



Office of Child Support Enforcement

2010 Annual Report



Human Resources
Administration
Department of
Social Services

Office of
Child Support
Enforcement

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Message

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DEPUTY COMMISSIONER





**Human Resources
Administration**

Department of
Social Services

Office of Child Support
Enforcement

Robert Doar
Commissioner

Thomas DePippo
Senior Executive
Deputy Commissioner

Frances Pardus-Abbadessa
Executive Deputy Commissioner

2010 may well have been a watershed year for the Responsible Fatherhood Movement. In June, President Obama launched a Fatherhood Mentoring Initiative, saying, “What we can do is send a clear message to our fathers that there is no excuse for failing to meet their obligations... [and] help [fathers] develop the skills and experience they need to move into full-time, long-term employment, so they can meet their child support obligations and help provide for their families.”

In New York City, Mayor Bloomberg also launched a coordinated Fatherhood Initiative, asking all city agencies that serve dads to “seize every opportunity to help fathers connect to their children and fulfill their responsibilities...” In September, the Mayor appointed Alan Farrell to be the first Citywide Fatherhood Coordinator. Mr. Farrell works with 13 city agencies, including HRA, to better integrate programs that serve fathers.

New York City Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs reflected that “if the dad is working and engaged and paying child support and there is an emotional support to the child, then the kid is going to grow up happier, healthier and better resourced.” HRA Commissioner Doar who has set the tone for the Agency’s focus on responsible fatherhood said, “A father is vital to his children’s emotional and financial stability, and men who father children have a fundamental duty to provide for them. Their advice, love and encouragement is essential, and their financial support can lift children from poverty.”

We are proud to report advances in our programs that support fathers. These include:

- Doubling referrals into Support Through Employment Program (STEP) over the last 2 years.
- Continuing our arrears reduction programs. To date we have modified orders and/or reduced arrears for nearly 600 noncustodial parents.
- Launching our Low Income Dads pilot (LIDS) in Brooklyn and the Bronx. This program utilizes case management and wrap-around services to help low-income NCPs pay child support and improve the connection with their children.
- Collections of almost \$700 million, a 3.3% increase from last year.
- An average of nearly 125,000 families receiving child support each month — a record-high.
- For those getting a collection, average support of \$4,349 (for the year) for families who used to be on cash assistance – 24% of the poverty line for a family of 3.
- An increase in new child support orders of 12% among all families, and 19% among families on cash assistance.

These are just some of the Office of Child Support Enforcement’s (OCSE) achievements and initiatives detailed in our 2010 Annual Report. We realize that many single-parent families that could receive child support still do not. In 2011, we plan to introduce additional programs to support low-income NCPs, and expand on our successful partnerships and initiatives already in place. All of this supports the child support program’s core mission: to ensure that both parents financially support their children.

Frances Pardus-Abbadessa

Introduction





Our Core Services

The New York City Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) establishes child support orders and collects and distributes payments on behalf of New York City families. The office supports this work through a number of supplementary services, from helping parents establish paternity, to referring low-income noncustodial parents to job placement programs. By ensuring children receive support from both parents, OCSE strengthens families and combats child poverty in New York City.

Establishing, Enforcing and Modifying Support Orders

New Yorkers seeking child support services first make contact with caseworkers at OCSE's Borough Offices or Family Court Support Services located in the Family Court. OCSE works with custodial parents and the Family Court to file petitions, schedule hearings and provide case information and arrears statements to the Family Court's Support Magistrates.

The Family Court **establishes** child support orders based on guidelines in the New York State Child Support Standards Act. The court calculates the amount of financial support the NCP pays as a percentage of his or her income; determines who should provide medical insurance; and considers additional costs for education and child care expenses.

OCSE has the authority to **enforce** orders if NCPs do not pay the child support they owe. OCSE uses administrative processes that include: temporarily increasing the amount of the NCP's wages that are garnished by 50

percent; seizing tax refunds, lottery winnings, financial assets and insurance settlements; notifying credit reporting agencies about the child support debt NCPs owe; suspending driver's licenses; denying passports or business and professional licenses; and referring cases to the New York State Division of Taxation and Finance for debt collection.

The Family Court may **modify** child support orders if an NCP's circumstances or child's needs change substantially. In 2010, the New York State Low Income Support Obligation Performance Improvement Act defined thresholds for the modification of support orders and expanded the definition of "substantial change in circumstances" to include incarceration.

Under certain circumstances, OCSE can adjust child support orders outside the Family Court. Some cases are eligible for automatic cost of living adjustments. If orders or arrears are payable to the Department of Social Services—which is true of some payments collected on behalf of children who receive cash assistance—OCSE can cap the arrears that the NCP owes and lower the NCP's ongoing obligation, if the NCP meets program requirements.

Collecting and Distributing Child Support Payments

OCSE receives, disburses and maintains account records for child support payments. In 2010, OCSE distributed 90 percent of the child support collections to families.



The Department of Social Services retained the remaining 10 percent to repay the cost of benefits provided to families receiving cash assistance. However, these families receive the first \$100 (for one child) or \$200 (for two or more children) collected on their behalf, in addition to their current level of government benefits.

Nearly three-quarters of collections in 2010 came from employer wage withholdings. Cash assistance recipients may receive child support payments on their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card, and custodial parents who do not receive cash assistance receive child support payments through the New York State EppiCard Debit Card program, by paper check, or by direct deposit to their bank accounts.

Establishing Paternity

For children born to unmarried parents, paternity (legal fatherhood) must be established before the Family Court can establish a child support order. Parents can establish paternity at any time, either by voluntarily signing an Acknowledgement of Paternity (AOP), or a court can issue an Order of Filiation. OCSE works with hospital staff to help parents understand and sign AOPs and refers clients to low-cost DNA testing services if they are unsure of the identity of a child's father. Paternity ensures a child's inheritance rights and a father's right in areas such as custody and visitation.

