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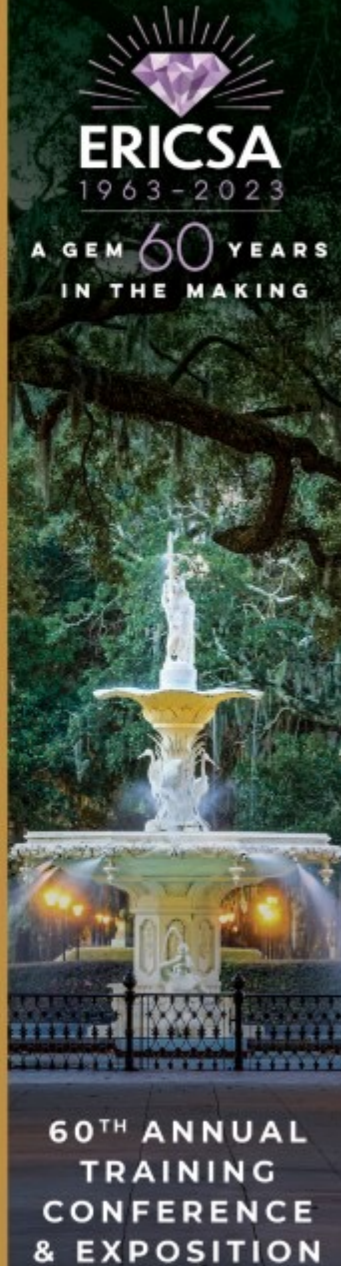
MONDAY, MAY 22 - FRIDAY, MAY 26, 2023

Exploring Strategies for Developing Impactful Child Support Led Employment Programs

Michele Ahern (NYC), Jim Fleming (ND) and Erin Frisch (MI)
Moderator – Michael Hayes



Learn about the successes and challenges of Noncustodial Parent Employment programs. Representatives from Michigan, New York City, and North Dakota will describe their programs to include how the program is funded, how participants are selected, lessons learned, and success stories.



Connecting Noncustodial Parents to Employment: NYC Parent Support Program



Michele Ahern

Assistant Deputy Commissioner, NYC HRA Office of Child Support Services



Today's Discussion

NYC Child Support
Program and
Demographics

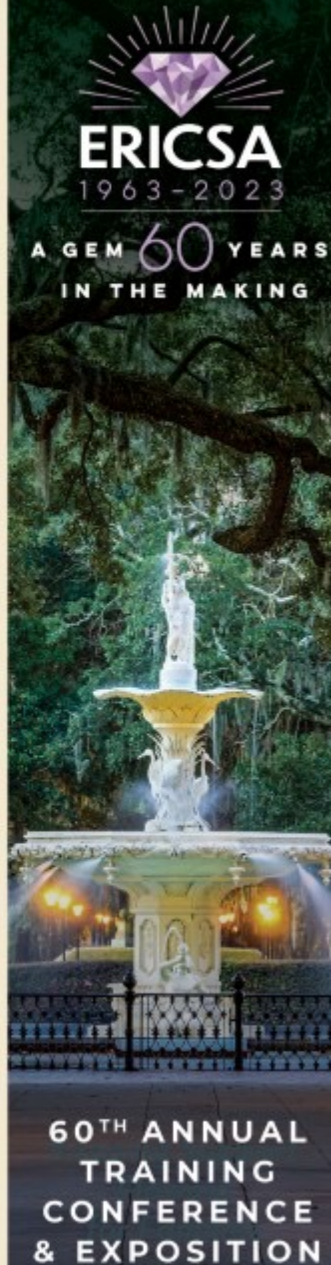
Parent Support
Program
Start and Evolution

Guiding Principles

Program Design

Who Does It
Serve?

Outcomes



NYC Child Support Program

Context

- Judicial state
- State-supervised, county-administered

Total Caseload: 244,214 (December 2022)

- 202,936 cases with orders (82.76% SEP)

Number of Individuals: 754,934

- 215,102 custodial parents (CP)
- 213,135 noncustodial parents (NCP)
- 240,511 children under age 21
- 86,186 children age 21 and older

Organizational Structure

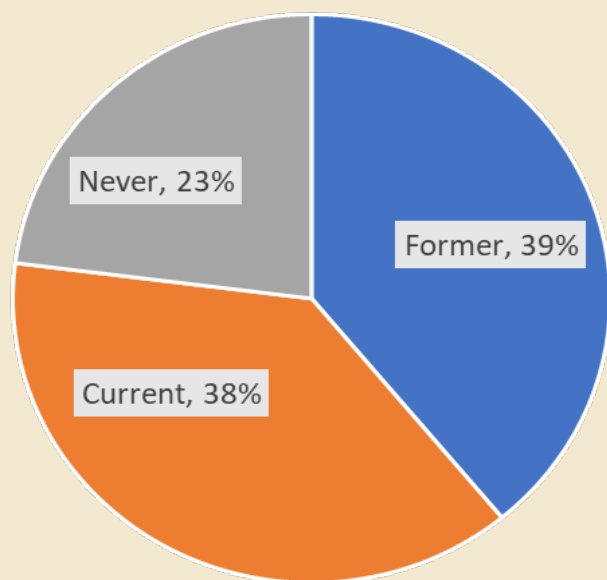
- Specialized job functions- no “case management”



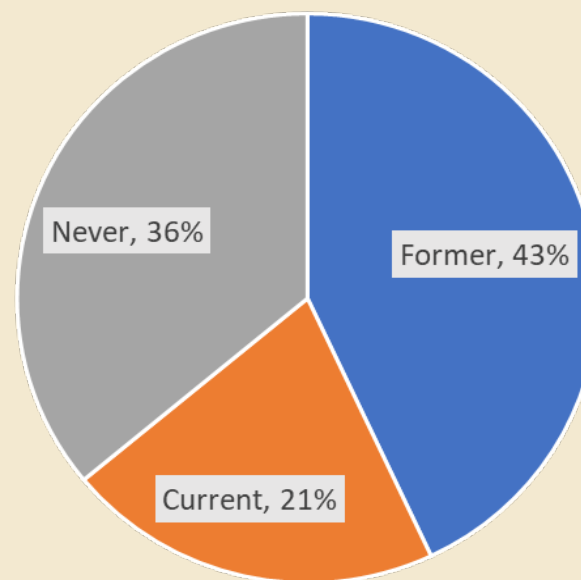
Most Parents Are Low Income

Benefit Status – Cash Assistance, Medicaid, SNAP, SSI (December 2022)

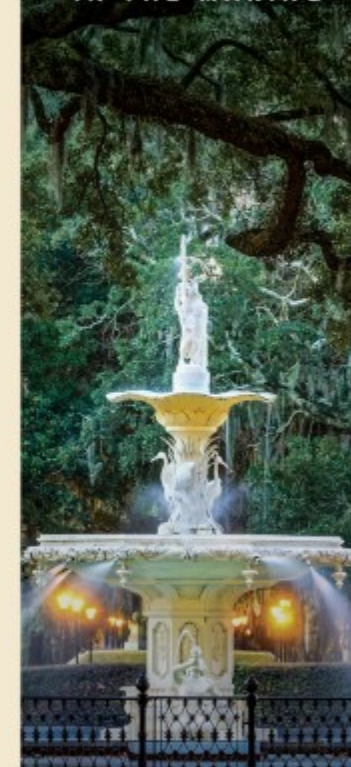
Custodial Parents



Noncustodial Parents



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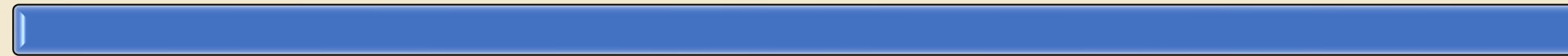


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Parent Support Program

Parent Support Program is a problem-solving court approach to connecting noncustodial parents (NCPs) to employment services and other programs to reduce barriers to paying child support.

