



# Child Support Awareness Month: A Look at How Child Support is Evolving

August 17, 2016



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# National Responsible Fatherhood Clearinghouse

- DHHS/ACF Office of Family Assistance funded national resource to support fathers and families.
- Resources are available for dads, fatherhood programs, researchers, and policy makers.
- Visit the NRFC: [www.fatherhood.gov](http://www.fatherhood.gov).
  - [www.fatherhood.gov/toolkit](http://www.fatherhood.gov/toolkit) for *Responsible Fatherhood Toolkit*.
  - [www.fatherhood.gov/webinars](http://www.fatherhood.gov/webinars) for archives of all our webinars.
- Contact us: [info@fatherhood.gov](mailto:info@fatherhood.gov).
- Encourage fathers or practitioners to contact our national call center toll-free at **1-877-4DAD411 (877-432-3411)**.
- Engage with us via social media:  
**Facebook: [Fatherhoodgov](https://www.facebook.com/Fatherhoodgov) Twitter: [@Fatherhoodgov](https://twitter.com/Fatherhoodgov)**

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# Our Goals Today

Today's webinar will share information about:

- How national and local child support policies and approaches are evolving.
- How child support order amounts are set, and how they can be modified when circumstances change.
- Ways in which fatherhood programs and child support agencies can work together to ensure that fathers have:
  - Access to employment services.
  - Accurate information about child support.
  - Help with modification of orders and arrearages as appropriate.
- Examples of successful local partnerships between fatherhood programs and child support offices.



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# Today's Presenters

- **James Murray**  
Office of Child Support Enforcement  
Washington, DC.
- **Kelly Little**  
Mecklenburg County Child Support Enforcement  
Charlotte, NC.
- **Cheri Tillis and Lisl King Williams**  
Fathers Support Center  
St. Louis, MO.



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August 17, 2016



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# Our Mission

Enhance the well-being of children by assuring that assistance in obtaining support—financial and medical—is available to children through:

Locating  
Parents

Establishing  
Paternity

Establishing  
Support  
Obligations

Monitoring  
and  
Enforcing  
Obligations



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# The Child Support Program

- Federal, state, and tribal child support agencies work together to collect and distribute child support payments and provide health care coverage.
- Serves 1 in 5 children — and both parents.
- Collects \$32 billion annually, with nearly 95 percent paid to families.
- Ensures children receive reliable financial support.
- Encourages both parents to be involved in their children's lives.
- Has a positive effect on children's life outcomes.
- Avoids public assistance costs.
- Collects \$5.26 for every public dollar spent.



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# Federal Functions

- Provide policy guidance, training and technical assistance.

- Operate the Federal Parent Locator Service - important tools for locate & enforcement.

- Collaborate with other agencies and organizations for child and family welfare.

- Operate federal enforcement remedies such as federal tax refund offset and passport denial.

- Oversee demonstration grants and special improvement projects grants.

- Administer Access and Visitation program.





# State and Tribal Functions

Establish  
paternity

Locate  
noncustodial  
parents

Review & adjust  
orders

Establish orders

Collect support

Cooperate in  
intergovernmental  
enforcement

Monitor &  
distribute  
collections



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# Child Support is Evolving

## Welfare Cost Recovery

- Recovering welfare costs
- Assigning and retaining
- Imputing income
- Automated, standardized enforcement processes
- Debt as motivation to pay
- Incarceration as consequence of nonpayment
- Financial support main focus

