The Right Track Project

**Customer-Centered Services
and Arrearage Management:
An Experimental Approach to Support
Payment Consistency and Arrearage
Reduction for Low-Income Noncustodial Parents**

Volumes I and II:

Evaluation and Final Report

Project Manager:

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Division of Child Support Enforcement
Virginia Department of Social Services
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A critically important component of the Right Track Project was establishing a focus group early on to address start-up questions and crucial elements regarding the basic operation of the project. Project staff and participants involved in this activity included: Todd Areson, initial Project Manager; Don Myers, Independent Evaluator; Phyllis Myers, Project Administrator; Terri Nickel and Sheila Bradley, Facilitators; Jane Venohr and Brian Laatsch, Payment Predictor Model Developers; Paula Merritt, Norfolk District Office; Carmen Gonzalez, Portsmouth District Office; Eddie Nelson, Richmond District Office; Mary Blevins, Abingdon District Office; Lisha Whitlock, Danville District Office; and Lil Cooper, Manassas District Office.

As Assistant Director, DCSE, Joseph Crane was supportive of the project, which operated under his management. And Cynthia Holdren, a former Management Services Unit Manager reporting to Mr. Crane, was also instrumental in serving a project manager when start-up activities were getting underway. She handled the task of securing contractual agreements with the three main project contractors, as well as entering into agreements with professional service providers outside of DCSE, to who Phase I project participants were referred.

Finally, Dr. Todd Areson, Department of Social Services, was indispensable as the initial Project Manager, helping write the proposal to obtain the grant; guiding initial project administration, including preparing the Request for Assistance (RFA) used to find candidates for, interview, and hire a Model Developer; and ensuring that the final report was comprehensive in its treatment of each project goal and objective.

Bob Owen,
Project Manager

NOTES ON ORGANIZATION of the RIGHT TRACK PROJECT
EVALUATION and FINAL REPORT

The Evaluation and Final Report is organized as two separate reports, each with its own Table of Contents and Appendices. Following this page, the 99-page Volume I was compiled and authored by the project evaluator, Dr. Donald W. Myers of Human Services Research Center, and addresses all phases of the project dealing with implementation of the comprehensive case management strategies including early intervention strategies of intensive case monitoring with frequent contact attempts to Treatment Group noncustodial parents (NCPs), and providing outside professional services to NCPs who consented to participate in this phase of the project.

Volume II immediately follows Volume 1, and was prepared by Dr. Jane C. Vehnor, economist, formerly with Policy Studies, Inc. and now employed with Center for Policy Research, and edited by Dr. David A. Price of Policy Studies, Inc. This is a comprehensive report of development and testing of a payment predictor tool for newly obligated NCPs, using a neural network model. This effort built on furthered research begun by Washington State using a neural network payment predictor model for NCPs who were not newly obligated and had already accumulated a fair amount of child support arrearages.

Together, these reports comprehensively address the objectives outlined in our proposal with the following exceptions and notes:

- Our proposal to study the effects of compromising arrears or entering into arrears settlements with NCPs as a tool to both discharge and/or prevent further accumulation of arrears was found to conflict with case law in Virginia, and therefore our legal counsel would not approve its implementation.
- Several of the statistical analyses in Volume I resulted in determinations that are counterintuitive to the results of established findings in previous studies (e.g., those NCPs who spend less time with their children pay more support). One factor that may explain some of these findings is the majority of Treatment Group NCPs came into the DCSE office as putative fathers, were obligated, and immediately interviewed by Case Managers, and asked questions about child support, custody and visitation when they had had no legal responsibility to pay, or any legal standing with respect to custody/visitation issues. It is important to consider that these findings were based on self reports, not verified information.
- There were three changes in project managers during the project period. Each of the three was responsible for critically important parts of the project. Dr. Todd Areson applied for, and handled most of the planning for project implementation, which was to begin 10/1/03. Cindy Holdren, Manager of the DCSE Management Services Team, took over in mid 2004 to early 2005, handling effectuation of many of the contractual agreements, leaving me to manage and complete the project for nearly the last three years. It has been both challenging and rewarding and I am more than satisfied that the ever-changing Project Team, including Drs. Vehnor and Myers, Terri Nickel, the two previous managers and myself, accomplished all that was practicable given the circumstances.

Bob Owen,
Project Manager

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Volume I:

**Phases I and II
Evaluation and Final Report**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Customer-Centered Services project was a three-year federal- and state-financed project, initiated by the Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE), Commonwealth of Virginia, to investigate the efficacy of two interventions (i.e., Right Track, Phase I and Phase II) on child support payments made by NCPs who had new cases.[1]

Phase I was an experimental study conducted from January 1, 2005 to August 31, 2006 in three DCSE district offices. The purpose of the study was to provide comprehensive case management, including intensive case monitoring and providing paid services to noncustodial parents (NCPs) with new child support orders to measure any effects of these early intervention strategies on NCPs' child support payments. The services offered NCPs included: budgeting assistance, mediation assistance, employment assistance, and parenting/mentoring assistance. To receive a service, the NCP had to consent to receive the selected service(s).

The interventions were administered by Case Managers (CMs) who randomly assigned NCPs to either a *Treatment Group*, consisting of 1,298 NCPs (657 of which were interviewed, 463 consented to receive services and 248 received services resulting in charges from professional service providers), or a *Control Group*, consisting of 142 NCPs who received no services. Case Managers provided comprehensive case management for NCPs in the Treatment Group, including interviewing them to assess their need for services; referring them to service providers, as appropriate; and monitoring and reviewing service delivery, to ensure its utility to the NCPs accepting services; tracking NCPs' monthly payments and following up with contact attempts to encourage payment. (See Appendix 2 for a comprehensive position description for Phase I Case Managers.)

Highlights: Findings and Recommendations for Phase I

There was a difference in the rate of payment of nearly 6 percent between those NCPs for whom CMs were able to conduct interviews and provide services or intensive case monitoring, and Control Group NCPs who had no CM contact. This is both notable and important in the IV-D child support enforcement arena. However, in research terms, there was no <u>statistically</u> significant[2] difference in the percent of the support amount (hereafter meaning, "the current monthly support obligation") paid among NCPs in the Treatment Group who were interviewed, NCPs in the Treatment Group who consented to receive services and NCPs in the Control Group (61 percent, 56.8 percent and 55.3 percent of the support amount, respectively). Considering federal financial incentive payments, beginning an early intervention program that would increase collections by 6 percent for newly obligated NCPs would have quite an impact over time in increasing program funding by increased collection performance.

NCPs in the Treatment Group who did not consent to receive services paid 71 percent of the support amount, which percentage was significantly higher than that for NCPs in the Control Group. This suggests that perhaps these NCPs had income or resources that were not disclosed during interviews with either DCSE staff or CMs. In view of their payments, this group of NCPs apparently responded well to intensive case monitoring and frequent letters or phone calls from CMs. They are also likely to have income and/or resources that could be attached should enforcement prove necessary.

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[1] Only MAOF, TANF and NTANF new cases were in Phase I. Phase II included MAOF, TANF, NTANF, SLFC, FC, ARRP, and ARRN new cases.
[2] Hereafter, the word "significant" means "statistically significant."

Most NCPs did not cooperate with either the CMs or the service providers. The NCPs in the Treatment Group were neither required to consent to services nor to cooperate with service providers. About one-half of the 463 NCPs in the Treatment Group who consented to receive services either left the Phase I program upon personal request or were removed for lack of cooperation; they paid about 50 percent of the support amount. Judicial involvement in providing services to NCPs is   recommended to encourage cooperation with CMs and/or service providers when support orders are established in court and/or when cases are referred to the courts for failure to pay support. Judicial intervention is especially helpful in obtaining cooperation from NCPs who need CM assistance.

Another approximately 25 percent of the 463 NCPs in the Treatment Group who consented to receive services were either cooperative or fully cooperative and paid 74.9 percent and 85.7 percent, respectively, of the support amount. Both percentages were significantly different from the amounts paid by NCPs in the Control Group. This group of NCPs responded very positively to early intervention efforts, including intensive case monitoring, frequent contacts, and offering services available in the NCP's community (budgeting, parenting or mentoring sessions were particularly useful).

The percent of the support amount paid differed significantly among NCPs who consented to receive different services/combinations of services. The best payment records were found among the 31 NCPs who consented to budgeting assistance (they paid 82.8 percent of the support amount), and the 11 NCPs who consented to parenting assistance (they paid 85 percent of the support amount). Assisting NCPs enroll in these classes which are available in the community may result in higher payment of the support order. (And in Phase II, described in the following section, we point out that no-cost services appear to be just as effective as paid services offered in Phase I.

NCPs who are employed full-time paid 77.1 percent of the support amount, compared to 36 percent for unemployed NCPs and 41.6 percent for those NCPs who were temporary/occasionally employed. Assisting unemployed NCPs, NCPs who are employed part-time, and underemployed NCPs in obtaining full-time jobs that are commensurate with their skill sets ensures higher, consistent support payments.

Notable findings and conclusions about these "new case" NCPs

- Gender   Ninety percent of the NCPs in both the Treatment and Control Groups were male and paid 18.7 percent more of their support amount than female NCPs.
- Ability to Pay   Fifty-seven percent of the NCPs were assessed by the CMs as "able to pay." NCPs assessed as "able to pay" paid 82.6 percent and 79.8 percent of the support amount *regardless* of whether they were considered "unwilling to pay" or "willing to pay," respectively.
- Cars and Licenses   NCPs who were either leasing or buying a car paid 96.6 percent of the support amount, a much larger percentage than for NCPs who used other means of transportation.
- Approximately one-half of the NCPs had a valid driver's license and, compared to the NCPs without a license, they paid a much greater percent of the support amount (79 percent and 44 percent, respectively).
- Employment   NCPs who were employed "full-time" paid 77.1 percent of the support amount compared to NCPs who were either "not employed" or "temporary/ occasional" employed, who paid 36 percent and 41.6 percent, respectively.

- Felony Conviction   About one-third of the NCPs had been convicted of a felony. They paid a much lower percentage of the support amount compared to those without a conviction (43.3 percent and 69.5 percent, respectively).
- Personal Service   Two-thirds of the NCPs received "Personal Service of Process" and paid a greater percent of the support amount (65 percent) compared to NCPs who did not receive such service (53.2 percent).
- Instate/Interstate Cases   Eight percent of the new cases were Interstate, and these NCPs paid a larger percent of their support amount than those with Instate cases (72.8 percent and 59 percent, respectively).
- Marital Status   About 87 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups were never married to the other parent. They paid a smaller percent of the support amount compared to those who were married (58.1 percent and 74.7 percent, respectively). Most of the children (94.8 percent) were born out-of-wedlock, and the NCPs in these cases paid a smaller percent of the support amount compared to the NCPs of children who were born in-wedlock (57.6 percent and 68 percent, respectively).
- Custody   When either grandparents or other relatives have physical custody of the child, the percent of support amount paid by the NCPs (45 percent and 39 percent, respectively) is significantly lower than when the NCP or the custodial parent has custody or they share custody (61.6 percent, 63 percent, and 73.6 percent, respectively).

Phase II was a field experiment, similar to Phase I, to provide comprehensive case management, including intensive case monitoring, and to test the efficacy of providing five free rather than paid services to NCPs with a new case. The objective was to prepare and support them to make more consistent child support payments. The services offered included: financial counseling, parenting assistance, mentoring, employment assistance, and job training. As with Phase I, the NCP was required to consent to the selected service(s) in order to receive it. The role of the Case Manager (CM) was to interview NCPs with new cases; assess issues effecting likely payment performance, based upon their risk assessment scores from the Payment Predictor model; make referrals to service providers, as appropriate; monitor progress of services provided; and track payments and follow up contacts with NCPs to encourage better payment performance or thank them for regular payments as the situation warranted. (See Appendix 8 for a comprehensive position description for Phase II Case Managers.)

CMs began accepting NCPs into Phase II in January 2007 and accepted the last NCPs in June 2007[3], although the services and frequent contact attempts continued for the affected NCPs for 11 months, through November 2007. The NCPs were randomly assigned to either a *Treatment Group* (377 NCPs) or a *Control Group* (434 NCPs).

Highlights: Findings and Recommendations, Phase II

There was nearly an 8 percent difference in the support amount paid by Treatment Group NCPs (66.9 percent) over Control Group NCPs (59.2 percent), which while not statistically significant from a research point of view, is important as a strategy to increase the federal incentive funding based on the amount of support paid. And over time, the implementation of a combination of early intervention strategies for newly obligated NCPs similar to those used in Phase II of this project would have an increasingly positive impact on program funding.

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[3] NCP payments for Phase II were recorded from January through November 2007. Eleven months of payments, then, was the maximum number recorded for NCPs entering Phase II in January 2007.

During interviews with NCPs in the Treatment Group, the CMs assessed the need for the five types of unpaid services. Services were provided by either an unpaid outside professional service provider (OP) or by a CM. Overall, the amount of support paid by NCPs who received unpaid services from OPs was significantly higher than that by NCPs who were provided services by CMs. Further study such as selective experiments using unpaid service providers, particularly offering budgeting and financial services in an early intervention program similar to the one in Phase II would provide more data as to the efficacy of unpaid services in increasing support payments.

For those NCPs who received services, the amount of support paid differed significantly, depending upon the type of service received. NCPs who received financial counseling paid 79.1 percent of the support amount. This was a considerably better payment result than for NCPs receiving other services. Offering free budgeting/financial counseling to newly obligated NCPs interested in this service, is an effective strategy to increase the amount of support paid by this group.

NCPs who were contacted by telephone paid 69.8 percent of the support amount; those contacted by letter paid 66.9 percent of the support amount. The support amount paid by NCPs who had face-to-face interviews with CMs was only 53.8 percent. Overall, the NCPs in the Treatment Group paid 66.9 percent of the support amount. The NCPs in the Control Group who were not contacted paid 59.2 percent of the support amount but there is enough difference to warrant further study of the effectiveness of communicating with NCPs to increase payments. It is recommended that intensive case monitoring and frequent contacts with NCPs be implemented, where telephone calls and letters to newly obligated NCPs have proven to be a particularly effective strategy.

Introduction

This project was a federal- and state-financed study, initiated by the Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE), Commonwealth of Virginia, to investigate the efficacy of two interventions on child support payments made by NCPs who had new cases. The two interventions were field experiments of randomly-selected NCPs in two treatment groups interviewed by specially selected and trained Case Managers (CMs).[4] During the interviews, one group of NCPs was offered services from professional service providers who were paid with funds from the study (Phase I); the other treatment group of NCPs was offered services from either unpaid service providers or CMs (Phase II). Control groups of randomly selected NCPs were used in both Phase I and Phase II studies. The project began in April 2004 with a one-day focus group, held with representatives from each participating child support district office and members of the project team, by outlining the purpose of the project and discussing the barriers to and services and other ideas for developing a more customer service-oriented approach to NCPs. See Appendix 1 for notes from the focus group.

Phase I

Phase I was a field experimental study conducted in three DCSE' district offices (Norfolk, Portsmouth and Richmond). The purpose of the study was to measure any effects of paid services on NCPs' child support payments. The study, which was conducted from January 1, 2005 to August 31, 2006, included NCPs who had new child support orders in the three district offices. Data were

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[4]The CM' training was conducted by the Center for the Support of Families.

collected by specially selected and trained CMs[5] using a carefully crafted intake form, *Payment Predictor & Right Track Intake Form* (Intake Form).[6] Appendix 3 is a copy of the Intake Form.

The CMs randomly assigned NCPs who had new cases[7] to either a *Treatment Group* or a *Control Group*.[8] The CMs diligently attempted to interview all these NCPs. Some NCPs either could not be contacted, or they refused requests for interviews. The CMs made repeated efforts to conduct interviews in these situations and were successful with some NCPs.

The Treatment Group consisted of 1,298 NCPs, approximately one-half (657) of which were interviewed. See Table 1. The Control Group consisted of 142 NCPs.[9] Prior to completing the services portion of the Intake Form, interviews were terminated with NCPs in the Control Group, since they were not being offered services. Interviews with NCPs in the Treatment Group were continued resulting in offers of four types of services, as needed. A number of these NCPs refused the offers of assistance. The CMs continued offering services to many of these NCPs, particularly when their periodic reviews found they were not making regular support payments. Some of these efforts were successful but, in the end, as shown in Table 1, 194 or about 30 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment Group, refused to accept any services. This resulted in 463 NCPs in the Treatment Group who consented to receive services.[10] All NCPs in the Treatment Group received monthly statements of their child support balances and periodic telephone calls urging them to make payments, whether or not they were receiving services.[11]

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[5] See Appendix 2 for a copy of the CM's job description.

[6] The Intake Form was developed with the assistance of personnel involved in the project. Demographic, case-related and personal relationship information were collected on the Intake Form. These were two of the main purposes of the form:
  1. Measure any moderating effects the variables on the form may have had on child support payments made by NCPs in the treatment group who received paid services from professional service providers; and,
  2. Use the data from the form to develop the Payment Predictor.

[7] Only MAOF, TANF and NTANF cases. SLFC, FC, ARRP, and ARRN cases were not included in the Phase I study.
[8] Based upon the last digit of the Social Security Number.
[9] Originally, there were 150 NCPs in the Control Group but 8 requested services, which were granted, so they were eliminated from the Control Group. The random assignment of NCPs was deliberately skewed due to DCSE's desire that the preponderance of NCPs receive services, hence the disproportionate number in the Treatment Group.
[10] See Appendix 4 for the Consent Form.
[11] See Appendix 5 for a copy of the letter and monthly statement.

Table 1

Percent of Support Order[1] Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Group	Number of NCPs	% of Order Amount Paid
Control	142	55.3%[2,3]
Treatment		
Interviewed	657	61.0%[2]
Consented to receive services	463	56.8%[4]
Did not consent	194	71.0%[5]
Not interviewed	641	49.6%
All Treatment	1298	55.4%[3]

[1]The term "Support Order" as used in this report means "the current monthly support obligation."
[2]No significant difference in the % of the Order Amount Paid by the NCPs in the Control Group and those NCPs that were interviewed in the Treatment Group (p = .195 in a two-sample T-test).
[3]Virtually, the same (p = 0.989).
[4]No significant difference in the % of the Order Amount Paid by the NCPs in the Control Group and those in Treatment Group who consented to receive services.
[5]Significant difference in the NCPs in the Treatment Group who consented to receive services and those who did not consent (p = .000).

Types of Services

The four types of assistance offered to NCPs in the Treatment Group were Budgeting, Mediation, Employment, and Parenting.

Budgeting Assistance

Some NCPs have histories of financial irresponsibility and an unknown, but presumably large, number believe a support obligation can be ignored like other obligations.[12] These NCPs need help in budgeting and understanding the seriousness of failing to pay the support obligations. The Commonwealth of Virginia charges NCPs interest on unpaid arrearages. The amount of an NCP's arrearages can increase significantly when interest charges are added to unpaid support. To help address this problem, budgeting assistance was offered with the expectation that NCPs who accepted budgeting assistance would be more diligent in making timely payments. To reinforce the budgeting concept, NCPs were sent monthly statements showing payments made, arrearages, and interest accumulation on the unpaid support.[13] The objective of the Budgeting assistance was to assist NCPs with the development of a budget and a plan to accomplish it during a single session.[14]

Mediation Assistance

Mistrust between the father and mother (Custodial Parent or CP) may cause arrearages because the NCP does not believe the CP is using the funds for the child's benefit. Also, NCPs may be angry

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[12]Pearson, Jessica, Lanae Davis, and Nancy Thoennes, *Dropping Debt: An Evaluation of Colorado's Debt and Retroactive Child Support Initiative*, April 30, 2001, p. i. This study found that NCPs made payments on personal debts and child support in a consistent manner. NCPs who had the poorest credit histories were the most delinquent in the support payments.
[13] Roberts, Paula, *Pursuing Justice: A Strategic Approach to Child Support Arrears in California*, Center for Law and Social Policy, May 2002, p. 2.
[14] See Appendix 7 for the objectives and required products of services provided by professional service providers.

with the CP and/or complain about not getting to see the child. In one research study, 22.2 percent of the NCPs in the experimental group and 32.3 percent of those in a control group complained about not getting to see their children. In the same study, 11.1 percent of those in the experimental group and 21.9 percent of the NCPs in the control group expressed "anger toward the mother of the child."[15] Children are adversely impacted when these hard feelings cause NCPs to miss making required support payments and/or direct these feelings toward their children.   The objective of providing Mediation Assistance was to assist NCPs in establishing a cooperative relationship with the mother/father of his/her child.[16]

Employment Assistance

Low-income NCPs who have employment records characterized by many changes in employers, working in minimum wage jobs or being periodically unemployed have the most difficulty paying current support and avoiding arrearages. For example, in 2000, approximately 38 percent of the NCPs in a large study of the DCSE caseload were unemployed, representing 43.6 percent of the NCPs who owed arrearages.[17]   The objective of providing employment assistance was to assist NCPs in securing employment through such activities as assessing training needs, receiving job readiness training (including either referrals to or making provisions for GED completion, as appropriate) and other employment assistance resulting in a job placement.

Parenting/Mentoring Assistance

Some researchers in child support enforcement have advocated providing mentors to low-income NCPs.[18] Parenting/mentoring assistance may help NCPs understand such important dimensions in life as parenting responsibilities, including providing financially for their children. The objective of this assistance was to provide NCPs with parenting skills through instruction and mentoring.

Percent of Support Amount Paid

Table 1 shows the percent of the support amount (i.e., the monthly obligation) paid by NCPs in the various groups. Comparing the NCPs in the Control Group with those in the interviewed Treatment Group resulted in an estimated treatment effect of 5.7 percent (61.0 percent – 55.3 percent) that is not significant. The NCPs in the Treatment Group, that is, those interviewed plus those not interviewed (n = 1298), paid 55.4 percent of the support amount. This is almost identical to the 55.3 percent of support amount paid by the NCPs in the Control Group (p = 0.989).[19]

Other than this overall comparison, data for the non-interviewed NCPs in the Treatment Group were excluded from the study because only basic case information could be obtained.[20] For example, information was not available for such variables as the Years at Current Address, Amount of Monthly Rent, Number of Days Incarcerated for Child Support Reasons, Current Salary/Wage,

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[15] Roberts, o*p. cit.*
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] Based on the results of a random sample of 6,653 cases in which NCPs owed arrears only or arrears plus current support. See *Child Support Arrearages*, Commonwealth of Virginia, Division of Child Support Enforcement, August 2004.
[18] Legler, Paul, *Low-Income Fathers and Child Support: Starting Off on the Right Track*, Policy Studies, Inc., p. 37.
[19] This means there is a 98.9 percent chance the difference in the payments of the support obligation was due to chance and not due to the intervention (providing services). The lower the p-value, the greater the likelihood any difference is due to an intervention.
[20] Information for eight variables was obtained from APECS, DCSE's case information system.

Number of Hours Worked, Hours Spent Per Month with the Child/Children in the Current Case and Number of Miles NCP Lives from the Child/Children in the Case.

Factors Moderating Effect of Overall Results

Potentially, there were a number of factors that could create variation among individual NCPs paying their monthly support amount. Some of these variables are quantitative, such as the amount of an NCP's income, and others are categorical, such as the type of case the NCP has. The possible moderating effect of these variables was given considerable deference in both planning and designing the experimental study. See Appendix 6 for a brief discussion of these efforts.

<u>**Quantitative Variables**</u>

The Intake Form contains both quantitative and categorical variables which were assumed to be associated with NCPs paying their child support. These were the 16 quantitative factors for which data were recorded as they existed at the time the form was completed:

1. Years NCP Lived at Current Address
2. Amount of NCP's Monthly Rent/Mortgage
3. Number of NCP's Children (including those not included in this study)
4. Number of NCP's Children in the New Case Included in this Study
5. Monthly Support Order Amount NCP Owed in the Case Included in this Study
6. Total Monthly Support Amount NCP Owed in All Current Cases
7. Arrears Owed in the NCP's Case Included in this Study
8. Arrears Owed in the NCP's Case Included in this Study that are Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
9. Total Arrears NCP Owed for all Cases
10. Number of NCP's Support Orders
11. Number of Days NCP was Incarcerated for Child Support Reasons
12. NCP's Monthly Gross Income from All Sources
13. NCP's Hourly Wages
14. NCP's Weekly Hours Worked
15. Number of Hours NCP Spends Per Month with Child in the Case in this Study (if more than one child, the question was to be answered on that basis)
16. Number of Miles NCP Lived from Child in the Case in this Study (if more than one child, the question was to be considered on that basis).

<u>**Effect of Quantitative Variables**</u>

The percent of the support amount paid was significantly associated ($p = 0.000$ for each) with only four of the quantitative variables.[21] Accounting for these four variables on the treatment effect, that is, the effect services received by NCPs in the Treatment Group had on the percent of the support amount they paid, decreases the 5.7 percent difference to 0.42 percent, which is not a significant difference ($p = .934$). These are the four variables:

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[21] Three out of four of these factors would cause the percent of the support amount paid to be greater for the Treatment Group than for the Control Group, even if there were no treatment effect.

Amount of NCP's Monthly Rent/Mortgage. The percent of support amount paid is positively associated with this variable. The greater the monthly rent, the higher the percent of the support amount paid, other factors being equal. The mean monthly rent/mortgage amounts were $276.80 (Control Group) and $281.60 (Treatment Group).

Number of NCP's Children in the New Case Included in this Study. The percent of support amount paid is negatively associated with this variable. The larger the number of children in the case, the smaller the percent of support amount paid. The mean number of children was 1.13 (Control Group) and 1.21 (Treatment Group).

Monthly Support Order Amount NCP Owed in the Case Included in this Study. The percent of support amount paid is positively associated with this variable. The greater the monthly support amount owed for the case in the study, the higher the percent of the support amount paid. The mean monthly support amounts were $197.20 (Control Group) and $239.20 (Treatment Group).

Number of NCP's Support Orders. This variable was negatively associated with the percent of the support amount paid. The larger the number of support orders for all cases, the smaller the percent of the support amount paid. The mean number of support orders was 1.65 (Control Group) and 1.57 (Treatment Group).

Categorical Variables

During the research phase of preparing the Intake Form, as discussed above, research team members suggested a number of categorical variables with a possible association with the propensity of NCPs to pay the support amount. After much discussion among the team members, these are the variables that were included in the Intake Form:

1. Current Living Situation (such as renter or homeowner)
2. Type of Case
3. Type of Support Order
4. Received Personal Service of the Administrative Support Order
5. Instate/Interstate Case
6. NCP' Gender
7. Race
8. Is NCP a Custodial Parent?
9. Ever Convicted of a Felony?
10. Primary Means of Transportation
11. Possess a Valid Driver's License
12. Current Employment Status
13. Possess Professional License
14. How Often Child is Seen
15. Satisfaction with Time Spent with Child
16. Relationship with Child
17. Importance of Child Relationship to Making Support Payments
18. Provide Other Financial Support to Child
19. Present When Child Was Born
20. Ever Married to Child's Other Parent?
21. Child Born Out-of-Wedlock
22. How Long Lived with Child's Other Parent?
23. If Lived Together, How Long Since Separated?

24. Importance of Good Relationship with Child to Making Support Payments
25. Effect of Relationship with Child's Other Parent to Making Support Payments
26. Confidence that Support Payments are Used for the Child
27. Effect of Where Child Lives to Making Support Payments
28. Effect of Who Has Custody of Child to Making Support Payments
29. Effect of Satisfaction with Custody Arrangements on Making Support Payments
30. Effect of Self Assessment of Responsibility to Pay Support on Making Support Payments
31. Understanding of the Laws and Procedures that Determine the Support Amount
32. Fairness of Procedures to Determine the Support Obligation
33. Appropriateness of the Support Obligation Amount
34. Regularity of Parent's Support Payments if NCP was a Recipient of Child Support When a Child
35. Grew-up with Parent in Home When NCP was a Child
36. Intake Interview Completed at District Office
37. Intake Interview Completed in Court
38. Consent for Services
39. CM's Assessment of NCP's Need for Services.

The last two variables were not used in comparisons of the percent of support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups since they only applied to those in the Treatment Group.

Effect of Categorical Variables

The percent of the support amount (i.e., current monthly obligation) paid was significantly associated with only 2 of the first 37 categorical variables: Type of Case (# 2, above) and Type of Support Order (# 3, above). The results are shown in the following tables.[22]

Table 2
Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in Treatment and Control Groups: Type of Case

Type of Case	Mean % of Support Amount Paid[1]			Difference Treatment – Control[2]
	Combined	Treatment	Control	
MAOF	54.7%	58.2%	54.1%	4.1% (p = .716)
TANF	53.3	55.2	44.0	11.2 (p = .046)
NTANF	69.8	69.0	74.3	- 5.3 (p = .389

[1]The % of support amount paid varies for the different categories (p = .0000)
[2]No significant differences within the categories, with the borderline exception for TANF cases.

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[22] One NCP in the Control Group paid 383 percent of the support amount. The reason for this large percent is not known, but it could have been due to a tax (return) intercept. Nevertheless, the case was deleted from this analysis because of the disproportionate effect it would have had on the results.

Table 3
Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in Treatment and Control Groups: Type of Support Order

Type of Order	Mean % of Support Amount Paid[1]			Difference Treatment – Control[2]
	Combined	Treatment	Control	
Administrative	64.9%	64.4%	72.8%	-8.4% (p = .182)
Judicial	44.4	48.6	35.1	13.5 (p = .053)
"Default": Admin. or Judicial[3]	37.6	37.0	38.1	-1.1 (p = .92)

[1]The % of support amount paid varies for the different categories (p = .0000)
[2]No significant differences within the categories, with the borderline exception for Judicial orders.
[3]Where the obligation is established, either administratively or judicially, by imputing income because the NCP fails to appear for a hearing and provide sufficient financial information to determine his/her earnings.

As shown in the above two tables, there were marginally significant differences in the percent of support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for those who had Judicial Orders and those who had TANF cases.

Effect of Four Quantitative Variables on Differences in Two Categorical Variables

The data were further analyzed to determine if the differences in the percent of support payments by NCPs in the Control and Treatment Groups for the two categorical variables could be accounted for by differences in the four quantitative variables. Specifically, could the differences in the percent of payments made by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups who had Judicial orders or had TANF cases be accounted for by their monthly rent/mortgage payments, number of children in the case, monthly support amount and number of support orders?   The conclusions of this analysis were, there were no significant differences in the two categorical variables after accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables.

In sum, after this further analysis, there were no significant differences in the payments made by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for any of the 37 categorical variables.

CMs' Assessments

At the conclusion of Phase I, the CMs assessed the level of cooperation of all NCPs who received assistance from professional service providers paid from grant funds. The results are shown in Table 4.   The extent of cooperation for more than half (51.8 percent) of the NCPs was assessed as Level 1, meaning they left the program before it ended because either they requested it or they were removed from the program for lack of cooperation. An additional 15.8 percent of the NCPs were assessed as Level 2, meaning they left the program before it ended because their case was closed, the case type changed, or the case was transferred to a district office that was not participating in the study. The smallest percent (7.3 percent) of the NCPs were assessed as Level 3, meaning they remained in the program until it ended and CM' opined they were "neither
cooperative nor uncooperative" in the program. Approximately 25 percent of the NCPs remained in the Phase I program until it ended and were assessed by the CMs as either "cooperative" (15.6 percent) or "fully cooperative" (9.3 percent).

There is a correlation between the CM' assessment of NCP' cooperation and the percent of the support amount they paid. Those NCPs receiving the lowest assessment (Level 1) paid 49.5 percent of the support amount they owed. Conversely, the NCPs who were assessed as "fully cooperative" paid

85.7 percent of the support amount. The percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs who received assessments of Levels 2, 3 or 4 increased with the assessment. These distributions differ significantly (p = .000).

In summary, 51.8 percent of the NCPs who consented to receive services either left the program upon personal request or were removed for lack of cooperation and paid about 50 percent of the support amount they owed. At the other end of the assessment scale, approximately 25 percent of the NCPs who were either cooperative or fully cooperative with program requirements paid, respectively, 74.9 percent and 85.7 percent of the support amount.

Table 4
Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs Who Received Services: CM' Assessment of NCP Cooperation

Level of Cooperation	Mean % of Support Amount Paid[1]	NCPs	
		Number	% of Total
1	49.5%	239	51.8
2	47.6	73	15.8
3	59.2	34	7.3
4	74.9	72	15.6
5	85.7	43	9.3
Total	56.8	461	100%[2]

[1]The distributions differ significantly (p = .000).
[2]Does not total 100% due to rounding
Level of cooperation definitions:
> 1 = the NCP left the program before it ended because he/she requested it OR was removed from the program for lack of cooperation.
> 2 = the NCP left the program before it ended because his/her case was closed OR the case type changed OR the case was transferred to another District Office.
> 3 = the NCP remained in the program until it ended and the CM' opinion was the NCP was "neither cooperative nor uncooperative" in the program.
> 4 = the NCP remained in the program until it ended and the CM' opinion was the NCP was "cooperative" in the program.
> 5 = the NCP remained in the program until it ended and the CM' opinion was the NCP was "fully cooperative" in the program.

Summary - Control, Treatment and Not-Interviewed Groups: Percent of Support Paid

The percent of support amount paid by the NCPs in various groupings of the Phase I program is shown in Table 5. The lowest percent (49.5 percent) of the support amount was paid by NCPs who received services but either left the program or were removed from it for lack of cooperation. This percent is almost the same as that paid (49.6 percent) by the NCPs who were in the treatment group but refused to be interviewed. The largest percentages were paid by the NCPs who received services and were either "cooperative" (74.9 percent) or "fully cooperative" (85.7 percent).

Table 5
Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups: Levels of Cooperation

Group	Number of NCPs	% of Order Amount Paid
Control	142	55.3%
Treatment		
Interviewed	657	61.0%
Consented to receive services	463	56.8%
Left/uncooperative	239	49.5%
Cooperative	72	74.9%
Fully cooperative	43	85.7%
Did not consent	194	71.0%
Not interviewed	641	49.6%
All Treatment	1298	55.4%

Willingness/Ability to Pay

There are multiple reasons affecting both an NCP's motivation and ability to pay child support.[23] The four combinations of these factors are willing/able to pay support, willing/unable to pay, unwilling/able to pay, and unwilling/unable to pay. In one study, a random sample of 30 of 294 NCPs was selected to measure the frequency of these four combinations among the group.[24] The CMs were asked to categorize each of the 30 NCPs in the combination that best described them. The CMs believed that 26, or 86.6 percent, of the NCPs were able to pay child support. Half of this group was categorized as willing to pay support and the other half unwilling. The CMs believed that only four, or 13.3 percent, of the NCPs were unable to pay support. The percent of the support amount that was paid by NCPs in the various groups was not calculated.

In the present study, the CMs were asked to categorize the NCPs in the control and treatment groups in the combination that best described them. The results are shown in Table 6. As shown in the table, 57.1 percent (6.4 percent plus 50.7 percent) of the total number of NCPs were able to pay (contrasted with 86.6 percent in the earlier study). Of these, 6.4 percent were categorized as unwilling to pay and 50.7 percent as willing to pay, contrasted with approximately 50 percent and 50 percent, respectively, in the earlier study. Almost 43 percent of the NCPs (42.7 percent) were deemed unable to pay their child support (contrasted with 13.3 percent in the earlier study).

The percent of the support amount was calculated for the NCPs in the various categories. Those NCPs categorized as "able to pay" paid a much larger percent of the support amount but, paradoxically, those deemed "unwilling to pay" paid a larger percent than those considered "willing to pay" (82.6 percent and 79.8 percent, respectively). The NCPs in the "unable to pay" categories paid a much smaller percent, 34.7 percent for those "unwilling to pay" compared to 36.8 percent for those in the "willing to pay" category.

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[23] For a discussion of these reasons, see *Child Support Arrearages: A Legal, Policy, Procedural, Demographic and Caseload Analysis*, Division of Child Support Enforcement, Virginia Department of Social Services (August 2004), pp. 4-7.

[24] *The Barriers Project*, Division of Child Support Enforcement, Virginia Department of Social Services (February 2006), p. 39.

Table 6
Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in Able/Unable and Willing/Unwilling Categories

| Assessment[1] | Group | | | | Total | |
| | Control | | Treatment | | | |
	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid
1	0 (0%)	n/a	47 (7.2%)	34.7%	47 (6.5%)	34.7%
2	21 (34.4%)	36.4%	238 (36.4)	36.9%	259 (36.2%)	36.8%
3	4 (6.5%)	84.3%	42 (6.4)	82.5%	46 (6.4%)	82.6%
4	36 (59%)	83.2%	326 (49.9%)	79.4%	362 (50.7)	79.8%
Total	61 (100%)[2]		653 (100%)[2]		714 (100%)[2]	

[1]Assessment Code:
    1 = Unable to pay & unwilling to pay
    2 = Unable to pay & willing to pay
    3 = Able to pay & unwilling to pay
    4 = Able to pay & willing to pay
[2]May not total 100 percent due to rounding

Within each of the four assessment categories, there is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid between the treatment and control groups. There is a significant difference ($p = 0.000$) in the percent of the support amount paid for the different assessment categories of Unable to Pay (Groups 1 & 2) and Able to Pay (Groups 3 & 4). Clearly, an NCP's ability to pay child support has a significant effect upon the percent of the support amount paid, regardless of whether the NCP is willing or not. Willingness is not a major problem since 86 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment Group were judged as "willing to pay." "Ability to pay" is the decisive factor since those considered as "able" paid 82.6 percent and 79.8 percent regardless of whether they were considered "unwilling" or "willing," respectively.

A further analysis produced similar results from a comprehensive regression model using as independent variables the four quantitative variables discussed earlier in this report, along with "willingness/ability to pay" variables. These are the results:

- The estimated treatment effect is 3.3 percent (vs. control), which is not significant ($p = .483$).
- The treatment effect is approximately the same (about 3.3 percent) for the four "willingness/ability to pay" groups.
- The "able-to-pay" groups paid about 34 percent more than the "unable-to-pay" groups.

Clearly, "Willingness-to-pay" is an insignificant factor in NCPs paying child support.

Effect of NCP's Current Living Situation

An analysis was conducted to determine any differences in the living arrangement of NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups and any effects those living arrangements had on the NCP' payment of the monthly support amount. The results are shown in Table 7. Most of the NCPs (638 of 715) either rented or lived with a friend or relative. Twenty-eight NCPs in the Treatment Group and five NCPs in the Control Group were homeowners, and they paid the largest percent (99.5 percent and 104.8 percent, respectively) of the support amount compared to NCPs in any other living arrangement. The "rent" group paid a greater percent (70.9 percent) of the support amount than did the "live with

friend or relative" group (51.9 percent). Within each of these groups, there was no significant treatment effect.

Table 7
Living Arrangements: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Living Arrangements	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Rent	70.9%	71.1%	226	69.6%	20
Homeowner	100.3	99.5	28	104.8	5
Live w/Friend/Relative	51.9	51.2	357	59.2	35
Temporary Housing/Shelter	52.1	53.2	15	35.2	1
Other	71.8	74.6	24	55.4	4

Personal Service

Information regarding personal service of process (as opposed to posted service) of the Administrative Support Order was obtained on the Intake Form. This information was then analyzed to determine any differences in the service of process method for NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups. The results are shown in Table 8.   Two-thirds of the NCPs (414 of 624) received personal service. The "received personal services" group paid a greater percent (65 percent) of the support amount than did those who did not receive such service (53.2 percent). For the "received personal services" group, there is no observable treatment effect. For the "did not receive personal services" group, there is an estimated +10.8 percent treatment effect (not quite significant, with p = .095). For the "did not receive personal services" group, after accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables discussed earlier in this report, there is no significant difference in the percent of the monthly support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups (estimated effect = 7.05, p = .452)

Table 8
Personal Service of Administrative Support Order: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Personal Service of Administrative Support Order	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Yes	65.0%	65%	414	64.9%	73
No	53.2	55.5	210	44.7	55
Unknown	n.a.	46.9	33	45.7	14

Instate vs. Interstate Cases

Whether a case was Instate or Interstate was another variable examined to determine any differences in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 9. Instate cases constituted 92 percent of the cases.

