

**NOTICE OF AND REQUEST FOR EXEMPTION
FROM CHAPTER 103F, HRS**

To: Chief Procurement Officer

From:  **Garry Kemp, CSEA Administrator** Department of the Attorney General, CSEA
Department/Division/Branch or Office

Pursuant to § 103F-101(a)(4), HRS, and Chapter 3-141, HAR, the Department requests a procurement exemption to purchase the following:

1. Title and description of health and human service(s):	
The agency was granted exemption from Chapter 103F, HRS, in September 2005 under the approval number PEH No. 06-13 for the federal Section 1115 project. The project, Kauka'i Ka 'Ohana (Strength in Families), is to reduce intervention and use of adversarial or formal proceedings while increasing financial security for children born out-of-wedlock.	
The original term of contract is from 8/1/2005 to 7/31/2008. However, the agency would like to request a no-cost extension from 8/1/2008 to 7/31/2009 due to a late start of the project.	
2. Provider Name and Address:	Policy Studies, Inc. 1899 Wynkoop Street Suite 300; Denver, CO 80202
3. Total Contract Funds:	\$0
Contract Funds per Year (if applicable):	
4. Reference number of Previous Request for this Service (if applicable):	
5. Term of Contract:	Start: 8/1/2008 End: 7/31/09
6. Describe how procurement by competitive means is either not practicable or not advantageous to the State:	This project is 95% funded with the federal 1115 grant. Because of this, it took several months to finalize the grant paperwork and the proper contract agreement in place. The project was not active until May 2006. As a result all the activities stated in the grant proposal were pushed back for almost a year. The federal grant management division has granted the State to extend the project for another year from August 1, 2008 to July 31, 2009. Therefore, there is a need to request the State Procurement Office's approval of extension of time on the 1115 Grant contract. Attached are additional information for your review.
7. Describe the reason for the selection of the provider including a description of how the procedure ensured the maximum fair and open competition practicable:	Policy Studies, Inc. is uniquely qualified for this project because of their knowledge of federal performance requirements pertaining to the paternity establishment as well as their involvement of the existing decision support system.

Attachment to SPO Form 7, Explanation describing how procurement by competitive means is either not practicable or not advantageous to the State:

1. CSEA requests an exemption from HRS Chapter 103D in order to enter into a subcontract with Policy Studies, Inc. to fulfill the agency's obligations under the federal grant award described in the proposal attached for information.
2. CSEA needs to subcontract with someone in order to fulfill its obligations under the grant award because CSEA's staff is too small and CSEA has limited capacity to implement and evaluate a project of this scope on its own. Therefore it needs to subcontract to obtain technical assistance and to have the project evaluated. The grant is to begin upon receiving the official grant letter from the federal government, and it would be impossible to develop specifications and seek competition within the time frame available.
3. Policy Studies Inc. was identified in the grant proposal as the subcontractor, and is uniquely qualified to provide the technical assistance and evaluation services because:
 - The company is familiar with the Hawaii Child Support Program, including its laws, regulations, and procedures, because it has been working on the Decision Support System (DSS) project for CSEA. Such project requires the company to acquire in-depth knowledge of the agency's child support program and its automatic child support enforcement system.
 - The company has successfully developed innovative strategies for establishment and enforcement of child support obligations with other states such as Michigan and Vermont.
4. The following are examples of the specific strategies PSI have developed to enhance voluntary paternity establishment programs:

Since 1994, PSI has been helping states including Massachusetts, New Jersey, Ohio, Kentucky, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia, Wyoming, and Arizona to reposition and publicize their voluntary paternity acknowledgment programs. PSI helped to educate providers, hospital staff, and parents about the broad range of benefits provided by paternity establishment. PSI put paternity in context, educating providers about elevated child poverty figures in single-parent households, and explaining the benefits (e.g., health insurance, social security, and veterans' benefits) that may be unavailable to children who do not have a legal relationship with their father. Under PSI's direction in Massachusetts, the statewide participation rate in the program increased from 49 percent of unmarried couples to 68 percent in less than two years.

In the course of operating paternity acknowledgment programs in these states, PSI devised outreach strategies and developed informational materials, including brochures, posters, parent education videos, training materials

(videos and manuals), television and radio PSAs, briefing packets, overheads, and advertisements to encourage unmarried parents to acknowledge paternity. In addition to designing and producing these materials, PSI helped the organizations involved incorporate the appropriate procedures into their individual processes.