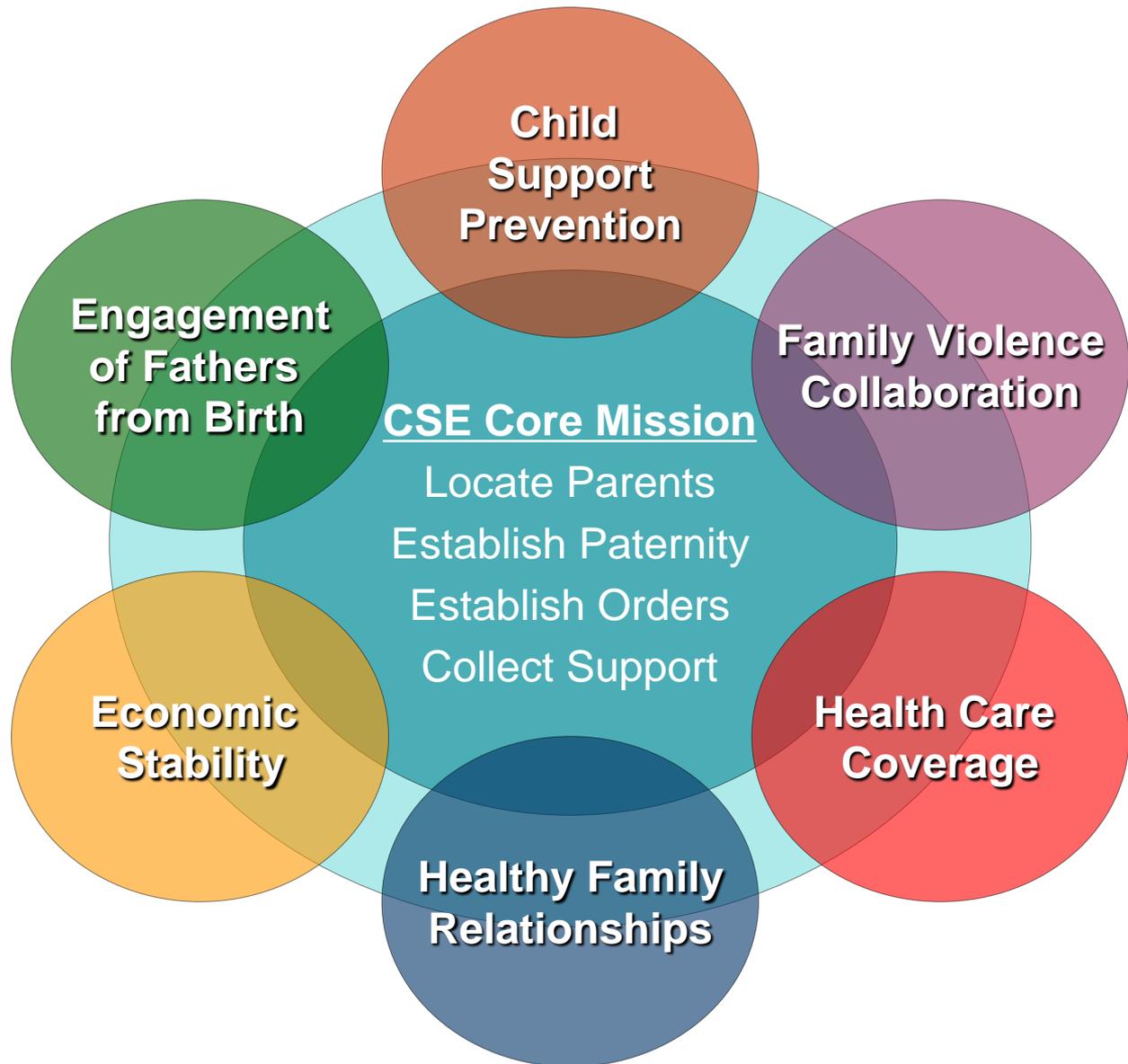
## Family Centered Practices

- Reliable payments
- Family distribution
- Accurate, actual income
- Caseload segmentation for tailored approaches
- Debt prevention/compromise
- Services to remove barriers contributing to nonpayment
- Involvement-balanced focus





# Family-Centered Child Support Strategies





# What does family-centered child support mean?

The goal is to increase regular support for children, by:

- Engaging both parents.
- Setting and modifying orders based on ability to pay.
- Paying all of the money to children.
- Implementing debt management.
- Using less adversarial dispute resolution.
- Jobs not jail--using contempt and jail sparingly.
- Coordinating with employment and other services.
- Addressing co-parenting and parenting time.
- Addressing domestic violence.