There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for either instate or interstate cases.

Table 9
Instate/Interstate Cases: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Instate/Interstate Case	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Instate	59%	60%	602	54%	133
Interstate	72.8	71.7	52	81.1%	7

Instate (p = .185)
Interstate (p = .585)

NCP's Gender

About 90 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment and Control groups were male. A comparison of the percent of support amount paid by males and females in the two groups is shown in Table 10. The male NCPs paid 18.7 percent more than female NCPs. For the Male NCPs, there is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups (p = .11). For the Females, there is a decided difference in the percent of support amount paid between the NCPs in the Treatment (45.9 percent) and Control (25.1 percent) Groups. The 20.8 percent difference is not significant because of the small sample size, but the results suggest that women responded more favorably to being offered/receiving services.

Table 10
NCP's Gender: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Gender	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group				Within each Group
		Treatment		Control		Treatment v. Control p-value
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number	2-sample tests
Male	61.7%	62.6%	586	57.7%	130	.297
Female	43.0	45.9	68	25.1	11	.107[1]

[1]After accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables, the Treatment – Control effect is virtually unchanged = +20.8 (p-value = .107)

NCP's Race

NCPs who are black constituted 87.1 percent of the NCPs in the study. Overall, NCPs who were Asian/Pacific Islander, while a small number (4), paid the largest percent of the support amount (73.5 percent), followed by Hispanic NCPs (72.5 percent), white NCPs (68.8 percent) and black NCPs (58.5 percent). The results are shown in Table 11. As shown in the table, within each of the groups, there is no significant difference in the mean percent of the support amount paid by those in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 11
NCP's Race: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Race	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group				Within each Group
		Treatment		Control		Treatment v. Control
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number	p-value
White	68.8%	69.6%	64	62.7%	8	.591
Black	58.5	59.5	566	53.9	129	.232
Hispanic	72.5	73.5	18	66	3	.774
Asian/Pacific Islander	73.5[1]	---	4	---	---	---
American Indian	n.a.[2]	---	---	---	---	---
Other	68.6[3]	---	6	---	---	---

[1]Four Asian/Pacific Islanders in this phase of the study.
[2]No American Indian NCPs in this phase of the study.
[3]Six NCP' race categorized as "Other"

Custodial Parent of Another Child

Approximately 20 percent of the NCPs were custodial parents of another child. See Table 12.
NCPs who are custodial parents of another child pay a greater percent of the support amount (p = .076) compared to those who do not have such custody (66 percent compared to 59.2 percent). For those NCPs who do not have custody of another child, there is weak evidence that the NCPs in the Treatment Group paid a greater percent of the support amount.   However, after accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables (results not shown in Table 12), the estimated treatment effect for those who do not have custody of another child is only +2.26, which is not significant (p = .697).

Table 12
NCP is Custodial Parent of Another Child: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

NCP is Custodial Parent of Another Child	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group				Within each Group
		Treatment		Control		Treatment v. Control
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number	p-value
Yes	66%	64.6%	129	76.4	17	.232
No	59.2	60.1	528	51.4	64	.096

Felony Conviction

About one-third of the NCPs (226 of 722) had been convicted of a felony. Those convicted of a felony paid a much lower percent of the support amount. As shown in Table 13, the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and the Control Groups is not significantly different.

Table 13
Felony Conviction: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Felony Conviction	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group				Within each Group
		Treatment		Control		Treatment v. Control
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number	p-value
Yes	43.3%	43.3%	226	43%	24	.972
No	69.5	69.5	496	76.7	41	.418

Primary Means of Transportation

NCPs who are either leasing or buying a car paid, on average, 96.6 percent of their support amount, which is larger than that for NCPs who used other means of transportation. The results are shown in Table 14. There is no significant difference in the percent of support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for those who used any primary means of transportation except public transportation. For the public transportation group, the difference in the Treatment and Control Group NCPs was 47.3 – 29.8 percent or 17.5 percent, which was significant (p = .033). However, when account is made for the four quantitative variables discussed earlier in this report, the difference is reduced to 12.6 percent, which is not significant (p = .201).

Table 14
Primary Means of Transportation: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Primary Means of Transportation	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group				Within each Group
		Treatment		Control		Treatment v. Control
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number	p-value
Own vehicle	79.1%	79.1%	204	80.4%	22	----
Leasing/buying	96.6	96.8	40	95.6	5	----
Friend's/relative's vehicle	52.4	50.0	208	80.6	18	.147
Public transportation	46.0	47.3	186	29.8	16	.033[1]
Other	44.9	----	----	----	----	----

[1]Treatment effect reduced to 12.6 percent after accounting for the four quantitative variables, which percent is not significant (p = .201).

Possession of Valid Driver's License

Approximately one-half of the NCPs had valid driver's licenses. See Table 15. Those NCPs who had valid driver's licenses paid a much greater percent of the support amount compared to those

who did not have licenses (79 percent and 44 percent, respectively).   There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 15
Possession of Valid Driver's License: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Possession of Valid Driver's License	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Yes	79.3%	79.7%	314	75.7%	42
No	44.6	44.3	317	47.8	21
DCSE suspended	41.4	37.3	14	50.8	6
Other	36.0	38.3	n.a.	26.9	n.a.

Employment Status

Compared to NCPs who were employed full-time (who paid 77.1 percent of the support amount), the NCPs who were either "not employed" or "temporary/occasional" employed paid a much lower percent of the monthly support amount, 36 percent and 41.6 percent, respectively. See Table 16. For those NCPs who were employed "full-time," the estimated treatment effect of +9.1 percent (78.4 percent – 69.3 percent) is marginally significant (p = .078).   However, by accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables, the estimated treatment effect (for full-time-employed NCPs) is reduced to +7.7%, which is not significant (p = .196). There are no significant treatment effects within any of the other groupings.

Table 16
Employment Status: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Employment Status	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group				Within each Group
		Treatment		Control		Treatment v. Control
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number	p-value
Full-time	77.1%	78.4%	302	69.3%	50	.078[1]
Part-time	64.9	66.2	103	56.1	16	.325
Self-employed	70.1	----	----	----	----	----
Temporary/occasional	41.6	----	----	----	----	----
Not employed	36.0	36.2	232	34.6	49	----

[1]Treatment effect reduced to 7.7 percent, after accounting for the four quantitative variables, which percent is not significant (p = .196).

Professional License

Approximately 14.5 percent of the NCPs possessed a professional license. The results are shown in Table 17. NCPs with professional licenses paid a greater percent of the monthly support amount than those without such licenses; 71.6 percent and 59.2 percent, respectively. There is no significant treatment effect in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 17
Professional License: Percent of Support Order Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Professional License	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group				Within each Group
		Treatment		Control		Treatment v. Control
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number	p-value
Yes	71.6%	73.8%	94	51.4%	10	.165
No	59.2	58.9	561	63.3	52	.420

Frequency of Seeing Child

How often an NCP sees his/her child does not appear to affect the percent of the support amount that is paid. See Table 18. For NCPs interviewed about the frequency of seeing their child, the largest percent of the support amount paid was by those NCPs who either see their child once/twice a month or never see their child: the respective percentages of the support amount paid are 69.6 percent and 68.1 percent. Conversely, NCPs who see their children on a daily basis pay the lowest percent of the monthly support amount, which is 55.1 percent. This appears to counter the frequently-expressed opinion about the importance of maintaining contact with their children for NCPs to assume responsibility for paying support. There is no significant difference between the Treatment and Control Groups in the payment of the monthly support amount for any of the frequency comparisons.

Table 18
Frequency of Seeing Child: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the
Treatment and Control Groups

Frequency of Seeing Child	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Daily	55.1%	55.3%	191	53.5%	15
1-2 per week	60.5	60.4	206	61.5	22
1-2 per month	69.6	69.0	72	74.5	9
Seldom	62.5	62.3	102	63.5	10
Never	68.1	68.3	83	65.9	5

Satisfaction with the Amount of Time Spent with the Child

Satisfaction with the amount of time NCPs spend with their children is not an important factor affecting the percent of the support amount that is paid. The results are shown in Table 19. There is no apparent treatment effect within any of the groups. The number of NCPs in each of the Control Groups is too small to detect any moderate differences in the mean monthly payments between the Treatment and Control Groups. The second largest number (213) of the NCPs were "Very dissatisfied" with the amount of time they spend with their child, but they paid 65 percent of the monthly support amount. Conversely, the largest number of NCPs (258) reported they were "Very satisfied" with the amount of time they spent with their child, but they paid the lowest percent (46.8 percent) of the support amount of the NCPs in the other groups.

Table 19
Satisfaction with Amount of Time Spent with Child: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Satisfaction with Amount of Time Spent with Child	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Very dissatisfied 1	65.0 %	64.5%	194	70.1%	19
2	73.8	78.0	27	45.6	4
3	67.0	66.2	28	87.1	1
4	61.3	62.7	72	51.5	10
5	67.6	67.3	57	69.8	7
6	56.5	54.8	33	110.6	1
Very satisfied 7	46.8	54.3	239	56.6	19

Evaluation of Relationship with Child

How NCPs evaluate their relationship with their child is not an important factor in the percent of the support amount that they pay. The results are shown in Table 20. As shown in the table, 101 NCPs rate their relationship with their child as "Poor," but on average they paid 67.3 percent of the support amount, which is the highest rate of payment regardless of the evaluation. Conversely, 407 NCPs rate their relationship as "Excellent," but on average they paid 58.7 percent of the support amount. None of the numbers of NCPs in the Control Groups was sufficient to detect any significant difference between the Treatment and Control Groups in the percent of the support amount that was paid.

Table 20
Evaluate Relationship with Child: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Relationship with Child	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Poor	67.3	68.1%	94	56.2%	7
Fair	62.5	65.3	16	47.8	3
Average	58.6	56.2	40	90.6	3
Good	64.3	64.2	125	65.3	19
Excellent	58.7	58.6	378	60.0	29

Importance of Having a Good Relationship with NCP's Child

The purpose of this question on the Intake Form was to determine the impact of the NCP' opinions of the importance of having a good relationship with their child in making child support payments. With the exception of one NCP who felt the relationship was "Very important," and who paid 100.1 percent of his/her support amount, the relationship apparently is unimportant. For example, 101 NCPs indicated the relationship was of "No importance" but paid the highest percent of the support amount (67.3 percent). The results are shown in Table 21. Based on these results, the importance of having a good relationship with the child is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. Furthermore, there is no significant difference between any of the Treatment and Control Groups of the NCP' payments of their monthly support amount. Most of the control groups are too small to be able to detect moderate effects.

Table 21
Importance of Having a Good Relationship with NCP's Child: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Importance of Having a Good Relationship with NCP's Child	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
No importance 1	67.3%	68.1%	94	56.2%	7
2	62.5	65.3	16	47.8	3
3	58.6	56.2	40	90.6	3
4	64.3	64.2	125	65.3	19
5	58.7	58.6	378	60.1	29
6	----	----	0	----	0
Very important 7	100.1	100.1	1	----	----

Provide Other Financial Support

Providing other financial support for their children is not an important factor affecting NCPs paying their monthly support. The results are shown in Table 22. A total of 544 NCPs in both the Treatment and Control Groups stated they provided financial support for their children, other than paying the monthly support amount. This support may have included items such as clothing, diapers or gifts. These NCPs paid a slightly smaller percent of their monthly support amount. However, there is no significant difference between the Treatment and Control Groups in the NCP' payment of their monthly support amount.

Table 22
Provide Other Financial Support for Child: Percent of Support Amount Paid
by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Provide Other Financial Support	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Yes	60.5%	60.7%	492	59.5%	52
No	62.9	62.4	159	73.2	8

Present at Child's Birth

Intuitively, it would seem that the emotional or bonding impact of NCP' presence at the birth of their children would positively influence their motivation to pay their monthly support amount. That assumption prompted the inclusion of this question on the Intake Form. As shown in Table 23, an NCP's presence at the birth of the child is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. Interestingly, the percent of the monthly support amount paid is higher among those NCPs who were not present when the child was born. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 23
Present When the Child Was Born: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs
in the Treatment and Control Groups

Present When the Child Was Born	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Yes	60.6%	60.9%	460	57.3%	41
No	62.5	61.5	194	71.9	21

Marriage

Most of the NCPs (87.7 percent) were never married to the other parent. The results are shown in Table 24. NCPs who were previously married to the other parent paid a greater percent of the support amount compared to those who were "never married" (74.7 percent and 58.1 percent, respectively). For the "never married" NCPs, there is a marginally significant, positive treatment effect of those who received paid services (p = .056). However, after accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables, the estimated treatment effect (for never-married NCPs) becomes -3.7 percent, which is not significant (p = .543).

Table 24
Effect of Marriage: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Were the NCP and CP Ever Married?	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Yes	74.7%	75%	57	71.7%	8
No	58.1	59.8	375	50.6	89

Child Born Out-of-Wedlock

Most of the children (94.8 percent) were born out-of-wedlock. The results are shown in Table 25. NCPs of children who were born in-wedlock paid a greater percent of the support amount (68 percent compared to 57.6 percent for NCPs of children who were born out-of-wedlock). The NCPs, who were in the Treatment Group that received paid professional services to assist them, did not pay a significantly different amount of their monthly support compared to those NCPs in the Control Group who did not receive services.

Table 25
Child Born Out-of-Wedlock: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Was the Child Born Out-of-Wedlock?	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Yes	57.6%	59.1%	566	50.6%	120
No	68.0	69.6	33	57.4	5

Length of Time Residing with Other Parent

Most of the NCPs (81.4 percent) lived with the other parent for less than 6 months. The results are shown in Table 26. Excluding the "Not answered" group, NCPs who lived with another

parent from six months to one year paid the largest percent (72.0 percent) of their monthly support amount. There is no significant difference in the payments of the monthly amount between NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 26
Length of Time Residing with Other Parent: Percent of Support Amount Paid
by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Length of Time Residing With Other Parent	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Never	55.1%	58.0%	17	6.4%	1
Less than 6 months	63.0	62.9	532	63.9	51
From 6 months to one year	72.0	69.9	14	78.0	5
From one year to three years	52.3	53.9	52	31.7	4
Three or more years	35.2	34.8	29	40.2	2
Not answered	75.9	75.9	9	----	----

How Long Since Separated, If Lived Together?

Twelve of the NCPs indicated they were still living with the other parent, but they paid the lowest percent (35.9 percent) of the support amount of the NCPs in the groups shown in Table 27. How long NCPs have been separated from the other parent is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in any of the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 27
How Long Since Separated if Lived with Other Parent: Percent of Support
Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

How Long Since Separated if Lived with Other Parent?	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
n/a	62.4%	62.1%	291	64.9%	28
Less than a year	61.5	61.1	146	64.9	16
One to three years	65.2	66.1	105	56.5	11
Three or more years	54.6	55.1	100	40.7	3
Currently living together	35.9	30.6	10	62.3	2

Importance of Having a Good Relationship with the Child's Other Parent

The importance of a good relationship with the child's other parent is not an important factor affecting the percent of the support amount that NCPs pay. The results are shown in Table 28. For example, 476 NCPs stated this relationship is of "No Importance," but they paid 60.1 percent of the support amount. At the other end of the scale, 106 NCPs who stated that a good relationship was a "Very Important" factor in their paying child support paid 65.5 percent of the support amount. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups, who responded differently to this question.

Table 28
Importance of Having a Good Relationship with Child' Other Parent: Percent of
Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Importance of Having a Good Relationship with Child' Other Parent	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
No importance 1	60.1%	60.1%	476	60.0%	36
2	64.7	64.7	16	----	0
3	50.9	52.3	11	47.3	4
4	67.4	67.0	18	75.0	1
5	71.5	70.4	15	88.2	1
6	45.9	45.9	9	----	0
Very important 7	65.5	65.6	106	64.7	18

NCP's Relationship with Other Parent

The NCP's perceived relationship to the other parent is not related to the percent of support amount paid. For example, 185 NCPs rate their relationship with the other parent as the "Worst Possible," but they paid 67.5 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 123 NCPs rate their relationship with the other parent as the "Best Possible," but they paid 55.5 percent of the support amount. The results are shown in Table 29. None of the differences in opinion about the relationship to the other parent result in a significant treatment effect on the percent of the support amount paid between the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 29
NCP's Relationship with Other Parent: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

NCP's Relationship with Other Parent	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Worst possible 1	67.5%	66.4%	174	85.3%	11
2	59.3	59.3	46	60.8	2
3	61.5	59.3	66	81.4	7
4	68.3	69.3	89	61.9	14
5	57.6	59.2	101	41.6	10
6	50.7	49.6	58	66.9	4
Best possible 7	55.5	56.5	110	46.9	13

NCP's Confidence That Payments Are Used for the Child

The "NCP's confidence that payments are used for the child" is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. The results are shown in Table 30. As shown in the table, 332 NCPs are "Completely confident" the payments they make are used for the child, but they only pay 57 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 130 NCPs are "Not confident at all" that the payments they make are used for the child, but they pay 63.9 percent of the support amount. It is also noteworthy that the 85 NCPs who did not provide an answer to the question made considerably lower payments (46 percent) than those who provided answers. There is no significant difference in the payments made by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 30
NCP's Confidence That Payments Are Used for the Child: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

NCP's Confidence That Payments Are Used for the Child	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Not confident at all 1	63.9%	63.5%	115	67.3%	15
2	67.0	65.1	35	88.6	3
3	63.5	62.9	49	78.4	2
4	70.0	69.1	70	82.3	5
5	62.5	62.3	45	64.5	4
6	59.3	61.4	33	23.6	2
Completely confident 7	57.0	57.4	303	52.7	29
No response	46.0	46.9	5	45.9	80

Where Does the Child Currently Live?

As shown in Table 31, NCPs paid a significantly lower percent (35.1 percent) of the support amount for arrangements in which the child is living with another relative (p = .001). As would be expected, a large portion (70.5 percent) of the children live with the other parent. None of the living arrangements resulted in significant differences in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 31
Where Does the Child Currently Live: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs
in the Treatment and Control Groups

Where Does the Child Currently Live?	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
With NCP	55.1%	57.9%	17	6.3%	1
With other parent	62.9	62.9	532	63.8	51
Shared physical custody with other parent	72.0	69.8	14	78.0	5
With grandparents	52.3	53.9	52	31.7	4
With another relative	35.1[1]	34.8	29	40.2	2
Foster parent' home	0	----	----	----	----
Other (explain)	75.9	75.9	9	----	----
No response	45.8	38.2	4	46.2	78

[1]Significantly lower (p = .001)

Individual(s) Who Have Physical Custody of the Child

As shown in Table 32, when either the grandparents or other relatives have physical custody of the child, the percent of support amount paid by NCPs is significantly lower (45 percent and 39 percent, respectively) than when either the NCP or the other parent has custody or when they share custody [61.6 percent, 63 percent, and 73.6 percent, respectively (p = .001)]. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs within the various categories of the Treatment and Control Groups.

Table 32
Person Who Has Physical Custody of the Child: Percent of Support Amount Paid
by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Person Who Has Physical Custody of the Child	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
NCP	61.6%	61.6%	10	----	----
Other parent	63.0	63.1	513	62.1	50
Shared custody with other parent	73.6	72.4	37	82.4	5
Grandparents	45.0	46.1	46	28.1	3
Other relative	39.0	38.9	23	40.2	2
Foster parents	0	----	----	----	----
Other (explain)	53.3	50.4	24	89.2	2
No response	45.3	----	----	----	----

Satisfaction with Custody Arrangements

The NCPs' "Satisfaction with custody arrangements" is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. For example, as shown in Table 33, 199 NCPs are "Very dissatisfied" with the custody arrangements, but they paid 64.5 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 322 NCPs are "Very satisfied" with the custody arrangements, but they only paid 58 percent of the support amount. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in any comparisons of the Treatment and Control Groups regarding "Satisfaction with Custody Arrangements."

Table 33
NCP's Satisfaction with Custody Arrangements: Percent of Support Amount Paid
by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

NCP's Satisfaction with Custody Arrangements	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Very dissatisfied 1	64.5%	63.3%	185	80.7%	14
2	75.6	77.6	15	60.8	2
3	63.6	65.7	34	46.9	5
4	57	55.4	41	66	7
5	63.4	67	46	30.3	45
6	60.6	60.9	32	55	2
Very satisfied 7	58	57.8	296	60.3	26

Responsibility to Pay Support

How responsible NCPs feel they are to pay support does appear to be related to their payments. As shown in Table 34, 26 NCPs indicate they are not responsible to pay support for the child, and they paid 50.6 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 581 of the NCPs stated they were completely responsible to pay support for the child in the case, and they paid 63.3 percent of the support amount. This is the highest percent shown in the table. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups in any of the comparisons regarding a stated responsibility to pay support.

Table 34
NCP's Rating of Responsibility to Pay Support for the Child in the Case: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

NCP's Rating of Responsibility to Pay Support for Child in the Case	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Not responsible 1	50.6%	49%	25	90.4%	1
2	49.7	49.7	4	----	----
3	52.8	52.8	6	----	----
4	44.8	42.7	29	65.3	3
5	50.5	50.5	23	----	----
6	58	63.2	37	19.5	5
Completely responsible 7	63.3	63.1	529	65.5	52

Understanding Laws and Procedures to Determine the Support Amount

As shown in Table 35, 62 NCPs stated they "Do not understand at all" the laws and procedures used to determine the support amount for the child in the case. This group paid 64.1 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 485 NCPs stated they "Fully understand" the procedures and laws used to determine the support amount of the child in the case. However, this latter group paid 59.4 percent of the support amount. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs within the Treatment and Control Groups and their understanding of the laws and procedures used to determine the support amount for the child in the case.

Table 35

Understand Laws and Procedures Used to Determine Support Amount for the Child in this Case: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups					
Understand Laws and Procedures Used to Determine Support Amount for the Child in this Case	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Do not understand at all 1	64.1%	64.3%	54	62.3%	8
2	49.6	44.6	10	100.2	1
3	68.6	66.1	20	94.2	2
4	62.8	61.5	35	78.8	3
5	67.2	66	36	82.1	3
6	66.1	65.7	55	72.1	4
Fully understand 7	59.4	59.7	445	55.8	40

Fairness of Procedure to Determine the Support Amount

As shown in Table 36, 143 NCPs believe the procedure used to establish the support amount in their case was "Completely unfair." These NCPs paid 65.1 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 365 NCPs stated the procedure was "Completely fair" and this group paid 59 percent of the support amount. How fair NCPs believe the procedure was that determined the support amount in their case is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and the Control Groups based on their perception of the fairness of the procedure used to establish the support amount.

Table 36
NCPs' Perception of Fairness of Procedure Used to Establish the Support Amount:
Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

NCPs' Perception of Fairness of Procedure Used to Establish Support Amount	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Completely unfair 1	65.1%	64.7%	130	69.7%	13
2	51.3	53.8	24	21.1	2
3	66.6	66.6	26	----	----
4	67.1	69.6	54	44.5	6
5	61.9	61	37	65.1	10
6	61.5	62.7	44	44.2	3
Completely fair 7	59	58.4	338	66.3	27

Opinion of Support Amount

As shown in Table 37, 214 (30.2 percent) of the NCPs believe the support amount for their child was "Too much." On average, this group paid 66.4 percent of the support amount. The largest number, 466 (65.8 percent) of the NCPs, stated the support amount was "About right." This group of NCPs paid 59.2 percent of the support amount. Somewhat paradoxically, 28 NCPs (3.9 percent) stated the support amount was "Too little," but they only paid an average of 51 percent of the support amount.

NCP' opinion about the appropriateness of the support amount is not a significant factor affecting the percent of the support amount paid. There is no significant difference in the Treatment and Control Groups in NCP' opinion about the appropriateness of the support amount and the percentages they paid.

Table 37
NCP's Perception of Support Amount: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs
in the Treatment and Control Groups

NCPs' Perception of Support Amount	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Too much	66.4%	66%	194	70.7%	20
About right	59.2	59.2	428	59.9	38
Too little	49	51	25	32.7	3

Regularity of NCP's Parents' Child Support Payments

The statement on the Intake Form to which the NCPs responded was this, "If your father or mother was required to pay child support for you when you were a child, how regular were the payments?" As shown in Table 38, 96 NCPs selected the statement that the payments were "Very irregular." This group of NCPs paid 61.4 percent of the support amount for their own child. At the other end of the scale, 85 NCPs stated the payments from their parent(s) were "Very regular." The NCPs with this opinion paid 63 percent of the support amount for their own child. The NCP' opinions about the regularity of their parent' support payments are not a significant factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups based on their opinions of the regularity of their parents' child support payments.

Table 38
Regularity of NCP's Parents' Child Support Payments: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

Regularity of NCP's Parents' Child Support Payments	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
Very irregular 1	61.4%	60.0%	92	72.8%	4
2	66	66	12	----	----
3	68.2	65.4	5	82.2	1
4	59.9	44.6	2	90.4	1
5	64	64	2	----	----
6	81.1	90.2	5	35.5	1
Very regular 7	63	64	74	56.3	11
Does not apply/unknown 8	60.4	60.2	462	62.1	43

Parent's Presence in NCP's Childhood

As shown in Table 39, 416 of the NCPs (58.6 percent) grew up with either one or neither parent at home. This group paid 58.6 percent of the support amount for their child. The 293 NCPs who grew up with both parents at home paid 64.8 percent of the support amount. Parental presence in the home during the period the NCP was growing up is not a significant factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. Also, there is no significant difference in the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups in the percent of the support amount paid based upon parental presence in their childhood.

Table 39
Parents' Presence in NCP's Childhood: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

As a Child, What Was Parents' Presence in Home?	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
One or neither parent at home	58.6%	58.9%	380	55.7%	36
Both parents at home	64.8	64.1	268	71.3	25

Monthly Support Amount

Table 40 shows the mean monthly support amount for the case in this study and for all current cases of NCPs in the study. The support amount for the current case in this study for the Treatment

Group is significantly greater than for the Control Group (p = .007). Also, the support amount for all current cases for the Treatment Group is significantly greater than for the Control Group (p = .002).

Table 40
Monthly Support Amount: Case in This Study and All Current Cases[1]

NCP's Monthly Support Amount	Group			
	Treatment		Control	
	Mean Monthly $ Amount	Number NCPs	Mean Monthly $ Amount	Number NCPs
Case in this study	$239	656	$197	140
All current cases[1]	$336	652	$271	141

[1]The term "All Current Cases" refers to all current cases of NCPs with a "new" case in this study.

Arrearages

Table 41 shows the average arrears owed by the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for the new case in this study and for all current cases. The arrears for the case in this study were obtained when the Intake Form was completed. As shown in the table, only 204 and 71 NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups, respectively, had arrears for the new cases. This constituted 31 and 50 percent, respectively, of the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups. With few exceptions, virtually all of the NCPs in both groups accumulated arrears on these "new" cases during the study. As shown in the table, the arrears for NCPs in the Treatment Group ($771) are significantly larger (p = .014) than those of the NCPs in the Control Group ($488).

Table 41 also shows the average arrearages for all current cases (including the new one in this study) owed by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups. The arrearages for the NCPs in the Control Group ($6,256) are larger than those owed by the NCPs in the Treatment Group ($5,771), but the difference is not significant.

Table 41
Arrearages Owed in the Case in this Study and All Current Cases

NCP's Monthly Support Amount	Group			
	Treatment		Control	
	$ Arrears	Number NCPs	$ Arrears	Number NCPs
Case in this study	$771[1]	204	$488[1]	71
All current cases	$5,771	303	$6,256	84

[1]Significant (p = .014)

Years of Education

The number of years of education for the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups is shown in Table 42. The percent of NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups who have 12 or more years of schooling are 58.1 and 65 percent, respectively. There are no significant differences in the years of education in the NCPs in the two groups.

Table 42
Years of Education

Years of Education	All	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		%	Number	%	Number
7	7	1%	7	0%	0
8	12	1.8	12	0	0
9	42	6.1	40	3.1	2
10	98	14	91	11.1	7
11	135	18.7	122	20.6	13
12	286	39	254	50.7	32
13	43	5.8	38	7.9	5
14+	90	13.2	86	6.3	4
Total	713	100%[1]	650	100[1]	63

[1]May not total 100% due to rounding

Monthly Income

As shown in Table 43, the income distributions are similar for the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.   When NCP' monthly income exceeds $1,000, they significantly increase the percent of the support amount they pay. NCP' whose income exceeds $2,000 per month pay almost 90 percent of the support amount. Unfortunately, only 17.4 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups earn in excess of $2,000 per month. These results suggest that income limitations are a factor in NCPs paying the support amount. The number of NCPs in the Control Group is too small for most of the income categories, which fact precludes testing for any significant differences with the NCPs in the Treatment Group.

Table 43
Monthly Income: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups

$ Monthly Income	Overall % of Support Amount Paid	Group			
		Treatment		Control	
		% of Support Amount Paid	Number	% of Support Amount Paid	Number
$0	32%	39.8%	108	30.6%	31
1 – 100	33.9	26.8	2	----	----
101 – 250	38.9	57.6	6	42.9	3
251 – 500	56.9	65.1	14	49.9	3
501 – 1,000	44.2	48.6	177	39.6	36
1,001 – 2,000	70.6	69.9	216	71.4	36
2,001 – 3,000	87.5	88	70	94.3	9
3,001 – 4,000	94.2	93.2	28	92.5	6
4,001+	89.2	91.2	18	90.6	3
Total	57.2	62.1	639	54.3	127

Consent for Services: Frequency and Percent of Support Amount Paid

Employment assistance was the most frequently requested service since it was chosen by 184 of the NCPs in the Treatment Group.   See Table 44. However, the average percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in this group was next to the lowest. The 26 NCPs who consented to receive Budgeting, Employment and Parenting assistance paid the lowest percent of the support amount (45.7 percent). For those services that were received by at least 10 NCPs, Parenting assistance resulted in the highest percent of the support amount being paid (11 NCPs paid 85 percent of the support amount). The 31 NCPs who consented to receive Budgeting assistance paid an average of 82.8 percent of the support amount. As shown in the table, the percent of the support amount paid varies considerably among the different services, and the mean payments vary by consent code (p = .000).

Table 44
Consent for Services: Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs

Services	Number of NCPs (% of total)		% of Support Amount Paid
Declined to participate	194	(29.5%)	71.0%
Budgeting assistance	31	(4.7%)	82.8
Employment assistance	184	(28.0%)	49.0
Mediation assistance	28	(4.2%)	79.0
Parenting assistance	11	(1.6%)	85.0
Budgeting & employment	57	(8.6%)	49.8
Budgeting & mediation	4	(0.6%)	90.2
Budgeting & parenting	10	(1.5%)	49.4
Employment & mediation	31	(4.7%)	55.4
Employment & parenting	17	(2.5%)	51.5
Mediation & parenting	10	(1.5%)	73.8
Budgeting, employment & mediation	8	(1.2%)	60.0
Budgeting, employment & parenting	26	(3.9%)	45.7
Employment, mediation & parenting	15	(2.2%)	60,0
Budgeting, mediation & parenting	6	(0.9%)	78.0
All four services	24	(3.6%)	58.4
Total	656	(100%)[1]	55.4%[2]

[1]Due to rounding may not total 100%

[2]Includes NCPs in the Treatment Group who declined to be interviewed.

Categories: Consent and Percent of Support Amount Paid

Table 45 shows the type of service(s) received by NCPs in the Treatment Group categorized in four groups by the percent of support amount paid ("Paid a Relatively Large Percent," "Paid an Average Percent," "Paid a Relatively Low Percent," and "Sample Size Too Small to be Meaningful"). As noted in the discussion of Table 44, NCPs who received Parenting Only and Budgeting Only paid the largest percent of the support amount. Those two categories are followed by NCPs who consented to Mediation Only and Mediation and Parenting, that paid 79 and 73.8 percent, respectively, of the

support amount. The NCPs in the Treatment Group that declined to participate in the offer of services paid 71 percent of the support amount.

The "Paid An Average Percent" category consisted of NCPs who consented to receive Employment, Mediation and Parenting, All Four Services, and Employment and Mediation; those NCPs paid 60 percent, 58.4 percent and 55.4 percent, respectively, of the support amount. The four services in the "Paid a Relatively Low Percent of Support Amount" were Employment and Parenting (NCPs paid 51.5 percent of support amount), Budgeting and Employment (NCPs paid 49.8 percent of the support amount), Budgeting and Parenting (NCPs paid 49.4 percent of the support amount), Employment (NCPs paid 49 percent of the support amount), and Budgeting, Employment and Parenting (NCPs paid 45.7 percent of the support amount). The services in which the sample size was too small were: Budgeting and Mediation (four NCPs paid an average of 90.2 percent of the support amount), Budgeting, Mediation and Parenting (six NCPs paid an average of 78 percent of the support amount) and Budgeting, Employment and Mediation (eight NCPs paid an average of 60 percent of the support amount).

The differences among the mean percent of the support amount paid for the different consent codes are significant (p = .000).

Table 45
Consent for Services: Categories of Percent of Support Amount Paid

PAID A RELATIVELY LARGE PERCENT OF SUPPORT AMOUNT		
Services	Number of NCPs	% Support amount Paid
Declined to participate	194	71%
Budgeting only	31	82.8
Mediation only	28	79
Parenting only	11	85
Mediation & parenting	10	73.8
PAID AN AVERAGE PERCENT OF SUPPORT AMOUNT		
Services	Number of NCPs	% Obligation Paid
Employment & mediation	31	55.4%
Employment, mediation & parenting	15	60
All four services	24	58.4
PAID A RELATIVELY LOW PERCENT OF SUPPORT AMOUNT		
Services	Number of NCPs	% Support amount Paid
Employment	184	49%
Budgeting & employment	57	49.8
Budgeting & parenting	10	49.4
Employment & parenting	17	51.5
Budgeting, employment & parenting	26	45.7
SAMPLE SIZE TOO SMALL TO BE MEANINGFUL (less than 10)		
Services	Number of NCPs	% Support amount Paid
Budgeting & mediation	4	90.2%
Budgeting, employment & mediation	8	60
Budgeting, mediation & parenting	6	78

The differences among the means for the different consent codes is significant (p = .000).

Cost of Services

Referrals were made to professional service providers for 248 of the NCPs who consented to receive services. The fees charged by these providers totaled $60,475. The fees were categorized as shown in Table 46. The fees incurred for services to 102 of the NCPs (41.1 percent of the total) were less than $100. An additional 64 NCPs received services that cost from $100 to $200 inclusive. Over 80 percent (82.6 percent) of the NCPs received services that cost from less than $100 to $300 inclusive. Only 15 (6 percent) of the 248 NCPs received services that cost more than $500. There is no relationship between the cost of services and the percent of the support amount the NCPs paid. The numbers of NCPs in categories where the cost of services was over $500 are too small to test for significance. It does not appear that incurring more than $500 in costs for services was prudent for the NCPs in this study.

Table 46
Cost of Services and Mean Percent of Support Amount Paid

Cost of Services	No. NCPs	% of Total	% of Mean Order Paid
Less than $100	102	41.1%	51.8%
100 – 200	64	25.8	60
201 – 300	39	15.7	52.5
301 – 400	19	7.6	60
401 – 500	9	3.6	78.9
501 – 600	4	1.6	40.2
601 – 700	3	1.2	51.7
More than $700	8	3.2	56.6
Total	248	100%[1]	----

[1]May not total 100 percent due to rounding

Phase II

Phase II was a field experiment to test the efficacy of an intervention (providing five free services)[25] to NCPs with the objective of better preparing them to make their child support payments. Phase II also including field testing a Payment Predictor.[26] The intervention and the Payment Predictor were administered by specially selected and trained Case Managers (CMs).[27] CMs commenced accepting NCPs into Phase II in January 2007 and accepted the last NCPs in June 2007.[28]

Treatment and Control Groups

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[25] The services were Financial Counseling, Mentoring, Parenting, Employment Assistance and Job Training.

[26] Development and testing of the Payment Predictor is covered in a separate project report: Venohr, Jane C., *Customer-Centered Services and Arrearage Management: Development of an Automated Tool to Predict Child Support Arrears,* Denver: Policy Studies Inc., December 2007.

[27] See Appendix 8 for a copy of the Phase II CM's job description.

[28] NCP' payments for Phase II were recorded from January to November 2007, inclusive. Eleven months of payments were the maximum number recorded for the NCPs entering Phase II in January 2007.

The CMs randomly assigned NCPs who had new cases[29,30] to either a *Treatment Group* or a *Control Group*.[31] The CMs diligently attempted to interview all the NCPs in the Treatment Group to determine their need for services. Some NCPs in the Treatment Group either could not be contacted or they refused requests for interviews. The CMs made repeated efforts to conduct interviews in these situations and were successful with some NCPs who initially refused to be interviewed. The Treatment Group consisted of 377 NCPs and 98 (25.9 percent) were interviewed. See Table 47. The Control Group consisted of 434 NCPs. Interviews were not conducted with NCPs in the Control Group since no information was obtained from them, as it was in the Phase I study.

Table 47
NCPs in Treatment and Control Groups: Percent of Support Amount Paid

| Group | NCPs | | % of Order Amount Paid |
	No.	No. (%) Interviewed	
Treatment	377	98 (25.9%)	66.9%
Control	434	n.a.[1]	59.2
Total	811	n.a.[1]	63.1%

[1]NCPs in the Control Group were not interviewed.
There is no significant difference in the mean "percent paid" for NCPs in the treatment group vs. those in the control group. (p = .132 for a 2-sample t-test; p= .165 for a nonparametric test that compares the medians rather than the means).

Percent of Support Amount Paid

Table 47 shows the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Control and Treatment Groups was 59.2 percent and 66.9 percent, respectively. There is a 7.7 percent point difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the two groups, but it is not significant.[32]

Communications with NCPs

The CMs used four different methods to contact NCPs in the Treatment Group to encourage them to make their child support payments. Another purpose of communicating with the NCPs was to motivate them to be interviewed by the CMs and receive services, dependent upon their needs. Table 48 shows the types of contacts used and the number made of each type. Over the 10-month period of Phase II, the CMs made 103 Face-to-Face contacts with 76 NCPs; placed 1,019 Telephone Calls to the residences of 238 NCPs in which someone (including the NCP, a family member or someone else) was contacted; sent a total of 2,931 Letters to 370 NCPs; and sent 6 e-mail messages to one NCP.

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[29] Some NCPs in the study also had existing cases. This study measured the effects of services on their new cases, only.
[30] NCPs that had MAOF, TANF, NTANF, SLFC, FC, ARRP, and ARRN cases were included in the Phase II study.
[31]Based upon the last digit of the NCP' Social Security Number.
[32] (p = .132 for 2-sample t-test; p = .165 for a nonparametric test that compares the medians rather than the means). This means for the t-test, there is a 13.2 percent chance that the difference in the payments of the support obligation was due to chance and not due to the intervention (services). The lower the p-value, the greater the likelihood any difference is due to an intervention.

Table 48
Type of Contact Made with NCPs in the Phase II Treatment Group

Type of Contact[1]	No. Contacts		Total No. of Contacts Made
	Not contacted	Contacted	
Face-to-face	301	76	103
Telephone call	139	238[2]	1,019
Letter	7	370	2,931
E-mail	376	1	6

[1]Each type of contact was used on more than one occasion for some or all NCPs.

