-headed families receiving child support income.
- In NYC, OCSE collects on average $5,605 per year, for a family with child support income, benefiting 255,630 children.
- In NYC the program has achieved strong results.

The number of NCPs paying Child Support continues to increase…



For those parents we do serve, there are many benefits

Ensures paternity is established which protects mom, dad, & child.

- Mom – 1st Step in establishing a child support order.
- Dad – Gives dad a voice in court-ordered visitation, custody, or adoption proceedings.
- Child – Legally connects child to both parents: the child will know who his or her father is.
  - Preserves inheritance and benefit rights for child: VA, Social Security, and death benefits.

Ensures the cost for raising a child is shared by both parents.

- Children are expensive – annual cost to raise a child for single parent: $7,447.
- $7,447 is a national average and when controlled for cost of living in NYC it rises significantly.
- Moms shouldn't have to bear the cost alone.

Ensures mom receives regular and consistent payments which helps her plan and budget her money.

Many Families Not Yet Reached

- OCSE estimates that over 300,000 children in single-parent families below 150% of poverty in NYC are either not connected to the formal child support program or they are known to OCSE, but do not have an order in place.
- For those 194,000 NCPs with current child support orders,
  - **37%** did not pay their child support.
- For those 91,000 NCPs with no current order but paying off child support debt,
  - **80%** made no payments, and
  - **40%** have children who are not emancipated.

What do we know about children who grow up in poverty and without a father actively involved in their lives?

High Poverty Among Single-Parent Households

Children need healthy relationships with both mother <u>and</u> father

- As of Nov 2011, 41% of children are born out of wedlock nationwide.
- Nearly a quarter of all children in the United States are being raised by a single mother.
- Forty percent of these children are living in poverty compared to 19% of married couples. For African American and Hispanic women and their children, the poverty rates are even higher.

Children need stable financial support from both parents

- Fathers are the absent parent in the vast majority of single-parent households.
- Children who grow up in single-parent households are statistically far less likely to accomplish the goals that lead them out of poverty and into stable, productive lives.
- Research has shown that increasing the financial resources of low-income families improves child outcomes.[1]

[1]Dahl, G.B. & Lochner, L. (2012). "The Impact of Family Income on Child Achievement: Evidence from the Earned Income Tax Credit." *American Economic Review,* 102(5): 1927-56; Duncan, G., Morris, P., & Rodrigues, C. (2011). "Does Money Really Matter? Estimating Impacts of Family Income on Young Children's Achievement with Data from Random-Assignment Experiments." *Developmental Psychology*, 47(5): 1263-79.

Father Support Makes a Difference

Research has established that when fathers support their children financially they are more likely to be involved in their children's lives. Moreover, children whose fathers are actively involved in their lives are more likely to:

- Thrive financially
- Succeed in the classroom
- Shun the abuse of drugs
- Steer clear of the criminal justice system
- Have higher self-esteem and avoid depression, etc.
- Avoid teen pregnancy

Sources: National Fatherhood Initiative; Princeton-Brookings: Fragile Family Study

The Challenge

- How can we go beyond what we already achieved?
- How do we increase the number of fathers paying child support and fulfilling their responsibilities to their children?
- How do we reach families who are not mandated to participate in the child support program?

The Challenge

- If we want better outcomes for our children, we need to be bold and be willing to explore alternatives to strengthen families in ways that:
  - reinforce the responsible fatherhood message,
  - connect both parents to their children,
  - support healthy relationships, and
  - increase family income by ensuring children receive financial support from both parents.

This means reexamining how we do business and questioning whether there are alternative ways to achieve our goals that yield stronger outcomes for children.

Brief Overview of the Child Support Program

The Child Support Program is a National and International Program

- The Program is established under federal law and is uniform across all states.
- States differ in how they administer the child support program.
- NYS Child Support Program is state supervised and locally administered.
- Child support orders are established and modified judicially.

NYC OCSE's Core Functions

- Establishing paternity;
- Locating noncustodial parents;
- Establishing child and medical support orders;
- Collecting and distributing child support payments; and
- Enforcing child support orders both administratively and judicially.

How Many Families do we Serve?

- As of July 2012, NYC has over 409,000 child support cases; 70% or about 285,000 have a child support order.
- We serve approximately 456,911 children.
- About 17% of our cases are on cash assistance (CA); 47% are families who formerly received CA; and 36% have never been on CA.
- Families in receipt of CA are mandated to comply with child support whereas all others may voluntarily access services by filing an application.

OCSE Enforcement Authority

- **Administrative enforcement** measures happen automatically (examples: driver's license suspension, passport denial, seizing bank accounts, denial of City issued professional licenses, and intercept tax refunds).
  - Prior to an action being taken a notice is sent to the NCP explaining the process and notifying them of their due process rights.
  - NCPs in receipt of government assistance are exempt from some of these actions.
- **Judicial enforcement** measures happen when a CP or the government files a violation petition in court (examples: NYS professional license suspension, referrals to mandatory work programs, judgments with interest, incarceration).

Protections in the Law for Low Income NCPs

To ensure fairness, orders are formula-based

- One child = 17% of income
- Two children = 25% of income
- Three children = 29% of income
- Four children = 31% of income
- Five or more children = 35% of income

New York State laws protect low-income NCPs

- For those earning below **$15,080** (SSR) there are minimum orders ($50).
- For those earning below **$11,170** (Fed Poverty) there are poverty orders ($25); arrears are capped at $500.
- NCPs in receipt of government assistance are exempt from some administrative enforcement actions.

Safeguards cannot be implemented unless the NCP shows up to court and read their mail

What do we know About the NCPs we Serve?

Nationally 85% of NCPs are men; in NYC that percentage is considerably higher.

Age breakdown of those with child support orders (285,000)

- 18-23 – 1%
- 24-36 – 23%
- 37-54 – 61%
- 55 and over – 15%

Cases with a Current Child Support Order (Approx. 194,000)

- 51% are currently or formerly in receipt of public assistance.
- 63% paid the majority of their child support in 2011.
- Average arrears of $6,825 – About 75% owed to CP.

Cases Paying Off Child Support Debt Only (Approx. 91,000)

- 80% of NCPs are currently or formerly in receipt of public assistance.
- 21% made payments in 2011.
- Average arrears of $15,618 – Majority owed to CP.
- 40% of cases are for families where child is under 21.

What factors explain high orders or debt?

- NCP fails to respond to their court hearing and a Default Order is issued. This almost always results in an order that is higher than their ability to pay.
- NCP fails to remit payments immediately upon receiving order of support.
- NCP does not return to court when there is a change in their circumstances:
  - Job loss, decrease in income or working fewer hours
  - Disability
  - Change in custody or parties are reconciled
  - Child(ren) emancipated (by circumstance)
- NCP is incarcerated for a period of time.
- NCPs fail to comply and pay their child support.

OCSE Services Available to Assist Noncustodial Parents

Debt Reduction Programs

Modify DSS Order

- Reduce orders payable to the government for those earning at or below the Self Support Reserve

Arrears Cap

- Reduce child support debt owed to the government if it accrued while NCP was earning at or below poverty
- Outcome: Reduced debt by $10.8m and the # of NCPs paying increased from 41% to 51%

Arrears Credit Program

- In response to paying child support consistently, an NCP can have their government debt reduced by $5,000 a year for up to 3 years.

Debt Reduction Programs

Settlement Agreements for NCPs Over 55

- OCSE will negotiate a lump sum payment for NCPs with child support debt to the government for whom we are unlikely to ever receive payment in full due to their age, health, or financial circumstances.

Reducing NCP Debt Owed to Non-Cash Assistance Families

- New partnership with NY Peace Institute and community based organizations.
- Parents are screened for domestic violence and if appropriate meet with a mediator to discuss how they are co-parenting their child.
- The discussion is expected to lead to a conversation around the child support debt owed and possibly lead to a reduction in the amount owed the custodial parent.
- The idea is to creates a safe environment for both parents where this topic can be broached.

Employment Services

Support Through Employment Program (STEP)

- Partnership with HRA's Back to Work Program
- 5,000 NCPs are referred annually
- 52% have a positive outcome
- 48% fail to comply
- $31 million was collected in FY12 from all NCPs ever referred to the program

Families WORK (Work Opportunities and Resources Kit)

- Began in 2011
- Connects NCPs with a child support order to employment
- Assess NCPs for other support services

Cash Assistance Agreement Pilot

- Custodial Parents in receipt of cash assistance are invited to meet with a child support worker along with NCP at OCSE's Customer Services Office to enter into a child support agreement outside of court.
- The Family Court approves the agreements and they become official court orders.
- Parents can be referred for mediation services but co-parenting issues are not discussed.
- 25% of the NCPs keep their appointments.
- 50 agreements have been signed.

Services to the Incarcerated

Our goal is to reduce recidivism and promote compliance with child support

- Connect them to employment;
- Educate them on the child support rules;
- Assist them with their child support debt or high orders; and
- Connect them to community based mediation services.

We have a strong partnership with serving thousands of individuals

- NYC Dept of Correction at Rikers Island
- NYC Dept of Probation
- Queensboro Correctional Facility

What do we Hope to Accomplish Today?

- Today's two panel discussions are intended to explore new ways to obtain better outcomes for children:
  - Alternative Approaches to Establishing Child Support Orders
  - A Problem Solving Court Approach to Increasing Compliance with Child Support
- Our hope is to create more paths & new ways to reinforce parents responsibility to their children, promote co-parenting, improve communication, and increase compliance with child support.
- I encourage you to think creatively, actively participate, ask tough questions and help move the policy discussion forward.

