



ERICSA

2022

**Jazzin' It Up
for Children
and Families**

New Orleans

May 22 – 26, 2022

**59TH ANNUAL
TRAINING CONFERENCE
& EXPOSITION**

TCSEPP

Tennessee Child Support Employment and Parenting Program

Helping noncustodial parents overcome barriers
to become stable

This program is funded through a
partnership between:



Debbie Abrams-Cohen, LMSW
dabramsc@utk.edu
865-946-2020



TCSEPP Clientele

Chronic Non-Payers of Child Support

What does a chronic non-payer look like?



OR



QUESTIONS:

- Why would someone:
 - Not pay their child support?
 - Not ask for help?
 - Not accept help?



ANSWERS:



BARRIERS

- Lack of Driver's License/Identification
- Criminal Record
- Housing Instability
- Food Insecurity
- Lack of Education
- Mental Health
- Physical Health
- Substance Use
- Inconsistent/Irregular Employment
- No support system
- DCS Involvement



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TCSEPP Process

Eligibility

- Ordered to pay child support in a TCSEPP covered county
- Able to work
- No Warrants

Intake Assessment/Plan

- Assess Strengths & Challenges
- Create Individualized Plan



Monitor Payments

Payments tracked:

- 12 Months Pre-enrollment
- During Enrollment
- 12 Months Post-exit

Referrals

- Child Support Court
- Child Support Enforcement Offices
- TPOPS
- Community Partners
- Self

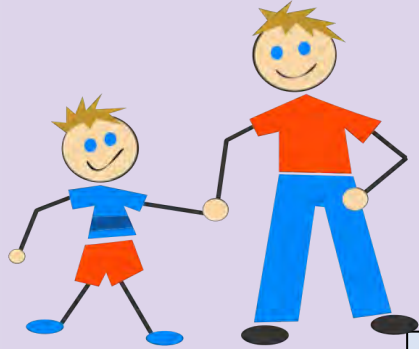
Case Management

- Weekly Contact
- Follow through
- Accessing community service
- One on one



TCSEPP Data: July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021

Demographics



66.8% Male
89% White
Avg. Age 39

298 enrolled in TCSEPP



Average monthly payment rose 31.9% after TCSEPP participation (from \$134.30 before TCSEPP to \$177.09)

Referrals

61.5% referred from the courts

478 individuals referred

38.8% of participants exited successfully

Average proportion of obligation increased from 41.8% to 69.3%



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TCSEPP KEYS TO SUCCESS



PARTNERSHIPS

- Court presence
- Attorneys
- Judges
- Child Support Offices
 - Court Order releases DL & takes jail off table with TCSEPP compliance
- Current/future Participants
- Program Evaluator
 - Ensure program goals are measurable