PSI provides ongoing technical and educational assistance needed to enable all birthing hospitals to execute their responsibilities under the program. In our experience, technical assistance is the single most important component of a voluntary paternity acknowledgment program. In our paternity projects, we have proven our capability to establish responsive and supportive working relationships with our partners. Our technical assistance includes methodology and data elements for reporting and an improvement of the quality and accuracy of data submitted.

Independent monitoring is critical to the success of the paternity program because the management of birthing facilities has no compelling institutional reason to track their internal performance in relation to paternity acknowledgments. Participation in the voluntary paternity acknowledgment program is legally required, but not generally regarded as a core function of a birthing facility. Thus, it is important to understand that external monitoring by project staff is the only systematic performance monitoring that will be conducted. One implication is that birthing facility staff are often grateful to be notified of problems, if approached properly, because they have no internal systems to tell them that something is wrong. Consequently, it is important to monitor their performance closely to ensure that they are implementing the program effectively.

We have several methods of identifying which hospitals are experiencing problems: phone calls received by our office, quality assurance review of In-Hospital Paternity forms, birth statistics, and internal reports all alert us to potential problems. These help us identify which facilities require the most attention and prepare for issues we will address with them, working creatively with the hospitals to improve their performance. We try to help them identify problem areas and overcome them, but we also believe it is essential to give encouragement and thanks, recognizing improvements and the dedicated efforts of the staff that assist parents with the voluntary paternity process.

Our belief about corrective action is to be as positive and supportive as possible, focusing on ways to improve the outcomes rather than on the sub-par performance. We have found that by building relationships, being approachable and available, and offering ongoing technical assistance, our partners' staff members feel more comfortable in admitting mistakes and asking for help.

When we identify sub-par performance, we will contact the appropriate staff person, gently point out the potential problem (e.g., "Was there a problem with your numbers submitted last month?") and analyze possible solutions. Frequently, just pointing out the problem is enough to motivate the hospital into taking corrective action. At other times, further probing identifies an issue that requires more attention. Most of these issues involve employee leave, employee turnover, or structural changes such as hospital mergers. Once we assess the severity of the problem, we will respond appropriately. This may involve telephone consultation and supplemental mailings. In many cases, it will require on-site visits for trouble-shooting and retraining. An on-site visit can also uncover in-house procedures and communication gaps that may be affecting performance. We will conduct these on-site technical assistance visits as necessary to assist birthing hospitals and other agencies in carrying out their responsibilities in support of the paternity program. PSI believes in addressing problems as soon as possible so corrective actions will not be delayed. Quick responses can prevent problematic actions from becoming habits. Part of our technical assistance is to continue to monitor a hospital's work after addressing the initial problem, following up as needed with more discussions and/or visits, or with a call of appreciation for the improvement. Ongoing technical assistance will yield ongoing program improvement.

In addition to performance monitoring and providing prompt and knowledgeable responses to inquiries, we conduct on-site visits to each birthing hospital. Birthing hospitals are prioritized for visits based on volume of non-marital births and performance problems that have been identified from monthly reports, telephone queries, Support Enforcement Services and/or Vital Records Registry staff. During these visits, we discuss topics such as collecting and processing forms and other issues that have arisen in that facility. We also review performance, assess obstacles to effective implementation as well as success factors, and determine whether additional technical assistance is needed from project staff. We review any problems that have been observed in acceptability of paternity acknowledgments being produced by the institution. We also, when possible, train birthing hospital employees to submit data electronically.

In addition to operating paternity acknowledgment programs, PSI has also recently started a project in Ramsey County Minnesota entitled "Breaking Down Barriers to Voluntary Paternity Acknowledgment." The project is funded by an 1115 grant from the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement. The project analyzes the current barriers that impede obtaining voluntary acknowledgments from unwed parents in a large urban jurisdiction and develops and implements a coordinated comprehensive approach to overcoming those barriers. The analysis includes an examination of both process and cultural barriers to the voluntary acknowledgment of paternity

(including cultural barriers faced by various ethnic and minority populations).
The major objectives of the project are to:

- Increase the completion of voluntary acknowledgments of paternity,
- Increase child support payments,
- Develop better understanding, increased communications, and new collaborations between the child support agency, birthing hospitals, pre-natal clinics, other government agencies and service providers, and community and faith-based organizations, and
- Develop a better understanding of how the voluntary acknowledgment program can promote marriage of unwed parents where appropriate.

