

Building Assets for Fathers and Families – Washington State

Design Report

Prepared for:

Washington Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Child Support

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I. Project Overview and Goals

The Washington Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) received a grant from the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE) as part of the Building Assets for Fathers and Families (BAFF) initiative to support increased asset building services for noncustodial parents (NCPs). This project will focus on collaborative arrangements between the state's Division of Child Support (DCS) and Assets for Independence (AFI) grantees in two sites, Vancouver and Spokane. The project represents an attempt to connect NCPs to asset building services that can help them increase financial stability, asset ownership, and the ability to meet child support obligations.

Funded by OCSE for three years, the project aims to serve over 600 NCPs, providing them with an array of customized asset building services that address barriers to financial stability and that increase NCPs' ability to meet their child support obligations. In addition, it will lay the groundwork for forming more permanent relationships between the asset building and child support communities and provide a model of collaboration that can be used by other DCS field offices and AFI grantees around the country.

While the programs and processes being developed in each of the two sites are independent, there are shared underlying goals that are guiding the project. Additionally, both sites are following a similar approach to identifying program participants and providing core asset building services.

The logic model shown in *Exhibit 1* outlines the conceptual logic of the intervention, identifying key program activities, outputs, outcomes, and goals. In both sites, the AFI grantees will provide access to Individual Development Accounts (IDAs) and a menu of asset building services tailored to the needs of individual NCPs. As we discuss in the sections below, both sites have developed specific criteria for recruiting program participants and identifying appropriate asset building services. In both cases, the sites expect to use a core financial education curriculum, and individual meetings with financial case managers are the basis for asset building activity. As part of the delivery of these services, the sites will attempt to identify those NCPs best suited for IDAs.

In addition to the asset building services provide by the AFI grantees, both DCS field offices involved in the project have identified specific staff to work with BAFF participants. These staff will deploy the same administrative tools all DCS Support Enforcement Officers (SEOs) have at their disposal to increase compliance with child support orders. In particular, these designated SEOs will work with NCPs participating in the program to pursue options related to order modification, debt forgiveness, and exemption from DCS enforcement activities such as license suspension. The hope is that the more personalized level of service and the coordination with financial counselors will increase NCP awareness of these discretionary measures and facilitate use of these measures to improve NCPs' financial stability and long term ability to meet child support obligations.

Exhibit 1: Logic Model for BAFF

Assumptions -

- 1) Noncustodial parents in Washington often have difficulty meeting their child support obligations
- 2) Low income populations in Washington, including NCPs, are asset poor
- 3) Child support orders and debt have a substantial impact on NCP financial stability
- 4) IDAs and additional asset building services can serve as a valuable resource for NCPs trying to attain financial stability and meet their child support obligations
- 5) Some NCPs will be attracted to the opportunity to receive asset building services to improve financial stability
- 6) DCS can incentivize NCPs' participation in asset building activities through access to order modification and arrears forgiveness

Inputs

- •Section 1115 grant funding
- •Federal AFI and matched funding for individual development accounts, with additional private funds supporting smaller IDAs (Spokane only)
- •Additional asset building services provided by two AFI grantees in Washington
- •Employment services delivered by the AFI grantees and Worksource centers
- •DCS data on NCP child support obligations and debt

Activities/Intervention

- •Identification of NCPs eligible for two types of asset building services
- 1) AFI funded IDAs for NCPs below 200% FPL and who are employed and making consistent child support payments
- 2) Other asset building services such as financial literacy education, financial counseling, credit repair services, access to free low-cost savings accounts
- •Referral of eligible NCPs to AFI grantees for appropriate asset building services
- •Use of DCS review of NCP cases to determine eligibility for order modification, arrears forgiveness, and consideration regarding DCS enforcement activities

Outputs

- •Number of NCPs referred to AFI for IDAs
- •Number of NCPs referred to AFI grantees for asset building services
- •Number of NCPs enrolled in BAFF who are identified as being eligible for order modification or arrears forgiveness
- •Number of NCPs referred to Worksource for employment services

Outcomes

- •Number of NCPs successfully saving for AFI approved asset in an AFI IDA
- •Number of NCPs completing financial education classes
- •Number of NCPs receiving financial counseling
- •Number of NCPs receiving credit repair services
- •Number of NCPs who were previously unbanked opening checking or savings accounts
- •Number of eligible NCPs receiving order modifications or arrears forgiveness as a result of participating in asset building activities
- •Number of NCPs receiving employment services through Worksource

