FAMILY SUPPORT F O R U M

The Official Newsletter of the Illinois Family Support Enforcement Association

Vol. 25 May, 2013 No. 1

The Case for Inspiration

By Susan Dalton, Child Support Enforcement Division, Cook County State's Attorney's Office

On October 12th, violence struck again on the streets of a Chicago neighborhood. This time the victim was seventeen year old, Miles Turner, who was shot 5 times in the Woodlawn neighborhood. At 9 p.m., Miles was visiting a friend who was home from college. He was off the streets in what is supposed to be a safe haven from the violent streets, in a place where parents believe their children are safe. As violence erupted outside, Miles stepped out to help, naive about what was happening outside and unaware his entire life would change in seconds.

Miles is a senior at Leo High School, a Catholic High School on Chicago's south side. He is a star offensive lineman on the Leo football team. A very big kid, with a very big heart. Miles is not a gangbanger, not a problem child. He is a high school senior with a dream of a college football scholarship and a career in video game design. An absolute computer whiz, Miles had dreams and goals that were within reach until that dreadful evening altered the course in how he would achieve those dreams.

Miles' mom is Angela Turner. Angela is an intergovernmental worker who has worked for the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, Child Support Division for over 20 years. She is one of our experts, our go-to person for Interstate cases. She is our constant, a rock of that team. She is that person who loves a challenge. While most of us cringe at the complexity of these Intergovernmental cases, Angela is the employee who enjoys everything about these cases.

On that fall day, Angela and her family lives would be changed forever. As we all rallied around Angela and her family, she was facing the unspeakable. Being at Northwestern Hospital, unable to do much more than pray as her only son fought for his life. She spent every moment at Miles' side. The ups and downs of what was going to happen next. The countless surgeries and the agonizing waiting. Gathering strength from the support of all those around her to make it through and remain positive. Feelings that is difficult for a mother to articulate while facing such a difficult situation. Feelings that some us do not really understand and feelings we don't like to think about because the thought of it happening is just too painful.

It has been 7 months since that day in October. Miles has made a miraculous recovery. He has been moved to the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (RIC) and has made great strides. Each milestone - moving his toes, lifting his arms, swinging his legs to get out of bed, and of course, finally being able to post remarks on Facebook have been accomplishments Angela has shared with us that has given us such joy. One great moment was on March 26th, when Governor Quinn stopped by to visit Miles. Unbeknownst to Angela, Governor Quinn heard about Miles story and wanted to personally stop by to encourage Miles in his recovery, as well as motivate him to achieve his goal of graduating with his class in June. Angela said Miles was star struck, so nervous about what to say to the Governor. He could not believe the Governor was sitting next to him.

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Angela is back at work. Getting up early every morning to see Miles before work and going straight back to the RIC after work. Working full time while still being there for her child has he continues to make strides towards a full recovery. Angela continues to remain encouraged by the progress her son has made. Seeing Angela's infectious smile throughout the aisles of our office continues to amaze us all considering what she has been through the previous seven months.

Working within the Child Support arena, we all interact with mothers and fathers. Whether it is an appointment interview, a walk-in customer or a court hearing, we share a small moment of time with a parent trying to raise a child in a society that can sometimes be a scary and uncertain place. We are not privy to all the experiences that have shaped a person's life. We all need to remember that our customers are people, not just cases. Some days we all get caught up in the numbers and frustrations related to cases, and on other days it is really hard to keep your mind focused on treating every case you touch as people living to support their family. We don't know their whole story. We only share brief moments with them trying to help them in their child support matter. We all have those days when coming into work can takes a lot of effort. It's on those days that I challenge you to really look at the stack of files in your cubicle, or those people waiting to go in front of a judge to learn of a decision that will affect the rest of their lives. It's those instances that could provide the opportunity to inspire one's self. It's those people that could have a story similar to that of Angela and Miles, and it's at those times we all need to be grateful for one another and the job we all do.

Hospital Paternity Establishment

By Maggie Tuerk, HOPE Statewide Coordinator

To increase paternity rates in Illinois, the Division has been evaluating ways to improve the existing paternity establishment processes performed in cooperation with Illinois birthing hospitals through the Hospital Opportunity for Paternity Establishment (HOPE) Program. Parent Support Services Unit (PSSU) staff implemented renewed outreach activities with hospitals in an effort to increase paternities using the Voluntary Acknowledgment of Paternity (VAP).