As of September 1, 2005 PSI has completed the initial analysis of barriers and produced a report with recommendations on how to overcome the identified barriers.

5. PSI has developed policies and innovative techniques for working with low-income unwed parents in the child support program. Here are the examples of its experience in this area:

PSI has been providing management analysis, program evaluation, technical assistance, policy research, and information technology services to public sector human service agencies and courts for over 20 years.

We have assisted over 40 states, the Navajo Nation, and several countries with the development and revision of their child support guidelines. This includes developing policies and adjustment formulas to deal with special guidelines issues such as low-income, noncustodial parents, additional dependents, and shared-parenting time.

In addition to our direct child support program experience with low-income parents, PSI has conducted numerous research and evaluation projects that pertain to low-income parents. Below, we summarize the scope and outcomes of selected projects.

PSI Experience

<p>Annie E. Casey Foundation Project on Low-Income Fathers and Child Support</p>	<p>PSI received a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation for a national project entitled, "Low-Income Fathers and Child Support: Starting Off on the Right Track." The project examined the treatment of low-income fathers in the child support system, examined best state practices, and made recommendations for state child support programs, state legislative action, and federal action. The project included analysis of the use of default orders, examining best state practices, reviewing and analyzing international practices, consulting with advocacy organizations, and preparing a final report.</p>
<p>Knox County Case Stratification and Early Intervention Project</p>	<p>The State of Tennessee contracted with PSI to implement a project funded under an 1115 grant from the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement to test interventions that increase payments by non-custodial parents and avoid the accumulation of arrears through early intervention. The project uses a case assessment tool, modeled after a successful approach used in Australia, to assess parental characteristics (such as income and marital status) in order to better target services and enforcement tools to individual case circumstances.</p>
<p>Memphis Tennessee Promoting Parental Responsibility and Healthy Marriages.</p>	<p>The State of Tennessee contracted with PSI to implement a project in Memphis Tennessee entitled, "Promoting Parental Responsibility and Healthy Marriages." This project was funded under a SIP grant from the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement. In addition to promoting healthy marriages, the project works to increase paternity acknowledgments and to refer unwed parents (most of whom are low-income) to services that they may need in the community.</p>
<p>California Department of Child Support Services Child Support Collectibility Report</p>	<p>The California Department of Child Support Services (DCSS) contracted with PSI to conduct child support collectibility research compilation and report preparation. For this project, we compiled the following: research on the collectibility of child support arrears in California; data on child support policies that lead to the accumulation of child support arrears; and recommendations for maximizing collections, preventing accumulation of future arrears, and managing existing arrears. We brought together the research</p>

	<p>and recommendations into a single document that explains the problems of arrears accumulation in California and sets forth recommendations for reducing arrears.</p>
<p>National Evaluation of the Access & Visitation Programs: Promising Practices</p>	<p>In 2002, PSI conducted a national evaluation of the child access and visitation grant programs that were established as part of the 1996 federal welfare reform legislation (PRWORA). OCSE was interested in identifying and documenting promising policies and practices states had implemented as part of their programs in the hope that practitioners and policy makers could use them to improve their access and visitation programs. PSI staff reviewed materials about the programs, interviewed program coordinators and service providers, and spoke with other practitioners to learn about promising practices. Last year, OCSE issued a press release about the findings of the final report. OCSE recently loaded the report on its website and printed 1,500 copies of the report for distribution nationally.</p>
<p>Louisiana Low Income Fathers</p>	<p>Through TANF funds, the State of Louisiana pursued the development of a low-income fatherhood program. In partnership with SSA Consultants, a local Louisiana firm, PSI assisted the State with the design, implementation and evaluation of the program. PSI initially produced three reports for the project. The first was a comprehensive review and comparison of Louisiana's existing regulations and procedures affecting low-income non-custodial parents to promising practices in other states. The State has found this report to be an invaluable resource in developing strategic plans for both its TANF and child support program.</p> <p>The second report developed a profile of Louisiana low-income fathers. PSI analyzed data from automated system records to develop the profile. It examined the relationship between child support payments and incomes. It also compared typical occupations of non-custodial parents to Louisiana labor market information to determine whether non-custodial parents have potential to increase earnings and in positions to move up career ladders.</p> <p>The final report was an evaluation of the piloted Fatherhood Program. It included both process and outcomes evaluations. PSI gathered data through interviews, focus groups, case files, and an automated management information systems, that PSI adapted to suit Louisiana's program. PSI modified the Responsible Fatherhood Management Information</p>