[2]Contact was made with someone at the NCP's place of residence.

Method of Contact and Percent of Support Amount Paid

The percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment Group who were contacted through the four methods are shown in Table 49. The percent of the support amount paid by NCPs was less for those who were contacted Face to Face (53.8 percent) than for those who were contacted via either the Telephone (69.8 percent) or by Letter (66.9 percent). The differences in the percent of the support paid between Face-to-Face contacts and the other methods are significant ($p = .013$ for Face-to-Face vs. Telephone Call; $p = .038$ for Face-to-Face vs. Letter; and, $p = .017$ for Face-to-Face vs. Telephone Call and Letter combined). The difference between the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs who received Telephone Calls and those who received Letters is not significant.

Table 49
Percent of Support Amount Paid: Case Managers' Methods of Contacting NCPs

Type of Contact	No. Contacted	Mean % of Support Amount Paid
Face-to-face	76	53.8%
Telephone call	238	69.8
Letter	370	66.9
E-mail	1	115.1

Services Provided

During the interviews with the NCPs in the Treatment Group, the CMs assessed their need for the five types of unpaid services. As shown in Table 50, most of the NCPs in the Treatment Group did not receive services. Employment assistance was the most frequently provided service with 84 NCPs receiving it. Mentoring was the second most frequently requested service with 46 NCPs receiving it. The next two most frequent services were Financial Counseling and Job Training, at 28 and 27 NCPs, respectively. Finally, only six NCPs received Parenting services.

The CMs continued offering services to the NCPs in the Treatment Group, particularly when their investigations found the NCPs were not making regular support payments. Some of these efforts were successful but, in the end, only 24.9 percent of the NCPs accepted services.

Table 50
Type of Services Received by NCPs in the Treatment Group

| Type of Services | No. NCPs Receiving Services | Service Provider | | No Services Provided[1] |
		CM	Outside Provider	
Financial counseling	28	7	21	349
Mentoring	46	44	2	331
Parenting	6	4	2	371
Employment assistance	84	60	24	293
Job training	27	17	10	350

[1]Most NCPs either could not be contacted to determine their interest in receiving services, or they were contacted and refused services.

Effects of Services on Percent of Support Amount Paid

Table 51 shows the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment Group who received different types of services. The payments significantly differ for NCPs depending upon the service they received (p = .000), with those NCPs who received Financial Counseling paying by far the greatest percent of the support amount and the NCPs who received Employment and Job Training services paying the least. These conclusions do not change if the NCPs who received Parenting services are eliminated from the comparisons, because the sample size is so small.

Table 51
Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment Group: Type of Service Received

Service Received[1]	No. Receiving Service	% of Support Amount Paid
Financial counseling	28	79.1
Mentoring	46	55.0
Parenting	6	63.4
Employment	84	42.4
Job training	27	42.1

1Some NCPs received more than one type of service.

Service Providers

Services were provided by either an unpaid outside professional service provider (OP) or by a CM. Table 52 shows that, with the exception of Financial Counseling, CMs provided services for more NCPs than OPs did. For each type of service (except Parenting, for which the sample sizes were extremely small -- 4 for CM and 2 for OP), the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs who received services from OPs was greater than for those who received services from the CMs. For example, Financial Services, were provided by OPs to 21 NCPs (75 percent of those receiving the service) and these NCPs paid 85.3 percent of the support amount. Financial Services were provided by CMs to seven NCPs (25 percent of those receiving the service), and these NCPs paid 62.8 percent of the support amount.

For most types of services, such as Mentoring, Parenting and Job Training, the sample sizes are too small for the results to be significant. However, combining the data (in a regression model) and

accounting for the differences in the percentages due to the type of service, then the difference for OPs compared to CMs becomes marginally significant (p = .066).

Table 52
Percent of Support Amount Paid by NCPs in the Treatment Group: Type of Service and Provider

Services Received	CM[1] % of Support Amount Paid	CM Sample Size	OP[2] % of Support Amount Paid	OP Sample size	p-value (CM vs. OP)
Financial	62.8%	7	85.3%	21	.115
Mentoring	53.2	44	95.7	2	.176
Parenting	73.5	4	43.2	2	.652
Employment	39.6	60	49.6	24	.313
Job training	39.1	17	47.3	10	.601
Overall (after accounting for differences between types of service)					.066

[1]CM = service was provided by a CM.
[2]OP = service was provided free by an outside professional service provider.

Payment Predictor: Development and Field Testing of a Model to Predict Arrears Payments

This part of the study, the development and field testing of a model to predict the payment of child support arrears, was carried out by Policy Studies Inc., Denver, CO. The final report for the model development and testing is presented separately and was prepared by Jane C. Venohr. It is entitled: *Customer-Centered Services and Arrearage Management: Development of an Automated Tool to Predict Child Support Arrears,* Denver: Policy Studies Inc., December 2007.

Findings, Conclusions and Recommendations

The Customer-Centered Services project was a three-year federal- and state-financed project, initiated by the Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE), Commonwealth of Virginia, to investigate the efficacy of two interventions (referred to as "Right Track, Phase I and Phase II") on child support payments made by NCPs who had new cases.

Phase I

Phase I was an experimental study conducted from January 1, 2005 to August 31, 2006 in three DCSE' district offices. Data were collected by specially selected and trained Case Managers (CMs). The CMs randomly assigned NCPs to either a *Treatment Group* or a *Control Group*. The Treatment Group consisted of 1,298 NCPs, approximately one-half (657) of which were interviewed and 35.6 percent (463) consented to receive services (assistance in one or more areas of Budgeting, Mediation, Employment and Parenting). The NCPs in the Treatment Group received monthly statements of the support payment balances and periodic telephone calls to make monthly payments and request services if they had not done so. The Control Group consisted of 142 NCPs.

Phase I Findings

Percent of Support Amount Paid

A comparison of the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment Group who were interviewed, with those in the Control Group resulted in an estimated treatment effect of 5.7 percent (61.0 percent – 55.3 percent), which is not statistically significant (p = 0.195). The NCPs in the Treatment Group (n = 1298) paid 55.4 percent of the support amount. This is almost identical to the 55.3 percent of support amount paid by the NCPs in the Control Group (p = 0.989).

Sixteen quantitative variables, such as the number of support orders, and 37 categorical variables, such as the type of case, which were on a specially-designed Intake Form, were included in the analysis of differences in the percent of support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups. Four of the quantitative variables (i.e., monthly rent/mortgage payments, number of children in the case, monthly support amount and number of orders) were significantly associated with the percent of support amount paid; accounting for them decreased the 5.7 percent difference to 0.42 percent, which is not significant (p = 0.934).

The percent of the support amount paid was significantly associated with only two of the 37 categorical variables (type of support order and type of case). These two variables were further analyzed to determine if their effect on differences in the percent of support payments by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups could be accounted for by differences in the four quantitative variables. The conclusions of this analysis were no significant difference in the two categorical variables after accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables. In sum, after this further analysis, there were no significant differences in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Group for any of the 37 categorical variables.

Effects of Receiving Services

The CMs used a five-point scale to assess the level of cooperation of each NCP who consented to receive services. The percent of the support amount paid differed depending upon the level of

cooperation, and the differences were significant (p = .000). The results were that 51.8 percent of the NCPs who consented to receive services either left the program upon personal request or were removed for lack of cooperation, and paid about 50 percent of the support amount they owed. At the other end of the assessment scale, approximately 25 percent of the NCPs who were either cooperative or fully cooperative with the program requirements paid 74.9 percent and 85.7 percent, respectively, of the support amount.

Willingness/Ability to Pay

The CMs assessed the four combinations of ability/inability and willingness/unwillingness to pay support for each NCP in the Control and Treatment Groups. An analysis of their conclusions was that "Willingness to pay" is not a major problem since 86 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment Group were judged as "willing to pay." "Ability to pay" is the decisive factor since those considered as "able" paid 82.6 percent and 79.8 percent, regardless of whether they were considered "unwilling" or "willing," respectively. "Willingness to pay" is an insignificant factor in the percent of support amount paid.

Living Arrangements

Most of the NCPs (638 of 715) either rented or lived with a friend or relative. Twenty-eight NCPs in the Treatment Group and five NCPs in the Control Group were homeowners, and they paid the largest percent of the support amount (99.5 percent and 104.8 percent, respectively) than NCPs with any other living arrangement. The "rent" group paid a greater percent (70.9 percent) of the support amount than did the "live with friend or relative" group (51.9 percent).

Service of Process

Two-thirds of the NCPs (414 of 624) received personal service. The "received personal services" group paid a greater percent of the support amount (65 percent) than did those who did not receive such service (53.2 percent). For the "received personal services" group, there is no observable treatment effect (vs. Control). For the "did not receive personal services" group, there is an estimated +10.8 percent treatment effect (not quite significant, with p = .095). For the "did not receive personal services" group, after accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables discussed earlier in this report, there is no significant difference between the percent of the monthly support amount paid for NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups (estimated effect = 7.05, p = .452).

Instate/Interstate Cases

Instate cases constituted 92 percent of the new cases for the NCPs in both the Treatment and Control Groups. Overall, the NCPs with Interstate cases paid a larger percent of the support amount than those with Instate cases (72.8 percent and 59 percent, respectively). There was no significant difference in the percent of support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Gender

Ninety percent of the NCPs in both the Treatment and Control groups were male. Male NCPs paid 18.7 percent more of the support amount than female NCPs. There was no

significant difference in the percent of support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

NCP's Race

NCPs who were black constituted 87.1 percent of NCPs in the study. Overall, NCPs who were Asian/Pacific Islander, while a small number (4) paid the largest percent of the support amount (73.5 percent), followed by Hispanic NCPs (72.5 percent), white NCPs (68.8 percent) and black NCPs (58.5 percent). There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Custodial Parent of Other Children

Approximately 20 percent (19.8 percent) of the NCPs were custodial parents of another child. NCPs who are custodial parents of another child pay a greater percent of support amount (p = .076) compared to those who do not have such custody (66 percent compared to 59.2 percent). For those NCPs who do not have custody of another child, there is weak evidence that the NCPs in the Treatment Group paid a greater percent of the support amount. However, after accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables, the estimated treatment effect for those who do not have custody of another child is only +2.26, which is not significant (p = .697).

Felony Conviction

About one-third (31.3 percent) of the NCPs (226 of 722) had been convicted of a felony. Those convicted of a felony paid a much lower percent of the support amount. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Primary Means of Transportation

NCPs who are either leasing or buying a car paid 96.6 percent of the support amount, which is larger than that for NCPs who used other means of transportation. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for those who used any primary means of transportation except public transportation. For the public transportation group, the difference in the Treatment and Control Group NCPs was 47.3 – 29.8 percent or 17.5 percent, which was significant (p = .033). However, when account is made for the four quantitative variables discussed earlier in this report, the difference is reduced to 12.6 percent, which is not significant (p = .201).

Possession of Valid Driver's License

Approximately one-half (51.3 percent) of the NCPs had a valid driver's license. Those NCPs who had valid driver's licenses paid a much greater percent of the support amount (79 percent vs. 44 percent). There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Employment Status

Compared to NCPs who were employed full-time (they paid 77.1 percent of their amount), the NCPs who were either "not employed" or "temporary/occasional" employed paid a much lower percent of the monthly support amount, 36 percent and 41.6 percent, respectively. For those NCPs

who were employed "full-time," the estimated treatment effect of +9.1 percent (78.4 percent – 69.3 percent) is marginally significant (p = .078). However, by accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables, the estimated treatment effect (for full-time-employed NCPs) is reduced to +7.7%, which is not significant (p = .196).

Professional License

Approximately 14.5 percent of the NCPs possessed a professional license. NCPs with professional licenses paid a greater percent of the monthly support amount than those without such licenses; 71.6 percent and 59.2 percent, respectively. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Frequency of Seeing Child

How often an NCP sees his/her child does not appear to affect the percent of the support amount that is paid. For NCPs interviewed about the frequency of seeing their child, the largest percent of the support amount was paid by those NCPs who either see their child once/twice a month or never see their child: the respective percentages of the support amount paid were 69.6 percent and 68.1 percent. Conversely, NCPs who see their children on a daily basis paid the lowest percent of the monthly support amount, which was 55.1 percent. This appears to counter the frequently-expressed opinion about the importance of maintaining contact with their children for NCPs to assume responsibility for paying support. There is no significant difference between the Treatment and Control Groups in the payment of the monthly support amount for any of the frequency comparisons.

Satisfaction with Amount of Time Spent with Child

Satisfaction with the amount of time NCPs spend with their children is not an important factor affecting the percent of the support amount that is paid. The number of NCPs in each of the Control Groups is too small to detect any moderate differences in the monthly payments between the Treatment and Control Groups. The second largest number (213) of the NCPs was "Very dissatisfied" with the amount of time they spend with their child, but they paid 65 percent of the monthly support amount. Conversely, the largest number of NCPs (258) reported they were "Very satisfied" with the amount of time they spent with their child, yet they paid the lowest percent of the support amount (46.8 percent) of the NCPs in the various groupings. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Evaluation of Relationship with Child

How NCPs evaluate their relationship with their child is not an important factor in the percent of the support amount they pay. A total of 101 NCPs rate their relationship with their child as "Poor," but they paid 67.3 percent of the support amount, which is the highest rate of payment regardless of the evaluation. Conversely, 407 NCPs rate their relationship as "Excellent," but they paid 58.7 percent of the support amount. None of the numbers of NCPs in the Control Groups was sufficient to detect any significant difference between the Treatment and Control Groups in the percent of the support amount that was paid.

Importance of Having a Good Relationship with Child

The purpose of this question on the Intake Form was to determine the impact of the NCP'

opinion of the importance of having a good relationship with their child to their making child support payments. With the exception of one NCP who felt the relationship was "Very important," and paid 100.1 percent of his/her support amount, apparently, the relationship is unimportant. For example, 101 NCPs indicated the relationship was of "No importance," but they paid the highest percent of the support amount (67.3 percent). Based on these results, the importance of having a good relationship with the child is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. Furthermore, there is no significant difference between any of the Treatment and Control Groups of the NCP' payments of their monthly support amount. None of the control groups is large enough to be able to detect moderate effects.

Provide Other Financial Support

Whether or not NCPs provided other financial support for their children is not an important factor affecting monthly support amount payments. A total of 544 NCPs in both the Treatment and Control Groups stated they provided financial support for their children beyond paying the monthly support amount. These NCPs paid a slightly smaller percent of their monthly support amount. There is no significant treatment effect between the NCPs in the Treatment and the Control Groups in the percent of support amount paid.

Present at Child's Birth

Intuitively, it would seem that the emotional or bonding impact of NCP' presence at the birth of their children would positively influence their motivation to pay their monthly support amount. That assumption prompted the inclusion of this question on the Intake Form. However, an NCP's presence at the birth of the child is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. The percent of the monthly support amount paid is higher among those NCPs who were not present when the child was born, but there is no significant treatment effect within any of the groups.

Marriage

Most of the NCPs (87.7 percent or 464 of 529) were never married to the other parent. NCPs who were ever married to the other parent paid a greater percent of the support amount (74.7 percent vs. 58.1 percent). For the "never married" NCPs, there is a marginally significant, positive treatment effect of those who received paid services (p = .056). However, after accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables, the estimated treatment effect (for never-married NCPs) becomes -3.7 percent, which is not significant (p = .543).

Child Born Out-of-Wedlock

Most of the children (94.8 percent or 686 of 724) were born out-of-wedlock. NCPs of children who were born in-wedlock paid a greater percent of the support amount (68 percent vs. 57.6 percent). There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Length of Time Residing with Other Parent

Most of the NCPs (81.4 percent or 583 of 716) of the NCPs lived with the other parent less than 6 months. Excluding the "Not answered" group, NCPs who lived with another parent from six months to one year paid the largest percent (72.0 percent) of their monthly support amount. There is

no significant difference in the payments of the monthly support amount between NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

How Long Since Separated, If Lived Together?

Twelve of the NCPs indicated they were still living with the other parent, but they paid the lowest percent of the support amount (35.9 percent) of the NCPs in the groups shown in Table 27. How long the NCPs have been separated from the other parent is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in any of the Treatment and Control Groups.

Importance of Having a Good Relationship with the Child's Other Parent

The importance of a good relationship with the child's other parent is not an important factor affecting the percent of the support amount that NCPs pay. For example, 476 NCPs that stated this relationship is of "No Importance" paid 60.1 percent of the support amount. At the other end of the scale, 106 NCPs who stated that a good relationship was a "Very Important" factor in their paying child support, paid 65.5 percent of the support amount. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in Treatment and Control Groups, who responded differently to this question.

NCP's Relationship with Other Parent

The "NCP's relationship to the other parent" is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. For example, 185 NCPs rate their relationship with the other parent as the "Worst Possible," but they paid 67.5 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 123 NCPs rate their relationship with the other parent as the "Best Possible," yet they only paid 55.5 percent of the support amount. None of the differences in opinion about the relationship to the other parent results in a significant treatment effect on the percent of the support amount paid between the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

NCP's Confidence That Payments Are Used for the Child

The "NCP's confidence that payments are used for the child" is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. A total of 332 NCPs are "Completely confident" the payments they make are used for the child, but they only paid 57 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 130 NCPs are "Not confident at all" that the payments they make are used for the child, but they paid 63.9 percent of the support amount. It is also noteworthy that the 85 NCPs who did not provide an answer to the question made considerably lower payments (46 percent) than those who provided answers. For this question, there is no significant difference in the payments made by the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Where Does the Child Currently Live?

NCPs paid a significantly lower percent of the support amount (35.1 percent) for arrangements in which the child is living with another relative (p =.001). As would be expected, a large portion (70.5 percent) of the children live with the other parent. None of the living arrangements result in significant differences in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.

Who Has Physical Custody of the Child?

When either the grandparents or other relatives have physical custody of the child, the percent of support amount paid by the NCPs (45 percent and 39 percent, respectively) are significantly lower than when the NCP or the other parent has custody or they share custody [61.6 percent, 63 percent, and 73.6 percent, respectively (p =.001)]. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs within the various categories of the Treatment and Control Groups.

Satisfaction with Custody Arrangements

The NCPs "Satisfaction with custody arrangements" is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. For example, 199 NCPs are "Very dissatisfied" with the custody arrangements, but they paid 64.5 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 322 NCPs are "Very satisfied" with the custody arrangements, but they only paid 58 percent of the support amount. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in any comparisons of the Treatment and Control Groups regarding "Satisfaction with Custody Arrangements."

Responsibility to Pay Support

How responsible NCPs feel they are to pay support does appear to be related to their payment practices. For example, 26 NCPs feel they are not responsible to pay support for the child, and they paid 50.6 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 581 of the NCPs stated they were completely responsible to pay support for the child in the case, and they averaged paying 63.3 percent of the support amount. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups in any of the comparisons regarding a stated responsibility to pay support.

Understanding Laws and Procedures to Determine the Support Amount

Sixty-two NCPs stated they "Do not understand at all" the laws and procedures used to determine the support amount for the child in the case. This group paid an average of 64.1 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 485 NCPs stated they "Fully understand" the procedures and laws used to determine the support amount for the child in the case; however, they paid 59.4 percent of the support amount. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs within the Treatment and Control Groups and their understanding of the laws and procedures used to determine the support amount for the child in the case.

Fairness of Procedure to Determine the Support Amount

Perceived fairness in the procedure used to determine the support amount does not appear to be important in the percent of the support amount that NCPs pay. For example, 143 NCPs believe the procedure used to establish the support amount in their case was "Completely unfair." These NCPs paid 65.1 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 365 NCPs stated the procedure was "Completely fair," but they paid 59 percent of the support amount. There is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and the Control Groups based on their perception of the fairness of the procedure used to establish the support amount.

Opinion of Support Amount

Thirty percent of the NCPs believe the support amount for their child was "Too much," but they paid 66.4 percent of the amount. The largest number of the NCPs, 466 or 65.8 percent, stated the support amount was "About right." This group of NCPs paid 59.2 percent of their amount. Somewhat paradoxically, 28 NCPs (3.9 percent) stated the support amount was "Too little," but they only paid 51 percent of the amount. NCP's opinion about the amount of the support amount is not a significant factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. Furthermore, there is no significant difference within the Treatment and Control Groups in the NCP' opinion of the support amount and the percent paid.

Regularity of NCP's Parents' Child Support Payments

The statement on the Intake Form to which the NCPs responded was this: "If your father or mother was required to pay child support for you when you were a child, how regular were the payments?" Ninety-six NCPs selected the statement that the payments were "Very irregular." This group of NCPs paid 61.4 percent of the support amount for their own child. At the other end of the scale, 85 NCPs stated the payments from their parent(s) were "Very regular." The NCPs with this opinion paid 63 percent of the support amount for their own child. NCP's opinions about the regularity of his/her parent' support payments are not a significant factor affecting the percent of support amount the NCPs paid. Also, there is no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups based on their opinions of the regularity of their parents' child support payments.

Parents' Presence in NCP's Childhood

A total of 416 of the NCPs (58.6 percent) grew up with either one or no parent at home. This group paid 58.6 percent of the support amount for their child. The 293 NCPs who grew up with both parents at home paid 64.8 percent of the support amount. Parental presence in the home during the period the NCP was growing up is not a significant factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. Also, there is no significant difference in the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups in the percent of the support amount paid based upon parental presence in their childhood.

Monthly Support Amount

The NCP' support amount for the current case in this study for the Treatment Group is significantly greater than for the Control Group (p = .007). Also, the support amount for all current cases for the NCPs in the Treatment Group is significantly greater than for the Control Group (at p = .002).

Arrearages

The arrears owed by the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for the new case in this study and for all current cases were obtained when the Intake Form was completed. Only 204 and 71 NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups, respectively, had arrears for the new cases. This constituted 31 and 50 percent, respectively, of the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups. With few exceptions, virtually all of the NCPs in both groups accumulated arrears on these "new" cases during the study. The arrears for NCPs in the Treatment Group ($771) are much larger than those for NCPs in the Control Group ($488), and the difference is significant (p = .014). The average arrearages for all current cases (including the new one in this study) owed by NCPs in the Control Group ($6,256)

are larger than those owed by the NCPs in the Treatment Group ($5,771), but the difference is not significant.

Years of Education

The percents of NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups who have 12 or more years of schooling are 58.1 and 65 percent, respectively. There are no significant differences in the years of education in the NCPs in the two groups.

Monthly Income

The income distributions are similar for the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups. When NCP' monthly income exceeds $1,000, they significantly increase the percent of the support amount they pay. NCPs whose income exceeds $2,000 per month pay almost 90 percent of the support amount. Unfortunately, only 17.4 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups earn in excess of $2,000 per month. These results suggest that income limitations are a factor in NCPs paying their child support. The numbers of NCPs in the Control Group are too small in most of the income categories, which fact precludes testing for any significant differences with the NCPs in the Treatment Group.

Consent for Services: Frequency and Percent of Support Amount Paid

Employment assistance was the most frequently requested service since it was chosen by 184 NCPs in the Treatment Group. However, the average percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in this group was next to the lowest. The 26 NCPs who consented to receive Budgeting, Employment and Parenting assistance paid the lowest percent of the support amount (45.7 percent). For those services that were received by at least 10 NCPs, Parenting assistance resulted in the highest percent of the support amount being paid (11 NCPs averaged paying 85 percent of the support amount). The 31 NCPs who consented to receive Budgeting assistance paid 82.8 percent of the support amount. The percent of the support amount paid varies considerably among the different services, and the means vary by consent code ($p = .000$).

Categories: Consent and Percent of Support Amount Paid

The type of service(s) received by NCPs in the Treatment Group was categorized in four groups by the percent of support amount paid ("Paid a Relatively Large Percent," "Paid An Average Percent," "Paid a Relatively Low Percent," and "Sample Size Too Small to be Meaningful"). NCPs who received Parenting Only and Budgeting Only paid the largest percent of the support amount. Those two are followed by NCPs who consented to Mediation Only and Mediation and Parenting and paid 79 and 73.8 percent, respectively, of the support amount. The NCPs in the Treatment Group that declined to participate in the offer of services paid 71 percent of the support amount.

The "Paid An Average Percent" category consisted of NCPs who consented to receive Employment, Mediation and Parenting, All Four Services, and Employment and Mediation; those NCPs paid 60 percent, 58.4 percent and 55.4 percent, respectively of the support amount. The four services in the "Paid a Relatively Low Percent of Support amount" were Employment and Parenting (NCPs paid 51.5 percent of the support amount), Budgeting and Employment (NCPs paid 49.8 percent of the support amount), Budgeting and Parenting (NCPs paid 49.4 percent of the support amount), Employment (NCPs paid 49 percent of the support amount), and Budgeting, Employment and Parenting (NCPs paid 45.7 percent of the support amount). The services in which the sample size was

too small were Budgeting and Mediation (four NCPs paid an average of 90.2 percent of the support amount), Budgeting, Mediation and Parenting (six NCPs paid an average of 78 percent of the support amount) and Budgeting, Employment and Mediation (eight NCPs paid an average of 60 percent of the support amount).

The differences among the mean percent of the support amount paid for the different consent codes are significant (p = .000).

Cost of Services

Referrals were made to professional service providers for 248 of the 463 NCPs who consented to receive services.   The fees charged by these providers totaled $60,475. The fees incurred for services to 102 of the NCPs (41.1 percent of the total) were less than $100. An additional 64 NCPs received services that cost from $100 to $200, inclusive. Over 80 percent (82.6 percent) of the NCPs received services that cost from less than $100 to $300, inclusive. Only 15 (6 percent) of the 248 NCPs received services that cost more than $500. There is no relationship between the cost of services and the percent of the support amount that the NCPs paid. The numbers of NCPs in categories where the cost of services was over $500 are too small to test for significance. Incurring more than $500 in costs for services was not prudent for the NCPs in this study.

Phase I Conclusions

Phase I was an experimental study conducted from January 1, 2005 to August 31, 2006 in three DCSE' district offices. Data was collected by specially selected and trained Case Managers (CMs). The CMs randomly assigned NCPs to either a *Treatment Group* or a *Control Group*. The Treatment Group consisted of 1,298 NCPs, approximately one-half (657) of which were interviewed and 35.6 percent (463) consented to receive services (assistance in one or more areas of Budgeting, Mediation, Employment and Parenting). The Control Group consisted of 142 NCPs.

After accounting for the effects of four (monthly rent/mortgage payments, number of children in the case, monthly support amount and number of support orders) variables associated with the percent of support amount paid, there was an insignificant 0.42 percent difference (p = 0.934) in the percent of support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups.   There were no significant differences in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for 12 other quantitative variables or 37 categorical variables.

For those NCPs in the Treatment Group who received services, the percent of the support amount paid differed significantly depending upon the level of cooperation (p = .000). About one-half (51.8 percent) of the NCPs who consented to receive services either left the program upon personal request or were removed for lack of cooperation and paid about 50 percent of the support amount they owed. Approximately 25 percent of the NCPs, who were either cooperative or fully cooperative, paid 74.9 percent and 85.7 percent, respectively, of the support amount.

The CMs assessed the ability/inability and willingness/unwillingness to pay support for each NCP in the Control and Treatment Groups. "Willingness to pay" was not a major problem since 86 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment Group were judged as "willing to pay." "Ability to pay" was the decisive factor since those considered as "able" paid 82.6 percent and 79.8 percent, regardless of whether they were considered "unwilling" or "willing," respectively.

Most of the NCPs (638 of 715) either rented housing or lived with a friend or relative. Twenty-eight NCPs in the Treatment Group and five NCPs in the Control Group were homeowners, and they paid the largest percent of the support amount (99.5 percent and 104.8 percent, respectively) than NCPs with any other living arrangement.

Two-thirds of the NCPs received "Personal Service of Process" but, after accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables discussed above, there was no significant difference in the percent of the monthly support amount paid by NCPs based on the type of service.

Instate cases constituted 92 percent of the new cases for the NCPs in both the Treatment and Control Groups. Overall, the NCPs with Interstate cases paid a larger percent of the support amount than those with Instate cases (72.8 percent and 59 percent, respectively).

Ninety percent of the NCPs in both the Treatment and Control groups were male. Male NCPs paid 18.7 percent more of the support amount than did female NCPs.

Black NCPs constituted 87.1 percent of NCPs in the study. Asian/Pacific Islander NCPs, while a small number (4), paid the largest percent of the support amount (73.5 percent), followed by Hispanic NCPs (72.5 percent), white NCPs (68.8 percent) and black NCPs (58.5 percent).

Approximately 20 percent (19.8 percent) of the NCPs were custodial parents of another child. NCPs who are custodial parents of another child pay a greater percent of the support amount (p = .076), compared to those who do not have such custody (66 percent compared to 59.2 percent). After accounting for the effects of the four quantitative variables, the estimated treatment effect for those who do not have custody of another child is only 2.26 percent, which is not significant (p = .697).

About one-third of the NCPs (226 of 722) had been convicted of a felony, and they paid a much lower percent of the support amount compared to those without a conviction (43.3 percent and 69.5 percent, respectively).

NCPs who are either leasing or buying a car paid 96.6 percent of the support amount, which is larger than that for NCPs who used other means of transportation.

Approximately one-half (51.3 percent) of the NCPs had a valid driver's license. Those NCPs who had valid driver's licenses paid a much greater percent of the support amount (79 percent vs. 44 percent).

Compared to NCPs who were employed "full-time" (they paid 77.1 percent of the support amount), the NCPs who were either "not employed" or "temporary/occasional" employed paid a much lower percent of the monthly support amount, 36 percent and 41.6 percent, respectively.

Approximately 14.5 percent of the NCPs possessed a professional license. NCPs with professional licenses paid a greater percent of the support amount than those without such licenses; 71.6 percent and 59.2 percent, respectively.

How often an NCP sees his/her child does not appear to affect the percent of the support amount paid. The largest percent of the support amount was paid by those NCPs who either see their child once/twice a month or never see their child (they paid 69.6 percent and 68.1 percent, respectively). Conversely, NCPs who see their children on a daily basis pay the lowest percent of the

monthly support amount, which is 55.1 percent. These results appear to counter the frequently-expressed opinion about the importance of maintaining contact with their children for NCPs to assume responsibility for paying support.

Satisfaction with the amount of time spent with their child is not an important factor in the percent of the support amount that NCPs pay. For example, the second largest number (213) of the NCPs was "Very dissatisfied" with the amount of time they spend with their child, but they paid 65 percent of the monthly support amount. Conversely, the largest number of NCPs (258) reported they were "Very satisfied" with the amount of time they spent with their child, yet they paid the lowest percent (46.8 percent) of the support amount.

How NCPs evaluate their relationship with their child is not an important factor in the percent of the support amount they pay; for example, 101 NCPs rate their relationship as "Poor," but they paid 67.3 percent of the support amount, which is the highest rate of payment regardless of the evaluation. Conversely, 407 NCPs rate their relationship as "Excellent," yet they paid 58.7 percent of the support amount.

NCP' opinion of the importance of their parent-child relationship is unimportant in the percent of the support amount they pay. For example, 101 NCPs indicated the relationship was of "No importance," but they paid the highest percent of the support amount (67.3 percent).

Providing other financial support for their children is not an important factor in the percent of the support amount NCPs pay. The 544 NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups who stated they provided other financial support for their children paid 60.5 percent of the support amount compared to 62.9 percent paid by the 167 NCPs who stated they did not provide other support.

Any emotional or bonding impact of NCP' presence at the birth of their children is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. Those NCPs present at the birth of the child paid 60.6 percent of the support amount compared to the 62.5 percent paid by NCPs who were not present at the birth.

Most of the NCPs (87.7 percent or 464 of 529) were never married to the other parent. NCPs who were ever married to the other parent paid a greater percent of the support amount (74.7 percent compared to 58.1 percent).

Most of the children (94.8 percent or 686 of 724) were born out-of-wedlock. NCPs of children who were born in-wedlock paid a greater percent of the support amount (68 percent compared to 57.6 percent).

Most of the NCPs (81.4 percent or 583 of 716) lived with the other parent less than 6 months. Excluding the "Not answered" group, NCPs who lived with the other parent from six months to one year paid the largest percent (72.0 percent) of the support amount. Twelve of the NCPs indicated they were still living with the other parent, yet they paid the lowest percent (35.9 percent) of the support amount.

NCP' opinion of the importance of his/her relationship with the other parent is not an important factor affecting the percent of the support amount that NCP pays. The 476 NCPs that stated this relationship is of "No Importance" paid 60.1 percent of the support amount. At the other end of the scale, 106 NCPs who stated that a good relationship was a "Very Important" factor in their paying child support paid 65.5 percent of the support amount.

The "NCP's relationship with the other parent" is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid. There were 185 NCPs who rate their relationship with the other parent as the "Worst Possible," but they paid 67.5 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 123 NCPs rate their relationship with the other parent as the "Best Possible" and paid only 55.5 percent of the support amount.

The "NCP's confidence that payments are used for the child" is not an important factor affecting the percent of support amount paid; 332 NCPs stated they were "Completely confident" the payments they make are used for the child, but they only paid 57 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 130 NCPs are "Not confident at all" that the payments they make are used for the child, but they paid 63.9 percent of the support amount. It is also noteworthy that the 85 NCPs who did not provide an answer to the question made considerably lower payments (46 percent) than those who provided answers.

NCPs paid a significantly lower percent of the support amount (35.1 percent) for arrangements in which the child is living with another relative (p =.001). As would be expected, a large portion (70.5 percent), or 563 of the children, live with the custodial parent.

When either the grandparents or other relatives have physical custody of the child, the percent of support amount paid by the NCPs (45 percent and 39 percent, respectively) are significantly lower than when the NCP or the custodial parent has custody or they share custody [61.6 percent, 63 percent, and 73.6 percent, respectively (p =.001)].

The NCPs "Satisfaction with custody arrangements" is not an important factor affecting the percent of the support amount paid; 199 NCPs are "Very dissatisfied" with the custody arrangements, but they paid 64.5 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 322 NCPs are "Very satisfied" with the custody arrangements yet paid only 58 percent of the support amount.

How responsible NCPs feel about their obligation to pay support does appear related to the percent of the support amount they pay. There were 26 NCPs who felt they are not responsible to pay support for the child, and they paid 50.6 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 581 of the NCPs stated they were completely responsible to pay support for the child in the case, and they paid 63.3 percent of the support amount.

Sixty-two NCPs stated they "Do not understand at all" the laws and procedures used to determine the support amount for the child in the case, but they paid 64.1 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 485 NCPs who stated they "Fully understand" the procedures and laws used to determine the support amount of the child in the case paid 59.4 percent of the support amount.

Perceived fairness in the procedure used to determine the support amount does not appear to be important in the percent of the support amount that NCPs pay. The 143 NCPs who believe the procedure used to establish the support amount in their case was "Completely unfair" paid 65.1 percent of the support amount. Conversely, 365 NCPs stated the procedure was "Completely fair," and they paid 59 percent of the support amount.

NCP's opinion about the amount of the support amount is not a significant factor affecting the percent of the support amount paid. For example, 214 (30.2 percent) of the NCPs believe the support amount for their child was "Too much," but they paid 66.4 percent of the support amount. The largest number, 466 (65.8 percent) of the NCPs, stated the support amount was "About right" and paid 59.2

percent of the support amount. Somewhat paradoxically, 28 NCPs (3.9 percent) stated the support amount was "Too little," but they only paid 51 percent.

The NCP's opinion about the regularity of his/her parent' payment of child support is not a significant factor affecting the percent of support amount the NCPs paid. The statement on the Intake Form to which the NCPs responded was this: "If your father or mother was required to pay child support for you when you were a child, how regular were the payments?" Ninety-six NCPs selected the statement that the payments were "Very irregular." This group of NCPs paid 61.4 percent of the support amount for their own child. At the other end of the scale, 85 NCPs stated the payments from their parent(s) were "Very regular." The NCPs with this opinion paid 63 percent of the support amount for their own child.

Parental presence in the home during the period the NCP was growing up is not a significant factor affecting the percent of support amount paid; 416 of the NCPs who grew up with either one or no parent at home paid 58.6 percent of the support amount for their child. The 293 NCPs who grew up with both parents at home paid 64.8 percent of the support amount.

The average support amount for the current case in this study for the NCPs in the Treatment Group ($239) is significantly greater than the average for NCPs in the Control Group ($197) (significant at p = .007). Also, the average support amount for all current cases for the NCPs in the Treatment Group ($336) is significantly greater than for those in the Control Group ($271) (significant at p = .002).

The average arrears owed by the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for the new case in this study and for all current cases were obtained when the Intake Form was completed. Only 204 and 71 NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups, respectively had arrears for the new cases. This constituted 31 and 50 percent, respectively, of the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups. With few exceptions, virtually all of the NCPs in both groups accumulated arrears on these "new" cases during the study. The average arrears for NCPs in the Treatment Group ($771) are much larger than the average for those in the Control Group ($488), and the difference is significant (p = .014). The average arrearages for all current cases (including the new one in this study) owed by NCPs in the Control Group ($6,256) are larger than those owed by the NCPs in the Treatment Group ($5,771), but the difference is not significant.

The percent of NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups who have 12 or more years of schooling are 58.1 and 65 percent, respectively.

The income distributions are similar for the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups. When NCP' monthly income exceeds $1,000, they significantly increase the percent of the support amount they pay. NCP' whose income exceeds $2,000 per month pay almost 90 percent of the support amount. Unfortunately, only 17.4 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups earn in excess of $2,000 per month. These results suggest that income limitations are a factor in NCPs paying their child support.

Employment assistance was the most frequently requested service since it was chosen by 184 of the NCPs in the Treatment Group. However, the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs in this group was next to the lowest. The 26 NCPs who consented to receive Budgeting, Employment and Parenting assistance paid the lowest percent of the support amount (45.7 percent). For those services that were received by at least 10 NCPs, Parenting assistance resulted in the highest percent of the support amount being paid (11 NCPs averaged paying 85 percent of the support amount). The 31

NCPs who consented to receive Budgeting assistance paid 82.8 percent of the support amount. The percent of the support amount paid varies considerably among the different services, and the means vary by consent code (p = .000).

Referrals were made to service providers for 248 of the NCPs who consented to receive services. The fees charged by these providers totaled $60,475. The fees incurred for services to 102 of the NCPs (41.1 percent of the total) were less than $100. An additional 64 NCPs received services that cost from $100 to $200, inclusive. Over 80 percent (82.6 percent) of the NCPs received services that cost from less than $100 to $300 inclusive. Only 15 (6 percent) of the 248 NCPs received services that cost more than $500. There is no relationship between the cost of services and the percent of the support amount the NCPs paid. Incurring more than $500 in costs for services was not prudent for the NCPs in this study.

There was no significant difference in the percent of support amount paid by NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups for comparisons based on: method of service of process, instate/interstate case, gender, race, felony convictions, mode of transportation, possession of a driver's license, employment status, possession of a professional license, frequency of seeing their child, satisfaction with the amount of time spent with their child, perceived relationship with their child, importance of the NCP/child relationship, provide other financial support, present at the child's birth, marital status, child born out-of-wedlock, length of time NCP resided with the other parent in the case, perceived importance of having a good relationship with the other parent in the case, NCP's willingness to pay child support, NCPs' relationship with the other parent, NCP' confidence that support payments are used for the child, child's place of residence, individuals who have custody of the child, NCP' satisfaction with custody arrangements, NCP' perception of responsibility to pay child support, NCP' understanding of laws and procedures used to determine the support amount, NCP' perception of the fairness of procedures used to determine the support amount, opinion of the support amount, regularity of NCP' parents child support payments, parents' presence in NCP's childhood, amount of arrearages, or years of education.