Locating Noncustodial Parents

It is every parent's responsibility to support his or her children. When a custodial parent cannot help OCSE locate an NCP, the office searches for the NCP's address, source(s) of income and assets using a variety of federal and state databases.

The information you provide to our participants is vital to our mission of creating responsible fathers. You are able to take a stressful subject and present it in a welcoming environment that leaves room open for discussion. I sincerely hope we are able to work together often in the future.

Michael Obertacz

Program Director, Career Gear

[provides job retention and advancement coaching to men]

Collecting Child Support





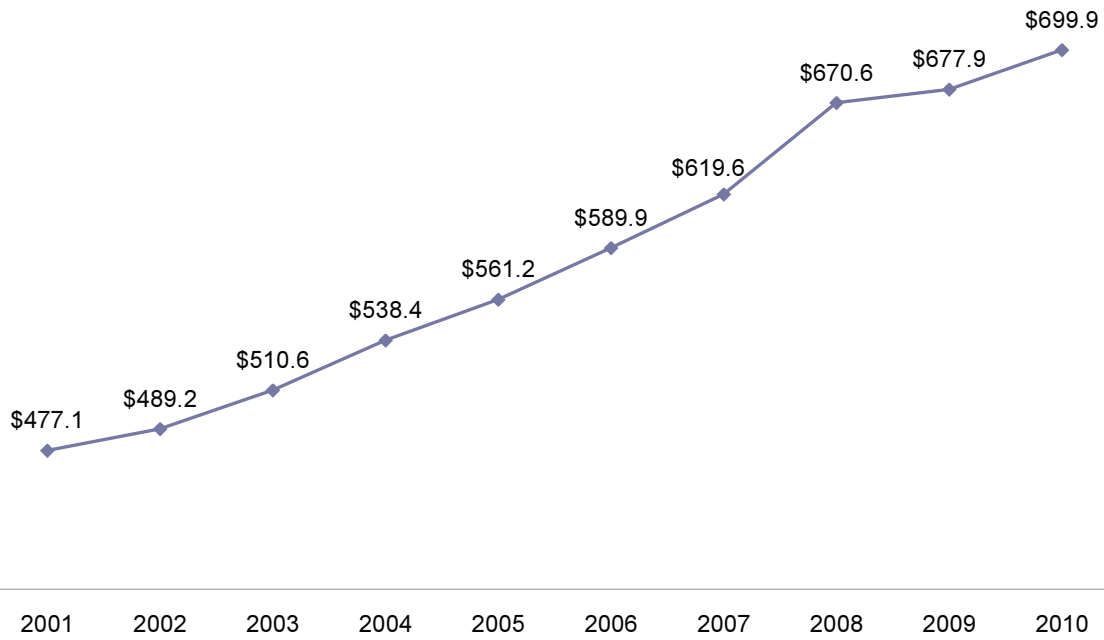
Collecting More Money for NYC Children

In 2010, OCSE collected nearly \$700 million on behalf of New York City families. Since 2001, OCSE has increased its collections by 47 percent. An increase in collections benefits NYC children; contrary to popular myth, OCSE distributes nearly all of this money—90 percent in 2010—to families.

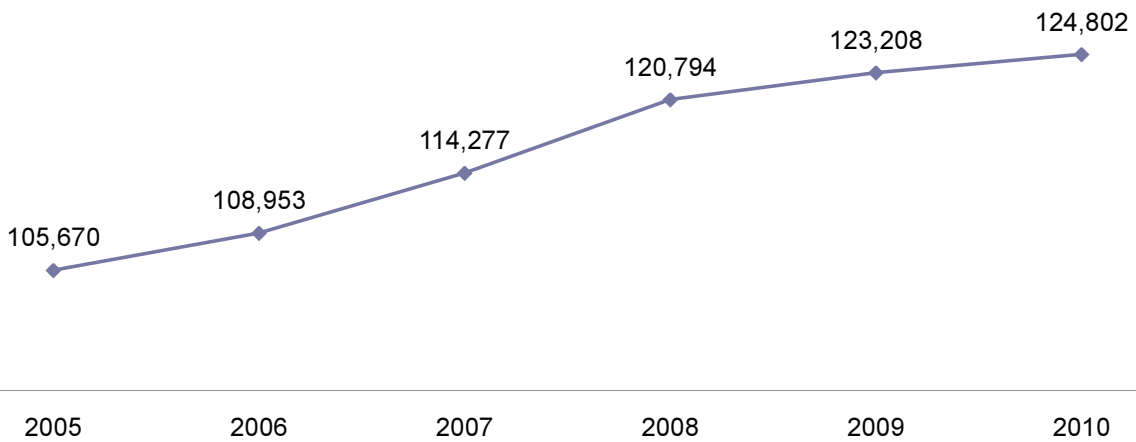
Each month in 2010, an average of nearly 125,000 families received a child support payment. This figure has increased by 18 percent since 2005. The average family that received at least one payment in 2010 collected \$5,605 during the year. This can make a real difference for low-income families struggling to stay out of poverty.

OCSE cannot collect child support until the Family Court has put an order in place. The agency continues to increase in the number of child support orders established. The majority of families OCSE serves have child support orders, and OCSE established more than 13,500 new orders in 2010, a 12% increase from 2009.

