County of Los Angeles

CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES DEPARTMENT 2009-2011 Biennial Report

Celebrating 10 Years of Service to the Community

MISSION STATEMENT

"To improve the quality of life for children and families of Los Angeles County by providing timely, accurate and responsive child support services"

The Child Support Services Department wishes to acknowledge the Biennial Report Committee for its contributions and devotion to this project:

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A Message From the Director

In July 2001, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors created the Child Support Services Department (CSSD). At that time, CSSD assumed certain duties formerly performed by the Bureau of Family Support Operations housed in the District Attorney's Office. This July marks the ten-year anniversary of that landmark transition and paradigm shift from a law enforcement approach to a social services way of providing child support services.

Today, the hard work continues. CSSD strives to carry out duties in a manner that is family friendly and less daunting for mothers, fathers, and caretakers. We see ourselves as an anti-poverty, self-sufficiency program committed to providing timely, accurate, and responsive services to both mothers and fathers. We have examined and changed those internal procedures that unintentionally acted as barriers to the parents and families we serve.

One positive result of our quest for continual improvement is reflected in the increase in our rate of current support collections. When CSSD was established, current support collections were stagnant at 32%. Because of ongoing staff training and constant streamlining of our internal procedures, CSSD staff has increased performance on this measure to 56.4% by April 2011. During the past two fiscal years, CSSD staff has collected nearly $1 billion in support.

Other steps we have taken to improve service to our customers include a department-wide move toward Case Ownership. This innovative business model emphasizes CSSD caseworker interaction with case participants in order to address the unique needs of each participant. Case Ownership enables each caseworker to speak to and meet with case participants on an ongoing and consistent basis. We attribute our recent improvement in performance, in large part, to the Case Ownership model.

CSSD is committed to the continual improvement of all aspects of our operations, particularly those that have a more visible and direct impact on the families we serve. Among these are – the number of paternities and support orders we establish for children and the time it takes to establish each; and the amount of support we collect for children and the time it takes to collect each payment.

My colleagues and I face significant challenges in 2011 with the ongoing state fiscal crisis. However, I have every reason to believe that our successes over the last several years provide the Department with a firm foundation that will propel us to greater heights and concrete results for children and families. We will continue to work with our community partners and stakeholders to enhance the level of service provided to children and families of this great County.

Steven J. Golightly, Ph.D.

June 2011

Who We Are

An Introduction to the Department

The Los Angeles County Child Support Services Department (CSSD) was created in July 2001 as a result of legislation that shifted child support enforcement away from local district attorneys to newly established county child support departments. Over the past ten years, CSSD has evolved from a law enforcement organization to a social service agency focused on providing excellent service to its customers while improving the ability of families to become self-sufficient.

CSSD is the largest locally operated child support agency in the nation. We manage approximately 350,000 cases, comprising 24% of the total child support caseload of California. We are charged with promptly and effectively establishing, modifying and enforcing child support obligations, including medical support, and establishing parentage for children. During the 2010 to 2011 reporting period, CSSD paid out an average of $28,265,746 per month in support to families we serve.

CSSD employs approximately 1660 child support professionals committed to the work of improving the economic, social and physical well-being of children. Our workforce includes not only highly trained caseworkers, clerical staff, administrative support staff and managers, but also highly skilled information technology personnel and a dedicated group of attorneys. CSSD staff strives to treat each parent and customer with fairness and consideration.

How We Are Improving Life for Families

Why We Do What We Do

Child support significantly contributes to the well-being of children and assists families in becoming self-sufficient. Studies have shown that family economic security impacts the educational, social and mental stability of children. The Annie E. Casey Foundation's *Kids Count Data Report*, updated in September 2010, reported that in 2009, 40% of children under the age of 18 in Los Angeles resided in single parent households. It found that 29% of children under 18 in Greater Los Angeles lived in poverty. These staggering statistics vividly reflect how important child support services are to families.

CSSD recognizes the importance of financial support to improving family self-sufficiency. To that end, CSSD has implemented new projects and utilized new technology to improve performance and secure better outcomes for the children of Los Angeles County.

Our Progress at a Glance

The Federal Performance Measures

The basis for measuring the success of state and local child support agencies is found in the Child Support Performance and Incentive Act of 1998. This Act provides minimum standards of performance that each state must achieve in order to maintain eligibility for federal funding. Because CSSD accounts for a quarter of the state's case load, Los Angeles County's performance on each of the federal performance measures is critical to California's overall success. The five measures used by the federal government to gauge success are:

- Percentage of paternities established
- Percentage of cases with a child support order
- Percentage of collections on cases with current support
- Percentage of cases with collections on child support arrears
- Cost-effectiveness of the child support program

Improving Los Angeles County's performance on the federal performance measures continues to be the top priority of CSSD. The figures below show significant and steady improvement in our performance over the past two fiscal years.