Sept. 6, 2012

Child Support: Achieving Better Outcomes for Children

NYC HRA OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT (OCSE)

OCSE Policy Conference

September 6, 2012 - CUNY Graduate Center

Richard R. Buery Jr.,

President & Chief Executive Officer

The Children's Aid Society

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First Plenary Session:

Alternative Approaches to Establishing Child Support Orders

<u>Moderator</u>: Professor Cynthia Bryant

Alternative Approaches to Establishing Child Support Orders:

The Child Support Review Process

Alicia Key

September 2012

Attorney General of Texas

Child Support Review Process

- Child Support Review Process (CSRP) – a quasi-administrative process in a judicial world
- Once signed by a judge, a CSRP order is a legally binding order
- Resolves child support legal issues in the child support office without parents going to court
- Parents can:

  Establish paternity and child support orders

  Obtain judgments for past due support

  Modify child support payments

Benefits to using CSRP

- Expedited action
- A relaxed atmosphere in the office improves customer service
- Increased privacy in the office as opposed to a public hearing
- If travel is an issue, a telephonic conference is available
- Saved time and money for parties and the agency
- Parentage testing can be ordered administratively

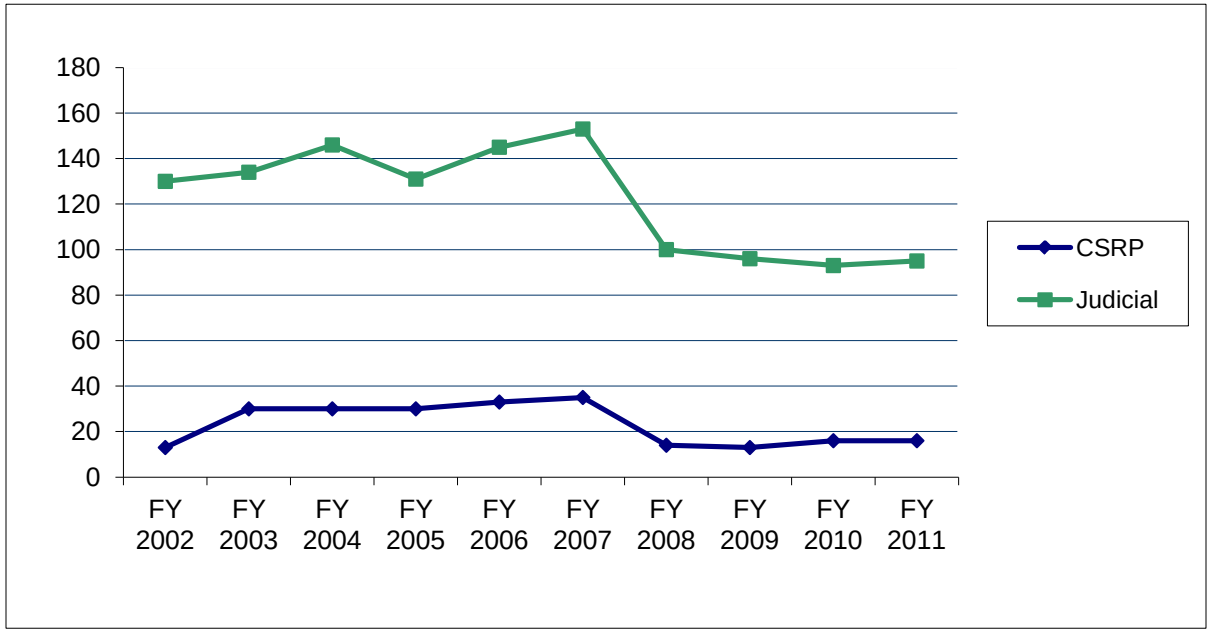
The Numbers Tell the Story

- The length of time from referral to disposition is reduced
- The length of time from referral to first payment is cut in half
- 50% of CSRP cases pay within 60 days
- While it takes 129 days for 50% of judicial cases to pay

More Numbers

- Better compliance through CSRP
- 51% of ALL CSRPs referred paid between January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011
- Only 34% of all judicial cases referred during the same time frame paid

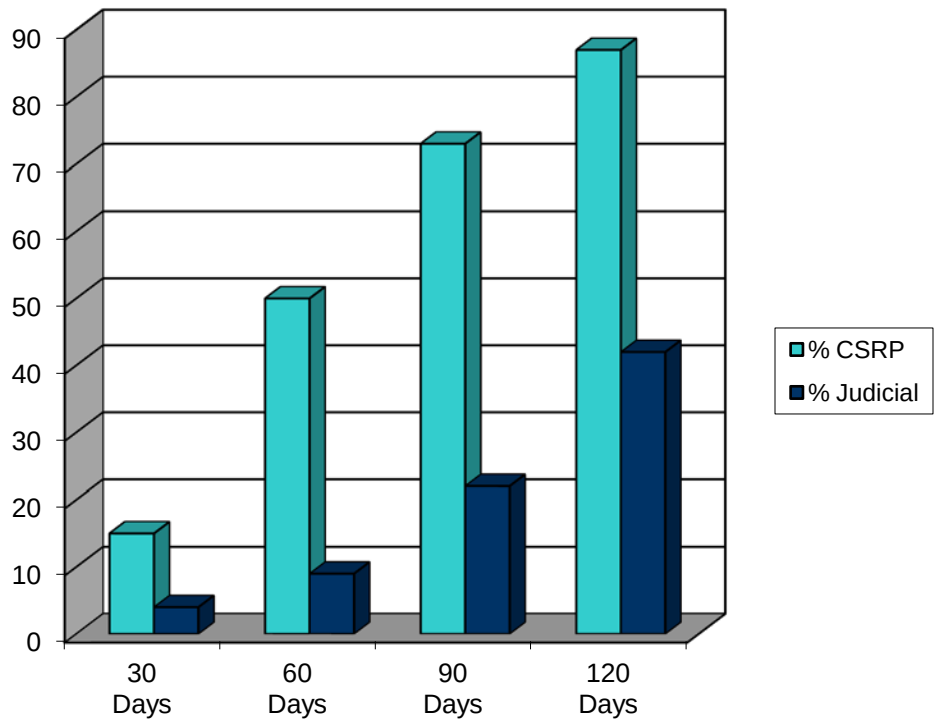
CSRP vs Judicial Time to Dispose



Time Dimension Measures

Referral to First Payment

January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011



Ineligible Cases

- Family violence
- Minor parent
- Historically uncooperative custodial parent
- Foster care cases

How To:

- Initiate Notice of CSRP by mail
- Schedule multiple cases on the hour
- Expect a 25% appearance rate
- Plan for back-up review officers

Encourage Participation

- Send a brief “plain language” description of the process along with notice and other required information.
- Make reminder phone calls, and take the opportunity to gather information prior to the conference.
- Make the parties feel comfortable and not threatened. Treat them respectfully.

Encourage Participation

- Offer telephone conferences.
- Send in a second staff person to "seal the deal"
- Be creative. Find out what works best for your office and share your success stories with others

Improved Automation – Since 12/04

- Automated Case Assessment for Paternity and Establishment cases
  - 35 criterion reviewed and met to move to next step
- Automated scheduling for eligible Paternity and Establishment cases
  - Manager creates conference locations, dates and times
- Automated mailing of notices to all parties
  - One notice to CP
  - One notice for each active NCP address

➔ ***Worker notified when conference is scheduled***

Benefits

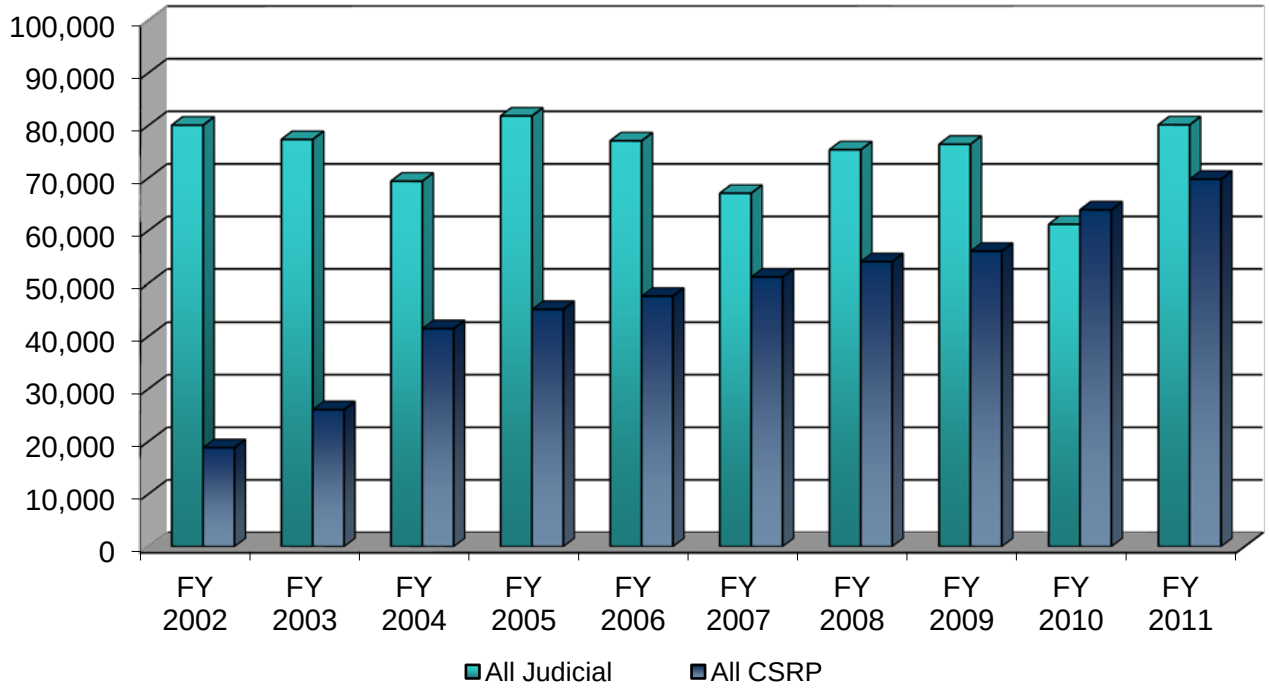
Benefits as a direct result of automated improvement include:

- Faster next action processing
  - streamlined assessment timeframes
  - staff time previously spent scheduling conferences, printing documents, and mailing notices can be allocated to other tasks
- Increased flexibility to allow additional review officers to conduct conferences

CSRP Results

Fiscal Year	Agreed	Non-Agreed
Pre-Improvement Annual Orders Obtained		
2001	5,721	155
2002	17,914	901
2003	23,275	2,750
Post-Improvements Annual Orders Obtained		
2004	36,178	5,716
2005	40,046	6,788
2006	40,925	7,909
2007	45,017	8,229
2008	47,148	8,326
2009	49,416	8,144
2010	56,353	10,571
2011	58,538	12,486

CSRP vs Judicial Over Time



Successful Dispositions Filed and Disposed within FY Timeframe

CSRP vs Judicial FY 2002-2011

	Judicial	CSRP	Totals
FY 2002	80,059	18,818	98,877
FY 2003	77,339	26,068	103,407
FY 2004	69,405	41,471	110,876
FY 2005	81,810	45,127	126,937
FY 2006	77,079	47,640	124,719
FY 2007	67,106	51,180	118,286
FY 2008	75,382	54,094	129,476
FY 2009	76,430	53,058	132,488
FY 2010	61,201	63,952	125,153
FY 2011	80,123	69,789	149,912
Totals	745,934	474,197	1,220,131

Successful Dispositions Filed and Disposed within FY Timeframe

Cost Comparison - Judicial vs. CSRP

- On average, the cost to establish a support order via the judicial process is double the cost of the administrative process.

- When establishing a support order, the simplest judicial process costs more than the most complex administrative one.

