

Members of the Child Support Reform
Shareholders' Group

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Daryl Novak, Director, Cuyahoga County CSEA

Loretta Adams, ODJFS Director's Association
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Robert Suver, Clark County CDHS/PCSA/CSEA
Tim Thourot, parent
Don Thomas, Hamilton County CDHS/PCSA/CSEA
Senator Lynn Wachtmann
China Widener, ODJFS

If you would like more information on the Child Support Reform Shareholders Group, please contact Susan McKinley at the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services at (614) 466-1454 or by e-mail at: mckins02@odjfs.state.oh.us. For additional copies of the *Insight on Child Support in Ohio*, contact Valerie Swain at (614) 995-2049 or visit our website at www.state.oh.us/odjfs and click on the *Insight* link.

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Volume I, Issue I
Summer 2001

Insight

Into Child Support in Ohio

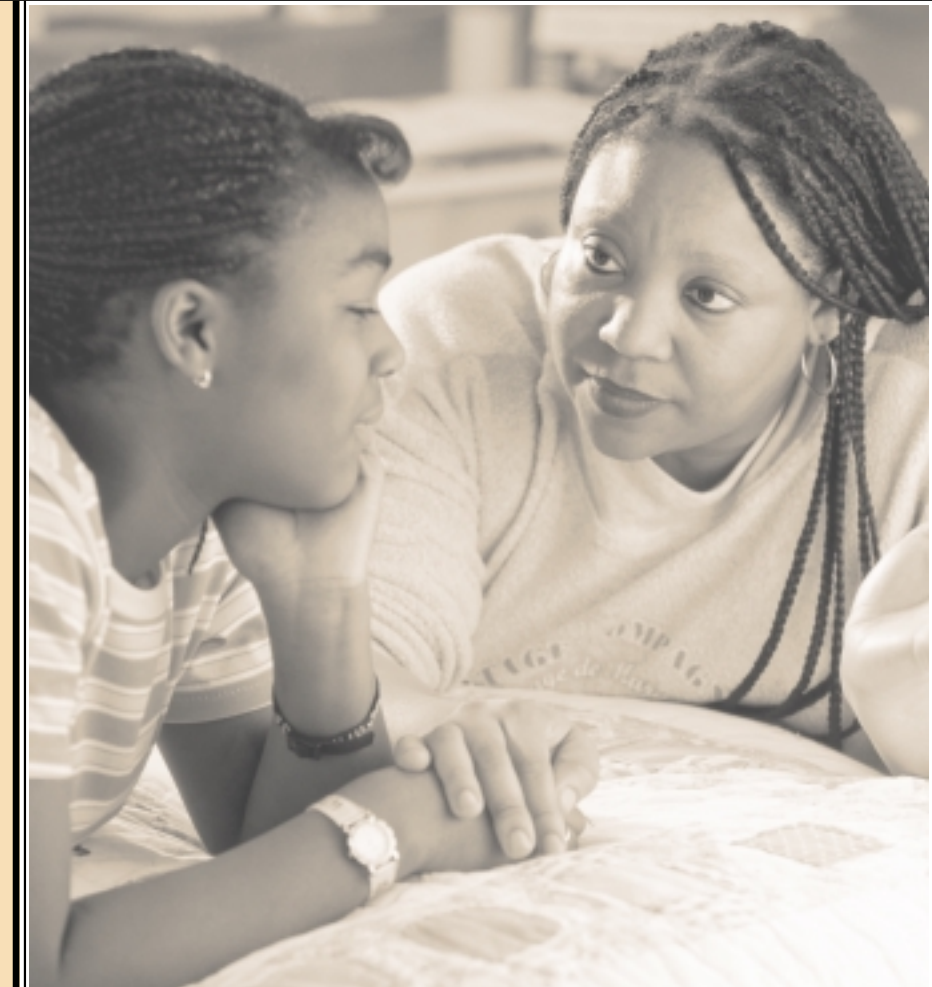
Child Support Reform Shareholders' Group Seeks Long-Term Solutions

Following the success of its predecessor, the Child Welfare Shareholders Group, the Child Support Reform Shareholders' Group was established in March 2001 to assist the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services and Child Support Enforcement Agencies in improving the quality of services to custodial and non-custodial parents, as well as to employers. The Shareholders Group will establish long-term priorities and develop strategies to improve the program and practices currently in place.