Phase I Recommendations

This study found no significant differences in the percent of the support amount paid by a Treatment Group of NCPs who consented to receive services from professional service providers and a Control Group of NCPs. Most NCPs did not cooperate with either the CMs or the service providers. The NCPs in the Treatment Group were neither required to consent to services nor to cooperate with service providers. Judicial involvement in providing services to NCPs is recommended to encourage cooperation with CMs and/or service providers when support orders are established in court and/or when cases are referred to the courts for failure to pay support.[33]

NCPs who received Personal Service of Process (SOP) paid 7 percent more of the support amount than those who received other forms of service. While this percent difference is not significant (p = .452), another study found a strong relationship between personal as opposed to substitute SOP with both child support collections and the necessity of issuing capiases.[34] The above findings support consideration of extensive utilization of Personal SOP.

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[33] See *The Barriers Project*, Division of Child Support Enforcement, Virginia Department of Social Services, February 2006.

[34] See *Reducing Judicial & Administrative 'Dead File' Cases Through Better Use of Technology & Interagency Cooperation*, Division of Child Support Enforcement, Virginia Department of Social Services, July 2006. This report outlines other benefits from personal SOP.

NCPs who are employed full-time paid 77.1 percent of the support amount compared to 36 percent for unemployed NCPs and 41.6 percent for those NCPs who were temporary/occasionally employed. Assisting NCPs who are unemployed, employed part-time, and underemployed to obtain full-time jobs that are commensurate with their skill sets will increase support payments.

NCPs whose monthly income exceeds $2,000 pay almost 90 percent of the support amount. Only 17.4 percent of the NCPs in the Treatment and Control Groups earn in excess of $2,000 per month. Insufficient income is a major cause of NCP's failure to pay child support. This is further support for assisting NCPs to obtaining gainful, full-time employment.

There is no relationship between the cost of services provided by professional service providers and the percent of the support amount paid. Programs to provide paid services to NCPs should carefully monitor service fees and establish an upper limit at $400 per NCP. Alternatively, stronger emphasis should be placed on referring NCPs to free services that are available which meet their needs.

Employment services were the most frequently requested service, but NCPs who received these services paid next to the lowest percentage of the child support. These results suggest that employment assistance is needed, but there were problems with the type of assistance provided in this study. The reasons for this may include unsatisfactory service quality, NCPs not meeting their responsibilities, and/or the NCPs not being adequately qualified to receive the services. Programs to provide employment services to NCPs should be carefully evaluated to ensure the providers are qualified, and service delivery should be monitored. Service providers should be required to establish outcome goals for each NCP being assisted and, also, provide status reports of progress.

Phase II

Phase II was a field experiment to test the efficacy of providing five free services[35] to NCPs with the objective of better preparing them to make their child support payments. Phase II also included testing a Payment Predictor model.[36] The intervention and the Payment Predictor were administered by specially selected and trained Case Managers (CM)s. CMs commenced accepting NCPs into Phase II in January 2007 and accepted the last NCPs in June 2007.[37]

Treatment and Control Groups

The CMs randomly assigned NCPs who had new cases to either a *Treatment Group* or a *Control Group*. The CMs diligently attempted to interview all the NCPs in the Treatment Group to determine their need for services. Some NCPs in the Treatment Group either could not be contacted, or they refused requests for interviews. The CMs made repeated efforts to conduct interviews in these situations and were successful with some NCPs who initially refused to be interviewed. The Treatment Group consisted of 377 NCPs, and 98 (25.9 percent) were interviewed. The Control Group consisted of 434 NCPs. Interviews were not conducted with NCPs in the Control Group since no information was to be obtained from them, as it was in Phase I.

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[35] The services were Financial Counseling, Mentoring, Parenting, Employment Assistance and Job Training.
[36] Development and testing of the Payment Predictor are covered in a separate project report: Venohr, Jane C., *Customer-Centered Services and Arrearage Management: Development of an Automated Tool to Predict Child Support Arrears,* Denver: Policy Studies Inc., December 2007. Note: The field test of the Payment Predictor did not introduce a multiple-treatment effect in the study (See Campbell, Donald T. and Stanley, Julian C., *Experimental and Quasi-Experimental Designs for Research*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1963).
[37] NCP' payments for Phase II were recorded from January to November 2007, inclusive. Eleven months of payments were the maximum number recorded for the NCPs entering Phase II in January 2007.

Phase II Findings

Percent of Support Amount Paid

The percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Control and the Treatment Groups was 59.2 percent and 66.9 percent, respectively; this 7.7 percent point difference is not significant.

Communications with NCPs

The CMs used four different methods to contact NCPs in the Treatment Group to encourage them to make their child support payments. Over the 10-month period of Phase II, the CMs made 103 Face-to-Face contacts with 76 NCPs; placed 1,019 Telephone Calls to the residences of 238 NCPs in which someone was contacted (either the NCP, a family member or someone else); sent a total of 2,931 Letters to 370 NCPs; and sent 6 e-mail messages to one NCP.

Method of Contact and Percent of Support Amount Paid

The percent of the support amount paid by NCPs was less for those who were contacted Face to Face (53.8 percent) than for those who were contacted either by Telephone (69.8 percent) or by Letter (66.9 percent). The differences in the percent of the support paid between Face-to-Face contacts and the other methods are significant ($p = 0.013$ for Face-to-Face vs. Telephone Call; $p = .038$ for Face-to-Face vs. Letter; and, $p = .017$ for Face-to-Face vs. Telephone Call and Letter combined). The difference between the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs who received Telephone Calls and those who received Letters is not significant.

Services Provided

During interviews with NCPs in the Treatment Group, the CMs assessed their need for the five types of unpaid services. Most of the NCPs in the Treatment Group did not receive services. Employment assistance was the most frequently provided service, with 84 NCPs receiving it. Mentoring was the second most frequently requested service, with 46 NCPs receiving it. The next two most frequent services were Financial Counseling and Job Training, at 28 and 27 NCPs, respectively. Finally, only six NCPs received Parenting services. Continued efforts to offer services were unproductive.

Effects of Services on Percent of Support Amount Paid

For those NCPs who received services, payment practices significantly differed depending upon the service received ($p = .000$), with those NCPs who received Financial Counseling paying the greatest percent of the support amount and the NCPs who received Employment and Job Training services paying the least. These conclusions do not change if the NCPs who received Parenting services are eliminated from the comparisons, because the latter sample size was so small.

Service Providers

Services were provided by either an unpaid outside professional service provider (OP) or by a CM. With the exception of Financial Counseling, CMs provided services for more NCPs than OPs did. For each type of service (except Parenting, for which the sample sizes were extremely small -- 4 for CM

and 2 for OP), the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs who received services from OPs was greater than for those who received services from the CMs. For example, Financial Services were provided by OPs to 21 NCPs (75 percent of those receiving the service), and these NCPs paid 85.3 percent of the support amount. Financial Services were provided by CMs to seven NCPs (25 percent of those receiving the service), and these NCPs paid 62.8 percent of the support amount.

For most types of services, such as Mentoring, Parenting and Job Training, the sample sizes were too small for the results to be significant. However, when combining the data in a regression model and accounting for the differences in the percentages due to the type of service, the difference for OPs compared to CMs became marginally significant (p = .066).

Phase II Conclusions

There was no significant difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Control and the Treatment Groups, which was 59.2 percent and 66.9 percent, respectively.

The CMs used four different methods to contact NCPs in the Treatment Group to encourage them to make their child support payments. Over the 10-month period of Phase II, the CMs made 103 Face-to-Face contacts with 76 NCPs; placed 1,019 Telephone Calls to the residences of 238 NCPs in which someone (including the NCP, a family member or someone else) was contacted; sent a total of 2,931 Letters to 370 NCPs; and sent 6 e-mail messages to one NCP.

The percent of the support amount paid by NCPs was less for those who were contacted Face-to-Face (paid 53.8 percent of the support amount) than for those who were contacted either by Telephone (69.8 percent) or by Letter (66.9 percent). The differences in the percent of the support paid between Face-to-Face contacts and the other methods are significant (p = 0.013 for Face-to-Face vs. Telephone Call; p = .038 for Face-to-Face vs. Letter; and, p = .017 for Face-to-Face vs. Telephone Call and Letter combined). The difference between the percent of the support amount paid by the NCPs who received Telephone Calls and those who received Letters is not significant.

During interviews with NCPs in the Treatment Group, the CMs assessed their need for the five types of unpaid services. Employment assistance was the most frequently provided service, with 84 NCPs receiving it. Mentoring was the second most frequently requested service, with 46 NCPs receiving it. The next two most frequent services were Financial Counseling and Job Training, at 28 and 27 NCPs, respectively. Finally, only six NCPs received Parenting services.

For those NCPs who received services, the percent of the support amount paid significantly differs depending upon the service received (p = .000), with those NCPs who received Financial Counseling paying the greatest percent of the support amount (79.1 percent) and the NCPs who received Employment and Job Training services paying the least (42.4 and 42.1 percent, respectively). NCPs who received Mentoring services paid 55 percent of the support amount.

Services were provided by either an unpaid outside professional service provider (OP) or a CM. With the exception of Financial Counseling, CMs provided services for more NCPs than OPs did. NCPs assisted by CMs typically paid a smaller percent of the support amount than those assisted by OPs. For most services, such as Mentoring, Parenting and Job Training, the sample sizes were too small for the results to be significant. However, combining the data (in a regression model) and accounting for the differences in the percent of support paid due to the type of service, the difference for OPs vs. CMs is marginally significant (p = .066).

Phase II Recommendations

NCPs in the Treatment Group in Phase I who received budgeting, financial services or employment services from paid service providers, paid 82.8 and 49 percent of the support amount, respectively. NCPs in the Treatment Group in Phase II who received budgeting, financial Services or employment services from unpaid OPs, paid 85.3 percent and 49.6 percent of the support amount, respectively. In sum, NCPs in Phase II who received services from unpaid providers paid approximately the same percent of the support amount as the NCPs in Phase I who received similar services from providers who were paid. To ascertain further reasons for this result, selective experiments using unpaid service providers, particularly offering budgeting or financial services in an early intervention program like the one in Phase II should be conducted.

NCPs who were contacted by telephone paid 69.8 percent of the support amount; those contacted by letter paid 66.9 percent of the support amount. Overall, the NCPs in the Treatment Group paid 66.9 percent of the support amount (coincidentally, the same percent as the NCPs who received Letters). The NCPs in the Control Group who were not contacted paid 59.2 percent of the support amount. The difference in the percent of the support amount paid by NCPs in the Control Group and the Treatment Groups (59.2 percent vs. 66.9 percent) is not significant (p = .132), but there is enough difference to warrant further study of the effectiveness of communicating with NCPs to increase payments. Based on these findings, it is recommended telephone calls be made and letters sent to NCPs who have new cases in an early intervention program.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Expert Panel Focus Group

Expert Panel Focus Group
April 14, 2004

Panelists present:

Experimental Offices: Paula Merritt, Norfolk
                        Carmen Gonzalez, Portsmouth
                        Eddie Nelson, Richmond

Control Offices: Mary Blevins, Abingdon
                        Lisha Whitlock, Danville
                        Lil Cooper, Manassas

Facilitators: Terri Nickel, Center for Support of Families
                Sheila Bradley, Center for Support of Families

Model Developers: PSI: Jane Venohr and Brian Laatsch

Evaluation Team: Don Myers and Phyllis Myers, VCU

DCSE: Todd Areson, Director of Research, Project Manager

Goals of the expert panel:

NCP Profile
Barriers
Services
Ideas for being more customer service-oriented approach

Introduction by Terri
Further brief explanation of project by Todd.
   Identified barriers in the 2001 Fredericksburg study: visitation issues; arrears amount, etc.

Comments from expert panel:

Identification of Barriers

No bond with child
Mother is often the cause of that lack of bond
Bad relationship between NCP and Mom
Attitude: It's a check, not a person.
Reduced amount of bonding (than normal) by the CP
Lack of family structure – was just a sexual act
NCPs – never be Dads?
Late paternity establishment

Sometimes CP does not apply for services until late. Maybe, didn't need services earlier; not aware of services; fearful of Dad; sometimes embarrassed, particularly if they don't know for sure who the father is.

Difference between TANF and non-TANF NCPs: Consensus is that population is not different among offices. CPs of TANF come much earlier; paternity established quicker. Start arrears process earlier on a TANF case b/c they come in earlier and start earlier.

Substance abuse – Go to jail, obligated during that time but can't pay

Unemployment

Young, lack of education, lack of job skills

Family cycle of nonpayment, i.e., Dads haven't paid, I don't have to pay. Many NCPs didn't receive the child support when they were children.
Children of single parents are now becoming parents themselves – no male role model

Fathering many children and, then, support payment becomes overwhelming

Haven't been taught parenting responsibility or planned parenting

Anger – didn't ask for this; anger regarding their childhood

Lack of opportunities (for jobs, for example)
Danville and Abingdon a real issue - have high unemployment.

Lack of transportation (suspension of license; no vehicle)
No personal ID or convicted felons – can't get a job or difficult to get a job
Getting through the maze of bureaucracy

Estrangement from family

Accountability of payments – what is CP doing with the money?

Interest charges are high

Our concept of 'dead-beat' Dads a detriment

Problem is often 'dead-broke' rather than 'dead-beat'

Many NCPs believe the Child Support guidelines are too high relative to their income.
Are based upon gross income before taxes
Richmond and Portsmouth don't see them as too high – they see them as low.

Cultural problem - diminished respect for fathers and the need for a father in the home. Not a lot of male role models.

Already defeated feeling when they walk in
Difficulty in follow-up with NCPs by Child Support specialists

Enforcement specialists are numbers-driven; incentives are numbers-driven
Lack of bond between case worker and NCPs

Lack of time to devote to NCPs – a staffing issue

DCSE policies and procedures – e.g., gentleman got behind; tried to get his passport back – but, he couldn't get it b/c he was still in arrears even though he was paying regularly for years – his wife even offered to give money from her 401(k) to pay, but CSE could not accept it. Procedures are very strict, little flexibility. Need more flexibility at Divisional level. Can play more with financial negotiation with the TANF, because it is owed the state, not the CP.

Kelly v. Kelly decision states that the Mom cannot barter away the rights of the child. The support is due the child, not the Mom.

Lack of education for NCP and CP about how child support works

NCP health problems – receiving SSI benefits; SSA can collect, cannot touch SSI; it's believed that many are not legitimately eligible for SSI.

Highest Priority Barriers

1. Employability
   job skills
   education
   job market
2. Jail
   Ex-felon
   Incarcerated
3. High interest rate
4. Substance abuse
5. Info about Child Support Program by CP and NCP

- About the Same Level of Priority – But Important

6. No bond with child – both Dad and Mom
7. Generational cycle
8. Lack of opportunities
9. Treatment of NCP by child support workers
10. Lack of family support

NCP Profile

Paying:

Employed, but not self-employed persons (W-2 v. 1099s)
Actively involved with kids (shared custody)
Educated
Somewhat older
Responsible

Trapped in arrears and have to pay
Automatic income withholding

Non-Paying:

Barbers
Farmers
Construction workers – seasonal and contractual, not a steady job
Self-employed
Merchant seamen
Females are worse
Out-of-state
Ex-military
Fast-food workers

Identification of Services Needed

Give DCSE the authority to give them a lower payment award if they work with DCSE program, but will revert back to higher amount if they don't – i.e., incentives.

Mediation – agree to, in terms of order amount

Don't bog NCP down with arrears.

Employment programs – apprenticeships; shipyard training (TCC-Tidewater Community College) – often needs transportation

Offer jobs within DCSE or other state agencies or offices, e.g., custodian, schools need yard work – DSS use to do this when welfare reform started – partnerships.

CP can get TANF housing, why not give some of this assistance to NCPs for a period of time.

Refer to vocational schools, GED

Counseling services
Communication – keeping in touch with NCPs
        Case monitoring; fairly constant

Referrals to Social Services to help with things like "documentation" process

Case workers work out of SS office

Case worker needs to be familiar with the appropriate county and services offered

More holistic Social Services interagency cooperation (work with foster agencies, etc.)

Work more with probation officers – get to NCP before they are released – send a packet to read; what to expect when they get out

More info. in the high schools about fathering children and the obligations they will have

Programs to work with ex-felons to get jobs, provide transportation "OAR" (Offender Aid and Restoration); Virginia CARES; Tax benefits for employing ex-felons

Programs for substance abuse help – federal money available; Community Services Board – rely on CPs to identify.

Community outreach – go to schools; go to prisons; School Boards

NCPs need to know: Range of enforcement remedies; modifications
        Modification procedures are a nightmare, take much time, don't have the staff to do, can take up to 6 months or longer, either judicial or dept; has to do with policies, time frames, appeals process, getting info. back from CPs
        Explain enforcement ramifications – understand difference between child support enforcement v. other financial enforcement remedies – going to jail.
        Explain appeals process

Offer parenting classes in high schools (prevention)

Follow-ups with NCPs

Time to devote to NCPs and their situation

Provide help for them – psychological for those who feel defeated and have low-esteem

What is probability we can get NCP in and offer strategies to get them to use services?

Norfolk – many walk-ins (may need 2 people)- about 50% would come – rest, have to summons in to get them in at all
Danville – 50% would come in; have to summons; like Abingdon, large geographical area, has a satellite site
Abingdon – not many come in; mostly telephone interviews
Richmond – 10% would come in
Manassas – does not know
Portsmouth – maybe, 25% would come in at paternity establishment stage

Can CP provide us with characteristics of NCP; some provided in automation system, online with DMV, DSS

Bring NCPs into the office:

Are we going to summons them as in the past, or send out notice, to provide services?
Some don't need to come in b/c paternity established at hospital.
Design a brochure to entice them into the office to accept services – don't label from DCSE
Need a public relations area to educate the public
Develop a catchy new name
% coming in could go up if they were being offered services
Offer services instead of threatening summons?

Intake is not always face-to-face

Point of first coming in, paternity establishment

Improving NCP treatment

> Face-to-face meeting
> Training for DCSE Case Specialists
> Separate enforcement side from service intervention
> Cradle-to-grave case management:
>   Takes a highly trained worker
> Keep same NCP
> Need liaisons for services

PSI

Geographical differences

Questions:

1. Practical Uses of the Arrearages-Prediction Tool
   a. How could CSE specialists use an arrearages-prediction tool?

> Refer the highest risk to as many services as applicable
> Eddie: Everyone is high-risk most of the time
> What would you do differently knowing this additional information?

> Wouldn't work with those that are higher at risk – would work with those that are more likely to pay because that is what they get incentives for.

> Use at establishment stage: identify factors and afford services, as needed.

> 90-day enforcement action

> What would we want a person to do if they did not have this case manager - help them find a job.

> Jane Q: How do you sort the priority of assistance, if they all need help?

> Emphasize "unable but willing to pay" NCPs

> Current priorities are federal, based upon delinquencies – a work list of cases not paid, with info. about what possibly can be done with these cases. Gets automatically when NCP has missed one payment. APECS based upon # of payments missed. Known employer would be highest priority; undistributed receipts are a priority.
> Think of this project, this new person who is concentrating on the customer services.

> How do you know if willing or unwilling to pay? Don't hear from them until you threaten them. Can identify "willing & unable" by their trying to pay. Willing will call or come in, on occasion.

Do you do anything different for the "willing and unable" than for the "willing and able"? Can't, by law.

How often would the case manager need to get a list of the high category, such as "willing and unable" and "willing and able"? How often for monitoring? 30 days.

Jane Q: If this went statewide, where would you get from? Who should get? Answer from panel: From enforcement point of view, we would not want to see it at all. Don't have time.

Brian Q: Do you look at attachable assets? Yes, and at amount of arrearages

Use of tool is vague. Jane gave examples:
Use for court orders, e.g., problem would be enforcing the order.
For incentives
For more intensive case management
For determining scare resources – for example, job opportunities. Panel: Yes.

Negotiating obligation
Negotiating interest.

Jane Q: Is it important to get info from CP? Is it critical and credible? Panel: Yes.

Jane Q: Do you think arrears is affected by the NCP's relationship with the child? Panel: Yes

How to get the data to feed into the model? E.g., work history, similar info.?

Appendix 2: Case Manager Job Description, Phase I

Position Description   (7/19/04)
Title: CM
Basic Function: Provides comprehensive case management for noncustodial parents (NCPs) in the Customer Services Project by interviewing them to assess their need(s) for customer services, providing referrals to appropriate service providers, and monitoring and reviewing service delivery to ensure any needs are met with the goals of improving the NCP's quality of life and parenting skills, enhancing their ability to function in society and preventing support arrearages.
Tasks: **Explain Services and Obtain Consent** Discuss with the customer the types of services provided, depending upon need, and how the services will be provided with the ultimate goal of facilitating relationships with his/her child and making regular support payments for the development and well being of the child. Explain actual services provided will depend upon the customer's needs and desires. Answer questions; reemphasize any information about the type and manner in which services will be provided. Provide assurance that any and all services are entirely based upon the consent of the customer, are free, and may be stopped at any time even if consent was initially given. Obtain initial consent or denial of services, including those customers who voluntarily request to receive them. Administer the *Consent Form* according to customer's consent for services. Secure customer's signature. Sign the *Consent Form* as a witness to the customer's agreement or disagreement to participate in one or more of the customer services. Give the customer a signed copy of the *Consent Form*. Enter the proper code on the *Payment Predictor & Customer Services Program Intake(Intake Form)* depending upon the customer's consent. **Intake** Administer the *Intake Form* to collect data on employment history, income and expenses, parenting and relationship issues, and related information. **Problem Assessment/Diagnosis** Review and, as necessary, verify information supplied by the customer during administration of the *Intake Form* regarding employment, income and budgeting, parenting, mediation, and the related. Note areas in which customer services may be needed. Ask questions as necessary to resolve any issues. Make final judgment about services needed that will increase the likelihood of customers making regular support payments. 79

Services Referral

    1. Employment Services

Complete *Employment Assessment, Referral & Monitoring* section of the *Intake Form* to customers who consent to employment services.

Assess customer's need(s) for services.

Make referral(s) to these agencies/entities based upon customer's problem assessment/diagnosis and needs

    2. **Mediation Services**

Complete the *Mediation Assistance* section of the *Intake Form* to customers who consent to mediation services.

Review information pertaining to parenting, visitation and child support payment issues.

Note areas in which improvement may be needed.

Discuss availability of mediation support.

Answer general questions regarding the mediation process.

Discuss prospects of mediation with other parent, based on customer's consent.

Arrange for mediation services, conditional upon acceptance of both parents.

Monitor progress of mediation through discussions with parents.

    3. **Income and Expense Budgeting Services**

Complete the *Income and Expense Budgeting* section of the *Intake Form* to customers who consent to these services..

Interview customer to determine available monthly income after living expenses to meet child support obligations. Note shortfalls in income levels.

Ask questions to determine what, if any, adjustments can be made in financial obligations.

Discuss plans to reduce spending and/or secure additional income (see Employment Services).

Assist in establishing payment priorities to plan debt reduction and estimate time for debt liquidation.

Refer for financial counseling as appropriate.

4. **Parenting Assistance**

Complete the *Parenting Services* portion of the *Intake Form* to customers who consent to establishing a parenting relationship.

Discuss parenting services with customer.

Answer questions about the parenting process.

Explain how persons are selected to assist with parenting.

Arrange for the assignment of parenting resources to customers.

Monitor the progress of parenting assistance.

5. **Other Referral**

Make referral(s) to these agencies/entities based upon customer's problem assessment/diagnosis and needs:
- Clinic for customer who have medical needs and cannot afford medical care;
- Relationship skill building;
- Department of Social Services for various services, including food stamps; and,
- Shelters for temporary sleeping accommodations.

Agreement to Participate and Consent to Exchange Information

Explain the *Agreement to Participate* section of the *Intake Form* which is a requirement for the customer to receive services. Obtain the customer's signature indicating agreement. Explain the *Consent to Exchange Information* section of the *Intake Form* and request the customer's signature authorizing the *CM* to exchange information with various service providers, such as employment history with the Virginia Employment Commission.

Monitoring/Evaluation

Contact representatives of referral agencies/entities to ensure customer kept appointments, and, where applicable:
- Obtain information about customer's progress; and,
- Receive information about other assistance needed.

Follow-up with customers either personally or via telephone to ensure they made contact with agencies/entities to whom they were referred.
- Send letters to customers who cannot be contacted either in person or via the telephone;
- Make contacts as frequently as necessary to ensure customers are meeting stipulations in agreements.

Conduct monthly reviews of each customer.

Check status and frequency of customer support payments.

Identify customers who are not making regular payments;
- Discuss with customers the reason(s) for non-payment and explain the ramifications of not meeting obligations;
- Determine what assistance is needed and if it can be provided;
- Make suggestions for addressing any identified problems; and,
- Make judgment about the efficacy of providing continued services to customers.

Schedule more frequent follow-ups with customers who are not meeting required targets to remain in the customer services program.

Document in APECS, the case file and the Excel database, all contacts with customers, including meetings, telephone conversations or correspondence.

Outreach

Create presentations and brochures, as needed.

Meet with representatives of community organizations to explain the customer services program, explore potential liaisons and learn names of contact personnel.

TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES:
Knowledge

Concepts and techniques of personal budgeting, family relationships and mediation, employment counseling, and parenting processes.

PC use and word processing and spreadsheet software.

Acquire this knowledge through DCSE training provided after employment:

Laws, legal codes, court procedures, and the related that apply to child support enforcement.

DCSE policies and procedures.

Principles and processes for providing customer services.

Va. laws and DCSE processes pertaining to mediation.

APECS methods and procedures

Appendix 3: Intake Form

Payment Predictor & Right Track Intake Form   Rev. 12/21/2005
(Norfolk, Portsmouth and Richmond District Offices)

CM INSTRUCTIONS: Complete just Sections A – G for all new NCP cases of the types shown as [PP Only] in A. 11 below. Complete just Sections A-H for all new cases of the types shown in A. 11 with the designation [RT] if the NCP's SSN ends in zero and/or the NCP was not interviewed. Complete Sections I – K for new [RT] cases shown in A. 11who have other than a zero as the last digit in their SSN; or, NCPs with new cases who request assistance (even if the last digit in their SSN is a zero); or, NCPs who are referred to the program by a judge.

A. Case Information

1. Internal Project ID Number: _____ - _____ [Do not complete]

2. Print NCP's name: _____ _____ _____
                                 (Last)   (First)   (MI)

3. Case no. (this case only) _____

4. NCP's Home Address: _____
                                         (no. & street)

    _____   _____
                 (city & state)   (zip code)

5. How long have you lived at this address: _____ years

6. Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Pager: _____

7. What is your current living situation:
  1 = rent
  2 = homeowner
  3 = live with friend or relative
  4 = temporary housing or shelter
  5 = other _____

8. Amount actually paid by NCP for rent/mortgage per month? $_____

9. Social Security #: _____

10. Name(s) of NCP's children, Age(s)*, Support Amount, Arrears Owed, TANF Amt of Arrears

Name(s) of NCP's children	Age(s)*	Support Amount	Arrears Owed	TANF Amt of Arrears
a. _____	_____	$_____	$ _____	$_____
b. _____	_____	$_____	$ _____	$_____
c. _____	_____	$_____	$ _____	$_____
d. _____	_____	$_____	$ _____	$_____
e. _____	_____	$_____	$ _____	$_____
f. _____	_____	$_____	$ _____	$_____
Totals		$_____	$ _____	$_____

* only required for children in this new case
 Circle the name(s) of the child(ren) involved in **this most recent** case.

11. Circle type of case: **MAOF[RT] TANF[RT] NTANF[RT]**
                          SLFC[PP Only] FC[PP Only] ARRP[PP Only] ARRN[PP Only]
    (Do not obtain any information for any other type of case.)

12. Type of support order in this case:
    1 = Administrative Order - non default
    2 = Judicial Order – non default
    3 = Order by default

13. Received personal service of Administrative Support Order:
    1 = yes   2 = no   3 = n/a

14. Number of support orders _____
15. [Intentionally omitted]

16. Instate/Interstate Case:
       1 = Instate   2 = Interstate

B. Demographic Information

1. NCP's gender:
    1 = M
    2 = F

2. Age in years: _____   Date of birth: ___/___/_____
                                              (mo) (da) (yr)
3. Past or current military service:
    1 = yes
    2 = no

4. Race (See Attachment 1):
    1 = White
    2 = Black
    3 = Hispanic
    4 = Asian/Pacific Islander
    5 = American Indian
    6 = Other

5. Years of education: 7 or less 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17+

6. Completed high school or GED:
     1 = yes   2 = no

7. Are you a custodial parent of a child?
     1 = yes   2 = no

8. Ever convicted of a felony?
     1 = yes   2 = no

9. No. of days incarcerated for *child support reasons*: _____days

10. What is your primary means of transportation?
    1 = own vehicle
    2 = leasing or buying a vehicle
    3 = friend/relative's vehicle
    4 = public transportation
    5 = other _____ (explain)

11. Do you have a valid driver's license?
    1 = yes
    2 = no
    3 = DCSE suspended license
    4 = other _____ (explain)

12. Monthly gross income from all sources:
   $_____   [Use APECS rather than information from NCP]

13. How was the income noted in #12 above determined?
       1 = Noncustodial parent
       2 = Guidelines worksheet used to establish order
       3 = Financial statement in case file
       4 = Photocopy of pay stub in case file
       5 = Imputed at minimum wage
       6 = Imputed at median earnings
       7 = Other_____

14. [Intentionally omitted]

15. Circle all sources of income:
    1 = employment
    2 = retirement compensation
    3 = disability income
    4 = Social Security
    5 = Unemployment Compensation
    6 = Other _____ (Indicate source)

16. How would you rank your credit rating:
    1 = poor
    2 = fair
    3 = average
    4 = good
    5 = excellent
    6 = don't know

C. Employment Information

1. Which one of the following best describes your current employment status:
    1 = employed full-time, name of occupation _____SOC code_____
    2 = employed part-time, name of occupation _____SOC code_____
    3 = self-employed, name of occupation _____ SOC code_____
    4 = employed on temporary basis/occasional jobs
    5 = currently not employed

2. If employed:
   Present employer's name & address: _____

   Dates of employment: From: _____   To: _____
                                (mo. & year)   (mo. & year)

   Salary/wage (show as a hourly amount): $_____ No. hours worked per wk.: ____
       If weekly salary given, divide by 40
       If monthly salary given, divide by 173
       If annual salary given, divide by 2080

3. If you are not currently working, which one of the following best describes the reason:
    1 = laid-off or terminated from last job
    2 = voluntarily quit last job
    3 = unable to work due to temporary disability or illness
    4 = unable to work due to permanent disability or illness
    5 = unable to work because am the primary caretaker for a person
    6 = other _____

4. If you are unemployed, what is the date that you last worked ? ____ ____ ____
                                                                    (mo.) (day) (yr.)
5. How many jobs have you had in the past two years? _____

6. CM's assessment of NCP's employment record:
    1 = unemployed, for one year or more
    2 = unemployed, for less than one year
    3 = employed sporadically within past year
    4 = presently employed but capable of better employment
    5 = presently employed to potential

7. Professional License:
    1 = yes   If yes, show Type _____, Occupation _____
    2 = no

D. Relationship with Your Child Involved in This Case (if more than one child in the case, consider the questions on that basis)

1. How often <u>do you see</u> this child:

	Daily	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month	Seldom	Never
Circle No.	1	2	3	4	5

2. How many hours <u>do you spend</u> with this child on average each month: _____ hours.

3. Overall, how satisfied are you with the amount of time you spend with your child? (a 7 would be very satisfied and a 1 would be very dissatisfied).
    (Circle the one that applies)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

4. How would you evaluate your relationship with this child:

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Circle No.	5	4	3	2	1

5. How important is having a good relationship with this child to your making child support payments (a 7 indicates very important and a 1 indicates no importance):
    (Circle the one that applies)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. Besides the child support order, do you provide other financial support for this child?
    1 = Yes, if yes, explain the type of support_____
    2 = No

7. Indicate the number of miles you live from this child _____

8. Were you present when this child was born:
    1 = Yes
    2 = No

E. Relationship with the Other Parent of this Child or Children

1. The BOW indicator for this case is:
    1 = Y   2 = N   (Obtain from APECS)

2. Indicate how long you and the other parent lived together:
    1 = never
    2 = less than six months
    3 = from six months to one year
    4 = from one to three years
    5 = three or more years

3. If you and the other parent lived together how long has it been since you have been separated?
    1 = n/a
    2 = less than a year
    3 = one to three years
    4 = three or more years
    5 = currently living together

4. How important is having a good relationship with this child's other parent (whether or not s/he is the CP) to you making child support payments ("7" indicates very important and a "1" indicates no importance):
    (Circle the one that applies)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

5. Rate your relationship with this child's other parent [whether or not the other parent is the CP.]
 ("7" is the best possible relationship and "1" is the worst possible relationship):
    (Circle the one that applies)   1 2 3 4 5 6 7

6. How confident are you that the payments you make for this child's support are used for the child
    ("7" would be completely confident and "1" would be not confident at all):

(Circle the one that applies)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7

F. Custody and Visitation Issues (if more than one child in the case, consider the questions on that basis)

1. Where does the child(ren) involved <u>in this case</u> currently live?
   1 = My home
   2 = With other parent
   3 = Shared physical custody with other parent
   4 = With grandparent(s)
   5 = With another relative
   6 = Foster parents' home
   7 = Other (explain) _____

2. Who presently has physical custody of this child:
   1 = Self
   2 = Other parent
   3 = Shared custody with other parent
   4 = Grandparent(s)
   5 = Other relative
   6 = Foster parents
   7 = Other (explain) _____

3. Overall, how satisfied are you with the custody arrangements for your child? (a 7 is very satisfied and a 1 is very dissatisfied).
   Circle the one that applies: 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

G. Support Payment Issues (if more than one child in the case, consider the questions on that basis)

1. How responsible do you feel you are to pay support for this child (a 7 is completely responsible and 1 is not responsible)
   Circle the one that applies: 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

2. Indicate your understanding of the laws and procedures used to determine how much support you have to pay (a 7 means you fully understand and a 1 means you do not understand at all):

   Circle the one that applies: 1   2   3   4   5   6   7

3. Indicate how fair you believe the procedure was to determine this child's support obligation (a 7 would be completely fair and a 1 would be completely unfair):

   Circle the one that applies: 1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8 (Circle 8 if does not apply)

4. Which of the following applies to the amount of your support obligation for this child:
   1 = too much
   2 = about right
   3 = too little

5. If your father or mother was required to pay child support for you when you were a child, how regular were the payments (a 7 would be very regular payments and a 1 would be very irregular payments):

   (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8 (Circle 8 if does Not Apply or Unknown)

6. As a child did you mostly grow up with *one* or *neither* parent present in your home?
   1 = yes
   2 = no – i.e., lived mostly with both parents

7. **CM's assessment** of customer's willingness/ability to pay:
   1 = Unable to pay & unwilling to pay
   2 = Unable to pay & willing to pay
   3 = Able to pay & unwilling to pay
   4 = Able to pay & willing to pay

8. Circle **all** sources of information used to complete this form:
   1- NCP interviewed at office
   2- NCP interviewed at court

3- APECS
4- Case file: Guidelines worksheet used to determine order
5- Case file: NCP's Financial statement or affidavit
6- Case file: Photocopies of NCP's pay stub
7- Case file: Custodial Parent's Intake form (specify which questions)_____
8- NCP interviewed by telephone
9- Other_____

District Employee's Signature: _____ **Date Completed:** _____

IF case is Foster Care, ARRP, ARRN, child is in the juvenile justice system or there is a FVI, THEN, STOP HERE. Submit pages 1-5 only.
_____

H. Customer Services Code   (circle the appropriate number)

   1 = NCP has a new case and a "zero" as the last digit in his/her Soc. Sec. No. and thus is not offered services and does not request services. **Do not proceed further in completing this Form**.

   2 = NCP has a new case and a "zero" as the last digit in his/her Soc. Sec. No. and is not offered services but requests them. **Continue on to Section I**.

   3 = NCP has a new case and a number other than "zero" as the last digit in his/her Soc. Sec. No. and thus is offered services. **Continue on to Section I.**

   4 = NCP has a new case and a number other than "zero" as the last digit in his/her Soc. Sec. No. and is eligible for services but has not been interviewed. **Do not proceed further in completing this form at this time. Send a letter to the NCP offering RT services.**

   5 = NCP is referred for services by a judge. **Continue to Section I.**

I.   Consent Code _____   (see Attachment 3)

J. CM's Assessment Code (CM, please complete according to Attachment 4) _____
_____

K. Services Desired but Cannot Provide (explain why)

L. Assessment and Referral for Services (CM, complete Sections M – Q, as necessary, to make an assessment of service needs for item (J) above.

M. Employment Assessment, Referral & Monitoring   (CM complete)

1. Past three employers (excluding current)

a. Employer name and address:
Supervisor's name: Supervisor's tel. no.:
Job title: SOC Code:
Dates of employment: *From:*   *To:*
Salary/wage (*show as a hourly amount*): $_____ No. hours worked per mo.: _____
Duties:

b. Employer name and address:
Supervisor's name: Supervisor's tel. no.:
Job title: SOC Code:
Dates of employment: *From:*   *To:*
Salary/wage (*show as a hourly amount*): $_____ No. hours worked per mo.: _____
Duties:

c. Employer name and address:
Supervisor's name: Supervisor's tel. no.:

Job title: SOC Code:
Dates of employment: *From:*   *To:*
Salary/wage (*show as a hourly amount*): $_____ No. hours worked per mo.: _____
Duties:

2. Employment skills you possess:

3. Training you have completed:

4. Show the three major types of employment assistance needed (put #1 in the space next to most important, #2 for next most important, and so). Put an "X" in the "None" space if no assistance is needed:
_____ Job skills/training
_____ Resume assistance
_____ Interviewing skills
_____ GED/education
_____ Conflict resolution (if difficulty getting along with bosses, co-workers or the related
_____ Other _____
_____ None

N. Mediation Assistance and Referral   (CM complete)

The mediation sessions are free and are conducted by a certified mediator to resolve any disputes between you and the other parent of your child (assuming the other parent will also agree to the mediation). An appointment will be scheduled with the other parent. In contacting the other parent an effort will be made to motivate the person to agree to mediation. If agreement is not reached, then you will be so notified. When both sides agree to mediation, an appointment will be scheduled with a mediator.   Are you interested in mediation assistance?
_____ yes   _____ no

O. Income and Expense Budgeting   (CM complete)

1. With your current income are you able to pay your bills
    1 = all the time
    2 = most of the time
    3 = some of the time
    4 = never
    5 = unknown/no response
2. With your current income are you able to pay your child support for this child(ren)
    1 = all the time
    2 = most of the time
    3 = some of the time
    4 = never
    5 = unknown/no response
If you have difficulty paying your bills and/or your child support, would you like some assistance, without charge to you, from a financial counselor to help you work out a livable budget?
    1 = yes
    2 = no
    3 = other _____

P. Parenting/Mentoring Assistance   (CM complete)

Based upon an analysis of the personal, employment and other information provided by the customer in Sections D and E (Relationship with Child, Relationship with Other Parent), formulate the type of parenting assistance that would be most effective.
Recommend (circle all that apply):
    1 = 4-hour "Co-Parenting class
    2 = Parenting skills
    3 = Visitation services (supervised visitation, child drop-off & pick-up, exchange monitoring)
    4 = Anger management
    5 = Family counseling
    6 = Responsible fatherhood program
    7 = Other _____
    8 = none

Q. Other Areas   (CM complete -- OPTIONAL)

1. Have you ever had any problems with alcohol or drugs?
    1 = yes   2 = no
 2. Are you willing to accept assistance to help you address any alcohol or drug problems?
    1 = yes   2 = no
 3. Do you have any health problems?
    1 = yes   2 = no
 4. Are you willing to accept assistance to help you with these problems?
    1 = yes   2 = no
 5. Any other areas which you would like to note?
    1 = yes, if yes, explain _____
    2 = no

Attachment 1

Race:

1 = White (Not of Hispanic origin)-All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

2 = Black (Not of Hispanic origin)-All persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

3 = Hispanic - All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

4 = Asian or Pacific Islander - All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian Subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa.

