

INFORMATION COLLECTION ACTIVITY #1

INSTRUMENT #1

**CHILD SUPPORT NONCUSTODIAL PARENT EMPLOYMENT
DEMONSTRATION (CSPED)**

STAFF INTERVIEW TOPIC GUIDE

The Child Support Noncustodial Parent Employment Demonstration (CSPED) implementation study will include two multi-day site visits to each grantee. Visits will occur in years 2 and 4. Researchers will interview grantee and partner administrators, supervisors, and frontline staff who work directly with noncustodial parents (NCPs) during the site visits. Interviews will be conducted either one-on-one or in small groups, depending on staffing structure, roles, and the number of individuals in a role.

Topic	Sub-Topic
Informant Characteristics	
Informant Characteristics	Job title Years in current position and with agency Role on CSPED Relevant prior experience
Program Planning and Design	
Decision to Apply for the Grant	Why grantee applied for the CSPED grant Decision making process and the role of child support agency leadership and the state and county levels in deciding to apply How organizational culture and leadership within the child support agency supports or poses barriers to applying for demonstration grants or proposing innovations in child support procedures and policies
Design Process	Grantees’ prior experience with similar programs and how prior experience informed the CSPED design Design and planning process for CSPED, including any changes if the program is a continuation or adaptation of past efforts Involvement of partners and other community organizations in the planning process Key design decisions made during the CSPED planning year and rationale for those decisions

Topic	Sub-Topic
	Challenges encountered during the planning process and steps taken to address them
Target Population	Characteristics of NCPs targeted for enrollment Eligibility criteria for CSPED Anticipated needs of NCPs and barriers to employment at the time of program design
Recruitment and Retention Plan	Planned enrollment targets Planned outreach and recruitment strategies to identify and recruit eligible NCPs Anticipated referral sources, eligibility screening procedures Intended geographic catchment area for recruiting NCPs Planned strategies to encourage enrollment and ongoing participation, including the use of incentives, suspension of child support enforcement tools, and state arrears forgiveness
Program Design	Planned role of the child support program as the lead agency for the demonstration Partners’ understanding of the child support program’s leadership role Description of how child support program carries out its role as the lead agency Planned role of project manager and other grantee staff in managing the demonstration, overseeing service delivery, coordinating services among partners, and monitoring implementation and whether staff were to have other responsibilities in addition to their role on this project Planned services, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case management • Enhanced child support services • Employment services • Fatherhood/parenting education using peer support • Supplementary services available through referrals to other community service providers Agency identified to deliver each type of service (including local child support agencies and contracted partners), prior experience providing services to the target population, and why each partner was selected for their role, partners’ motivation for participating in CSPED Planned curricula for fatherhood/parenting education using peer support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Curriculum name and history of use with target population • Rationale for selection • Modules or topics to be provided • Planned adaptations and rationale • Intended format including total number of hours and frequency of

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	<p>sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of any alternative parenting education services for non-custodial mothers <p>Plan for conducting initial and ongoing assessments of participants’ needs and linking them to appropriate services</p> <p>Planned duration and intensity of services and standardization across participants</p> <p>Services anticipated to contribute most to increased child support payments and other positive outcomes for NCPs</p> <p>Development of domestic violence plan, selection of any formal screening or assessment tools used to identify domestic violence, planned response to disclosures of domestic violence, and plan for providing domestic violence training to program staff working with NCPs</p> <p>Other planned training for program staff working with NCPs</p>
Target Outcomes	<p>Goals for the CСПED program</p> <p>Expected outcomes for NCPs, how planned services will contribute to these outcomes, and anticipated length of program participation needed to achieve outcomes</p> <p>How program plans to monitor progress toward program goals</p>
Program Structure and Implementation System	
Characteristics of the Grantee Agency	<p>Mission and goals of grantee agency</p> <p>Grantee experience with similar demonstration programs</p> <p>Grantee staffing for the demonstration, including key staff responsibilities</p> <p>Grantee staff buy-in to the demonstration and approach to supporting NCPs</p> <p>Sources and amounts of funding for CСПED program</p> <p>Program costs for the grantee agency</p> <p>In-kind contributions made by the grantee agency</p> <p>Benefits from the project for the grantee agency</p>
Characteristics of Partner Agencies	<p>For each partner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mission and goals of partner agency, and how well goals align with grantee goals for CСПED • Prior experience working with the grantee agency and other partners • Partner agency staffing for the demonstration, including key staff responsibilities • Partner staff buy-in to the demonstration and approach to supporting NCPs • Sources and amounts of funding for CСПED program • Program costs for the partner agency • In-kind contributions made by the partner agency