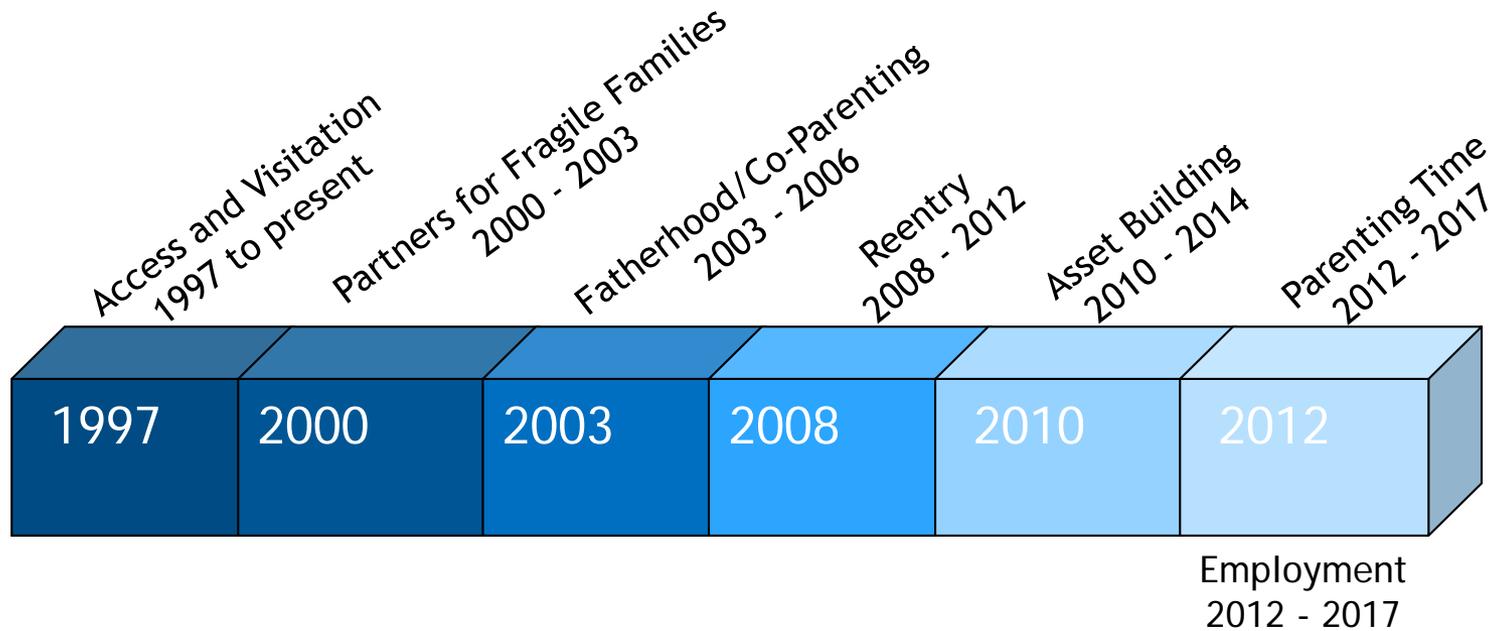


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# OCSE Fatherhood Initiatives



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# Benefits of Paternity Establishment

- Identity.
- Parental Bond.
- Legal Rights.
- Extended Family.
- Benefits and Services.



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# Tips for Fatherhood Programs

- Reach out to your local child office.
  - Meet with child support staff to discuss mutual goals.
  - Invite a child support representative to talk to your staff, provide training, answer questions.
  - Invite them to make regular presentations to your father groups.
- Look to develop a deeper partnership relationship:
  - Referrals to fatherhood program.
  - Help with questions from fatherhood staff and participants.
  - Assistance with order modifications, etc.



