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## Collaborate, Compromise, Communicate Nevada state and county child support offices partner 'for the greater good of the program'

By Louise Bush, Director  
*Nevada Division of Welfare and Supportive Services*  
*Child Support Enforcement Program*

*Managing change can be tough enough when a single agency leads the effort. For child support offices in Nevada, theirs was more than a state-led change management endeavor; it was a collaborative effort across 3 Nevada state offices and 10 counties. State child support director Louise Bush explains.*

### Background – need to improve

In 2005, the Nevada Legislature commissioned an audit of the state's child support program to determine how to improve customer service and performance. As a result, in 2006 a private company assessed the program and came up with a list of recommended operational improvements, most of which required system enhancements, additional funding, and time to implement.

Both the state and county offices recognized the need for system improvements and business process changes to gain efficiencies, but lacked the funding for large initiatives. Around the same time, a child support task force formed and the federal match on incentives was restored for two years. Once this news was official, the task force discussed statewide program enhancements and how to maximize our spending power by pooling the incentive funds to accomplish high priority initiatives within the restoration period.



Nevada child support director Louise Bush continues our series on change management in the child support program

continued ▶

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*The greatest lessons we learned are "united, we can accomplish our goals" and "yes, we can trust our program partners."*

## Challenges – funding, lead, oversight

Our first challenge was getting a commitment from all the offices to contribute unobligated incentive funds to the statewide initiatives, especially when 25 percent of their incentives were already reserved for statewide IT projects. The second challenge was to identify the state or county office that was willing to take the lead on the project; could complete the procurement process most expeditiously; and could design, develop, and implement the IT project in less than two years. The third challenge was continuous oversight of the concurrent projects to address obstacles promptly, complete milestones timely, and keep projects within budget.

## Solutions – all persevered

We addressed the funding challenge through continuous communication, collaboration, and compromise. Every office supported the IT initiatives in one way or another— through incentive contributions to the statewide pool; taking the lead on a major project; providing subject matter experts; and providing space for the contractors. That helped solve our first two challenges. The third was a bit more taxing on staff, especially the project leads and management. But again, the staff in all the child support offices statewide persevered and worked collaboratively to manage the program changes effectively and accomplish the goals within the timeframes.

## Dividing three projects

Clark County offered to take on the responsibility of the Document Management project. This made sense because the county procurement process is quicker than the state process, and the Document Management project required the most time to design, develop, and implement. Throughout the project, Clark County staff worked with their state and county partners to make sure everyone involved approved major system design decisions.

Elko County sponsored the second major project— developing the OCSE-157 and management reports in a Business Intelligence application. The county already had a contracted vendor that assessed the design of the OCSE-157 and identified areas where the program could improve performance. So they amended the contract to have the OCSE-157 redeveloped and management reports created in a Business Intelligence application for program-wide use. Since the contractor was located in Reno, and Washoe County had technical and program subject matter experts in-house, Elko County teamed up with Washoe County to work on the project. This was a win-win for all parties.

Finally, there was a need for an Employer Web Services

portal because the employer data within the integrated system was continuously corrupted by automated interfaces and manual data entry by title IV-A and IV-D staffs. The program goal was to clean-up and secure the employment data and build the foundation to automate the process for sending and receiving employment verifications and income withholding orders. As the county with the biggest caseload, Clark County offered to take this task on as well.

Although several counties took the lead on these statewide initiatives, numerous state IT and program resources were dedicated to these projects to meet the technical needs and serve all offices equitably. It was a collaborative team effort.

## Managing the change

You can imagine what happens when you have even one major project; everyone wants to be involved. Having three major projects managed by various partners concurrently really took people out of their comfort zones. Those accustomed to being the leader or actively involved had to let go of some of the control and trust their partners. Once everyone realized they were being kept apprised of the projects' progress, the "trusting their partners" grew stronger.

We used the monthly task force meetings to keep the committee updated on the status of each project. Then all of the offices got updates during regular conference calls. It was a very stressful time, but in the end, we realized we are one big family working for the greater good of the program. It was one of the first times everyone agreed, "this is really important; it has to happen; and we can't do it alone."

## Lessons learned

It is best when you have adequate time to plan for major projects and the change management. However, given the narrow window of opportunity we had to plan, design, develop, and implement three major projects, it is totally amazing how we made it happen by working collaboratively and trusting our partners.