5 = American Indian or Alaskan Native - All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America, and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

Revised 9/03/04

Appendix 4: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

[Right track Program in Norfolk, Portsmouth and Richmond District Offices]

The purpose of the right track Program has been explained to me, and I understand I have been selected to receive services to improve the quality of my life and help me make my child support payments on a regular basis, to prevent the accumulation of arrearages. I understand these are the services I am being offered without any expense to me:

1. <u>Income and Expense Budgeting Assistance</u>. The purpose of this assistance is to help me develop a personalized budget and a plan to meet my financial obligations.
2. <u>Employment Assistance</u>. This service will assist me in securing employment through such activities as assessment of my job training needs, job readiness training (may include a referral for other training or GED completion), and other employment assistance, such as completing employment applications and preparing for job interviews, and identifying job opportunities that match my competencies.
3. <u>Mediation Assistance</u>. The purpose of this assistance is to help establish a cooperative relationship between me and the other parent of my child by identifying conflict issues and the tools needed to resolve those conflict issues, and by reaching a cooperative agreement to be signed by me and my child's other parent.
4. <u>Parenting Program</u>. This service will help me acquire or enhance my parenting skills through instruction and mentoring, including a plan of action for me to follow in order to improve my parenting skills.

I understand I have the choice to decline any one or all of these services, and without any adverse actions being taken against me. I have indicated my agreement/disagreement to participate in these services as follows:

_____ I agree to participate in the Income and Expense Budgeting Assistance.
_____ I do not agree to participate in the Income and Expense Budgeting Assistance.

_____ I agree to participate in Employment Assistance.
_____ I do not agree to participate in Employment Assistance.

_____ I agree to participate in Mediation Assistance.
_____ I do not agree to participate in Mediation Assistance.

_____ I agree to participate in the Parenting Program.
_____ I do not agree to participate in the Parenting Program.

I understand, also, that I may reject any assistance later even if I agree to accept it now.
I understand that I may be terminated from right track if I fail to participate in services to which I am referred, or if I fail to remain in contact with my CM.

_____   CM Witness: _____
     (Your signature and date)   (Signature and date)

Agreement to Participate

Service(s): _____

_____

Service Provider(s):

Name of Provider_____

Contact Person_____

Telephone Number_____

Address_____

_____

Hours: _____

Appointment/Participation Dates:_____

Need to bring: _____

Special Notes: _____

I understand as part of the requirement for receiving the services to which I have given consent, it will be necessary for me to complete the actions outlined above that I have agreed to do. I agree also to notify the CM who is assisting me within five (5) days if I am unable to meet a commitment in the agreement, such as not keeping an appointment. I understand that failing to meet the terms of this agreement may result in my being dropped from this phase of the Right Track Program.

_____   _____
   (Customer's signature)   (Date)

_____   _____
   (CM's signature)   (Date)

Consent to Exchange Information

I understand as part of the requirement for receiving employment, mediation, financial counseling and/or parenting skills, it may be necessary for the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) and/or
_____, Services Provider
_____, Services Provider

to exchange information with the Right Track CM who is assisting me. I consent to releasing information about me to the above organizations to facilitate this assistance.

_____   _____ _____
   (Customer's signature)   (Date)   (Right Track CM's signature)

Revised September 22, 2005

"Consent Codes" for Norfolk, Portsmouth, and Richmond District Offices

A. Enter these numbers in the "Consent Code" space if the last digit in the NCP's S.S. No. is other than a "zero" and thus is offered participation in the program and the NCP:

      3 = declines to participate.
      4 = agrees only to Budgeting assistance.
      5 = agrees only to Employment assistance.
      6 = agrees only to Mediation assistance.
      7 = agrees only to the Parenting program.
      8 = agrees only to Budgeting and Employment.
      9 = agrees only to Budgeting and Mediation.
      10 = agrees only to Budgeting and Parenting.
      11 = agrees only to Employment and Mediation.
      12 = agrees only to Employment and Parenting.
      13 = agrees only to Mediation and Parenting.
      14 = agrees only to Budgeting, Employment and Mediation.
      15 = agrees only to Budgeting, Employment and Parenting.
      16 = agrees only to Employment, Mediation and Parenting.
      17 = agrees only to Budgeting, Mediation and Parenting.
      18 = agrees to all customer services.

B. Enter a "19" in the "Consent Code" space for NCPs who have new cases and the **last digit in their SSN is a "zero"** and was not offered the Customer Services Program (CSP) but the NCP independently learns about it and volunteers to participate.

C. Enter a "20" in the "Consent Code" space if the NCP (whether or not the NCP has a new case) is referred to the CSP by a judge.

Assessment Codes (Norfolk, Portsmouth and Richmond District Offices)

The CM will review the information provided on the Payment Predictor and Customer Services Program Intake Form and make an initial assessment of the services the NCP needs. This assessment is to be made for all NCPs who are offered services, regardless of whether they consent to them.

Assign the one code which best meets an initial assessment of an NCP's need for services:

    5 = No services are needed
    6 = Budgeting only
    7 = Employment only
    8 = Mediation only
    9 = Parenting only
  10 = Budgeting and Employment
  11 = Budgeting and Mediation.
  12 = Budgeting and Parenting.
  13 = Employment and Mediation.
  14 = Employment and Parenting.
  15 = Mediation and Parenting.
  16 = Budgeting, Employment and Mediation.
  17 = Budgeting, Employment and Parenting.
  18 = Employment, Mediation and Parenting.
  19 = Budgeting, Mediation and Parenting.
  20 = All four customer services.

Appendix 5: Monthly Statement Letter

<div align="center">

RIGHT TRACK PROGRAM
Norfolk District Office
6340 Center Drive
Norfolk, VA 23502
(757) 455-3615

MONTHLY STATEMENT LETTER

</div>

Dear _____:

As a participant in the **Right Track Program**, we want to work with you to help make sure your child's needs are met.

You agreed to participate in **Right Track** in the hope that together we could make sure your child support payments are kept up-to-date. One of the ways we can help is to keep you informed, on a monthly basis, of what you owe.

If you think the amount shown below is not correct, please call or stop by our office as soon as possible. For example, you might have made a payment after this statement was prepared, so it is not showing in the "Amount Owed to Date" below. If your job or money situation changes, please let us know right away because we need to know if it will affect your ability to make payments.

Our goal is to help you stay in good standing with the child support agency/court and to help you keep up support payments for your child. If there is a change in your circumstances, address, work, housing, medical or anything that might prevent you from making your required child support payments, please call our office. For more information on job training, employment, counseling, parenting, etc., please contact us.

Sincerely,

XXX
Right Track Case Manager

Child Support Case #_____

Amount Owed : $_____as of_____

Appendix 6: Intake Form Considerations

Design Intake Form.   A major preliminary task was designing an intake form for CMs to administer to NCPs who had new cases, prior to admission into the research study. The intake form was intended for use in collecting data on the significant quantitative and categorical variables which presumably were related to NCPs paying their child support obligations. This data was intended for these purposes:

- Aid deliberations at the project's conclusion in explaining any differences in support payments made by NCPs in the Treatment Group (who received services intended to better qualify them to make their payments) and NCPs in a Control Group who did not receive services.
- Provide mathematical modelers with information to craft a predictive model for use by support enforcement personnel in identifying NCPs who had a greater probability of failing to consistently make their child support payments and thus incur arrears.
- Assist CMs in identifying NCPs in the Treatment Group who may a one or more service(s).

Develop Intake Form. Two intake forms were developed. The *Payment Predictor & Right Track Intake Form* (RT Form) was intended to accomplish all three of the purposes outlined above. The other intake form, the *Payment Predictor Intake Form* (PP Form) was for use in accomplishing the first two purposes. To identify data related to NCPs paying their child support obligations, a number of actions were taken in task, including conducting a literature review to identify both theoretical and empirical research findings of factors that were either theorized to be related to NCPs making support payments or were found to be quantitatively related to them, and designing an intake form that would contain those moderating variables that might significantly affect NCP's payments of the support obligations.

- **Train CMs**   Train CMs on interviewing NCPs who had new cases, with particular emphasis on understanding the purpose of the questions, how to ask them and the proper method of recording. Many iterations, answering questions.
- **Resolve Issues**   The treatment group and the control group differ somewhat in regard to these variables. Perhaps if we account for the effects of these variables, we'll see a significant treatment effect. Read on.
- **Monitor Input**   This was the last step to ensure the data was being input correctly.

Appendix 7: Objectives and Products of Service Providers

Budgeting RFAs

<u>Objective</u>: The objective of the service is to assist NCPs enrolled in the Right Track program with the development of a budget and plan to accomplish it during a single session. These are the required products:
1.   Meet individually with an NCP and determine obligations and income,
2.   Format a budget,
3.   Develop a plan with input from the NCP, to meet the obligations (include in the plan actions the NCP needs to take to ensure the plan is met), and
4.   Give a copy to the NCP and send a copy to the appropriate CM for him/her to periodically monitor, through interviews (telephonic or otherwise), NCP's progress in meeting the plan.

Mediation RFAs

<u>Objective</u>: The objective of the service is to assist NCPs enrolled in the Right Track program in establishing a cooperative relationship with the mother/father of his/her child. These are the required products:
1.   Meet with NCP and CP,
2.   Identify conflict issues,
3.   Provide the parties with either tools to work towards resolving the conflict issues or a cooperative agreement between the parties, and
4.   Give both parties a copy of either the tools provided or the agreement and send a copy to the appropriate CM for him/her to periodically monitor, through interviews (telephonic or otherwise), NCP's progress under the agreement.

Employment Assistance RFAs

<u>Objective</u>: The objective of the service is to assist NCPs enrolled in the Right Track program in securing employment through such activities as assessing training needs, providing job readiness training (including either referral to or making provisions for GED completion, as appropriate) and other employment assistance resulting in a job placement. These are the required products:
1.   Meet individually with the NCP,
2.   Assess the NCP's employment competencies and developmental needs,
3.   Provide the NCP with job readiness training, to address any deficiencies and training needs,
4.   Identify job opportunities consistent with the NCP's competencies,
5.   Prepare the NCP to apply for employment , such assistance in completing employment applications and role-playing job interviewing, and
6.   Continue such activities until he NCP obtains a job.

Parenting/Mentoring RFAs

<u>Objective</u>: The objective of the service is to assist NCPs enrolled in the Right Track program with acquiring/enhancing their parenting skills through instruction and mentoring. These are the required products:
1.   Meet individually with an NCP and determine parenting developmental needs,
2.   Develop a plan to meet the needs including a specific plan of action for the NCP to follow,
3.   Provide mentoring assistance to help guide the NCP in following the plan of action, and
4.   Give a copy to the NCP and send a copy to the appropriate CM for him/her to periodically monitor, through interviews (telephonic or otherwise), NCP's progress in meeting the plan.

Evaluation Criteria

Please respond to the following questions, using additional paper. If you have any questions about the application process, please call Cynthia Holdren at (804) 726-7474.

1. Contact information:
   Name and title
   Program/Organization
   Mailing Address
   Business Telephone
   Fax Number
   E-mail Address

45 points
2. Describe the services your organization offers which relate to the four components listed in Paragraph Two of the Purpose section above. As part of your description, please give a per unit (e.g., hourly, per class, or per session) cost for the delivery of your services.

20 points
3. Provide information, including statistical data if available, regarding the effectiveness of your program in the delivery of the service described in Item 2 above.

20 points
4. List staff in your organization by title and level of education or certification, who will be delivering the services of Item 2 above.

15 points
5. Describe your implementation plan for incorporating services to noncustodial parents into your existing delivery of services. Please include why you think your services would be particularly useful to noncustodial parents.

Total possible score = 100 points.

Appendix 8: Case Manager Job Description, Phase II

Position Description
Title: CM, Payment Predictor Project

Basic Function: Conduct intake interviews of noncustodial parents (NCPs) who have new cases and input data in the *Payment Predictor*. Inform Enforcement Specialists of NCPs who have a medium or high risk of failing to pay the support obligation. Assess NCP's problem(s) contributing to this failure, refer them to appropriate agencies to address the problems and monitor progress. Track monthly payments and take action to encourage payments.

Tasks:

Intake and Risk Assessment

Complete the *Payment Predictor Intake Form* for NCPs with new cases. Enter NCPs' name, case number and data from this form on the *Evaluation Worksheet*.

Input data in the *Payment Predictor* and obtain *Risk Assessment Category* (Low, Medium or High) and numerical risk assessment (ranging from 0.0 to 1.0) of NCPs' failure to pay monthly support obligations.

Enter NCPs' *Risk Assessment Category* and the numerical risk assessment on the *Evaluation Worksheet*.

Assignment to Control & Treatment Groups

Review Social Security Numbers (SSNs) of NCPs.

Enter in the Control Group columns on the *Evaluation Worksheet* the NCPs who have even numbers as the last digit in their SSNs

Enter in the Treatment Group columns on the *Evaluation Worksheet* the NCPs who have odd numbers as the last digit in their SSNs.

Enforcement

Treatment Group: Advise Enforcement Specialists of NCPs in Medium and High Risk Assessment Categories for possible consideration for early intervention of enforcement actions. Cases of NCPs who are in the Low Risk Assessment Category will be enforced in the typical manner.

Control Group: Enforcement Specialists will not be informed of the *Risk Assessment Categories* of NCPs in the Control Group. Cases of these NCPs will be enforced in the typical manner.

Problem Assessment (Treatment Group with Medium and High Risk Assessments)

Discuss with NCPs the information furnished during intake interviews and recorded on the *Payment Predictor Intake Form.*

Utilize information obtained from this discussion to determine NCP's current/potential problem(s) in making regular support payments.

Identify any state and local (public or private) agencies that provide free services to address NCP's problems.

Discuss with the NCPs the services that are provided, the importance of cooperation and other relevant information.

Explain the *Participation Agreement*, if the NCPs agree to receive assistance, and have NCPs sign it. Give a copy of the agreement to the NCPs so they know what they have agreed to do. Complete *Consent to Exchange Information* section authorizing the CM to exchange confidential information with various agencies, such as the Department of Social Services and the Virginia Employment Commission.

Give business cards to NCPs and explain the importance of remaining in contact and meeting the terms of the *Agreement.*

Referral (Treatment Group with Medium and High Risk Assessments)

Make referral(s) to agencies/entities based upon NCP's problem assessment and needs, such as:
- VEC for either underemployed or unemployed NCPs.
- Local agencies who provide free medical care;
- Salvation Army for NCPs who need job training;
- Local agencies who provide free parenting skills;
- Temporary employment agencies who provide free employment referral;
- Department of Social Services for various services, including food stamps;
- Local agencies who provide homeless shelter for temporary sleeping accommodations; and,
- Other organizations providing services in the local area.

Develop a plan and have the NCPs sign it.

Enter types of referrals made on the *Evaluation Worksheet* and in the case file.

Monitoring/Evaluation(Treatment Group with Medium and High Risk Assessments)

Contact representatives of referral agencies/entities to ensure NCPs kept appointments, and, where applicable:
- obtain information about NCP's progress; and,
- receive information about other assistance needed.

Follow-up with NCPs either personally or via telephone to ensure they made contact with agencies/entities to whom they were referred.

- send letters to NCPs who cannot be contacted either in person or via the telephone;
- discuss with NCPs the progress being made to address problems identified in the problem assessment phase after intake; and,
- make contacts as necessary to ensure NCPs are meeting conditions of their agreements; and,
- offer encouragement, as appropriate.

Document in the case file all outcomes and contacts including contacts with service providers, and successful/unsuccessful contacts with NCPs.

Conduct weekly reviews with NCPs and document in case file.

Notify DCSE when NCPs' change addresses and/or employers.

Check status and frequency of NCPs' support payments and record any payments each month on the *Evaluation Worksheet*.

Identify NCPs who are not making regular payments;
- discuss with NCPs the reason(s) for non-payment and explain the ramifications of not meeting obligations;
- review plan with NCPs;
- determine what additional assistance is needed and if it can be provided;
- make suggestions for addressing any identified problems;
- make judgments about the efficacy of continuing to work with NCPs; and,
- discontinue efforts to work with non-responsive NCPs, document in the case file and refer for court enforcement.

Meet with representatives of community organizations to explain the Payment Predictor program; explore potential liaisons and learn names of contact personnel.

TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Demonstrated knowledge of PC use and word processing and spreadsheet software.

Acquire following knowledge through DCSE training provided after employment:

Laws, legal codes, court procedures, and the related that apply to child support enforcement.

DCSE policies and procedures.

APECS methods and procedures

PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

Skills

Active Listening – giving attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.

Working relationships – establish and maintain relationships with customers, service providers and peers.

Service Orientation – actively looking for ways to help people.

Social Perceptiveness – being aware of others' reactions and understanding why they react as they do.

Judgment and Decision-making – considering the relative costs and benefits of potential actions to choose the most appropriate ones.

Abilities

Oral Expression – ability to communicate information and ideas in speaking so others will understand.

Problem Sensitivity – ability to tell when something is wrong or is likely to go wrong. It does not involve solving the problem, only recognizing there is a problem.

Written Expression – ability to communicate information and ideas in writing so others will understand.

Deductive Reasoning – ability to apply general rules to specific problems to produce answers that make sense.

ESSENTIAL WORK ACTIVITIES

Communicating with Supervisors, Peers and Others Inside the Organization – providing information to supervisors, co-workers and other internal personnel by telephone, in written form, email or in person.

Communicating with Persons Outside the Organization – communicating with external personnel, representing the organization to customers, the public, government and others and maintaining them over time.

Assisting and Caring for Others – providing personal and technical assistance to NCPs and others, such as co-workers and service providers.

Evaluating Information to Determine Compliance with Standards – using relevant information and individual judgment to determine whether events or processes comply with laws, regulations, or standards.

DEFINITIONS

Evaluation Worksheet: An Excel worksheet used by CMs to record information about NCPs, such as monthly payments.

Payment Predictor: A software program that uses several items of NCPs' case information to calculate a *Risk Assessment* of not paying monthly support obligations.

Payment Predictor Intake Form: Used to collect data to input in the *Payment Predictor* and assist a CM in assessing NCPs' needs for assistance.

Participation Agreement Form: NCPs who agree to receive assistance from CMs sign this agreement. CMs also sign and date the agreement. NCPs are given a copy so they know what they have agreed to do. This form includes a section where NCPs consent to the CMs contacting representatives from such agencies as the Virginia Employment Commission to discuss issues affecting them.

Risk Assessment Category: The *Payment Predictor* calculates a probability of not paying monthly support ranging from 0.0 to 1.0. A *Low Risk Category* ranges from 0.0 to ≤ 0.5, *Medium Risk Category* ranges from 0.51 to ≤ 0.9, and *High Risk Category* is 0.91 to ≤ 1.0.

The Right Track Report

**Customer-Centered Services
and Arrearage Management:
An Experimental Approach To Support
Payment Consistency And Arrearage
Reduction For Low-Income Noncustodial Parents**

Volume II:

**Development Of An Automated Tool
To Predict Child Support Arrears
Final Report**

Prepared by:

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1899 Wynkoop Street, Suite 300
Denver, Colorado 80202

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EXHIBITS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The goal of this part of the *Right Track* project was to prepare, validate, and implement an arrears predictor tool. The principal objective was to establish an arrears prediction instrument that was helpful to local child support staff in collecting child support payments. The premise behind the prediction instrument development was that large caseloads and automation-driven enforcement actions limit child support workers from taking individualized actions in cases at risk of arrears, even though individiualized actions may be more effective at obtaining child support payment. An arrears predictor tool could provide staff with more information to direct enforcement decisions.

DEVELOPMENT AND PREPARATION OF THE TOOL

The tool was developed using a "neural network," which is a flexible data modeling technique that uses input variables (e.g., income, obligation amount) to predict outcomes (i.e., the accrual of arrears). The basis for using a neural network was a 2002 Washington State study that considered alternative data modeling techniques and concluded that a neural network best predicted changes in arrears. The Washington study focused on data modeling, using past arrears to predict present arrears for noncustodial parents. It did not address how that modeling could inform workers' case management decisions by predicting future arrears from arrears on new cases.

The Virginia tool was prepared using data from 2,403 recently established child support orders in six district offices. Project staff carefully developed a data collection instrument that included factors local child support staff identified as affecting arrears and other factors identified in a literature review. The data collection instrument consisted of over 30 demographic and personal questions ranging from the number of children on the case to the noncustodial parent's level of confidence that child support payments were being used for the child, but not all of the data were used to develop the model. Data were collected from multiple sources including: (1) the automated child support system, (2) the child support guidelines worksheet, and (3) interviews with the noncustodial parent. Case data were matched to six months of payment data captured from the automated system. Not all noncustodial parents agreed to be interviewed, which meant that there were fewer than 2,403 records available to develop the data model. To maintain the robustness of the model, this also necessitated scaling back the number of predictive variables included in the data modeling.

Because of the limited number of records with interview data, we developed two models instead of one. The first model was developed largely from non-interview data (e.g., number of children, income, out-of-wedlock birth indicator) that could be extracted from automated sources. The second model included the same data as the first model and also included interview data. A merit of the first model is that it could be incorporated into automated child support systems and an arrears risk score could be developed without human intervention. The limitation of the first model is that it overlooked the impact of the noncustodial parent's relationships with the child and other parent on

arrears accrual as well as the impact of other possible predictive variables that could only be obtained from interviewing the noncustodial parent.

<div align="center">

PREDICTOR SOFTWARE

</div>

The data models were converted to a stand-alone software application that could be used to predict arrears from a personal computer. The software allowed the user to enter information about a case (18 data fields including income, order amount, number of children, etc.) and produce an "arrears risk" score, as well as categorize the arrears risk as "high," "medium," or "low." The arrears risk score was a prediction of the percent of current support that would accrue in arrears in the six months following order establishment. The arrears risk was categorized as "low" if the percentage was 50 percent or less; "medium" if the percentage was between 50 and 80 percent; and "high" if the percentage was more than 80 percent.

FIELD TEST

The tool was field-tested in six district offices using an experimental design approach; that is, cases with new orders were randomly assigned to treatment and control groups. Staff hired specifically for this part of the project calculated the arrears prediction score for both groups. Project staff then informed existing enforcement staff about the arrears prediction score for treatment cases, in the event that enforcement staff wanted to use the scores to supplement their enforcement actions. Six district offices participated in the field test. They collected data on over 900 cases that were eventually matched to six months of payment data, to evaluate how well the arrears prediction scores matched actual payments.

RESULTS

The arrears predictor tool accurately predicted arrears in 57 percent of the cases. The accuracy rate was much higher for those who accumulated "low" arrears and much lower for those who accumulated "medium" to "high" arrears. The field test found that fewer arrears accrued in treatment cases than control cases. The dollar difference in arrears between the two groups was statistically significant. The percentage of current support accrued in arrears was statistically significant only for cases assessed as having medium risk of arrears. Overall, the difference in arrears accrued was about $100 to $200 over the six-month study period, a substantial amount of income to many NCP families. Although the percentage difference in arrears accrued was as little as two percentage points, this can represent a substantial increase in the percent of support collected, which is a federal performance measure. The two measures— percent of current support accrued in arrears and percent of current support paid— are directly, but inversely, related.

RECOMMENDED NEXT STEPS

There are several ways an arrears predictive tool could be used to increase child support collections while using staff more efficiently. An arrears predictive tool could be used to stratify cases that

would *and* would not benefit from early intervention, including by intensive case monitoring. This would increase child support collections among those cases most likely to benefit from it. Since early intervention, particularly intensive case monitoring, requires more staff time, it does not benefit a child support agency to use it in all cases. Nor do support staff have the time to monitor a large caseload intensively. Such a case-sorting tool, then, could be particularly beneficial if it could stratify existing cases for worker attention. The odds of positively affecting payments in *existing* cases using early intervention strategies are less than in new cases. A case-sorting tool, then, could help identify those new cases most likely to benefit and, hence, better target existing staff resources.

A second way an arrears predictive tool could be used is to target for more intensive investigation and enforcement actions those delinquent cases that appear to have the ability to pay. For example, there are many cases without an income-withholding order in place that have the ability to pay. Assuming these cases have characteristics similar to other payers in the data model, the arrears prediction tool could be used to identify cases that appear to have the ability to pay but are not paying. The literature review contains an example of a state that was able, successfully, to place an income-withholding order in a high proportion of such delinquent cases using this approach.

Finally, the accuracy and utility of the tool could be improved by two actions: (1) by increasing and broadening the data (i.e., cases and case characteristics) used in the initial data modeling, and (2) by extensive field-testing with experienced establishment and enforcement specialists. Overall, the fact that the tool can consider several characteristics of a case, including both demographic and personal attributes and attitudes held by the noncustodial parent, is a strength, since there is not one factor alone (e.g., the obligated parent's income, whether the order is more than 20 percent of the obligated parent's income) that can explain the accrual of arrears well.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND TO AND PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT
In 2004, Virginia was awarded a grant to test strategies to increase child support payments among low-income noncustodial parents. One of the strategies proposed in the state's grant application was to develop and test an automated tool to predict the accumulation of child support arrears. Child support workers would use the tool to help identify cases in which early intervention activities and prompt enforcement actions might prevent the accrual of arrears.

This report summarizes:
- The background to the tool, including lessons learned from other states;

- How the tool was developed, including a discussion of what data were collected and how the tool works;
- How we tested the tool in the field; and
- What we learned from the field testing.
-

OVERVIEW OF THE ARREARS PREDICTOR TOOL

The software tool we developed for this project computes a "risk of arrears" score based on various characteristics of the case and of the noncustodial parent. The tool was used with new order cases, regardless of whether the noncustodial parent had or did not have one or more other child support orders. The exhibit below illustrates the tool's proposed application.
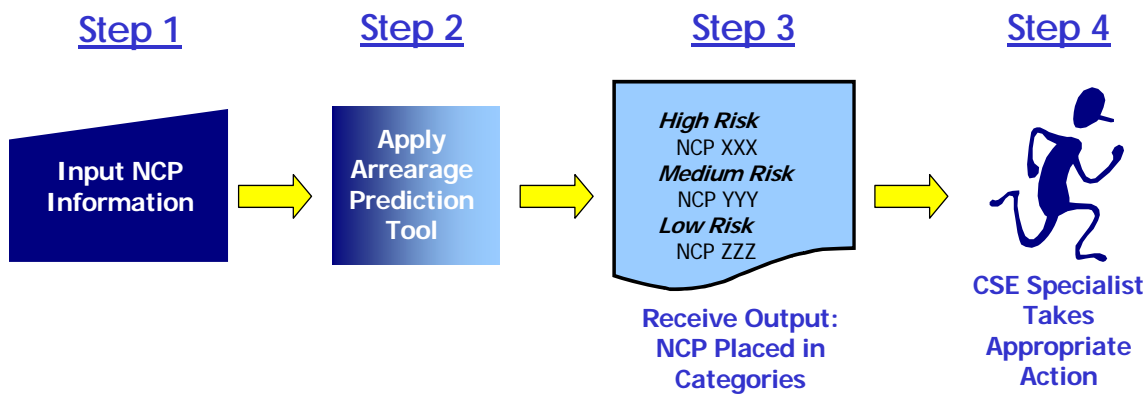
In the first step, staff enter information about the noncustodial parent (e.g., the parent's income, total number of child support orders) into an on-line form. Once the information is entered, staff click a button labeled "classify." A numeric arrears risk score appears, along with the word "high," "medium" or "low" to indicate the category of risk associated with the score. In the final step, child support staff use the information to decide which cases need more intensive case monitoring or when and how to enforce a case.

PROJECT GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND TASKS

Project Goals and Tasks

One of the goals of the *Right Track* project was to prepare, validate, and implement an arrears predictor tool. The principal objective was to establish an arrears prediction instrument that would be helpful to local child support staff in effecting child support collections. The underlying premise for the model development is that large caseloads and automation-driven enforcement actions limit child support workers from taking individualized actions in cases at risk of arrears, especially where

individualized actions may be necessary to collect a child support payment. An arrears predictor tool can provide staff with more information to focus their enforcement decisions more effectively.

There were several components to the original design of the arrears predictor tool and field test, including:

- Develop an arrears prediction tool for use by child support staff in local offices to assist them in their enforcement responsibilities.
- Categorize noncustodial parents with new orders based upon the level of risk associated with arrears accumulation into high, medium, and low risk.
- Build the tool from demographic information and personal data about the noncusotdial parent.
- Develop and test the model using information from six district offices. The six offices included three offices that were also sites for the *Right Track* demonstration, which was another project under the grant.
- Build the model using a sample of 900 new noncustodial parents and then test the model on another 900 new noncustodial parents.
- Capture data on 1,800 cases over an 18-month period, to include 12 months of payment data on each case.
- Construct the model to make predictions in a dynamic process. That is, as information pertaining to the noncustodial parent is updated (e.g., the frequency and amount of payments, enforcement actions taken), the model will self-adjust its arrears prediction.
- Convert the model into user-friendly computer software that child support workers can run from a PC computer.
- Test the tool in six district child support offices using an expermental research design, randomly assigning noncustodial parents with new orders to treatment and control groups and testing the differences in outcomes between the two groups.
- Inform enforcement specialists of the arrears risk in expermental, but not in control cases. (Enforcement specialists would manage control cases according to customary practice.)
- Include 450 experimental and 318 control cases in the field test.
- Consider as part of the evaluation (1) statistical testing of differences between the experimental and control groups and (2) a survey of child support workers to assess the helpfulness of the tool to them and their work.

In summary, the key tasks that derive from the project design components were:

- Develop a data collection form based on characteristics associated with arrears;
- Collect data;
- Develop and validate the arrears predictor tool;
- Conduct a field test of the tool by training staff in its use; and
- Evaluate the results of the field test.

Determining a Use for the Tool

A challenge in this project was how to move the tool beyond being an intellectual exercise to becoming an operational guide for caseworkers. How would caseworkers use the tool to achieve excellence in operational outcomes? The project design proposed that existing establishment and enforcement specialists would field test the tool by using the arrears prediction score calculated from

the model to make decisions about what actions could be taken on individual cases. Then, these specialists would be able to suggest practical improvements in the tool, beneficial to both their time and the tool's application to their casework. This proposal could not be implemented with the specialists to provide the planed field test during the project. As a result, staffing for this phase of the project was limited to staff hired specifically to field test the tool.

One explanation for not implementing the original design was that enforcement specialists already felt inundated with alerts, work lists, and the constant flow of new information available from the automated system, to work a case. Further, Virginia caseloads per FTE are high relative to many states. As a result, the arrears risk score was quite possibly seen by the specialists as just another piece of information – and not necessarily better information -- than information already available to them through existing sources. Finally, established procedures used by enforcement specialists to enforce support are driven by automation, and by federal and state procedures and timelines (e.g., license revocation is triggered by at least $500, or equal to 90 days support, in arrears. There was little flexibility and little opportunity for child support workers to intervene in these actions, regardless of what the payment predictor tool suggested should be done. The only exception available was to initiate earlier court action than usual when an NCP has a high risk of arrears accumulation.

Given this reality, we explored other ways to apply the model using staff specifically hired for the project. The project management team decided that the tool should be used to target cases for early intervention strategies (e.g., referrals to supportive services including job programs, enhanced case monitoring). They could monitor cases at high risk of arrears more closely, stay in frequent contact with the high-risk noncustodial parents, and offer supportive services to them when appropriate. Through more frequent contact, we believed project staff would capture better and more current information to manage the case. For example, if workers learned the noncustodial parent had lost his/her job, they could immediately direct the parent to employment services before arrears accrued to the point that license revocation was triggered.

Demonstration projects in Colorado (Center for Policy Research, 2007), Nebraska (Social Science Research Center, 2006) and Tennessee (Policy Studies Inc., 2006) have all found that early intervention strategies (i.e., taking actions on the case prior to or immediately after a payment is missed) can increase child support payments and reduce arrears. These strategies may include conducting "relationship-building" telephone calls, closely monitoring payment receipt, and/or contacting the noncustodial parent shortly after a payment is missed rather than waiting for automated enforcement mechanisms to be triggered. "Relationship-building" means the case manager attempts to develop a rapport with the noncustodial parent so that he/she will contact the case manager immediately about employment or address changes, and/or about other issues that may affect child support payments. In general, early intervention is a strategy applied more intensively at or soon after order establishment rather than after arrears have already accumulated.

EXPERIENCES OF OTHER STATES

Many studies have analyzed the characteristics of noncustodial parents with high child support arrears (e.g., Sorensen, Sousa, and Sayer, 2007), but few studies have developed sophisticated data models that predict which noncustodial parents are likely to accrue arrears, the amount of arrears they are likely to accrue, and when the arrears will occur. A 2002 Washington State study (Formoso, 2002) examined the composition and collectability of child support arrearages and in doing so broke new ground by developing a data model to predict arrears. Since then, other studies have documented the utility of data modeling as a tool to improve child support worker and agency performance.

Washington State

In part, the Washington study inspired Virginia's Section 1115 demonstration grant project. Through a federal Office of Child Support Enforcement grant, the Washington Division of Child Support prepared a neural network model to predict child support arrearages. As discussed in the next section, the neural network is a very flexible and adaptive data modeling tool that can capture complex relationships between inputs and outputs, including non-linear relationships. The Washington model, which accurately predicted arrears in up to 80 percent of its calculations, was built using information from about 148,000 noncustodial parents over eight calendar quarters from 1993 to 1997. The variables included in the model were: (1) the number of quarters with no change in arrears; (2) the number of quarters with decreasing arrears; (3) the number of quarters with increasing arrears; (4) average quarterly earnings; (5) the number of months the noncustodial parent was on public assistance; (6) total arrears; (7) amount of un-subrogated debt; (8) whether the case type (i.e., TANF, former TANF, never TANF) was specified; (9) whether there was automated payment processing; and (10) whether the custodial parent was also in the data base. Conspicuous by its absence from this list is the order amount as a percentage of the noncustodial parent's income. Washington found that this variable did not increase the accuracy of the arrears prediction.

Unlike the model Virginia wanted to develop, the Washington neural network only predicted arrears in cases where certain criteria were met. Depending on the quarter in which arrears were predicted, the prediction was made for about half to three-quarters of the cases. Absent from the modeling effort was whether and how the tool could be used in local child support offices. The state's final report recommended that the model be expanded to include case-level and cross-program data. Further, the study recommended using the tool to predict arrears in new cases.

SAS Institute's Model Development in Two States

In 2006, after the design of the Virginia tool was well underway, SAS Institute, a nationally-recognized developer of business intelligence and predictive analytics software, released a white paper summarizing the initial efforts from its ongoing data mining and predictive modeling of child support arrears in two states (Blomberg and Long, 2006). Since the states wished to remain

anonymous, the paper refers to them only as "State A" and "State B." The study does not report the accuracy rates of the data models.

State A developed a model that classified noncustodial parents into seven categories of arrears based on demographics, payment, and employment data collected over a four-year period. The model places noncustodial parents into categories according to their similar demographic characteristics. For example, "job jumpers" and "frequent movers" were common characteristics of the category that was labeled "unstable non-payors." One of State A's next steps was to identify child support enforcement strategies appropriate for each of the seven payor classifications.

State B developed a data model that predicted a noncustodial parent's payments over a six-month period. State B was most interested in identifying noncustodial parents who had the ability to pay, but who were not paying and had no income-withholding order in place. State B sent its caseworkers a list of cases in which the data model predicted payment receipt, but where the actual outcome was delinquency (i.e., statistically known as "false negative" where a model incorrectly identifies an event, but the event does not occur). The premise behind sending this list to caseworkers was that these noncustodial parents may actually have the ability to pay because they share the same characteristics as payors. In fact, the field office was able to take actions, including placing income-withholding orders, that generated payments in 60 percent of these cases. One of the next steps for State B, which has considerable variation among local offices in child support enforcement approaches, was to use the tool to identify offices with best practices.

Other Findings from the Literature

Our review of other literature as background to the project included the evaluation of Parents' Fair Share, various Urban Institute studies, the results from state studies on arrears management, and academic articles. There were many consistent findings in the literature indicating that (1) case specifics, (2) enforcement actions, and (3) characteristics of the noncustodial parent, the child-parent relationship and the parent-parent relationship affect payments. Some sample findings from our review include the following:

- Child support payments are lower in TANF cases, partly because child support receipts are retained to offset TANF expenditures rather than passed through to the family (Meyer and Cancion, 2001).
- Child support is more likely to be paid when the parents agree to the order (Peters, et al., 1993 and Anderson-Gill & Associates, 2003).
- Based on data analyzed from the 1990 Survey of Income Program Participation (Turner and Sorensen, 1998), the number of children has an inconsistent correlation with child support payments. The payments for two children are greater than the payments for one child, but the payments for three children are less than the payments for two children. Another study (Manning et al., 2003) relying on a different data source, found greater payments when there are more full siblings.
- There is a strong, positive correlation between income withholding and payments (Case et al., 2000).

- Arrears are more likely to accrue among noncustodial parents with multiple orders (Peters, 1999).
- Washington State found that arrears accrue more frequently when the noncustodial parent is also a custodial parent or has received public assistance (Peters, 2003). Washington also found that arrears accrue when the child support order exceeds 20 percent of the noncustodial parent's income.
- Higher orders are more likely to be paid because they are set when there are higher incomes (Anderson-Gill & Associates, 2003). This is supported by findings from the evaluation of Parents' Fair Share (Doolittle, 1998).
- Turner and Sorensen (1998) found that non-labor income and hours worked are positively correlated to child support payments. The same study also found that child support payments are higher when the noncustodial parent is a college graduate.
- Although Washington State found a negative correlation between alcohol and substance abuse and child support payments (Peters, 2003), the multi-site evaluation findings from the OCSE responsible fatherhood demonstration projects (Center for Policy Research and Policy Studies Inc., 2003) suggest that noncustodial parents are not always forthcoming about alcohol and substance abuse issues, so self-report of this information may be unreliable.
- The Parents' Fair Share (Doolittle, 1998) evaluation found no relationship between payment and a dichotomous variable indicating whether the noncustodial parent had a prior arrest.

The multi-site evaluation of the federal OCSE-funded child access demonstration projects (Center for Policy Research and Policy Studies Inc., 1996) revealed many findings about the parent-child relationship. Payments are lower the greater the distance between the noncustodial parent's residence and the child's residence and payments are higher the more frequent the contact between the noncustodial parent and the child.

Turner and Sorensen (1998) examined many indicators of the parent-parent relationship. They found that payments are lower if the child is born out-of-wedlock than if the parents were ever married. If they were married, the length of the marriage is positively correlated with payments. Manning et al. (2003) considered the impact of re-marriage and additional children on payments. They found only a weak correlation between payment and re-marriage and no correlation between payment and the noncustodial parent being responsible for children in another relationship. Several studies, including the findings from the OCSE child access and demonstration projects, found that the parents' anger and/or their ability to maintain amicable relationships are tied to child support payments.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

There are four sections to the report, including this introduction. The second section discusses the theory behind the neural net model and how the tool was developed and field tested. The third section summarizes the results from the evaluation of the field test. The final section recommends improvements for developing and using future predictive tools.