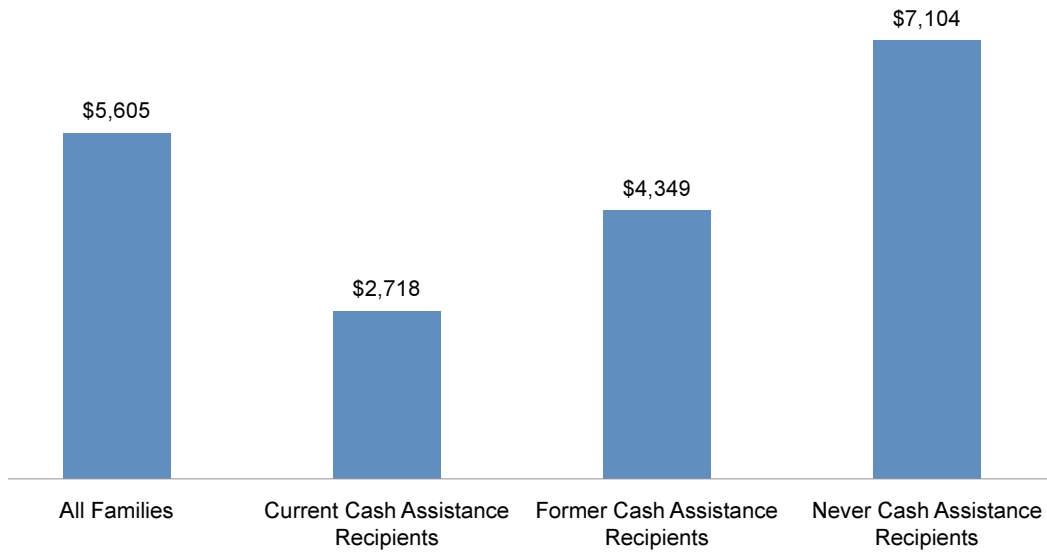
NYC Child Support Collections (\$ Million): 2001 to 2010



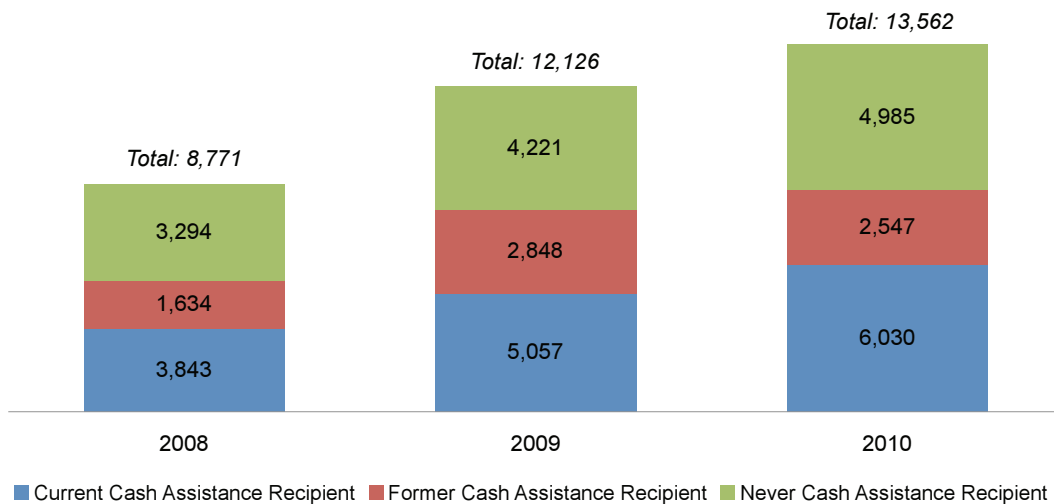
Number of Families Receiving a Payment: Monthly Average



Average Total Support Collected Per Family: 2010



New Orders: 2008 to 2010



I wanted to express my heartfelt thanks to you and your staff. We are looking forward to working with you continuously to achieve bigger and better accomplishments.

