

Instrument 2: SAVES Quantitative Survey with DV Survivors

Domestic Violence (DV) Survivor Experiences with Child Support Services - Screening Survey Questions (Required Survey on Qualtrics)

Trigger/Content Warning:

This survey will include some questions that may touch on difficult experiences, including emotional or physical harm.

Please know that you are in control:

- You can skip any question.
- You can stop or pause the interview at any time.
- You do not have to explain your reason.

If anything becomes distressing, you are encouraged to take a break or let me know if you'd like to end the conversation.

Here is a list of resources:

- **National Domestic Violence Hotline**
Available at: 1-800-799-7233 | www.thehotline.org
Offers: 24/7 confidential support via phone or live chat.
- **Crisis Text Line**
Available at: Text HELLO to 741741
Offers: 24/7 support for any crisis, emotional or psychological.
- **SAMHSA National Helpline**
Available at: 1-800-662-HELP (4357) | samhsa.gov/find-help/national-helpline
Offers: Free, confidential help in English and Spanish, 24/7.

I. What is your age group?

- a. Below 18 years → (If Below 18, end survey)
- b. 18-24 years

The Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This collection of information is voluntary and will be used to better understand efforts to increase safe access to child support, parenting time, and establishment of parentage services for survivors of domestic violence. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes per response, including the time for including time to review the consent form. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB number and expiration date for this collection are OMB #: XXXX-XXXX, Exp: XX/XX/202X. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Center for Policy Research; 1570 Emerson Street Denver, Colorado 80218.

- c. 25-34 years
- d. 35-44 years
- e. 45-54 years
- f. 55-64 years
- g. 65 years and older

II. How many children do you have?

- a. 0 → (If 0, end survey)
- b. [Enter Number]

III. Have you experienced domestic violence (physical, emotional, psychological, financial, or sexual abuse) from a current or former partner?

- a. Yes, from a partner who is the parent of one or more of my children
- b. Yes, from a partner who is **not** the parent of any of my children → (End survey)
- c. No → (End survey)
- d. Prefer not to say → (End survey)

Main Survey Questions

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Everything you share will be kept private. No identifying information will be included in any reports from this survey. Any information we use in reports will be

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anonymized and combined with other participants' responses so that you cannot be identified. You can skip any questions or stop the survey at any time. If you are currently receiving child support payments or other benefits through human services programs, your participation in this study will not be shared with the child support program or any other agency, and it will not affect your eligibility for or receipt of those benefits in any way.

Child Support Eligibility [ask everyone]

This section asks about your current or past involvement with the child support program.

- 1. Have you ever engaged with a state, county, or tribal child support agency?**
 - a. Yes,
 - b. No → [Skip to Q20]
 - c. Other (please specify): _____
- 2. Why did you engage with the child support program? (Check all that apply)**
 - ☐ I wanted or needed child support from the other parent
 - ☐ I applied for public benefits such as TANF, SNAP, Medicaid and I was required to open a child support case
 - ☐ My domestic violence (DV) advocate, lawyer or other service provider suggested that I go to child support
 - ☐ My friends or family suggested that I go to child support
 - ☐ It was initiated by the other parent
 - ☐ Other (please specify): _____
- 3. Have you ever had a child support order for one or more of your children in a county, state, or tribal child support program?**

- a. Yes
- b. No

4. Have you ever received any formal child support payments through the child support agency or ordered by the court?

- a. Yes
- b. No → [Skip to Q6]

5. How regular were the child support payments you received on this case?

- a. Sometimes received payments
- b. Regularly received payments
- c. Almost always received payments
- d. Always received payments

6. Have you ever received any informal child support from the other parent? (Informal child support is financial or non-financial help a noncustodial parent gives directly to the other parent or caregiver – without going through the child support agency or court – such as giving cash, buying groceries, or paying for school supplies.)

- a. Yes
- b. No

Engagement with Child Support *[only ask those engaged in child support]*

This section asks about your experiences across different stages of the child support process.