Judicial Establishment

ORDER	SERVICE	HEARING	COST	
Agreed	Not Required	Not Required	**$297**	*(Simplest)*
Not Agreed	Two Services	Judicial	**$314**	
Not Agreed	Pass on Service	Judicial	**$571**	*(Most Complex)*
		$394	*(Average)*	

Administrative Establishment

ORDER	SERVICE	HEARING	COST	
Agreed	Not Required	In Office	**$128**	*(Simplest)*
Not Agreed	Not Required	In Office	**$176**	
Not Agreed	One Service	Not Requested	**$205**	
Not Agreed	One Service	In Office	**$248**	*(Most Complex)*
		$189	*(Average)*	

Texas Family Code Chapter 233

CHILD SUPPORT REVIEW PROCESS TO ESTABLISH OR ENFORCE SUPPORT OBLIGATIONS

Sec. 233.001. PURPOSE. (a) The purpose of the procedures specified in the child support review process authorized by this chapter is to enable the Title IV-D agency to take expedited administrative actions to establish, modify, and enforce child support and medical support obligations, to determine parentage, or to take any other action authorized or required under Part D, Title IV, of the federal Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. Section 651 et seq.), and Chapter 231.

(b) A child support review order issued under this chapter and confirmed by a court constitutes an order of the court and is enforceable by any means available for the enforcement of child support obligations under this code, including withholding income, filing a child support lien, and suspending a license under Chapter 232.

Questions?

Alicia Key

Deputy Attorney General for Child Support

Texas IV-D Director

Office of the Attorney General

Austin, Texas

Attorney General of Texas

Sept. 6, 2012

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Arapahoe County
Early Intervention Program

Bob Prevost

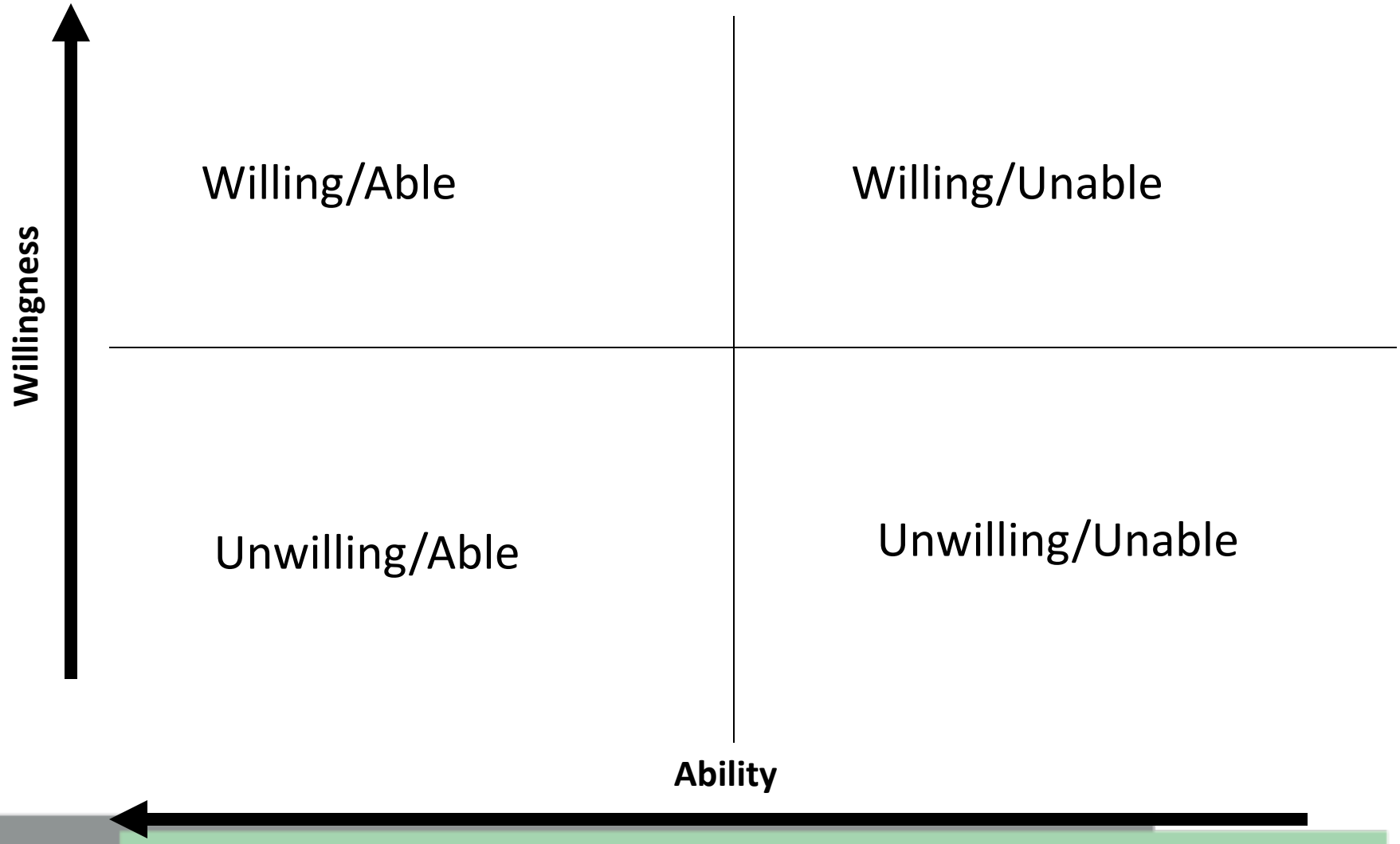
303-752-8836

7/20/12

New Approach

- Spend less time/effort working on cases in which the NCP is willing and able
- Reach out as soon as the case is initiated through phone calls and letters
- Tailor our approach based upon the Non-Custodial Parent's response to initial contact.
- Designate specific staff as primary Establishment/Early Intervention Responders
- Address barriers before moving forward

Theory - NCP Typologies



NCP's Response by Typology

- Willing and Able
  - Responds Immediately and expresses a desire to cooperate
- Willing and Unable
  - Responds but explains barriers
- Unwilling and Able
  - Does not respond, however locate indicates ability
  - Sometimes responds but doesn't cooperate further
- Unwilling and Unable
  - Does not respond and locate indicates little or no ability

CSE Approach to Typology

- **Willing and Able**
  - Set a early tone of cooperation and accommodation in scheduling, payment options, and address any other needs to facilitate continued cooperation
- **Willing and Unable**
  - Identify barriers and offer assistance programs
  - Hold off on establishment until barriers are addressed
  - Avoid Default Orders
- **Unwilling and Able / Unwilling and Unable**
  - Immediately send the case out for service if the NCPs location is verified
  - Indentify and address barriers if/when the NCP responds to service

CSE's Response to NCP's Barriers/Programs

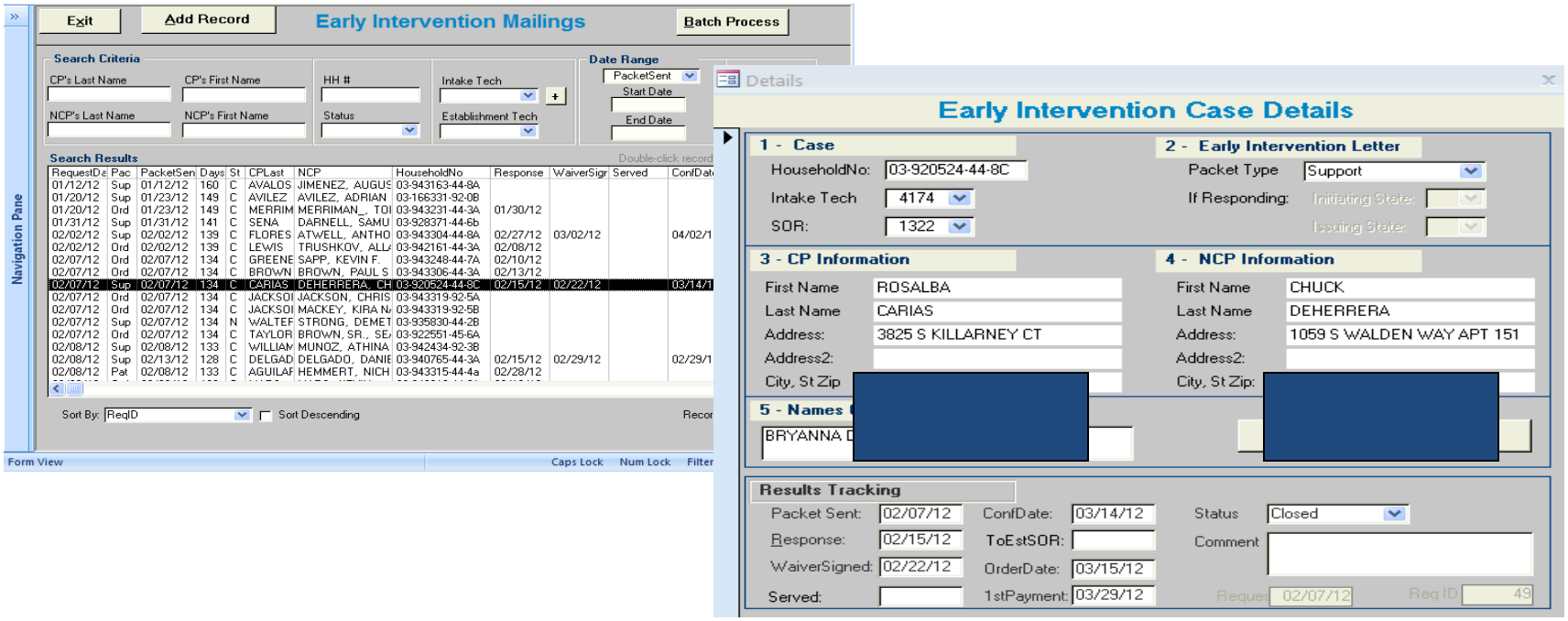
- Unemployed or Underemployed = Parents to Work (Arapahoe/Douglas Works), Goodwill
- Parenting Time and Visitation = Mediation, Office of Dispute Resolution
- Communication Problems with CP = Center for Relationship Education
- Supervised Visitation and Parenting Classes = Family Tree, Nurturing Fathers (Aurora Mental Health)
- Impact of Child Care Cost on MSO = CCCAP (reverse referral)

Intake

- **Letters sent to both parties immediately upon case initiation**
- **Tailored packets for the case's situation**
  - Responding Reciprocal w/order
  - Paternity establishment
  - Support establishment
  - Existing Orders
- **Packet Contents**
  - Introduction Letter (CP and NCP)
  - Questionnaire to identify barriers
  - FAQs
  - Coupon (paternity cases)
  - Financial Affidavit
  - Direct number to Establishment EIP Specialist

