

NYC Dads - 2013 Fatherhood Initiative Progress Report

NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA)

Progress during 2012 - 2013

| 2012 | 2013 |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cash Assistance Pilot (CAP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Launched in May of 2011, CAP allows custodial parents applying for or receiving cash assistance and non-custodial parents (NCPs) to establish paternity and a child support and medical support order without having to appear in court. The expectation is that a non-adversarial environment will lead more parents to establish child support orders and comply with those orders. As of July 2012, 956 NCPs were referred to this program with 25% keeping their appointment and meeting with an Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). Of those NCPs who participated in the program and completed a survey, 94% strongly support this approach to establishing child support orders. ● Problem Solving Court continued to connect NCPs to employment and other services to determine whether a case management approach and more intensive court monitoring would result in improved compliance with child support. ● The Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) and the New York City Department of Probation (DOP) WEB-based Application Project gives DOP officers in the Bronx access to current child support data for their probationers. This project enables DOP officers to give custodial and non-custodial parents involved with the criminal justice system better access to on-site child support information, individual consultations, and resources for jobs, with the goal of reducing recidivism rates and improving outcomes for children and families. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Cash Assistance Agreement Program (CAAP) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ In July 2013, the pilot was implemented citywide as a full-fledged program. More than 8,880 NCPs have been referred to this program, with approximately 18% keeping their appointment and meeting with an OCSE worker, and more than 457 agreements have been entered into. ● Problem Solving Court continued to be implemented in Brooklyn, with discussions to expand to other boroughs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ As of December 2013, 84 NCPs had graduated from the program, and 259 NCPs were still enrolled. Of 52 graduates for whom we have an enrollment date and a graduation date prior to October 2013, 30 NCPs made child support payments for a 3 month period prior to enrollment in the program, compared to 43 NCPS who made payments for a 3 month period after graduation. The total payment amount for the 30 NCPs over a 3 month period prior to enrollment was \$13,683, compared to \$28,791 from the 43 NCPs for a 3 month period after graduation, a 110% percent increase. Of 185 NCPs who are still enrolled in the program and have an enrollment date prior to July 2013, 150 NCPs made payments for a 3 month period prior to enrollment, compared to 121 NCPs who made payments for a 3 month period after enrollment. The total payment amount for the 3 month period prior to enrollment for 50 NCPs was \$19,975 compared to \$70,789 by the 121 NCPs for the 3 month period after enrollment, an increase of 254%. At 6 months after enrollment, \$143,167 had been paid toward child support, an 617% increase. |

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The Parent Pledge Pilot (PPP), a partnership between the Mayor’s Office, New York City’s Human Resources Administration/Office of Child Support Enforcement, the New York State Family Court, and faith and community based organizations, was launched. The PPP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Allows parents to create child support and parenting agreements in a comfortable community-based setting with a trained mediator. ○ Connects parents to parenting classes and is not subject to enforcement tools such as license suspension and seizing of bank accounts. ○ Gives parents the opportunity to request HRA’s Office of Child Support Enforcement’s services if the NCP does not comply with the agreement and mediation efforts have not succeeded. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The WEB-based Application Project continued to give DOP intake officers access to current child support data for their probationers. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Probationers were referred to OCSE’s Customer Services Walk-in Center to access OCSE services, including debt reduction programs and referrals for employment. If a probationer met with OCSE Customer Service staff, both DOP and OCSE monitored the probationer’s progress, and DOP took the probationer’s compliance with child support into consideration when determining whether s/he could report to a kiosk, as well as considered early discharge if progress was being made with OCSE and DOP obligations. ● The Parent Pledge remained a small but promising program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A Request for Proposals was released in order to expand the program and identify qualified providers ○ Focus groups were conducted to better understand how to engage parents and discuss this topic. ○ Production of a video to help promote the program began. |

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Additional Successes & Best Practices:

- As of December 2013, there were 284,058 cases with a child support order. In calendar year 2013, the NYC Child Support Program collected a total of \$742.2 million, benefiting approximately a quarter of a million NYC children. The average annual amount of collections for those with a payment is \$6,082.
- In partnership with the court, 4,105 non-custodial fathers were referred to HRA's Back to Work employment program in calendar year 2013. In addition, OCSE collected over \$36 million from all NCPs who ever received a referral to HRA's employment program, doubling over the last 5 years
 - As of October 2012, 74% of Modify DSS Orders Program (MDO) and/or Arrears Credit Program participants paid child support after enrolling, compared to only 52% before enrolling. As of December 2013, OCSE reduced the child support orders of 228 NCPs through the MDO by an average of \$297/month to an average of \$39/per month. OCSE has reduced the arrears of 2,166 NCPs—by \$23 million total—through the Arrears Cap Program.
- OCSE staff met with non-custodial parents at Riker's Island, Metropolitan Detention Center, Queensboro Correctional Facility, Department of Homeless Services' veteran shelters, and community-based organizations. OCSE Customer Services Walk-in Center assisted fathers in decreasing arrears and reducing orders payable to the government. OCSE provided multiple community-based organizations with child support information for the fathers they serve, including child support trainings for staff and parents. In CY13 OCSE held or attended approximately 620 presentations, workshops and other events throughout the 5 boroughs, for nearly 10,400 participants.
- Modified HRA computer systems to alert staff in other programs within HRA (cash assistance, food stamps, and HASA) to whether a participant is a noncustodial parent, whether he is engaged in the child support program and information on the status of his child support case. This allowed caseworkers to access information about the noncustodial parent, engage them in a conversation, and refer them to OCSE's Customer Service Walk-In Center where they could be connected to services such as debt reduction programs, employment, mediation.
- From November 12, 2013 – December 31, 2013 the NYC Human Resource Administration's Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) conducted the "Pay It Off" initiative - a time limited debt reduction program for noncustodial parents (NCP)s that accumulated child support debt. In addition to the debt reduction programs already in place by the City's Child Support Program, this initiative was designed to help noncustodial parents (NCP)s reduce their child support debt owed to the NYC government/Department of Social Services (DSS). Through "Pay It Off", if an NCP paid a minimum amount of \$2,500-\$5,000 toward their NYC/DSS child support debt, NYC OCSE:
 - Matched their payment and reduced their child support government arrears up to the amount owed to NYC/DSS;
 - Removed interest charged on a child support judgment owed to the government if the NCP pays the principle amount in full; and
 - Considered lifting DSS child support warrants.

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32,000 flyers were mailed out to NCPs who met the criteria for the program. In addition, OCSE partnered with the Young Men's Initiative and NYC Dads to publicize the effort through a social media and email campaign. Interested NCPs visited the OCSE Customer Service Walk-In Center and met with a caseworker who reviewed their cases to determine their eligibility and where appropriate, accepted payment towards their arrears. They also worked to connect them to employment services, mediation services and other debt reduction programs where applicable.

As of December 31, 2013, the final number of NCPs that participated in the *"Pay It Off"* program is 180 of which 9 signed two agreements, resulting in 189 agreements. The total collected is \$978,349.59 of which \$294,111 was distributed to the custodial parent and \$684,350 was retained to pay back cash assistance benefits. A total of \$923,656 in DSS permanently assigned arrears was reduced as part of this program.

Please see the [NYC Young Men's Initiative](#) and [NYC DADS](#) websites for additional information on the progress of NYC Dads.