The greatest lessons we learned are "*united*, we can accomplish our goals" and "yes, we can trust our program partners." I cannot emphasize enough the importance of working collaboratively, compromising when necessary, and keeping the communication lines open.

**The *Child Support Report* last spotlighted Nevada in the July 2012 article "[Clark County, Nevada, social work project reaches parents who are homeless, disabled.](#)"**





**Commissioner's  
Voice**

## What is our medical support road map?

On Oct. 1, 2013, enrollment in the Health Insurance Marketplace will begin under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), while coverage will begin on Jan. 1, 2014. Child support agencies have an important role to play in connecting uninsured parents and their children to health care coverage by providing them

with information about and referrals to the Health Insurance Marketplace.

But as important as these dates are for consumers, they are not child support program deadlines. Child support program requirements will not change on Oct. 1 and Jan. 1. Instead, we will continue to keep doing what we are doing—what our statute directs us to do, which is to provide for child health care coverage in child support orders. Employers still have the same medical child support responsibilities to respond to the National Medical Support Notice as they had before. Over time, the ACA *will* likely impact how we carry out our medical child support responsibilities, but not directly and not tomorrow.

At OCSE, we've done a number of things to pave the way for the future of medical support:

- Early on, even before the ACA was enacted, we issued grants to bring together state child support and state Medicaid teams to begin to identify the issues.
- Beginning in 2010, we issued guidance to give state child support agencies flexibility to manage consistently with each state's health care direction and framework—programmatically—as well as data reporting and audits.

- We clarified that state child support agencies may look to both private and public coverage in ordering medical child support.
- We clarified allowable activities, including medical support facilitators and liaisons to cover children and to develop effective health care referral policies for both parents.
- We've worked with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to secure a medical support hardship exemption that exempts a parent from paying the shared responsibility payment if their child is not covered because the other parent was ordered to provide coverage but did not do so.
- We're actively working with CMS to clarify child support assignment, cooperation, and Medicaid referral policies.
- We're working within the federal government to clarify data sharing legal authorities between state child support and health care agencies, OCSE and state health care agencies, and between OCSE and federal health agencies. Our child support safeguarding rule permits state child support agencies to share certain data with state Medicaid and CHIP agencies.

I hope you'll look at our new OCSE [Child Support Health Care Connections fact sheets](#) with staff in your child support agencies. We've prepared these fact sheets to help you find the information you need about the ACA. See a description in the box below. Please let us know your ideas for sharing the fact sheets.



*Vicki Turetsky*

If you have questions or comments about a child support case, please contact your **state or tribal agency**.

### OCSE fact sheets on the ACA

OCSE launched the first six in a series of fact sheets on the website, titled [Child Support Health Care Connections](#), to offer information about the Affordable Care Act geared to the child support community. Please share these fact sheets, as well as the [HealthCare.gov](#) resources, with child support professionals and stakeholders.



### HealthCare.gov tools in Spanish

[HealthCare.gov](#) now has a Spanish Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/cuidadodesalud.gov](http://www.facebook.com/cuidadodesalud.gov)) and Twitter account

(@CuidadoDeSalud). Follow important announcements and learn Marketplace and Insurance concepts on these interactive channels.

# Behavioral economics meets child support

By Jason Despain  
HHS Administration  
for Children & Families



For some people, taking no action or choosing to opt out of something is often easier to do, even though the other path may be more beneficial to themselves or their families. The HHS Administration for Children & Families (ACF) is sponsoring a project called BIAS, Behavioral Interventions to Advance Self-Sufficiency, to see if changing some of its procedures will help families choose better child support options.

The study will try to determine if, by using behavioral economics theories and studies, we can make system and process improvements that will help people make more beneficial choices. For example, when noncustodial parents go to jail, their lack of income often makes it impossible for them to make their monthly child support payments. If they do not request and obtain a downward child support order modification, they may leave prison with significant child support debts that follow them for years to come.

Four years ago, the Texas Office of the Attorney General (OAG), Child Support Division, began mailing letters to a small number of incarcerated noncustodial parents with information on how to apply for a modification. Despite the clear benefits of this pilot program, only a small percentage of parents who were contacted applied for a modification. The BIAS team has partnered with the Texas OAG to determine whether the tools of behavioral economics can be used to increase the overall response rate of incarcerated noncustodial parents, as well as the accuracy and timeliness of their application materials.