Automation

- Tracking and letter generation
  - Mail merge database designed to do both



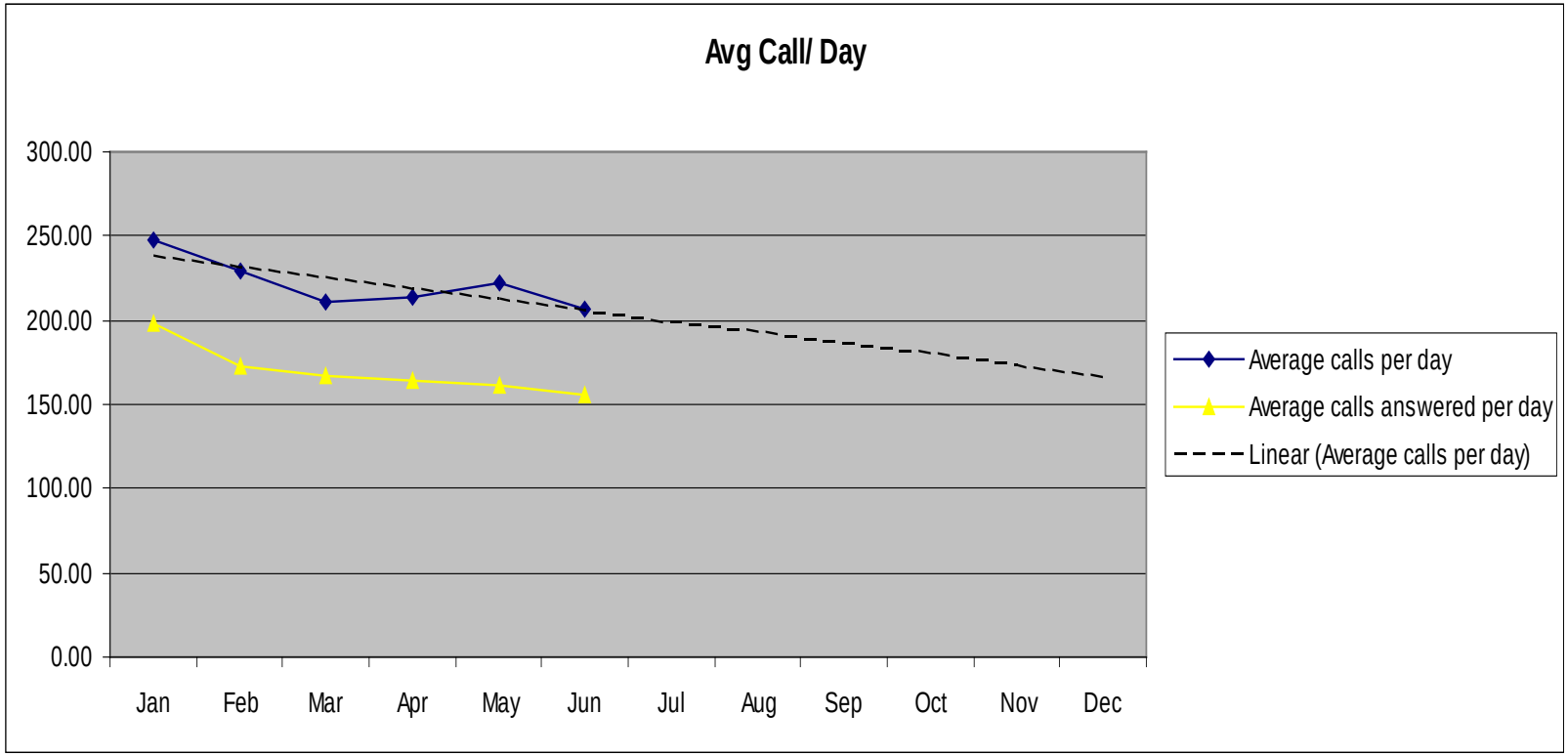
Scheduling

- Prep packets in advance of appointments
- Welcome walk-ins and make them a priority
- Accommodate NCP for dates and times
- Set APA Conference less that 30 days out
  - Can reschedule for GT results, etc.
- Notice CP and get her Financial Affidavit immediately after the APA conference is set
- CP presence is encouraged but optional

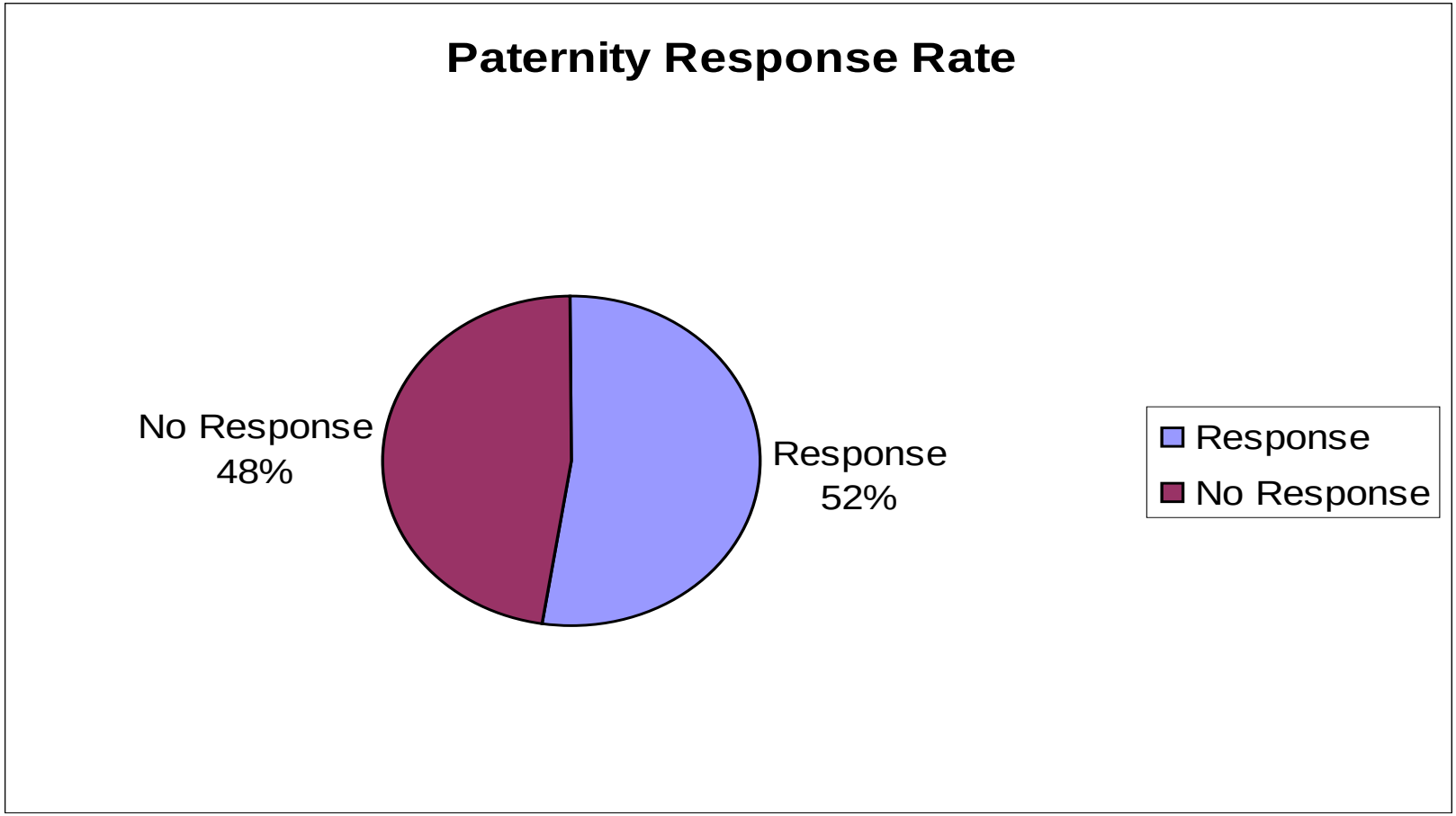
Transition to a Paying Case

- Folders for newly established orders
  - Enforcement/CSE ongoing case FAQs
  - Wells Fargo Pamphlet
  - FSR Account Number
  - RAW form
  - CSE contact numbers