Ultimate Goal -

- 1)Increased assets and financial stability for NCPs that increases their ability to fulfill their financial obligations 2) Successful use of AFI
- resources to increase savings and asset accumulation among NCPs already meeting their child support obligations 3) Successful use of DCS administrative tools to incentivize asset building activities among NCPs with cases in arrears and support NCP financial stability
- 4) Increased child support payments by NCPs on current and past support due
- 5) Improved child and family outcomes through increased financial stability for CPs and NCPs

Context – Substantial number of asset poor NCPs struggling to meet their financial obligations; existing efforts to increase employment and earnings of NCPs; AFI grantee program structure and asset building services; higher than average poverty rates in both Spokane and Cowlitz County; NCPs with cases in arrears who are reluctant to engage with financial system for fear of child support enforcement activities.



As the logic model indicates, these programmatic features are expected to directly impact financial stability for NCPs. More specifically, the project has five primary goals:

- 1. Increased assets and financial stability for NCPs that increases their ability to fulfill their financial obligations
- 2. Successful use of AFI resources to increase savings and asset accumulation among NCPs already meeting their child support obligations
- 3. Successful use of DCS administrative tools to incentivize asset building activities among NCPs with cases in arrears and support NCP financial stability
- 4. Increased child support payments by NCPs on current and past support due
- 5. Improved child and family outcomes through increased financial stability for CPs and NCPs

The sections below provide more details on the proposed approaches of both the Vancouver and Spokane sites. In particular, we discuss the eligibility criteria for the program, outreach, and service delivery models. While the underlying approaches are quite similar, the descriptions of the interventions in each of the two sites make evident the steps the project partners in each have taken to develop a customized approach that reflects local conditions and strengths of the partners.

After describing the proposed interventions we provide a brief description of the evaluation design. This section outlines proposed methods of evaluating the implementation of the initiative, including the key data elements we will rely on to capture program outputs and outcomes.

II. Proposed Intervention

Each of the sites has developed detailed service delivery plans that they provided to both the state and the evaluation team. Following review of these drafts, the evaluation team met with each site (Vancouver via conference call, Spokane in person) to review the proposed approach and explain the role of the evaluation. In this section, we provide an overview of the proposed interventions based on the service delivery plans and the conversations during the meetings with the sites.

A. Spokane

DSHS has identified SNAP Financial Access as the key asset building program partner in the Spokane BAFF site. SNAP has a strong history of providing asset building services in the greater Spokane area, winning its first AFI grant in 2001. The program has used relationships with an array of community partners and financial institutions to continually develop the range of asset building services it can provide to the community. To facilitate the partnership with SNAP, the DCS field office in Spokane designated a specific SEO to serve as a liaison with SNAP and to coordinate on-the-ground BAFF efforts.

1. Eligibility and Participation Goals

The Spokane BAFF site expects to serve 300 total NCPs with an array of asset building services. The primary target audience is NCPs with household incomes at or below 200 percent of the Federal Poverty Line (FPL) who are struggling to meet their child support obligations. While the income requirement is largely to ensure eligibility for the AFI IDAs, it also reflects a broader program goal to focus efforts on the lower-income NCP population.

Given limitations in AFI funding and uncertainty regarding the number of NCPs who will be a good fit for IDAs, the site expects to use AFI funds to support IDAs for 10 qualified NCPs. These IDAs will provide a 2 to 1 match for earned income up to \$2,000 (a maximum \$4,000 match). The money can only be used to invest in a first home, business, or education. In addition, SNAP has a separate IDA program – Pay It Forward – that provides a 2 to 1 match for earned income up to \$200. This program has a wider array of eligible asset classes and a shorter savings period. Through DCS and Washington Department of Commerce funds, SNAP has roughly \$13,500 to support Pay It Forward IDAs.