BIAS and the Texas OAG analyzed every step in the modification request process, from the wording of the outreach letter and application, to the actions the parent must take within the prison to get an application notarized by a law librarian and returned to OAG by mail. The team identified several potential “bottleneck” points at which the parents may not follow through with the process; for example, the parent may receive the letter but decide not to open it because they see it is from the attorney general’s office. Or they may not follow through with the application because they do not have the needed information such

as their child support case number or the address of the custodial parent.

The team has redesigned the materials that the Texas OAG sends to incarcerated noncustodial parents to address these bottlenecks in ways that consider behavioral science. Changes include mailing the letters in envelopes without the OAG logo, simplifying the language in the letter to make it easier to read and understand, and pre-filling the application with some of the required information.

The BIAS team and the Texas OAG are conducting a random assignment study to determine whether the changes in application materials can lead to a change in the parents’ behavior and increase the number of modification applications that OAG receives. If so, they may apply behavioral economic modifications to other ACF and OCSE programs in the future.



## OCSE, Child Welfare partner to test state access to FPLS data

Over many years, OCSE and the ACF Children’s Bureau, which oversees the Title IV-E child welfare program, have partnered on projects to improve family services. The most recent collaboration between the two programs included development of a pilot project to give nine state child welfare staffs access to locate data via the OCSE State Services Portal.

The portal, part of the FPLS (Federal Parent Locator Service), marks an important achievement in the world of child support electronic communications. The portal opens the door for state workers to get web-based access to other states’ child support information through a secure, “single sign-on interface.”

The pilot is set to begin next month. After pilot completion, the fully implemented project will let designated child welfare staff use the portal to search for parents and relatives of children who have been removed from their home, without the need to involve a child support worker. The information will reach child welfare staff faster because it will cut out the “middle man.” OCSE hopes the process will also help ease pressure on child support staffs that face increased workloads.

On July 16, OCSE and the Children’s Bureau held a kickoff conference call with the child welfare contacts from the pilot states: Alabama, Arizona, California, District of Columbia, Iowa, Indiana, Massachusetts, Oklahoma, and Texas. They discussed training, user agreements, and connectivity, as well as how their access can benefit children and families in the child welfare caseload.

—LaShawn Scroggins, OCSE

## Child support can trigger stress for parents with PTSD

By Noelita Lugo, Manager of Fatherhood and NCP Involvement  
Texas Office of the Attorney General  
Child Support Division

The child support system can be stressful for parents. The system, by its very nature, evokes an emotional reaction by forcing parents to face highly personal matters involving family, finances, and the legal system. For parents with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), the added stress of child support can fuel the very symptoms that make managing their parental responsibilities so difficult. To make matters worse, child support professionals may misunderstand the symptomatic behaviors, interpreting them as evidence of an uncooperative or irresponsible parent.

### What is PTSD?

PTSD is a mental disorder that can occur after witnessing or directly experiencing life-threatening events such as natural disasters, serious accidents, or military combat. Symptoms of PTSD fall into three main categories: reliving the event, avoidance, and hyper-arousal. The severity of symptoms varies by individual.

### Why is it important to know about PTSD?

Child support professionals deal with troublesome cases every day, but cases involving parents with PTSD can be particularly difficult, especially if staff overlook or misunderstand parents' behaviors. PTSD is not limited to combat veterans; it also afflicts service members who did not see combat. Individuals with PTSD have higher rates of unemployment, criminal history, and health problems (e.g., substance abuse, mood disorder). These can be tough cases!

### What can child support professionals do?

**Learn more:** Child support professionals can learn

continued ▶

**WHAT CAN PTSD LOOK LIKE?** The table below shows a few examples of how PTSD symptoms can display themselves within the child support system.

Symptoms	What they can look like to child support professionals
<b>Reliving the event:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flashbacks, recurring nightmares</li> <li>Intense distress of reminders from the trauma</li> <li>Physical reactions to triggers that resemble or symbolize the trauma</li> </ul>	The court process, discussions of noncompliance, and perceptions of unfair treatment can symbolically represent past trauma and set off physical reactions and flashbacks.
<b>Avoidance:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Significantly diminished interest in activities</li> <li>Feelings of detachment from others</li> <li>Restricted range of feelings (e.g. numbness)</li> <li>Difficulty thinking about a long-term future</li> </ul>	Possible strained relationship with the other parent and children. The parent may fail to respond to child support letters and calls, or not show up for appointments or court hearings.
<b>Hyper-arousal:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sleep disorders</li> <li>Excessive emotion, outbursts of anger</li> <li>Difficulty concentrating</li> <li>Increased vigilance and easily startled</li> </ul>	Parents may have trouble paying attention to child support staff and may not follow through on next steps. Parents may show extreme emotional reactions to routine proceedings; staff may perceive the parent's behavior as belligerent, combative, aggressive, or dangerous.