The Shareholders Group will review financial, administrative, program and intersystem issues. It is comprised of representatives from county support enforcement agencies, child support associations, legislators, custodial and non-custodial parents, employer representatives, child and parent advocacy groups, state auditor representatives, ODJFS staff members, and others interested in ensuring excellent child support services to Ohio's families. After examining program quality, effectiveness and accountability, it will make recommendations that are specific, realistic and measurable.

The Shareholders Group was appointed by the director of the agency and is co-chaired by Daryl Novak, director, Cuyahoga County Child Support Enforcement Agency, and Cheri L. Walter, Assistant Director, ODJFS.

To facilitate its task, the Shareholders Group has appointed six subcommittees, and will conduct site visits, hold community forums and officiate employer focus groups. The subcommittees are drafting their "charges," or statements of purpose. Two of them have done so already and they are listed on the inside; the other four will appear in the Fall issue of *Insight*.



"The future must be planned today. We may never see it in our lifetime, but the success of our ventures will impact future generations."

L. Douglass Wilder

Governor Bob Taft
Director Greg Moody

Ohio Department of
Job & Family Services

Message from the Interim Director

As the newly appointed interim director for the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, I recognize a priority is to evaluate and improve the system, services and programs that contribute to the financial support of children. This, in turn, will help to maintain or shore up the stability of the family. As we look to improve the child support system, we will focus on support and enforcement at all levels of the county and state.

These pages recount some of the activities that ODJFS has undertaken to conduct a critical review of child support services in Ohio. Many dedicated child support services partners have joined to form a Child Support Reform Shareholders Group in order to identify and recommend solutions in areas that need improvement and to reaffirm those that are performing well. The progress of the Shareholders' Group will be the initial focus of this new newsletter, which will be published quarterly. In future issues, China Widener, ODJFS deputy director of the Office of Child Support, will provide you with updates in this column.

The shareholders group faces many challenges but the outcome of its work will have a positive effect on children and families — everyone whose lives are touched by child support. The mission of this group has my full support.

— Greg Moody, Interim Director, ODJFS

Statement of Purpose and Guiding Principles Establish Priorities

To establish a mission and create a road map to reach the mission goals, the Shareholders' Group developed the following statement of purpose and guiding principles:

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Child Support Reform Shareholders' Group is to assist the State of Ohio, counties, and child support partners in improving programs and the delivery of quality services to all parents and their children. The shareholders' group will take a holistic approach to establish long-term priorities to develop innovative strategies to create a more effective and efficient child support program in Ohio.

Guiding Principles

Child support programs and services must:

- Be customer-driven and user friendly
- Strive for fairness for all involved with child support
- Look to established best practices and build on them
- Deliver services in an effective and cost-efficient manner, which is responsible to the public
- Be derived from a single, integrated delivery system that utilizes local resources
- Focus on long-term, big-picture solutions
- Develop a process for prioritization
- Strive for perfection to achieve excellence
- Seek involvement from all child support partners (communities, families, employers, state and federal government, etc.)
- Promote simplicity with innovative, realistic strategies and alternate solutions
- Comply with state and federal regulations.