Performance Measures for Federal Fiscal Years 2009-2011

	2009	2010	Through April 2011
Paternities Established	92.8%	93%	91.9%
Cases with Support Orders	70.9%	73.2%	76.3%
Collections on Current Support	50.8%	53.8%	56.4%
Collections on Cases With Arrears	53.5%	56.4%	52.8%

Additional Relevant Data

	2009	2010	Through April 2011
Number of Walk-in Interviews Per month	8,999	9,715	9,881
Number of Call Center Calls Handled Per Year	1,041,783	1,233,063	699,964
Total Collections	$472,099,658	$447,234,538	$257,675,365
Total Staff	1,727	1,685	1,660
Percentage of Cases With Families on Welfare	28.4%	35.9%	34.9%

Significance of Performance Data

As shown in the Performance Measure chart on the previous page, child support collections in Los Angeles County have improved significantly during the last two years. Federal law requires that states achieve a minimum collection rate of 40% of current support in order to compete for a share of federal funding. CSSD has far exceeded the 40% collection threshold for the last six years. Through April 2011, CSSD has achieved a year-to-date collection rate year of 56.4%, an increase of 11.02% since October 2009. This is a record high accomplishment for CSSD. Just as important, given Los Angeles County's share of California's caseload, CSSD's performance success is key to the state's ability to qualify for a larger share of performance incentive funds. Approximately 75% of the monies collected in support are provided directly to families.

Child Support Statistics (CSTATS)

Each month, CSSD senior managers meet to review the department's performance by analyzing data captured from different aspects of the department's operation. Modeled after similar programs at the Department of Public Social Services and the Department of Mental Health, CSSD implemented CSTATS to review performance trends and identify best practices that can be implemented department-wide. Monthly meetings focus on performance at all levels of the Department and feature robust dialogue.

Large Jurisdiction Initiatives

Los Angeles is the most populous county in the nation, rich with diversity. The community CSSD serves is a vast and complex mixture of ethnicities, cultures and economies. In its efforts to improve performance and provide better customer service, the Department has recognized the value of working together with other large jurisdictions that face similar challenges. Through shared learning efforts, it's possible to identify common barriers and develop best practices.

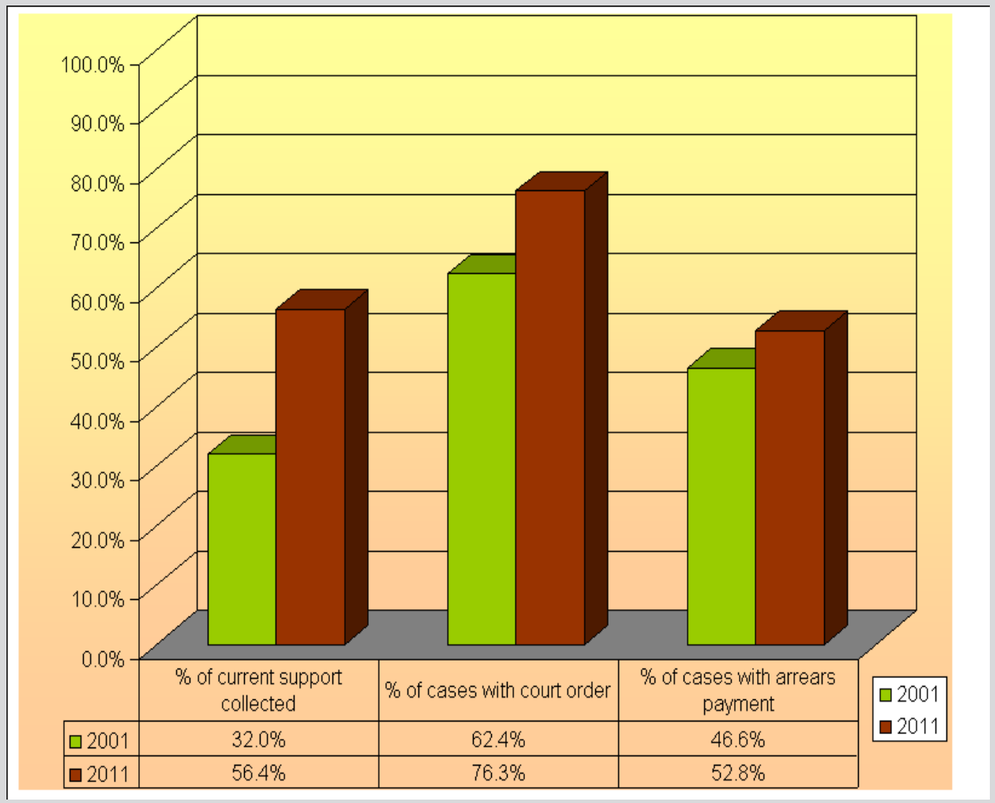
To accomplish this goal, CSSD hosted an Urban Jurisdiction Forum. The Forum provided an opportunity for officials from both the federal government and the State of California to come together with child support administrators from jurisdictions as widespread and diverse as New York City, Chicago, Denver, Boulder, Phoenix, San Diego County, San Bernardino County, Orange County, Sacramento County, and Riverside County. The two-day event provided participants with extensive opportunities to network, discuss, and explore ideas and approaches to maximize performance and achieve better outcomes for families.