SECTION 2: TOOL DEVELOPMENT AND FIELD TEST

For Virginia's Section 1115 demonstration project, the project team included a large network of individuals and organizations.

- Policy Studies Inc. (PSI): Much of the work on the arrears predictor tool was conducted by PSI and Dr. Matthew Richey, Professor of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science, St. Olaf College, Minnesota. PSI was responsible for overall logistics of the tool development and field test and the evaluation. Professor Richey developed the neural network and the computer software used by child support staff to predict arrears at local offices.

- Virginia Division of Child Support Enforcement and the Center for Support of Families: Staff from the Division and the Center trained CMs on how to use the predictive tool and collect general data for the pilot test. CMs were instructed to meet with their district office management regarding the predictive tool, how it worked, and to determine how it might be used. The project manager contacted each district manager to explain what the tool was designed to do, and encourage use of its arrears accumulation prediction result for each newly obligated NCP by enforcement specialists.

- Human Services Research Center: The data collection instrument was developed in collaboration with another component of the grant, the *Right Track* program, which was designed and evaluated by the Human Services Research Center. *Right Track* offered supportive services, such as employment assistance, to noncustodial parents with new orders.

As shown in Exhibit 2-1, seven local child support offices participated in the project in some manner. The offices represented a range of office sizes and mixes of administrative vs. judicially established orders and TANF and non-TANF cases.

Exhibit 2-1
Order Establishments in
Virginia Offices Participating in the Development and/or Field Test of the Arrears Predictor Tool

	Orders Established (State Fiscal Year 2004)	Percent of Orders Established Administratively	Percent of Orders Established by the Court	Proportion of Establishments that are Current TANF	Proportion of Establishments that are Non-TANF
Abingdon	1,411	44%	56%	26%	74%
Danville	1,504	25%	75%	8%	92%
Fredericksburg	1,224	30%	70%	15%	85%
Manassas	1,641	72%	28%	35%	65%
Norfolk	1,909	47%	53%	19%	81%
Portsmouth	925	54%	46%	19%	81%
Richmond	1,631	65%	35%	34%	66%
Statewide	26,725	51%	49%	21%	79%

Most of the offices were involved both in collecting the data used to develop the payment prediction tool and in field-testing the tool. The exceptions were the Manassas and Fredericksburg offices. The Manassas office collected data for the tool development but did not participate in the field test. The Fredericksburg office only participated in the field test. The Norfolk, Portsmouth and Richmond offices also participated in the *Right Track* demonstration, which is discussed in a separate report on findings from this demonstration grant. Each of the participating offices hired staff dedicated to the project. These staff were primarily responsible for data collection, implementing *Right Track*, and/or assessing the arrears risk using the arrears predictor tool.

TOOL DEVELOPMENT
The tool was developed in three phases.

1. *Identify data needs.* Project staff reviewed the findings from other studies and other sources, including the findings from a focus group conducted with Virginia field staff, to identify factors that may be correlated with arrears (e.g., income, the noncustodial parent's attitude about child support payments). This information was used to develop a data collection instrument.

2. *Collect data.* Field staff in six Virginia district offices completed data collection forms for newly established cases from about January 2005 to about January 2006. Monthly payment and order data were collected from APECS, Virginia's automated child support system, and matched to the data collected by field staff.

3. *Data Modeling and Development of the Tool.* Data mining techniques were used to identify which variables were correlated with arrears accumulation. Those variables were considered in the neural network that was used to develop the tool.

Phase 1: Identify Data Needs and Data Collection Instrument

Project staff drafted an exhaustive list of factors associated with arrears accumulation based on a focus group with child support staff from local offices and from a literature review (discussed above) and then identified the potential data source for each factor. They organized the list of factors into subcategories — characteristics of the order, characteristics of the noncustodial parent, characteristics of the parent-child relationship, characteristics of parent-parent relationship, and availability of enforcement actions — and then narrowed the list by combining similar factors (e.g., parent is remarried and parent is dating someone else) or by keeping the factor that either was more robust based on previous research findings or that was identified as important in the focus group. Project staff also narrowed the list by considering the availability of the data and the feasibility of collecting it.

After the list of factors was defined, project staff drafted a data collection instrument. The final version of the data collection instrument was determined by the needs of the evaluation of *Right Track* because the data collection instrument for the arrears prediction model would piggyback from the *Right Track* data collection. In fact, the data collection instrument for the arrears predictor tool is an abbreviated version of the *Right Track* data collection instrument. (Appendix A provides a copy of the data collection instrument for the arrears predictor tool.)

Identified Data Sources

The data collection instrument required project staff to use multiple data sources. APECS and self-reports from the noncustodial parent were the two largest data sources. Project staff used other information from the case file (e.g., the child support order or guidelines worksheet), particularly to capture information about the noncustodial parent's income. In addition, staff used some additional data sources to learn such details as whether the noncustodial parent had ever been incarcerated.

Focus Group Findings

The project team convened and facilitated a focus group with child support staff to identify characteristics of noncustodial parents associated with higher and lower risks of arrears and to select an appropriate measure of arrears. Some of the key variables identified by the focus group were: (1) the noncustodial parent's employment status and income, (2) TANF status of the case, (3) age of the child, (4) child support enforcement, (5) the noncustodial parent's self perception, (6) the bond between the noncustodial parent and the child, and (7) the noncustodial parent's anger toward the other parent. Child support staff generally observe better payment patterns among employed parents than among those whose incomes come from other sources (e.g., disability insurance). Although the amount of income influences payments, the more connected the noncustodial parent is to the child, the more likely child support will be paid. Child support staff suggested several ways that the bond and connection between the noncustodial parent and the child could be measured or examined, including the frequency of child-parent contact and the custody arrangement.

Other factors positively correlated to payments (e.g., the noncustodial parent's sense of responsibility to the child, parenthood) were deemed important, but recognized as difficult to measure. In addition, child support staff suggested that TANF cases would have higher arrears because families tend to receive TANF when their children are young, hence more time elapses for arrears to accrue. Child support staff emphasized the importance of the noncustodial parent's attitude. They believed that some noncustodial parents view themselves as victims or have a defeatist attitude that manifests itself in non-payment. A positive attitude or positive relationship with the other parent was rated particularly important to payment receipt.

The findings from the focus groups were supplemented with findings from the literature review, which were reported in the last section.

Dynamic Data

The original design of the model called for a dynamic process; that is, as information pertaining to the noncustodial parent was updated (e.g., the frequency and amount of payments, enforcement actions taken), the model would automatically revise its arrears prediction. In designing the data instrument, project staff decided against capturing dynamic data because it would require a more complicated and longer data collection form and modeling that could sidetrack the utility of the general tool. Tracking changes in cases would prolong the time needed to collect the data, hence stall data entry and the model development.

At first blush, it appeared that APECS contained dynamic data. For example, it includes indicators of whether the wage withholding was in place and the noncustodial parent was employed. However, many of these data fields do not actually capture dynamic data on a month-to-month basis and are only updated as new information becomes available. Hence, if there is no new information say for two years, the field would contain two-year old information.

Phase 2: Data Collection
There were two primary sources of data: (1) data collection instruments completed by staff in the project sites and (2) APECS data.

Number of Cases

Virginia originally proposed collecting data from 1,800 noncustodial parents with newly established orders, to develop the model to predict arrears and to test the model. Local office staff completed data collection instruments for over 3,000 noncustodial parents. From this base, project staff excluded duplicates, cases transferred to a non-project office,[1] and *Right Track* treatment cases that

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[1] Cases transferred to non-project district offices were excluded from the dataset. Payment data were used for the project offices only.

received services. These last cases were excluded because the *Right Track* treatment aimed to increase payments, hence their inclusion could skew the model. *Right Track* cases assigned to the control group were included for model development, as were *Right Track* cases assigned to the treatment group where the noncustodial parent denied services. Initially, there was a total of 2,403 cases available for developing the model. Somewhat less than half (44%) of these cases came from *Right Track* offices; the remaining 56 percent came from the other three project offices. However, while the initial total (i.e., 2,403) exceeded the 1,800 cases that Virginia had proposed to include in model development, the actual number of cases *usable* for developing the model was considerably smaller because of incomplete data in many cases. Noncustodial parents' unwillingness to participate in the voluntary interview contributed largely to the issue of incomplete data.

Noncustodial Parents with Interviews

Project staff hoped that a sufficient number of noncustodial parents could be interviewed to obtain the qualitative information for model development that was not available from other sources. The qualitative information mainly included information about the noncustodial parent's relationship with the child and the other parent. Project staff made numerous attempts to contact noncustodial parents to complete the interviews. Although staff preferred a personal interview, they conducted interviews by telephone at the convenience of the noncustodial parent. Despite their concerted efforts, project staff were only able to interview 38 percent of the noncustodial parents in the data set used to develop the arrears predictor tool.[2]

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2   When the database was extended to include noncustodial parents who received treatment through the *Right Track* demonstration, the interview rate is closer to 50 percent.

Initial Data Collection Issues

The small proportion of completed interviews imposed timeline issues and limitations to the data modeling. The original plan called for 18 months of data collection including 12 months of payment history for each sampled case. The targeted sample count was 1,800 cases. Obtaining the targeted number of cases with interviewed noncustodial parents could add years to the data collection period because of the slow flow of new cases into the project. Data collection commenced in January 2005 and as of April 2005, staff had completed about 70 data collections forms per month. The monthly average with interviewed noncustodial parents was even smaller. Further, these counts included experimental cases receiving treatment from the *Right Track* demonstration that would eventually be eliminated from the database used to develop the arrears prediction tool.

Many factors contributed to the slow pace of data collection. Although we assumed that data collection instruments would be completed for all new orders, that did not occur. First, not all of the local project staff had immediate access to the courts, so they concentrated on cases with administratively-established orders. Interviewing the noncustodial parent also contributed to slowing the pace of data collection and the initial low counts of completed forms. Some of the local project staff focused so much on getting interviews they overlooked completing forms for non-interviewed noncustodial parents. Compounding the problem was the lack of a master list of newly established orders that the evaluator and model developer could have used to monitor and track cases that should be coming into the project.

<div align="center">

Solutions to Initial Data Collection Issues

</div>

Several efforts were taken to increase project counts after the April 2005 case counts were examined. Some of the sites that had previously focused on collecting data from administratively-established orders expanded their efforts to include judicially-established orders. Additional staff were added and they were encouraged to complete data collection instruments for <u>all</u> newly established orders, regardless of whether the noncustodial parent agreed to an interview.

Finally, modifications were made to the data that would be used to develop the arrears predictor tool. Instead of 12 months of payment data, the tool would consider six months of payment data. We also decided to develop two arrears predictor tools, one without interview data and the other with interview data. The first model would be built largely without consideration of data from interviews. Instead, it would be based on data that were not likely to be missing (i.e., data collected from APECS, hard copy case files, and electronic sources). We further recognized that the smaller sample of cases with interviewed noncustodial parents would limit the robustness of the second model.

Nonetheless, an arrears payment predictor tool that did not rely on interviewing noncustodial parents made practical sense. The reality is that not all noncustodial parents are willing to be interviewed, and interviewing noncustodial parents adds to the workload of field staff. The most

efficient version of the tool would be designed to require no human intervention; that is, it would be linked exclusively to APECS data. This would allow for much of the data used by the arrears prediction tool to be automatically populated.

Project staff were able to meet the revised target of 1,800 cases as of January 2006, but the total included cases with and without interviewed noncustodial parents.

APECS Data

APECS data were used to track the amount of child support due, payments, and arrears on a monthly basis. DCSE could not allocate programming time for the data extract, so the project staff considered alternative sources, including the feasibility of collecting the data manually. Instead, it was decided that the data would be extracted from monthly APECS downloads sent to the regional and local offices for case management. These extracts contain extensive data on all open and closed child support cases in Virginia. A typical monthly extract contains information on over 990,000 cases. The data needed for this project was essentially buried in these extracts and required a considerable amount of computer time among the model development team to separate. Many data limitations occurred as a result.

To control file sizes, cases from project offices were first selected into sub-files, then another selection criterion was used to pull only the cases with completed data collection instruments. Since the statewide downloads were in three separate files each month, project staff had multiple sub-files to match. Compounding the number of files was the fact that extracts were produced monthly. At least six months of payment data were needed and orders did not start the same month. Project staff were able to capture payment data through June 2006.

The method of extracting APECS data made it impossible to retrieve payment data on data collection forms that were received numerous months after the order was established or cases that did not match the first time because the case number was recorded incorrectly. It also limited payment data to cases that stayed in the same local office. For example, if a case was assigned to Richmond and then was transferred to Alexandria, payment data, once the case was transferred to Alexandria, would be missing.

Project Data Issues and Solutions

Throughout the data collection period, two data problems became apparent. First, there was a considerable amount of missing data. Second, staff were not using the same data sources to complete individual questions. Often, the data were missing simply because they were unavailable. This presented a potential data bias issue if the data were missing for one particular type of noncustodial parents that had a unique payment pattern. To address this issue, project staff identified what data fields should never be missing because they were required to establish a child support order (e.g., income) or by APECS (e.g., the data field indicating the child was born out of wedlock). These data fields were prioritized in the first cut of the model development. Further, the

model developer would consider standard data modeling techniques to deal with missing data and control for any bias created if the data were systematically missing. Also, since the missing data were not consistent from case to case and since not all of the data fields would be used in the final cut of the model development, the number of records that would need to be deleted was unknown until well into the data mining.

As the data collection progressed, it also became apparent that staff were not always reporting the same information for the same variables. For example, some staff recorded "income" and "arrears" at the time of order establishment and others recorded the amounts at the moment they completed the data collection form. Other problems occurred because we captured information from multiple data sources. For example, many staff interviewed the noncustodial parent to determine where the child lived, but a few staff used information from automated sources to get the same information. When such discrepancies became apparent, project staff would develop a consistent data collection procedure and train staff on that procedure. Some of these data issues appeared to be fairly minor. For example, a question about whether the parents were ever married was changed to a question about whether the children were born out of wedlock because the former question could only be answered by interviewing the noncustodial parent and the latter question could be answered from APECS data. However, when some of the discrepancies in data sources did not become apparent until much later, the issue appeared to be more severe. For example, project staff obtained the noncustodial parent's felony history and the noncustodial parent's employment status from both automated sources and interviewed data. Since the model developers believed the data came from automated sources, they used it in both models. The use of multiple data sources confounded the distinction of the first model, which was to be based on automated data only.

Phase 3: Tool Development

Data Available for Model Development

In all, it appears we had data on about 2,000 cases, but this was before: (1) eliminating cases without at least six months of payment data, (2) eliminating cases assigned to the *Right Track* treatment group where the NCP chose to receive services, and (3) controlling for missing data fields. We could not apply the exclusion criteria until at least six months had elapsed, when we could match the cases to automated payment data to ensure we had sufficient information.

In addition to the problems we faced combining multiple payment files, we also had to combine information from multiple data collection instruments stored in separate files (one for *Right Track* demonstration sites and another for non-*Right Track* demonstration sites), which files were constantly being updated as project staff collected more information and corrected previously entered data.

<u>Defining Arrears and Arrears Risk Categories</u>

Developing the model required defining a variable indicating the "risk of arrears." The data modeler explored several alternative definitions ranging from the simple to the complex to determine whether one particular definition better fit the trends observed in the data. One overly simplistic approach would be to define risk as a binary variable according to whether the support due was paid in full. In this approach, there are two possible outcomes; either the obligation is paid in full or the obligation is not paid in full. However, this is an oversimplification of payment patterns observed in the data, which included intermittent payments; consistent partial payments; payments in excess of current support due in some months and skipped payments in other months; no payments in the first one or two months, then full or partial payments begin; and other patterns.

Given the observed payment patterns, the limitations with the available data, and the fact that the project design called for developing three levels of arrears risk scores, it made more sense to define arrears risk based on a continuous rather than a binary measure. We had month-to-month data on the amount due, the amount paid, and the total arrears for 6 to 18 months depending on the date of order establishment. Using this information, an after-the-fact measurement of risk could be determined. For example, full payments every month would indicate a low risk of arrears while no payments would indicate high risk of arrears. Payment patterns between these two extremes would mean a medium risk of arrears.

After considering a variety of definitions, the research team settled on the following definition of arrears risk:

> **Definition**: The risk of arrears is defined as the ratio of missed payments (in total dollars) to current support due over the first six months of the order period.

The following examples illustrate how our continuous measure of risk is calculated:

Example 1: Low Risk Obligor							
	Payment Months						Total Payments
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Obligation Amount ($)	$100	$100	$100	$100	$100	$100	$600
Payment Amount ($)	$100	$75	$100	$25	$0	$100	$400

Example 2: High Risk Obligor							
	Payment Months						Total Payments
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Obligation Amount ($)	$100	$100	$100	$100	$100	$100	$600
Payment Amount ($)	$0	$25	$25	$25	$0	$25	$100

In Example 1, Low Risk Obligor, the total obligation was $600 and payments totaled $400, or $200 short of full payment over the six-month period. The calculated risk of non-payment was therefore fairly low.

$$\text{Risk} = (\$600\text{-}\$400)/\$600 = 0.33$$

Example 2, High Risk Obligor, illustrates the other end of the spectrum. In that example, the risk of accumulating arrears is much higher, namely:

$$\text{Risk} = (\$600\text{-}\$100)/\$600 = 0.83.$$

From these examples, we can see that the risk range was on a continuum from 0.0 to 1.0. In those unusual cases where the obligor would overpay his/her obligation during the six-month period, we assigned a numerical value of 0.0 to the risk.

Alternative Definitions of Risk. There are other approaches we could have used to define risk, but we rejected them in favor of the approach we just outlined. Among those approaches we considered and rejected were:

- One approach we rejected was to define risk as the time until the obligation was not paid in full. Since information about arrears was available, we could have defined risk based on a combination of payment history and initial arrearage. However, this definition would categorize noncustodial parents who missed their first payment then became regular payers as being at high risk of arrears. It is not uncommon for noncustodial parents to appear to miss their first payment when the order begins in the middle of the month, just because of the timing of the initial posting and the APECS download of monthly data.

- Another alternative approach would have incorporated initial arrears in the definition, but that approach did not vary much from the chosen definition that examines arrears as a proportion of support due.

In the end, we selected the first definition of arrears because it seemed to meet most of the intuitive characteristics of risk, was understandable operationally, and correlated quite well with other working definitions.

Arrears Categories. Even though the model predicts a numerical value for risk, Virginia's grant proposal suggested that three categories of risk might be considered when building a predictive model, categories such as low-, medium-, and high-risk. Program architects believed that categories

would be a simpler concept to grasp and use in child support field operations. The definitions of these categories, however, were unknown to and undefined for child support practitioners, of course. Therefore, as model developers, we selected quantitative breakpoints to create the three categories.

Category	Break Points
Low Risk	$0.0 \leq 0.5$
Medium Risk	$> 0.5 \leq 0.8$
High Risk	$> 0.8 \leq 1.0$

These breakpoints were determined *post hoc* based on deciles. The high-risk category is intended to capture the noncustodial parents in the 90th percentile of risk. The low-risk category captured the first 30th percentile of risk and the middle category captured everyone else.

Predictor Variables

As mentioned earlier and discussed here in greater detail, we developed two different but related models. The intent of the first model was to maximize the number of records available for data modeling by excluding data that could only be collected from interviewing noncustodial parents. Both models used the same response variable (i.e., risk of arrears) defined above.

For the first model, there were over thirty possible predictor variables that were largely extracted from APECS (e.g., whether the child was born out of wedlock) or from hard copy case files (e.g., noncustodial parent's income). Although neural networks can have a large number of predictor variables, including a large number generally requires having a large data set. We had a relatively small data set. Thus, it was not feasible to use all the variables in developing the neural network model. As a result, we initially used statistical analysis (multiple regression) to identify a smaller set of significant predictor variables.[3] In the end, the models used the following 13 variables.

- Age (numerical)
- Gender (binary)
- Total arrears for all cases (numerical)
- Total monthly income (numerical)
- Number of children (number/category)
- Support order amount (numerical)
- Employment status: Full-time, part-time, etc (categorical)
- Type of order: judicial, administrative, default (categorical)
- Type of case: MAOF, TANF, Never TANF, other (categorical)
- In-state status (binary)
- Felony status (yes, no, don't know)

- Interviewed (binary)
- Born out-of-wedlock status for child (binary).

The second model included about 45 data fields from interviewed noncustodial parents in addition to the same data fields used in first model. The second model was also pruned to a smaller number of predictive variables using multiple regression analysis. In the end, only information from the following two interview questions were used.

- How much confidence (low, medium or high) did the NCP have that the support payments would benefit the supported child?
- What was the living arrangement between the NCP and the supported child? The possible responses were reduced to (1) living with NCP, (2) living with custodial parent, and (3) other.

Developing the Neural Network

There are two standard steps in using neural networks for data modeling.

1. The *training* step in which model parameters are estimated, and
2. The *validation* step in which the performance of the model is evaluated.

Development normally involves two separate data sets, one for training and one for validation. There were approximately 1,400 records used to develop the first model. These records were arbitrarily divided in half, one half was used to train the neural network and the other half was used to validate it. There were only about 1,000 full records available to develop the second model that included the interview data. That is, we had fewer cases to train/validate the neural network, but a larger number of predictor variables to consider. This was problematic because as the number of predictor variables increases, more records are needed to achieve reliability of the data modeling. The solution we chose to develop the second model was to use the entire 1,000 records with interview data for training and conduct no validation.

Validation of Model

The analysis of results below refers only to the first model. The lack of a validation step for the second model is clearly a limitation. However, since the data set for the second model extended from the first model's data set, there is some confidence that the validity of the second neural

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3 There was not much concern about including extra variables in the predictor set because neural networks, unlike regressions, can handle co-line disparities in the predictor variables. This attribute allows the neural network to include predictors if there is an intuitive or practical reason for doing so.

network would not decrease. In fact, it should increase due to the availability of more information about the case. There is no accepted measure of success in predicting arrears risk. That is, there is no "gold standard," which is a term used in neural networks to describe an accepted measure. As a

consequence, the neural network was compared to a simple multiple-linear regression model, which is the basic statistical approach used in data modeling by early computers. For both the neural network and the regression model, the same predictor/response combination was used.

There are at least two ways to measure model performance.

- **Squared error loss.** A simple measure of performance is to take the total sum of the squares of the differences between the predicted and the actual risk values. The limitation of this approach is that it considers the performance of the entire model and not the performance of predicting individual groups (i.e., low, medium and high-risk arrears). Squared error loss will favor results that are close to the overall mean risk. This penalizes attempts to categorize high and low risk and rewards attempts to categorize medium risk. Using this performance metric, therefore, the regression model outperforms the neural network. However, it also neglects the strength of the neural network over the regression approach, which is that a neural network tries to predict outliers and regression focuses on the mean.

- **Categorization.** A more meaningful way of measuring performance is to consider how a model categorized each individual in terms of his/her risk level (low, medium, or high). This depends on the break points for each risk level. More that 20 percent of all the risk values are below 0.07 while 30 percent are above 0.94. In other words, the extremely low and high risk cases account for half of the population used in the model. One definition of low risk is that the individual will meet at least 50 percent of his/her obligation to pay. At the other extreme, a high risk individual can be defined as someone who will fail to meet at least 90 percent of his/her obligation.

Since the goal of these models is to correctly categorize risk, the second metric is arguably a more effective gauge of model accuracy. A simple measure of categorization is to ask: What is the probability that an individual is placed in the correct category? Below is a table comparing the neural network to a regression model. The numerical values represent the probability that the model will correctly categorize an individual given his/her actual risk status.

Percent of Cases in which the Arrears Prediction Matched Actual Category				
Model Type	All Cases	Low-Risk Cases	Medium-Risk Cases	High-Risk Cases
Neural Network Prediction	56%	63%	16%	65%
Regression Prediction	48%	76%	47%	16%

Both the neural network and regression models perform well, but in different ways.

- Both models identified low risk individuals almost equally well.
- The regression model did better at predicting medium-risk arrears.
- The neural network did better predicting high-risk arrears.

As a consequence, the choice of models for the payment predictor tool in the field test depends largely on which subgroup of noncustodial parents the child support agency is trying to identify. For example, State B in the SAS study (Bloomberg and Long, 2006) discussed in Section 1 used its data model to identify cases the model predicted would pay, but who in reality were not paying. The state's intent was to target noncustodial parents who appeared to have the ability to pay, but who were not actually paying. Virginia, on the other hand, was going to use the tool from this project to identify noncustodial parents more appropriate for early intervention because they were at high risk of noncompliance with the child support order. For this goal, the neural network makes more sense than the regression model since it performs better at identifying cases with a high risk for arrears.

What is a Neural Network Model?

A neural network is a data modeling technique that can be used to recognize patterns. In particular, it works like any other prediction tool: given certain inputs, it will predict a "best guess" output. The neural network concept is loosely modeled on the brain. There are "neurons" that "fire" when they see the appropriate inputs. For a specific collection of input values, the neural network ideally will fire the proper collection of neurons. The sum total of this collection will define the prediction.

A neural network can have any number of neurons (e.g., dozens, hundreds or even thousands) all connected to each other. Weights are used to control the influence the neurons have on each other. A large weight connecting the first neuron to a second means that the output from the first neuron has a large influence on the behavior of the second (i.e., that it will fire with the proper input from the first). Designing a neural network involves using a set of training values in order to build the correct weight values associated with each neuron.

A neural network differs from other approaches (e.g. multiple regression) in that it functions almost as a black box. There is not a simple interpretation of weights. In fact, how they combine is usually

quite complex. This is actually a virtue of the approach. Ideally, the complex interactions between the neurons will model the complex patterns that go into the prediction of outcomes.

The specifics of the neural model follow.

- It is a *feed forward* model. This refers to the straightforward way in which inputs move forward from the input neurons through to the output neuron(s).
- It uses *back propagation* to select the appropriate weight values. Back propagation is an extension of the standard gradient descent method used in many optimization situations.

The *architecture* of the neural network consists of three layers of neurons:

Input Layer   Hidden Layer   Output Layer

- The *input* layer consisting of approximately 20 neurons. This is where the predictor values are represented.
- A *hidden* layer of approximately 20 neurons. These neurons are influenced by each of the input neurons and, collectively, these neurons influence the output neuron. The choice of 20 was a design decision we made after examining the results of many different architectures.
- One *output* layer consisting of a single neuron, namely the predicted risk.
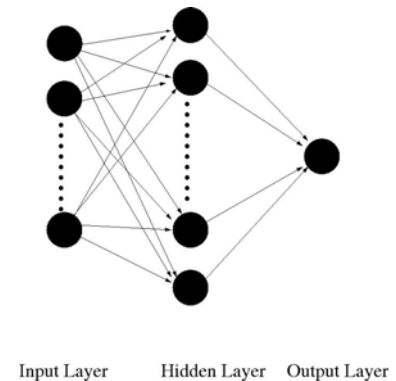
The Predictor Software

The software (screenshots below) was developed using Java (Java VM 1.5 or higher). It was designed as a stand-alone application for use on a personal computer. The application ships with two sets of weights, one for each model. The predictor software also dumped the results from the predictor model and the predictor values entered by field staff into an Excel file for purposes of evaluating the tool.

DCSE NCP Prediction Model

File

Name	
IVD Case Number	

NCP's Age

NCP's Gender ○ Female ● Male

Monthly Support Order

Total Gross Income

Arrears

Number of Children

Number of Orders

Born Out-of-Wedlock? ● Yes ○ No

Instate Case? ● Yes ○ No

Felon History? ○ Yes ○ No ○ DK

NCP's Current Employment Status

○ Full-time ● Part-time ○ Self employed

○ Temporarily employed ○ Not Employed

Case Type

● MAOF ○ TANF ○ non-TANF ○ Other

Type of Support Hearing at which NCP Appeared

● Administrative ○ Judicial ○ NCP Did Not Appear

Reset values **Total Risk** **Classify** Save values

DCSE NCP Prediction Model

File

No Interview	Have Interview

Use Interview Info? ☐

The NCP was asked about their confidence that the support payments would be used to help the child.

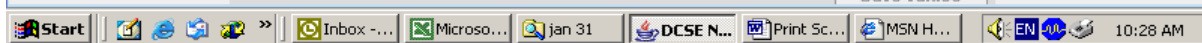What was the NCP's level of confidence?

The NCP was asked about their living arrangement with the child.

The possibilities were:
The child was living with the NCP
The child was living with the CP
The child was living with some else

Confidence

● Low ○ Med ○ High

Live With Status

● NCP ○ CP ○ Other

Reset values **Total Risk** **Classify**

Save values

FIELD TEST OF THE ARREARS PREDICTOR TOOL

As described earlier, after the arrears predictor tool was developed, we field-tested the model in six local offices, in conjunction with Phase II of *Right Track*. The test was limited by two factors. First, we could not use the tool to target cases for early intervention strategies for *Right Track* treatment cases that received services, regardless of their arrears risk score. Second, we could not use the tool to effect changes in the way existing enforcement workers managed their cases because these staff already had large caseloads and tasks other than field-testing high-risk arrears cases, identified by the tool, to perform.

Given these limitations, we hired specialized staff to conduct the field test. They collected data on qualified, new *Right Track* NCP cases, ran the arrears predictor tool, forwarded the arrears prediction scores to the enforcement staff, and performed other duties as required by the second phase of *Right Track*. The test included all noncustodial parents with new orders. Cases were randomly assigned to either a treatment or a control group from January through June 2007, based on the last digit of the parent's Social Security Number. Project staff remained through November 2007 to provide follow-up services and collect data for 11 months of the Phase II, *Right Track* demonstration.

Dedicated project staff received extensive, in-depth training on the tool, data collection methods, and the second phase of *Right Track*. (The training manual is attached as Appendix B.) Although district office staff received no training, all District Office managers and the Home Office Executive Team were informed about the tool. In the end, the District Managers had final say on whether and how the arrears risk score was communicated to the establishment and enforcement staff.

After running the arrears predictor tool, project staff would send weekly downloads to PSI with the arrears calculations. Those downloads were combined into a single file and matched to APECS monthly downloads. At this point, there were somewhat more than 900 cases in the analysis database. From this total, we deleted duplicate cases as well as cases that we could not match to APECS data or that did not have six months of payment data.[4] After eliminating these cases, there were 934 cases left for the evaluation, 441 treatment cases and 493 control cases.

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4 APECS payment data were extracted for the six project offices only. Cases that were transferred to a non-project district office were eliminated from the dataset. The elimination of data from transferred cases also applied to the data used to develop the model.

SECTION 3: FINDINGS

There are four major findings from the field test of the arrears predictor tool. They are:

- The tool accurately predicted arrears in the majority of the cases. It performed much better predicting low-risk arrears cases than predicting medium- or high-risk arrears cases.

- Fewer arrears accumulated in treatment cases than in control cases. Project staff notified enforcement workers of arrears predictions in treatment cases only. In addition, project staff contacted and offered services to all treatment cases only.

- Arrears prevention was most effective among cases that the arrears predictor tool assessed with medium risk of arrears accrual.

- Regular establishment and enforcement specialists, unfortunately, were not integrated into the project or trained on the tool for the field test, as originally proposed. As a result, few establishment and enforcement specialists gained experience using the arrears prediction score or risk categories. Use of the score/risk categories by regular establishment and enforcement specialists was left to the discretion of the participating district offices and their managers.

Each of these findings is explored in greater detail below.

ACCURACY OF ARREARS PREDICTION

Exhibit 3-1 shows that the arrears predictor tool worked better at predicting arrears in cases that accumulated low arrears than in those cases that accumulated medium and high arrears. Among all field-tested cases, the tool predicted the accurate category of arrears in 70 percent of low-risk arrears cases, 10 percent of medium-risk arrears cases, and 38 percent of high-risk arrears cases. In all, the arrears predictor tool had a 57 percent accuracy rate, which was almost identical to its laboratory prediction rate of 56 percent.

Exhibit 3-1
Percent of Cases in Which Arrears Predictor Tool Accurately Categorized Arrears Risk

	All Cases	Actual Category of Arrears Risk		
		Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
Model (Laboratory) Development	56%	63%	16%	65%
Field Test- All cases	(n=934)	(n=628)	(n=82)	(n=224)
	57%	70%	10%	38%

It is not clear why there was a large discrepancy in the accuracy rates for the high-risk group between model development and the field test. There were no obvious differences in the characteristics of cases used to develop the data model and those used in the field test except that payments were slightly better for cases in the field test. This is consistent with other child support collections trends that show the percentage of current support paid increasing over time. Payment data for the data model were collected in 2005 and 2006, whereas payment data for the field test were collected in 2007.

Comparison of Virginia to Washington

It is difficult to compare the accuracy rates of the Virginia and Washington State tools because the arrears prediction was made for all Virginia cases, while the Washington State tool essentially pre-screens cases and only makes an arrears prediction for those cases in which the prediction is likely to be accurate. Due to the pre-screening, we would expect the Washington State accuracy rate to be higher than the Virginia rate and it is. Washington State's accuracy rate (69% and 74% depending on the quarter predicted) is higher than Virginia's accuracy rate during model development (56%) and during the field test (57%). The pre-screening Washington conducted limited the arrears calculation to between 49-62 percent of the cases. If Washington's accuracy rate could be adjusted to consider all cases, including those it screened out of the prediction, the gap in the accuracy rates between Washington and Virginia would likely be smaller.[5]

Both the Virginia and the Washington models performed better at predicting low-risk arrears than high-risk arrears cases. Instead of segregating cases into low to high risk categories, however, Washington predicted four types of arrearages: increasing, decreasing, unchanged, and missing (i.e., because the case was no longer in the child support system). Unchanged and decreasing arrears cases in the Washington demonstration were more likely to meet the pre-screening criteria for the calculation and result in an accurate calculation than were increasing arrears cases. Unchanged and decreasing arrears cases would be categorized as low arrears in the Virginia model. The Virginia model performed the best at predicting low-risk arrears cases. The Washington model performed the worst at predicting cases that would be missing because they were no longer in the child support system. The Virginia model was not designed for that prediction.

A key difference between the Virginia and Washington tools was that Virginia relied on information available when the order was established and Washington relied on information over time, including past arrears patterns. Previous payment patterns may be a better predictor of future payment

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5 For example, if we assume that the odds of the Washington State model correctly predicting arrears in the cases that failed the pre-screening was the same as a coin toss (i.e., 50%), Washington State's accuracy rate would be 59 to 65 percent.

patterns than a prediction based on specific individual and case characteristics. This may have further contributed to Washington's somewhat higher accuracy rate.

CHARACTERISTICS OF CASES WITH ACCURATE ARREARS CATEGORIZATION

Arrears were predicted accurately in 67 percent or more of the cases with at least one of the following characteristics:

- relatively high income;
- relatively medium income;
- interstate case;
- high child support order (i.e. over $350/month);
- non-TANF; or
- the noncustodial parent was older (i.e., over 35 years of age).

Exhibit 3-2 shows (1) the number of cases with each of these characteristics, (2) the proportion of cases with the characteristic in which the arrears prediction was accurate, (3) the average amount of arrears accrued, (4) arrears accrued as a proportion of current support due, and (5) the average arrears categorization. For example, Exhibit 3-2 shows that there were 114 cases with relatively high income and the arrears categorization was predicted accurately for 90 percent of those cases. The exhibit also shows that the average arrears accrued in high-income cases was $382, about 10 percent of current support due. This places high-income cases in the low arrears risk categorization.

Exhibit 3-2 **TOP SIX FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH ACCURATE ARREARS CLASSIFICATION**					
	Results of Arrears Prediction (% of cases, sum of accurate & inaccurate predictions = 100%)		**Arrears Actually Accrued**		
	Accurate Prediction	Inaccurate Prediction	Average Dollars	Average Percent of Current Support Accrued in Arrears	Average Arrears Categorization
All Cases (n = 934)	57%	43%	$626	33%	Low
Relatively High Income (n = 114) *Income > $2,500/month*	90%	10%	$382	10%	Low
Relatively Medium Income (n = 70) *(Income is $2,001 - $2,500/month)*	74%	26%	$332	12%	Low
Interstate Case (n = 48)	7%	24%	$448	17%	Low

Exhibit 3-2					
TOP SIX FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH <u>ACCURATE</u> ARREARS CLASSIFICATION					
	Results of Arrears Prediction (% of cases, sum of accurate & inaccurate predictions = 100%)		**Arrears Actually Accrued**		
	<u>Accurate</u> Prediction	<u>Inaccurate</u> Prediction	Average Dollars	Average Percent of Current Support Accrued in Arrears	Average Arrears Categorization
High Child Support Order (n = 192) *Order > $350/month*	72%	28%	$506	13%	Low
Non-TANF Case (n = 330)	69%	31%	$416	21%	Low
Older Noncustodial Parent (n = 239) *NCP is over age 35 years*	68%	32%	$426	26%	Low

Exhibit 3-2 shows that that the two characteristics associated with the highest accuracy rates are relatively high income cases (90% accuracy rate) and relatively medium income cases (74% accuracy rate). Relatively high incomes are defined as incomes greater than $2,500 per month and relatively medium incomes are defined as incomes between $2,001 and $2,500 per month. The definitions are based on incomes of noncustodial parents with child support orders that were recently established through the IV-D program, not on incomes statewide. Generally, incomes of noncustodial parents in the child support caseload are lower than statewide incomes. For example, median male earnings in Virginia are about $3,057 per month (Census 2006 American Community Survey), while the median income of noncustodial parents among the field-tested cases was $1,046 per month.

Relatively high- and medium-income cases comprised 114 and 70, respectively, of the 934 field-tested cases. Stated differently, 12 percent of the field-tested cases had relatively high incomes and 7 percent of the field-tested cases had relatively medium incomes.

In general, most of the characteristics associated with a *higher* accuracy of arrears prediction (i.e., those shown in Exhibit 3-2) are also commonly associated with higher payment rates or higher income. For example, payment typically has a positive correlation with income and income typically has a correlation with child support order amounts, age, and TANF eligibility.

- Higher incomes result in higher child support orders by design of the child support guidelines. Higher orders, defined as being more than $350 per month, comprised 21 percent of orders in field-tested cases.

- Older workers tend to earn more money than younger workers. Older noncustodial parents, defined as over 35 years of age, comprised 26 percent of the field-tested cases.
- TANF is a means-tested program which counts child support as income. If higher incomes pay more child support, the cases receiving the higher support are more likely to be ineligible for TANF receipt.

Characteristics of Cases with Inaccurate Arrears Categorization
Case characteristics associated with the lowest accuracy rates are:

- Temporarily employed noncustodial parents;
- Self-employed noncustodial parents;
- Noncustodial parents who did not appear for the administrative or judicial establishment hearing;
- Noncustodial parents with three child support orders;
- Low-income noncustodial parents (i.e., incomes between $1 and $900 per month); and
- Noncustodial parents with four or more child support orders.

As shown in Exhibit 3-3 below, the accuracy rate of the tool among cases with any one of these characteristics was less than 50 percent. Cases in which the noncustodial parent was temporarily employed had the lowest accuracy rate, 35 percent.

Although not shown in Exhibit 3-3, other case characteristics associated with less than a 50-percent accuracy rate are: (1) the noncustodial parents is unemployed, (2) the order covers two children, (3) the noncustodial parent's income is $0, (4) the monthly order amount is between $1 to $65 per month, and (5) the children receive TANF. The accuracy rates in these cases ranged from 47 to 50 percent.

