

Next Steps for 2014

As part of our efforts to engage parents in the child support program, OCSE training has become a mandatory component of the training curriculum for all HRA program areas by the end of 2013. In 2014 OCSE will also implement its Training Institute for community based organizations. We hope that by training Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), CBOs will integrate a discussion of the child support program into their service delivery models and advise their clients about how the child support program benefits children and has safeguards and programs in place to assist low income Noncustodial Parents (NCPs). With better informed CBOs, OCSE will be able to reach more parents and hopefully engage parents in the program and improve outcomes for children.

- Continue to help mothers understand the important role of fathers in a child's life. Educating mothers on the role child support plays in helping them financially, and on the knowledge that children perform better on all social indicators when a father is actively involved in their lives. When this occurs, it can lead to better overall outcomes for children and increased connection and compliance with the child support program by low-income families.
- Continue to stress that fathers matter and educating staff to recognize that assisting fathers obtain employment, establish paternity, and obtain child support orders is consistent with the broader HRA mission of helping families achieve their highest level of self-sufficiency.
 - Reducing non-cash assistance arrears for non-cash assistance families. This initiative is a partnership with the NY Peace Institute. It creates a safe environment for fathers who are low-income and owe a high amount of child support debt directly to the custodial parent to meet with a mediator about reducing the debt. It is expected that the discussion will also include issues around co-parenting and healthy relationships between mothers and fathers.