Child Support Reform Shareholders' Group Subcommittees

Structure Subcommittee

Co-Chairs: Geraldine Jensen, Association for Child Enforcement Support (ACES); Lora Jollis, Hamilton County Child Support Enforcement Agency; China Widener, ODJFS

Accountability/Dependability Subcommittee

Co-Chairs: Dan Cade, Butler County Child Support Enforcement Agency; Beth Connor, parent; Chris Carlson, ODJFS

Staffing and Training Subcommittee

Co-chairs: Kim Newsom, Ohio Child Support Enforcement Agency Director's Association; Barbara Boyd and Nita Matter, ODJFS

Charge: To recommend actions and strategies for a comprehensive system at the state and local levels that address staff classifications and certification; assessment and deployment (e.g., caseload analysis and organizational structure); recruitment and retention; and educational and training needs. Further, to develop recommendations and protocols for improving communication within and between state and local entities.

Technology/Work System Design Subcommittee

Co Chairs: Don Hubin, PACE/Columbus Chapter; Greg Kelly, Auditor of State's Office; Raivo Murnieks, ODJFS

Funding and Legislation Subcommittee

Co-Chairs: Bob Suver, Clark County Child Support Enforcement Agency; Judy Chavis, Ohio Job and Family Services Director's Association; Jill Reardon and Susan McKinley, ODJFS

Customer Service Subcommittee

Co-Chairs: Carri Brown, Fairfield County Child Support Enforcement Agency; Linda Hondros, Hondros College; Doug Thompson, Montgomery County Child Support Enforcement Agency; Susan McKinley, ODJFS

Charge: Collect information from child support customers (including parents, caretakers, employers, and child support partners) regarding long-term strategies for improving the quality of services and programs for the families; and recommend specific, measurable customer service standards – and – suggest action plans that empower child support partners to anticipate and meet the needs of the customer.

Information on Subcommittees

If you would like to be involved with a subcommittee or would like more information, please contact Susan McKinley at 614-466-1454 or mckins02@odjfs.state.oh.us.

Update Child Support

by China Widener, Deputy Director, Office of Child Support, ODJFS

Editor's Note: China Widener, after serving as Acting Deputy Director since February 20, was named Deputy Director on May 2.

Several global updates on Child Support include:

Senate Bill 180. The Office of Child Support Policy Bureau and Ohio Child Support Enforcement Agency Director's Association have been conducting joint reviews of the legislation, including reviewing the breadth and depth of the changes and identifying and prioritizing necessary amendments.

Support Enforcement Tracking System (SETS). Another milestone: the SETS team has successfully piloted an improved month-end batch programming process. This new process will allow SETS to be in production mode (up and running) a full day earlier after month-end processing. Thanks and hats off to those counties who assisted in the validation process!

Lawsuit. The Franklin County Appeals Court ruled to allow the lawsuit filed by the Association for Children for Enforcement of Support (ACES) against ODJFS and its director to proceed, rejecting a motion to dismiss filed by the state. The litigation will proceed into the discovery phase.



Franklin CSEA Chief Joins Department

Joseph Pilat, the director of the Franklin County Child Support Enforcement Agency since 1991, joined the ODJFS Office of Child Support staff in May as assistant deputy director. Before coming to Franklin County, he had been director of the newly designated Lucas County CSEA (1988-91). Pilat was the first president of the Ohio CSEA Directors Association and is a past president and trustee of the Ohio Bureaus of Support Association.

Update Auditor of State Performance Audit

by Greg Kelly, Auditor of State Jim Petro's Office

In seeking an outside, independent evaluation, the ODJFS director asked Auditor of State Jim Petro to review ODJFS' administrative procedures to identify issues regarding the effective and efficient delivery of services. Areas for review include:

- Computerized Support Enforcement Tracking System (SETS)
- Child Support Payment Central – (CSPC)
- New hire reporting program
- Paternity establishment program
- Child support hot line
- Child support help desk
- Financial institution data match
- Central paternity registry
- Payment and analysis and reconciliation center implementation.

The performance audit, which began in March, is expected to take from 12 to 15 months. It is a process improvement effort, however, not a compliance audit. To that end, ODJFS will continue to improve specific areas of child support as identified by the audit team.