Partner Agencies

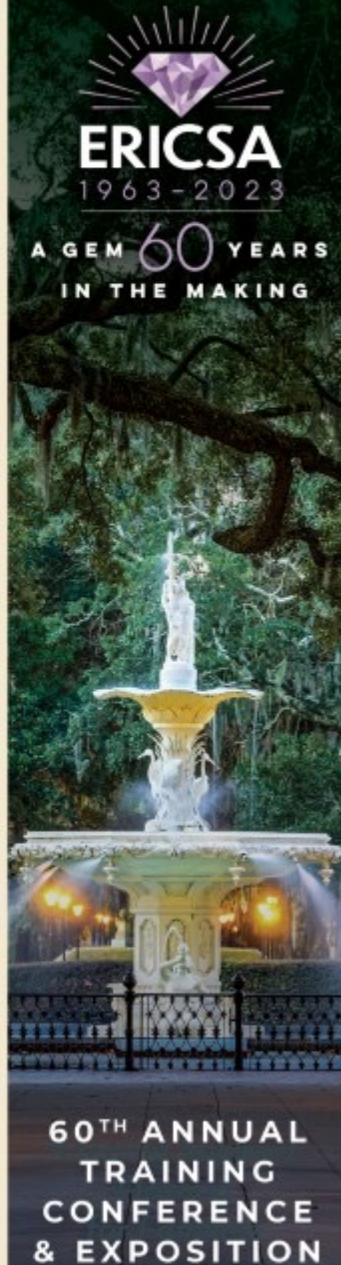


Human Resources
Administration
(HRA)/Office of
Child Support
Services (OCSS)

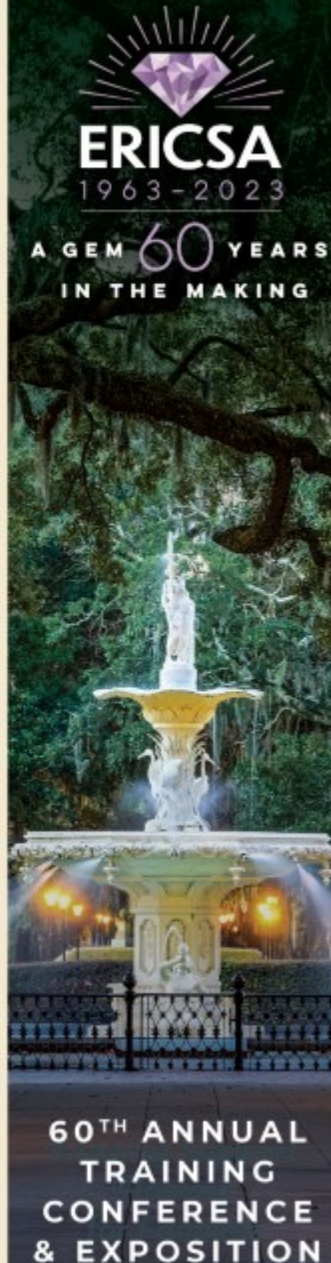
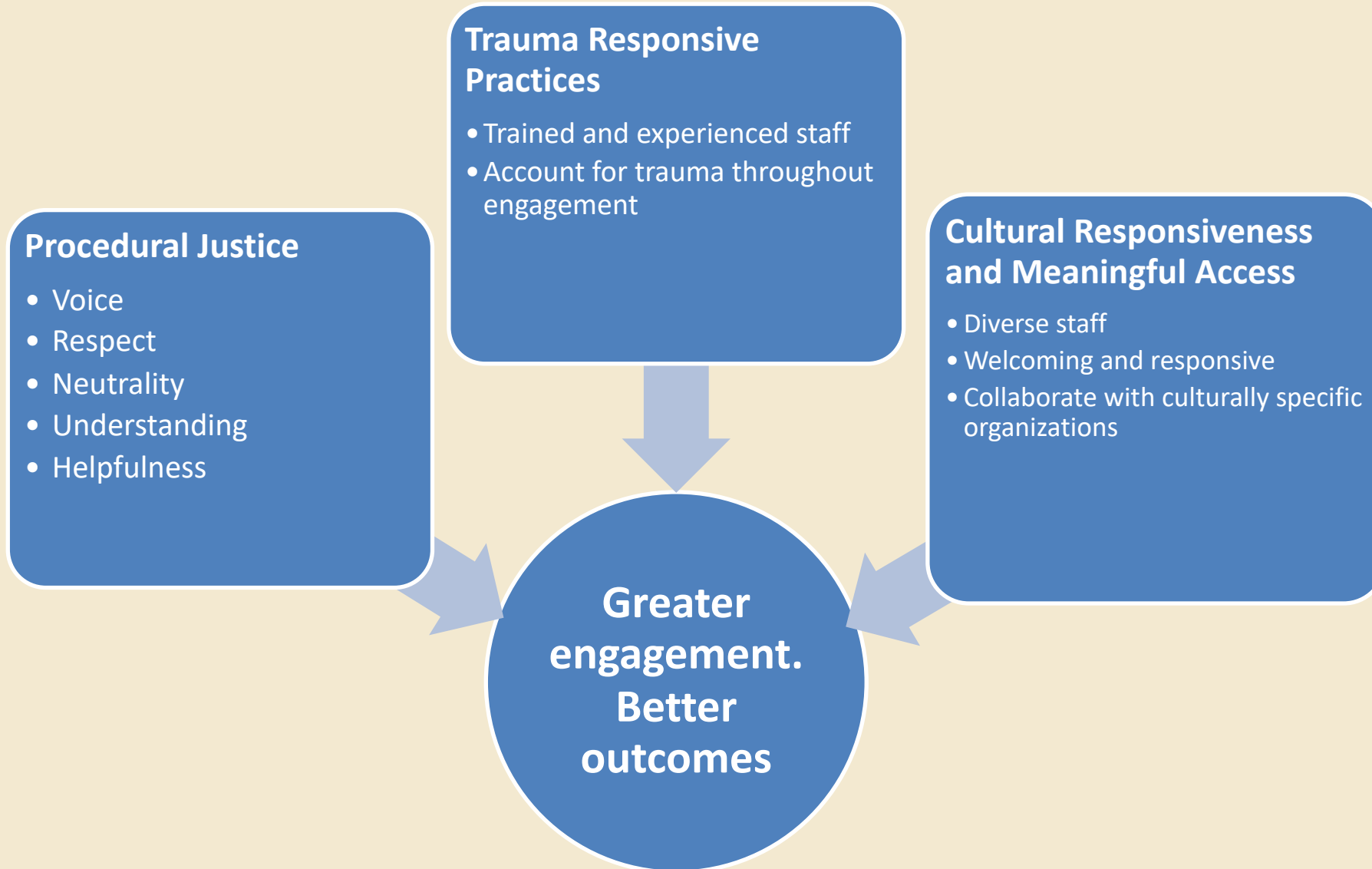
NY State
Unified Court
System

Center for
Justice
Innovation

Support Service
Providers



Guiding Principles



Program Timeline

2011

Kings(Brooklyn)
Family Court

Violation
petitions
Dedicated court
part

2018-2019

Expanded to
Bronx and
Manhattan
Family Courts

2020

Enrollments
paused for
five months
due to
pandemic

When re-
started,
expanded to
all petition
types

All court
parts in three
boroughs

2021

Expanded to
remaining
Family Courts
in Staten
Island and
Queens

Expanded
capacity in
Bronx

2022

Expanded
capacity in
Kings
(Brooklyn)



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Program Design

Screening of
Cases

- Service plan to overcome specific barriers
- Connect NCPs to employment and other services to address barriers to payment
- Child Support navigation
- Consistent communication with Resource Coordinator
- Court oversight

Graduation =
Start new jobs and
make six months of
consistent child
support payments



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Who Does the Program Serve?

Support Magistrate may include an order for the noncustodial parent to participate in the Parent Support Program

- Respondent in any proceeding to establish, decrease or enforce an order of support
- Currently unemployed or underemployed
- Experiencing barriers to paying support

Target populations

- Owe child support arrears or have high child support orders
- Received a child support order by default
- History of receiving public assistance
- Needs information on child support process such as general rules governing the process; how to obtain assistance; importance of reading mail; when to return to court and what information to bring; how to respond to an enforcement action



Program Overview

NYC Family Court

Identify cases needing more intensive support

Use procedural justice principles to engage participants

Direct participant to meet and cooperate with PSP

Adjourn case for participant to work with PSP

PSP Resource Coordinator

Conduct assessment of needs and barriers

Develop service plan & work with participant to complete.