	<p>System (RFMIS), which is a public use file available at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website. The purpose of the RFMIS is to provide fatherhood programs with an automated tracking tool that can also be used to compile evaluation data.</p> <p>Subsequently, in the past year, SSA contracted with PSI to conduct an evaluation of the program after its first pilot year of operation.</p>
South Carolina Access and Visitation Program	<p>The South Carolina Department of Social Services (DSS) contracted with PSI to conduct an evaluation of its Visitation, Involvement, Parenting (VIP) Program, which is being operated in two jurisdictions. PSI conducted a process and outcomes evaluation of the program. PSI staff gathered data from case files; conducted interviews with State and local staff involved with the programs and other stakeholders (e.g., judges, representatives from community based organizations); reviewed materials prepared by and for the programs (e.g., outreach brochures, data collection instruments); and analyzed outcomes data from the management information system designed for the programs. PSI staff prepared a final report that DSS could use as a foundation for building on their existing program to help serve families better, particularly non-custodial parents.</p>
Boulder County Workforce Program	<p>In July 2002, PSI began operating a Welfare-To-Work (WtW) program for non-custodial parents in Boulder County. Specifically, the program works with non-custodial parents who are unemployed, underemployed, or are having trouble meeting their child support obligations by linking them with community agencies to help them overcome barriers to employment and payment of child support. PSI tracks outcomes for clients including employment, payment of child support, and visitation with children. This program is being run in cooperation with the Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) using monies from multiple federal and state funding sources. Our Project Manager routinely sends verbal and written progress and financial reports to the WtW Coordinator at CDLE that comply with State and federal reporting requirements.</p>
Colorado Initiative to Partner FBO/CBOs	<p>The Colorado Department of Labor and Employment (CDLE) in collaboration with the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) has engaged PSI in support of the State's approach to increasing participation of faith-based</p>

with Workforce Centers	and community-based organizations (FBOs/CBOs) in the State's workforce development system. PSI is assisting FBOs/CBOs One-Stop Centers across the State by: identifying Promising Practices in partnerships between One-Stop Centers and FBOs/CBOs, assessing unmet needs of One-Stop Centers and their customers, reviewing current participation levels, interviewing stakeholders, and identifying barriers to FBO/CBO participation, and providing technical assistance to One-Stop Centers to help them partner with FBOs/CBOs.
El Paso County Full-service Child Support Operation Parent Opportunity Program	When PSI began managing the El Paso County Child Support Operation in 2001, they also began operating the Parent Opportunity Program (POP). This program works with non-custodial parents by linking them with services in the community that will help them become more emotionally and financially available for their children. In June 2002, PSI was awarded an additional 21-month contract with the Pikes Peak Workforce Center (PPWFC) to better serve their Welfare to Work (WtW) non-custodial parents. This program has a larger funding source, which has allowed POP clients to obtain additional education and training along with expanded supportive services. Recently, PSI has added mediation and life skills groups to the program. A trained mediator on staff tries to mediate access and visitation issues in hopes that both parents can agree upon a parenting plan. The life skills groups work with clients on issues such as child support, employment, and relationships with custodial parents.
New Jersey Healthy Families Initiative	The New Jersey Department of Human Services, Division of Family Development contracted to PSI to lead the creation of a community-based demonstration program entitled Healthy Families. The project will be based in Camden County. The goal of the project is to increase responsible father involvement, improve the job-skills of low-income fathers, and help low-income father's establish positive relationships with their children and their children's mothers. In addition, recognizing the importance of marriage as a social unit and the necessity to support and encourage marital relationships, this project will promote marriage, where appropriate.
Tennessee Families First Initiative	In Tennessee, PSI is working to integrate the child support and WtW functions to create new options for underserved populations. In Knox County, Tennessee, PSI's full-service