PROGRAM

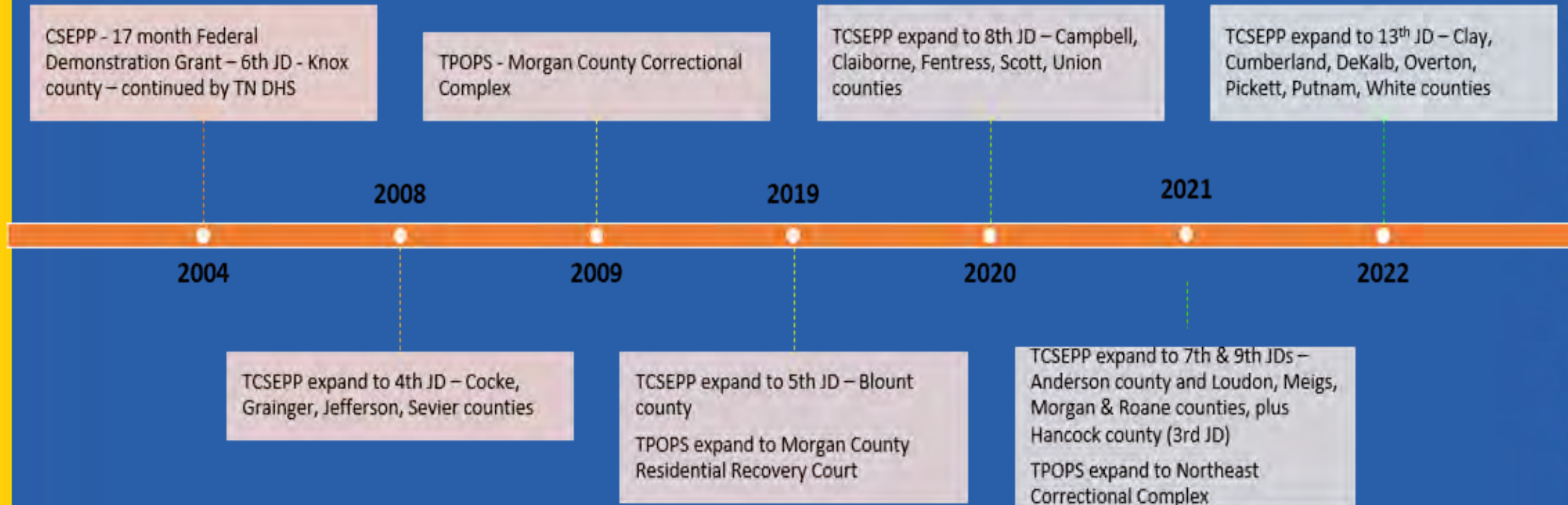
- Supportive Service Funds
 - availability to access funds quickly to help participants with ID/DL, transportation, clothing/tools for job, cell phone, and more
- Individualized Action Plans with Attainable Goals
 - Participant feels successful & supported
- Multiple Jurisdictions with different needs and personalities
- Longevity & creating a team that is excited to grow and learn from each other

COORDINATORS

- Flexible
- Non-judgmental
- Advocates
- Firm & Gentle
- Second Chances Mindset
- Partner with child support while being UT employee



TCSEPP GROWTH 2004 TO PRESENT



“The ultimate key to TCSEPP success is the ability of coordinators to connect with participants, spend quality one-on-one time with them, to be a support to them, and to help them learn to take responsibility for their lives.”





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Georgia's Parental Accountability Court and Prison Reentry Initiative

Wende R. Parker, MPH, Program Manager
Georgia Division of Child Support Services



A close-up photograph of a woman and a young child laughing together. The woman, with long brown hair, is leaning over the child, her mouth open in a wide laugh. The child, with curly brown hair, is also laughing heartily, showing their teeth. They are both wearing blue and white striped shirts. The background is a warm, out-of-focus indoor setting.