Exhibit 3-3

TOP SIX FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH <u>INACCURATE</u> ARREARS CLASSIFICATION

	Results of Arrears Prediction (% of cases, sum of accurate and inaccurate predictions = 100%)		Arrears Actually Accrued		
	<u>Accurate</u> Prediction	<u>Inaccurate</u> Prediction	Average Dollars	Average Percent of Current Support Accrued in Arrears	Average Arrears Categorization
All Cases (n = 934)	57%	43%	$626	33%	Low
Temporarily Employed (n = 46)	35%	65%	$790	46%	Low
Self Employed (n = 14)	36%	64%	$846	37%	Low
Non-Appearance at Hearing (n = 141) Noncustodial parent did not appear at judicial or administrative hearing	40%	60%	$800	51%	Medium
Three Child Support Orders (n =71) Noncustodial has 3 child support orders	42%	58%	$561	43%	Low
Low Income (n = 319) Noncustodial Parent's Income is between $1 to $900 per month	46%	54%	$798	46%	Low
4 or More Child Support Orders (n = 37) Noncustodial has 4 child support orders	46%	54%	$629	45%	Low

In general, many of the characteristics associated with poor arrears predictions are also associated with low levels of child support payments. This includes noncustodial parents with low incomes or employment that may be unstable (e.g., temporary employment or self-employment). It also includes noncustodial parents who did not appear for their judicial or administrative order establishment hearing and noncustodial parents with three or more child support orders.

Although payments were generally lower among cases with these characteristics, payments were not zero. In fact, there was a substantial amount of payments. On average, most of the cases with at least one of these characteristics accrued less than $900 in arrears in the field test and less than 50 percent of the amount due over the study period, which placed them in the low-arrears category. This suggests three things. First, the presence of these characteristics alone cannot be equated to

zero payments. If this were the situation, the average percent of current support accrued in arrears would be 100 percent. Second, there are many partial payers or intermittent payers among cases with these characteristics. This is evident by the proportion of current support accrued in arrears shown in Exhibit 3-3, which ranges from 37 to 51 percent. Implicitly, this means 49 to 63 percent of support due is paid in these cases, which are substantial amounts. Finally, an arrears-threshold less than 50 percent of current support due may be better suited for differentiating low-risk arrears cases from medium-risk arrears cases. As evident in Exhibit 3-3, although many of these characteristics are commonly associated with low child support payments, only one of the case characteristics — non-appearance by the noncustodial parent — resulted in arrears accumulation that was categorized as medium-risk for arrears. The proportion of current support accrued in arrears averaged 51 percent among cases where the noncustodial parent did not appear at the hearing. At this level of arrears, the cases would be categorized as having a medium-risk of arrears.

Differences between Actual Arrears and Arrears Prediction
For all cases, the proportion of support due that accrued in arrears was, on average, 0.05 percentage points less than the arrears prediction. This includes all field-tested cases, regardless of whether the arrears categorization was predicted accurately.

For cases that were categorized incorrectly, the gap between the predicted and actual arrears was considerably larger than the 0.05 percent gap for all cases.

Finally, among cases that were inaccurately categorized as medium risk for arrears, the tool under-predicted arrears in 61 percent of the cases and over-predicted arrears in 39 percent of the cases. The gap between predicted and actual arrears averaged 49 percentage points in cases where the tool under-predicted arrears and 26 percentage points in cases where the tool over-predicted arrears.

The large gaps reflect the large range in the three categorizations. For example, if a case was actually a high-arrears case but was predicted to be a low-arrears case, then the gap between the actual and predicted arrears accrual would be at least 30 percentage points because low-risk arrears cases were defined as having 50 percent or less of current support accrued in arrears and high-risk arrears cases were defined as having more than 80 percent of current support accrue in arrears.
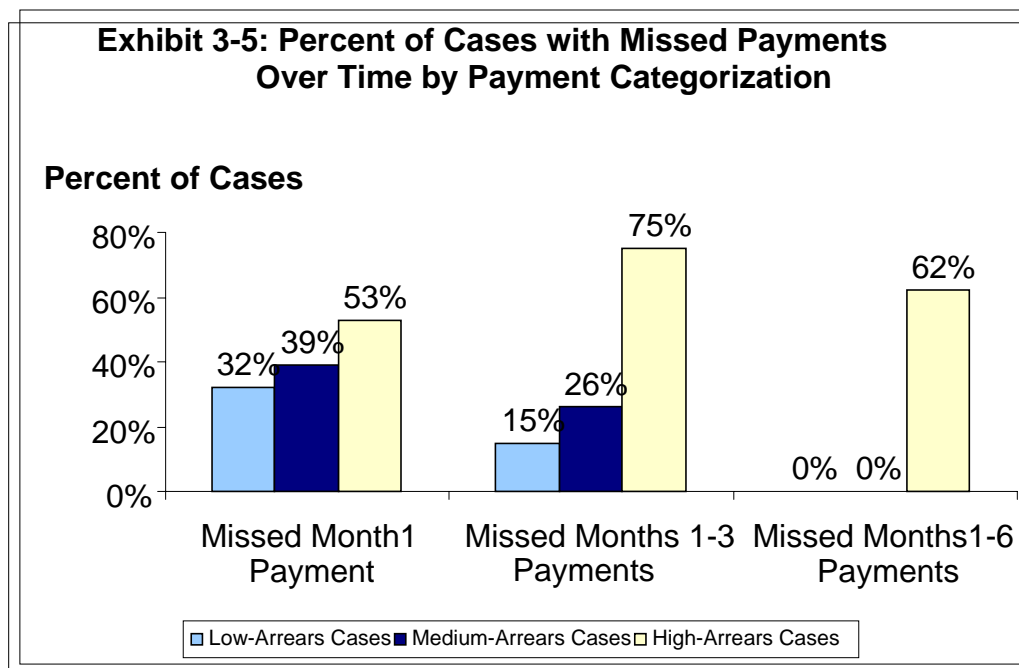
Differences over Time
The study's field test was designed to capture six months of payment patterns following order establishment. Exhibit 3-4 explores how well the arrears predictor tool works for shorter time periods (i.e., one and three months following order establishment). In general, the accuracy rates are lower when payments are tracked for fewer months following establishment. The accuracy rates for one- and three-month tracking periods are 47 and 48 percent, respectively, compared to a 57-percent accuracy rate for six months. The accuracy rate for longer than six months, however, is about the same as the six-month rate. Thus, for the 275 cases that had 10 or more months of

payment data, the accuracy rate was 56 percent. A longer tracking period would be necessary to determine how well the tool predicts arrears for 12 months or longer.

Exhibit 3-4
VARIATIONS IN ARREARS PREDICTION RESULTS BY NUMBER OF PAYMENT MONTHS TRACKED
(all field-tested cases = 939)

	Results of Arrears Prediction (% of cases, sum of accurate and inaccurate predictions = 100%)		Arrears Actually Accrued		
	Accurate Prediction	Inaccurate Prediction	Average Dollars	Average Percent of Current Support Accrued in Arrears	Average Arrears Categorization
One Month Following Order Establishment	47%	53%	$131	70%	Medium
Three Months Following Order Establishment	48%	52%	$237	53%	Medium
Six Months Following Order Establishment	57%	43%	$626	33%	Low

The data in Exhibit 3-4 also imply that the payment patterns develop within the first six months of order establishment. Following order establishment, arrears grow on average by $131 after one month, $237 after three months, and $626 after six months. Yet, when expressed as a percentage of current support due, arrears decrease over time. They decrease from 70 percent of the amount due after one month to 53 percent of the amount due after three months and to 33 percent after six months. (To be clear, the dollar amount can still increase when a percentage decreases.) This pattern occurs because several noncustodial parents miss their first month of payment, but fewer miss their first three months of payment and even fewer miss their first six months of payment. This trend is evident in Exhibit 3-5. It shows that the first month of payment is missed by 32 percent of low-risk arrears cases and 39 percent of medium-risk arrears cases. Yet by month three, the proportion of missed payments decreases among low-risk and medium-risk arrears cases and increases among high-risk arrears cases. In all, Exhibit 3-5 illustrates the importance of enhanced monitoring and enforcement within the first few months of order establishment.

**Exhibit 3-5: Percent of Cases with Missed Payments
Over Time by Payment Categorization**

Percent of Cases

Chart showing percent of cases:

- Missed Month 1 Payment: Low-Arrears Cases 32%, Medium-Arrears Cases 39%, High-Arrears Cases 53%
- Missed Months 1-3 Payments: Low-Arrears Cases 15%, Medium-Arrears Cases 26%, High-Arrears Cases 75%
- Missed Months 1-6 Payments: Low-Arrears Cases 0%, Medium-Arrears Cases 0%, High-Arrears Cases 62%

Legend: □ Low-Arrears Cases ■ Medium-Arrears Cases □ High-Arrears Cases

Noncustodial Parent Interviews

We built two arrears predictor tools for this project. One allows the calculation of arrears risk *without* interview data and the other allows the calculation of arrears risk *with* interview data. As discussed earlier, both options were included because only about half of the noncustodial parents agreed to be interviewed when the base data used to develop the arrears predictor tool were collected. Interviews were entirely voluntary. Therefore, rather than imputing average amounts or relying on another approach for dealing with missing interview data, we developed one model without interview data.

We hypothesized that the accuracy of the arrears prediction would be higher in interviewed cases because those cases had more information on which the arrears prediction could be based. The field test proved this hypothesis not to be true, at least not for the interview data we decided to include in the model. There was no difference in the accuracy of the predictions for interviewed and non-interviewed cases. Both had a 57 percent accuracy rate on average.

USING THE ARREARS RISK SCORE

Project staff ran the arrears predictor tool for both treatment and control group cases in the field test. However, only cases assigned to the treatment group were to receive the following.

- Project staff informed the enforcement staff of the arrears risk score in treatment cases.

- Project staff were instructed to build a relationship with noncustodial parents in the treatment group. This included interviewing the noncustodial parent immediately after the order was

established, whenever possible, and offering special assistance for the next six months. Special assistance ranged from referrals to job search or life skills assistance to immediate alerts when there were missed payments and other early intervention strategies.

Experiences of Field Test Staff

The *Right Track* evaluator distributed a survey to the 29 enforcement staff working in the six district offices participating in Right Track, Phase II. Despite aggressive follow-up efforts, only 14 enforcement staff (48.3 percent) responded to the four-question survey. Among the 14 respondents, six were aware of the tool and eight were unaware of the tool. Among the six staff aware of the tool, five found it helpful because it brought the case to their attention, they initiated enforcement action more quickly, or both. The evaluator was not able to survey the project staff hired to gather the information keyed into the arrears predictor tool, run the calculation, and attempt to contact noncustodial parents in the treatment group to determine their need for support services. Anecdotally, however, what we did learn when coordinating the weekly transfer of data for the evaluation is that some of these staff volunteered their insights. A common theme expressed was that the arrears risk score did not always match their perceptions of the case. For example, staff did not understand how a noncustodial parent could be assessed as being at "low risk" when he had zero income.

Differences between Control and Treatment Cases

Exhibits 3-6 and 3-7 compare arrears accrual between the control and treatment cases by their arrears risk categorization. Exhibit 3-6 compares the average dollar amount of arrears accrued six months following order establishment. Exhibit 3-7 compares arrears accrual as a percentage of current support due over the same time period.

More arrears accrued in control cases than in treatment cases. The average amount of arrears accrued in treatment cases was $536 or 32.2 percent of current support due. The average amount of arrears accrued in control cases was $705 per dollars or 34.5 percent of current support due. The dollar difference was statistically significant between the treatment and control cases when all cases were considered (ϱ <0.10). The percentage difference was only significant for medium-risk cases (ϱ <0.10).

Exhibit 3-6
Average Dollars of Arrears Accrued Six Months Following Order Establishment

	ALL (n=934)	Categorization of Arrears Risk Prediction		
		Low (n=594)	Medium (n=99)	High (n=241)
Field Test- All cases(n=934)	$626	$534	$581	$863
Field Test – Treatment Cases (n = 441)	$536	$450	$449	$794
Field Test- Control Cases (n = 493)	$705	$612	$695	$928
Difference in Arrears Accrual between Treatment and Control Group	-$169*	-$162	-$246	-$134

* Treatment and control differences are statistically significant at $\varrho < 0.10$

Exhibit 3-7
Average Arrears Accrued as Percent of Support Due Six Months Following Order Establishment

	ALL (n=934)	Categorization of Arrears Risk Prediction		
		Low (n=594)	Medium (n=99)	High (n=241)
Field Test- All cases (n=934)	33.3%	27.3%	37.5%	46.8%
Field Test – Treatment Cases (n = 441)	32.2%	27.4%	29.8%	45.5%
Field Test- Control Cases (n = 493)	34.5 %	27.2%	44.1%	48.0%
Difference in Arrears Accrual between Treatment and Control Group	-2.3%	0.2%	-14.3%*	-2.5%

* Treatment and control differences are statistically significant at $\varrho < 0.10$

These findings have two potential policy implications. First, they suggest that early intervention strategies are most effective among cases assessed as having a medium-risk of arrears. Second, they suggest that the tool can be effective in improving an agency's collections performance. Although the difference between the treatment and control groups may only be incremental for all cases and for high-risk cases — specifically, a $134-$169 difference or a 2.2 to 2.5 percentage difference — that proportional increase is an improvement in an important federal performance measure where incremental increases count. Essentially, arrears accrual as a proportion of current support owed is what remains from the proportion of current support paid. Child support agencies seeking to improve their performance on the proportion of current support paid would also want to reduce arrears accrual as a percent of current support due.

Based on the results shown in Exhibits 3-6 and 3-7, conducting early intervention strategies will result in some incremental decreases to arrears, hence incremental increases to collections. The increase is likely to be the greatest for those at medium risk of arrears.

ALTERNATIVE CASE STRATIFICATIONS

The arrears predictor tool was developed based on a neural network, which requires time and resources to develop. Is there a simpler way of stratifying cases for early intervention, such as selecting low-income obligors or obligors without full-time employment?

We explored five types of alternative stratifications based on the noncustodial parent's:
(1) employment status, (2) income, (3) appearance at the order establishment hearing, (4) arrears at order establishment, and (5) the child support order amount as a percentage of income. Some observers suggest that early intervention strategies should target unemployed or marginally employed noncustodial parents. Others suggest that low-income noncustodial parents should be targeted. Some studies suggest that noncustodial parents who do not appear for the order establishment hearing (Legler, 2003) are more likely to accrue arrears and that starting the obligation in arrears may be an insurmountable barrier to payment (OIG, 2000). In addition, Washington State found that arrears accrue when the order is more than 20 percent of the obligated parent's income. Since early intervention (i.e., personal contact and offering of supportive services) was administered to all treatment cases agreeing to accept services, the analyses did not consider their arrears risk score.

There were no statistical differences in arrears accrual between treatment and control cases based on any of the five stratifications except when the noncustodial parents were stratified by employment status, and that difference was statistically significant only for self-employed noncustodial parents. Thus, for example, the difference in accrual percentage between noncustodial parents with no income in the treatment group and noncustodial parents with no income in the control group was not statistically significant. This suggests that income alone is not a suitable criterion for stratifying cases for early intervention treatments. Similarly, stratifying cases by whether the noncustodial parent appeared at the order establishment hearing or by whether the order is more than 20 percent of the obligated parent's income or amount of arrears at order establishment also are not suitable criteria, based on our findings.[6]

There were no statistical differences in arrears accrual between treatment and control cases based on employment status, except for self-employed noncustodial parents. Specifically, arrears accrual did not differ between noncustodial parents who were not employed and assigned to the treatment group and those who were not employed and assigned to the control group, nor were there differences when noncustodial parents with full-time employment were analyzed separately. This

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6 As an aside, the analysis did find that more arrears accrued among all cases when the order was more than 20 percent of the obligated parent's income and that the difference was statistically significant from the arrears accrued when the order was less than 20 percent of income. (This statistical test considered <u>all</u> cases, regardless of treatment/control group assignment.) So, this finding may just be an artifact of the order amount: the higher the order amount, the higher the area.

suggests that employment status is probably not an ideal criterion for stratifying cases appropriate for early intervention. It could be that the noncustodial parents who are not employed actually have unreported earned income or income from other sources. It is also possible that their arrears accrual rates are not high because they have lower order amounts.

As noted above, we did find statistical differences between the treatment and control group when only self-employed noncustodial parents were considered. Self-employed parents are an enigma. There were only 14 self-employed noncustodial parents in the field test; 10 were randomly assigned to the treatment group and 4 were assigned to the control group. The proportion of current support accrued in arrears averaged 47.6 percent among self-employed parents in the treatment group and only 9.7 percent among self-employed parents in the control group. However, there were many notable differences between self-employed parents in the treatment and control groups. Those in the treatment group had more children, more support orders, and more arrears at order establishment.

Conclusions about Alternative Case Stratifications
In all, we could not identify a single criterion where treatment cases with a particular characteristic accrued fewer arrears than control cases with a particular characteristic. This suggests that basing case stratification on one characteristic is less effective than basing it on more than one characteristic. Neural networks can consider more than one case characteristic.

SECTION 4: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

There are two major research questions that we addressed in this portion of the *Right Track* project that involve the development and field test of an arrears predictor tool.

Question 1
Can an arrears predictor tool be built with some level of accuracy?

This study found that an arrears predictor tool can be built that is fairly, but not perfectly, accurate. The tool we developed in this study was more accurate at predicting arrears in low-risk cases than in medium or high-risk cases. However, as we discuss in more detail below, the accuracy and utility of the tool could be improved and/or enhanced by using additional cases and case information to develop the tool, and by additional field-testing using experienced establishment and enforcement specialists.

Question 2
Can the knowledge gained from an arrears predictor tool be used to increase child support collections?

The field experiment suggests that the arrears predictor tool can have a positive impact on child support payments. During the test, fewer arrears accrued in cases assigned to the treatment group than in cases assigned to the control group.

The intervention approach used in this study with treatment group cases consisted of project staff: (1) contacting noncustodial parents to offer supportive services and (2) informing enforcement staff of the arrears risk score. Project staff offered no services to control group cases and did not inform enforcement staff about those arrears risk scores. The evaluation found that the differences between the treatment and control groups varied in statistical significance depending on how arrears were measured (i.e., absolute dollar difference or as a percent of current support due). Differences also varied among subgroups in these populations. Nonetheless, even small decreases in arrears accrual can be meaningful to child support agencies and to children and families. The proportion of current support paid, which closely relates to the proportion of current support accrued in arrears, is a federal performance measure. Incremental increases in the proportion of current support collected, even increases as low as one to two percentage points, matter in the federal measure. Furthermore, collecting one or two hundred dollars more in child support — which is the average difference in collections between the treatment and control groups for some subgroups — can make a big difference to a child's and a family's well-being.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

One possible application of the arrears predictor tool that was partially explored in this project was the tool's use to target cases appropriate for early intervention strategies, such as more active case monitoring and referrals to supportive services. Since these activities are labor-intensive, a case sorting tool could divide cases into two groups: one that receives the more labor-intensive early interventions and another that receives conventional enforcement and monitoring. For example, only cases at high risk of arrears would receive early intervention and those assessed at low-risk would not receive early intervention. We were not able to fully test this approach as part of the demonstration.

Another innovative application of an arrears predictor tool comes from the literature review. As discussed by Bloomberg and Long (2006) in their white paper about the use of data modeling in child support enforcement, State B used its arrears prediction tool to target cases that appeared to have the ability to pay but were not paying. Caseworkers in State B believed that, in many of these cases, there was income but not an income-withholding order. Child support workers investigated these cases and took enforcement actions when appropriate. They were able to place an income-withholding order in many of these cases.

Still another possible use of the tool is implicit in preliminary findings from Colorado's Early Intervention demonstration project. Anecdotal evidence from this project suggests that: (1) the success of early intervention is more evident and more frequent in new cases than in older cases, and (2) some older cases respond better to early intervention strategies than others. An arrears predictor tool targeting which older cases are more responsive to early intervention strategies may help Colorado staff more wisely direct their early intervention efforts, given how labor-intensive those efforts can be.

DATA MODEL

The payment predictor model could be improved by using larger samples and additional analysis of the data. Limiting the data collection to case information that can be captured from automated sources could increase the samples available for, and allow us to include more variables in the, data analysis. As discussed above, our analysis was somewhat constrained by the tedious manual data collection, which limited the number of cases in our sample.

Finally, a perennial challenge to the data modeling is that the predictive variable (i.e., the risk of arrears accumulation) is somewhat of a moving target since the percent of current support continues to increase. Our findings from this project indicate that data modeling may be a more useful approach to identifying noncustodial parents at risk of arrears accumulation than using a single criterion (e.g., the obligated parent's income, arrears at order establishment). Clearly, a neural network which considers more than one characteristic is a viable option and one worth exploring further.

APPENDICES

Payment Predictor Intake Form
(Abingdon, Danville and Manassas District Offices)

INSTRUCTIONS: Interview and collect information from NCPs who have new cases. Obtain data from APECS, where appropriate. The information will be used to develop a tool to predict an NCP's consistency in making support payments.

A. Case Information

1. Internal Project ID Number: _____ - _____ [Do Not Complete]

2. Print NCP's name: _____ _____ _____
                       (Last)   (First)   (MI)

3. Case no. (the most recent case) _____

4. NCP's Home Address: _____
                               (no. & street)

_____ _____
           (city & state)   (zip code)

5. How long have you lived at this address? _____ years

6. Home phone: _____ Cell phone: _____ Pager: _____

7. What is your current living situation?
  1 = rent
  2 = homeowner
  3 = live with friend or relative
  4 = temporary housing or shelter
  5 = other _____

8. Amount actually paid by NCP for rent/mortgage per month? $_____

9. Social Security #: _____

10.

Name(s) of NCP's children	Age(s)*	Support Amount	Arrears Owed	TANF Amt of Arrears
a. _____	_____	$_____	$_____	$_____
b. _____	_____	$_____	$_____	$_____
c. _____	_____	$_____	$_____	$_____
d. _____	_____	$_____	$_____	$_____
e. _____	_____	$_____	$_____	$_____
f. _____	_____	$_____	$_____	$_____
Totals		$_____	$_____	$_____

* Only required for children in this new case
Circle the name(s) of the child(ren) involved in **this most recent** case.

11. Circle type of case: MAOF   TANF   NTANF   SLFC   FC   ARRP   ARRN
   (Do not obtain information for any other type of case.)

12. Type of support order in this case?
   1 = Administrative Order – non default
   2 = Judicial Order – non default
   3 = Order by default

13. Received personal service of ASO?
   1 = yes   2 = no   3 = n/a

14. Number of support orders _____

15. [Intentionally omitted]

16. Instate/Interstate Case?

1 = Instate	2 = Interstate

B. Demographic Information

1. NCP's gender?
   1 = M
   2 = F

2. Age in years: _____   Date of birth: ___/___/_____
                                              (da) (mo) (yr)

3. Past or current military service?
   1 = yes
   2 = no

4. Race (*see Attachment 1*):
   1 = White
   2 = Black
   3 = Hispanic
   4 = Asian/Pacific Islander
   5 = American Indian
   6 = Other

5. Years of education: 7 or less 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17+

6. Completed high school or GED?
   1 = yes   2 = no

7. Are you a custodial parent of a child?   [Obtain from NCP, when possible]
   1 = yes   2 = no

8. Ever convicted of a felony?
   1 = yes   2 = no

9. No. of days incarcerated for *child support reasons*: _____days (enter 0 if never for child support reasons)

10. What is your primary means of transportation?
   1 = own vehicle
   2 = leasing or buying a vehicle
   3 = friend/relative's vehicle
   4 = public transportation
   5 = other _____

11. Do you have a valid driver's license?
   1 = yes
   2 = no
   3 = DCSE suspended license
   4 = other _____

12. Monthly gross income from all sources:
   $_____   [Obtain info from APECS rather than NCP.]

13. Source of Income Information in 12, above:
         1 = Noncustodial parent
         2 = Guidelines worksheet used to establish order
         3 = Financial statement in case file
         4 = Photocopy of pay stub in case file
         5 = Imputed at minimum wage
         6 = Imputed at median earnings
         7 = Other_____

14. [Intentionally omitted]

15. Circle all sources of income:

1 = employment
        2 = retirement compensation
        3 = disability income
        4 = Social Security
        5 = Unemployment Compensation
        6 = Other _____ (Indicate)

16. How would you rank your credit rating?
        1 = poor
        2 = fair
        3 = average
        4 = good
        5 = excellent
        6 = don't know

C. Employment Information

1. Which <u>one</u> of the following best describes your current employment status?
        1 = employed full-time, name of occupation _____SOC code_____
        2 = employed part-time, name of occupation _____SOC code_____
        3 = self-employed, name of occupation _____ SOC code_____
        4 = employed on temporary basis/occasional jobs
        5 = currently not employed

2. If employed:
   <u>Present</u> employer's name and address: _____

   Dates of employment: From: _____   To: _____
                                        (mo. & year)   (mo. & year)
   Salary/wage (*show as a hourly amount*): $_____ No. hours worked per mo.: ____
      If weekly salary given, divide by 40
      If monthly salary given, divide by 173
      If annual salary given, divide by 2080

3. If you are not currently working, which <u>one</u> of the following best describes the reason?
        1 = laid-off or terminated from last job
        2 = voluntarily quit last job
        3 = unable to work due to temporary disability or illness
        4 = unable to work due to permanent disability or illness
        5 = unable to work because am the primary caretaker for a person
        6 = other _____

4. If you are unemployed, what is the date that you last worked ? ____   ____   ____
                                                                  (mo.) (day) (yr.)
5. How many jobs have you had in the past two years? _____

6. CM's assessment of NCP's employment record:
        1 = unemployed, for one year or more
        2 = unemployed, for less than one year
        3 = employed sporadically within past year
        4 = presently employed but capable of better employment
        5 = presently employed to potential

7. Professional License?
        1 = yes   If yes, show Type _____, Occupation _____
        2 = no

D. Relationship with Your Child Involved in this Case   (*if more than one child in the case, consider the questions on that basis*)

1. How often <u>do you see</u> this child?

	Daily	Once or twice a week	Once or twice a month	Seldom	Never
(Circle No.)	1	2	3	4	5

2. How many hours <u>do you spend</u> with this child on average each month?   _____ hours.
3. Overall, how satisfied are you with the amount of time you spend with your child?   ("7" would be very satisfied and "1" would be very dissatisfied)
     (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

4. How would you evaluate your relationship with this child?

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Circle No.	5	4	3	2	1

5. How important is having a good relationship with this child to your making child support payments? ("7" indicates very important and "1" indicates no importance)

   (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

6. Besides the child support order, do you provide other financial support for this child?

   1 = Yes   If yes, explain the type of support_____

   2 = No

7. Indicate the number of miles you live from this child: _____.

8. Were you present when this child was born?

   1 = Yes

   2 = No

E. Relationship with the Other Parent of this Child   (if more than one child in the case, consider the questions on that basis)

1. Were you and the other parent ever married?

   1 = Yes

   2 = No

2. Indicate how long you and the other parent lived together:

   1 = never

   2 = less than six months

   3 = from six months to one year

   4 = from one to three years

   5 = three years or more

3. If you and the other parent lived together, how long has it been since you have been separated?

   1 = n/a

   2 = less than a year

   3 = one to three years

   4 = three years or more

   5 = currently living together

4. How important is having a good relationship with this child's other parent to your making child support payments?   ("7" indicates very important and "1" indicates no importance)

   (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

5. How would you rate your relationship with this child's other parent?   ("7" would be the best possible relationship and "1" would be the worst possible relationship):

   (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

6. How confident are you the payments you make for this child's support are used for the child?   ("7" would be completely confident and "1" would be not confident at all)

   (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

F. Custody and Visitation Issues   (if more than one child in the case, consider the questions on that basis)

1. Where does the child(ren) involved <u>in this case</u> currently live?

   1 = My home

   2 = With other parent

   3 = Shared physical custody with other parent

   4 = With the grandparent(s)

   5 = With another relative

   6 = Foster parents' home

   7 = Other (explain) _____

2. Who presently has custody of this child?

   1 = Self

   2 = Other parent

   3 = Shared custody with other parent

   4 = Grandparent(s)

   5 = Other relative

   6 = Foster parents

   7 = Other (explain) _____

3. Overall, how satisfied are you with the custody arrangements for your child?   ("7" would be very satisfied and "1" would be very dissatisfied)

   (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

G. Support Payment Issues   *(if more than one child in the case, consider the questions on that basis)*

1. How responsible do you feel you are to pay support for this child?   ("7" would be completely responsible and "1" would be not responsible)

    (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

2. Indicate your understanding of the laws and procedures used to determine how much support you have to pay.   ("7" would be fully understand and "1" would be do not understand at all)

    (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7

3. Indicate how fair you believe the procedure was that was used to determine this child's support obligation. ("7" would be completely fair and "1" would be completely unfair)

    (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   (Circle 8 if Does Not Apply)

4. Which of the following applies to the amount of your support obligation for this child?
     1 = too much
     2 = about right
     3 = too little

5. If your father or mother was required to pay child support for you when you were a child, how regular were the payments?   ("7" would be very regular payments and "1" would be very irregular payments)

   (Circle the one that applies)   1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   (Circle 8 if Does Not Apply or Unknown)

6. As a child, did you mostly grow up with *one* or *neither* parent present in your home?
     1 = yes
     2 = no – Grew up mostly with both parents present in the home.

7. CM's assessment of customer's willingness/ability to pay:
     1 = Unable to pay & unwilling to pay
     2 = Unable to pay & willing to pay
     3 = Able to pay & unwilling to pay
     4 = Able to pay & willing to pay

8. Circle all sources of information used to complete this form:
     10- NCP interviewed at office
     11- NCP interviewed at court
     12- APECS
     13- Case file: Guidelines worksheet used to determine order
     14- Case file: NCP's Financial statement or affidavit
     15- Case file: Photocopies of NCP's pay stub
     16- Case file: Custodial Parent's Intake form (specify which questions)_____
     8.   NCP interviewed by telephone
     9.   Other_____

Case Manager's Signature: _____ Date Completed: _____

(rev. Sept. 2005)

Attachment 1

Definitions for Race

1 = White (Not of Hispanic origin) - All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, North Africa, or the Middle East.

2 = Black (Not of Hispanic origin) - All persons having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa.

3 = Hispanic - All persons of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Central or South American, or other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.

4 = Asian or Pacific Islander - All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, the Indian subcontinent, or the Pacific Islands. This area includes, for example, China, India, Japan, Korea, the Philippine Islands, and Samoa.

5 = American Indian or Alaskan Native - All persons having origins in any of the original peoples of North America and who maintain cultural identification through tribal affiliation or community recognition.

RIGHT TRACK

Case Manager Training Phase II – Payment Predictor Field Test

STUDENT GUIDE

February 6, 2007

TABLE OF CONTENTS

2.1 INTRODUCTION TO CASE MANAGER PAYMENT PREDICTOR TRAINING

This course is designed to provide Case Managers with basic procedures for case processing in the Right Track Phase II field test of the Payment Predictor tool. District Offices may prescribe specific procedures to be used in their individual offices.

Case Managers in the following six Right Track offices will be working with NCPs who have recently obtained an order to pay child support:

- Abingdon

- Danville

- Fredericksburg

- Norfolk

- Portsmouth

- Richmond.

Group Activity: Introduction of Case Managers

2.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The learning objectives for this module are:

- Participants will understand the purpose of the Payment Predictor tool and the Phase II field test.
- Participants will identify basic procedures for the intake/screening process for Right Track customers.
- Participants will run risk assessments on the Payment Predictor tool (version 1).
- Participants will view data logs generated by the Payment Predictor tool in Excel (to be sent to researchers and evaluators).
- Participants will identify the noncustodial parents who may receive Right Track interventions, and will define the various interventions open to those noncustodial parents.
- Participants will understand when to refer noncustodial parents to free services offered by community organizations.
- Participants will define the data collection goals of the Phase II field test.
- Participants will describe the importance of maintaining contact with, and tracking the payments of, at-risk noncustodial parents.
- Participants will learn how to use the logs and forms required in Phase II.

2.3 PURPOSE OF PAYMENT PREDICTOR FIELD TEST

The Payment Predictor tool (PP) has been developed and validated by Policy Studies, Inc. (PSI) and its subcontractor, Matthew Richey, Professor of Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science, St. Olaf College. The PP's ability to predict arrears and its value in assisting DCSE employees with early intervention in arrears prevention and case enforcement will be tested in Phase II of Right Track.

The purpose of the PP is to predict, for an NCP with a new order, the level of "risk" of failing to pay his/her* monthly support obligations. "Risk" is defined as the ratio of payment dollars not made to obligation dollars owed in the six-month period after the prediction is made.

The three categories of risk are High, Medium and Low. High risk means that from 80% or more of the current support is not likely to be paid; Medium risk means that 51 to 80% of the current support is not likely to be paid. Low risk means that 50% or less of the current support is not likely to be paid.

These measurements pertain to the NCP's new order. If the NCP has more than one order, only the new order which brought the case into the project should be considered. See Appendix 1 for more information about the development of the payment predictor.

Once a risk level has been assessed, the Case Managers will make appropriate interventions to help the NCP pay his child support on a timely basis. Interventions will range from frequent contact with the NCP, to assistance with job searches, to referrals to free community services.

The role of the Right Track Case Manager in Phase II is to:

- Screen all NCPs with new child support orders and run the PP to determine their risk level

- Provide appropriate interventions to Treatment Group NCPs

- Track payments for all NCPs assessed by the PP.

* Note that hereafter NCP will be referred to as "he" as a generic format.

2.4 OVERVIEW OF PHASE II - PAYMENT PREDICTOR FIELD TEST

The Payment Predictor field test will run in the six participating District Offices during 2007 for the length of time it takes to collect the total amount of data needed.

Case Managers will run the Payment Predictor on all newly ordered NCPs who will be

split into two groups as follows:

- **Control Group:**

    o NCPs with Social Security Numbers (SSNs) ending in **even numbers** and

- **Treatment Group:**

    o NCPs with SSNs ending in **odd numbers**.

Only NCPs in the Treatment Group will receive CM interviews and interventions. Enforcement Specialists will only be informed about the risk assessments of NCPs in the Treatment Group. Case Managers will give Enforcement Specialists a periodic listing of all Right Track NCPs in the Treatment Group; Enforcement Specialists will not be informed of the NCPs who are in the Control Group.

2.5 DATA COLLECTION GOALS

The data collection efforts are critical to measuring the validity and success of the Right Track Payment Predictor tool, and the effectiveness of early interventions made on behalf of the Treatment Group NCPs.

The following quotas must be met to complete valid data collection:

- **A minimum of 500 Treatment Group NCPs** in all 6 participating District Offices (not 500 in each office).

- **A minimum of 6 months of payment data for each NCP in the Treatment Group and the Control Group** (the first NCP may have 9 months of payment data and the last NCP may have just 6 months)

- **No specific number of Control Group NCPs** is needed; whatever number of Control Group NCPs run through the Payment Predictor by the time the Treatment Group quota is met will suffice.

2.5.1   How Data Will Be Used

The data collected by the Case Managers will be used to:

- Compare payments made by the Treatment Group NCPs with the payments made by the Control Group NCPs in terms of frequency and amount, and NCP risk level

- Compare the predicted risk level as assessed by the Payment Predictor tool and the actual outcome (% of arrears predicted vs. % of arrears accrued)

- Compare the effectiveness of early interventions (assistance provided by the Case Managers and services received from outside organizations) in preventing arrears.

2.6 PAYMENT PREDICTOR SCREENING PROCEDURES

The purpose of the screening is to **obtain data on new orders that will be entered in the PP** in order to predict the NCP's risk level of accumulating arrears. Data will be entered into the PP for both Control Group and Treatment Group NCPs.

Case Managers must coordinate with the Establishment Specialists and court team to ensure that NCPs and/or information about new orders are provided on all newly established orders, whether the orders are entered administratively, judicially or by "default." It may be helpful to obtain copies of the Establishment Specialists' appointment schedules so that you know when NCPs come into the office.

For the Right Track program, **new** child support orders are defined as follows:

- APECS case type: TANF, NTANF, MAOF (note that on APECS, TANF is ADC and NTANF is NADC)
- NOT the following APECS case types: SLFC, FC, ARRP, ARRN
- No modified or amended orders (no "add a baby" orders)
- No cases with:
  - a child in the Juvenile Justice system (where both parents are NCPs)
  - Family Violence Indicator (FVI flag)
  - Incarcerated NCPs with "unworkable" status

Note that new receiving (aka "incoming") interstate cases are also eligible, that is, cases where the CP resides in another state and the NCP resides in Virginia.

Data can be collected on a paper Intake Form or directly entered into a computer on the PP entry screen, whichever works best in your office configuration.

Data can be entered into the PP for both interviewed and non-interviewed NCPs. The PP will ask if an interview was held, and if so, provide two additional questions (version 2).

If an interview cannot be held with a Treatment Group NCP when he is in the office at the time the order is entered, the Case Manager should make every effort to set up a later appointment with the NCP. Whenever possible, all Treatment Group NCPs should be interviewed.

For NCPs in the Control Group:

- No interview is necessary for Control Group NCPs (SSN ends in even #).

- Case Manager obtains data from the Specialist's case folder using the Administrative Support Order (ASO) or Court Order, the Guidelines Worksheet and/or APECS.

- Case Manager runs the PP risk assessment calculation and logs on the Evaluation Worksheet.

- Monthly payments are tracked on the Evaluation Worksheet.

For NCPs in the Treatment Group:

- Whenever possible, Treatment Group NCPs should be interviewed.

- If the Case Manager is not able to interview the NCP, then the order, the Guidelines Worksheet and APECS are used to obtain data.

- Case Manager sets up regular meetings, if possible, and offers assistance. It is strongly urged that regular meetings with Treatment Group NCPs be held in order to establish and maintain a trusting relationship.

2.7 PAYMENT PREDICTOR TOOL

The Payment Predictor tool is an easy-to-use software application that runs on "JavaScript" which is a free and popular programming language

The PP will not work unless all data fields are filled in. An incomplete PP screen cannot be "saved" to be completed later.

Two additional behavioral questions will be included in the PP (version 2) and should be asked during the initial interview with Treatment Group NCPs.

The PP consists of several files: predictor.jar, weights.txt, and log.csv (a "comma separated values" Excel file; not an Excel worksheet).

2.7.1   Running the Payment Predictor

Once all data fields have been completed on the PP screen, press the "Classify" button to run the risk assessment calculation. This can be done before the 10-day appeal period for new orders has passed. The application updates the LOG.CSV file; the log file should be emailed every Monday to:

Ashley Snyder
asnyder@policy-studies.com
(303) 285-7550

In turn, she may contact you to verify the number of cases you have run through the PP tool and other information.

The risk assessment is classified as both a level (low, medium, high) and a number (ranging from .00 to 1.00). Log both the category and numerical assessment (for example **medium** risk and **0.33)** on the **Evaluation Worksheet.**   On a periodic basis, print a copy of the Evaluation Worksheet of Treatment Group NCPs for the Enforcement Specialists in your office.

Once the risk level is calculated, the data has been saved. The NCP data and calculated risk level will be saved in the LOG.CSV file that resides in the same directory as the PP and can be emailed and manipulated in Excel.

<u>2.7.3 Tool Tips for Using the Payment Predictor</u>

An "incorrectly entered" error message will display if any data is entered that is not accurate or realistic (i.e., an error message will show if an impossible monthly support order amount is entered, for example $6000).

The "Total Gross Income" field pertains to **gross monthly**, not yearly, income.

Every field must be completed; otherwise an error message will be generated. As a helpful addition, the error will be automatically highlighted in red for quick correction.