PSSU staff visited nearly 120 hospitals in November and December of 2012 – and continues in 2013 – to establish new or strengthen current positive working relationships, evaluate each hospital's HOPE procedures and provide assistance and training as needed. In addition, a new HOPE training and reference manual was developed and distributed to each hospital which assists hospital staff in educating new parents on topics such as positive reasons for establishing paternity and contact information, how to complete documents and order forms and brochures.

Other outreach methods are now being expanded or developed to provide Illinois birthing hospitals with the most current information and guidance. PSSU staff is also sharing performance statistics and will be augmenting the child support website and performing outreach to OB/GYN offices and community based agencies.

For more information on the HOPE Program, contact Maggie Tuerk at 309-671-3127 or maggie.tuerk@illinois.gov.



From the President . . .

...IFSEA UPDATE

By Angela Williams IFSEA President

It is hard to believe that another year has come and gone. It feels as if it were just yesterday that a group of "flappers and gangsters" came together for a most interesting kick-off of a successful conference. Thank you for all of the members who stepped out of their comfort zones and participated! Our attendance approached 200 members. The response to sessions, facilities and food was very positive. I hope everyone enjoyed the experience and gained more knowledge from our exceptional classes. Our success was due to the efforts of many who spent much time planning sessions, obtaining gift donations and securing generous vendors. I give you all my heartfelt thanks.

I also offer much thanks to our past president, Bryan Tribble, who channeled his passion for the growth of IFSEA into the creation of our new IFSEA committees. The committees are meeting regularly via teleconferencing and are engaged and accomplishing many tasks that are geared towards enhancing membership in our Association. Many new members have become involved in the implementation of these goals.

This year we are hoping that some of you will be able to attend the National Child Support Enforcement Association Annual Conference & Expo, "Charting A Course For the Modern Family." The Conference will be held August 5-7 in Baltimore, Maryland at the Baltimore Hilton. The conference agenda offers many workshops and training sessions that look to be very informative and educational. I am thankful for the opportunity to attend and look forward to sharing my experience with the membership. Should you need more information please go to www.ncsea.org.

Our 25th annual training conference is just around the corner. The 2013 IFSEA Conference will be held October 6-8 at the Marriott Hotel & Conference Center, 201 Broadway Ave., Normal, Illinois. We are planning a special celebration beginning with a Sunday evening "Silver Ball" to honor 25 years of IFSEA conferences. Andrea Sarver is the conference chair this year and would appreciate any assistance or suggestions you may have. You can email her at Andrea.Sarver@Illinois.gov. More information will come later in the year, but mark your calendars now and plan to come celebrate our organization's 25th anniversary conference. Keep looking at your emails to get the most recent updates to find out what we have in store for the membership. Hope to see you soon!

The Illinois Division of Child Support Services Pilot Tests the MAXIMUS Mobile App — Cutting the Cord to Old Communication Practices



From the moment a child support court order is filed, caseworkers are challenged with myriad tasks that rapidly fill each day and often require the skills of a juggler. Interactions with parents are particularly time-consuming, as both custodial and non-custodial parents (CPs and NCPs) call with questions about their case and to check the status on a variety of actions. Recognizing the opportunity to leverage the widespread adoption of mobile devices in the United States, the Illinois Division of Child Support

Services (DCSS) and MAXIMUS joined together to pilot an exciting new mobile application ("app") that offers parents a convenient, self-service option for accessing case information. By using the technology parents already prefer for conducting numerous other day-to-day transactions, the app bridges the "mobile app gap" to reshape and enhance the customer experience. And because so many parents will prefer using the app over other more time-consuming customer service options, Illinois DCSS caseworkers will have more time to spend on higher-value activities critical to helping the children and families they serve.

The numbers for doing so are compelling. More than 129 million people across the nation have smartphones¹, with one-third of all households using them in place of landline phones². In Illinois alone, more than 800,000 child support customers have designated their mobile phone as the main form of contact. With so many people owning and often preferring to get their information from mobile devices, it just makes sense that child support customers are among them. DCSS and MAXIMUS are confident that many of the parents they serve will be eager to take advantage of the convenience of communicating via a mobile app.