stronger families

FOR A STRONGER GEORGIA



Georgia Department of Human Services

Outreach versus Incarceration



Since 2009, the program has helped

5,920

Customers at risk of incarceration, avoid jail time. They provided support to

13,927

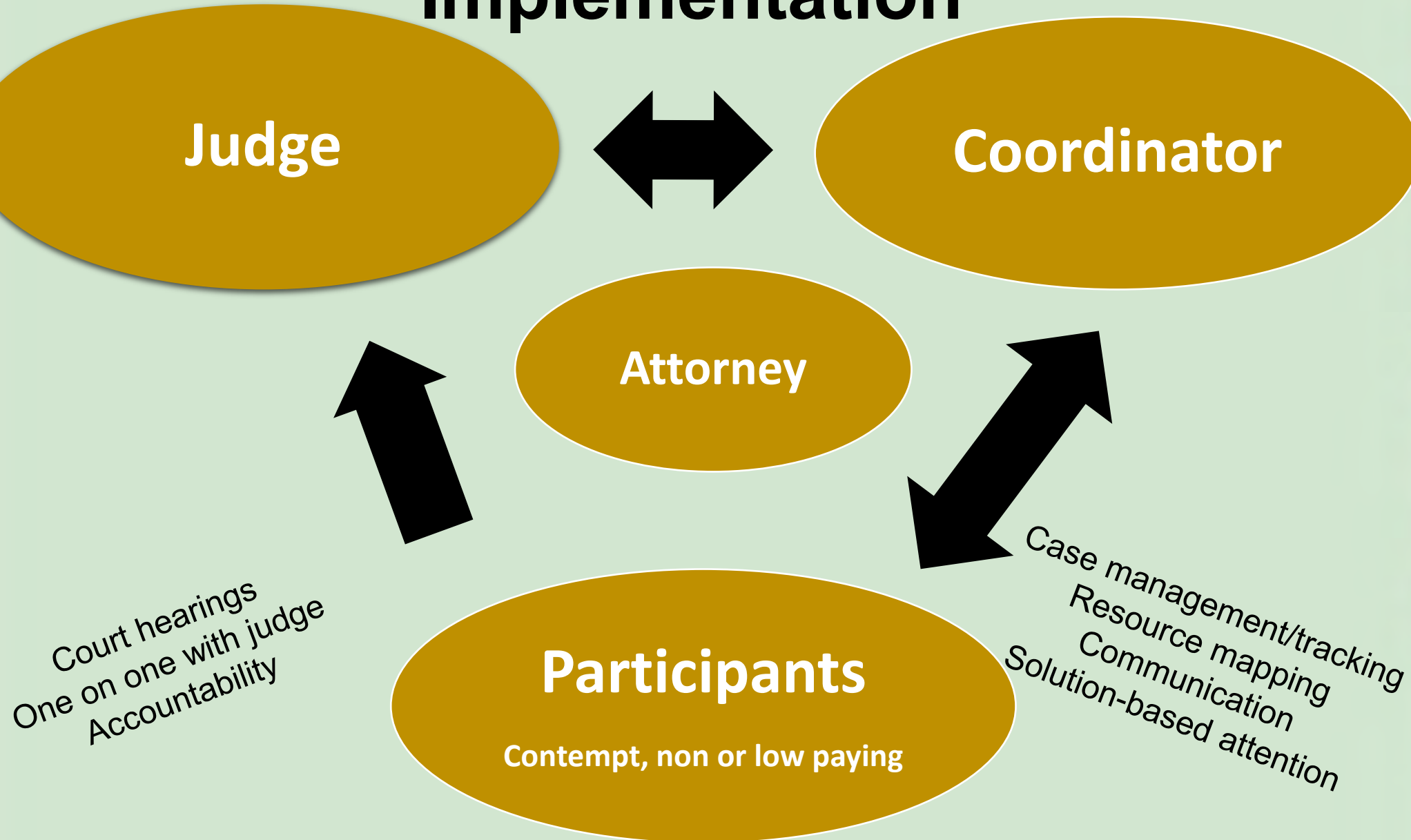
of Georgia's children. Program participants paid an estimated

\$21.6 million +

in support to families



Parental Accountability Court Implementation



Program Phases

Recruitment & Intake Processes

Intake

- Complete forms, interviews, and assessments
- Submit criminal investigation consent
- Sign terms & conditions
- Referrals to service providers
- Driver's license reinstatement review

Phase I

- Meet with coordinator as specified
- Compliance with service providers
- Complete weekly verifiable job search/training, obtain employment
- Communicate & cooperate

Graduation

- Successful completion of program requirements
- Increased self sufficiency
- More informed on child support process
- Increased work ethic
- Increased child support payments for children
- 12 month follow up

Phase II

- FT employment, 6 months full payments
- Compliance with service providers
- Review for modification
- Referral for access and visitation if applicable
- Seek legitimization rights if applicable
- Request to negotiate payment on state arrears