Rev. Philip Craig
Greater Allen AME Cathedral of New York

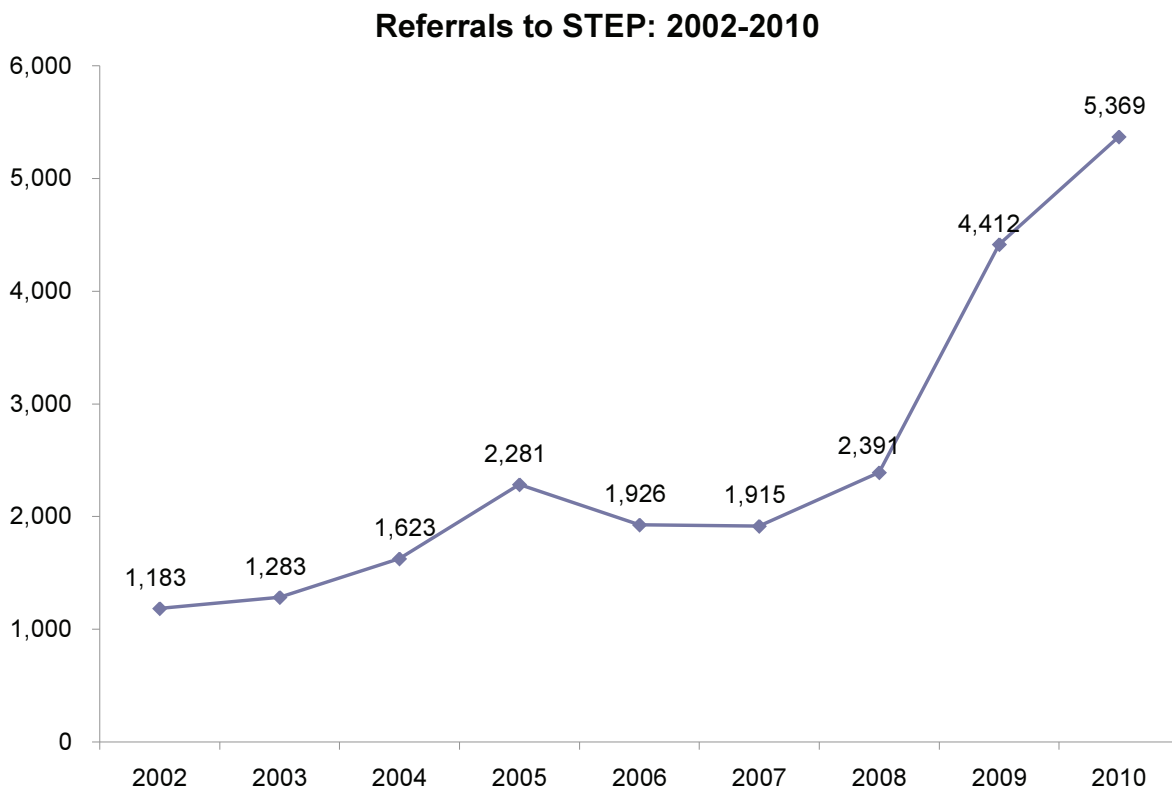
Services for Parents



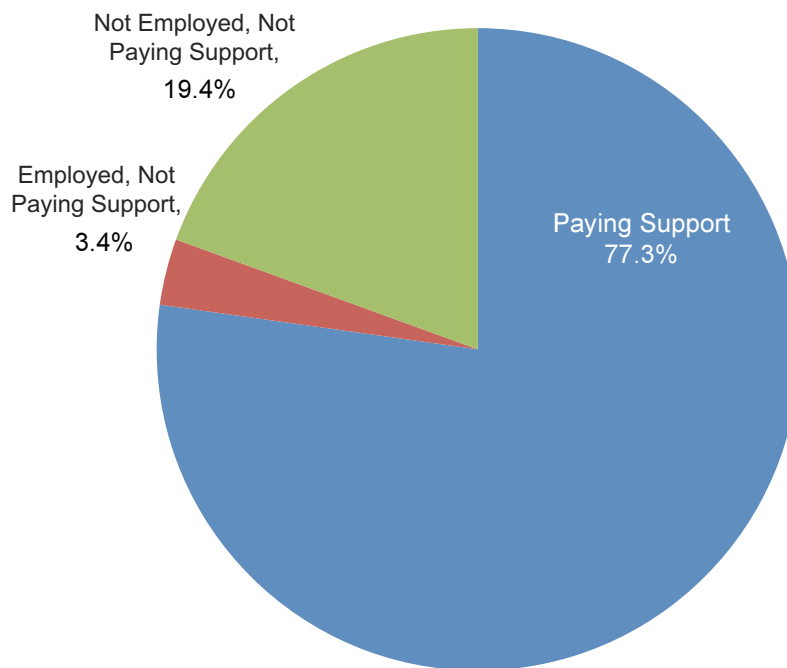
To support its mission of collecting child support payments on behalf of families, OCSE works to engage NCPs with the formal child support program and help them overcome barriers to paying support. In 2010, OCSE expanded its employment offerings by launching the Low Income Dads (LIDS) program, as well as arrears modification programs for low income NCPs. It also raised parents' awareness of free and low-cost mediation services available to them.

The Support Through Employment Program (STEP)

Support Magistrates refer un- and underemployed NCPs to the Support through Employment Program. Through STEP, NCPs receive job search and job placement assistance from DSS' Back to Work employment vendors. In the past two years, STEP has more than doubled the number of NCPs who receive its services annually. DSS' Back to Work vendors emphasize helping participants find jobs as quickly as possible. In 2010, referrals to STEP yielded 322 jobs, averaging \$11 per hour for 33 hours per week. In addition, NCPs who have undeclared income often begin making payments when they are referred to STEP. In 2010, all NCPs who participated in STEP between 2002 and 2010 paid more than \$24 million dollars of child support, up from \$20 million in 2009.



STEP Respondent Compliance with Child Support: 2010



Low Income Dads (LIDS)

In 2010, OCSE launched LIDS, a three-year pilot program that seeks to increase noncustodial fathers' employment, child support payments and connections to their children. LIDS combines a traditional workforce development model with strong social service support, including peer support forums, mediation, parenting and anger management classes, and fatherhood peer programs. OCSE has launched the program in Central Brooklyn and the South Bronx, two areas with high child support noncompliance. The agency will conduct an evaluation on the program to determine its effectiveness.

Order/Arrears Reduction

Several OCSE programs allow low income NCPs to reduce child support they owe DSS without a court hearing—making it easier to bring their child support obligations in line with their income. OCSE instituted these programs because (as noted by the U.S. Administration for Children and Families' Fatherhood, Marriage and Family Innovation Fund), "emerging research suggests that child support policies and practices such as setting realistic child support orders, reducing child support debt ... may contribute to positive employment and child support outcomes." NCPs can enroll in these programs at OCSE's Customer Service Walk-In Center. OCSE's programs include:

- The **MDO (Modify DSS Order)** program lowers child support orders owed to DSS for NCPs living at or below the State Self-Support Reserve (\$14,620 for 2010).

- The **Arrears Cap** program reduces arrears owed to DSS. Arrears can be capped at \$500 for NCPs who were living at or below the Federal Poverty Level (\$10,830 for 2010) when they accrued the debt.
- The **Arrears Credit Program (ACP)** was introduced in 2010 for NCPs who accumulated arrears at a time when they did not live below the Federal Poverty Level. Participants can earn a credit toward arrears owed to DSS if they remain in good standing on their current support payments. The maximum credit participants can earn is \$15,000 over three years.

