



City and County of San Francisco  
Board of Supervisors, Finance Committee  
Department of Child Support Services  
Supervisor Mark Farrell, Committee Chair  
May 20, 2015



### **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PREVENTION INITIATIVE**

The child support program developed the Family Violence Indicator (FVI) for case managers to flag cases of domestic violence where the enforcement of child support obligations may be dangerous. The Department is currently seeing unprecedented growth in the number of clients who are exposed to family violence: in 2009, the Department served 391 clients exposed to family violence; in July of 2011, there were 1,901 open cases flagged for family violence. In response, SFDCSS has trained caseworkers and attorneys to communicate effectively with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence, and to work with non-custodial parents to secure child support for the custodial parent safely.

The case management response for cases assigned to the domestic violence prevention initiative focuses on providing the noncustodial parent with increased levels of outreach, education, and a structured case management model that promotes a commitment to child support payments and reduces the likelihood of violence. Noncustodial parents are educated on their rights and responsibilities with the child support program understanding that intimidation, threats of retaliation will not be tolerated and will require SFDCSS to refer the matter to the District Attorney, or Adult Probation for revocation of probation. Parents are briefed prior to any action that SFDCSS plans to take on the case reducing surprise and concern that feed frustration. For those who are struggling and require employment assistance, referrals are made to collaborating community-based organizations. The violence prevention team was honored to receive the Public Managerial Excellence Award from SPUR. As of April 2015, there are 528 cases assigned to the Family Violence Initiative. **In 2014 1,770 victims received a total of \$3,104,857 dollars in child support paid and 100% of survivors have reported no new incidence of abuse.**

### **PROJECT 500 - PARENTING TIME PLANS PROMOTING - FATHER INVOLVEMENT**

Parenting Time Plans are visitation schedules parents, who no longer live together, have with their minor child(ren). The Bipartisan Child Support Improvement and Work Promotion Act (S.1877), which would incorporate such plans with support orders, continue to await floor action. The San Francisco Department of Child Support service will implement a pilot project integrating parenting time plans with child support orders. The San Francisco Department of Child Support Services, along the Status of Women, Bay Area Legal Aid, domestic violence advocates, San Francisco Family Court Services, and the San Francisco IV-D Commissioner have created an opt-out option for victims of domestic violence from participating in this pilot. There will be domestic violence training for the all child support staff. The implementation of this pilot depends upon the next step of developing a plan with Family Court Services surrounding referring clients to orientation and mediation without attending the Readiness Calendars.

Item 3 - File No. 150440  
5/20/15

## **FATHERHOOD AND PARENTING SUPPORT NETWORK**

Fatherlessness is a growing crisis in America and exacerbates many of the challenges that families face. Research has shown that children who grow up without their fathers are more likely to be negatively affected psychologically, emotionally, and behaviorally. To help address this issue, we have developed a local directory of service providers of fatherhood and parenting support resources to advance our mission to empower parents in ways that contribute to the overall well-being of children and families. When a service provider is identified, SFDCSS Outreach staff conducts presentations to facilitators and attendees of the support group to educate them about the child support program and encourage customer participation in the management of their case. We also attend partner roundtable meetings to contribute to the discussions that are taking place to develop a city-wide network of service providers. In August 2013, in honor of Child Support Awareness Month, SFDCSS published its first issue of *Focus on Fathers*, a father-specific newsletter that provides information on programs, resources, and case management.

## **MAYOR'S OFFICE OF HOUSING**

### **HOUSING OPPORTUNITY, PARTNERSHIPS & ENGAGEMENT (HOPE SF)**

SFDCSS recognizes that acquiring stable and affordable housing in San Francisco can be a challenge for the customers we serve. In alignment with SFDCSS's Mission Statement to empower parents to obtain economic self-sufficiency in order to provide and care for their children, SFDCSS plans to establish a liaison with HOPE SF. Created by the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors, the HOPE SF initiative seeks to transform eight of San Francisco's most distressed public housing sites by rebuilding distressed public housing sites, increasing affordable housing and ownership opportunities, and improving the quality of life for existing residents and the surrounding communities. The SFDCSS liaison **will work with clients referred by HOPE SF to review and remove any unintentional barriers to housing created by child support enforcement – restore driver's licenses and help restore credit worthiness.** Clients who are referred to SFDCSS will receive enhanced case management support that will seek to address their child support delinquency and provide solutions to bring their account into compliance and restore their standing as a prospective housing tenant.