Refers and coordinate with community-based services

Report to court on participant's progress

NYC Child Support

Provide training for PSP staff on child support services

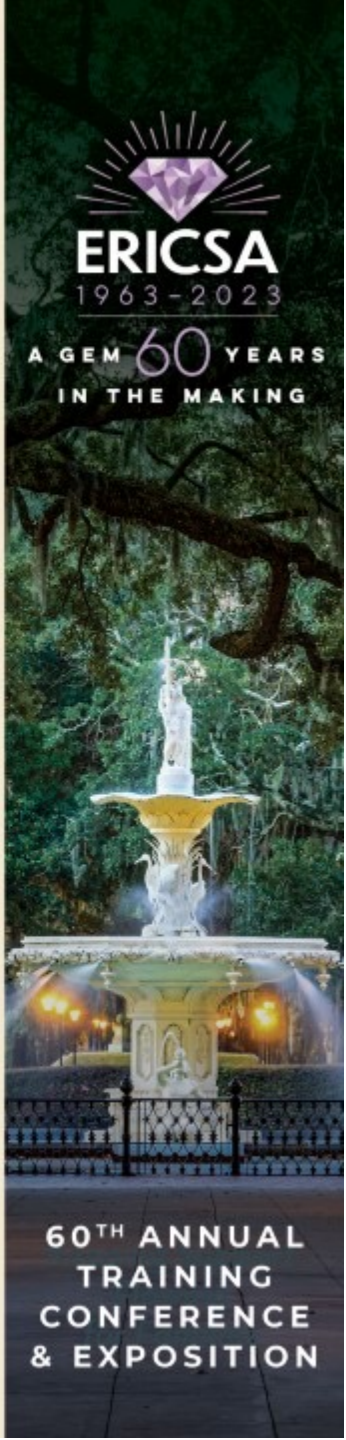
Liaison to address case-specific issues

Provide linkages to community based services

Collect data and evaluate effectiveness of the model

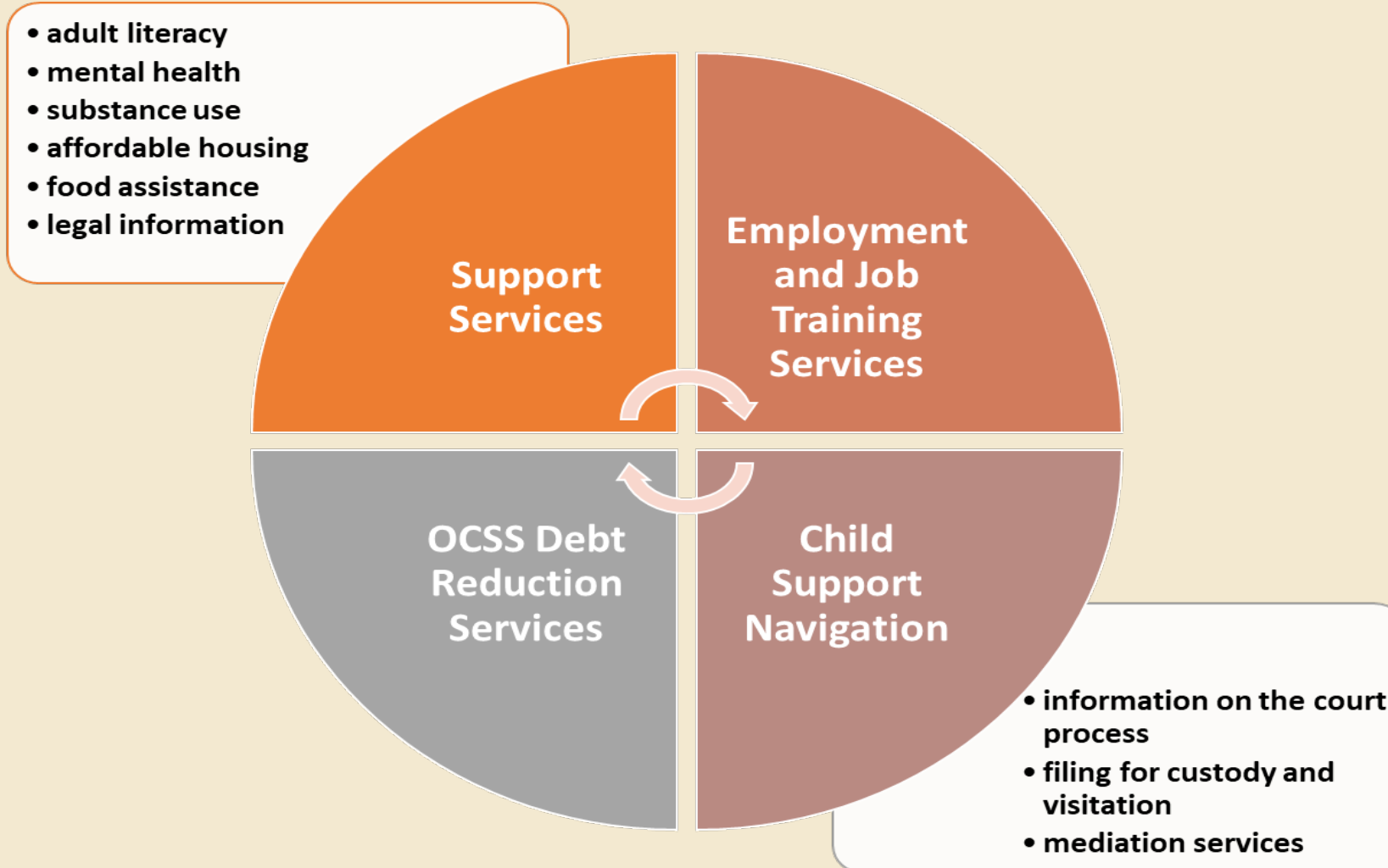


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Facilitated Referrals to Services



Program Outcomes (2011-2022)

Referrals

- 2,015 noncustodial parents referred

Employment

- 971 (48%) found employment

Graduates

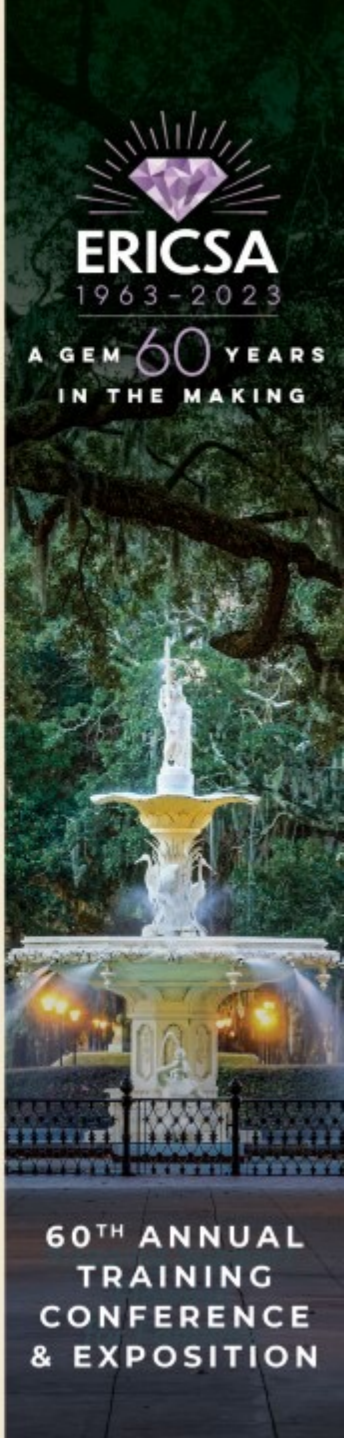
- 604 (30%) paid consistently for at least 6 months

Payments

- \$19.9 million from all parents ever referred



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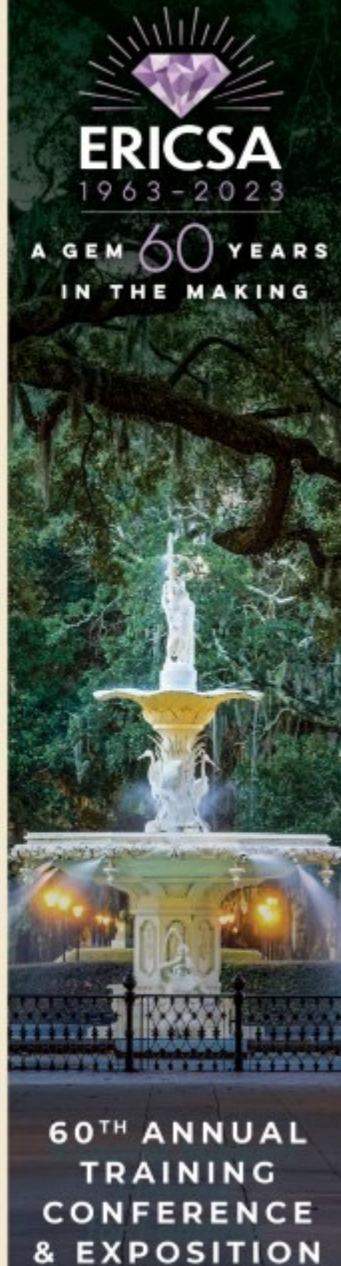
Parent Support Program – Today and Tomorrow

Challenges and Opportunities

- Managing rapid expansion since 2018
 - 2011-2017: 592 referrals in Brooklyn only; 2018-2022: 1,423 referrals citywide
- Changes in court resources and processes
 - Initial program: dedicated court part, frequent court monitoring. Current citywide program: no dedicated court parts, 2-6 months between hearing dates
 - Initial program: In-person hearings. Current citywide program: Virtual court hearings

Program Monitoring and Evaluation

- What are program outcomes today?
- For whom does it work best?
- How can we further improve engagement and employment outcomes?