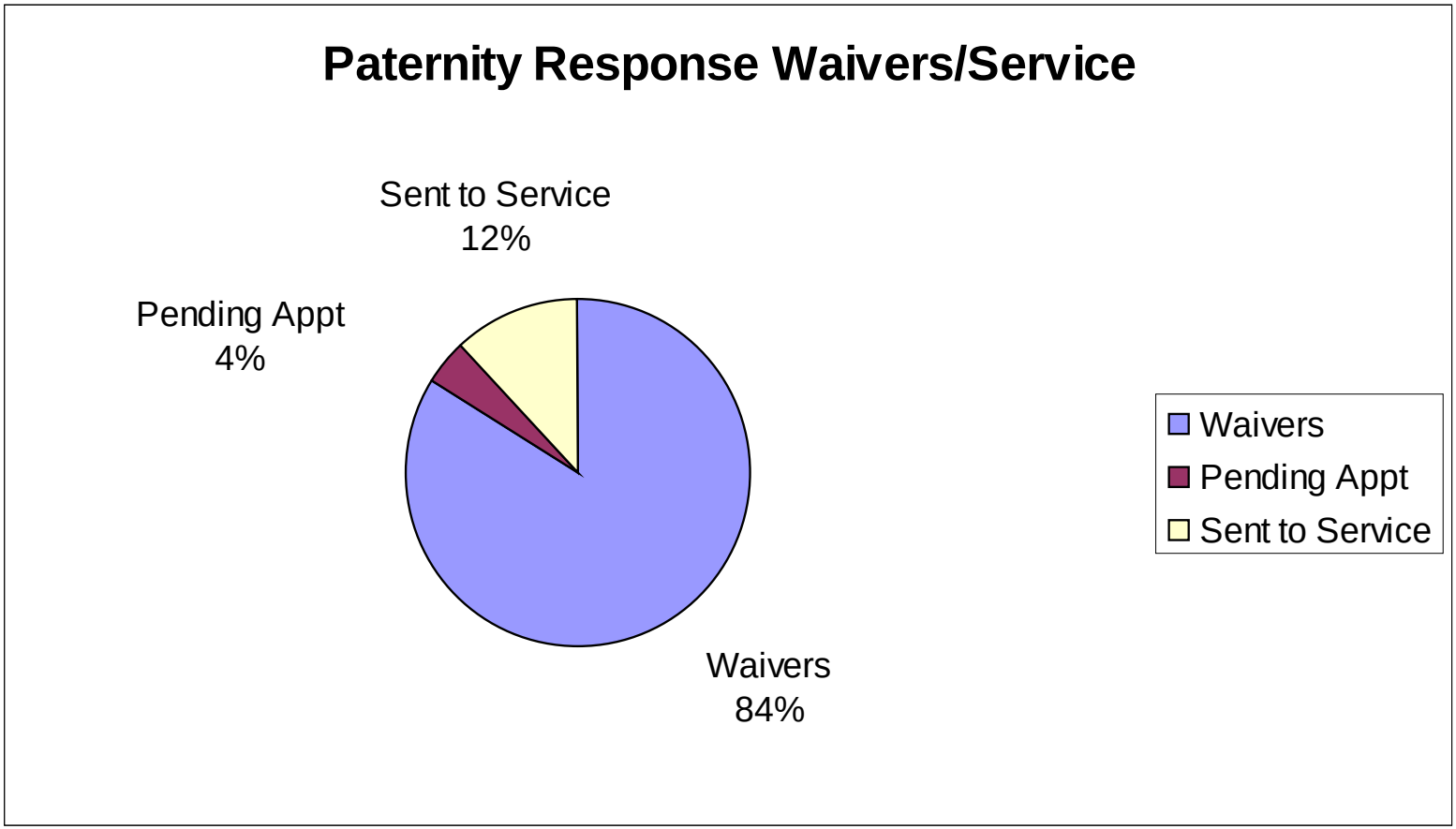
Results – Call Volume



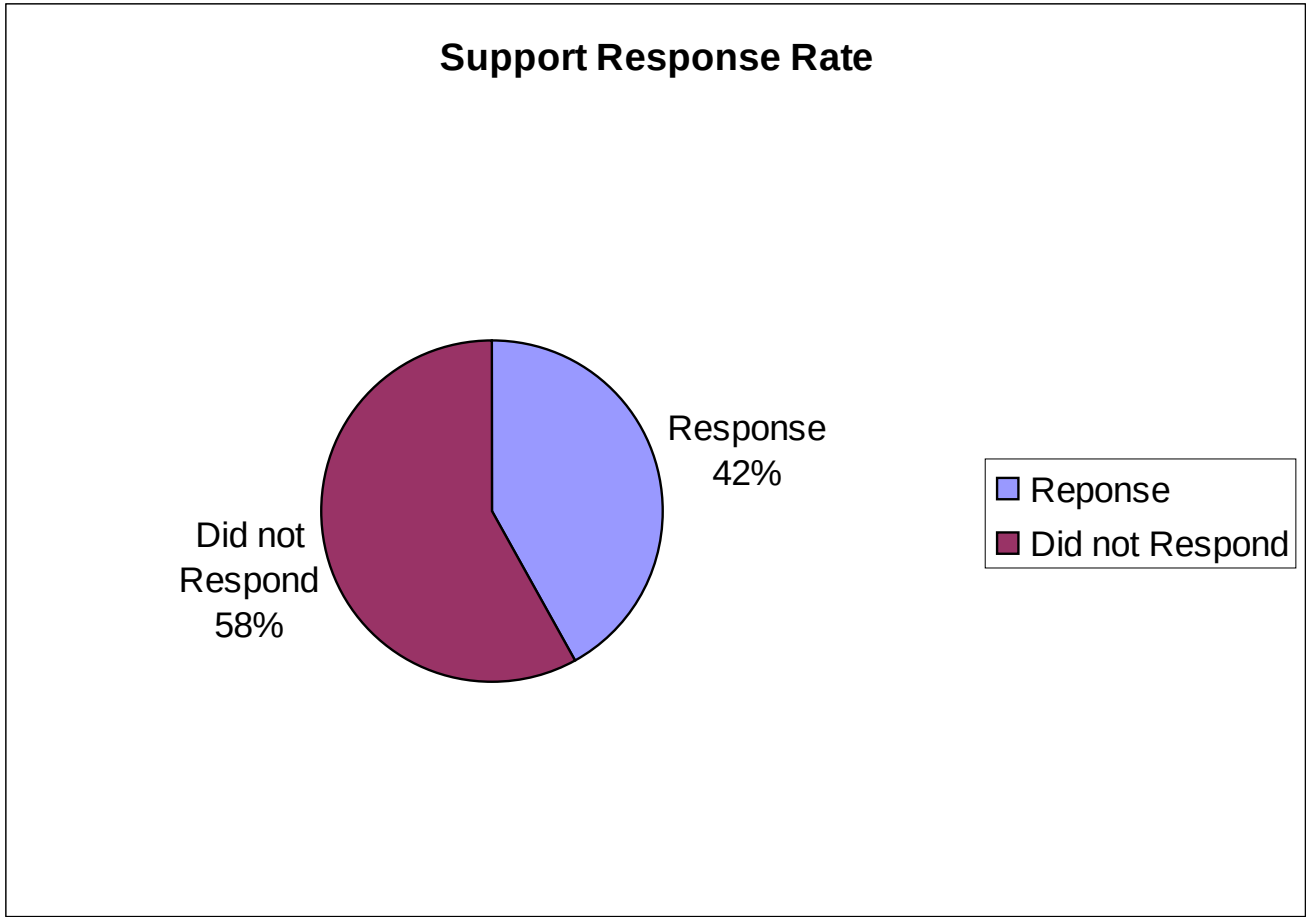
Results – Stats (Paternity)



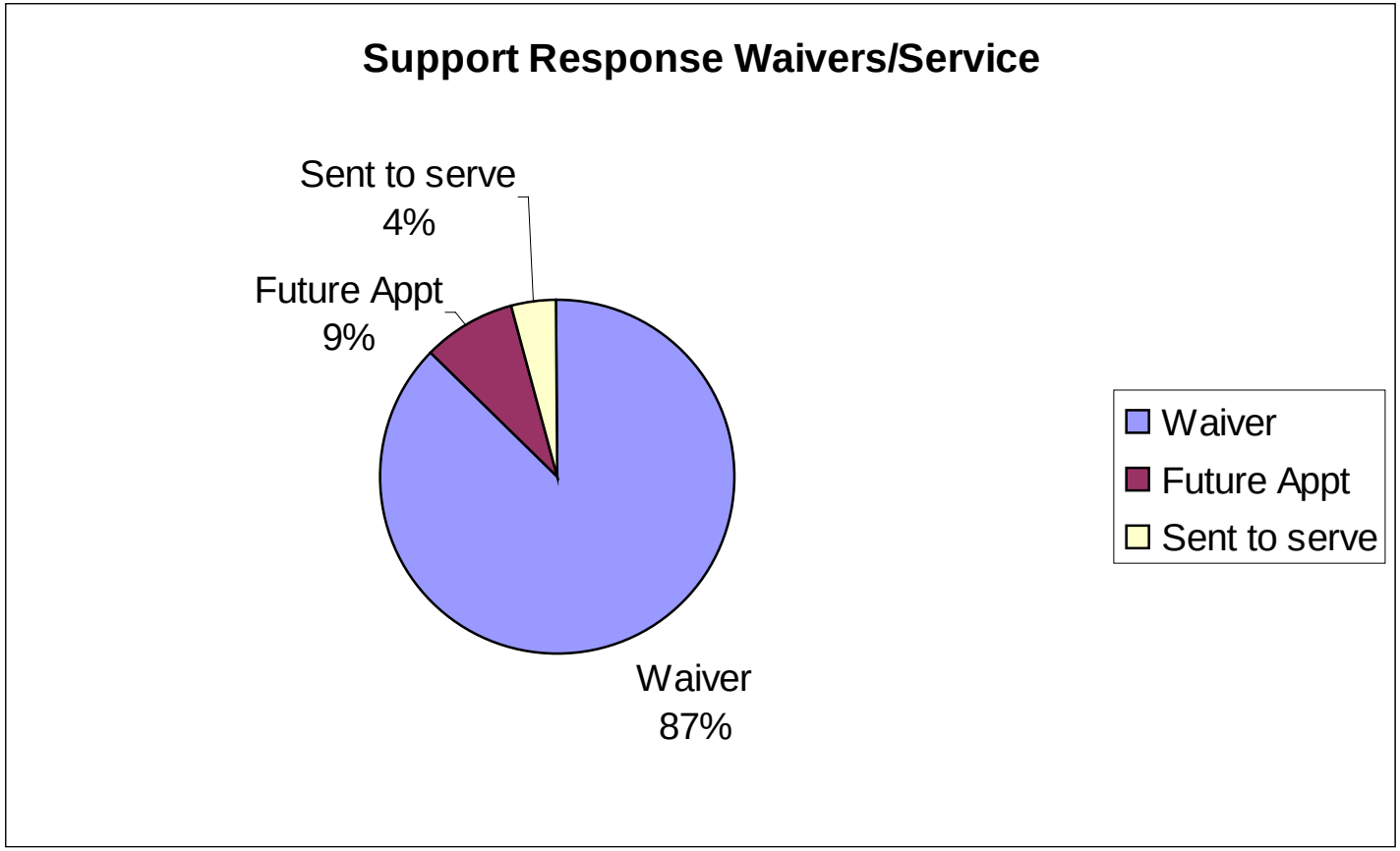
Results – Stats (Paternity)



Results – Stats (Support)



Results – Stats (Support)



Results – Timeframes

- Fastest from Response to Waiver = 3 business hours
- Fastest from Waiver to Order = 45 minutes
- Average from Response to Order = 28 days
- Average from Order to First Payment = 27 days (order usually commence in the following month)

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THE PARENT PLEDGE PROJECT

A Community Partnership for Children and Families:
Mediating Parenting Issues and Child Support

Alan Farrell,
Citywide Fatherhood Coordinator
NYC Office of the Mayor

About NYC Dads

The Initiative

- NYC Dads – The Mayor's Fatherhood Initiative was established to respond to the 33% of children under the age of 18 growing up in fatherless households in NYC
- Ensure that fathers were not being unintentionally excluded from or missing opportunities to engage in their children's lives

The Goals

- To remove barriers that fathers may face in interacting with City agencies
- To make all City agencies as "father friendly" as possible
- To support fathers as they increase their capacity to be good dads
- To assist in the creation of memorable moments between fathers and their children

Desired Impacts

- Increase father engagement in the lives of their children and decrease father absence in the homes of low-income families of color
- Increased levels of responsible fatherhood
- A city-wide standard of father friendliness that can be lifted up as a national model

Progress to Date

Year 1

- Initiated cross agency collaboration to improve the sensitivity of front-line workers to the needs of fathers
- **NYCHA Community Centers** provided a space for dads and their kids to interact in and where fathers can gain theoretical and practical child development and life skills
- Launched **"Daddy & Me,"** a reading program at the Eric M. Taylor Center on Riker's Island
- Held the first annual **NYC Dads Matter Awards**
- A Year 1 **Progress Report** was released in July 2011 that found significant progress has been made across agencies, but that further work must continue to meet the initiative's goals

Progress to Date

Year 2

- Launched **CUNY Fatherhood Academy** at LaGuardia Community College
- DHS facilitated support groups to bring dads together to encourage one another on the road to self sufficiency and independence
- Launched the **Parent Pledge Project** to explore alternatives for fathers and mothers to establish child support agreements in their local communities and outside of court
- Held the the second annual **NYC Dads Matter Awards**

Parent Pledge Project

A Strategy to Reduce Child Poverty and Improve Child Well-being

What is the Parent Pledge Project?