## **DEPARTMENT OF LABOR: ENHANCED TRANSITIONAL JOB DEMONSTRATION PROJECT (ETJD)**

In collaboration with the San Francisco Office of Economic and Workforce Development, the San Francisco Human Services Agency, and Goodwill of San Francisco, San Mateo, and Marin Counties, SFDCSS won an Enhanced Job Training Demonstration grant from the Department of Labor for its "Transitions SF." Transitions SF targets non-custodial parents ages 18-59, with minor children, who reside in San Francisco and who have been identified by SFDCSS as either delinquent in child support payments or non-job ready. Recruitment began in November 2011 and ended in December 2013 with the project meeting its enrollment goal of 1,000 non-custodial parents. We anticipate that successful graduates of Transitions SF will move from subsidized employment to permanent employment increasing their child support payments versus recipients of standard job placement services who only pay during the subsidized employment period. SFDCSS is providing specialized, intensive services to Transitions

SF participants to assist them with modifying child support orders, repaying arrears, and getting child support obligations in line with their income and ability to pay. **As of April 2015, formerly delinquent participants enrolled in ETJD have paid \$1.9M in child support collections.**

### **COUNTY JAIL OUTREACH**

SFDCSS established a formal relationship with the County Sheriff's Department to provide on-site child support services to incarcerated parents. Since its inception in 2007, caseworkers and attorneys meet weekly with non-custodial parents who are incarcerated in the San Francisco County jail system - both male and female - to discuss and respond to client concerns and modify orders. SFDCSS partners with Prisoner Legal Services to work with noncustodial parents we are unable to reach through our regular jail visits (i.e. maximum security). Staff provides educational presentations and answers questions weekly at the parole release meetings and meets with attending parents to discuss their child support cases. Since 2007, the jail outreach initiative **has identified 2,558 unique non-custodial parents whose whereabouts were previously unknown and are associated to 3,511 statewide cases with overall debt owed in excess of \$21.2 million.** Once released from incarceration, parents are required to communicate with child support and begin the process of re-introducing payment of child support.

### **COLLABORATION WITH ADULT PROBATION**

This partnership seeks to re-engage low income non-custodial and custodial parents in the child support program that are currently or formerly incarcerated through early intervention strategies that promote successful reentry of these parents. **The collaboration between the Adult Probation Department and the SFDCSS begins with co-location** that refers probationers who have open child support cases and includes child support's review and assessment as part of the "probation plan" for post-release parents. Strategies also include the gradual re-introduction of realistic orders that are mindful of the instability many parents experience as they transition from incarceration, consolidation of out-of-county cases, paternity establishment and timely modification of orders. This initiative reduces the negative impact that full child support enforcement may have on the successful reintegration of post release parents and the increase in recidivism rates while prioritizing positive parent child relationships.

### **ENHANCEMENTS FOR PERFORMING COMMUNITY OUTREACH (EPCOT)**

The Enhancements for Performing Community Outreach and Tracking (EPCOT) where the SFDCSS Community Outreach and Customer Services Program teams reach out to the community in various methods to engage parents in their child support cases. The team attends various fairs and festivals and gives presentations at various community organizations and agencies to educate the community regarding child support. Through these activities, the team identifies those individuals with child support cases, schedules appointments for and meets with them to provide assistance in all aspects of their child support case(s). Also, as part of the EPCOT program, the team holds monthly workshops in communities within San Francisco

that educate parents on the child support program and assist them with their child support cases. Additional outreach activities include television and radio.

#### **CUSTODIAL AND NONCUSTODIAL PARENT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING PROGRAM (C-NET)**

The Custodial and Noncustodial Parent Employment and Training Program (C-NET) was developed in response to parents who are struggling to pay child support owed and face considerable barriers to employment that includes lack of permanent housing, substance abuse, anger and rage issues, and multiple incarcerations. Non-custodial parents while incarcerated may seek reunification with their children (typically female) and face child support debt owed while children were in foster care, upon release, depend on child support received to help meet the basic needs of their children leading to successful reunification. This initiative realizes that for non-custodial parents who are unemployed or underemployed Court-ordered work searches are not enough. Motivation is not the major issue - a criminal history is! C-NET requires parents to work cooperatively with organizations affiliated with the SFDCSS that address employment readiness issues promoting the stability of the family. Obligated parents are required to report regularly to SFDCSS for review and consideration of child support. Participants in C-NET obtain assistance through our partners at Goodwill Industries, the One Stop Career Link Centers, and FACES SF (formerly Florence Crittenton Services), for peer support and counseling, improvement in parenting skills, education, anger management, substance recovery, employment assessment and training, and other resources to help the participant stabilize.