PRIDE

Parental

Responsibility

Initiative for the

Development of

Employment

Jim Fleming, Director North Dakota Child Support Section



Purpose

To assist
unemployed or underemployed
child support obligors
secure and maintain employment.



History

- PRIDE started as collaborative effort of TANF, Job Service North Dakota, a District Court, and a regional Child Support Unit
- Implemented in April 2005 to address nonpayment of child support resulting from unemployment or underemployment of the noncustodial parent
- Expanded January 2006 to second location
- Expanded statewide 2009



PRIDE Overview

A Collaborative Effort

- Child Support and court involvement
 - Referrals of Child Support obligors
- TANF involvement
 - Funding
 - Contract – Funding
 - Case Management Services
 - Supportive Services
- Job Service North Dakota (current employment service contractor)
 - Provide one-on-one case management by the PRIDE Coordinator
 - Skill and needs assessment
 - Job search and development
 - Supportive services



Referral Sources

Child Support



SFY 2022:	86%
SFY 2021:	85%
SFY 2019:	70%
SFY 2017:	55%

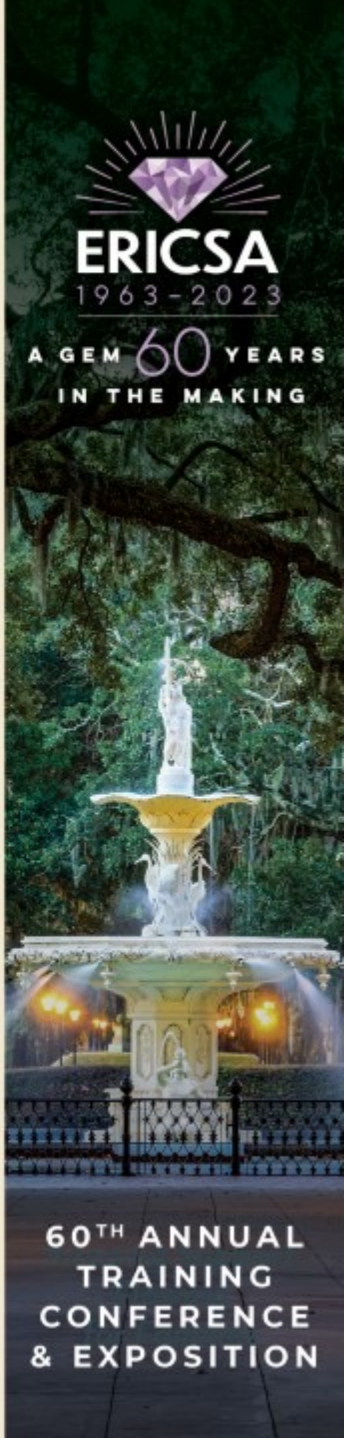
Court Mandate



14%
15%
30%
45%



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Referral Process – Administrative

Child Support Referral

- Child Support caseworker and obligor agree PRIDE would be beneficial
- Once referred, PRIDE Coordinator contacts the obligor within 7 days to establish a date and time to meet



Referral Process - Judicial

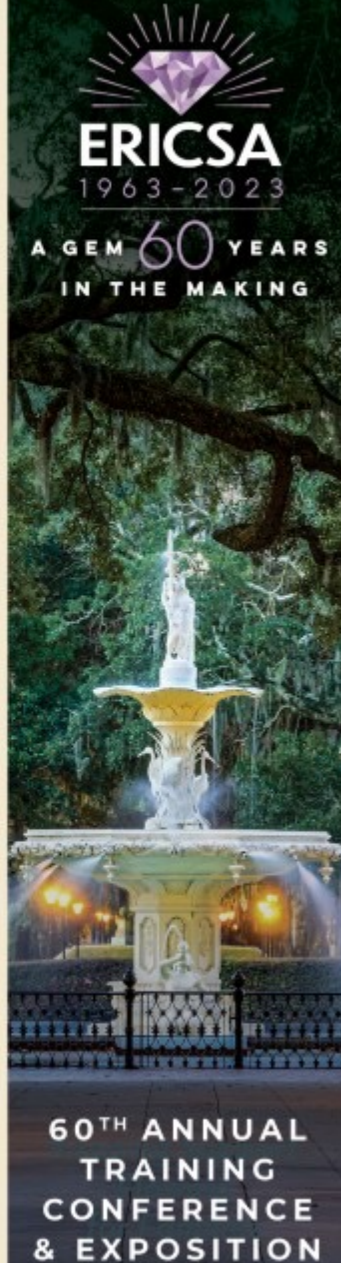
Court Ordered Referral

- Often PRIDE coordinator attends child support contempt of court hearings
 - ✓ Meets individual referred to PRIDE
 - ✓ Sets a date/time to meet with the PRIDE coordinator
- If PRIDE coordinator does not attend the hearing, the participant must contact Job Service within 7 days from the referral date



Referral Logistics

- Referral data is entered into the Fully Automated Child Support Enforcement System (FACSES) which sends an e-mail to the PRIDE Coordinator
- The PRIDE Coordinator accesses FACSES to see the details of the referral



Non-compliance Procedures

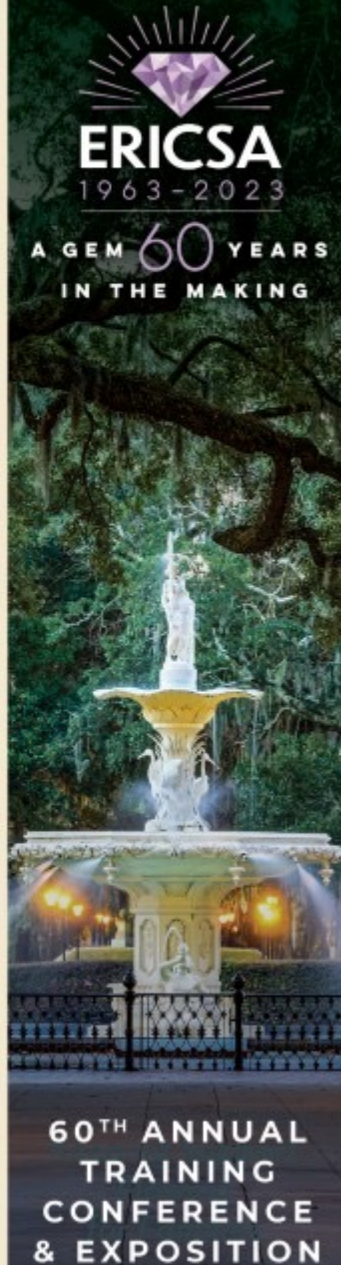
If referral to PRIDE is based upon a court referral, noncompliance may result in the following:

- Appearance before the court
 - ✓ Warrant for arrest
 - ✓ Request for another contempt hearing
- No action if the obligor has secured employment on his/her own and is meeting the support obligation



Process at Job Service

- Assessment of skill level and needs
- Develop Employment Plan
- Determine if supportive services are needed
 - ✓ Examples: phone cards, license/exam fees, tools, transportation assistance, work boots
- Report employment information to Child Support
- Track successful employment for 6 months