Site staff will use several outreach methods to identify and enroll eligible applicants. These will include recruitment and outreach efforts by both SNAP and DCS. Below we highlight the three primary expected recruitment strategies:

- Review of individuals currently receiving SNAP services. SNAP provided DCS with a list of all individuals to whom it is currently providing services. This includes individuals receiving a broad range of services, not necessarily focused on asset building (e.g., housing assistance). Based on a data match run by DCS, there are over 150 individuals currently working with SNAP who are in some way affiliated with the child support system. While this includes both NCPs and custodial parents, SNAP hopes to begin identifying NCPs on this list to make them aware of the BAFF initiative and to encourage participation specifically in BAFF. In these cases, this would allow SNAP to focus more specifically on the implications of child support obligations, thereby providing a more holistic set of services focused on financial stability. In addition, it would make it easier to link the NCP to an SEO at DCS that could help the NCP think through options related to the NCP's child support obligation.
- Review of DCS administrative data. The DCS field office has conducted a series of queries on its NCP database to identify individuals living in the greater Spokane area and potentially eligible for BAFF services. Staff have generated three different lists based on a set of characteristics identified by SNAP and DCS of NCP profiles most likely to benefit from BAFF: (1) NCPs current on support obligations with incomes under 200 percent of FPL, (2) NCPs with recent payments, but not current on obligations, with incomes under 200 percent of FPL, and (3) NCPs with no regular payment history and with incomes under 200 percent of FPL. DCS will send an introductory letter and BAFF program brochure to all NCPs identified through this process.
- *DCS Program Outreach*. DCS participates in a number of community based initiatives that represent an opportunity to inform NCPs about BAFF. This includes Father's Day events and other Fatherhood events and resource fairs. As part of participation in these events, DCS SEOs will distribute brochures about the program to NCPs.

In addition, SEOs in the field office will be educated about BAFF and will be able to refer NCPs that they encounter through their normal duties that are good candidates for the program.

2. Referral Process

As noted above, the primary mechanism for informing NCPs about BAFF will be through the mailing of introductory letters and the program brochures. DCS and SNAP do not anticipate any additional follow-up after the distribution of the initial recruitment materials. DCS will track the names and unique identifiers of each NCP that is mailed a recruitment packet. All of the recruitment materials will instruct the NCP to contact the designated Financial Counselor at SNAP. This individual will be responsible for providing NCPs with more detail about the program and setting up the initial intake interviews. NCPs identified from SNAP's current caseload will receive information about BAFF specifically and will also be referred to the SEO designated to work with BAFF clients.

SNAP expects to serve at least 300 NCPs through BAFF over the life of the project.

3. Service Delivery

BAFF participants will be eligible for two primary sets of services. The core set of services will be provided by SNAP and will be focused on financial education and asset building. In addition, DCS has a designated SEO who will be available to review cases and proposed enforcement action for NCPs participating in BAFF.

a. SNAP Financial Access

All interested NCPs will begin their participation in BAFF by attending a 90 minute initial intake appointment with a SNAP Financial Counselor. This appointment will involve an assessment of cash flow, financial goals, credit assessment, and benefits review. It will also be an opportunity for the Financial Counselor to educate the NCP about the array of services available through BAFF. Potential services that NCPs can take advantage of include: financial planning, access to banking, credit enhancement, access to credit, and access to public benefits. In some cases, this meeting will also result in referrals to WorkSource for employment services. The specific services offered will be highly dependent on the NCP's financial situation and current status of child support obligations. Aside from the specific focus on child support and the use of a modified financial education curriculum, these services will largely mirror those typically offered by SNAP as part of its regular menu of financial stability services.

As part of the initial meeting, the NCP and the Financial Counselor will develop an Action Plan that lays out next steps and financial goals. As part of this process, the Financial Counselor will review the NCP's child support obligations to discuss strategies for paying current and past due support owed. DCS will provide the Financial Counselor with an official summary of the NCP's case. This meeting will also be an opportunity to screen applicants for potential participation in the IDA component of the initiative.

The NCP will also be required to attend 30 and 60 day review appointments. The purpose of these meetings will be to review Action Plan successes and challenges, review IDA progress,

create or review other plans as appropriate, and to update the case notes and BAFF tracking document. These follow-up meetings are designed to help keep the NCP involved and engaged in the program, and to address any issues that arise.

In addition to the initial intake and the review appointments, all BAFF participants will be required to take two financial education classes: *Money Management* and *Understanding Your Credit*. These classes will provide NCPs with the basic tools for understanding their finances, and the classes will spend time specifically discussing how child support obligations fit into the broader financial picture.

b. DCS

In addition to the enhanced asset building services available to BAFF participants, DCS has also designated a specific SEO to monitor the BAFF caseload. While NCPs will remain on the same SEO's caseload as they were before the intervention, this additional SEO will simultaneously track the cases. The primary SEO will be informed through case comments that the NCP is enrolled in BAFF, and the BAFF SEO will be notified before SEOs take any new enforcement action. Through this review, DCS will explore the option of deferring enforcement actions in those cases where a given NCP is participating in BAFF.