	<p>child support office is working with the County's Department of Human Services (DHS) to improve the integration of child support and Families First (Tennessee's Welfare-to-Work program) activities. PSI is taking a proactive approach to identify and interview Families First applicants during the initial child support application process and/or when they visit DHS offices for other purposes. This allows specialists to provide child support information and education to Families First participants. PSI is also working with the State to enhance the interface with the Families First program in the Tennessee Judicial Districts in which PSI provides services (the 6th, 10th, 21st, 27th, and 29th). In the Tennessee offices, PSI is developing strategies for outreach and educational programs to both the Families First and Non-TANF parents. PSI is focusing on identifying new Families First cases, identifying domestic violence potential, and enhancing training for intake staff.</p>
<p>Study to Improve State Policies and Practices to Make Child Support Enforcement More Appropriate to Low-income Fathers</p>	<p>As part of a Task Order from the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement, PSI conducted a study to identify opportunities to improve child support policies as they affect low-income NCPs. The study focused on 16 areas, including such issues as (1) establishing appropriate child support orders, (2) arrears management, (3) amnesty programs, (4) application of selected enforcement remedies, (5) access/visitation and marriage programs, (6) case management and responsible fatherhood, and (7) incarcerated obligors. Through a combination of primary and secondary sources, PSI identified states that have innovative practices in each of the 16 policy areas.</p>
<p>Federal Fatherhood Multi-Site Evaluation</p>	<p>PSI collaborated with the Center for Policy Research (CPR) on the multi-site evaluation of the responsible fatherhood demonstration projects in eight different states funded by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) and the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) at DHHS. The demonstration projects recruited low-income, non-custodial parents and linked them with a variety of services and case management interventions with the objective of improving their employment and promoting their financial and emotional involvement with their children. The PSI/CPR team was responsible for developing data collection instruments, designing an evaluation plan, and conducting the evaluation. The project produced a</p>

	<p>process analysis report that is available on the federal ASPE and OCSE Web sites. The PSI/CPR team also prepared a final report on outcomes using telephone surveys, case managers' reports, and information from the automated child support and wage reporting systems.</p>
<p>Chicago Workforce Board Development of Customer Service and Satisfaction Process</p>	<p>PSI is a subcontractor to the Kaiser Group, Inc. in designing an integrated customer service and satisfaction process for the Chicago Workforce Board (CWB). The project's focus is to develop and implement uniform customer service measures in the One-Stop System and Center that are meaningful and valuable to the diverse set of independent partner programs. These measures will reflect service and satisfaction levels for job seekers and employers, as well as internal customers. PSI staff members are providing technical research and analysis for the project. Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting in the review of a previous service pilot project in Pilson, Illinois; • Assisting in the review of four One-Stop Centers; • Creating and developing products and materials for the CWB's Business Services Team; • Preparing materials for implementation of Business Services Team; and • Creating Center-specific manuals and procedure guide for the Centers.
<p>Minnesota Child Support Arrears Forgiveness and Pass-Through Study</p>	<p>PSI developed a sampling strategy for the Minnesota child support assurance project (1998-2001) that used a random selection of child support cases from the IV-D administrative database matched to the IV-A administrative database. PSI staff conducted a micro simulation, which estimated the caseloads and costs of a Child Support Assurance Program. Later, we worked with Minnesota to expand the sample and the scope of the data collected for use in another project that analyzes the impact of Minnesota's recently implemented 100-percent pass through of child support payments in TANF cases.</p>
<p>Massachusetts 1115 Program for Non-Custodial</p>	<p>Massachusetts received a Section 1115 grant from the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement to pilot a demonstration program aimed at assisting non-custodial fathers overcome obstacles and barriers that prevented them</p>

<p>Parents</p>	<p>from being responsible fathers. The ultimate goal was to increase the number of child support orders and child support payments among program participants. Other objectives were to help unemployed non-custodial parents find jobs and improve child-father and parent-parent relationships. PSI was responsible for evaluating the project. The evaluation consisted of both process and outcomes evaluations. Program participants, staff and stakeholders were interviewed as part of the process evaluation. PSI assisted Boston with developing a Management Information System to track program participants that was used as part of the outcomes evaluation. PSI also used child support and wage data from the automated child support system to analyze outcomes.</p>
<p>MDRC Parents' Fair Share</p>	<p>As a subcontractor to Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation, PSI reviewed case files to determine the extent and costs of child support enforcement activity for the Parents' Fair Share Evaluation, a project that tested the efficacy of providing employment services to unemployed or underemployed obligors in seven states including Michigan. As part of this project, PSI estimated costs of specific enforcement actions (i.e., initiating income withholding, reviewing and adjusting an order, initiating a lien, and filing a contempt action) for each of the PFS sites. In developing these estimates, PSI staff analyzed the organizational structure, staff responsibilities and costs, enforcement procedures, and other costs for each site. PSI has also reviewed numerous case files as part of our management studies in North Carolina, Vermont, and West Virginia. We have also reviewed court files for foster care projects.</p>