In addition to the Forum, CSSD participated in regular meetings of the "Big Six" counties in California, including Orange, Riverside, Sacramento, San Bernardino, and San Diego. The goals of these meetings include analyzing critical operations data, identifying strategies to increase productivity and improve the timeliness and accuracy of customer service initiatives, and boosting the performance achievements of California's largest counties.

Ten Years of Improvement

As significant as CSSD's performance improvement under the federal measures has been in the last two years, the improvement over the decade since the Department was established in 2001 is even more impressive. For example, in the last ten years, CSSD has improved the percentage of current support collected by more than 75%.

The accompanying chart demonstrates the improvements CSSD has achieved in outcomes on the three federal performance factors used to measure program success through April 2011.



	% of current support collected	% of cases with court order	% of cases with arrears payment
2001	32.0%	62.4%	46.6%
2011	56.4%	76.3%	52.8%

How CSSD Helps Families

Services We Provide

- **Establishing Paternity:** Legally naming a child's father is called paternity establishment. This is a necessary first step in obtaining a child support order when a child is born out of wedlock. In addition to providing a legal relationship between a father and a child, establishing paternity can provide a child with access to social security benefits, medical insurance and health information.

- **Establishing Child Support:** California has adopted child support guidelines that are the basis for determining the appropriate level of child support.

- **Establishing Medical Support:** Both parents have a duty to provide health insurance to their child if available at a reasonable cost.

- **Modifying Support Orders:** Support orders are subject to modification as circumstances change. Changes in the incomes of the parents or the needs of the child are frequent reasons for modifying court orders so that they reflect current realities. Obligated parents who are incarcerated or receive certain government benefits can have their child support order adjusted to zero.

- **Enforcing Child, Medical and Spousal Support Orders:** CSSD employs many tools provided for by law to collect support. These tools include having the parent's employer withhold the child support from the employee's paycheck; intercepting IRS and FTB tax refunds; levying bank accounts; suspending drivers licenses, professional licenses and passports. Spousal support is enforceable by CSSD only if the obligated party also owes child support.

- **Financial Processing:** CSSD strives to provide cost effective and timely delivery of child support payments. Customers can pay their child support by credit card, check, money order or electronic funds transfer. Credit card payments can be made in person at any of our seven offices located throughout Los Angeles County, over the telephone and via the internet. Employers can also transmit payments through electronic fund transfer. The recipients of support can now receive the support by direct deposit, or by having the money transferred to an electronic benefit card.

- **Compromise of Arrears:** The California Department of Child Support Services established a program for parents who are unable to pay all their back support owed to the state. The Compromise of Arrears program allows a parent to compromise a portion of their child support arrears in exchange for a lump sum payment or scheduled payments over time.

"I wanted to thank...CSSD for all its help and efforts in helping me enforce child support for my daughter...[with] the hard work from your agency my daughter had a chance to live a decent life. Thank you very much."

Other Ways We Help Families

The Changing Face of Child Support

On April 28, 2011 CSSD hosted a forum entitled *"The Changing Face of Child Support: Strengthening and Supporting Families."* The purpose of this one day event was to answer the question, *"How Can Child Support be a Catalyst to Help Families?"* Presenters and individuals from across the country representing state and local government, academia, the private sector, community based organizations and the child support community attended the event that was kicked off by the Federal Commissioner of Child Support Vicki Turetsky who shared her vision of the future of child support.