In addition to exercising discretion in DCS enforcement activities, the BAFF SEO will also conduct proactive reviews of the BAFF child support cases. This will serve as an opportunity to evaluate whether a given case is eligible for order modification or debt forgiveness. As appropriate, the BAFF SEO will communicate directly with the Financial Counselor at SNAP to review case specifics and discuss how DCS enforcement or modification efforts could support the NCP's longer term financial goals.

While the actions DCS will take on BAFF cases are the same as are available under normal circumstances, the expected benefit of BAFF is increased attention to the specific characteristics of the given cases. Additionally, the collaboration between SNAP and DCS may result in NCPs paying more attention to their own financial circumstances and proactively seeking assistance from DCS to develop approaches to make support order obligations more realistic.

B. Vancouver

DSHS has identified Lower Columbia Community Action Program (CAP) as the key asset building program partner in the Vancouver BAFF site. Through its Financial Independence Center, CAP provides the Lower Columbia area of Southwest Washington with a wide array of services aimed at leading and expanding asset building services. CAP has been running an IDA program since 2001 and has enrolled over 300 participants since the program's inception. As with the Spokane site, the DCS field office in Vancouver has designated a specific SEO to serve as liaison with CAP and to coordinate on the ground BAFF efforts. The BAFF initiative in the Vancouver area will focus on Cowlitz and Wahkiakum counties, reaching out to Clark and Lewis counties if resources allow.

1. Eligibility and Participation Goals

The Vancouver BAFF site expects to serve 300 total NCPs with an array of asset building services. The site is targeting NCPs with household incomes at or below 200 percent of FPL who are struggling to meet their child support obligations. As with Spokane, the income requirement is largely to ensure eligibility for the AFI IDAs, yet the site is primarily focused on serving low income NCPs.

The site has funding to support 30 AFI IDA slots for NCPs through BAFF. In addition to the challenges associated with identifying NCPs who qualify for the IDA, the funds available to support these IDAs expire in 2012. As such, the site aims to enroll as many NCPs in the IDA portion of BAFF in the early stages of the project as possible.

Site staff will use several outreach methods to identify and enroll eligible applicants. Participant recruitment will largely be driven by DCS staff, using the following two strategies:

- Review of DCS administrative data. The DCS field office has conducted a series of queries on its NCP database to identify individuals potentially eligible for BAFF services. Staff have generated three different lists based on a set of characteristics identified by CAP and DCS of NCP profiles most likely to benefit from BAFF: (1) NCPs with recent earned income who are under 200 percent FPL, (2) NCPs with recent unearned income who are under 200 percent FPL, and (3) NCPs on TANF who are under 200 percent FPL.
- DCS Staff Referrals. CAP staff have made presentations to the DCS field office staff to
 educate them about BAFF and the characteristics of NCPs who are especially well suited
 for BAFF. DCS field office leadership and the specially designated BAFF SEO will
 reinforce to SEOs the importance of referring promising candidates to BAFF. SEOs get a
 list of partial payers on a monthly basis; DCS expects that this will be a good opportunity
 to identify potential participants.

In addition to the criteria for generating outreach lists from the DCS database, the site has developed a list of case characteristics to prioritize enrollments. The primary focus will be on partial payers with earned income. These are individuals who may be eligible for an IDA and who are likely to benefit from financial education classes to help establish a more regular payment schedule. The next priority level are those NCPs who have only unearned income. While this disqualifies them from IDAs, the financial education and other asset building services provided by CAP are likely to help these NCPs move closer to financial stability. To the extent additional slots are available, the program will target NCPs on TANF and arrears only cases.

DCS expects to identify approximately 600 NCPs through the processes identified above. The BAFF SEO will send letters and introductory brochures to each NCP identified through these processes. In addition, the SEO expects to follow up each mailing with a phone call to ensure that the NCP received the materials, answer any questions, and encourage participation.

2. Referral Process

DCS expects that the combination of mailings and follow-up calls will generate a take up rate of roughly 50 percent, thereby allowing CAP to meet its fee-for-service target of serving 300 NCPs.

DCS will mail a consent sheet and participation agreement to all NCPs who express interest in participating in BAFF. After the NCP returns these documents DCS will refer the NCP to CAP to schedule the initial intake appointment and begin receiving services.