#### **ENHANCED PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT COLLABORATIVE (EPIC)**

The EPIC establishment model focuses on establishing and maintaining communication with the non-custodial parents at the beginning of the life of the case that is inclusive and nonthreatening. The child support program focuses on encouraging non-custodial parents and educating them regarding their responsibility for their children and the role of the child support agency. By working with parents instead of against them, our agency is able to establish orders that non-custodial parents and their children can live with. Prior to EPIC, the child support order establishment process was highly system-driven and did not encourage comprehensive customer service and outreach to the non-custodial parents. At the time of EPIC's implementation in 2004, 60% of our orders established were obtained by Default (without the non-custodial parent involvement). Absent the non-custodial parent involvement these orders go unpaid leaving single parents to struggle, mounting debt that most non-custodial parents are unable to prepay. Presumed income orders comprised 21% of these Default orders. **Since the implementation of EPIC, our current default order rate is steady at 15% or less of all orders established.** The outcomes of the EPIC process have been a positive impact to the agency's arrears management and performance targets. **With 85% or more of our child support orders being established by means of voluntary Stipulation or court hearing, parents are more willing to pay their obligation each month** because they were involved in the process and have been educated regarding the purpose of the child support program.

### **ENHANCED PATERNITY OPPORTUNITY PROGRAM-(POP) OUTREACH PROGRAM**

In early 2011, SFDCSS launched its Enhanced POP Outreach Program. The goal of the program is to increase the establishment of paternity for children born to unwed parents. To meet this goal, the SFDCSS developed relationships with both private and public healthcare providers to educate hospital staff on child support and employs several different initiatives, including:

presentations to expectant mothers and fathers in prenatal classes; regular meetings with hospital birth clerks at all San Francisco birthing hospitals; meetings with hospital and medical clinic staff including nurse-midwives, medical-social workers, health education workers, and public health nurses; provision of outreach materials to hospitals and medical clinics; inclusion of POP materials in pre- and post-birth hospital packets; a bi-annual Paternity newsletter for perinatal-care staff; establishment of a direct telephone line to provide expectant parents with confidential consultations with SFDCSS staff; establishment of a Paternity section of the SFDCSS website; and facilitation of the POP program for incarcerated fathers. **100% of our cases have paternity established!**

### **COMPROMISE OF ARREARS PROGRAM (COAP)**

In response to the increasing number of court orders that are considered as unenforceable or non-collectable, the State of California implemented the COAP program in 2004. The COAP program offers non-custodial parents the option of compromising up to 90% of the arrears owed on their child support case. In order to qualify for a compromise, a parent must owe governmental arrears of at least \$501. If a parent meets the eligibility criteria and applies for the program, the case is then further analyzed to review for assets and payment ability. Once the determination is made that the parent qualifies for a compromise, a payment arrangement is made that allows the parent to make a one-time lump sum payment or establish a payment plan that will pay the balance of the case within three years.

COAP offers an arrears management solution to the State of California and to parents who would otherwise not be able to pay their case balance. It is a known fact that a very small percentage of obligors are responsible for the majority of child support arrears that are uncollected. This fact negatively impacts performance of the local child support agencies. By offering parents the option to compromise monies that would otherwise be uncollected, the State of California is able to focus its efforts on enforcement of collectable outstanding child support. As of SFY 13-14, San Francisco's COAP program received 106 applications resulting in the compromise of **\$973,697.28 of unpaid child support debt in exchange for repayment settlements totaling \$184,788.86.**

### **HEALTH CARE REFORM AND CHILD SUPPORT**

The Affordable Care Act (ACA), which went into effect in 2014, will improve accessibility and affordability for custodial and non-custodial parents in meeting their obligation to ensure adequate medical coverage for their children. SFCSS, along with California's entire child support program, is moving aggressively to implement the requirements and programmatic changes

necessitated by ACA legislation. The Office of Child Support Enforcement will not be making policy on the Affordable Care Act (ACA) for two years. The Administrative Office of the Courts has formed a workgroup consisting of IV-D Commissioners and Family Law Facilitators. The Child Support Directors Association of California, Legal Practice Committee has formed a work group. The focus of these work groups is to determine the intersections between the ACA and IV-D child support. There is an ACA mailbox at Department of Child Support Services for questions.

