

**2007 Innovations Awards Program  
APPLICATION**

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 07-S-06OKREDUCEFOSTERCARE

**Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:**

State: Oklahoma

Assign Program Category (applicant): Health and Human Services (Use list at end of application)

Legend of OKDHS Acronyms:

CSED: Child Support Enforcement Division

CASA: Court Appointed Special Advocate

CSS III: Child Support Specialist Level Three

JJC: Juvenile Justice Center

UPA: Uniform Parenting Act

Child Support Specialist IV: Child Support Specialist Level Four

1. Program Name: **Reduce Time Spent in Foster Care Through Early Intervention**
2. Administering Agency: **Child Support Enforcement Division**
3. Contact Person (Name and Title): **Pamela Bowie, Managing Attorney**
4. Address: **Oklahoma County Juvenile Court Office  
5905 N. Classen Court, PO Box, 268998, Oklahoma City, OK 73126**
5. Telephone Number: **(405) 767-2600**
6. FAX Number: **(405) 767-2678**
7. E-mail Address: **Pamela.Bowie@okdhs.org**
8. Web site Address: **www.okdhs.org**
9. Please provide a two-sentence description of the program. **The program is intended to reduce the length of time children spend in foster care through the involvement of child support enforcement at the earliest possible point. The program also addresses paternity and support issues within six months of the filing of the deprived petition for all deprived cases in Oklahoma County.**
10. How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on April 2, 2007, to be considered. **August 2005.**
11. Why was the program created? What problem[s] or issue[s] was it designed to address? **The program seeks to reduce the length of time children spend in foster care by creating an effective dialogue between Family Support, Child Welfare, Child Support Enforcement and the juvenile justice court system.**
12. Describe the specific activities and operations of the program in chronological order.
  - **August 2005:** OKDHS Director Howard H. Hendrick authorizes the creation of a full service CSED office in the Juvenile Justice Center (JJC) to establish paternity and child support orders in deprived cases. The dual mission of this office is to reduce the length of time in foster care and to maximize standard CSED performance measurement production.

- **December 2005:** Pamela Bowie is hired as Managing Attorney on Dec. 5, 2005; Robert Cameron is hired as Office Manager on Dec. 19, 2005. They conducted interviews for two Child Support Specialist IV positions (supervisors) and one Child Support Specialist III position, and hired personnel for those positions.
- **January 2006 (ongoing):** Two Supervisors and one CSS III report for duty at the JJC. Due to a shortage of adequate office space in the JJC, CSED staff operate from two Oklahoma City area locations.
- **January 2006 (ongoing):** Outreach efforts begin with individuals, organizations and divisions that must partner with us for this office to be successful. Some of those partners are: Juvenile Court judges, the District Attorney's office, the Public Defender's office and Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) staff. Special training was conducted and presentations were made to the several Child Welfare County Directors and staff involved in the JJC process.
- **January 2006:** Begin to appear in two of the four courtrooms during the disposition docket for deprived cases.
- **February 2006:** CSED computer access installed in all JJC court rooms.
- **March 2006:** Agreement reached with Oklahoma City metro CSED offices as to the rules governing the assignment and transfer of CSED cases. Also, State's Attorney was hired. This enabled our office to expand courtroom coverage to three courtrooms.
- **May 2006:** Consolidated our office staff into a temporary location on the third floor of the JJC capable of accommodating 16 personnel. This enabled us to move forward with hiring new staff. All equipment and other support are provided by the Child Welfare County Director in JJC. Our only equipment consists of 16 desktop computers and four laptop computers.
- **June 2006:** Our own office code created for computer system access and case management. This facilitated the computer transfer of cases which met specific criteria to be automatically assigned to the Juvenile Court Office. We immediately acquired 6,000 cases.
- **July 2006:** Began to partner with Child Welfare to do diligent searches on all children taken into custody in Oklahoma County. A diligent search is the process where we research our system to gather important information, i.e. determine if paternity has been established, who mother has named as potential fathers, whether or not any orders exist, etc. This information is given to both child welfare and the district attorneys office to help determine who the necessary parties are to each case.
- **August 2006:** CSED Division Memo 06-02, Child Support Issues in Deprived Actions (Child Welfare Cases) effective Aug. 29, 2006.
- **September 2006:** Expanded docket coverage to the fourth courtroom in the juvenile building.
- **November 2006:** Uniform Parentage Act (UPA) effective Nov. 1, 2006. Outreach which began in January 2006 was expanded to familiarize all partners with the UPA and numerous changes in paternity law.
- **February 2007:** Approval granted by the Director of CSED to participate federal grant project. Karen Anthony with the Administration for Children & Families referred us to Nancy Thoennes with the Center for Policy Research in Denver, Colo. as a potential participant in this project. Oklahoma is one of four states who will be participating in a conference in Washington D.C. in July 2007 to share ideas and gather information regarding child support and paternity establishment in juvenile deprived cases.