In order to save the data only once for each client, press the "Classify" button **one time only**. The "Save Values" button does not actually need to be pressed, because the "Classify" button has already saved your data. As a side note, the "Save Values" button cannot be pressed without having first pressed the "Classify" button.

The "Save Values" key will be removed in later versions of the PP.

Never open the PP log file (LOG.CSV) while data is being entered into the tool itself.

The second screen, to be completed only if an interview with the NCP was held, will not be operational until a later version of the PP.

There is no need for the log file to be opened by Case Managers unless a serious error has occurred. In the event of error, contact Ashley Snyder at PSI (asnyder@policy-studies.com).

2.8   RIGHT TRACK INTERVENTIONS

Our goal is to provide high quality customer service to all NCPs in the Treatment Group. Remember that our customers:

■ Are human beings with feelings
■ Are often separated from the children they are ordered to support
■ Need to understand we are working to help them support their children
■ May believe the rules and regulations of child support enforcement are not fair
■ May have misinformation about child support enforcement
■ Have behaviors ranging from cooperative to hostile.

The Case Manager's role is to help the NCPs in the Treatment Group by maintaining frequent contact, and offering assistance to help them overcome barriers to paying child support.

2.8.1 Flow of New Orders to Case Managers

Establishment Specialists (or Court Specialists, for judicial orders) will identify Control Group NCPs as those with SSNs ending in even numbers, and the Treatment Group as those SSNs ending in odd numbers.

Control Group NCPs will not be sent to Right Track Case Managers; the paper case folder will be given to the Case Manager for data entry into the PP.

The Establishment Specialist should conclude their meeting with **all** Treatment Group NCPs by informing them that they must now meet briefly with a Right Track Case Manager who will explain a new program to that can help him make his payments on time and avoid enforcement actions if he falls behind on payments. **The meeting with the Case Manager should be characterized as "mandatory" and not as "optional."**

2.8.2 Interventions for NCPs in the Control Group

NCPs in the Control Group will receive no interventions.

Once the risk assessment is run, the risk classification should be logged into the Evaluation Worksheet. Thereafter, the Case Manager is responsible for tracking and recording payments on the Evaluation Worksheet. If the NCP misses a payment, no action will be taken by the Case Manager (of course, automated enforcement actions and other actions by the Enforcement Specialist may occur).

<u>2.8.3   Interventions for NCPs in the Treatment Group</u>

The first step to assist the NCP in the Treatment Group is to establish a relationship with him/her. Whenever possible, the NCP should be interviewed immediately after the order is established (while the NCP is still in the office, for ASOs). If this is not possible, the NCP may be interviewed in person or by phone within a week of the order establishment.

Let the NCP know that as a Right Track Case Manager, you are there as part of a special program to provide extra help so that payments can be made on a regular basis, he can help his child, and he can avoid enforcement actions that DCSE has a right to take if payments are missed. This special assistance is available for the next six months to help him stay on the "right track."

Three points should be stressed to all NCPs in the Treatment Group:

1. **It is the NCP's responsibility to ensure the first child support payment is made, even if wage withholding is in place. This may mean that the NCP has to send in a payment instead of waiting for the employer to send it in.**

2. **If wage withholding is not in place, it is extremely important that *some* payment be made every month, even if the NCP cannot make the full payment. A minimal payment is better than no payment at all.**

3. **The NCP will be charged interest on missed payments at the rate of 6% annually (.005 per month).**

Be sure to give him your business card and stress that it has your direct dial number. Familiarize him with the DCSE website as another means of getting information about his case.

There should be no discussion of the PP with any NCP. NCPs should not be told they have been classified as "at risk" and placed in a Treatment Group.

The following interventions may be offered to NCPs in the Treatment Group:

- **Frequent communication**
- **Face-to-face meetings**
- **Life skills assistance**
- **Job search assistance**
- **Resume preparation assistance**
- **Basic financial counseling**
- **Referrals to free community services**
- **Mentoring** (assign Phase I RT NCPs as "peer mentors" to Phase II NCPs, or use mentors in local community and fathers' groups)
- **Expedited court hearings** (at the option of the District Manager)
- **Missed payment alerts** (call an NCP immediately if he has missed a payment; determine the reason for the missed payment and if RT assistance is needed).

The NCP must sign the Consent Form before any information is shared with outside organizations.

2.8.4   Frequent communication with NCPs in the Treatment Group

The primary intervention in working with NCPs in the Treatment Group is to maintain contact on a regular basis with the NCP, whether by phone, mail or face-to-face.

The "Early Intervention Initial Contact Checklist" may be used for the initial contact with the NCP; it may also be useful as a reminder of what to say to the NCP on subsequent calls or during meetings. At the first interview with the NCP, provide him with:

- Your business card (explain that the telephone number goes directly to you)
- Two pre-addressed and pre-stamped envelopes for payments to the Treasurer.

The "Enforcement Thresholds & Remedies Matrix" lists the various enforcement actions and the threshold of arrears that must be met for action to be taken. The Case Manager may wish to generally discuss this with the NCP when the child support order is first established, and then discuss it in detail (as applicable) if payments are missed.

The minimum level of contact that should be maintained with all NCPs in the Treatment Group is as follows:

- Telephone call (at least one)
- Monthly statement letter
- Attempted service intervention to address specific issues that the NCP may have
- Thank-you note or call if payment is made on time.

2.8.5   Face-to-face meetings for NCPs in the Treatment Group

Although Phase I of Right Track has shown us that it is difficult to get NCPs to agree to come in to the office for a face-to-face meeting or interview, we have also learned that this is the best way to build a trusting relationship and maintain meaningful contact with an at-risk NCP.

Remember that high quality customer service is key to trust-building.

Whenever possible, Case Managers should try to set up regular meetings in person with an NCP. Meetings can be used to discuss barriers that may prevent NCP from making timely payments, and highlight opportunities for additional intervention that the Case Manager can take to assist the NCP.

If the NCP is reluctant to commit to regular meetings, **every effort should be made to have at least one face-to-face meeting as soon as possible after his order is established.**

2.8.6   Life skills assistance for NCPs in the Treatment Group

NCPs in the Treatment Group may need help navigating paths that we consider very basic, such as:

- keeping a schedule to note appointments and due dates;
- planning transportation to and from a service session;
- interview etiquette (including cell phone etiquette – turn it off!)
- appropriate dress for a job interview;
- opening and managing a bank account;
- basic budgeting (discussed below in Basic Financial Literacy);
- providing basic care for an infant, toddler or young child;
- understanding the importance of punctuality;
- contacting employer if coming in late or calling in sick.

2.8.7   Job search assistance for NCPs in the Treatment Group

One of the most helpful interventions for the un- or under-employed NCP can be job search assistance. The Case Manager can sit side by side with the NCP in the Treatment Group and walk/talk him through employment strategies, an online job search, or preparation for a job search or interview. The following resources are available:

- Virginia Employment Commission (VEC)
  - www.vec.virginia.gov
  - Register the NCP with VEC job services online
  - Includes numerous links for job seekers
- Virginia Career Connect
  - www.careerconnect.state.va.us
  - Allows job search by region within Virginia
  - Provides local temporary employment agencies by region
- Other online job search engines:
  - Monster.com
  - Yahoo Hotjobs.com
  - USAjobs.com (for Federal government jobs; also resume development)
  - CareerBuilder.com, etc.
- Job postings in the District Office
- May also encourage NCP to pursue GED or further his education in order to enhance the job search
  - The Virginia Race to GED website (http://www.vaged.vcu.edu) offers study classes, practice tests, the testing schedule, and online registration for the test.

2.8.8 Job interview preparation for NCPs in the Treatment Group

Prior to a job interview, the following items may be reviewed with the NCP:

- Appropriate dress for an interview
- Do "homework" – know some background information about the employer to show interest
- Be on time (even early)
- Proper greeting and closing (handshake; thank you)
- Review anticipated employer questions and NCP's answers.

■ In Word, follow the easy-to-use resume template (see sample below):

File / click New / General Templates / Other Documents tab / double-click Résumé Wizard

1. On the **File** menu, click **New**.
2. In the **New Document** box, under **New from template**, click **General Templates**.
3. Click the **Other Documents** tab.
4. Double-click **Résumé Wizard**.

If you do not see the wizard in the **Templates** dialog box, you might need to install it.

5. Follow the steps in the wizard.

■ NCPs may also need assistance in completing job applications.

123 Main Street		Phone 804 878 1234
Richmond, VA 23456		E-mail ncp@aol.com

Noncustodial Parent

Objective	▪	[Type Objective Here]	
Education	[Dates Attended]	[Company/Institution Name]	[City, State]
	[Degree/Major]		
	▪ [Details of position, award, or achievement.]		
Work experience	[Dates Attended]	[Company/Institution Name]	[City, State]
	[Job Title]		
	▪ [Details of position, award, or achievement.]		
Volunteer experience	▪	[Click here and enter information.]	
References	▪	[Click here and enter information.]	

2.8.10   Basic financial counseling for NCPs in the Treatment Group

The NCP may benefit from basic financial counseling. Refer to the "Financial Fitness Guidebook" handout that covers the basics of:

- Setting financial goals
- Budgeting and expense tracking
- Savings
- Credit management.

2.8.11   Referrals to free community services for NCPs in the Treatment Group

The Case Managers in each District Office must compile their own list of appropriate **free** services available in the community.

Services that could be useful to NCPs in the Treatment Group typically fall into these categories:

- Employment
- Financial or credit counseling
- Parenting
- Job training
- Homelessness prevention
- Substance abuse
- Mediation (rarely a free service).

Use online searches and/or existing local service directories, if possible. Potential sources are the local Dept. of Social Services, Urban League, United Way, volunteer organizations, YMCA, community action agencies (www.vacap.com), etc.

Check the Virginia Department of Social Services website for more information (www.dss.virginia.gov; click on "Community Partners" for many useful links).

NCPs who elect to participate in services must sign the Consent Form. The Case Manager will explain that the Consent Form outlines the NCP's rights and
responsibilities for participation and authorizes information exchanges about him.

Whenever possible, follow up on the NCP's participation in these outside services by contacting the service provider and the NCP.

2.8.12   Mentoring for NCPs in the Treatment Group

One form of this intervention will be taken in Phase I experimental offices only (Norfolk, Portsmouth, Richmond): peer mentoring.

For peer mentoring, Case Managers will identify NCPs that participated in Right Track services during Phase I who have the potential to serve as mentors to Phase II NCPs in the Treatment Group. These NCPs may be paired with willing Phase II NCPs to provide encouragement and guidance.

Mentors may also be found in local community and/or fathers' groups identified through the Department of Health.

2.8.13   Expedited court hearings for NCPs in the Treatment Group

The Right Track Project Officer will discuss this option with participating District Managers. Any expedited court actions would be initiated by an Enforcement Specialist and not by a Case Manager, and may not be applied until later in Phase II.

Expedited court hearings have been known to get the immediate attention of non-paying NCPs, and can result in:

- Possible jail time
- Fines
- Other early enforcement actions ordered by a judge.

Judges often prefer to take early, preventive action against a non-paying NCP to emphasize the consequences of non-payment, rather than waiting until large arrearages have accrued.

2.9 TRACKING MONTHLY PAYMENTS FOR ALL NCPS

The Case Manager should check APECS every month to see if a payment has been made by **every NCP with a risk assessment (every NCP on your Evaluation Worksheet) in both the Control Group and the Treatment Group**. The payment amount and date should be recorded on the Evaluation Worksheet with the other case data.

Missed payment alerts (in the form of a telephone call and/or written notice from the Case Manager) should be sent to NCPs in the Treatment Group. Missed payments signal the need for increased intervention by the Case Manager, and possibly early court referrals by the Enforcement Specialist.

- NCPs in the Treatment Group should be reminded that partial payments are better than no payment at all.

- If desired, use the **Enforcement Thresholds & Remedies Matrix (see Appendix)** to discuss enforcement actions that may be taken against the NCP in the Treatment Group if/when payments are missed. Note the level of arrears and other conditions that must be met before certain actions are taken.

On the first of every month, Case Managers will send a copy of their Evaluation Worksheet in Excel format showing the payments made by all NCPs in both Treatment and Control Groups (tracked by that Case Manager) to:

Human Services Research Center
7731 Ashley Circle
University Park, FL 34201
Attn: Dr. Phyllis Myers.

2.10 PAYMENT PREDICTOR FIELD TEST FORMS

The following forms will be used during Phase II of the Right Track project:

- **Payment Predictor Intake Form**
- **Evaluation Worksheet**
  - To list all new orders logged by a Case Manager (includes NCP name, SSN, IV-D #, MPI #, amount of obligation, Treatment/Control, date of risk assessment, risk assessment category, risk assessment numerical value and payments received)
  - To track monthly payments for each NCP
    - To send in Worksheet on 1st of each month to Human Services Research Center in Florida
- **Consent Form for NCPs in the Treatment Group**
  - Signed by NCP authorizing his consent to have case information shared with other parties (i.e., VEC)
- **Intervention Log for NCPs in the Treatment Group**
  - To document all contacts with NCP attempted and made by Case Manager
  - To document all interventions made or recommended to NCP
  - To document the time spent on collecting and entering data into the PP
  - To document the time spent on obtaining answers to the behavioral questions (PP version 2).

2.11 WHERE TO GO WITH QUESTIONS

If you have a question about any of the procedures that are specifically related to Right Track participation criteria, interventions or forms:

E-mail Dr. Phyllis Myers at pmyers6@aol.com or Terri Nickel at tnickel@csfmail.org.

If you have a question about the Payment Predictor tool:

E-mail Terri Nickel at tnickel@csfmail.org (these questions may be forwarded to Jane Venohr at Policy Studies, Inc.).

If you have a question about working with Establishment Specialists, Enforcement Specialists or Court Specialists:

Contact your District Manager, and copy Dr. Myers and Terri Nickel by e-mail.

All questions related to office procedures and requests for leave:

Contact your District Manager.

Telephone numbers:

Dr. Phyllis Myers   (941) 360-0046

Terri Nickel   (240) 676-1430

Bob Owen   (804) 726-7434.

2.12 SUMMARY OF PAYMENT PREDICTOR PROCEDURES FOR CASE MANAGERS

Let's review the basic procedures for Right Track Case Managers in Phase II:

- Purpose of the Right Track Payment Predictor tool and field test of the tool
- Intake/Screening procedures for NCPs with new orders
    - Treatment Group
    - Control Group
- Using the Payment Predictor tool
- Right Track interventions for Treatment Group NCPs
- Payment tracking and reporting, including missed payment alerts
- Phase II forms
- Questions
- Data collection.

Recall the key elements of good customer service:

- Courtesy
- Respect
- Good listening skills
- Good communication skills
- Barriers to communication
- Use of body language in communication.

Summary Review Exercise

> **Right Track Case Manager Training**
> **for the Payment Predictor Field Test**
> **Summary Review**

1. Should the data collected about each new NCP be entered directly into the payment predictor tool or on the Intake Form?

2. What is the first step in screening newly ordered NCPs for Right Track?
   A – Divide the NCPs into two groups, a Control Group and a Treatment Group, based on the last digit of their Social Security Number
   B – Determine which NCPs owe medical support only
   C – Separate out NCPs who owe arrears only

3. Circle the case types that can be entered in the payment predictor:
   A - Modified cases
   B - TANF
   C - Case with a Family Violence Indicator flag
   D - Non-TANF
   E - Cases where the child is in the Juvenile Justice system
   F - Foster care
   G - Arrears only case
   H - Case where custodial parent is on Medicare and gets child support

4. Which data fields on the payment predictor tool do not need to be entered before the risk assessment can be calculated?
   A – Current employment status
   B – NCP's age
   C – None
   D – Number of children

5. Name the three categories of risk assessment made by the payment predictor.

6. When the "Classify" button is clicked in the payment predictor tool, where is the entered data saved?

7. What step (or steps) below do not apply to Control Group NCPs?
   A - Obtain data on new order and NCP
   B - Enter data into payment predictor tool
   C - Run and log the risk assessment
   D - Offer and provide assistance and services if the NCP consents
   E - Track and log the NCP's payments every month
   F – Stay in contact with the NCP to offer help and encouragement.

8. Name 3 types of interventions that you can make:

9. What is the recommended intervention for a Control Group NCP?

10. What is the purpose of the payment predictor tool?

11. What is the purpose of the field test?

12. What must the Treatment Group NCP do before he or she receives any interventions?

13. When should an NCP be referred to free services?

14. What is the minimum number of Treatment Group NCPs that must be tracked?

15. What is the minimum number of Control Group NCPs that must be tracked?

16. What is the minimum length of time that payments for RT NCPs must be tracked?

17. For which group of RT NCPs should payments be tracked?

18. What should be done if an NCP misses a payment?

19. On what form should payments be logged?

20. On what form should interventions be logged?

2.13   CLOSING GROUP ACTIVITY

Follow the trainer's instructions.

<u>Appendix</u>

APPENDIX 1   PAYMENT PREDICTOR BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The theory behind the payment predictor tool incorporates two recent developments in child support. First, it represents a new breed of case sorting tool that could be used to bifurcate new cases into those appropriate for early intervention activities (e.g., more intensive case management) and those that do not need more intensive case management.   Recent early intervention demonstrations in Colorado, Nebraska and Tennessee have found that early intervention strategies can improve child support outcomes. It is not necessary, however, to employ early intervention strategies in every case to realize successful child support outcomes. These demonstration projects did not concern themselves with trying to sort cases; rather, they applied early intervention strategies to all new orders. A case sorting tool could make the process more efficient by only applying early intervention strategies, which are staff-intensive, to cases at high risk of arrears.

Secondly, a payment predictor tool is the next practical step to recent studies that predict child support arrears based on case and noncustodial parent characteristics. For example, a 2003 Washington State study found it could predict child support arrearages debt with 80 percent accuracy.[1] The ensuing question is whether child support agencies can use this information— specifically, knowledge that a noncustodial parent is at high risk of arrears before the first payment is even due— to better manage the case. This includes such actions as early intervention strategies.

Phase II of Right Track is the field test of the theory outlined above. Documenting the findings from the field test is crucial to informing the next generation of case sorting tools and early intervention practices. The failures of field tests provide just as important lessons as the successes. Both advance the next generation of tools and strategies in the continued search to improve child support outcomes.

It should be noted that the risk level breakpoints (i.e.,81-100 percent, 51-80 percent and 50 percent or less) were determined by statistical grouping. However, a question that will be explored in the field test is whether these categories are helpful to case managers or whether another categorization could be more helpful. To this end, case managers will be provided with both (a) a risk categorization (i.e., high, medium, or low risk of accruing arrears); and (b) the numerical score (i.e., a 0-100 percent value to indicate the percent of current support the noncustodial parent is likely not to pay).

The payment predictor classifies risk levels using a complex calculation that predicts arrears for each case. This calculation was developed from an extensive statistical analysis of payments and case and noncustodial parent characteristics in about 3,000 new orders. The data were collected in the first phase of the Right Track project. The analysis identified which characteristics are correlated with arrears risk. It is those data fields that appear on the data entry screen. The behind-the-scenes calculation consists of a complicated formula that incorporates the responses to these data fields. The formula recognizes that some data fields have more bearing on arrears than others (e.g., employment status has more bearing than number of children) and that some combinations of data fields (e.g., employment status and felon history) magnify the impact of another data field.

APPENDIX 2   PAYMENT PREDICTOR DATA FIELD MATRIX

	Potential Payment Predictor Data Field	Information Source	Clarifications
1	IVD Case Number	APECS or Establishment Specialists that referred case	IV-D case number of the NCP's new order. (This should be double-checked. It will be used to link the case to actual payments, so it must be accurate.)
2	Name		Name of NCP. (This field is for ease in use only. It will not be used for data analysis.)
3	NCP's Age	APECS or interview	Age can be calculated from the NCP's birth date recorded on APECS. If age is calculated from the NCP's birth date, compare the birth date to the date that you received the referral. The case manager may round up or down to the nearest year. (The direction of the rounding does not matter because a difference of a year will not significantly affect the PP outcome.)
4	NCP's Gender	APECS or interview	
5	Monthly Support Order	APECS	This is the amount of the monthly support order for this IV-D case only. Please do **not** add orders for arrears or other cases if the NCP has multiple cases.
6	Total Gross Income	Guidelines worksheet used to establish order	This is the amount of gross income used to calculate the support order. (The income of the NCP has been extensively researched and verified as part of the order establishment process. The CM does not have to redo this work for the PP.) Hence, if income was imputed, please record that amount because it was the amount used to calculate the order.
7	Arrears	APECS	This is the total amount of arrears owed for **this IV-D case only**. The total amount of arrears includes state debt and arrears owed to the custodial parent for this IV-D case only. The arrears at the time that the order is established should be entered. The amount of arrears when the calculation is made may also be entered if it is within 3 months of the order establishment date. Please do not add arrears for other orders if the NCP has multiple orders.
8	Number of children	APECS	This is the number of children covered by **this IV-D case only**. Please do not add other children even if the NCP has multiple children.
9	Number of orders	APECS	This is the number of child support orders that the NCP has and can be verified. If the NCP tells you that he/she has more orders but they are not verified (i.e., on APECS), do not count them.
10	Born-out-of-wedlock?	APECS	Please select "Yes" if at least one of the children on this IV-D case were born out-of-wedlock (BOW). If none of the child(ren) were born-of-wedlock, please select "No."
11	NCP's Current Employment Status	APECS, Intake form, order or interview	Verification of employment is done as part of the establishment process. APECS may have limited information about employment. It has definitive information about whether the NCP is "employed" or "not employed," but if the NCP is employed, it may not note if he is "full-time employed," "part-time employed," "self-employed" or "temporarily employed." This information may available through the interview, order, APECS screens relating to employment, case notes and other sources. However, if you determine the NCP is employed and still do not know if he is "full-time," "part-time," "self-employed," or "temporarily employed" after exhausting all of these sources, select "part-time." To be clear, this should only occur in cases where APECS indicates the NCP is employed. Do not select "part-time" if you do not know whether the NCP is employed. Again, at a minimum, APECS will at least indicate whether the NCP is employed or not employed through verified employment.
12	Instate Status	APECS	Instate means both parents live in state and the case is not being enforced as an interstate case.
13	Was the NCP Interviewed?	Interview attempt	There will be a second screen that directs the case manager to the last two questions (Questions 17 and 18) if the case manager was able to interview the NCP.
14	Case Type: *Options:* MAOF, TANF, never TANF, other	APECS	"Other" refers to foster care (federal or state), arrears only cases and other cases.
15	Type of Support Hearing at which NCP Appeared	APECS	Administrative – order was entered through a settlement conference or the NCP stipulated to an administrative order Judicial- order was entered through a judicial hearing NCP did not appear – this is essentially an administrative or judicial "default" order.

	Potential Payment Predictor Data Field	Information Source	Clarifications
16	Felon History	APECS, interview or Online research (www.bop.gov, LIDS)	The ability to determine felon history from APECS is limited. As a policy, Virginia does not establish an order to a NCP when he is incarcerated. However, the practices of establishing orders after the NCP is released vary between districts. This may include the use of work lists or reports that identify recently released NCPs that be recorded in case notes. In addition, it can be assumed that if a NCP has a release date, which appear on screen 1123, he has a felon history. The question can also be asked in the interview. If the case manager exhausts all resources and still does not know, select "DK (Don't Know.)"
17.*	On a 1 to 7 point scale, how confident are you the payments you make for this child's support are used for the child? (a 7 would be completely confident and a 1 would be not confident at all)	Interview	Please use the following scale to complete the PP intake form: Low is 1-2 Medium is 3-5 High is 6-7
18.*	Where does the child(ren) involved in this case currently live?		This refers to the actual living situation of the child, not the custody. "Other" includes shared physical custody where the child lives in both homes, the child lives with the grandparent(s), the child lives with another relative, the child lives with foster parents and other situations.

APPENDIX 3   IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT CHILD SUPPORT

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT

IMPORTANT NOTICE ABOUT CHILD SUPPORT

<u>DO</u>   <u>CASE #</u>   <u>CUSTODIAL PARENT'S NAME</u>

Dear :

This notice provides important information about laws that may affect you.

Child support is very important. If you are paying child support regularly, thank you for meeting that responsibility to your children.

If you owe support and are not paying the support, state and federal laws allow the Division of Child Support Enforcement (DCSE) and the courts to collect the money you owe. Some ways we collect support are by
- having your employer withhold support from your wages;
- issuing liens and orders to withhold money in bank accounts and other financial institution accounts;
- seizing and selling your property;
- intercepting state and federal payments and refunds due you;
- reporting your past due support to consumer reporting agencies; and
- requesting the Secretary of State to deny, revoke, restrict or limit your passport.

If you owe at least $5,000 or are behind at least three months in your support payments or you fail to respond to a subpoena, summons or warrant issued by the DCSE, the DCSE may take the following actions:
- Ask the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) to suspend or refuse to renew your driver's license. The DMV will not return your driver's license until the DCSE tells the DMV that you have 1) paid your past due support in full or 2) made an initial payment of at least $500 or 5 percent of your past due support, whichever is greater, and have signed an agreement with the DCSE to pay your remaining past due support or 3) complied with the subpoena, summons, or warrant.

- Ask the courts to require you to turn in any certificate, registration, or other business, trade, professional, occupational or recreational license (including hunting and fishing) issued to you. Courts will not order the licensing agency to reissue your license until the DCSE tells the court that you have 1) paid your past due support in full or 2) made an initial payment of at least $500 or 5 percent of your past due support, whichever is greater, and have signed an agreement with the DCSE to pay your remaining past due support.

The DCSE may charge fees for the following actions it takes:

- Intercepting federal payments and refunds
- Using a private process server to serve notices on you
- Using the services of an attorney for court enforcement actions when the court rules in the DCSE=s favor
- Seizing and selling your property to pay past due support you owe.

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If your address or telephone number changes, you are required by law to send the DCSE written notice of your new address or telephone number within 30 days of the change. Send your address or telephone number change to the district office listed at the top of this notice.

If you believe your child support order needs reviewing and it has been at least three (3) years since your last review or if you can show a material change in circumstances, mail a written request to the district office listed at the top of this notice. The following are examples of a material change in circumstances:

- A change of 25 percent in the income of either party
- A change in dependent care, health insurance or medical expenses
- A change in the number of dependents for which either partly is legally responsible

The DCSE will ask you to provide information about your current income. The review may result in an increase, decrease or no change in your current support order. It will not change the amount of past due support you owe.

The Commonwealth charges you interest on your past due support at the judgment rate established by state law on support orders issued in Virginia. This rate is currently 6 percent annually. The Virginia General Assembly sets this rate and it may change every year. If the support order was issued in another state, Virginia charges interest on your past due support as specified in your support order, or if not specified, in accordance with the law of the issuing state.

To avoid collection actions, pay your child support. If you owe past due support, PAY IT NOW. If you cannot pay all of the past due support at once, contact the district office listed at the top of this notice, immediately, to work out a payment plan.

PAYMENT INSTRUCTIONS

Mail a personal check, cashiers' check, or money order for the amount you owe. Make the payment payable to the Treasurer of Virginia. Include your social security number on the payment. Mail the payment immediately to:

DIVISION OF CHILD SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT
P O BOX 570
RICHMOND VA 23218-0570

DO NOT INCLUDE CORRESPONDENCE WITH YOUR PAYMENT. Mail correspondence to the district office listed at the top of this notice.

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APPENDIX 4   ENFORCEMENT THRESHOLDS & REMEDIES

Enforcement Remedy	Arrears Threshold	Other Criteria
Income Withholding	None	
State Income Tax Refunds	2 months current support [$25 - arrears only cases]	
Federal Income Tax Refunds	$150 - TANF and AFDC/FC Arrears $500 – Non-TANF and Medicaid-only Arrears	Letter is sent to NCP in Oct; NCP cannot get "rapid refunds" in Jan – Feb is there is a hold.
Lottery Intercepts	2 months current support [$25 - arrears only cases]	
Suspension of Driver's License	3 months or $5,000	
Financial Institution Data Match (FIDM)	$500 and has not paid full amount of current support for last 3 consecutive months	*Data from banks and other financial institutions can be matched and attached*
Seizure and Sale	$1,000 for a case with a current support obligation [$500 for an arrears-only case.]	
Reporting to Credit Bureaus	3 months current support. [$500 on arrears-only case.]	
Liens	$500	*Liens can be placed on land, homes or other real or personal property*
Show Cause Petition		When administrative methods are unsuccessful, DCSE can ask the court to ask the NCP why (to "show cause") he is not complying with order
IRS Full Collection	$750	
Foreclosure		Before using foreclosure, the referral must be approved by unit managers and Special Counsel.
Criminal Prosecution of NCPs in Interstate Cases	Not currently paying child support **and** has not paid for more than 1 year **or** $5,000	NCP has willfully taken steps to avoid payments

Enforcement Remedy	Arrears Threshold	Other Criteria
Suspension of Occupational, Professional, or Recreational License	$5,000 or past due 90 days. [$1,000 on an arrears-only case.]	
Passport Denial	$2,500 (became effective 10/1/06)	
Orders to Withhold and to Deliver	Amount of debt owed	*"Seize and freeze" used as a last resort; lump sums can be attached*
Child Support Lien Network (CSLN)	$1,000	*Asset matches with insurance companies to attach claim settlement pay-outs – on worker's comp and personal injury insurance claims*
Vehicle Booting	$1,000	All the conventional enforcement remedies must have failed or are not appropriate. A lien must be filed in the city or county in which the vehicle is housed
Most Wanted posting	$8,000, court enforcement action has occurred and no voluntary payment has been made in the past 6 months	

U Early Intervention
Checklist for Initial Contact

Type of Call: Relationship-Building
First informational Call (or Interview, if possible)

Purpose: **U** To establish personal contact with NCP;

U Explain the new order and payment arrangements;

U Emphasize the importance of communicating with DCSE, and;

U Describe the types of services Right Track can offer.

- ▪ Introduce yourself:
- ▪ You will be helping them overcome any barriers to making their child support payments on time and hope to have a good working relationship.
- ▪ Explain the purpose of the call:
  - ▪ You are calling to:
  - ▪ Review the new order and payment arrangements,
  - ▪ Explain responsibilities and answer questions,
  - ▪ Make sure contact information is correct, and
  - ▪ Help him/her understand what having an order and being in the child support system means.
- ▪ Offer to schedule a meeting:
  - ▪ You would like to cover all the information face-to-face or, if preferred, to go over everything by phone.
- ▪ Try to continue the call:
  - ▪ Only schedule a new time to talk if now is not a good time.
  - ▪ If you must reschedule, get a specific reschedule time and phone number.
- ▪ Explain the order:
  - ▪ Review order amount,
  - ▪ Payment frequency,
  - ▪ Children covered by the order.
  - ▪ Review arrears payments and fees.
  - ▪ Explain that some payment is better than no payment at all.
- ▪ Explain responsibility to send payments until wage withholding begins:
  - ▪ Review arrangements for 1st payment including making a direct payment to DCSE (not to the CP!).
  - ▪ Emphasize need to send a check with case number to avoid a delinquency.
  - ▪ Give address and phone number of DCSE:
  - ▪ Treasurer of Virginia, P.O. Box 570, Richmond, VA 23218.
- ▪ Make sure NCP has a copy of the order:
  - ▪ Ask Specialist to send a copy if not received.
- ▪ Get contact information and preferred contact time:
  - ▪ Mailing address, telephone number, cell phone number & email.
  - ▪ Determine the best time for a telephone contact during regular business hours.

- - Get secondary contact information:
  - Ask for someone who will also know how to reach him (mother, friend).
  - Explain that people often move or change numbers and forget to notify DCSE.
- - Explain the importance of keeping CSE aware of new information:
  - The NCP must tell DCSE if there are changes in his/her contact information, changes in employment, or other changes, to avoid falling behind and bad things from happening.
- - Review employer information:
  - Verify accuracy.
  - If no employer, check if he has recently found employment. If not, ask if suggest ways you can help him/her find a job.
- - Review wage withholding for self-employed NCPs:
  - Emphasize the importance of checking to make sure payments are being deducted from paycheck to be sure withholding is in effect.
- - Explain enforcement remedies:
  - Explain it is for information only.
  - Use a conversational, informational tone and not a threatening one.
- - Provide your direct phone number for easy communication:
  - Reiterate importance of keeping in touch
  - Explain the value of having a direct number and not having to go through customer service.
- - Explore problems with employment:
  - Note that CSE can refer people with problems to programs and community services.
- - Mention CSE's interactive website:
  - www.dss.virginia.gov (then in the left sidebar, click on Children, and click on Child Support Enforcement)
- - Explain schedule of future contact:
  - Note you will be calling every month to see if any assistance is needed, and/or you will be calling if a payment doesn't arrive on time.
  - Explore NCP's willingness to come in to the office for face-to-face meetings.
- - Offer to answer questions:
  - Ask if NCP has any questions that haven't been covered.
- - Thank NCP:
  - For taking the time to talk and for his commitment to his children.
  - Remind the NCP that you are here to help.

RIGHT TRACK PROGRAM
Norfolk District Office
6340 Center Drive
Norfolk, VA 23502
(757) 455-3615

Dear _____:

As a participant in the **Right Track Program**, we want to work with you to help make sure your child's needs are met.

You agreed to participate in **Right Track** in the hope that, together, we could make sure your child support payments are kept up-to-date. One of the ways we can help is to keep you informed, on a monthly basis, of what you owe.

If you think the amount shown below is not correct, please call or stop by our office as soon as possible. For example, you might have made a payment after this statement was prepared, so it is not showing in the "Amount Owed to Date" below. If your job or money situation changes, please let us know right away because we need to know if it will affect your ability to make payments.

Our goal is to help you stay in good standing with the child support agency/court and to help you keep up support payments for your child. If there is a change in your circumstances, address, work, housing, medical or anything that might prevent you from making your required child support payments, please call our office. For more information on employment, counseling, parenting, etc., please contact us.

Sincerely,

XXX
Right Track Case Manager

Child Support Case #_____

Amount Owed : $_____as of_____

RTL13007P

201

Right Track

CONSENT FORM

The purpose of the **Right Track Program** has been explained to me, and I understand I have been offered help assistance to improve the quality of my life, to help me make my child support payments on a regular basis, and to prevent overdue child support and interest charges (arrearages).

I understand that my **Right Track** Case Manager will provide help or refer me to free services available from local community organizations that may include:

5. <u>Money Management and Budgeting</u>. This can help me understand budgeting, credit, savings and/or meet my financial obligations.

6. <u>Employment Search</u>. This can help me find a job through identifying my job training needs, job readiness training, information about GED completion, online job searches, completing employment applications and preparing for job interviews, resume writing and identifying job opportunities that match my competencies.

7. <u>Parenting Program</u>. This can help me get or improve my parenting skills through instruction and mentoring.

8. <u>Mentoring.</u> Concerned noncustodial parents or fathers in the community can help me figure out how to meet my responsibilities to myself and my child.

I understand that I am responsible for obtaining help from community service organizations that may be recommended to me. I understand that it is important to remain in contact with my Right Track Case Manager.

Consent to Exchange Information

I understand as part of the requirement for receiving employment, mediation, financial counseling and/or parenting skills services, it may be necessary for my Right Track Case Manager to exchange information with the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) and/or other service organizations (as listed below), either online, by telephone, fax or mail:

_____, Service Provider

_____, Service Provider

_____, Service Provider

I consent to releasing information about me to the above organizations to facilitate this assistance.

_____   _____   _____
(Customer's Signature)   (Date)   (Right Track Case Manager's Signature)

Revised 01/22/07

RIGHT TRACK Payment Predictor Field Test
INTERVENTION LOG

District Office:_____   Risk Assessment: High / Medium / Low _____
                                                                        Circle one   *numerical*

NCP Name: _____

NCP SSN: _____ *(must end in ODD number)*

IV-D #: _____   MPI #: _____

Initial interview held on: ____/_____/_____   N/A

Notes:

Length of time for data entry/risk assessment: _____

Length of time to obtain PP Screen 2 information (behavioral questions): _____

INTERVENTIONS:

DATE:	TYPE:	AREA:
____/_____/_____	Phone	Employment
	In-office meeting	Financial counseling
	Email	Basic mentoring
	Correspondence	Assigned mentoring
	Missed payment alert	MENTOR: _____

Phone: _____

Recommended services:

_____

_____

_____

OTHER:_____

Notes:

DATE:	TYPE:	AREA:
____/_____/_____	Phone	Employment
	In-office meeting	Financial counseling
	Email	Basic mentoring
	Correspondence	Assigned mentoring
	Missed payment alert	MENTOR: _____

Phone: _____

Recommended services:

_____

_____

_____

OTHER:_____

Notes:

DATE:	TYPE:	AREA:
____/_____/_____	Phone	Employment
	In-office meeting	Financial counseling
	Email	Basic mentoring
	Correspondence	Assigned mentoring
	Missed payment alert	MENTOR: _____

Phone: _____

Recommended services:

_____

_____

_____

OTHER:_____

Notes:

MONTHLY CONTACT SHEET		
NCP NAME		**NCP NAME**
	February	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	March	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	April	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	May	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	June	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	July	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	August	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	September	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	October	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	November	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call
	December	☐ Monthly Statement Ltr ☐ Phone call

(*Rev.1/31/07*)

APPENDIX 9   PAYMENT PREDICTOR – PHASE II INTAKE FORM

DRAFT PAYMENT PREDICTOR INTAKE FORM – PHASE II
To be completed for ALL newly ordered NCPs

IV-D #: _____

Case Type: ☐ TANF ☐ NTANF ☐ MAOF ☐ OTHER (SLFC, FC, ARRP, ARRN)

NCP Name: _____

NCP Age: _____

NCP Gender: ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE

NCP total gross income: $ _____ (amount used to determine order amount)

Amount of monthly support order: $ _____ (this order only) order amount)

Amount of ordered arrears (if any): $ _____ (this order only) order amount)

Number of children on this order: _____ (only if verified on

Was any child on this order born out-of-wedlock (BOW)?   ☐ YES   ☐ NO

Number of child support orders (including this order) for this NCP: _____

Is this an in-state case?   ☐ YES   ☐ NO

Does this NCP have a felon history?   ☐ YES   ☐ NO

What is NCP's current employment status?
☐ Full Time   ☐ Part Time
☐ Temporarily Employed   ☐ Not Employed
☐ Self-Employed (either full or part-time)

At what type of support hearing did the NCP appear?
☐ Administrative   ☐ Judicial
☐ Did not Appear

This NCP is in the:
☐ **Treatment Group** (SSN ends in odd # and Medium/High risk)
☐ **Control Group** (SSN ends in even # or odd # and Low risk)

APPENDIX 10   EVALUATION WORKSHEET

Sample Data:

District Office	NCP Last Name	IV-D#	MPI#	Mo.Support Oblig ($only)	Interview: y=1;n=2	SSN Last Digit	TreatGrp: y=1;n=2	Risk Assess. Date	Risk Assess. Cat.	Risk Assess. #	Pay 1mo	Pay 2mo	Pay 3mo	Pay 4mo	Pay 5mo	Pay6 mo	Pay 7mo	P
Portsmouth	Brown	1234	333	100	1	2	2	2/8/2006	high	0.8	50							
Portsmouth	White	2345	888	500	2	3	1	2/9/2006	medium	0.4	500							
Portsmouth	Green	3456	444	65	1	4	2	2/9/2006	low	0.1	65							
Portsmouth	Redd	4567	999	400	2	5	1	2/14/2006	high	0.9	300							
Portsmouth	Baloo	5678	555	220	2	7	1	2/13/2006	medium	0.5	200							

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