Participants

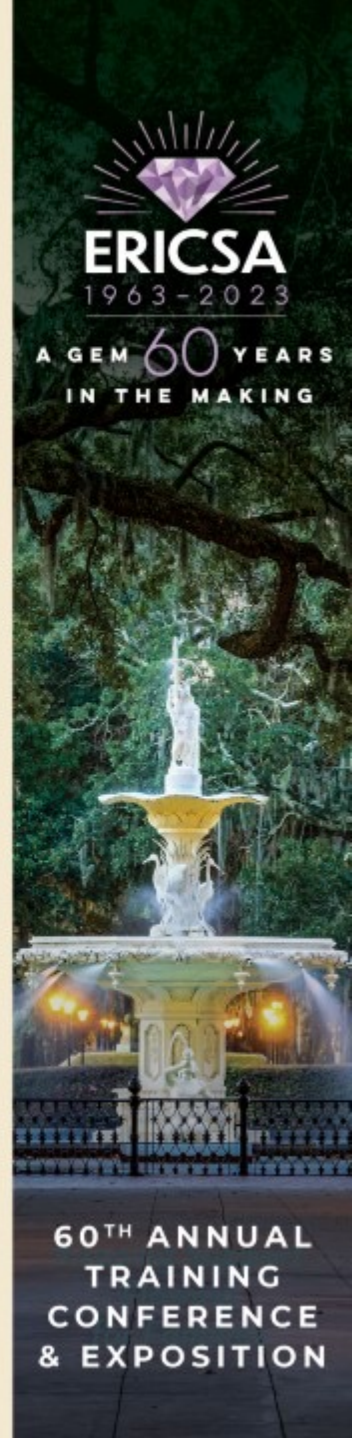
- In SFY 2022
 - 339 obligors were referred
 - 141 obligors were enrolled



Indicator of Success – Child Support Referral vs. Enrollment

State Fiscal Year 2022

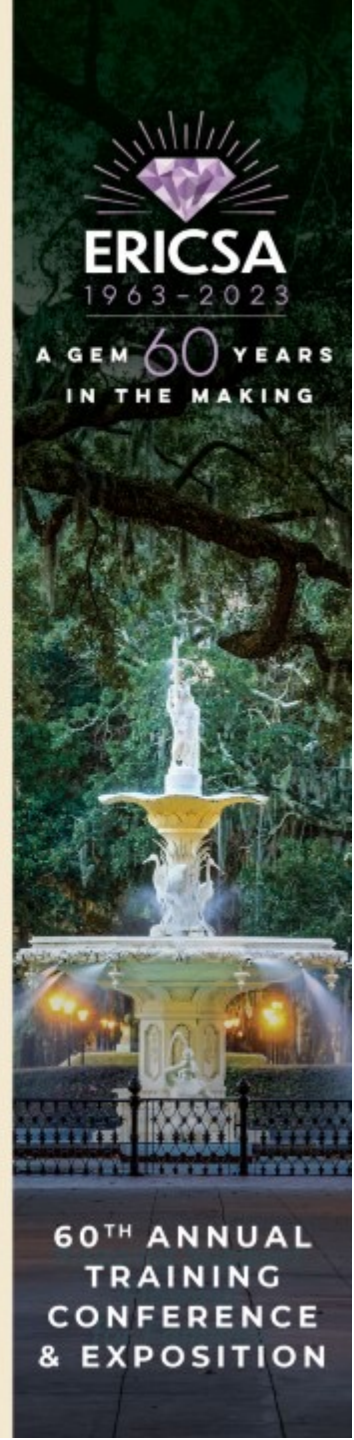
- For those referred (not necessarily enrolled)
 - ✓ 38% increase in amount of child support paid
 - ✓ 44% increase in the frequency of child support payments
- For those referred and enrolled
 - ✓ 44% increase in amount of child support paid
 - ✓ 67% increase the frequency of child support payments



Indicator of Success – Child Support With vs. Without Supportive Services

State Fiscal Year 2022

- For those enrolled and receiving supportive services
 - ✓ 4% increase in amount of child support paid
 - ✓ 57% increase the frequency of child support payments
- For those enrolled and not receiving supportive services
 - ✓ 77% increase in amount of child support paid
 - ✓ 74% increase the frequency of child support payments

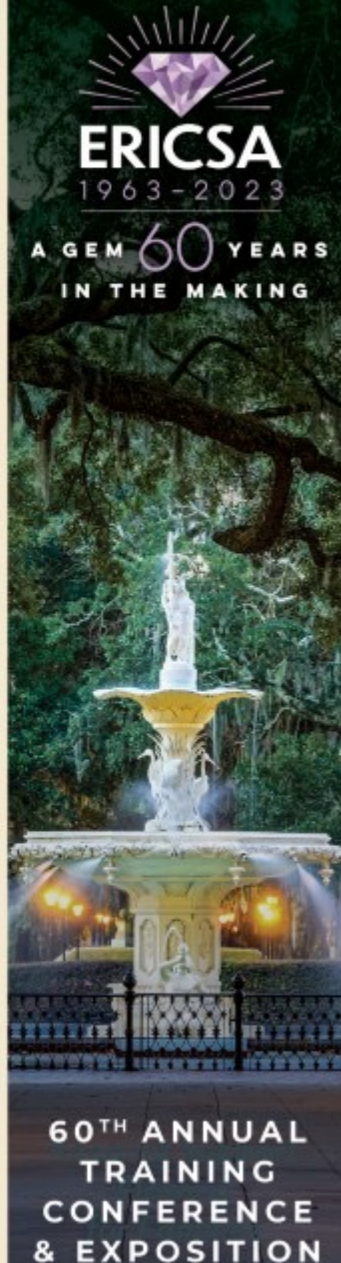


Indicator of Success - Analysis



- A 6-month pre and post referral or enrollment timeframe was used for comparative purposes.
- Multiple payments received in a single month were summed and considered as one payment.
- Only payments received directly from the obligor or as a result of income withholding were considered, i.e., those that could be reasonably attributable to PRIDE
- As a point of reference, overall child support collections in ND historically increase in single digits*

*(2.5% comparing 2021 to 2019 – skipped 2020 because of unusually high federal tax offset collections).



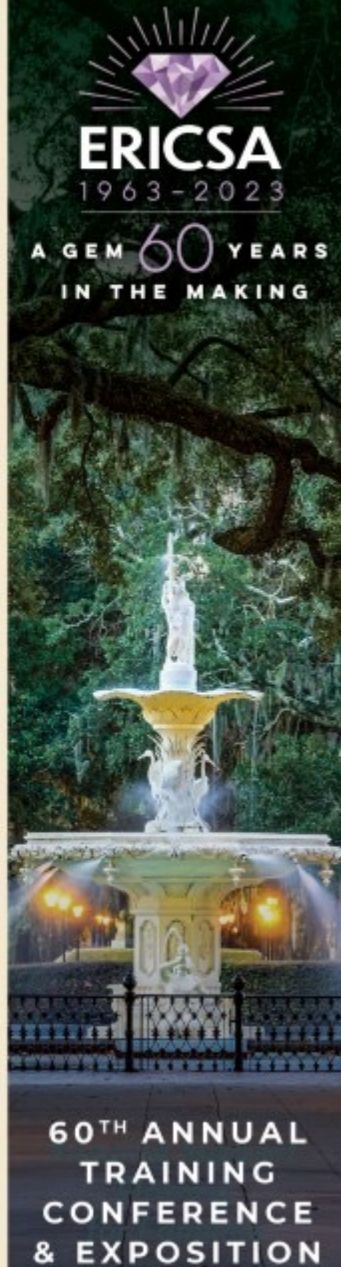
Lessons Learned - Advice

- Administrative referrals – very practical solution for unemployed obligors
- Administrative license suspension and PRIDE work can run counter to one another
- Child Support needs to be aware when supportive services are provided
- Referrals vs Enrollment
- Evaluation Tools





Erin Frisch, IV-D Director Michigan
Department of Health and Human Services
Office of Child Support



Background

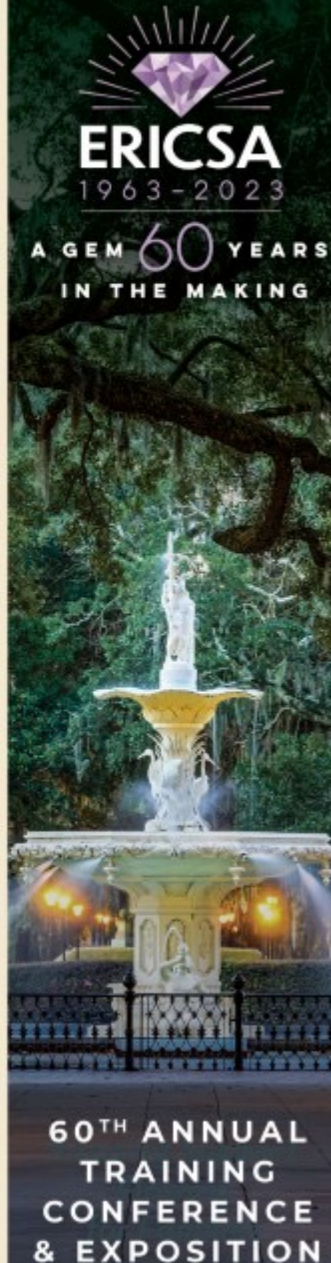
- **Partners:** Michigan Office of Child Support (OCS), Department of Labor and Economic Opportunity, Workforce Development (LEO-WD), Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), Friend of the Court (FOC) in Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, St. Joseph, Muskegon and Michigan Works!
- **Funding:** In 2020, the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) awarded OCS a three-year waiver for focused on employment opportunities for IV-D parents who are ordered to pay support (or currently have a \$0 monthly support obligation due to unemployment), with the third year devoted to evaluation. In 2022, a one-year extension to the waiver was approved by OCSE.