6. PSI has developed recent initiatives to promote marriage within the child support program as elaborated in the following:

The idea of marriage promotion within the child support program is a relatively recent one. PSI has been in the for-front of this new direction in child support policy.

In 2004 PSI started a project in Memphis Tennessee entitled "Promoting Parental Responsibility and Healthy Marriages." Marriage promotion activities to date include:

- A specialized child support worker is utilized to have a daily presence in the Memphis Regional Medical Center (the "MED") to educate unwed parents on parental responsibilities, promote healthy marriages (in appropriate cases), and obtain voluntary acknowledgments of paternity. Unwed mothers and fathers who are interested in marriage are provided information on the benefits of marriage. In appropriate circumstances, referrals are made to marriage preparation courses, relationship training, and counseling. A Domestic Violence Protocol was developed, with the assistance of a nationally recognized expert on domestic violence, to ensure the safety of individuals provided services.
- A brochure, "Why Marriage," was developed to inform the targeted population about the benefits of marriage for both parents and children. This brochure is now being provided to unwed couples at the MED that express an interest in marriage as well as at other locations in Tennessee.
- The project also coordinates with schools, faith-based, and other community based organizations to reach older teens and young adults. This includes collaborating with and providing training to existing program efforts in the community as well as directly making presentations in appropriate settings where older teens and young adults congregate in the community. Workshops and other forums are used to strengthen inter-agency collaboration and increase interest in and capacity for service outreach programs. Educational efforts stress parental responsibility, how the child support programs works, and the benefits of marriage.
- Training was provided for all Shelby County (Memphis) child support staff regarding the benefits of marriage and in identifying members of their caseload who might be an appropriate audience for such a discussion. Training addressed the nature of relationship services and the conditions under which services would be provided. Training was designed to address staff concerns about the risk of encouraging individuals to remain in unhealthy relationships in for couples where marriage is inappropriate. The focus is on promoting "healthy marriage" rather than promoting marriage per se.

As stated in answer to question 1 above, PSI has also recently started a project in Ramsey County Minnesota entitled "Breaking Down Barriers to Voluntary Paternity Acknowledgment." The project analyzes the current barriers that impede obtaining voluntary acknowledgments from unwed parents in a large urban jurisdiction develop and implement a coordinated comprehensive approach to overcoming those barriers. One of the objectives of the project is to develop a better understanding of how the voluntary acknowledgment program can promote marriage of unwed parents where appropriate. The project will thus also analyze current barriers to marriage promotion in the child support program and develop a set of recommendations on how marriage promotion may be incorporated into the existing in-hospital paternity acknowledgment program.

7. PSI has experience in providing technical assistance for and evaluating demonstration projects such this one described in the grant application/proposal.

For the past 21 years, PSI has been providing high level consulting, technology, and outsourcing services to state and local human services agencies, particularly child support agencies, around the nation. We have conducted over 200 in-depth quantitative and qualitative evaluations of social welfare programs, including TANF, Welfare to Work, child support enforcement, and Medicaid. We offer our customers significant administrative data analysis capabilities, state-of-the-art technology tools and approaches, highly skilled evaluators, and expertise working with hard to serve populations. Also, because we operate full service child support offices in several states, we understand that effective evaluations require more than good data analysis. They must also suggest practical, real-world solutions that managers can implement in program operations on a daily basis. As a result, we take a collaborative approach to evaluation, one that works with our customers in the design and implementation of the evaluation plan.