### **CITY COLLEGE COLLABORATION**

In 2006, SFCSS initiated a pilot program in collaboration with City College of San Francisco to provide child support services to student parents in the case management areas of debt forgiveness and order modification. **Student parents also had the option of entering into informal and voluntary parenting time plans/ family plans that enabled them to attend school and complete their educational goals.** Beginning in 2014, SFCSS in collaboration with Family Court Services, Domestic Violence Advocates and other stakeholders reengaged with City College of San Francisco by partnering with an existing on campus service provider to facilitate voluntary court ordered parenting time/family plans to student parents. The project, implemented in March 2015 with the Southeast and Mission campuses, expects to strengthen family relationships while expanding access to CSS for local residents and supporting student parents with meeting their educational goals.

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**ANNUAL HOLIDAY TOY AND BOOK FESTIVAL**

In collaboration with the Mayor's Office, the San Francisco Fire Fighter's Union Local 798, and the San Francisco Public Library, SFDCSS hosts the Annual Holiday Toy and Book Festival every December. The Festival, held at San Francisco's historic City Hall, invites children ages 12 and under, and provides age-appropriate toys and books along with an opportunity to meet Santa Claus and Clifford the Big Red Dog. For over seven years the workers of SFDCSS have welcomed parents, teachers, and children into City to share in the holiday season. Each year, the Festival attracts up to 1,200 local children, many for whom it is their first visit to City Hall. Children are invited through San Francisco's public schools, community-based organizations, and SFDCSS offices.







# **DEPARTMENT of CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES**

**BUDGET PRESENTATION**

to

**SAN FRANCISCO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**BUDGET AND FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**FY2015-2016 and FY2016-2017**



# Putting San Francisco Families FIRST

- **Our Vision:** Children can count on their parents for the financial, medical and emotional support they need to be healthy and successful.
- **Our Mission:** To empower parents to provide economic support for their children by furnishing child support services in the form of location of absent parents, establishment of paternity and support obligations and enforcement of support obligations, thereby contributing to the well-being of families and children.



# Putting San Francisco Families **First**

| District | Caseload   | % of Caseload | Annual Collection | Money to Families |
|----------|------------|---------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| 11       | 1,950      | 15%           | \$3,979,055       | \$3,382,197       |
| 10       | 4,161      | 32%           | \$8,488,652       | \$7,215,354       |
| 9        | 1,300      | 10%           | \$2,652,703       | \$2,254,798       |
| 8        | 260        | 2%            | \$530,540         | \$450,960         |
| 7        | 520        | 4%            | \$1,061,081       | \$901,919         |
| 6        | 1,430      | 11%           | \$2,917,974       | \$2,480,278       |
| 5        | 1,821      | 14%           | \$3,713,785       | \$3,156,717       |
| 4        | 390        | 3%            | \$795,811         | \$676,439         |
| 3        | 650        | 5%            | \$1,326,352       | \$1,127,399       |
| 2        | 132        | 0%            | \$265,274         | \$225,482         |
| 1        | <u>390</u> | <u>3%</u>     | <u>\$795,811</u>  | <u>\$676,439</u>  |
|          | 13,004     | 100%          | \$26,527,038      | \$22,547,982      |