- Parent Pledge Project is a non-Title IVD community-based alternative which parents can use to establish voluntary child support orders through mediation.

- Project Partnerships: The DOOR, The Children's Aid Society, Saint Paul Community Baptist Church, the Human Resources Administration, the Family Court and the Mayor's Office.

- Community Mediation Services Inc. (CMS)
  - State court certified trainers & curriculum in community and family mediation
  - Developed NYC Family Court Custody mediation program
  - Designed domestic violence policy with court & service providers
  - Developed standardized materials and agreement formats
  - Trained a panel of over 50 mediators across NYC

Parent Pledge Project
Agreements can Strengthen Families

HRA OCSE, in partnership with the Mayor's Fatherhood Initiative, is piloting the use of mediation and case management to test whether parents will take advantage of a proactive approach to supporting the child's development and household both financially and emotionally.

The approach offers to strengthen families in the following ways:

- Offers mediation by trained mediators in a community-based organization usually in low-income neighborhoods
- Improve child outcomes by having both parents involved co-parenting arrangements and in accordance with the Child Supports Standards Act
- Promote ownership of child support payments and co-parenting responsibilities
- Increase the number of children receiving financial & emotional support from both parents

Parent Pledge Project
Agreements can Strengthen Families

How does a voluntary child support agreement differ from an order payable through HRA's Office of Child Support Enforcement?

- Voluntary agreements provide parents the choice to pay child support directly to the custodial parent or through wage garnishment. They are not subject to OCSE's other administrative enforcement authority, such as tax intercept.
- Parents can complete a voluntary agreement in their neighborhoods outside of court, although it must be filed with the court.
- Voluntary agreements allow for a conversation on and consideration of co-parenting issues.

Parent Pledge Project
Agreements can Strengthen Families

What are the anticipated benefits?

- Voluntary Agreements
  - Ensure children receive financial support from both parents
  - Regular payments allow both Mom and Dad to budget their income
  - Establishing paternity protects the Mom, Dad, and child

- Parents can establish an agreement in a non adversarial environment within the family's own community which may appeal to more parents
  - Parents can discuss co-parenting issues, child activities, and child development goals
  - Parents may feel more ownership in the outcome of the order which may lead to increased compliance with child support payments
  - Parents can take advantage of parenting classes

What Can Parent's Expect?

Assessment Interviews

- Background information, Domestic Violence Screening
- Information on Assisting Parents through Transition (A.C.T.) Classes

Appropriate Case	Not Appropriate Case
• Schedule mediation session • Request for financial documents • Mediation Process • Post mediation evaluation • 3 & 6 month follow-ups	• Contact referral organization with status of case • Other referrals if needed

What are the anticipated benefits?

By using a mediation approach to discuss with parents how they will support their children both financially and emotionally, it will likely lead to improved contact between parents and their children and insures a relationship

Parent Pledge Project as a Family Support

General overview of how the process will work?

- A CBO refers one or both parents to Community Mediation Services
- A voluntary child support agreement is arranged by a trained mediator between a custodial parent, who will receive the support, and the non-custodial parent, who must pay it
- The agreement establishes the amount of money each parent contributes towards the cost of raising their child(ren). It is prepared using the Child Support Standards Act and deviations from the Act are allowed based on the unique needs of the family
- Co-parenting issues will be part of the conversation about how both parents will support their children emotionally and financially. The mediation service can result in two separate agreements if the parents agree, a child support agreement and a co-parenting agreement
- The completed child support agreement is filed with the court by the parents

ROLE OF PARENTS

Role of Parents

- Work with the mediator to establish a mutually agreeable voluntary agreement
- Both parents file the agreement with the court
- Both parents meet with a Support Magistrate, provided the agreement is filed before 1:00 pm. Otherwise, they may be asked to return on another day
- The Support Magistrate wants to ensure both parents entered into the agreement voluntarily, understand their rights, and the order conforms to the law
- Maintain documentation proving payment was received
- Either parent may go to court when circumstances change to modify the order

ROLE OF THE FAMILY COURT

ROLE OF THE FAMILY COURT

- Meet with parents who file petition before 1:00 pm
- Ensure the agreement conforms to legal requirements
  - If so, the agreement will be approved and converted into an order
    - Both parents will receive a copy of the court order
    - The order carries the full weight of the Court
  - If not, because the agreement is flawed, the court will speak with both parents at the time of filing or if after 1:00 they will need to appear before at a later date
- The custodial parent may file a violation petition to enforce the order judicially. Either parent may go to court when circumstances change to modify the order
- A custodial parent reserves the right to file a child support application with OCSE at any time, so the order can be enforced administratively

What happens after the agreement is approved by the Court?

- Payments may be made directly by the NCP to the CP or the NCP's wages may be garnished.
  - Both parents should be encouraged to maintain documentation of payments received and made.
- If one of the parents does not comply with the order, both parents should return to the mediation program to explore ways to resolve the issue.
- If mediation cannot resolve the noncompliance issue, the custodial parent
  - May file a violation petition with the court
  - May file a child support application with the Office of Child Support Enforcement
    - The order will be enforced administratively such as
      - » Wage garnishment
      - » Tax and lottery intercept
      - » Drivers license suspension

Questions & Answers

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Second Plenary Session:

A Problem Solving Court Approach to Increasing Compliance with Child Support

<u>Moderator</u>: Alfred Siegel

Onondaga County Parent Support Program

A Demonstration Project by the Center for Court Innovation

CENTER FOR COURT INNOVATION

Sarah Reckess, Senior Associate
Center for Court Innovation
Syracuse, New York

PSP Model Overview

- Onsite, court-based service staffed by Resource Coordinator.
- Family Court collaboration with community-based organizations.
- Addresses the underlying issues that bring NCP to court.
- Alternative to incarceration/ fines/ stiff penalties.

Service Population

- Non-custodial parents with current NYS support orders /arrears who are unemployed, underemployed, or working in an underground economy.
  - Approximately 125 cases open at any given time

Eligibility Requirements as of Aug 2012

- NCP, over 18, current support order.
- Low income (70% of Poverty Level)
- [DOL Requirements] Unemployed and
  - Has no history of working full-time consistently (4 consecutive quarters) for the same employer; or
  - Does not have HS diploma/GED; or
  - Criminal history and has been searching for job for last 60 days; or
  - Was released from jail/prison fewer than 60 days ago.

Referral Process

- Case before Support Magistrate.
- SM does quick screen from bench and makes immediate referral to Resource Coordinator (RC).
- RC screens for eligibility.
- RC makes referrals to community-based services.
- RC tracks client progress and reports back to SM.
- SM incorporates client progress in court orders.

Types of Services Provided

- Subsidized employment/ work crew
- LEADERS/ National Work Readiness Credential
- Job development
- Job training programs
- Legal assistance
- Parenting classes
- GED classes
- Other services as appropri

Outcomes

- 70% of those who began employment services found work
- 48% of referrals came from 1 SM (out of 9 judges)
- 25% did not meet grant eligibility requirements
- Average employment was 31 hours/week at $9.17/hr
- Estimated child support collected $193,000/year

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Division of Child Support Services

A Helping Hand to Self-Sufficiency

Problem Solving Court

Presenter: Tanguler Gray-Johnson

Director of State Operations

Presentation to: OCSE Policy Conference

Date: September 6, 2012

Vision

Stronger Families for a Stronger Georgia.

Mission

Strengthen Georgia by providing Individuals and Families access to services that promote self-sufficiency, independence, and protect Georgia's vulnerable children and adults.

Core Values

- **Provide access to resources that offer support and empower Georgians and their families.**
- **Deliver services professionally and treat all clients with dignity and respect. Manage business operations effectively and efficiently by aligning resources across the agency.**
- **Promote accountability, transparency and quality in all services we deliver and programs we administer.**
- **Develop our employees at all levels of the agency.**

Demographics and Services

- **Georgia distributed over $708M to families in FY11**
- **Moved nationally from 47th to 26th in Current Support Paid in 5 years**
- **2010 "Most Improved Child Support Agency in the Nation"**
- **2012 "Most Outstanding Child Support Program in the Nation"**
- **Caseload information**
  - ***Georgia DCSS has 400,600 cases representing over 1.2M Georgia citizens***
  - ***Caseload represents 538,000 children***
  - ***90% of caseload consists of Custodial Parents who have never received public assistance or formerly received public assistance***

- **60.63% of NCP's paid current**
- **19.00% of NCP's paid arrears**
- **~ 7% are incarcerated**
- **~ 14% of NCP's have barriers**
- **Fatherhood information**
  - ***84% of NCP's in the Fatherhood Program have a criminal record***
  - ***34% of NCP's in the Fatherhood Program do not have a GED***
  - ***94% of NCP's in the Fatherhood Program are males***
  - ***80% of NCP's in the Fatherhood Program are African American***

Outreach Efforts

- **Fatherhood Program**
  - *Serves 3,000 NCPs per year*
  - *Serves Non-Custodial Parents who are Fathers and Mothers*

  Re-entry Services
  - *Partnership with DOC to assist NCPs with re-entry into society*

  Paternity Testing
  - *Voluntary DNA testing done at all Georgia Prisons; 17-20% exclusion rate*

  Homeless Veterans Initiative
  - *Metro Atlanta Pilot Partnership with Veterans Affairs and Legal Aid; GA one of 10 sites selected by the Feds*
- **Community Outreach Council**
  - *Focus group to find ways to help NCPs and CPs become self-sufficient*
  - *Enhanced Transitions Job Grant Partnership with Goodwill that will ensure 500 non-custodial parents in Atlanta area receive transition jobs*
- **Problem Solving Court**
  - *Child support alternative to incarceration*
  - *Utilize free community resources*
  - *Referrals for initial assessment through local CSB's*
    - *Substance abuse*
    - *Mental health*

Why Problem Solving Court?