Topic	Sub-Topic
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits from the project for the partner agency
Grantee-Partner Collaboration	<p>Contractual relationship between grantee and partner agencies, including when contractual relationship was established and terms of the partnership</p> <p>Extent of coordination and collaboration between the grantee and its partners, the courts, and other relevant community organizations</p> <p>Methods for sharing data, including the extent to which partners have access to and employ grantee data systems</p> <p>Referral systems among CSPED partners and to other community service providers</p> <p>Communication systems among CSPED partners</p> <p>Extent to which grantee and/or partner organizations had to adapt their normal operating procedures to accommodate the collaboration</p> <p>Extent of co-location of child support and partner activities</p> <p>Termination of partnership, if relevant, and reasons for termination</p> <p>Barriers to effective collaboration and strategies for overcoming them</p> <p>Partnership challenges, successes, and lessons learned</p>
Leadership and Management	<p>Organizational structure for the CSPED demonstration; reporting relationships among the grantee and partners</p> <p>Decision-making processes and extent of shared decision-making among partners</p> <p>Staff perceptions about how well the child support-led model has worked in practice; benefits and challenges of this approach to demonstration leadership</p> <p>Staff perceptions of the strengths and weaknesses of the demonstration’s approach leadership</p> <p>Changes in the demonstration’s approach to leadership over time</p> <p>Nature of guidance from OCSE on program management; usefulness of guidance and need for additional guidance or support</p> <p>Strongest advocate for CSPED program and how demonstrated; role of advocate and how individual emerged as advocate</p> <p>Grantee approach to managing the demonstration</p> <p>Grantee oversight of program activities and partner services</p> <p>Use of data systems to monitor progress toward goals and partner performance</p> <p>Internal evaluation of program performance and continuous program improvement activities</p>