In addition to the participation of Commissioner Turetsky, the forum's presenters included two previous child support commissioners, Margot Bean and Dr. Sherri Heller. Other presenters were Margaret Stapleton from the Sargent Shriver Center on Poverty Law, Sharon Rowser of MDRC, James Rodriguez from the Fathers and Families Coalition of America, Robert Ek of the American Public Human Services Association and Judge Bruce Peterson representing the Hennepin County Courts of Minnesota.

Attendees also participated in one of three workshops to dialogue about access and visitation, returning veterans and child support arrears and collaboration between workforce programs and child support.

Children and Families Well-Being Cluster Collaboration

CSSD is part of the County's Children and Families Well-Being Cluster, a structure that encourages and enhances collaboration among departments that deliver related services to children and families. Other departments in the Cluster include the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) and the Department of Community and Senior Services (DCSS).

Philanthropy

CSSD is a philanthropic leader in Los Angeles County and is an active participant in a variety of charitable programs targeting those in need. Over the last four years, CSSD raised just under $100,000 for AIDS Project Los Angeles with its phenomenal participation in the annual AIDS Walk. CSSD staff also participated in HomeWalk-the United Way's 5K walk to end homelessness. CSSD was one of the top fundraising teams for HomeWalk 2009 and 2010. During 2009 and 2010, CSSD raised $7,200 for the March of Dimes' research to end childhood disabilities. CSSD managers, employees, family and friends not only raised money for important causes but also donated their time, efforts and personal items to help the community.

The Children's Closet

During the winter of 2009, a CSSD staff member observed a family who had come to one of our Department's offices. She noticed that a number of the children did not have proper clothing for the wet and cold day. That caring staff member approached one of CSSD's attorneys and through their efforts the award winning "Children's Closet" was born. Donations from staff filled the "Closet" with new and gently used clothing items to be provided to families in need. To date, children from 100 families, ranging in age from infants to teenagers, have benefited from donations made to the Children's Closet.

March of Dimes

The March of Dimes Campaign takes place every year during the months of February through August. CSSD, in partnership with the Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office, rolls out fundraising efforts from which all proceeds benefit the March of Dimes. There are numerous fundraising events which include selling tickets to theme parks, movies, and a variety of other events. From 2009 through 2011 the Department has raised approximately $7,200.

Book Giveaway

Books play an important part in children's development. During "Child Support Awareness Month," which is observed every August, CSSD furnishes new and used books to children who accompany their parents to our Department offices. The books are donated by CSSD staff and community partners.

Annual Holiday Giving

CSSD sponsors an annual holiday giving campaign which raises money for needy families in the Department's caseload. In 2010 the campaign celebrated its 10th year. Each December, CSSD provides more than 50 needy families with groceries, gift cards, and large gift bags filled with toys and other important items. Each bag is individually tailored to the needs of the family being assisted and helps provide a happy holiday.

Homeless Projects

CSSD has implemented outreach efforts in shelters and rehabilitation centers to provide assistance to homeless parents and answer questions regarding our program. In doing so Department staff assists parents in reviewing their child support obligations.

In addition, CSSD participated in the Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count. CSSD partnered with other County departments to count the homeless in Los Angeles County. The effort is designed to help quantify the size of the area's homeless population. The information is used to support efforts to secure appropriate levels of state and federal funding to help provide the homeless with vital social and health services. The following comment is from a CSSD employee who participated in the count.

"I went out to count the homeless last night and I must say it was an experience. I know that I will complain less about not having enough money and thank God more for the all that I have been blessed with. It was also nice to see the community coming together taking time away from their busy lives and families not for a monetary reason but out of concern and in hopes to help those less fortunate. I enjoyed the experience and will continue to volunteer in the future."

Fatherhood Program Participation

In February 2010, CSSD was an active participant and sponsor of the 11th Annual Fatherhood and Families National Conference in Los Angeles staged by the Fathers and Families Coalition of America. The conference was attended by 500 practitioners from father and family programs throughout the country. CSSD Director Dr. Steven J. Golightly was a keynote speaker along with Carmen Nazario, the former Assistant Secretary of the Federal Administration of Families and Children. CSSD was also part of the opening plenary session on child support and conducted a well-attended child support workshop for conference attendees.

Outreach Programs for the Community

Employer Workshops

More than 70% of child support is collected through employer wage withholding. For this reason, employers are critical to the Department's success. CSSD continues to strengthen its relationship with employers by hosting Employer Workshops at various locations throughout the year. These workshops provide employers with valuable information about their roles and responsibilities and changes in rules and regulations that govern wage withholding and health insurance orders. The workshops give employers an opportunity to learn more about CSSD and to ask questions. CSSD has organized 20 Employer Workshops and is committed to hosting more each year. Attendance ranges from 100 to 160 employers at each event.

