



ERICSA 2014: *TAKING FLIGHT*
for Children and Families



Supporting Parents Supporting Kids (SPSK)

Jackie Scharping, Director,
Bureau of Child Support, WI

Choosing our Partners



- ❖ Wisconsin IV-D program – county administered
- ❖ Identified counties with appropriate caseloads
 - Existing employment service program
 - Good performers and sound structure/procedure
 - Relationship with courts
 - Existing relationships with community partners



Program Implementation

❖ Parenting and Peer Training

- Evaluated two successful programs
- Partnered with UW-Oshkosh, Center for Career Development
 - Modified Texas “NCP Choices” program
 - Stakeholders meetings and planning sessions

❖ Focus Groups for Process Development



Wisconsin Innovations to Reach Enrollment Goals

- ❖ Referrals received by:
 - Outreach efforts via letter
 - Caseworker referrals and phone contacts
 - Court referrals in Kenosha
 - Building momentum and word of mouth
 - Among NCPs, Public Defender's Office and Probation and Parole referrals
- ❖ Community and Courts view the programming as a valuable resource for NCPs



Broad Scope of Process

- ❖ NCPs volunteer for SPSK
 - Based on caseworker referral
 - Stipulate or court ordered into a broader work search
- ❖ Baseline Survey resulting in randomized assignment into 2 groups

Regular and Extra Services



- ❖ “Regular services” participants are provided with local employment and community resources to pursue on their own:
 - Employment supports available to the general public to conduct work search
 - Community resources and a “where to go for help” packet
 - An overview of child support and answers to questions
- ❖ “Extra services” participants are assigned to SPSK programming



Wisconsin Incentives

Dependent upon full participation in all program activities OR employment and reliable payment of child support:

- \$100 in Gift Cards (\$25 at 4 key milestones);
- Suspensions of administrative and judicial enforcement;
- Expedited review and adjustment
- Reducing state-owed arrears and birth arrears balances; and
- Food available at special activities and some training events.



Suspensions of Administrative and Judicial Enforcement

- ❖ Reinstate suspended drivers and professional licenses early on
- ❖ Request courts suspend possible jail sentence as part of purge condition
- ❖ Suspend financial account seizure
- ❖ Returning suspended recreational licenses (with attainment of program milestones)



Child Support: Early Lessons

- ❖ Perception of Child Support program
 - Outreach letters less effective than initially assumed
- ❖ Many NCPs don't understand child support
- ❖ Many NCPs are excited by opportunity to work on adjusting his/her order and to receive other expedited services



Case Management: Early Lessons

- ❖ Engagement and re-engagement philosophy is critical to retaining participants
- ❖ NCPs respond effectively to intensive case management with a personal touch
- ❖ Need to understand NCP barriers and the ways it affects their participation
- ❖ Critical to have all partners (employment, parenting, child support) on the same page in working with NCPs



Employment Services: Early Lessons

- ❖ Many NCPs are part of the pool of long-term unemployed with extensive barriers
- ❖ Barriers are so significant with some that job readiness training is needed
- ❖ Individualized employment, assessment, and job search appointments help keep NCPS them engaged and motivated
- ❖ Job retention, tiered employment, educational advancement also a focus



Parenting Course: Early Lessons

- ❖ NCPs are excited about graduation and earning the certificate for achievement
- ❖ Positive feedback, despite initial resistance from some NCPs
- ❖ Many NCPs talking about deeper issues with own childhood and bonding with others
- ❖ Plan to start using a pre- and post- survey in Brown Co. and may adopt in Kenosha Co.



Early Trends: Domestic Violence

- ❖ The majority “rarely” or “never” screened
- ❖ Little need for or interest in referrals to batterer’s treatment or for victim services
- ❖ No CP contacts so far as a result of SPSK notification letter which asks the CP if there are DV concerns
- ❖ Many NCP’s who have presented or disclosed DV have already taken a batterer’s treatment or anger management course, often while in jail

NCPs in Court Setting



- ❖ Court cases resolve more quickly and in favor of the Extra Services NCPs
- ❖ Extra Services NCPs have a coach in their corner providing intensive case management services
 - Instructed on being respectful and responsive and presenting job searches to Judges
 - NCPs are less resentful and hostile toward the Court and the Child Support system
 - Courts prefer Child Support Agencies work with NCPs



SPSK Experiences to Date

- ❖ Challenges
- ❖ Motivated and appreciative NCPs
- ❖ Excitement about and interest in parenting course
- ❖ NCPs with many barriers, needs and questions
- ❖ NCPs benefitting from employment services and experiencing higher employments
- ❖ Positive community-wide and judicial response



Questions? Wisconsin Contacts

❖ Questions and feedback

❖ Contacts for SPSK:

- State of WI: Anna Fosdick, 608-261-0298
AnnaW.Fosdick@wisconsin.gov
- Brown County: Maria Lasecki, 920-448-7601
Lasecki_MA@co.Brown.wi.us
- Kenosha County: Nina Taylor, 262-697-4744
Nina.Taylor@Kenoshacounty.org