Goals and Rules

Help parents find and keep good paying jobs so they can meet their child support obligations.

- Retain employment for 180 days or more and make at least six months of consistent (i.e., full and on-time) child support payments.
- Michigan Works! provides and monitors supportive employment services for 180 days (six months) after the participant obtains employment. The participating counties monitor child support services for 180 days after employment.
- The length of the program for each participant will vary based upon the services provided.



Program Planning

- Planning phase December, 2020 – March, 2021
 - Draft policy, develop communication plan, data sharing agreements, training of staff
- Referrals began in April 2021 in four counties. Currently 6 counties participating
- Weekly county-level meetings to track participants and refine processes
- Monthly statewide meetings to evaluate issues common among counties.



Design

1. The Friend of the Court (FOC) finds child support payers on their caseload who are currently unemployed or underemployed and live in their county.
2. The FOC enforcement officer talks to potential participants about LEAP participation responsibilities and the consequences of non-participation
3. The FOC enforcement officer makes a referral to Michigan Works! via email or fax.
4. Michigan Works! contacts the participant and provides them with an appointment for orientation.
5. Michigan Works! staff complete orientation with participants within 14 days.
6. Frequent communication between the FOC enforcement officer and the Michigan Works! career coach.
7. Upon completion, the payer is willing and able to make regular child support payments in full.

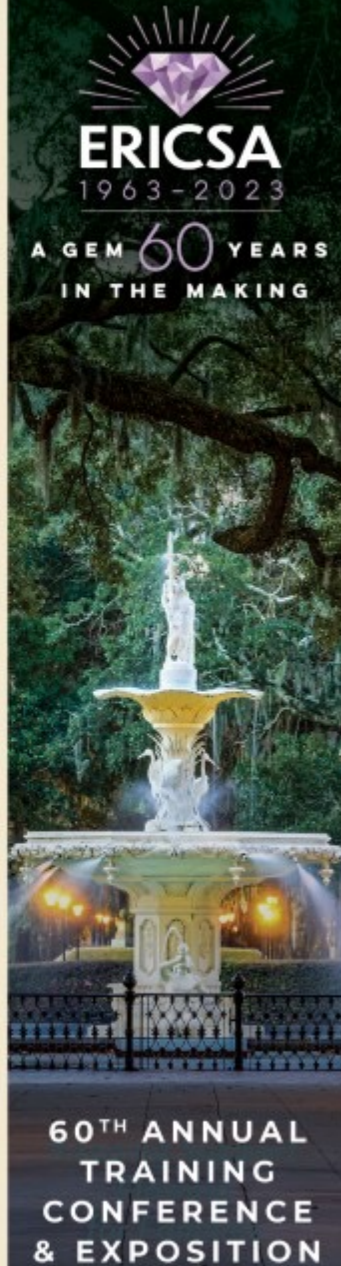


Eligibility

L.E.A.P. participants average 4.7 work-force related barriers when they enter the program.

- **We want to recruit those who are most likely to be successful, so we are targeting payers who have shown they want to pay their child support, but may not be able due to lack of employment or the skills necessary to maintain steady employment**
 - ✓ Participation can be voluntary, or court ordered
 - ✓ Participants must live in AND have an open child support enforcement case in Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo, or St. Joseph county
 - ✓ Participants must be medically able to work
- **A participant will be ineligible to participate in the LEAP pilot if (s)he meets any of the following criteria:**
 - ✓ Does not live in one of the participating pilot counties;
 - ✓ Is awaiting a sentence that may include incarceration for committing a crime;
 - ✓ Is medically unable to work; and/or
 - ✓ Has unaddressed mental health or substance abuse issues that prevent participating in training or employment services and obtaining employment.

Note: An individual may participate in the LEAP pilot after release from incarceration or after addressing mental health or substance abuse issues.



Recruiting

Internal Identification of Participants

FOC staff involved in the LEAP pilot may internally identify potential LEAP participants. Enforcement officers and other FOC staff know many of the parents who pay child support on their caseloads and could identify support payers who will benefit from participation in LEAP.

Self-Service Reporting (SSR)

Used to assist FOC staff with determining which support payers meet the criteria to become a potential participant in the LEAP pilot. This report includes information on arrearages, the existence of bench warrants, etc.

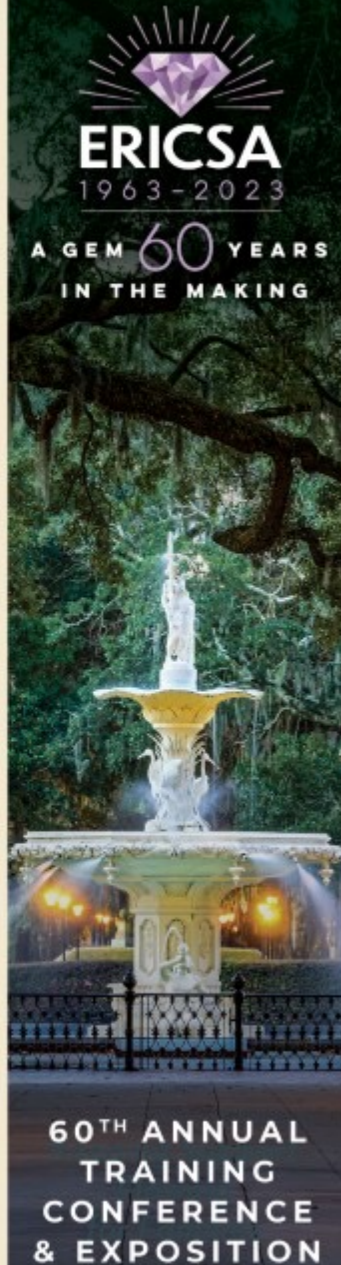
Court-ordered after Show Cause / Enforcement Hearing



Services

PROVIDED BY
MICHIGAN WORKS!

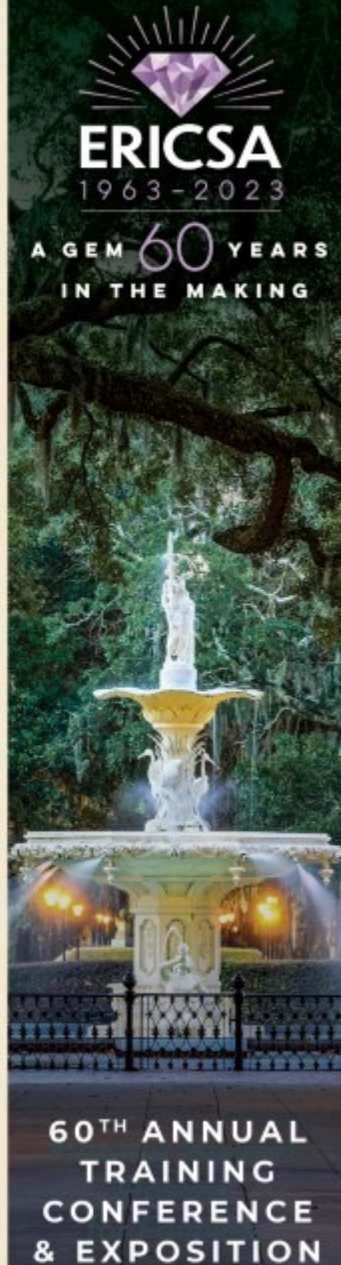
- Traditional employment services
 - ✓ Job referrals
 - ✓ Training Opportunities
 - ✓ GED completion
 - ✓ Community Service (assist with hard and soft skills for employment)
 - ✓ Employability skills workshops (Resume writing, Interview skills, etc.)
 - ✓ Supportive Services (transportation, supplies needed for employment, court fees, etc.)
 - ✓ Retention Services (checking-in with participants ensure they retain employment)
- Transitional jobs
 - ✓ Short-term subsidized employment opportunities
 - ✓ Designed to increase participants' income while helping them "learn to work by working"