Arrears Outreach

Parents who owe substantial child support arrears may understandably be uncomfortable about dealing with their issues in a government office setting. In an effort to reach these parents, CSSD hosted two special events designed to provide personalized customer service and help in managing their debt. Invitations were issued for separate Saturday events held at the South Coast Botanic Garden and the Los Angeles County Arboretum. Parents had a chance to meet with caseworkers, obtain helpful information, learn about the ability to use credit cards for making child support payments and establish reasonable payment plans.

Court Order Compliance Review

When a new support order is obtained, CSSD sets a future appointment to review the obligated parent's compliance with the court order. If all payments have been made, the parent can be excused from the review by contacting the department. This program provides an opportunity for early involvement to minimize non-compliance with court orders.

"Thank you...for being not just a worker on the other end of the phone line but a caring person who felt the need to assist me in my time of need."

Prison Efforts

CSSD partners with the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department to provide outreach to incarcerated parents. CSSD staff visits the Men's Central Jail and Pitchess Detention Center to provide informational workshops about parentage, child support, and support arrears. Staff also assists incarcerated parents with their individual support cases.

CSSD staff attends parole orientation for newly released inmates to increase their awareness of their rights and responsibilities concerning the support of their children. Here, as well, parents are given assistance with their individual child support needs.

Veterans Outreach

CSSD collaborates with local veteran groups to provide child support information and case management services. Due to the significant health issues facing veterans attempting to re-enter civilian life, child support issues may be overlooked. In order to address this situation CSSD, in association with the public interest law firm Public Counsel, provides direct child support services to homeless veterans. Because of this collaboration many veterans have received the assistance they need to move on with their lives.

Community Outreach

In 2009-2011 CSSD continued its already ambitious outreach program to the many diverse communities in Los Angeles County. The goal is to educate the public about child support and the services offered by the Department. Each year, the Media and Outreach Section coordinates outreach to more than 30,000 individuals through partnerships with over 100 community organizations, government agencies and educational institutions serving needy families and children.

CSSD makes presentations to clients of Los Angeles County agencies such as the Department of Public Social Services, the Office of Education, WorkSource job centers and the Sheriff's Department. Outreach efforts also include presentations and partnerships with the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation and the Employment Development Department. CSSD makes regular presentations to non-profit organizations serving veterans, the homeless, women and victims of domestic violence. Some of these organizations include U.S. Vets, the Women at Work Resource Center, Head Start, AltaMed Health Centers, the Fred Jordan Mission, Public Counsel and Los Angeles County Superior Court.

Staff not only provide general information to participants attending the outreach events, but take specific inquiries and case updates back to the office for appropriate research, follow-up and resolution. CSSD is committed to the accuracy of its support orders and ensuring that all cases contain the most current participant information.

Media Outreach

Educating the public about the availability of child support services is a critical tool to meet CSSD's mission. This involves far more than printing and distributing brochures and informational materials. The effort to tell the Department's story in a community as large and culturally diverse as Los Angeles involves working extensively through mass media. A good example of this type of outreach was the Department's September 2009 partnership with Spanish-language television station KMEX (Channel 34). At this event twenty Spanish-speaking CSSD employees, including child support officers and attorneys, staffed a phone bank during the station's "34 A Su Lado" ("34 On Your Side") broadcast. They answered questions from callers and appeared in live interviews to explain CSSD's services. Broadcast during morning prime-time hours, the program reached thousands of Spanish-speaking viewers.

In 2010, Women in Film, a respected organization of film and television professionals, assisted in the production of several public service announcements with the goal of helping spread CSSD's message as widely as possible

Child Support Awareness Month

Each August, CSSD joins the national celebration of "Child Support Awareness Month" which is aimed at educating the public about the importance of child support and the work of child support professionals.

CSSD undertook an ambitious schedule of community outreach for "Child Support Awareness Month." Over 30 outreach events were held to educate the public about child support issues under the themes "A Building Block for Our Children's Future" and "Working with You for Child Support Solutions."

Among the many highlights of "Child Support Awareness Month" were the special child support workshops for representatives from respected community organizations. CSSD partnered with organizations and programs such as the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, the Los Angeles County Office of Education, United States Veterans, Women Infant and Children (WIC), WorkSource, Phoenix House, Weingart Center and El Nido.

Every year this special month culminates in a celebration for the child support professionals who are critical to helping serve families. CSSD sponsors an annual employee picnic where over 1,000 employees and family members enjoy food, fun, and games.