Examples from the [National Alliance on Mental Illness, The Symptoms of PTSD](#)



more about PTSD and its symptoms by reaching out to the Veterans Affairs (VA) mental health services or other local veterans' organizations.

**Get trained:** As part of the federally funded demonstration project called Help Establish Responsive Orders Ensuring Support (HEROES) for Military Children, the Texas Child Support Division brought in staff from the VA to train all child support attorneys on recognizing and responding to post-traumatic stress disorder. Check with VA representatives in your state to see if they can provide the same kind of training to your staff.

**Identify appropriate referrals:** The VA is a good place to start to identify local resources for treatment and services. Make sure child support staff know about resources available and how to help connect parents suffering from PTSD to appropriate services.

When child support staff know the signs of PTSD, they can tailor communication to meet the needs of these parents, make appropriate resource referrals, and process cases more effectively.

## Resources

[NAMI's Veterans Resource Center](#)

[National Center for PTSD](#)

[U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs service directory](#)

## Impact of deployment on children

**A new study and an accompanying video from Child Trends report that the reunion of a deployed parent can be accompanied with a new set of risks and challenges—especially for young children—and particularly if the returning parent has serious physical or mental problems. The study discusses ways to address the needs of these children. Nearly half of our active-duty military members are parents.**

## Media Matters



**By Lara Fors, Director  
Springfield, MO, Regional Prosecutors' Child  
Support Office**

*The authors of both this article and the following sidebar based their stories on their presentations at the Eastern Regional Interstate Child Support Enforcement annual conference in May.*

Legal professionals in the child support program increasingly want to know: Can an attorney admit information found on social media sites as evidence to the court in a child support case? I did some research and found a few answers to that question, as well as ways that social media sites have affected the ethical issues of practicing law.

### Ethical

Both attorneys and judges are bound by certain rules or codes of conduct. There are no new, bright-line rules (clearly

defined rules or standards) for them when dealing with social media; however, several states have issued ethical opinions to guide their legal professionals. For example, some states believe that legal professionals may use social media sites, but they should act appropriately and with discretion. (Example: A North Carolina judge was reprimanded for using Facebook to communicate about a case with the father's attorney, a Facebook *friend*; he was not *friends* with the mother's attorney.)

Other states have said that certain behavior is prohibited. Florida and Oklahoma do not allow judges to *friend* attorneys on Facebook if those attorneys appear in court before that judge. Similarly, Massachusetts requires judges to recuse themselves if an attorney *friend* appears before a judge.

The American Bar Association has weighed in on the matter with a formal opinion, but gave no instruction about whom to *friend* or what social media to use or not use. The opinion did warn against posting pictures and videos, and *liking* pages. The Model Code Preamble requires judges to "maintain the dignity of judicial office at all times and avoid both impropriety and the appearance of impropriety in their professional and personal lives," so judges must take care to not act in such a way online that would embarrass themselves or be insensitive to others. Furthermore, judges cannot act in such a way that would even give the appearance of compromising the independence, integrity, and impartiality of the judge or undermine public confidence in the judiciary. So, maybe it's OK for the judge to *like* her

husband's canoe guide's business page, but not OK to *like* her friend's campaign page.

As it relates to attorneys, most opinions were on target with just applying the current rules of professional conduct to how attorneys behave online. Also, attorneys should be careful of people *recommending* them for areas of expertise, a feature of LinkedIn that lets members endorse others in areas of expertise. The South Carolina and Ohio ethics boards have found that it is a violation of Model Rule 7.1 for the attorney to post something on LinkedIn that is not true or correct and for the attorney to allow another person to post an untruth.

I did find it interesting to note that the American Bar Association Commission on Ethics is working on these questions in its working group, Implications of New Technologies. New or changed rules of professional conduct for attorneys and codes of conduct for judges may be coming to reflect the changing environment for communications. Until then, the current ones should be applied.

## Discovery

There were several cases where attorneys tried to get access or information to a person's MySpace account. All of the cases found that the existing rules of civil procedure, like Federal Rule 26, are sufficient to guide information held electronically. The information must be relevant to the litigation.