Services

PROVIDED BY
CHILD SUPPORT

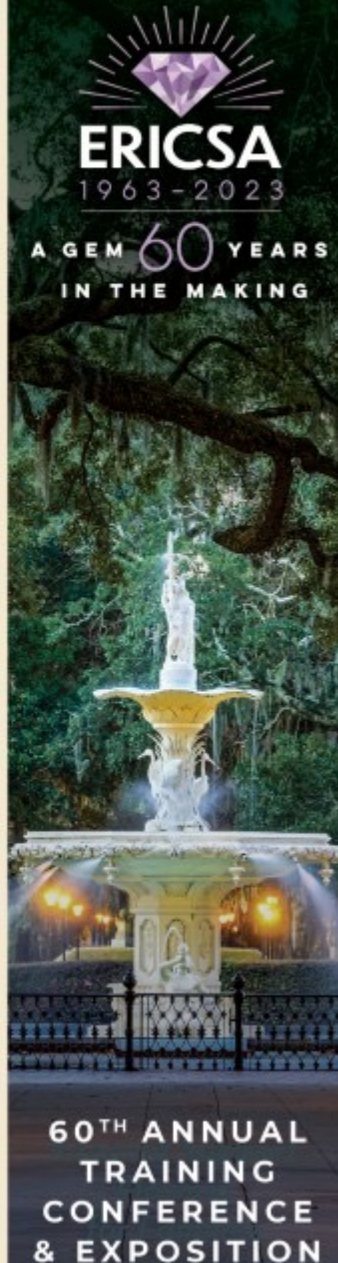
1. **REVIEW AND MODIFY CHILD SUPPORT ORDERS:** One of the goals of LEAP is to ensure that child support order amounts are based on current ability to pay. Upon entry into LEAP, Friend of the Court (FOC) staff will consider whether the participant's child support order requires review and modification, and use an expedited timeframe to complete modification.
2. **RESTORE SUSPENDED DRIVER LICENSES:** FOC staff are able to reinstate a LEAP participant's driver's license or occupational license that has been suspended if the license was suspended due to non-payment of child support in the participating LEAP county. FOC staff may exempt participants from suspension of driver's licenses and occupational licenses in the LEAP county while participating in LEAP.
3. **RECALL BENCH WARRANTS:** FOC staff will request to recall bench warrants previously issued by the LEAP county due to non-payment of child support.
4. **ARREARS MANAGEMENT:** FOC staff will use all existing arrears management strategies for LEAP participants to further incentivize participation if qualifying state arrears are owed.



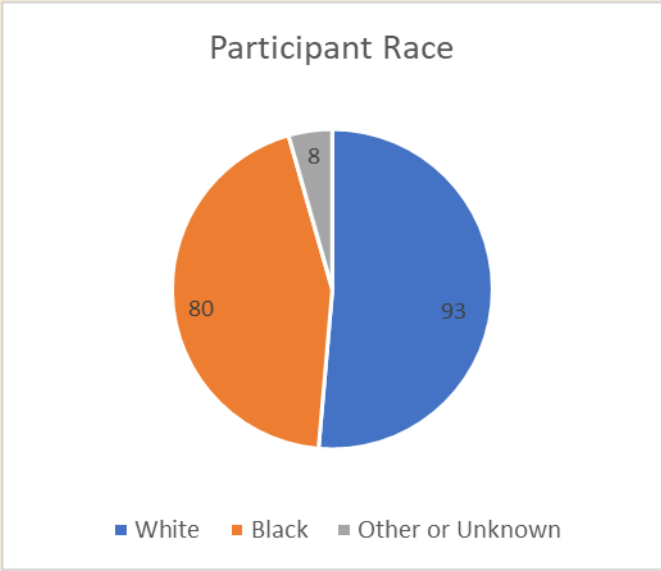
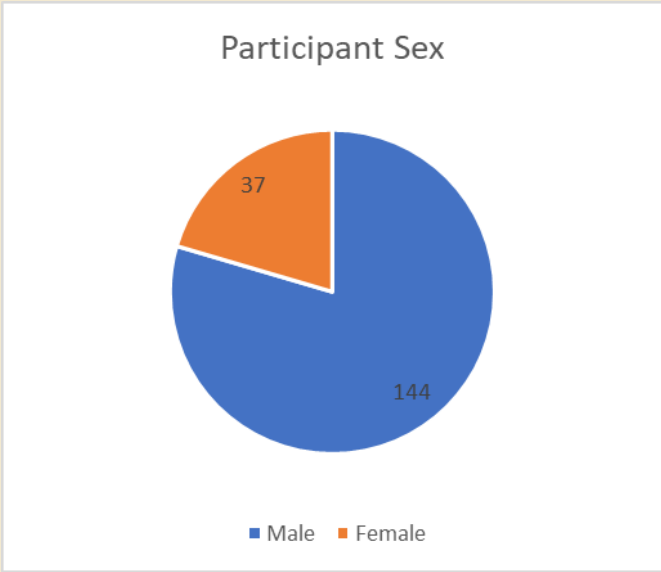
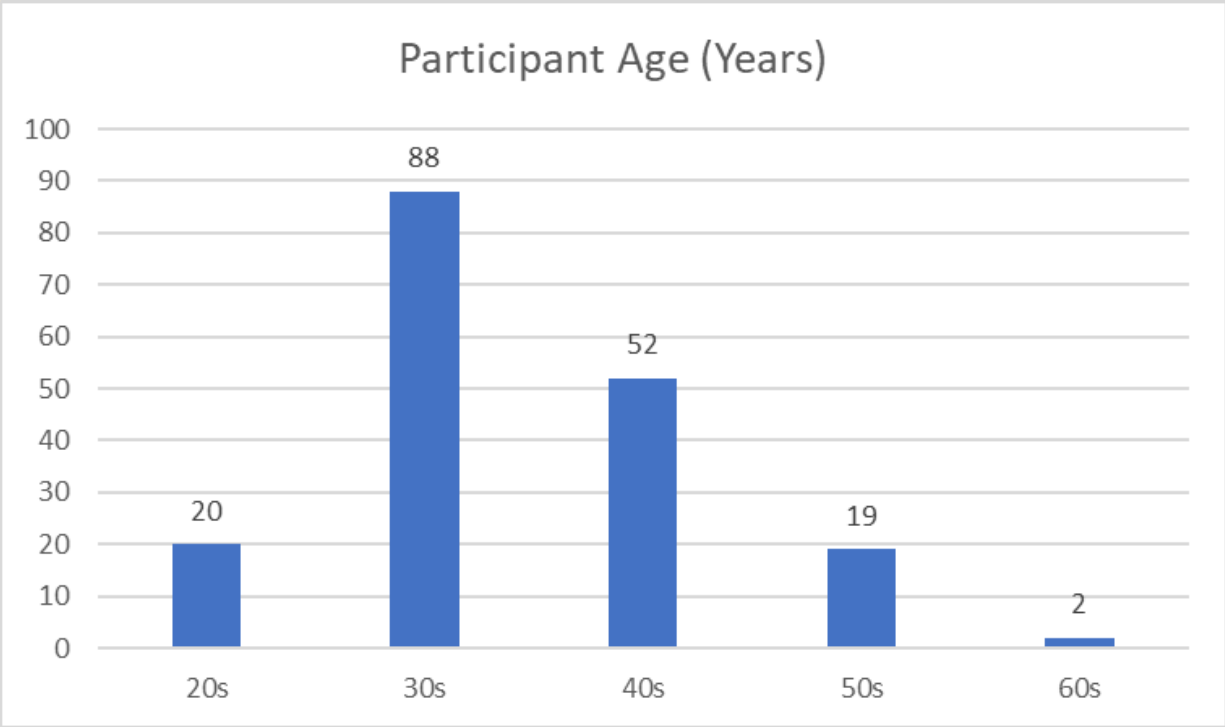
Barriers

TO EMPLOYMENT
THAT LEAP HELPS
PARTICIPANTS
ADDRESS

1. **TRANSPORATION:** 68% of LEAP participants report transportation related barriers to employment. The LEAP programs assists with bus passes, vehicle repairs, travel reimbursement and assistance paying fines related to traffic tickets and license reinstatement. The LEAP program also assists in obtaining a driver's license when necessary.
2. **CRIMINAL RECORD:** 58.7% of LEAP participants report having a criminal history (either felony or misdemeanor). LEAP career coaches educate participants on how to respond to questions about their criminal history, assist participants in applying for expungement (when applicable), and identify felon-friendly employers.
3. **CLOTHING:** 11.7% of LEAP participants report lack of appropriate clothing as a barrier to employment. LEAP assists participants in obtaining interview clothing as well as clothing required for certain careers, such as steel-toed boots or welding goggles.