Outreach versus Incarceration



Short-term training
when available



Access and Visitation
referrals



Substance abuse
treatment referrals



Mental health
services



Volunteer work
opportunities



Additional services
specific to the local area



Literacy Training



Employment referral
assistance



Evidence Based Research

- Demonstrated success through intentional engagement:
 - **Increases** (Source: 1) Judicial Council of Georgia, Administrative Office of the Courts. (2018). *PAC Court Evaluation.*)
 - Child support payments by PAC Participants **(79%)**
 - Child support payments by PAC Participants receiving referred services **(84%)**
 - Child support payments increased by parents exposed to PAC, but did not enroll **(32% & 27%)**
 - Monitoring of collections 12 months prior to PAC enrollment, during PAC, and 12 months after graduating the program has demonstrated a 144% increase in collections statewide.



Golden Nuggets

- Procedural Justice Principles
- Third Party Evaluation
- Creative Use of Resources
- Learning to Pivot – Pandemic Related Situations and Solutions



Key to Engagement & Success

- Judge interaction is key for support to non-custodial parent
- Engagement includes daily and weekly check in meetings
- One on one time with the judge, whether in court or on the phone is key
- Ongoing communication and conversations with customers is of the utmost importance. The customers want to be heard



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Prison Reentry Initiative

The program strives to increase parental accountability, self-sufficiency, and child support collections:

- Provides free DNA testing
- Weekly Education Sessions & Support Groups
 - *24/7 Dad* curriculum
 - *Understanding Dad for Moms*
- Referrals for Access & Visitation

Comprehensive Strategies:

- **Inform:** Create an environment where noncustodial parents are aware about the outreach programs
- **Notify:** Streamline effective coordination between state and community partners
- **Encourage:** All partners are part of the solution; Utilize past participants to share successes



Contact Information

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Division of Child Support Services

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Tennessee Partnership For Ongoing Parental Support

TPOPS

This program is funded through a
partnership between:



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Partnerships are



Child Support Services



TPOPS INSIDE THE WALLS



Morgan County
Correctional Facility
(MCCX)
Wartburg, TN



Northeast
Correctional Facility
(NECX)
Mountain City, TN



Incarcerated Fathers &
Men who are receiving drug
and alcohol treatment



Morgan County
Residential
Recovery Court
(MCCRRC) in
Wartburg, TN.



TPOPS INSIDE THE WALLS

Front-end child support services to offenders at MCCX, NECX and MCRRC

- Intakes to Gather Parental Information
- Child Support Case Status Reports
- Referral to Order Modification Team
- Coordinate Services to Establish Paternity & Child Support Orders
- Arrange Telephonic Hearings
- Attend monthly Re-Entry Orientation @ MCCX
- Parenting and Child Support Education Classes @ MCRRC
- Identify men who have child support cases from NECX release reports; complete intakes via phone with NECX counselors
- Attend Re-Entry Resource Summits at NECX & MCCX



TPOPS INSIDE THE WALLS

MCRRC: Unique Population and Opportunity

- 1-year residential recovery drug court program
- 12 Step based program
- Therapeutic Community
- Graduation – transition to halfway house to work & pay child support



@ Program Entrance

TPOPS completes assessment for child support needs and informs child support offices of program residency.