Topic	Sub-Topic
Staffing Structure/ Supervisory Model	<p>For the grantee and all contracted partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staffing structure for the CSPED program • Required qualifications for each staff role • Responsibilities and expectations for each staff role • Timeline and process for hiring new staff or reassigning staff to fill CSPED roles • Plan for providing supervision and training to direct service staff, including the intended frequency, duration, and focus
Service Delivery Supports	<p>For the grantee and all contracted partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial and in-service training plan for new and ongoing CSPED program staff, including the frequency, content, length, and format of training, and individual or organization providing the training • Technical assistance or guidance available to CSPED staff from fatherhood curriculum developers, OCSE, and other entities to support program implementation; whether staff have accessed these resources and, if so, helpfulness of the technical assistance • Topics on which staff need more training and technical assistance • Plan for monitoring program performance and for tracking service delivery and quality, adherence to curricula or other programming, client engagement and participation, and participant outcomes • Helpfulness of management information system designed for CSPED, helpfulness of technical assistance for using MIS
Program Implementation	
Recruitment and Engagement Strategies	<p>Outreach and referral</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategies used to identify eligible NCPs, relative use of each strategy • Outreach strategies for recruiting NCPs to enroll in CSPED; successes and challenges of each strategy; and perceptions about which strategies are most successful and why, relative use of each strategy • Organizations and individuals involved in outreach and their roles • Sources of referrals, length of relationship with these referral sources, and how relationships were established, relative size of enrollment from each referral source • Referral sources that consistently refer individuals that meet eligibility criteria and engage in the CSPED program • Process used by other agencies to refer potential participants to CSPED • Any changes to outreach and referral strategies and why <p>Eligibility Determination and enrollment</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment process for new participants in the CSPED program, including process for screening for program eligibility and interest and who conducts the screening • Challenges encountered with enrollment process; strategies used to address challenges • Any changes to eligibility criteria and rationale for changes <p>Process for tracking progress in (1) outreach and referral, and (2) enrollment, including whether there are weekly or monthly goals, how often progress is monitored, and who is responsible for monitoring</p>
<p>Characteristics of Enrolled NCPs</p>	<p>Characteristics of enrolled NCPs; strengths and needs</p> <p>Changes over time in the characteristics of NCPs who are enrolling</p> <p>Barriers NCPs face to participation in services</p> <p>Common barriers to obtaining steady employment and making child support payments</p> <p>Discussion of cases that exemplify the common barriers participants face to making child support payments, challenges staff need to address, and promising strategies for dealing</p>
<p>Frequency, intensity, and type of services offered: Case management</p>	<p>Type and frequency of case management services provided; frequency and mode of contact between case managers and NCPs</p> <p>Whether child support or another partner provides case management services and rationale</p> <p>How NCP needs are assessed, including specific needs assessment tool used (if any) and frequency of assessment</p> <p>Development of service plan for each NCP</p> <p>Frequency, mode, and purpose of contact between case managers and other CSPED staff working with NCPs; extent of coordination of services through case conferences or other communication among partners; how this differs from case management provided to NCPs not in the treatment group and impact of that difference on staff and service delivery</p> <p>Other service needs not addressed by CSPED core services; community resources available for address these needs; how assessments are used to guide service delivery and link participants to outside services.</p> <p>Case management challenges, successes, and lessons learned</p> <p>Cost and benefits of case management services</p>
<p>Frequency, intensity, and type of services offered: Enhanced child support services</p>	<p>Types of enhanced child support services used with CSPED participants, including expedited review and adjustment of orders, wage withholding, and temporary suspension of arrears collection tools</p> <p>Approach used to determine which arrears collection tools are suspended and on what basis suspension can be revoked</p> <p>Extent of state-owed debt forgiveness offered during CSPED enrollment</p> <p>Extent of license reinstatement used during CSPED enrollment</p> <p>Frequency and mode of contact between child support staff and NCPs;</p>

Topic	Sub-Topic
	<p>how they differ from contact between child support staff and NCPs not participating in the demonstration and impact of that difference on staff and service delivery</p> <p>Frequency, mode, and purpose of contact between child support staff and other partners and service providers working with enrolled NCPs</p> <p>Challenges, successes, and lessons learned related to enhanced child support services</p> <p>Cost and benefits of enhanced child support services, include administrative as well as foregone or increased collections</p>
<p>Frequency, intensity, and type of services offered: Employment Services</p>	<p>Types of employment services provided to CSPED participants, including job search assistance, job readiness training, job placement services, and employment retention services.</p> <p>Type of partner(s) that provides employment services and rationale</p> <p>Sequence, length, and frequency of employment services and how program determines which services participants receive and at what intensity; how assessments are used to guide service delivery and link participants to services; how this differs from employment services provided to NCPs not in the treatment group and impact of that difference on staff and service delivery</p> <p>Frequency and mode of contact between employment services staff and NCPs; type and frequency of follow up after initial job placement</p> <p>Frequency, mode, and purpose of contact between employment services staff and other partners and service providers working with enrolled NCPs</p> <p>Types and intensity of job retention services provided to NCPs and employers</p> <p>Format, length, and frequency of job readiness and/or financial literacy group sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curricula used - Modules or topics provided - Any adaptations made to curricula and why <p>Challenges, successes, and lessons learned related to employment services</p> <p>Cost and benefits of employment services</p>
<p>Frequency, intensity, and type of services offered: Fatherhood/ Parenting Education</p>	<p>Types of fatherhood/parenting education services provided to CSPED participants</p> <p>Type of partner(s) that provides fatherhood/parenting education services and rationale</p> <p>Methods used to address the parenting needs of female NCPs</p> <p>Sequence, length, and frequency of fatherhood/parenting education services and how program determines which services participants receive</p>