To date, OCSE has reduced the child support orders of 89 NCPs through the MDO program, from an average of \$328 per month to an average of \$47 per month. OCSE has reduced the arrears of 478 NCPs—by \$4.8 million total—through the Arrears Cap program. As research suggests, participating NCPs have increased their payments after having their orders and/or arrears modified. Forty percent of NCPs paid child support before participating in MDO or Arrears Cap, versus 61% who paid child support afterwards. Since its initiation this past year, 11 NCPs have signed up for ACP. OCSE hopes to expand all three programs and see significant growth in ACP as parents hear of its availability.

Mediation

By law, visitation and custody are not considered during child support hearings. However, these issues can cause resentment to grow between custodial and noncustodial parents and NCPs to feel disconnected from their children—with the end result that NCPs do not pay child support. OCSE informs parents about free and low-cost mediation services through its outreach materials and website. OCSE hopes that a mediation setting can help resolve some of these issues.

“Thank you for your informative and helpful presentation on child support. I must say I am better educated on child support functions and expectations of the noncustodial parents.

Shauna Wheatt

Career Coach, Green Career Center

[provides men and women with criminal records environmental literacy and comprehensive career development training]

Community Engagement



OCSE supports its core mission by informing the public about the child support program. The office works to dispel myths about child support and to highlight the connection between child support, child development and healthy parent-child relationships. In 2010, OCSE strengthened existing partnerships, formed new ones and undertook efforts to make child support information available to custodial and noncustodial parents.

“Man Up to Child Support” Campaign with Hot 97

Local radio station Hot 97 and OCSE created the “Man Up to Child Support” campaign to promote the benefits of the formal child support program and inform listeners about OCSE services such as order/arrears modifications, job placement and mediation. The collaboration included events, public service announcements and live on-air discussions. Additionally, Hot 97 posted child support-related information and links on its website and Facebook page.

New Informational Videos for Custodial and Noncustodial Parents

OCSE produced two new videos designed to inform parents about how NYC’s child support program works and the benefits it can provide. One video is tailored to the interests of custodial parents and the other to NCPs. The videos are available in English and Spanish, and community organizations can obtain copies for free. The videos are also available on YouTube.

Riker’s Island and Reentry Initiatives

NCPs involved with the criminal justice system face heightened challenges to paying child support because their support obligations are not automatically put on hold during incarceration. OCSE works with NYC’s Department of Correction, the New York State Division of Parole and other agencies involved with the justice system to help incarcerated and reentering NCPs address child support issues. This becomes even more critical in light of a change in New York State law which allows incarcerated NCPs to petition the Family Court to have their orders reduced.

Two years ago, OCSE began working with the Department of Correction to inform new inmates at Rikers Island about the child support program and offer on-site assistance for NCPs to request modifications of their child support orders or arrears. To date, 1,684 inmates have participated in a “child support orientation,” and 554 have requested individual consultation with OCSE staff to discuss the rules governing child support, review their cases, and determine if they qualify for the MDO or Arrears Cap program.

OCSE also presented to New York State Division of Parole case management staff on the child support issues specific to ex-offenders. OCSE has built on this partnership, making presentations to the Kings County District Attorney’s Office, United States Probation Office – Southern District New York and other agencies that provide re-entry support services.

Partnerships with Other NYC Human Service Agencies

Many New York City agencies serve client bases that overlap with OCSE's. OCSE seeks to form partnerships with these agencies to improve clients' experiences interacting with the City and help both OCSE and the other agencies function more efficiently. OCSE often works toward these goals by educating fellow agencies' staff and contractors on the child support program, as well as other topics relevant to the agencies' mutual client base. In 2010, OCSE worked with the **Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD)** to provide training and informational materials to staff of fatherhood programs it operates at 30 sites across the city. OCSE also educated providers who work with the **Administration for Children's Services**.

In some cases, OCSE reaches out directly to CPs or NCPs while they are at other programs' sites. This year, OCSE offered child support workshops, assistance for those requesting work order/arrears modifications and connections to mediation services to NCPs participating in DYCD's fatherhood programs. This summer, OCSE began outreach to inform residents of the **Department of Homeless Services'** Borden Avenue Veterans Residence in Queens about the child support program and opportunities for low income NCPs to modify their child support obligations. In 2011, OCSE hopes to expand the partnership to other DHS facilities.

No Kidding! Straight Talk from Teen Parents

In 2010, OCSE expanded its teen pregnancy prevention program, **No Kidding! Straight Talk From Teen Parents**. The program uses a peer education model in which young parents serve as instructors, telling high school students about the realities and responsibilities of teen parenthood in their own words. The program conveys the value of delaying pregnancy until teens are in a committed relationship and are both financially and emotionally stable. The peer educators also promote the use of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's School-Based Health Centers, which provide health care, including reproductive health care, on public school campuses.

Since it began in Spring 2009, No Kidding! has reached over 2,000 teens through high schools, DYCD's Summer Youth Employment Program and Department of Juvenile Justice (DJJ) detention centers. Pre- and post-program surveys indicate that No Kidding! improves students' knowledge of paternity and child support and shifts their attitudes in recognizing the challenges of teen parenting.

I learned that having a baby is hard work and it's a lot of responsibility and money problems. You have to be mature and have career and life goals.

No Kidding Participant

Our Partners

Non-Governmental Organizations

America Works	Jericho Project
BronxWorks	Legal Information for Families Today (LIFT)
Brooklyn AIDS Task Force	Midtown Community Court
Career & Educational Consultants, Inc.	Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem
Center for Court Innovation	Northern Manhattan Improvement Corporation
Center for Employment Opportunities	The Osborne Association
Community Mediation Center	Parent Help
The Doe Fund	Safe Horizon
F.E.G.S.	SCAN
Forestdale Inc.	Seedco
Fortune Society	St. Nicks Alliance
Goodwill Industries of Greater New York	STRIVE New York
Harlem Congregations for Community Improvement, Inc.	Union Settlement Association
Henry Street Settlement	Wildcat Service Corporation

Government Agencies

NYC Administration for Children's Services	NYC Department of Probation
NYC Department of Homeless Services	NYC Housing Authority
NYC Department of Correction	NYS Department of Correctional Services
NYC Department of Education	NYS Division of Parole
NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene	U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Prisons
NYC Department of Parks & Recreation	

Events



Greater New York Hospital Association Paternity Briefing

To encourage parents to establish paternity at the time of their children's birth, OCSE works with New York City hospitals and birthing centers to train staff on the paternity establishment process, provide informational materials, and maintain contact for issues that arise. In May, OCSE, the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene briefed hospital administrators, birth registrars and government staff on paternity establishment at an event hosted by the Greater New York Hospital Association.