@ 6 months

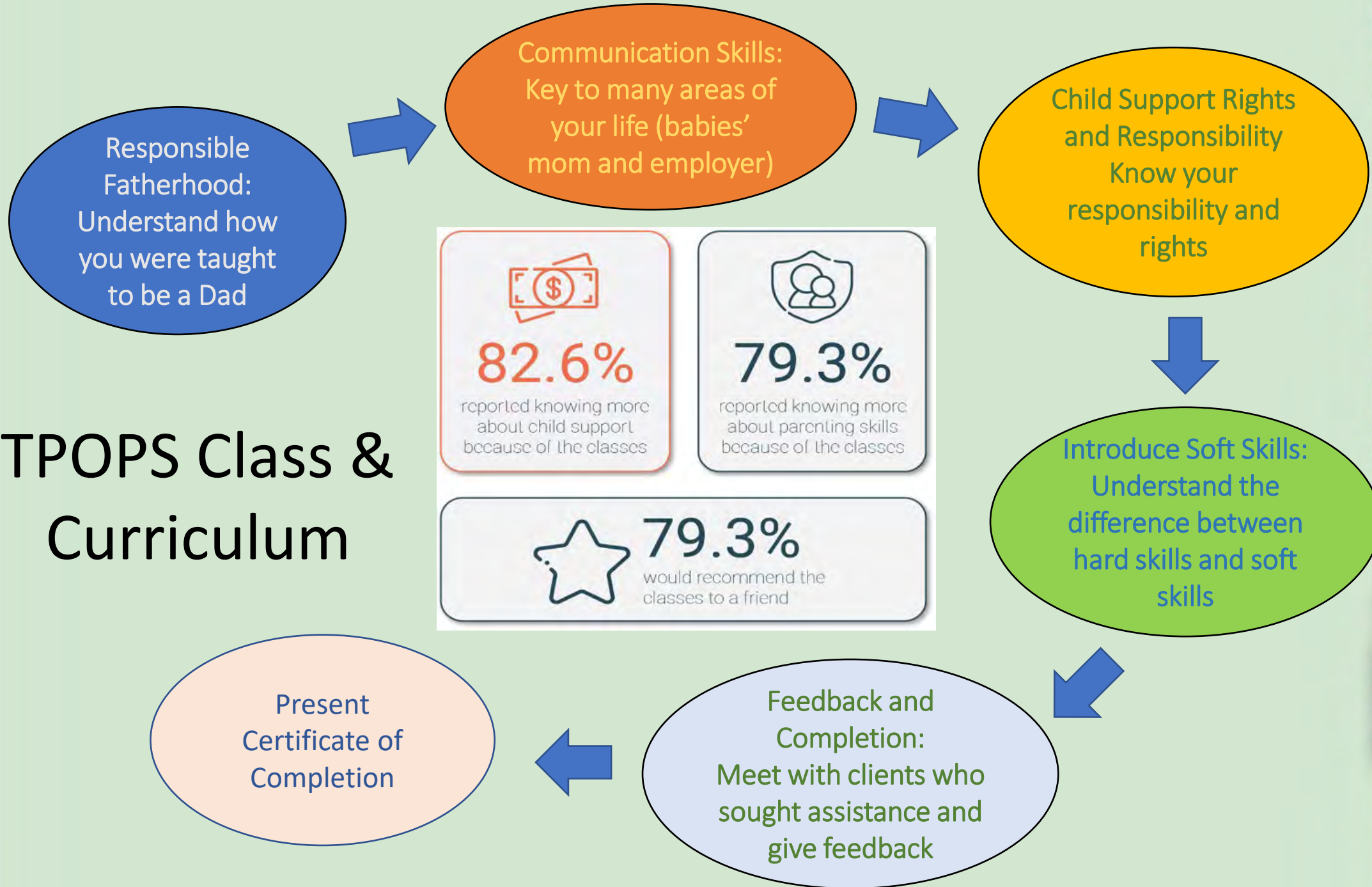
TPOPS presents Child Support and Parenting Education Class & checks for any case updates.

@ Graduation

TPOPS connects with client prior to exit and begins Re-Entry Case Management.



TPOPS Class & Curriculum



TPOPS RE-ENTRY SUPPORT & CASE MANAGEMENT

Interview & assess needs



Child Support assistance & ongoing case management



Referrals to other programs & services



Employment Assistance



Driver's License Reinstatement



Assistance in finding housing, medical & mental health care, etc.