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Services	<p>and at what intensity</p> <p>Frequency and mode of contact between fatherhood/parenting education services staff and NCPs</p> <p>Frequency, mode, and purpose of contact between fatherhood/parenting education staff and other partners and service providers working with enrolled NCPs; how this differs from fatherhood/parenting education provided to NCPs not in the treatment group and impact of that difference on staff and service delivery</p> <p>How peer support is incorporated into fatherhood/parenting education services</p> <p>Format, length, frequency, and intensity of fatherhood/parenting education group sessions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curricula used - Modules or topics provided - Any adaptations made to curricula and why <p>Challenges, successes, and lessons learned related to fatherhood/parenting education services</p> <p>Cost and benefits of fatherhood/parenting education services</p>
Domestic Violence Plan	<p>Grantee’s approach to addressing domestic violence, including guidelines for encouraging healthy relationships, protocols for responding to disclosures of domestic violence, and procedures for conducting domestic violence screening</p> <p>Format, duration, and frequency of training for program staff on domestic violence plan</p> <p>Staff experiences working with the domestic violence expert in developing the plan and responding to disclosures of domestic violence; frequency of contact with domestic violence expert once program operations begin</p> <p>Challenges encountered in developing and implementing the domestic violence plan and strategies used to overcome challenges</p> <p>Staff perceptions about the usefulness of training and their readiness to address disclosures of domestic violence</p> <p>Cost and benefits of domestic violence services</p>
Referrals to other community services	<p>Types of community services to which CSPED staff refer participants</p> <p>Frequency of referrals for various services; most common types of referrals made</p> <p>Extent to which needed services are available and accessible in the community</p> <p>Extent to which participants follow up on referrals and take up the services</p>
Integrated	<p>Grantee’s approach to integrating all four core services—case</p>

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Approach	<p>management, child support procedures, employment services, and fatherhood/parenting education—into a single package for enrolled NCPs. Staff perceptions of the utility of an integrated approach to the provision of core services</p> <p>Challenges to integration of core services and steps taken to overcome these challenges.</p> <p>Costs and benefits associated with the development of an integrated approach</p>
Adherence to Program Model	
Adherence to Implementation Plans	<p>Procedures used to ensure that all staff carry out program activities as planned and in a consistent manner</p> <p>Barriers that impede the delivery of consistent services across staff and partners; strategies used by staff and supervisors to address these barriers</p> <p>Whether staff received the planned level of initial and ongoing training and guidance; perceptions about adequacy of training and guidance in preparing and supporting staff to provide services; further training needs</p> <p>Efforts to track service delivery and adherence to curricula or other programming, and whether it aligns with intended plan; who completes tracking; use of data systems to facilitate tracking; what is tracked and how often; how information is used by staff</p>
Modifications to Planned Implementation	<p>Modifications to the grantee’s CSPED implementation plan that have occurred since implementation began; timeline for and monitoring of roll-out of modifications; why program implemented these modifications; how changes affected service delivery</p> <p>Potential future modifications to the implementation plan; how potential modifications could improve service delivery; timeline for roll-out of these modifications</p> <p>Unplanned modifications to the implementation plan; how these came about; whether they became long-term changes; how changes affected service delivery</p>
Quality of Services	<p>Grantee expectations about the quality of services delivered through CSPED; how grantee defines high quality delivery for core services (case management, enhanced child support procedures, employment services, and fatherhood/parenting services) and why program defines service quality in this manner</p> <p>Efforts to monitor service quality, adherence to curricula or other</p>