Partnering to Build a Better Tomorrow

Collaboration Strategies

In its quest to provide seamless integrated services, CSSD has implemented several collaborative strategies with various County and community partners. CSSD remains committed to working with other public and private agencies to improve outcomes for families.

Department of Public Social Services

In 2010 CSSD began a project with the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS). CSSD provides annual training to DPSS Eligibility Workers to improve joint case processing practices. The primary goals are to educate DPSS staff regarding child support processing and to enhance communication between the agencies. The collaboration helps to provide better services to the community.

Sheriff

CSSD receives data about inmates who are sentenced to State prison for the purpose of reviewing and/or appropriately modifying child support orders and updating CSSD parent information. We help inmates with modifying their orders to assist them to adjust to life outside prison.

Superior Court Family Law Facilitator

In the expedited referral program, CSSD staff meets with case participants whose issues can be resolved without the filing of legal paperwork. This expedited process resolves participant issues early in the required course of action and saves the families time and expense.

Community and Senior Services Collaboration

CSSD initiated a collaborative effort with the Community and Senior Services WorkSource programs. CSSD staff attended orientations at the WorkSource offices to educate parents about child support and the services offered by our department. CSSD assisted parents in reviewing their requests to modify child support obligations to appropriate amounts and in calculating reasonable payment plans for arrears that have accrued.

> "Through the years the staff here has been attentive, professional and courteous. They are the best governmental staff I've come across."

Accomplishments at a Glance in FFYs 2009-2011

Awards and Recognition

- Deputy Director David Kilgore received the Western Interstate Child Support Council 2010 Excellence Award for Outstanding Individual Achievement.
- Deputy Director David Kilgore received a Collaboration Award at the Annual Child Support Director's Association (CSDA) Training conference for his development of the Case Management Tool, a software interface that allows staff to proactively manage their case load. The tool has been adopted statewide.
- Los Angeles County CSSD received a Top Ten Award for its collaboration in the creation of a new office to serve the public in the newly-constructed County government family service center in South Los Angeles.
- CSSD was honored with a special Productivity Enhancement Award for the Public Check-in System established at Central Civil West court operations to improve customer service and wait times.
- CSSD received a "Million Dollar Club" Award from the Los Angeles County Quality and Productivity Commission for Operation Medical Support. The award recognizes programs that save at least a million dollars in cost or generate a million dollars in revenue.
- Retired Deputy Director of Information Technology David "Jake" Jacobson received the 2009 Truly B. Knox Award at the annual awards dinner at the CSDA Training Conference. The award recognizes outstanding service to California's child support program.
- CSSD was honored with a "Personal Best" award for its "Children's Closet" project at the annual L.A. County Quality and Productivity Commission Awards Luncheon.

Technology Advances

- Provided electronic fund transfers as a new, easy option for making child support payments.
- Implemented direct deposit and the Electronic Payment Card (EPC) program for custodial parents.
- Created the Case Management Tool (CMT); a database to enhance electronic caseload management.
- Launched the newly-redesigned and customer friendly CSSD website.
- Currently imaging the Department's entire caseload.

CSSD Staff Educational Achievements

CSSD recognizes the importance of higher education; therefore, it supports and encourages staff in pursuing their higher education goals. During this reporting period many employees obtained various types of degrees, including Associates of Arts, Bachelors, Masters and Juris Doctorate degrees. Leading by example, CSSD's Director Steven J. Golightly received a Doctorate Degree.

Partnerships in Excellence

CSSD has embraced and implemented the Partnerships in Excellence (PIE) program devised by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors. CSSD encourages every division within the Department to acknowledge the outstanding achievements of their staff. CSSD formally recognized over 40 employees for their exceptional performance and service during the last two years.

Town Hall Meetings

CSSD hosted several Town Hall meetings to share information and to acknowledge its dedicated staff. CSSD's Director delivers his "State of the Department" address and staff share their experiences and opinions. The topics of discussion range from current events and new legislation to the Department's budget. CSSD also hosts its semi-annual Awards Ceremony at the Town Hall allowing employees to receive recognition from Department managers and peers.

Wellness Program

CSSD continued its Wellness Program, with voluntary participation from 650 employees, representing approximately 39% of the Department's workforce. Surveys completed by the Program participants revealed the significant benefits of the program. Staff reported that the Wellness Program relieved stress, made them feel healthier and refreshed their minds and bodies. More importantly, participants reported that they were more alert and energized during the day. Overall, the Program increased employee morale.

"Staff provided me with extraordinary service. They treated me like family, were polite and helped me in a timely manner."