Support Magistrate Conference

On May 26, OCSE hosted its annual conference for Family Court Support Magistrates. The conference provides an opportunity for attendees from OCSE, the New York City Family Court and the Sheriff's Office to exchange ideas, discuss best practices and identify follow-up issues—ultimately improving outcomes for families served by the child support program.

New York City Housing Authority Fatherhood Initiative Kickoff

On July 31, OCSE participated in the kickoff for NYCHA's Fatherhood Initiative at the Williamsburg Community Center in Brooklyn. OCSE staff discussed the benefits of formal child support and the services available to fathers through the Customer Service Walk-In Center.

Strengthening Families Conference: How Can Child Support Help?

On October 14, OCSE co-sponsored a conference with the City University of New York and Princeton University titled, "Strengthening Families: How Can Child Support Help?" The conference aimed to broaden understanding within the social service community about how child support strengthens families and reduces child poverty. Attendees came from federal, state and local government agencies, as well as universities and nonprofit and community groups. Keynote speakers included Federal OCSE Commissioner Vicki Turetsky and NYC Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs.

The conference overall was excellent, it was very informative and very relevant to the families that I work with on a day to day basis.

Attendee of Strengthening Families Conference

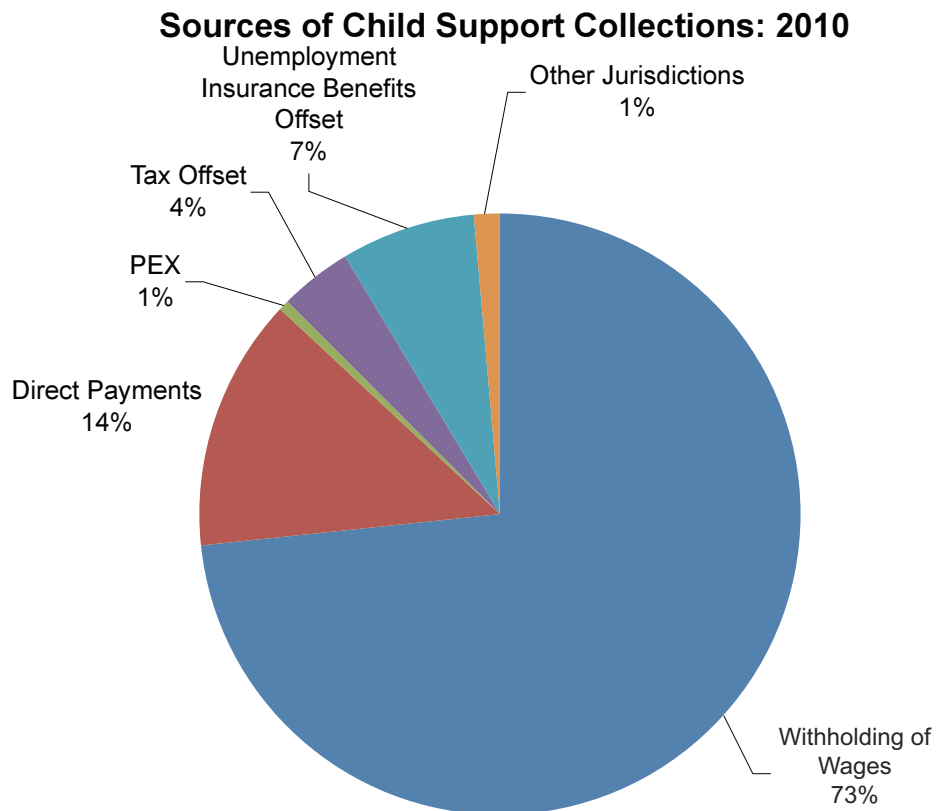
A photograph of a man and a young girl walking away from the camera on a paved sidewalk. The man, on the right, is wearing a blue and white striped short-sleeved shirt and dark trousers, holding a blue shopping bag in his left hand. The girl, on the left, is wearing a denim jacket, a red and white striped skirt, and white socks. They are holding hands. The background shows a suburban street with green lawns and trees.

Enforcement

Many NCPs pay or want to pay the child support they owe. But when parents deliberately avoid payments, OCSE's enforcement units step in to hold them accountable for financially supporting their children. Many enforcement actions occur automatically, based on nonpayment of a certain amount of child support. In other cases, OCSE investigates specific cases where the NCP appears to have the resources to pay their child support but has not been doing so.

Where Does the Money Come From?

Nearly three-quarters of the child support funds OCSE collects come from employer wage withholding, also called wage garnishment. OCSE works with employers to ensure that the appropriate amount of child support is collected from each participating NCP. Direct payments from NCPs comprise another 14 percent of collections.