Topic	Sub-Topic
	programming, client engagement, participation, and participant outcomes; who completes monitoring; what is monitored and how often; how information is used by staff
Attainment of Program Goals	<p>Whether the grantee is meeting enrollment targets; successes and challenges encountered</p> <p>Enrollment of NCPs into each component of the CSPED program; whether enrollment in specific components aligns with expectations and what accounts for differences that may be observed</p> <p>Challenges that have hindered how well the program operates, including challenges that affect the program’s ability to deliver high-quality services, obtain high levels of client engagement and participation, and achieve intended participant outcomes; strategies to address challenges</p> <p>Unexpected events that altered CSPED program activities; how they affected the program and how they were addressed</p>
Staff Characteristics, Retention, Turnover	<p>Characteristics of key grantee and partner staff</p> <p>Number of full-time equivalent (FTE) staff in CSPED program devoted to administration and direct service provision</p> <p>Extent to which staff in the CSPED program had other responsibilities in addition to CSPED and staff perceptions as to whether these multiple roles had an effect on their ability to implement the program as designed</p> <p>Extent to which CSPED program staff “bought in” to the idea that providing case management, enhanced child support procedures, fatherhood/parenting education, and employment services in an integrated package would improve outcomes for NCPs and their children</p> <p>Changes in grantee, partner, or CSPED program leadership that occurred during the demonstration and may have impacted the direction of the CSPED program</p> <p>Current staff vacancies; length of vacancies; efforts to fill vacancies</p> <p>Extent of staff turnover since initiating program operations; reasons for staff turnover (or staff retention); effects on remaining staff when turnover occurs; length of process to replace departing staff</p> <p>Effect of staff turnover on enrollment and service delivery; programmatic adjustments and accommodations as a result of turnover</p> <p>Efforts to prevent future turnover and retain current direct service staff and supervisors</p>
Participant Responsiveness	
Enrollment and Motivation for Enrolling	<p>How NCPs hear about the opportunity to enroll in CSPED</p> <p>Staff perceptions about why NCPs enroll in CSPED and their eagerness to enroll</p> <p>Staff perceptions about NCPs’ expectations for CSPED</p> <p>Factors that most often make an NCP ineligible for CSPED</p> <p>Perceived usefulness of CSPED program service for NCPs</p>
Program	Typical duration of NCP participation in the demonstration

Topic	Sub-Topic
Participation	Definition of program completion Criteria used by CSPED staff for terminating services to a participant Maximum length of participation permitted by the demonstration Extent to which program attrition has been a challenges, and if so, the timing of when participants typically drop out Challenges to promoting sustained participation Strategies used to encourage initial and ongoing participation; perceived success of each strategy; new strategies under consideration to encourage participation Incentives used to encourage participation in services; types of incentives; timing and frequency of incentives; staff perceptions about which incentives appear to best promote participation Staff perceptions about particular subgroups of NCPs who appear most and least responsive to CSPED Staff perceptions about why NCPs drop out of CSPED before completing the program Strategies use to re-engage NCPs who have stopped participating; which partners are involved; point at which staff cease attempts to re-engage NCPs Any changes to these strategies over time and rationale for changes
State and Community Context	
Socio-demographic and Economic Profile	State or local child support policies and policy climate, and how they impeded or supported program development Other state or community organizations providing parenting or employment services; how the services provided by these organizations differ from the CSPED program; whether and how these services may have affected the CSPED program; and use of these other services by NCPs Role of the courts and willingness of family court judges to support and participate in CSPED Physical, social, and economic characteristics of communities in which CSPED is offered
Lessons Learned	
Lessons Learned	Most important implementation challenges faced by the demonstration Strategies used to overcome challenges and perceptions of how effective the strategies have been Identification of significant gaps between the services participants need and those offered by the demonstration Lessons learned about facilitators and barriers to making changes in child support policy and practice Changes informants would make to the demonstration if they were

Topic	Sub-Topic
	starting over Most important strengths of the demonstration Most important lessons learned about implementing the demonstration Suggestions for how OSCE can best support and encourage child support agency leadership to adopt innovations in child support policy and practice