



News Release

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Arizona Child Support Division One of Six Chosen for Grant to Improve Parental Participation

Voluntary compliance through increasing trust

PHOENIX – The Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) was awarded a grant of more than \$780,000 to design and implement projects that attempt to increase the perception of fairness in child support proceedings.

The Procedural Justice Informed Alternatives to Contempt (PJAC) grant—with a \$781,214 federal match—comes from the Office of Child Support Enforcement at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF). Arizona is one of six child support agencies in the country to receive this five-year demonstration project grant. Maricopa County has been designated as the geographical area for the project.

"This is a huge win for our Child Support Services colleagues," said Director Tim Jeffries. "Our mission is to provide support, information and services to all parents to provide for their children. This grant will allow the Division to continue their current efforts of working with parents for the good of Arizona children."

The project begins this month and provides opportunities to create a holistic approach to implementing behavioral change and self-sufficiency. DCSS will create and test new procedures such as creative marketing techniques (text messaging, email) with the goal of increasing parental participation, collections and creating financial stability for families that rely on child support for their basic needs. By promoting cooperative relationships between mothers, fathers and DES, the Division can focus on breaking down support collection barriers such as domestic violence, unemployment and substance abuse.

"The members of the Division of Child Support Services are encouraged with the award of this grant to continue working towards providing the best for Arizona parents and children," said DCSS Assistant Director Gerald Richard. "We are striving to be the best in the nation, and with this grant, we believe we will come closer to achieving that goal."

Staff will closely monitor randomly-selected cases and actively engage parents in the child support process by providing enhanced services through community partnerships and referrals to other state agencies. The goal is to avoid contempt proceedings that may result in incarceration, court costs and reliance on public benefits.

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