PSI staff have conducted evaluations of child support programs at many different levels, from examining the impact of innovative policies and practices on agency performance to identifying and helping programs implement promising practices. Some examples of our evaluation work include:

- National Cross-Site Evaluation of the Responsible Fatherhood Demonstration Projects. PSI directed a multi-site evaluation of the responsible fatherhood demonstration projects in eight states funded by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement and the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation at DHHS. The demonstration projects

recruited low-income, non-custodial parents and linked them with a variety of services and case management interventions with the objective of improving their employment and promoting their financial and emotional involvement with their children. The PSI team was responsible for developing data collection instruments, designing an evaluation plan, and conducting the evaluation. The project produced a process analysis and a final report of outcomes titled *OCSE Responsible Fatherhood Programs: Client Characteristics and Program Outcomes*. Both reports are available on the OCSE website.

- *Minnesota Passthrough 1115 Demonstration Project*. In January 2001, Minnesota began passing through 100 percent of current child support received on behalf of TANF recipients. Prior to that time, the state had retained child support collections to offset TANF payments. PSI analyzed the implementation and impact of the 100 percent passthrough program. The evaluation used multiple approaches, including conducting focus groups with state and county staff to identify implementation issues and facilitating focus groups and interviewing parents to determine the impact of the passthrough on child support payments, child outcomes and parent behavior. A key feature was the design of a database to analyze outcomes that merged data from samples of cases from the child support automated system with data on the TANF system.
- *El Paso County, Colorado Parent Opportunity Program (POP)*. As an amendment to our contract to provide child support services, PSI implemented and operates a Parent Opportunity Program for noncustodial parents of both genders. Our case managers link clients to resources in the community, such as substance abuse counseling, mental health services, enhanced child support services (e.g., assistance with forms to modify orders, obtain visitation, set up an arrears payment schedule), emergency housing, and parenting classes. PSI conducts an ongoing evaluation of the program (e.g., pre/post impact of program participation on payment behavior, access/visitation, job placement and retention) to share with its key funders, including the County Department of Human Services and the County Board of Commissioners. We have presented the findings from POP at several child support conferences, including NCSEA and WICSEC.
- *Louisiana Low Income Fathers Evaluation*. Working as a subcontractor for SSA Consultants, Inc., PSI contributed to Louisiana's Low-Income Fathers Pilot Demonstration Project, which is designed to facilitate the connection and maintenance of father's emotional and financial

contributions to their children. As part of this project, we completed an assessment of how the child support program in Louisiana works with low-income fathers and analyzed current practices, examined and catalogued best state practices in the U.S., and made recommendations for changes in Louisiana law and policies. The assessment and recommendations addressed a wide range of issues including default orders and service of process, review and adjustment, customer service, contempt, and arrears management. PSI also used data from the state's automated system to develop a profile of low income noncustodial fathers. The profile examined the relationship between child support payments and incomes and compared typical occupations of low income noncustodial parents to Louisiana labor market information to determine whether noncustodial parents have the potential to increase earnings and are in positions to move up career ladders. The information from the profile was partly used to design a fatherhood program. PSI staff completed an evaluation of the pilot program and have continued the evaluation under a subsequent contract.

- Evaluations of 1115 demonstration projects. Over the last 21 years, PSI staff have conducted evaluations of 1115 demonstration projects on numerous topics. Each evaluation has required PSI staff in cooperation with the client to (1) identify the research issues and expected outcomes, (2) design an evaluation plan (process/outcomes research using experimental and quasi-experimental designs), (3) design data collection instruments and management information systems, (4) collect and analyze data, (5) write evaluation reports, and (6) make presentations of findings to policy makers, other researchers and practitioners. Among the issues we have evaluated over the years are (1) paternity establishment programs, (2) staffing standards, (3) updating of child support awards, (4) access and visitation programs, (5) medical support facilitator, (6) interest on arrears, (7) interstate enforcement, (8) child support assurance, and (9) noncustodial parent stratification programs.

In addition, PSI has conducted studies and assessments for the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement through a series of task order contracts. Among others, this has included (1) developing and delivering a leadership training program for child support managers, (2) examining program self assessment policies and practices, (3) summarizing research on offender and ex-offender noncustodial parent programs, (3) identifying promising practices for access and visitation programs, (4) studying issues surrounding staffing standards, (5)

examining promising policies and practices for dealing with low income obligors (e.g., arrears, case management practices, guidelines, interest on arrears, enforcement methods), (6) evaluating the impact of new hire reporting, (7) examining the reasons for flattening of increases in child support collections, and (8) developing training needs assessments and inventories.