What is truly unique about the new DCSS / MAXIMUS child support mobile app is that it is the first of its kind to offer services beyond a simple child support calculator. Downloaded for free and available for both Android and iPhones, the app connects CPs and NPCs alike with their local child support office through real time messages, updates and information. There's even the option to connect directly to the child support call center, should parents need or desire to speak with their caseworker. And everything is accessed via the ease and convenience of a mobile device touch screen.

How It Works

The app launches for the first time with a request for the parent to register. The registration process establishes the flow of information between the child support office and the parent, and ensures that the information shared is both unique to the parent's case and secure. Once registered, the parent is redirected to the home screen, where they can choose from among six menu options containing information on topics most commonly requested.



The DCSS / MAXIMUS child support app home screen.

From the home screen, parents can easily navigate to the information they seek, utilizing screens that are both simple and intuitive. Key actions include the ability to check the status of a support order modification or payment, send and receive messages, and call their caseworker with one touch of the screen.

Following is a brief tour of the DCSS / MAXIMUS child support app, highlighting its main features and benefits.



Mod Center

The Mod Center allows CPs and NCPs to track the status of modification requests over the different stages. The app displays all possible steps in the process and visually indicates the steps that have been completed as well as those that remain. The active step provides a description, helping parents understand what is currently happening with the process.



Call Center

On a periodic basis, such as daily, a call center operations staff member can post within the central server the "best time to call" information. This information is then uploaded to the central app server program and pushed out to parents' mobile devices. Parents can also choose to send a message to the customer service team requesting a call back at a time that is convenient for the parent.



Message Center

The Message Center securely and privately enables parents and the child support office to communicate with each other. Parents can send notifications to the mobile customer support team, which are then forwarded to the parent's caseworker. Similarly, the child support office staff can send messages to parents, such as links to informational videos, reminders, answers to quick questions, and ad hoc announcements. Parents and staff can also share

attachments, such as program flyers and pictures of documents.



FAQs

The Frequently Asked Questions menu option displays static text answers to commonly asked questions. Parents can choose from several categories.

About Us

Finally, the About Us menu option enables parents to learn more about the Illinois Division of Child Services and provides links to additional resources.

Bringing the Next Generation of Child Support to Illinois

Today's consumers are more mobile than ever before, taking their smartphones and other devices with them everywhere and using them to access information anytime, anywhere. With smart technology playing such a prominent role in communications, it just makes sense to use it in child support applications. The DCSS / MAXIMUS child support app is taking customer service to the next level, offering parents an easy-to-use, self-service option that is available whenever they are. Just as importantly, it serves as a virtual assistant to caseworkers, freeing them to focus more of their time on activities that result in vital support for children and families. It's not so much about creating new technologies for child support, but helping child support adapt to the changing needs and expectations of the people we serve.

DCSS and MAXIMUS are excited to bring the next generation of child support to the children and families of Illinois.

Sources

¹http://www.comscore.com/Insights/Press_Releases/2013/3/comScore_Reports_January_2013_U.S._Smartphone_S ubscriber_Market_Share

²http://www.research-live.com/news/news-headlines/a-third-of-us-homes-now-cellphone-only-finds-nhis/4007737.article

Committee Updates

By Bryan Tribble

Hello everyone! This is one of my favorite times of year. I like to walk around my garden, contemplating the blank slate winter has provided and daydreaming of what it can and will become with the warmth of spring. Daydreaming and planning, however, also require a healthy dose of action and attention. Otherwise, those dreams will soon wither and die. Last year, one of our goals for IFSEA was to form/re-form several committees to work symbiotically to move our Association forward. It is with great pleasure that I report, not only did we reach our goal of forming these committees, but we also put these committees into action. Following the 2012 Annual Conference, we formed committees on Continuing Education, Legislative, Membership, Scholarship, and Website and Forum. These five Committees are comprised solely of members who have volunteered their time, skills, and expertise to serve in helping our Association meet its potential. All of the Committees have met multiple times this spring and are well on their way to meeting their collective goals and laying a foundation for the future. I would like to say thank you to all of the members of each of these committees, and especially the five individuals who are leading them: Lorelei Frost (Continuing Education), Sinan Alkin (Legislative), Angie Williams (Membership), Barb Smithers (Scholarship), and Christine Towles (Website and Forum). Thank you all, and keep up the good work! As you read the updates from each of the committees below, please take a minute to both think about how you would like to see your Association grow and consider what role you are willing to play in helping reach that vision.