I found from their respective websites that if you want information directly from Facebook and MySpace, you will need a subpoena, court order, or warrant, depending on the information you desire. If an attorney wants content of a person's page, and that page is restricted to only *friends*, attorneys will need a warrant. Law enforcement may be able to deceive people online to catch criminals, but attorneys are bound by professional conduct rules and cannot deceive another for information.

## Evidence

Again, the courts are holding that no new, bright-line rules are necessary to deal with the information held on social media sites. I think my main concern as a prosecutor was authentication of the information. Courts have found that there is no requirement for the site's representatives to authenticate print-outs of pages from Facebook or MySpace. Cases have held that another party or witness can authenticate the page. These pages can be proof of contact (*ex parte* action) and used to show that a person's testimony changed from earlier, or even as character evidence.

Until new laws give additional guidance to attorneys, the current rules and law should be applied to the new situations we find with social media sites regarding both the practical and the ethical practice of law. Attorneys and their staff should not be afraid to use information on Facebook or MySpace on a noncustodial parent's location, assets, or ability to pay, as long as they follow the rules of evidence.

## Florida partnership builds app to locate parents



By Sharon Keri, Compliance  
Process Manager

**Florida Department of Revenue  
Child Support Program**

Today's technology and the internet offer individuals a place to share their personal information with family members, friends, coworkers, classmates, and even unknown parties throughout the world. This personal information often includes where they live and work, their personal interests, how they spend their time, contact information, and photos.

Here at the Florida Department of Revenue, Child Support Program, we have a wide variety of sources to locate parents to help establish, enforce, and modify support orders. These sources include data from state and federal agencies and private entities. In spite of these vast resources, we sometimes have difficulty in finding parents who owe support. Often these parents work for cash, do not own property (e.g. home, vehicle), move frequently, do not file taxes, or do not have an active credit history.

We are looking to the Internet as a new potential source of location information for parents who owe support. Since manual searches take time and are labor intensive, we're working with Florida State University to build an application that uses automation to search the web for parents who owe support. This app will look for mailing and residential addresses, phone numbers, employment, email addresses, assets, and other examples of ability to pay.

The approach for obtaining information on the web involves crawling and scraping information from sites such as Facebook, LinkedIn, and Craigslist. The project team identified the specific data fields needed from each site. The application automatically pulls the information into a database and matches it against a list of parents who owe support. The matching relies upon a combination of parent information such as name, date of birth, cell phone number, and/or email address to verify the parent's identity. Normally we would use Social Security Numbers for verification, but the SSNs are not available on the websites.

The project team continues to refine the application and test it against case data. We have seen positive matches and look forward to using the final product to help locate parents who owe support. This project is possible through an OCSE Section 1115 demonstration grant, awarded in September 2010.

## Text4baby campaign grows stronger every year

Screenshot from text4baby video

By Kim Danek, OCSE

Text4baby, ([text4baby.org](http://text4baby.org)), is anything but a wobbly, 3-year-old toddler. It is a robust, award-winning information campaign that has reached hundreds of thousands of followers predominantly through mobile text messages. Over the years, the site has added [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [YouTube](#) accounts to help spread healthy prenatal messages.

Department of Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius believes the program's messages are so important that she launched a State Enrollment Contest that started on Mother's Day and runs through Oct. 21. She described it as a "friendly competition among states—to connect even more women to critical health and safety information."

The contest is open to all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands. During the contest, states try to enroll as many participants as possible. The prize—bragging rights. The website describes the contest this way, "Throughout the contest, states with the highest text4baby enrollment over seven days will be identified as the Weekly Winners in Text4baby Tuesday. The states to enroll the most users (as a proportion of live births in their state) between May 12 and October 21, 2013, will be the overall contest winners."

### What is text4baby?

Text4baby started as a way to supply important health information to low-income, pregnant women and new mothers who may not receive it because they do not attend regular prenatal or healthy baby medical checkups. The campaign uses cell phone technology to send out text messages tailored to provide the right information for their babies' stage of development, from conception up to first birthdays.

Major cell phone carriers provide the text messages free of charge, even if the mother does not have a data plan. Women can sign up for reminders about upcoming medical appointments and baby immunization due dates. In recent

years, the program has branched out to include messaging for dads, friends and relatives, and health care providers.

A group of health and communications organizations developed this partnership to try to prevent prenatal deaths and help more babies get a healthy start in life. They launched text4baby in February 2010. Earlier this year, the text4baby campaign enrolled its 500,000th participant.