Demographic Data

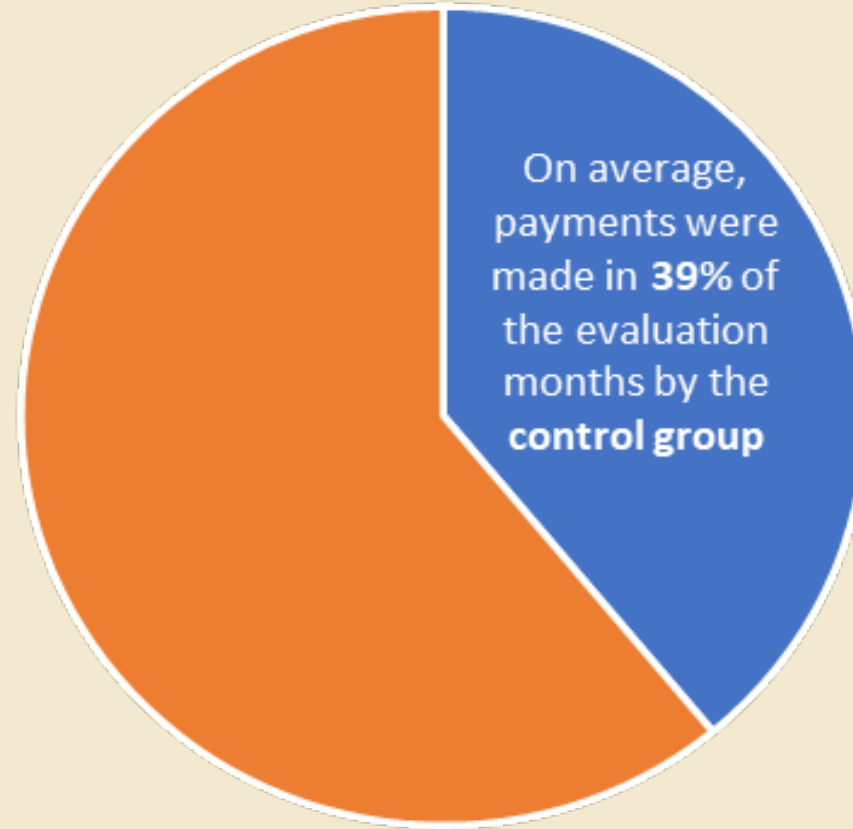
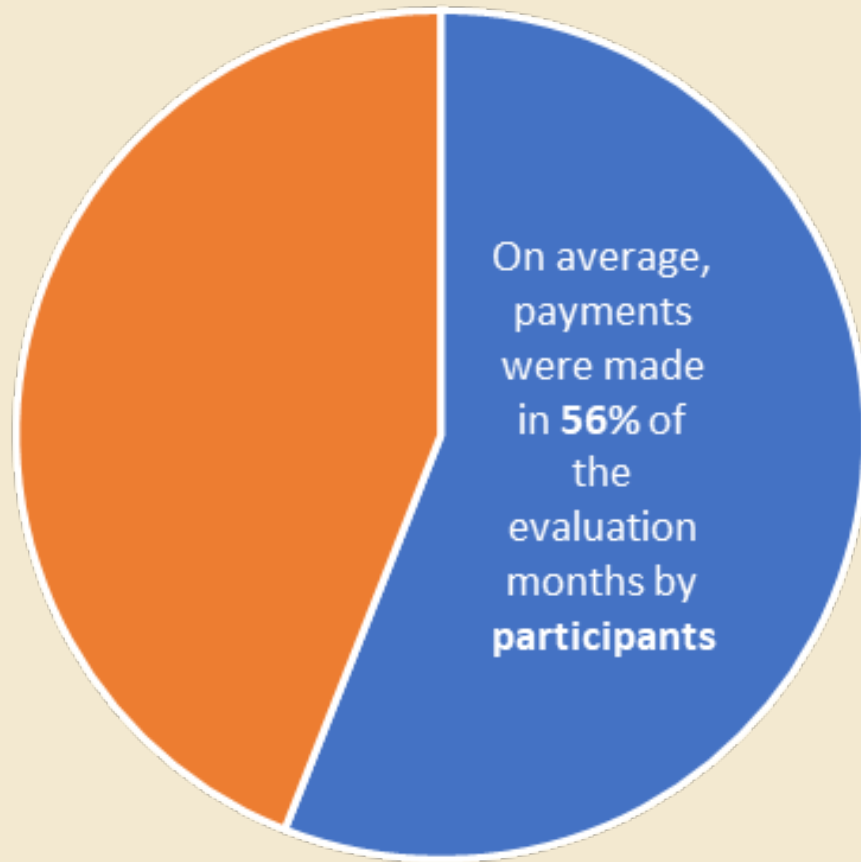


Employment Data

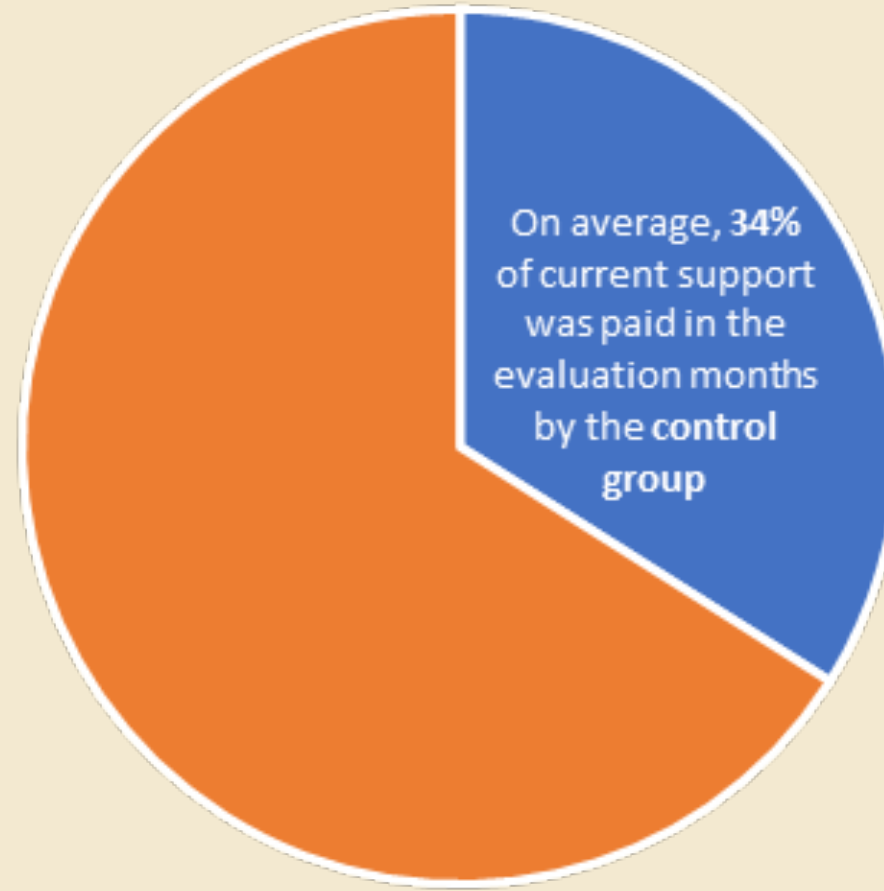
	Employment Rate	Average Wage	Average Hrly Hours
Southwest region (Branch, Calhoun, Kalamazoo and St. Joseph)	71.3% (236/331)	\$15.39	36
West region (Muskegon)	50% (22/44)	\$18.12	35
Overall	68.8% (258/375)	\$16.75	35.5



Payment Timeliness



Current Support



Participant Success Story

Dean came into the LEAP program motivated to find employment. He identified his barrier to finding and maintaining employment was his ability to obtain appropriate clothing and transportation. Dean worked with his Career Coach to find employment on the bus line and was provided bus passes. LEAP was able to provide appropriate clothing and steel-toe boots. Dean is now in transitional employment while he continues to work on his employment goals. He has stated that the social support he has received from his Career Coach has been vital to his success. Dean has recently achieved the milestone of maintaining employment for 90 days, and is currently pursuing more parenting time with his children.



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