Scholarship

The IFSEA Scholarship Committee has developed a formal application and criteria for the Scholarship selection process. We have also begun discussions on fundraising in the future to maintain and possibly increase the number of scholarships that can be provided each year. The Committee will be recommending to the Board that applicants must be current members of IFSEA and that at least one (1) scholarship recipient will be selected from the Belleville Region in honor of Lyn Kuttin's driving force in doubling the number of scholarships we can now offer. The remaining three (3) scholarships will be awarded to at large applicants. Please see the application in this issue of the FORUM to apply for a scholarship to attend the 2013 Annual Conference. The deadline for application is June 30th, and the individuals selected will be notified by July 31st.

Membership

The goals of the Membership committee are to: Define ways to increase IFSEA membership, Increase communication with our current members, and define what the benefits of membership are for both attorneys and non-attorneys. The first order of business is to get the word out statewide to the Judiciary, Circuit Clerks, and private attorneys about IFSEA in general and the benefits of membership in our association. To accomplish this task, we have developed a brochure to use to promote IFSEA membership, and will be disseminating electronic copies of the FORUM to various statewide Bar Associations. The next order of business is the development of a system for renewal of membership and a detailed listing of the benefits of membership. The committee is developing an automated invoicing process utilizing email addresses provided on the original membership application. Lastly, we are looking into ways we can provide a membership roster to all active members. This roster would be a listing of names, area(s) of expertise, and their preferred method of contact. The roster then could be utilized by members to have a direct link to other members to discuss an issue or problem.

Continuing Education

The IFSEA Continuing Education Committee is busy planning various CLE seminars for IFSEA members, and members of the bench and bar. The committee's goal is to provide relevant and informative CLE seminars. Our first CLE "Judicial Registration of HFS Administrative Orders" is scheduled for July 11, 2013 (3 pm - 4 pm). See the flier in this issue of the FORUM for details. The Committee wants to hear from IFSEA members. Please email your comments and ideas to Lorelei-G-Frost@illinois.gov.

Legislative

The IFSEA Legislative Committee, which is tasked with monitoring the progress of legislation that will affect child support enforcement, has begun its 2013 session by researching and discussing HB2330. HB2330 proposes to automatically suspend child support obligations for non-custodial parents, while affording custodial parents the opportunity to object to this suspension of support where the non-custodial parent has the means to continue to pay support. The bill also would prevent courts from considering incarceration as "voluntary unemployment." While the Legislative committee has not yet taken a position on the passage of HB2330, the committee is exploring the possibility of adopting a position and submitting a position paper on the bill. The Legislative committee also plans to release a summary of the effects of the bill if it is passed into law.

2012 IFSEA Conference Scholarship Winner

By Barb Smithers, DCSS Downstate Field

Thank you to the IFSEA Board for providing scholarships to their conferences and Angela Williams for nominating me for a scholarship to attend the 2012 Fall IFSEA Conference held at Indian Lakes Resort in Bloomingdale! It was a fantastic experience and I strongly encourage anyone interested in learning about the current issues in child support to seriously consider making attendance at the next conference a part of your plans for 2013! It is also an excellent opportunity to network with child support professionals from throughout Illinois who gather for this annual conference.

A very special thank you to Tracy Ferguson and Lyn Kuttin for organizing the 20's theme murder mystery mixer that gave us a chance to get to know each other in a fun and interesting way! The excitement it generated was surely a part of what felt like a very successful conference! Commissioner Turetsky's opening remarks were insightful and timely for the changes and challenges in the child support environment. Professor Betson's presentation provided data I found interesting and informative as Illinois moves toward the possibility of a different child support model. It was difficult to choose from the excellent topics being presented, but the break-out sessions I attended were all very well presented and the knowledge I gained was invaluable. A very special thank you to the presenter who got us up and moving for a 7th inning stretch!