7. Did you ever have safety concerns about any of the following? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Going to a meeting at the child support office with the other parent
- ☐ Going to a court hearing that the other parent is at
- ☐ Going to a genetic testing center that the other parent is at
- ☐ Child having contact with the other parent
- ☐ Other parent being required to pay child support
- ☐ Disagreements with the other parent due to child support payment
- ☐ Retaliation from other parent required to pay child support

- ☐ Child's safety when staying with the other parent part of the time
- ☐ Locating the other parent
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

**8. After your child support case got started, did any of the following happen?
(Check all that apply)**

- ☐ The other parent was angry about child support
- ☐ The other parent wanted more visitation with the child(ren)
- ☐ The other parent stopped giving me and the child(ren) informal (informal support means things like buying groceries, paying rent or utility bills, purchasing clothing or school supplies, or providing transportation for the children)
- ☐ There were direct threats or violence as a result of the child support order
- ☐ The other parent found personal information about me (e.g., my address) without my permission
- ☐ I did not experience any problems
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Child Support and Safety *[only ask those engaged in child support]*
This section asks about safety and domestic violence-related concerns and how they relate to your child support decisions and experiences.

9. Did any of the following happen when you went to child support? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I was asked if I had any safety concerns
- ☐ I was told I had to cooperate with child support to get TANF or other benefits
- ☐ I was told I didn't have to cooperate if it was unsafe for me
- ☐ I was told I could apply for good cause to avoid cooperating
- ☐ I was told I needed official documentation to prove abuse
- ☐ I was told I might have to see the other parent in court
- ☐ I was told the other parent might ask for more visitation
- ☐ I was told child support could collect money from the other parent even if they didn't want to pay (e.g., paycheck or tax refund)
- ☐ I was told I could keep my address private on court or child support documents
- ☐ I was told child support had ways to make the process safer
- ☐ I was told I could talk to a staff member who specializes in safety
- ☐ I was given a referral to a domestic violence (DV) community service provider
- ☐ I was told I could close my case if safety was an issue

☐ Other (please specify): _____

10. When were you given safety-related information? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ During my child support application
- ☐ When I went to court
- ☐ When modifying my child support order
- ☐ During a routine visit at the child support office
- ☐ I was not given any safety related information
- ☐ I don't remember

11. Did anyone talk to you/offer you the following safety measures? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Family Violence Indicator
- ☐ Virtual court appearances
- ☐ Escorts to and from court
- ☐ Separate waiting areas in court
- ☐ Multi-factor identification protections for online portals/applications
- ☐ Advanced notice of potential contact with other parent
- ☐ Referral to local domestic violence (DV) service providers
- ☐ Genetic testing scheduled on different days/times from other parent
- ☐ Safety-modified parenting time orders
- ☐ Assistance filing a protection order
- ☐ Notification of enforcement actions and their start dates
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

12. How safe did you feel by the safety measures offered/available to you?

- a. Not at all safe
- b. Somewhat safe
- c. Moderately safe
- d. Very safe
- e. I was not offered or informed of safety options

13. Did you use any additional safety measures/strategies on your own (e.g., moving, legal help etc.)?

- a. Yes → If Yes, what was it _____
- b. No

14. Did you apply for a good cause exemption (allowing survivors of domestic violence to opt out of cooperation due to safety risks)?

- a. Yes
- b. No [Skip to Q16]

c. Not sure/Don't remember

15. If yes to Q14, were you offered help when applying for good cause?

- a. Yes
- b. No

16. Did you apply for address confidentiality?

- a. Yes
- b. No

17. Were you required to provide documentation like police or court records of abuse?

- a. Yes
- b. No

18. If you didn't use these protections, what were the reasons? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I did not know about these options
- ☐ I didn't think I needed these options
- ☐ I was afraid of retaliation from the other parent
- ☐ I did not think these protections were enough to keep me safe
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Barriers [only ask those engaged in child support]

This section asks about challenges or obstacles you've faced when trying to access or participate in child support.

19. Did you experience any barriers or challenges when engaging with the child support program? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ I didn't understand how the child support process works
- ☐ I had concerns about having to contact or involve the other parent
- ☐ The process was too complicated or overwhelming
- ☐ I didn't have enough support from professionals (e.g., caseworkers, advocates)
- ☐ I was not told about my rights or safety options
- ☐ There were long delays (e.g., in court, receiving payments, or communication)
- ☐ I couldn't afford to pursue child support because of barriers like taking time off work, child care, or transportation.
- ☐ I was afraid it would affect my public assistance or immigration status

- ☐ I did not understand the process due to a language barrier
- ☐ I was concerned that I would be judged for my situation
- ☐ I was afraid I would be reported to child welfare
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____
- ☐ I did not experience any challenges

Non-Engagement with the Child Support Program *[only ask those NOT engaged in child support]*

This section asks about your reasons and decision-making related to not applying for or using child support services.