- **$3 million a day to operate the Georgia Department of Corrections**
- **Georgia has 53,000 individuals incarcerated**
- **Alternative to incarceration**

  Link to 42 U.S.C. 3797 u-2 http://tinyurl.com/bqy7u59
- **Decrease in cost to taxpayers**
- **Reduction in customer complaints**
- **Increased Child Support Collections**

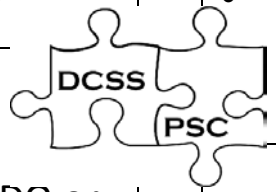
Program Phases

Intake

- Complete assessments, forms and interviews
- Initial Drug Screening
- Drivers License Reinstatement Review

Phase I

- Regularly attend Group Sessions
- Meet with Coordinator as specified
- Pass Random Drug Screen
- Complete weekly verifiable 40-hour job search
- Communicate/Cooperate with DCSS



Phase II

- Obtain Full-time employment with IDO or making payments for 3-6 months
- Pass Random Drug Screen
- Negotiate payment on State arrears
- Access and Visitation Activity
- Seek legitimation rights
- Attend Family Counseling
- Communicate/Cooperate with DCSS

Graduation

- Successfully completed all phases

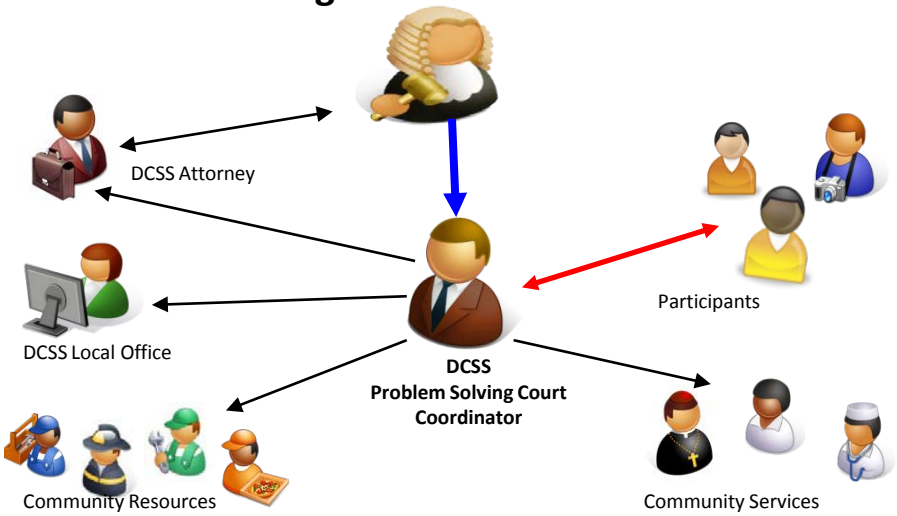
1st – *Less than* 1 Week
2nd – 2-3 Months
3rd – 3-6 Months
4th – 12 Months *(approximately)*

Problem Solving Court – Making A Difference… FY 2012

Child Support: *Achieving Better Outcomes for Children*

Active Problem Solving Courts	
Coweta – *Carrollton/Newnan*	October 2009
Northeastern - *Gainesville*	February 2011
Augusta – *Augusta*	November 2011
Appalachian – *Ellijay*	January 2012
Atlanta – *Atlanta*	February 2012
Stone Mountain – *Decatur*	May 2012
Flint – *McDonough*	June 2012
Pataula – *Cuthbert*	June 2012

Judge-Decision Maker



PSC Expansion	
Mountain -*Clarksville*	Pending
Enotah -*Dahlonega*	Pending
Alcovy -*Covington*	Pending
Macon -*Macon*	Pending
Southwestern -*Americus*	Pending
Towaliga -*Jackson*	Pending

Participants Served	207
Total Cases	449
Children Served	539
Support Collected	$217,013.96
Paying Percentage	73.48%
Incarceration Savings	$2,142,581.14
Graduates	90

Sept. 6, 2012

Child Support: Achieving Better Outcomes for Children

NYC HRA OFFICE OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT (OCSE)

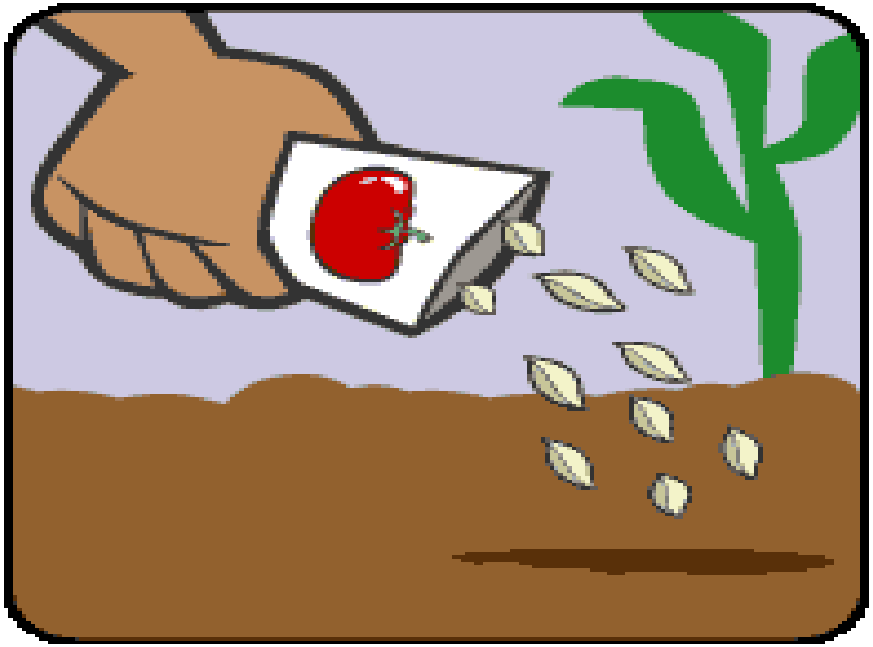
OCSE Policy Conference

September 6, 2012 - CUNY Graduate Center

CSISP – THE CHILD SUPPORT INTENSIVE SUPERVISION PART

A collaborative model grows in Brooklyn

Planting the Seed



Planting the Seed

- Prior OCSE Conference
- 2009 NCSEA Policy Forum Presentation
  - *Courting Compliance: From Decision Maker to Service Gateway*
  - Research into "Restorative Justice"
- Review of past experiences
  - "Frequent Fliers"
  - Lack of court control
    - STEP
    - Probation
- 2010 NCSEA Policy Forum discussion

The Seed Germinates

The Seed Germinates

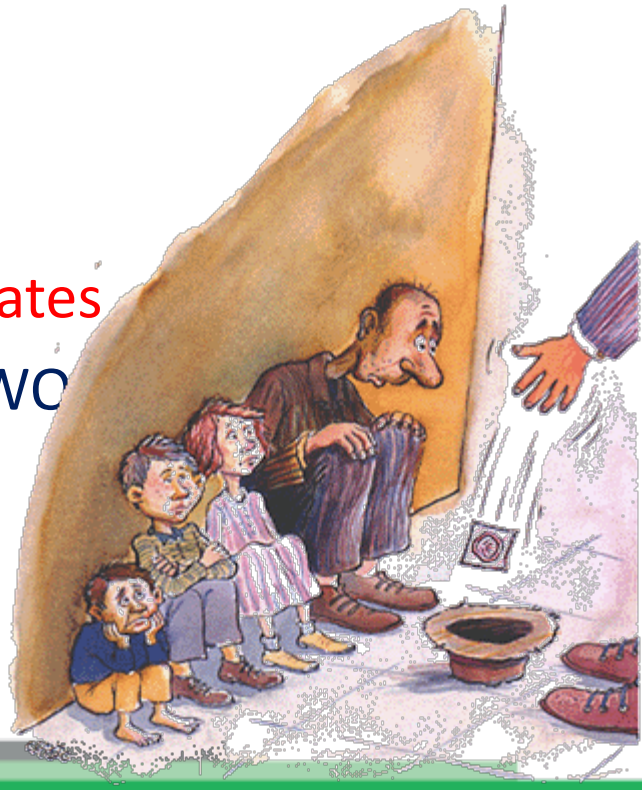
- Development Meetings at NYC OCSE Offices
  - OCSE
  - CCI
  - Support Magistrate
  - FEGS
- Internal Court discussions
  - With fellow Support Magistrates
  - With Supervising Judge

The Seed Germinates

- Who is Eligible to Participate
  - Custodial household screening criteria
    - No issues of domestic violence
    - Current order of support in existence
    - Obligee household financial status
      - Former TANF cash assistance
      - SNAP participation
      - WIC participation
      - Medicaid participation
      - Subsidized SCHIP participation

The Seed Germinates

- Who is Eligible to Participate
  - Obligor screening criteria
    - Active support obligation
    - Authorized to work in the Untied States
    - Little if any history of payment by IWO
    - Is not in receipt of Cash Assistance



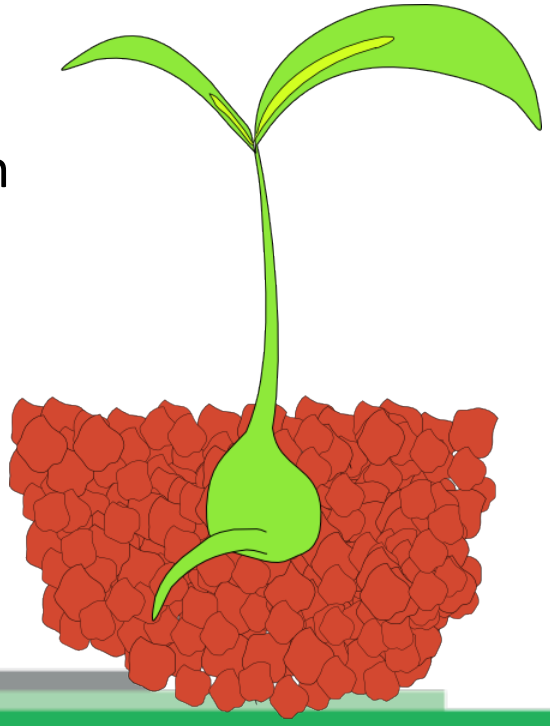
The Seed Germinates

- Address issues underlying non-compliance with support orders
  - Referral to back to work program
    - Request for proposal sent to local BTW providers
    - FEGS chosen for initial referrals
      - Proximity to courthouse a key factor
      - Attendance monitored by resource coordinator
  - Subsequent referral as necessary to other
    - GED prep
    - OCSE
    - Court services
    - Mental health services
    - Veteran services
    - DSS

The Seedling Grows

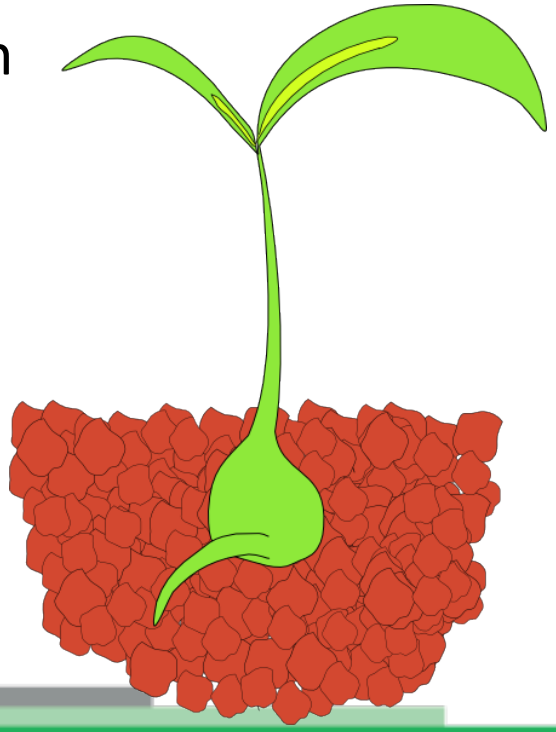
The Seedling Grows

- First participant accepted on January 31, 2011, program opened for participation by all seven parts in late April, 2011
  - All cases eligible for referral to program
- Support Magistrate makes initial screening determination
  - Considers the household criteria and the NCP criteria
  - Refers to Resource Coordinator to fully screen the non-paying obligor
  - Resource Coordinator reports back to referring Support Magistrate
  - If accepted, matter is adjourned to the CSISP part for the next session after first referral date