After attending the 2011 IFSEA conference in Springfield I had committed to myself to attend the 2012 conference, on my own if necessary so the scholarship was really nice to receive in that regard! I volunteered for IFSEA's new Scholarship Committee to help build a program within IFSEA to provide more scholarships in the future. A very sincere thanks to Lyn Kuttin and Deb Packard for getting this ball rolling with their friendly challenge that resulted in a new IFSEA scholarship, the KFC Scholarship Fund that has over a thousand dollars already! If you are not a member of IFSEA please consider joining for just \$20.00 per year.

If asked why I wanted to attend an IFSEA conference I would say, "So I can continue to grow and improve my service to the people of this State." One of the very first lessons I was taught as a brand new State employee in 1983 is that I had been given a privilege and was a public servant, and I should never lose sight of that. At times I'm sure I have, but working in child support keeps that in the front of my focus almost daily. We serve people who have real needs and real issues, and if they didn't need us they wouldn't be calling, writing or coming to see us.

If there is one small thing I can impart to those on the very front lines of child support in Illinois, the caseworkers, receptionists, customer service staff, legal reps, each and every person who has contact with the people we serve, it would be to say "they need you and deserve your best efforts" even if they are screaming and yelling, cursing and getting in your face. No one comes to see us for the fun of it, except auditors! For every one that yells there are ten who are truly appreciative of your efforts.

Since I came to this division in 1999, I have been amazed over and over by the people I've had the privilege to meet and sometimes work with. You are the most caring and hard working people I have ever had the pleasure to work with in State government, and without a doubt the most generous of them. It is both humbling and motivating, so I want to lastly thank each and every person who works towards better lives for the families in Illinois for doing what you do.

Vision for the Future is Paperless

By Nancy Emberton, DCSS Champaign Regional Manager

With the implementation of an imaging system that supports our business processes, one of DCSS's visions for the future is to be paperless. It is a lofty goal, but we dream BIG at DCSS. A word of clarification is warranted here. By paperless, DCSS means that whenever possible document transfers should occur electronically, and document storage should occur via our imaging system, commonly known as DOCRS. At present two initiatives toward our future vision are currently ongoing;

- 1. regional files are being imaged in some locations, and
- 2. a pilot has begun wherein representing legal offices provide judicial orders to regional offices via electronic transfer.

DCSS often utilizes the mail to communicate with our customers and collect data, so we fully realize this means that responses are received in our offices in the form of incoming paper. How Field Operations processes that mountain of incoming paper is key in our quest toward paperless regional offices. As documents are received, data is captured in KIDS. If the document is needed within a legal action referral (LAR) to be sent to our representing attorneys, the document is then routed to the assigned team member working the case. However, if the document is not required in hard copy form for any process, the document is sent directly to imaging. Imaging equipment has been installed in all regional offices, and regional team members image the documents; rather than filing the documents. Each document image is available to anyone in the Division with access to the imaging system and is easily retrievable in the future when necessary.

The implementation of a user friendly document retrieval system naturally lead to the goal to cease keeping records in our regional field offices. Many sites are already successfully functioning as paperless offices and have been for quite some time. They include:

- Cook
- ARO -Lake County
- BRO –St. Clair County
- BRO –Madison County

Other DCSS office sites have already working toward becoming a paperless office by starting to image their existing file records. These include:

- ARO –DuPage County
- CRO -Champaign Region
- CRO -Macon County

Within the venue of electronic document delivery, a pilot was implemented in February 2013 involving the DuPage County State's Attorney's office and the Effingham Attorney General office. Orders issued in the counties served by these two offices are electronically delivered to the corresponding regional offices for data entry into KIDS. Additionally, the electronic version of the order is moved to the DOCRS imaging system and available right away to anyone with access to the DOCRS. This represents a huge advantage for DCSS, as so many of our processes are driven, so to speak, by the paternity and support orders. Interest in expanding this process has been voiced and is expected in the very near future.

Springfield Urban League Partnership

By Shannon Clay, DCSS Springfield Region

A federal grant issued in 2011 established the "Male Involvement program", specifically the Fatherhood Initiative, provides support to low income fathers in workforce readiness, education and building strong relationships with their children. Fathers involved in this program receive training and support in being responsible, effective, accountable, and loving parents. This includes providing financial and emotional support to children who do not live with their father.