Special Collections

OCSE's enforcement efforts resulted in a number of special collections in 2010, with all money going to custodial parents:

- \$51,622 resulting from a passport denial
- \$95,265 seized from a bank account
- \$177,966 total from three NCPs who had liens placed on their property, including over \$80,000 from one NCP on three separate cases
- \$65,720 seized from a personal injury lawsuit settlement and \$49,735 from a separate worker's

compensation settlement

- A total of \$77,811 on 47 delinquent child support accounts collected from NCPs arrested with assets through the New York City Police Department's Civil Enforcement Lien Project

Professional Licenses

In New York State, professional licensing agencies must ask applicants if they have child support obligations and forward this information to the relevant child support office. NCPs who owe child support arrears may have their licenses, permits or registrations denied until they pay off the debt.

OCSE has worked with the New York City Fire Department, Taxi and Limousine Commission and the City's Departments of Consumer Affairs, Education, Environmental Protection, and Health and Mental Hygiene to strengthen the program. In 2010, OCSE has expanded and improved the program by:

- Adding NYC's Business Integrity Commission, Department of Buildings and Police Department to its list of partners
- Initiating electronic information sharing between agencies, which will decrease processing time and improve accuracy, efficiency and customer service for license applicants
- Working with licensing agencies to grant six-month temporary licenses while applicants address their child support obligations



Serving Our Customers



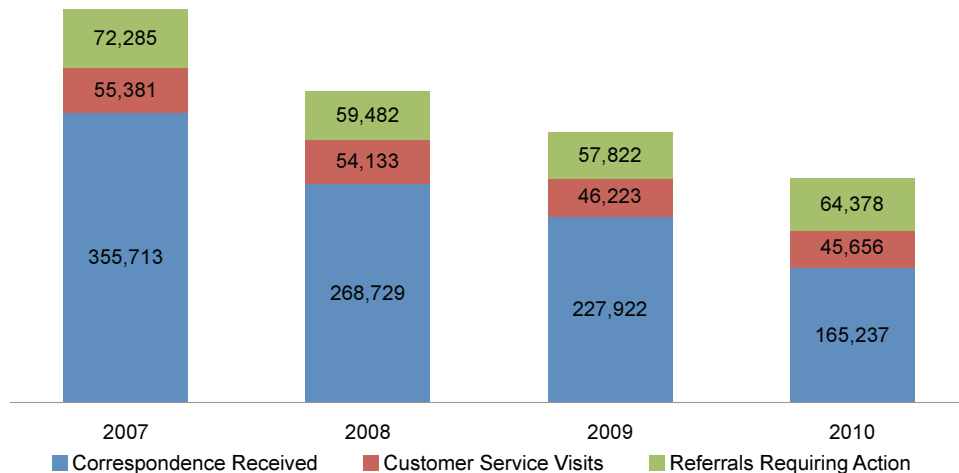
OCSE works to improve child support collections and our clients' experiences through staff training and customer service initiatives. The office also seeks to improve its efficiency and effectiveness by continuously examining its operations and identifying areas for improvement.

Customer Service

OCSE has seen a decrease in customer service correspondence over the past four years. This change likely reflects the success of the office's consumer education and outreach initiatives: customers can more easily access information about the child support program on their own or through partner organizations or City agencies they visit for other purposes. Improvements to the State's child support telephone help line and changes to the way the State and City process customer mail have also led to this change.

OCSE receives referrals from customers who contact the New York State Call Center. Additionally, some customers who come into the OCSE Walk-In-Center have their issue referred to another area of OCSE. Customers primarily contact OCSE for account inquiries. Most inquiries are handled effectively within 30 days.

Child Support Correspondence Received, Customer Service Center Visits and Referrals Requiring Action: 2010



Centralized Locate Unit

Ms. Furman was excellent – I believe God sent me directly to her today!

Custodial Parent who recently visited Customer Service

Miss Rivera is a very good employee. She is very calm and very helpful. She took time to explain everything I have to do

Noncustodial Parent who recently visited Customer Service

In February, OCSE established a centralized unit to locate NCPs along with an information technology system to support the unit's work. OCSE anticipates that focusing a core group of staff on this effort, automating part of the process and storing reports in a central database will improve its efficiency and effectiveness. Most importantly, OCSE expects this new centralized, more automated approach will result in an increase in the number of NCPs located and the number of families with child support orders.

Account Level Case Closure Initiative

In 2010, OCSE worked to close account level cases (cases with orders in place) that it had determined, according to federal guidelines, were highly unlikely to result in collections and were eligible for closure. The initiative allowed staff to more aggressively target cases more likely to result in collections. Mostly as a result of these efforts, OCSE's total number of account level cases decreased by 6.3 percent, from 298,913 at the end of December 2009 to 280,007 at the end of December 2010.

Improved Financial Data Management System

In June, OCSE automated the transmission of financial adjustment data to the state Child Support Management System (CSMS) by implementing the Batch Administration Transmission System (BATS). By reducing manual data entry, OCSE improved efficiency, reduced error and achieved cost savings. Since BATS' implementation, OCSE has transmitted 122,049 financial transactions directly to CSMS.

“Thank you for the manner in which you have assisted my District Office staff and me in responding to community problems... [OCSE's] efforts on behalf of my constituents throughout 2010 are greatly appreciated and in many cases have made a positive difference in their lives.

Steven H. Cymbrowitz
Member
New York State Assembly District 45”

Looking Forward



In 2011, OCSE will continue to strengthen NYC families and reduce child poverty by connecting more families to formal child support and providing supplemental services for parents. In particular, the office hopes to expand and strengthen its partnerships with government agencies and community organizations; find new ways to engage parents with the formal child support program; increase collections, order establishment and paternity establishment; and further improve efficiency and customer service.

Among the new initiatives to which OCSE looks forward in 2011 are:

Cash Assistance Agreement Pilot (CAAP)

In the second quarter of 2011, OCSE will launch the Cash Assistance Agreement Pilot, which will allow parents to establish paternity, child support and medical support without having to appear in court. Parents who decide to participate in CAAP will enter into agreements based on interviews with both parents at OCSE's Customer Service Walk-In Center.