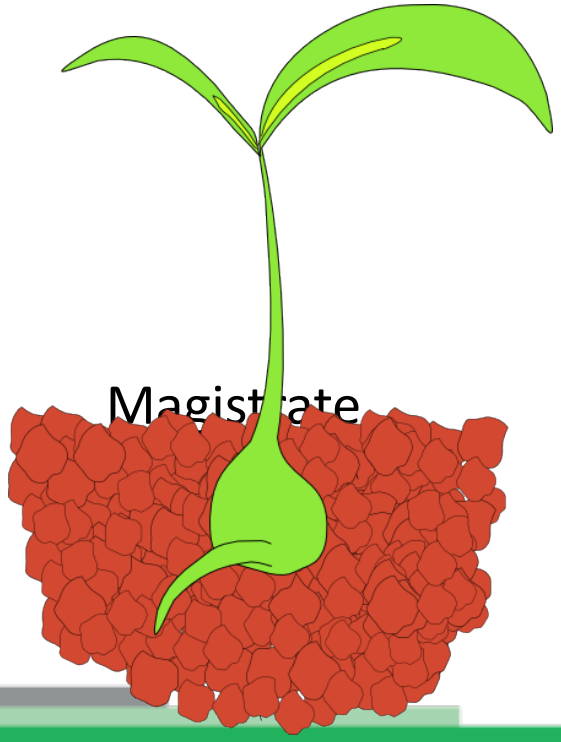
The Seedling Grows

- Frequent court appearances
  - Immediately after the referral to the BTW program
    - Confirm initial attendance at program
    - Approve final services plan
  - The amount of time between court appearances is dependent on cooperation and progress
- Regular contact between the Resource Coordinator and
  - Obligor
  - BTW program
    - FEGS
    - Dads United for Parenting (D-UP!)
  - Other programs



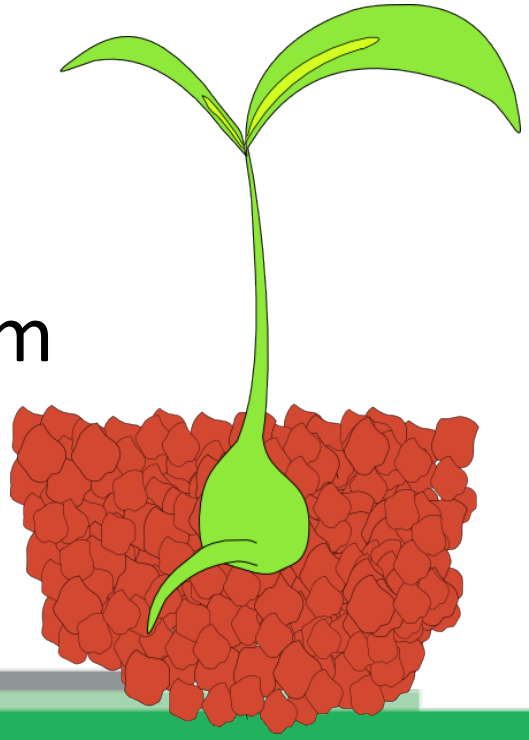
The Seedling Grows

- Court may impose sanctions for failure to comply with referrals
  - More frequent court appearances
  - Essays
  - Community Service
  - Termination from program
    - Case referred back to original Support Magistrate
    - Proceed to contempt hearing

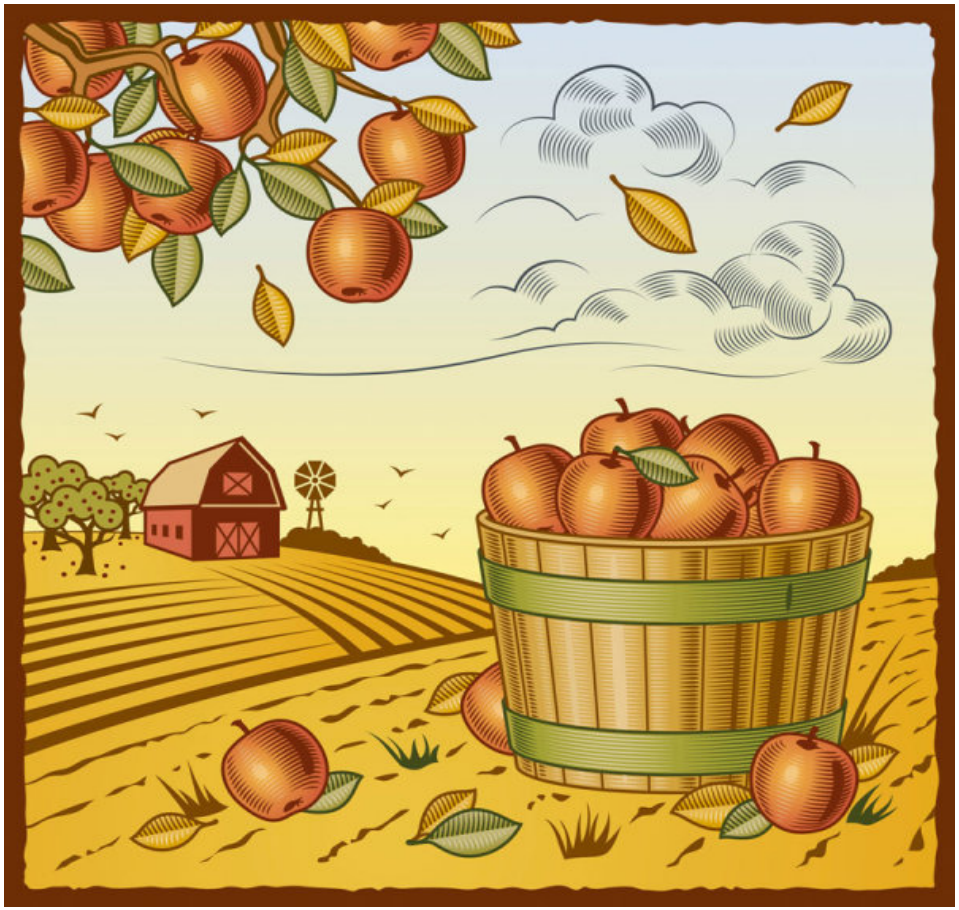


The Seedling Grows

- Minimum participation time is six months
  - Graduation requires six months of current support programs
  - May be reduced if arrears are also substantially liquidated
- No maximum time limit as long as individual is cooperating in program
  - May involve referrals to different programs



The Harvest



The Harvest – Good Fruit

- CSISP had its first graduation on September 14, 2011
  - 4 graduates
    - $16,464.70 in payments during participation in program
    - $3,520.00 paid in 3 months prior to assignment to program
    - 1 individual liquidated all arrears while enrolled
  - Ceremony held in large Ceremonial Courtroom
    - Each graduate given a certificate and a gift
    - Each graduate had opportunity to speak
    - Reception at conclusion of ceremony

The Harvest – Good Fruit

The Harvest – Good Fruit

- CSISP had its first graduation on January 25, 2012
  - 8 graduates
    - $27,420.07 in payments during participation in program
    - $4,097.61 paid in 3 months prior to assignment to program
- CSISP had its first graduation on January 25, 2012
  - 6 graduates
    - $7,586.02 in payments during participation in program
    - $5,358.00 paid in 3 months prior to assignment to program

The Harvest – Good Fruit

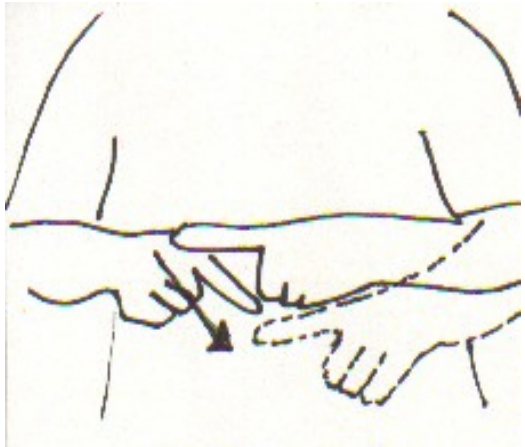
- 145 families have been involved in the CSISP Program (through August 30, 2012)
  - Payments received from 119 participants (82%)
    - $158,094.25 in total payments
  - 97 participants made $0.00 in payments in 3 months prior to enrollment in
    - 74 have made payments while participating in program
    - $89,731,42 in total payments

The Harvest – Bad Fruit

- 145 families have been involved in the CSISP Program (through August 30, 2012)
  - 8 have stopped attending and are subject to arrest warrants
  - 16 have been discharged from program prior to graduation
    - 6 payors were approved for cash assistance
    - 5 payees failed to come to court when requested by the court in order to obtain warrants for an absent payor
    - 4 failed to cooperate with program requirements
    - 1 payee withdrew the enforcement proceeding and terminated the order

The Harvest – Bad Fruit

- 145 families have been involved in the CSISP Program (through August 30, 2012)
  - 11 participants have had sanctions imposed
    - 11 were required to produce an essay on a subject assigned by the court
      - Importance of following through on actions
      - Importance of complying with court orders
      - Importance of appearing in court
      - Defining diligence
      - Setting forth a plan to support family
    - 2 were assigned community service
      - Red Hook Community Court project



Tsk Tsk!

Lessons Learned

- Frequent court appearances contribute to higher payment rates
- High default orders result in little to no payments
  - Reduction of a default order while payor seeks employment results in payments
- There is a lack of financial literacy in the population being served
  - Self-employed individuals with no clue as to recordkeeping requirements
    - Taxi drivers
    - Handy men
    - Street vendors
  - No understanding of their own tax return

Lessons Learned

- Family Court Judges must back-up sanctions imposed by Support Magistrates
  - Dismissal of applications to modify where there is non-compliance with the program must be upheld
- Unreasonable expectations on the part of both parents
  - Unemployed individuals with no skills expect a job which pays more than entry level rates
  - Custodial parent expects the court to re-impute income to an ex-offender which may have been the result of the previous criminal activity