The Male Involvement program fortunately blossomed into a partnership between the Springfield Urban League and the Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) of Illinois to strengthen the involvement of fathers with their families. The program kicked off in March of 2012; with the Springfield Urban League identifying and referring eligible fathers whose families are enrolled in the HFS child support program. Once a Father is identified as willing to participate in the "Fatherhood Initiative", indicating a desire to meet his child support obligations, DCSS of Illinois may suspend collection activities and if appropriate work with the courts to review the case for a downward modification toward a reasonable order based on the father's current income. If the father fails to cooperate with the Urban League, then all DCSS collection actions will resume.

While the program is still in its infancy, participants who have child support cases enrolled with DCSS have successfully began making payments on 46% of the cases involved, which is remarkable given the recent implementation and the time it takes to overcome some of the employment barriers the program participants face. On November 14, 2012, DCSS staff attended the first annual "Rites of Passage" event for the fathers enrolled in the Fatherhood Initiative where it was announced that some of the fathers in the program could not attend the event due to work commitments, a welcomed reason for not attending.

The Urban League Program involves an orientation, program screening and eligibility determination to assist in identifying strengths and barriers to aid in the development of each individuals "Man Plan." The "Man Plan", as it is known, is developed for barrier reduction and supportive services in such things as childcare, housing, transportation, education, work experience/employment, marriage and parenting training followed by implementation, monitoring and regular evaluation of each individual's plan.

On January 1st, 2013 DCSS of Illinois began phase II of the partnership where DCSS identifies candidates for the program which involves reaching out to fathers who have cases with the Illinois Child Support Program to introduce the concept of the partnership and program and to refer interested candidates to the Urban League.

During the first year the Urban League enrolled over 238 participants with DCSS assisting nearly 30% of them. While the concept may not be new, the partnership is! Both the Urban League and DCSS of Illinois are reaching out to work with families, serving compassionately and resulting in a win-win for all involved.

The IFSEA Scholarship Committee has met and agreed to develop a formal application and criteria for the selection process. They also have started discussions on fundraising in the future to maintain and possibly increase the number of scholarships that can be provided each year. The Committee will be recommending to the Board that applicants must be current members of IFSEA and that at least one (1) scholarship recipient will be selected from the Belleville Region in honor of Lyn Kuttin's driving force behind this effort, with the remaining three (3) being at large. The Committee has drafted an application and criteria for selection of scholarship applicants to attend the 2013 and future conferences and will finalize it at the next meeting on April 16. The deadline for selection needs to be by the end of July. A deadline for applications has not yet been determined.

JUDICIAL REGISTRATION OF HFS ADMINISTRATIVE ORDERS

Illinois new law on registering administrative child support orders in circuit courts:

- What the Law Allows and Prohibits
- Registering Party Requirements (HFS, obligee & obligor)
- Challenges to Registration
- Process for Obtaining Required Documents from HFS
- Clerk of the Circuit Court Registration Forms & Filing (for private bar & pro-se litigants)

<u>SAVE THE DATE</u>: JULY 11, 2013 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm

Via videoconferencing in various locations across Illinois REGISTRATION INFO SOON TO BE ANNOUNCED Illinois MCLE Credit provided

Presented by: IFSEA Continuing Education Committee

The Illinois Family Support Enforcement Association will be celebrating the 25th Annual 2013 Annual Training Conference this October 6 – 8 in Bloomington, Illinois. There will be a 25th Anniversary Recognition/Presentation Dinner Sunday night. If you have any special conference memories, stories or photos to share, please contact Jeanne Fitzpatrick at Jeanne. fitzpatrick@illinois.gov.

FAMILY SUPPORT FORUM

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ILLINOIS FAMILY SUPPORT ENFORCEMENT ASSOCIATION Application for Membership / Address Correction
Please: [] accept my application for membership in IFSEA. [] correct my address as noted below.
 Regular membership - please enclose \$20.00 annual dues. Subscription membership - please enclose \$20.00 annual fee. Affiliate membership - (dues to be determined by Directors upon acceptance).
Applicant's Name:
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