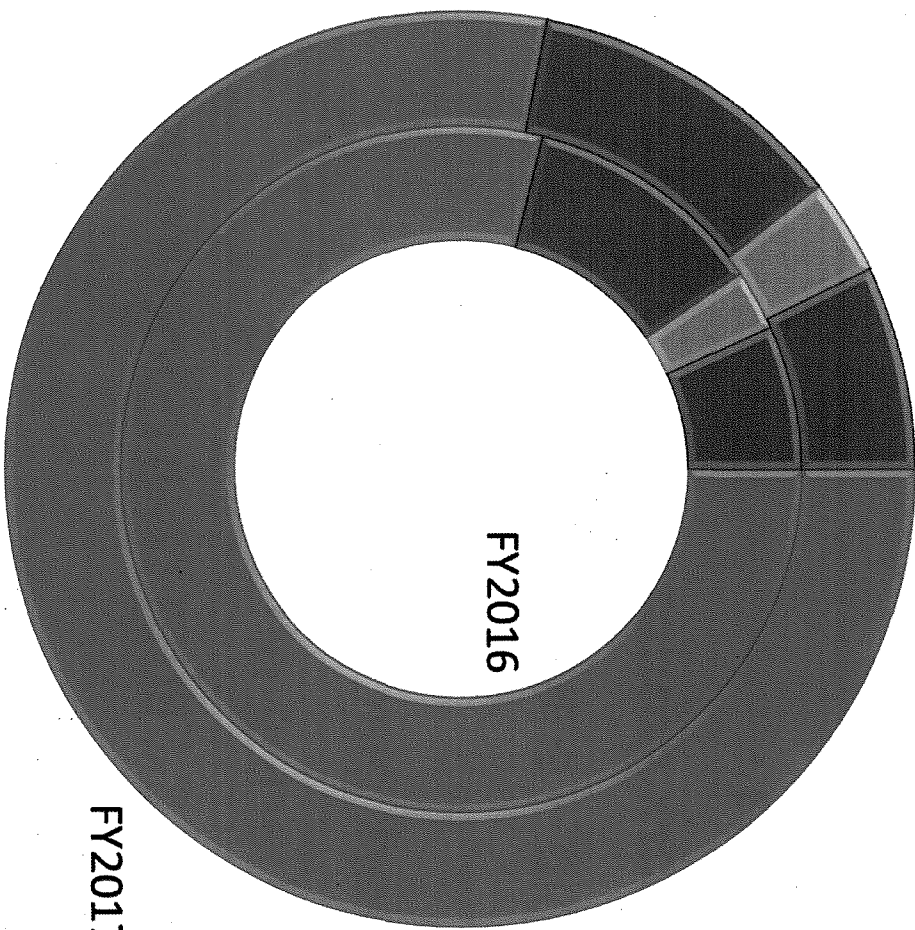


# Funding: FY 2016 and FY2017

| <b>Budget Allocation</b> | <b>FY 2016</b>   | <b>FY 2017</b>   |
|--------------------------|------------------|------------------|
| <b>Revenue</b>           |                  |                  |
| Federal Funds            | 8,500,640        | 8,500,640        |
| State Funds              | <u>4,379,117</u> | <u>4,379,117</u> |
|                          | 12,879,757       | 12,879,757       |
| <b>Expenditure</b>       |                  |                  |
| Personnel Services       | 10,161,982       | 10,055,775       |
| Rent                     | 1,476,499        | 1,463,975        |
| Non Salary Services      | 369,784          | 434,809          |
| Work Orders              | <u>871,492</u>   | <u>925,198</u>   |
|                          | 12,879,757       | 12,879,757       |



# Direct services depends on direct service personnel



FY2017

FY2016

- Salary /Benefits
- Rent
- Non-Salary
- Work Orders



# Maintaining Direct Services: Opportunities for continued savings

- Staffing
  - “Lead” Caseworkers
  - Cross training, work groups
  - Shared leadership – solving challenges together
  - Prevention of work place injuries
- Condensing and sharing office space
- Green technology – E-Filing court documents



# Maintaining Customer Access to Services

- Language Access
  - 63% caseworkers are certified bilingual workers
    - 21% Cantonese, Mandarin
    - 79% Spanish
  - California Language Line available during business hours
  - TTY lines for the hearing impaired



# Expanded client services and collaborations

- ✓ Project 500 – lifting families out of poverty
- ✓ Domestic Violence Prevention through enhanced case management - \$3M to 1,770 victims of domestic violence
- ✓ Incarcerated Parents - Jail Outreach (as of 2015 – 2,558 parents - \$21.2 million)
- ✓ Enhanced Transitional Jobs Demonstration Project collaboration with (Office of Economic and Workforce Development) Employment Opportunities - \$1.9M collected from participating parents
- ✓ City College – helping parents stay in school through shared child care
- ✓ HOPE SF – Building credit worthiness for affordable housing
- ✓ Building Fatherhood Services Network (parent networking and support)
- ✓ EPCOT (Enhancements for Performing Community Outreach and Tracking)
- ✓ C-NET (Custodial and Noncustodial Parent Employment and Training)
- ✓ COAP (Compromise of Arrears Program) – Debt restructuring has forgiven \$800K for indigent noncustodial parents





# Federal Performance – How did we measure up in Federal FY2014?

| Economic Self Sufficiency of Single Parent Families | Federal Performance Required | California State Average | San Francisco Performance |
|---|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Collection (Current Support)                        | 62%                          | 63%                      | <b>74%</b>                |
| Collection (Arrears)                                | 62%                          | 65%                      | <b>70%</b>                |
| Establishment of Child Support Order                | 84%                          | 84%                      | <b>90%</b>                |
| Establishment of Paternity                          | 100%                         | 100%                     | <b>100%</b>               |