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# Share the Message

- Child support program and practices are evolving.
- Child support can play a powerful role in helping to strengthen—not erode—family income, work participation, and relationships.
- Implementing parent-focused innovations:
  - Building relationships.
  - Individualized case management.
  - Personalized communication.
  - Emphasis on parenting.
  - Employment and wrap-around services.
- Welcoming opportunities to collaborate and partner.





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Kelly R. Little, MBA/MSL, AMC  
Mecklenburg County Child Support  
Intake Supervisor  
Responsible Fatherhood and Mom  
as Gateway Initiative  
Kelly.Little@MecklenburgCountyNC

August 17, 2016



# Holistic Service Delivery

## Emotional, Physical, and Financial

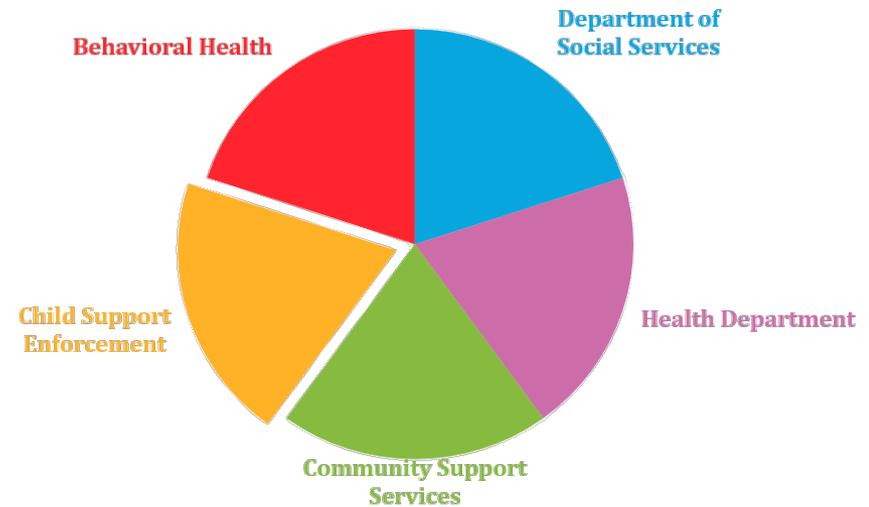
“High Performance as the goal: How we achieved organizational excellence and changed our culture.”

- The ownership to transform the culture of Child Support started with the decision to recognize our most valuable resource, “our children.”
- The culture shift begins with the creation of a Progressive Vision, True Communication, and Clear Expectations.





# Expanded Role of Child Support



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# Strengthening Families

- Responsible Fatherhood Initiative.
- Mom as Gateway, not Gatekeeper.
- Positive Parenting Program Collaboration.
- Community Outreach Activities.
- Preventing the Need for Child Support.
- Collaboration with DSS and Stakeholders.
- Performance Monitoring.



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# Strengthening Families



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# Strengthening Families

## Our Responsible Fatherhood Initiative:

- Educates fathers.
- Assists with employment opportunities.
- Improves relationships.
- Leverages parenting skills through “Triple P.”
- Helps fathers navigate the complicated maze of community resources.
- Provides Quarterly Noncustodial Parent Orientations.
- Includes Expungement clinics.



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# Strengthening Families

## Responsible Fatherhood Initiative (RFI) Outreach

A customer's experience after an RFI Outreach event

*"I just wanted to write and thank you once again for the great assistance. It is amazing that I learned and accomplished more in an hour with you then in three years with everyone else. I really appreciate it and wish I had met with you originally. Thanks for the common courtesy, professionalism, and education you provided. Unfortunately not everyone gives those core fundamentals of business. I cannot express how drastic of a change in service I experienced with you rather than the previous times where I was treated unfairly, prejudged, and more. Once again thank you, thank you, thank you."*



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Mecklenburg County Child Support Enforcement Customer



# Strengthening Families

## Mom as Gateway Initiative (MAGI)

- Studies show that mother's perceptions greatly influence father's involvement; therefore mothers are a key factor for getting fathers involved. When both parents can effectively co-parent, their children benefit greatly.
- Through MAGI, we work with mothers who are child support customers. We use a National Fatherhood Initiative curriculum to explore:
  - Mothers' protective instincts.
  - Beliefs about fathers' involvement in their children's lives.
  - Parents' impact on children's well-being.
  - Importance of co-parenting.