- **March 2007:** Project planning session with the OKDHS Office of Project Management and other key partners concerning the design and construction of our new office on the fourth floor of JJC. This space will accommodate 20 staff and projected completion date is summer 2007.

**13. Why is the program a new and creative approach or method? Our interaction and involvement in the juvenile court for deprived cases addresses the Uniform Parenting Act requirement to address child support and paternity within six months of the filing of the deprive petition. This office is the only CSED office so structured in the state of Oklahoma.**

**14. What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.) Our office, at full staffing, will consist of 20 full time employees (FTEs) to include the Managing Attorney, one States Attorney, a Program Manager, 15 Child Support Specialists, plus an administrative staff of two.**

**15. What are the program's annual operational costs? \$1,053,476**

**16. How is the program funded? It is funded by the Child Support Enforcement Division.**

**17. Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number. No**

**18. What equipment, technology and software are used to operate and administer this program? We will be a fully operation CSED office employing the Information Management System utilized by CSED as well as access to Child Welfare tracking/data system known as KIDS. At the present time we have read-only access; this could change if we determine the need for a further broadening of our access requirements. In addition, we utilize certain parts of the Family Support screens and employ a referral system from Family Support for the initiation/update of our child support caseload.**

**19. To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and e-mail address. OKDHS Director Howard H. Hendrick, 2400 N. Lincoln Blvd., Oklahoma City, OK 73125. (405) 521-3646; fax, (405) 521-6458; email howard.hendrick@okdhs.org.**

**20. Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ? No**

**21. Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken? Our full staff of 20 FTE has not been reached. We have been operating with limited staffing in the Juvenile Justice Center, utilizing temporary quarters and equipment in common use with other building occupants. Our only equipment at this time is our complement of desk top computers and lap top computers for use in court and from home.**

**22. Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem[s] or issue[s]. Provide tangible examples. We have made significant strides toward our goal of being the primary agent of research and genetic testing when paternity is an issue. The juvenile court judges have been very supportive of our efforts to address the UPA requirements and in our effort to define the most effective way to positively impact the length of time children spend in foster care. We have worked cases long neglected due to the difficulty of obtaining current and accurate case information as well as the difficulty of appearing before the juvenile court in the frequency required with deprived cases; this was prohibitive considering the demands of other CSED cases.**

**23. How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception? Growth and acceptance has been steady. It is a new program still in the growth and definition phase. Every week, we find new ways that we can effectively interact with the child welfare staff and the juvenile justice system.**

**24. What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program? Obstacles could include information system interface and access. Also,**

**understanding and acceptance by the key players in the juvenile process to include front line staff, and the several pieces of the juvenile justice system. Also, to determine the most effective way to interact with the system/process that exists and contribute and enhance the effectiveness of that system by using the special skills Child Support Specialists can contribute.**

## 2007 Innovations Awards Program Program Categories and Subcategories

Use these as guidelines to determine the appropriate Program Category for your state's submission and list that program category on page one of this application. Choose only one.

### *Infrastructure and Economic Development*

- Business/Commerce
- Economic Development
- Transportation

### *Government Operations*

- Administration
- Elections
- Public Information
- Revenue

### *Health & Human Services*

- Aging
- Children & Families
- Health Services
- Housing
- Human Services

### *Human Resources/Education*

- Education
- Labor
- Management
- Personnel
- Training and Development
- Workforce Development

### *Natural Resources*

- Agriculture
- Energy
- Environment
- Environmental Protection
- Natural Resources
- Parks & Recreation
- Water Resources

### *Public Safety/Corrections*

- Corrections
- Courts
- Criminal Justice
- Drugs
- Emergency Management
- Public Safety

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CSG Innovations Awards 2007  
The Council of State Governments  
2760 Research Park Drive, P.O. Box 11910  
Lexington, KY 40578-1910

### **Contact:**

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This application is also available at [www.csg.org](http://www.csg.org), in the Programs section.

**Deadline: April 2, 2007**