Staff Development and Training

Online Policy Manual

CSSD has expended significant resources to ensure that its staff remain current with the ever-changing child support laws, guidelines and procedures. CSSD's state of the art online policy manual, the Knowledge Resource Information System (KRIS), enables staff to electronically research and retrieve key information, eliminating the need for costly printed materials. Further, KRIS allows immediate access to state and Department policies, thereby improving customer service and reducing customer wait times for information.

Video Conferencing Training

Understanding the importance of reducing costs, CSSD has implemented department-wide video/web conferencing. From one location, CSSD trainers reach staff located at seven different offices throughout Los Angeles County. This state of the art training makes it possible to keep staff well informed of changing policies and procedures.

Mentor Program

In FFYs 2009 – 2011 CSSD continued with its well-established department-wide Mentorship Program, which was originally designed to assist in the succession of employees to critical staff positions. Due to its success, the program has been expanded to include mentoring opportunities to staff at all levels. Over 190 staff members have participated in this program since its inception.

Caseworker Olympics

In 2010, CSSD launched the "Caseworker Olympics"-an innovative approach to training in a fun-filled game show format. Teams challenged each other in contests such as "The Match Game" and "Solve That Case." The Olympics were a refreshing way for staff to learn and to reinforce their knowledge about case ownership and case management. Approximately 100 staff have participated.

What's New?

Case Ownership Business Model

To improve the efficiency and quality of managing the Department's caseload, CSSD implemented the case ownership method of case management. Caseworkers now have the responsibility for most aspects of case processing within their designated caseload. Case participants also have direct access to their case manager via phone or Customer Connect to communicate via the internet. With the implementation of case ownership, caseworkers have become more aware of the individual needs of their case participants, allowing them to provide better customer service.

Case Management Tool

The Case Management Tool (CMT) is a software application that organizes cases by location, team and worker. CMT provides unprecedented oversight and control of case assignments - it allows users to sort, analyze, prioritize and work cases and track the results of their efforts. It enables managers to identify where and how caseworkers should direct their efforts in alignment with goals set by the Department to meet federal and state performance measures and County strategic goals. The greatest evidence of CMT's value as a means to improve organizational effectiveness and enhance customer service is the fact that 25 other California child support agencies have adopted the CMT or are pursuing it for use in their own child support operations.

New CSSD Website

The Department launched a newly-redesigned internet website. The website provides users with a colorful and easy-to-navigate reference tool. The site provides general information about the child support program and allows users to initiate actions in his or her own case. For example, a custodial parent can click on an icon and begin the process of opening a new case or checking the case payment history. A non-custodial parent can easily make a payment online or request that staff review the case for modification. The website also serves a variety of other stakeholders and contains valuable information and links for employers, title companies, and lawyers.

"I want to personally offer my gratitude and thank you for the comfort you provided me and a job well done."

Looking Ahead

CSSD looks toward the future keenly focused on building upon the progress of the last several years. Specifically, CSSD is committed to increasing program performance, enhancing customer service and meeting the needs of the family by using technology to become the child support program model of the 21st century.

CSSD acknowledges the dedication of its staff and partners, including the California Department of Child Support Services, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, the Chief Executive Office, the Child Support Directors Association, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU/Local 721), the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME/ District Council 36), the Association of Child Support Attorneys, and the Superior Court.

Meet the Executive Managers

Steven J. Golightly, Ph.D.
Director

Dr. Steven J. Golightly currently serves as Director of the Los Angeles County Child Support Services Department, the largest locally-administered child support program in the nation. He was appointed to this position by the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors on February 23, 2007. As Director, he oversees the day-to-day operations of the County's child support agency with an annual budget of $168 million and a workforce of over 1,600 individuals.

Prior to joining the County, Dr. Golightly was a career member of the federal government's Senior Executive Service, and was Regional Administrator for children and families in Federal Region IV (Atlanta) for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Before that he worked with the National Alliance of Business (NAB), in Washington DC, where he served as Vice President for Human Service Programs. He also served as Chief Deputy Director and Acting Director at the Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services.

Dr. Golightly has an undergraduate degree in Business Management, a Masters Degree in Public Administration, and a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Public Policy and Administration.

Fesia A. Davenport
Chief Deputy Director

Fesia A. Davenport received her Juris Doctor degree in 1995 from the University of California, Hastings College of Law located in San Francisco, California. After returning to Los Angeles in 1996, Ms. Davenport practiced civil litigation and ultimately practiced Family Law exclusively before joining the child support family in 1998. As Chief Deputy Director, Ms. Davenport assists CSSD's Director with the day-to-day oversight of the CSSD operation. Her responsibilities include development and implementation of department-wide policy and procedure, and working closely with the CSSD's Executive Managers.