By eliminating the need to appear in court, CAAP should improve program efficiency, increase the number of cases with an order, increase the number of support orders that reflect NCPs' earnings, help NCPs understand the child support program, and ultimately increase the number of NCPs supporting their children financially. OCSE will evaluate the results of the pilot and compare participants' outcomes with those of parents required to appear in the Family Court.

Case Financial Status Forms

In the first quarter of 2011, OCSE will implement an automated system to make it easier and faster for community-based organizations (CBOs) to obtain specific information on NCPs' child support cases (after obtaining a waiver from the NCP). Case Financial Status Forms (CFSFs) will provide a one-page snapshot of an NCP's monthly obligation, arrears owed to DSS and/or the custodial parent, as well as next steps the NCP should take to address enforcement actions, modify the order or apply for an arrears cap. OCSE maintains ongoing relationships with many organizations that serve NCPs with open child support cases. By automating what used to be a manual process, the forms will improve providers' ability to address NCPs' child support issues and concerns.

Problem Solving Court for STEP Participants

OCSE is working with the New York State Unified Court Management System's Office of Court Administration and the nonprofit Center for Court Innovation to pilot a Problem Solving Court in the Brooklyn Family Court. The pilot will explore whether intensive monitoring can reduce noncompliance with the Support Through Employment Program (STEP), which refers low income un- and underemployed NCPs to job placement vendors. Currently, NCPs are not required to return or report to the court for three months after they receive STEP referrals. The Problem Solving Court will refer participants to a resource coordinator who will establish a service plan including financial counseling, parent education and individualized services, and monitor NCPs until they have made child support payments for six months. NCPs who do not comply with the plan will have to appear at weekly hearings.

Who's Part of Our Team?



OCSE and Department of Social Services Staff

OCSE **Borough Office and Family Court Support Services** staff are New Yorkers' first point of contact with the child support program. When cash assistance clients are referred to OCSE, Borough Office staff open or update their cases and coordinate the process of establishing child support orders on their behalf. Caseworkers located in the Family Court assist families who do not receive cash assistance in opening child support cases and filing petitions.

OCSE operates borough offices in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens, serving Staten Island clients from the Manhattan office. Family Court Support Services staff works out of the family court in each borough.

The **Program Integrity** unit reviews and updates cases to ensure the accuracy of OCSE's automated case processing systems. Program Integrity also trains staff and writes policies and procedures.

Fiscal Operations establishes, monitors, and updates child support accounts to reflect court orders, payments, and public assistance status.

Since 1997, OCSE has contracted with **YMS Management Associates, Inc.** to provide account maintenance services for NYC child support accounts. YMS helps OCSE fulfill its fiduciary responsibilities to families by building financial accounts for child support cases that receive court orders in the Family Court.

The **Enforcement, Investigation and Interstate** units are engaged when NCPs do not pay the child support they owe. Administrative Enforcement oversees enforcement tools—such as suspending driver's licenses—that initiate automatically when NCPs do not make payments. They also ensure that NCPs have due process to challenge enforcement actions. Special Investigations identifies the most egregious cases of nonpayment for local or federal prosecution. Finally, Interstate works with parents and other child support agencies to coordinate enforcement of cases that span New York City and another county, state or country.

OCSE's main link to the community, the Division of **Parent & Community Engagement** provides customer service, develops community partnerships and identifies opportunities for outreach. Parent & Community Engagement operates OCSE's Customer Service Walk-In Center in Manhattan and responds to client mail. It also works with community organizations that serve child support clients, providing training and information about the child support program, and reviews cases when clients have questions or problems. Parent & Community Engagement also connects unemployed and underemployed NCPs to employment services and implements OCSE's teen pregnancy prevention program, No Kidding! Straight Talk from Teen Parents.

Management Support & Administrative Services directs OCSE's management planning and control functions, personnel services, office services, facilities, contracts and IT systems.

DSS' **Office of Legal Affairs** litigates Family Court cases to establish and enforce child support orders on be-

half of cash assistance recipients.

OCSE coordinates closely with DSS' **Family Independence Administration** (FIA), which administers New York City's temporary cash assistance, food stamp and welfare-to-work programs. FIA and OCSE work together to ensure cash assistance applicants apply for and receive child support services, as required by law. In addition, OCSE employment programs utilize FIA's job training and placement vendors to assist NCPs in obtaining employment.

Family Court

OCSE works closely with the Family Court. Part of the New York State Unified Court System, the Family Court establishes and modifies child support and medical support orders. It can also enforce the outcomes of violation hearings through judicial means.

Sheriff's Department

The Sheriff's Office serves Family Court summonses and subpoenas for child support cases and executes arrest warrants that result from child support cases.

New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance

The Division of Child Support Enforcement of the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA) supervises local administration of the child support program throughout New York State. The Division of Child Support Enforcement administers program funding; monitors performance; issues regulations, policies and procedures; offers technical assistance and provides centralized services including the statewide Child Support Management System, child support call center and child support processing center.

Corporation Counsel

The New York City Corporation Counsel's Interstate Child Support Unit helps NYC parents file petitions to establish paternity and support, or enforce or modify existing support orders, in courts in other states. It also represents out-of-state residents and child support agencies that bring paternity and support cases in NYC.

Community Based Organizations (CBOs)

CBOs play a key role in NYC's child support program. By partnering with CBOs that serve families, OCSE communicates with clients outside a government office or family court setting. OCSE provides community partners with up-to-date information about child support programs and services, and works with them to review clients' child support cases as needed. Nonprofits also provide job training and placement services for OCSE's employment programs. OCSE works with all interested nonprofit organizations, regardless of size.



Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

**Human Resources
Administration**
Department of
Social Services

Robert Doar
Commissioner