# Outreach and Reciprocity

## Soaring in our Community: Community Engagement

- Empowerment Center
- Albemarle Road Elementary School
- Men's Empowerment Coalition
- Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department
- Center for Urban Families
- Charlotte Housing Authority
- Johnson C. Smith University/ UNC-Charlotte, Queens College
- Fathers United
- Expungement Clinic
- Father's Action Network
- Self-Service Center
- Veterans Affairs



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# Strengthening Families

## Workforce Strategies to encourage Economic Independence and Economic Mobility

- DSS Workforce Development Collaboration.
- Community Partners:
  - Charlotte Works.
  - Urban League.
  - Goodwill Industries.
  - Community Culinary School of Charlotte.





# Strengthening Families

## Banning The Box

- Mecklenburg County Child Support Enforcement (MCCSE) collected \$50+ million in Fiscal Year 2016!
  - No jurisdiction in NC has done this before.
- MCCSE's Focus on Fathers has helped change the perception of the office to a "father friendly" organization.
- The Department launched a rebranding initiative to demonstrate its commitment to co-parenting.



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# Saddest Boy Ever



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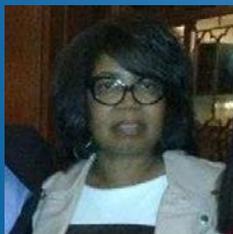


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Lisl King Williams  
Director of Legal Services  
Fathers' Support Center, St. Louis, MO



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# Fathers' Support Center - Overview

- Mission: foster healthy relationships by strengthening families and communities.
- Since its founding in December 1997, Fathers' Support Center has served more than 13,000 fathers and their families – including more than 32,500 children.
- Fathers who completed FSC's core program in the past year are paying a combined \$273,000 annually to directly support their children, and 56% of them report increased interaction with their children.
  - In addition, 197 clients agency-wide obtained employment in the last year and are putting a combined \$3.4 million into the local economy.
- In 2015, on a \$4.1 million budget, FSC's return on investment to the St. Louis community totaled more than \$11.8 million.



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# Questions for Cheri and Lisl

1. What are some of the typical child support issues faced by the dads you work with?
2. How does Fathers' Support Center (FSC) respond to these issues? What kinds of services do you provide? What is the role of FSC's Legal Clinic?
3. How did FSC work with child support in late 90s/early 00s?
  - How did the partnership form and evolve? Was there a particular set of circumstances or individuals that proved to be a catalyst?
  - How does the current partnership work?
4. What advice can you offer to fatherhood programs that have not yet established a relationship with their child support office?
5. How do you talk with fathers about the importance of paternity establishment (for children, fathers, and mothers)?
6. How do you talk with fathers (and mothers) about co-parenting? How do you address custody and visitation issues?
7. Anything you'd like to highlight from the points made by James or Kelly?





# Contact:

## NRFC:

- [info@fatherhood.gov](mailto:info@fatherhood.gov)
- Please send your comments/questions, suggestions for future webinar topics, and any information or resources that you recommend we share with others.

## Today's presenters:

- James Murray: [james.murray@acf.hhs.gov](mailto:james.murray@acf.hhs.gov)
- Kelly Little: [kelly.little@mecklenburgcountync.gov](mailto:kelly.little@mecklenburgcountync.gov)
- Cheri Tillis: [ctillis@fatherssupport.org](mailto:ctillis@fatherssupport.org)



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