Lori A. Cruz
Deputy Director, Operations

Lori A. Cruz, Deputy Director of Operations, supervises several public contact divisions including Encino, West Covina, Torrance and Interstate. She also oversees the State Hearing/Ombudsman and Customer Financial Services divisions. Her staff consists of caseworkers, clerical staff, managers and staff attorneys. She has been with the child support program since 1990, initially serving as a deputy district attorney for the Bureau of Family Support Operations of the District Attorney's office. Immediately prior to her appointment, Ms. Cruz served as the chief of the Department's Employee Relations Division.

David Kilgore
Deputy Director, Operations

David Kilgore, Deputy Director of Operations, supervises the public contact divisions in Commerce, South Los Angeles, and Palmdale. He also oversees the Central Intake, Co-Locate, Call Center and Quality Control & Data Analysis divisions. He has nine years of experience in child support program management. Prior to joining CSSD, he worked for five years as an Analyst and then Program Manager for the Tulare County Department of Child Support Services. Immediately prior to joining Los Angeles County, Mr. Kilgore spent two years as a Deputy Director for the San Bernardino County Department of Child Support Services.

Rita Figueroa
Administrative Deputy

Rita Figueroa has been the Administrative Deputy for the County of Los Angeles Child Support Services Department since April 2007. As the Administrative Deputy, Ms. Figueroa manages the day-to-day operations of the Administrative Services Bureau, comprised of approximately 120 staff within five Divisions: Fiscal Management, Human Resources, Contract Management, Facilities Management, and Staff Development and Media Services.

Alexandra Bauer
Senior Legal Counsel

Alexandra Bauer currently serves as Senior Legal Counsel for the Los Angeles County Child Support Services Department. In that capacity Ms. Bauer oversees the Department's Special Litigation, Policy, and Special Enforcement Divisions. Ms Bauer received her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Southern California, Gould School of Law located in Los Angeles, California. She joined the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office Bureau of Family Support Operations (now the Los Angeles County Child Support Services Department) in 1996.

LA County Board of Supervisors

Michael D. Antonovich
5th District

Mark Ridley-Thomas
2nd District

Gloria Molina
1st District

Zev Yaroslavsky
3rd District

Don Knabe
4th District

County of Los Angeles

Strategic Plan

Enriching Lives
lacounty.gov

County Mission

- **To enrich lives through effective and caring service**

County Values

Our **philosophy** of teamwork and collaboration is anchored in our shared values:

- **Accountability** — We accept responsibility for the decisions we make and the actions we take.
- **Can-Do Attitude** — We approach each challenge believing that, together, a solution can be achieved.
- **Compassion** — We treat those we serve and each other in a kind and caring manner.
- **Customer Orientation** — We place the highest priority on meeting our customers' needs with accessible, responsive quality services, and treating them with respect and dignity.
- **Integrity** — We act consistent with our values and the highest ethical standards.
- **Leadership** — We engage, motivate and inspire others to collaboratively achieve common goals through example, vision and commitment.
- **Professionalism** — We perform to a high standard of excellence. We take pride in our employees and invest in their job satisfaction and development.
- **Respect for Diversity** — We value the uniqueness of every individual and their perspective.
- **Responsiveness** — We take the action needed in a timely manner.

Strategic Plan Goals

1. **Operational Effectiveness:** Maximize the effectiveness of the County's processes, structure, and operations to support timely delivery of customer-oriented and efficient public services.
2. **Children, Family and Adult Well-Being:** Enrich lives through integrated, cost-effective and client-centered supportive services.
3. **Community and Municipal Services:** Enrich the lives of Los Angeles County's residents and visitors by providing access to cultural, recreational and lifelong learning facilities programs; ensure quality regional open space, recreational and public works infrastructure services for County residents; and deliver customer oriented municipal services to the County's diverse unincorporated communities.
4. **Health and Mental Health:** Improve health and mental health outcomes and efficient use of scarce resources, by promoting proven service models and prevention principles that are population-based, client-centered and family-focused.
5. **Public Safety:** Ensure that the committed efforts of the public safety partners continue to maintain and improve the safety and security of the people of Los Angeles County.

Gloria Molina	Mark Ridley-Thomas	Zev Yaroslavsky	Don Knabe	Michael D. Antonovich
Supervisor, First District	*Supervisor, Second District*	*Supervisor, Third District*	*Supervisor, Fourth District*	*Supervisor, Fifth District*

March 2009