Supportive Service Funds



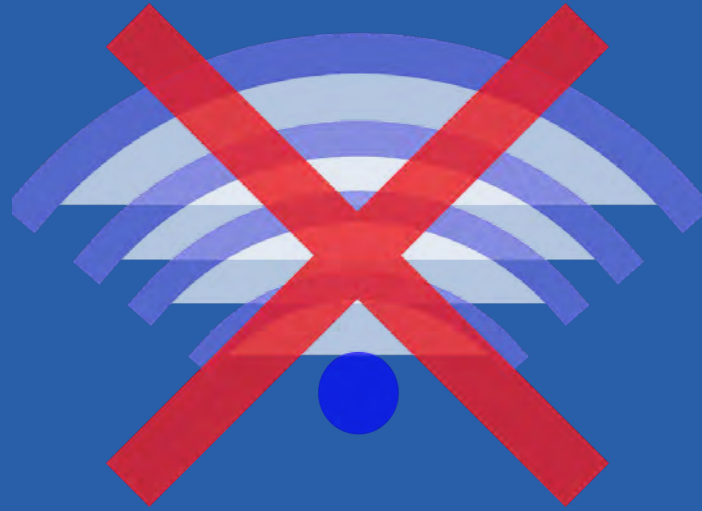
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TPOPS STATEWIDE CLEARINGHOUSE

TDOC



CHILD SUPPORT

No automated sharing

TPOPS is the statewide clearinghouse for information exchange between TDOC and DHS-CSD.

TPOPS gathers daily TDOC release information, researches for released individuals who have child support cases and sends release reports to child support offices.



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TPOPS STATEWIDE CLEARINGHOUSE

How it is utilized by child support staff



88.9%
Of
caseworkers
said release
reports were
helpful in
their work

79.3%
Of
caseworkers
said release
report were
easy to
understand

Clearinghouse report usage by caseworkers:

- 73.3% update TCSES
- 34.4% Discuss next steps in case with co-workers or supervisors
- 25.5% Forward release reports to other staff in the office



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TPOPS Successes

- ❖ He did not want to talk to TPOPS because he was already aware of his child support order of \$985/month. In casual conversation, he stated mom lost custody of children. He was not aware that his order was to stop. TPOPS worked with child support who modified the order back to date mom lost custody and \$20,000 in arrears was removed.
- ❖ He did not want to return home when he graduated from MCRRC because of the old crowd. After taking TPOPS class he realized his son was the same age he was when he started using drugs and decided he wanted to be there for him.
- ❖ TPOPS and child support case manager worked together to clear up a very confusing case, removed a capias and contempt hearing, and assisted client in making payments upon release. Case manager stated “My admin sent out an email about your program moving into the 13th. That is such exciting news. If this case is any indication of how successful your program is, I can’t wait for it to expand.”
- ❖ She was referred by a partnering agency for child support assistance. TPOPS completed an assessment, and with supportive service funds was able for her to get several teeth removed, a mouth infection healed from the bad teeth and receive dentures. She has so much confidence, is excelling in her schooling and will be on the road soon driving a truck full time.

During COVID shut down, TPOPS was able to continue business as usual via telephone calls and emails with prison counselors to conduct intakes, facilitate child support needs and mailed all correspondence to incarcerated fathers. TPOPS also initiated contact with those who had not heard of TPOPS, had child support cases and were to be released in 6-12 months to offer case status reports and TPOPS continued services.

74 pre-release
child support
status packets
sent

41 of 77
released
individuals were
contacted pre-
release for child
support help

54 intakes
completed





Community Outreach

Helping parents support their children.