20. If you have chosen not to apply for child support, what were the reasons? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Didn't know about child support or how it works
- ☐ Found child support confusing, unfair, or not effective
- ☐ Didn't need the money
- ☐ Worked it out informally with the other parent (informal support means things like buying groceries, paying rent or utility bills, purchasing clothing or school supplies, or providing transportation for the children)
- ☐ Other parent couldn't afford to pay
- ☐ Didn't want to cause conflict with the other parent
- ☐ Didn't want or didn't feel safe having contact with the other parent (for myself or my child(ren))
- ☐ Didn't want government or legal involvement
- ☐ Concerned about immigration status
- ☐ Didn't want to disclose past abuse or violence I experienced
- ☐ Afraid of being reported to child welfare
- ☐ Concerned I would be judged for my situation
- ☐ The other parent was in prison
- ☐ The child lived part-time with the other parent
- ☐ Couldn't locate the other parent
- ☐ Received a good cause waiver
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

21. Did you read about or did anyone talk to you about the following safety measures? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ Good cause waiver allowing survivors of domestic violence to opt out of cooperation due to safety risks

- ☐ Address confidentiality
- ☐ Family Violence Indicator
- ☐ Virtual court appearances
- ☐ Escorts to and from court
- ☐ Separate waiting areas in court
- ☐ Case opening notices sent to recipient only
- ☐ Multi-factor identification protections for online portals/applications
- ☐ Advanced notice of potential contact with other parent
- ☐ Referral to local domestic violence (DV) service providers
- ☐ Genetic testing scheduled on different days/times from other parent
- ☐ Safety-modified parenting time orders
- ☐ Assistance filing a protection order
- ☐ Notification of enforcement actions and their start dates
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

22. Did you feel you had enough information to make an informed decision not to apply for child support?

- a. Yes
- b. No

23. Would having information about available safety measures (e.g., good cause, address confidentiality) have impacted/changed your decision?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Economic Impact Questions [ask everyone]

24. Has your experience with abuse affected your ability to (Check all that apply):

- ☐ Maintain employment
- ☐ Pay bills or afford basic needs
- ☐ Access or maintain public benefits
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

25. Have you ever stayed in or returned to an abusive relationship due to financial concerns?

- a. Yes
- b. No

26. How important have public benefits (e.g., SNAP, housing assistance, TANF) been for meeting your family's basic needs?

- a. Very important

- b. Somewhat important
- c. Not very important

Wrap-up [ask everyone]**27. How important is it for the child support program to routinely screen clients for domestic violence?**

- a. Very important
- b. Somewhat important
- c. Not very important
- d. Not sure

28. How important is it that child support cases involving domestic violence be handled by specially trained staff?

- a. Very important
- b. Somewhat important
- c. Not very important
- d. Not sure

To wrap up, we are going to ask you a few demographic questions. All questions are optional and you can answer as little or as much as you'd like, but we ask these questions to help us understand differences in experiences, outcomes, or needs across groups and more effectively tailor services and policy in the future.

Demographics [ask everyone]**What is your sex?**

- a. Female
- b. Male
- c. Prefer not to answer

What is your estimated annual income?

- a. \$0 - \$19,999
- b. \$20,000 - \$39,999
- c. \$40,000 - \$59,999
- d. \$60,000 - \$79,999
- e. \$80,000 or more
- f. Prefer not to answer

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Are you a recipient of any of the following public benefits? (Check all that apply)

- ☐ TANF
- ☐ SNAP
- ☐ Housing Assistance
- ☐ Medical Assistance
- ☐ Childcare Assistance
- ☐ Other (please specify): _____

Thank you for completing the survey.

We appreciate your time and insights.

Your responses will help us better understand how to improve safety, support, and access for survivors of DV navigating the child support program.

This interview has been approved under IRB Protocol #XX-XXXX and has been reviewed to ensure it meets all ethical standards for the protection of human subjects. All study procedures have been designed to prioritize participant safety, respect, and privacy, in alignment with federal regulations and best practices for conducting trauma-informed research.

If you have any questions or would like more information about this project, please feel free to contact **Betty Tegegne** at [**betty@centerforpolicyresearch.org**](mailto:betty@centerforpolicyresearch.org).