Grantee: Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Office of Child Support (OCS)
Project Title: Learn/Innovate/Improve Strategies for Technology and Engagement (LISTEN)
Project Site: Statewide
Target Population: People who are eligible for, but do not currently receive, child support services
Geographic Location: Statewide
Planned Interventions: Create Social Media Presence, Enhance Social Media, Optimize Social Media

Project Summary
In 2016 and 2017, Michigan teamed with a marketing firm on two digital advertising campaigns focused on (1) improving public perception of the child support program and directing parents to online resources and (2) raising awareness about the importance of paternity establishment. While both campaigns were deemed successful, OCS was not able to accurately evaluate the campaigns’ effectiveness on the total caseload or on the number of paternities established. The LISTEN project will develop additional digital marketing interventions geared toward reaching parents not currently served who could benefit from child support services. Using the Learn-Innovate-Improve methodology, OCS will be able to evaluate their interventions throughout the project period and make changes or tweaks to improve the interventions.

The objectives of the LISTEN project are:
- To increase the number of new child support cases that are not the result of a public assistance referral by 5% over the course of the project
- To increase and improve customer engagement with Michigan’s child support program

Project Approach
Through the LISTEN project, OCS will conduct three interrelated marketing interventions designed to reach parents that could benefit from child support services but that are not currently receiving them. OC’s intended outcome is to increase the number of new non-referral cases opened statewide each month. The quantity and quality of new engagements with customers and potential customers will be measured.

These interventions will include Google Search Engine Optimization (SEO), paid posts on Facebook and Instagram, and targeted mobile media ads. Under this project, OCS’s digital marketing efforts will be more targeted than previous efforts, with the three interventions focused on low-income, never-married women, ages 18-44, with children under the age of 18. Specific counties will be targeted, allowing the evaluator to measure the impact of media messaging for any specific county’s proportion of new nonassistance cases.

Intervention One: Create Social Media Presence
Description: For Intervention One, OCS will create a new Facebook page that is specific to Michigan’s child support program, allowing a new channel for two-way digital communication and engagement with parents. This intervention will also include Google SEO, targeted mobile media ads, and paid ads/boosted posts on social media (Facebook and Instagram). Content will be posted to the page at least once each business day, such as information from partners in the Prosecuting Attorney and Friend of the Court offices, as well as paid ads and boosted posts.
Evaluation Plan Highlights: Child support administrative data will be used to create the first intervention, using monthly data from FY 2018 to set baselines for the number of non-referral cases opened each month. Nonreferral cases will be tracked as a percentage of total cases opened. The number and proportion of positive and negative interactions will also be tracked. Data analytics will be accessed from the marketing platforms used in the campaign. The following digital metrics will be measured by gender and geographic location: number of impressions, click-through rates, cost per click, post engagement (Facebook and Instagram), clicks to website, number of website sessions, and time spent on website.

Intervention Two: Enhance Social Media
Description: In the second intervention, OCS will continue to maintain their Facebook presence while making tweaks to digital media ads, Google SEO, and paid/boosted social media posts as needed. The outcomes of Intervention One will inform these tweaks with the dual goals of improving content and messaging delivery and maximizing positive engagements with the targeted population.

Evaluation Plan Highlights: Facebook data from the first intervention period will be used to set a baseline to measure engagement for this intervention. OCS will use the same metrics as in Intervention One.

Intervention Three: Optimize Social Media
Description: Based on results of Intervention Two, OCS will make tweaks to digital media ads, Google SEO, and paid/boosted social media posts as needed to optimize the messages, improve content and delivery of messaging, and to maximize positive engagements with the targeted population. OCS will also continue to maintain the Facebook page.

Evaluation Plan Highlights: As before, OCS will use Facebook data from the first intervention period as the baseline for measuring engagement. Intervention Three will collect and analyze the same metrics used for the prior interventions.