Parental Accountability Court Program

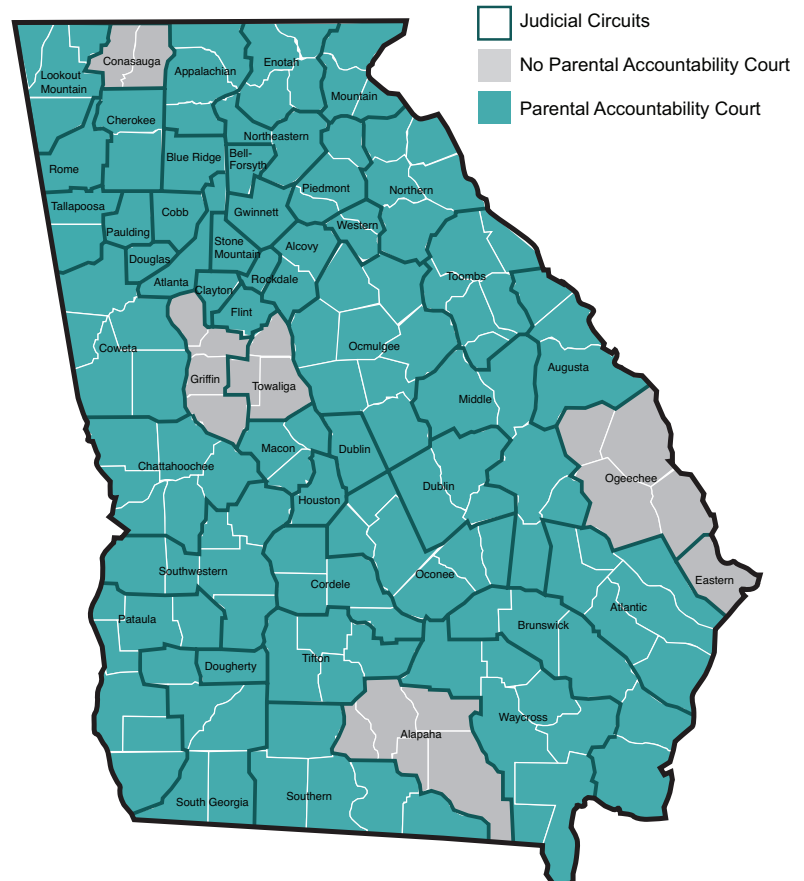
The Parental Accountability Court (PAC) program is a joint effort of the Division and Superior Court Judges to offer an alternative to incarceration and to help chronic nonpayers of child support make regular payments. The program uses community resources and judicial oversight to address barriers that keep parents from meeting their support obligations. Each program, including services provided to participants, is tailored to the needs of the local community. Superior Court Judges provide judicial oversight and collaborate with PAC coordinators to implement the program. PAC coordinators connect participants to existing community resources.

Services Offered to Participants

- Volunteer work opportunities
- Literacy training
- Job assistance/placement
- Mental health services
- Clinical assessments
- Substance abuse treatment
- Coaching/mentoring
- Additional services specific to each local community

Judicial Circuits with PACs

Parental Accountability Courts are in operation in 43 judicial circuits across the state. The Division's goal is to establish PACs in all 49 judicial circuits.



By the Numbers



Since State Fiscal Year 2009, the PAC program has helped

5,642

noncustodial parents who were at risk of incarceration avoid jail time and provide much needed support to



13,294*

of Georgia's children. Program participants paid an estimated
*child count includes active cases



\$20.2M

in support, which, in return, has saved the state millions in incarceration costs.

Contact Information

For information about the PAC program and other outreach services, call **1-844-MYGADHS (1-844-694-2347)**. Custodial and noncustodial parents can apply for services, enter and receive information about their cases, make a payment online or check payment information by using the Customer Online Services portal at **childsupport.ga.gov**. Users receive a password to protect confidentiality. Customers may also contact the PAC program directly by emailing **pac.dcscs@dhs.ga.gov**.

Candice L. Broce, DHS Commissioner | **Breanna Thomas**, Deputy Commissioner of State Programs & Human Resources | **John Hurst**, Assistant Deputy Commissioner of Child Support Services | **Sarah Hurst**, Deputy Director of Administration | **Ashley Forbes**, Deputy Director of Operations