Child Support’s Role in Supporting Family Success

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Agenda

• Why?
• Brief historical overview of child support function
• Federal mandate to expand services/information
• State Role in new support mission
• Local Agency role in new mission/examples
Why is Child Support Interested in Family Success?”

• Or, ‘Don’t you just care about the money?’

• Child support is just one player in the integrated human services safety net – our success affects your success

• Shift from ‘this month’ to long-term anti-poverty efforts

• No customer has just one problem – many report multiple social, economic challenges
Factors for Parental Success

- Housing
- Medical
- Safety
- Education
- Mental Health
- Finances
Historical Framework

• 1974 – Title IV-D of the Social Security Act
  • Required states to have child support establishment/enforcement units
  • Most saw this as a law-enforcement function, in Attorney General or District Attorney offices
  • Some states put child support in state taxing authority
  • California used Department of Social Services (small unit) overseeing local District Attorney Family Support Divisions.
Historical Framework

• 2002: Legislature moved child support enforcement to new State Department of Child Support, required counties to set up free-standing Child Support Services offices.
  • Allowed shift in focus to current support and family success

• 2008: Single statewide computer system, unified phone systems
  • Linked county systems and strong State oversight
Historical Framework

• 2009-2016: New Federal Administration
  • Encouraged human service departments to talk to each other and about each other.
  • Encouraged data-sharing, unity of policy and approach.
  • Recognized customers-in-common need safety net of support from multiple agencies/providers, both public and private.
  • Success in each domain requires coordinated care.
Office of Child Support Enforcement’s ‘Bubble Chart’

CSE Core Mission:
- Locate Parents
- Establish Paternity
- Establish Orders
- Collect Support

- Child Support Prevention
- Family Violence Collaboration
- Health Care Coverage
- Economic Stability
- Healthy Family Relationships
- Engagement of Fathers from Birth
State Role in New Approach

• High-level cooperation between IV-A and IV-D
• Data Exchange, streamlining interfaces between Public Assistance and Child Support computer systems
• Oversight of spending on community support functions
• Branding and statewide advertising/education
Local Agency Role

• Expand information about community resources available to the customer
• Have referral information/resources at local child support offices
• Establish relationships with community partners to learn about each other, forge pathways for success
• Provide training with other community partners both directions: about child support for community partners; about partners for child support.
• Outreach for the customer/community
Local Agency Role - Examples

- Social Safety Net Training
  - 2-hour training blocks with 2-3 providers who come into local child support agency to train staff on community partner’s role/personnel/customer needs

- Government (Social Services, Health Care, Behavioral Health)
- Community (Domestic Violence, Rescue Mission, Veterans Groups)
- Faith-Based (Homeless Services, Emergency Shelter, etc.)

- Reciprocal Training
- Video-tape for intranet reference archive
Community Resource Centers

• Orange County has a 5,000 sq. ft. space for Community Referrals:

  • Computer Room with 6 computers for customers to use to open child support case, apply for benefits, complete court forms, search for jobs, etc.

  • Library with folders, brochures, maps, guides, etc. on job skills, adult education, low cost/free medical, dental, vision care; food banks, housing assistance, counseling, etc.
Community Resource Centers

- Family Law Facilitator (attorney employed by the Superior Court) to help with legal matters

- Clinical Social Worker to assist with mental health, disability applications, etc.

- Classroom space for group workshops

- Military/veteran referral specialist
Community Service Referrals, (18,000)
Orange County CSS 2016

- Food/Clothing: 17%
- Financial Assistance: 16%
- Employment: 14%
- Custody/Visit: 14%
- Health Services: 12%
- Legal Aid: 11%
- Counseling: 10%
- Housing: 6%
- Food/Clothing: 17%
Diverse Programs

• Stanislaus County has a federal grant to bring together child support, courts, domestic violence specialists to channel parents into job training/placement services.

• San Diego has a grant for parenting orders (visitation) assisting parents to work out shared parenting schedules. Parents who see their children pay more support.

• San Francisco is experimenting with referring customers to mediation and counseling. Cooperative parents raise better-adjusted children.
What’s the Payoff?

- Expunging a felony conviction *(Public Defender, Bar Association)* from a record opens up the potential job market.
- Completing high school *(Adult Ed/GED)* increases support paid over the child’s life by 44%!
- Addressing housing instability *(County Housing Authority)* means increasing likelihood of job stability.
- Meeting medical/dental needs *(County, Community clinics)* means less time lost from work, better child health.
What’s the Payoff?

- Counseling/mental health *(County, faith, community, domestic violence, etc.)* decreases conflict, improves outcomes.
- Visitation/shared parenting *(Courts)* increases parental involvement, which leads to increased financial support and lower childhood social pathology.
- Food Banks, nutrition support *(Social Services, faith, community partners)* mean kids do better in school.

Parental Success = Child Success!
Questions?

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