Find out more about the [2013 Text4baby State Enrollment Contest](#). Child support offices can help get the word out by visiting the [web page for materials](#) and suggested messaging.

### Text4baby for dads, too

Text4baby now sends dad-specific messages to encourage fathers and fathers-to-be to engage with their children early. The expanded program follows the success of text4baby for moms and moms-to-be, which has collected more than 550,000 subscribers and sent more than 62 million messages since its launch in February 2010. Learn more at the [NIH Spotlight page](#).

Now moms, dads, friends and relatives, and even health care providers can [sign up to receive text4baby messages](#).

### Want to win the state text4baby enrollment contest?

Take a look at these strategies and tools to help your state win the 2013 State Enrollment Contest.

#### Strategies:

- Send a targeted mailing with information about how to enroll to pregnant women and moms with babies under a year. Learn from [Idaho's targeted Medicaid mailing](#) to pregnant beneficiaries.
- Identify and engage your state's largest birthing hospitals in promoting text4baby as part of their intake and discharge processes.
- Reach out to your state affiliates of AAP, ACOG, and other major medical organizations.

#### Tools:

- Dedicated [State Enrollment Contest page](#) (includes press release template, talking points, sample social media posts, updated enrollment charts, featured partner spotlights.).
- [Partner Outreach Toolkit](#) provides outreach strategies for promoting text4baby in your state or community.
- Brief [informational video](#) explains how the service works and shares testimonials from providers.

## Community Connections

### Fatherhood summit in L.A. County strengthens child support partnership

By Al Reyes, Outreach Services Division Chief  
Los Angeles County, CA, Child Support Services Department

A first of its kind Fatherhood Summit in Los Angeles County laid the groundwork to improve child support collections for families. The summit fostered cooperation between child support agencies and community organizations serving parents through healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood programs.

## OCSE 2010 Annual Report on website

OCSE published its [FY 2010 Annual Report to Congress](#), available on the [Researchers web page](#). The report highlights the child support program functions in all states and several territories and tribes.

### FY 2010 Highlights

- State child support collections increased .6 percent, to \$26.6 billion.
- Collections by state child support agencies reached more than \$30 billion.
- Administrative expenditures totaled \$5.8 billion, with a federal share of \$3.8 billion and a state share of \$2 billion.
- The Federal Parent Locator Service (FPLS) located 7.7 million people.
- Collections attributable to the FPLS totaled \$3.4 billion.
- Tribal child support programs collected \$31.4 million.
- Tribal programs contained 38,000 cases and established 21,000 support orders.
- The number of comprehensive (full-service) tribal child support programs increased to 38.
- OCSE awarded \$1.1 million for 10 “Section 1115” grants and 3 “Special Improvement Project” grants.
- OCSE published two regulations, the Final Rule on Intergovernmental Child Support and the Final Rule on Computerized Tribal IV-D Systems and Office Automation.

Please see the [full report](#) for performance information for each state, territory, and tribal child support program.

Held May 1 at Child Support Services Department (CSSD) headquarters in Commerce, CA, the summit included representatives from seven community organizations, each one of which received a 2011 Healthy Marriage/Fatherhood grant from the federal Office of Family Assistance.

The event’s host, Director Dr. Steven J. Golightly, and federal Office of Family Assistance Director Dr. Earl Johnson each noted the goal to “connect the two programs” and promote dialogue between child support and federal grantees in Southern California. “There is no other program in the federal portfolio like child support that has contact with low-income fathers from the time their children are born until they reach age of majority,” Golightly told attendees.

Going forward, CSSD will work with agencies to schedule on-site child support workshops and “arrears outreach” events to help fathers address unpaid child support.

Among the feedback from community organization participants:

“CSSD’s desire to come on site and work alongside our case managers to help remove the fears and other barriers of the fathers in our communities is a vital step toward helping these fathers support their kids financially and physically.”

“We appreciate CSSD’s efforts to bring together partners who are providing fatherhood services in Los Angeles County” (from the director of an agency well known for assisting ex-offenders with employment and counseling services after incarceration).

“It is a first step towards working more closely together, which can and should result in better outcomes for families.”

## Child Support Report

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George H. Sheldon  
Acting Assistant Secretary for Children and Families

Vicki Turetsky  
Commissioner, OCSE

Gabrielle Pagin  
Director, Division of Consumer Services

Elaine Blackman  
Editor  
[elaine.blackman@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:elaine.blackman@acf.hhs.gov)