3. Service Delivery

The proposed services in Vancouver are relatively similar to the proposed approach in Spokane. BAFF participants will be eligible for two primary sets of services. CAP will provide the asset building services and DCS has designated a SEO to manage the child support related components of the initiative.

a. Lower Columbia CAP

NCPs who complete the initial consent sheet and participation agreement will meet with a CAP financial counselor for a 90 minute initial intake appointment. During this appointment CAP staff will go through the financial coaching client intake inventory. This document addresses budgeting, financial goals, a financial health assessment, and the "Financial Wheel of Life." In addition, the appointment will serve as an opportunity to review a DCS-provided case history form for each NCP. The Vancouver DCS will provide NCPs with their Case History screenshot detailing the type and amount of debt that the NCP owes for back child support. This will allow the NCP and financial counselor to accurately discuss the NCP's total obligations and financial situation.

Based on the initial intake, CAP staff will create an Initial Client Asset Plan. In addition, CAP will determine eligibility and the appropriateness of a given NCP for the full array of asset building services CAP provides through its Financial Independence Center. Examples of these services include: financial coaching, referrals to WorkSource or EITC assistance, credit health assessments, and access to credit. The initial meeting will also serve as an opportunity to screen applicants for potential participation in the IDA component of the initiative.

The NCPs who participate in BAFF will be required to attend 30, 60, and 90 day review appointments. The purpose of these meetings will be to review Action Plan successes and challenges, review IDA progress, create or review other plans as appropriate, and to update the case notes and BAFF tracking document. These follow-up meetings are designed to help keep the NCP involved and engaged in the program, and to address any issues that arise.

In addition to the initial intake and 30, 60, and 90 day review appointments, all BAFF participants will be required to take the *Money Smart* financial education classes, including a special component of the class that CAP developed in conjunction with DCS on child support. CAP has integrated the DCS child support information into the regular *Money Smart* curriculum the agency delivers. Participants will take the class alongside non-participants, as CAP has found that most of the population that attends these classes is involved with child support in some way and will likely also benefit. However, for more detailed information, CAP has decided to offer an optional Child Support 101 class exclusively for program participants. As part of this class, participants will meet one-on-one with an SEO. The SEO will have client-specific information and will be able to answer questions and help participants make individual decisions.

b. DCS

In addition to the enhanced asset building services available to BAFF participants, DCS has also designated a specific SEO to work on BAFF. Unlike the proposed approach in Spokane, NCPs participating in BAFF will be transferred to this particular SEO's caseload. Given that proposed outreach approach involves this SEO calling each potential participant, this approach allows for continuity between outreach and ongoing monitoring of the BAFF child support caseload.

Similar to Spokane, the BAFF SEO will review the cases of all BAFF participants to identify situations in which order modification, debt forgiveness, or discretion around enforcement activities is appropriate. The designated BAFF SEO will meet with each BAFF participant for a one on one interview to review the NCP's case and explore options that can help facilitate more regular support order payments.

III. Evaluation Design

The BAFF intervention in Washington represents a unique attempt to merge the services provided by DCS and AFI grantees. While a large portion of the individuals receiving services from CAP and SNAP are in some way affiliated with the child support program (e.g., custodial parent, NCP, family member involved in the system), the lack of an explicit link between the programs often means there is limited information about available resources for these populations. By establishing linkages between the programs and customized service delivery models, the projects hope to increase the ability of NCPs to meet child support obligations.

A key component of the initiative will be an evaluation that chronicles the implementation of the initiative and examines program participation. Over the course of the project, staff from MEF Associates will work with the sites to document their efforts, assess program implementation, and identify barriers and lessons learned from the initiative. The evaluation will serve as a road map of the program and provide valuable information for the state and other child support programs around the country that are seeking to implement similar initiatives.

The below table outlines the expected project timeline from the evaluation perspective. It identifies the qualitative data collection activities as well as key deliverable due dates.

Table 1: Key Deliverables and Data Collection Dates

Deliverable	Due Date
Design Report	
Draft	3/31/2011
Final	4/30/2011
Monthly Check-in calls	Monthly, beginning April, 2011
Implementation Status Calls	
Year 1	July, 2011
Year 2	February, 2012
Year 2	August, 2012
Implementation Site Visits	Summer, 2012
Progress Reports	
Year 1	9/15/2011
Year 2	9/15/2012
Final Report	11/30/2013

In this section we highlight the primary components of the evaluation, the expected methods for collecting and analyzing data, and the key outcome measures that will serve as the basis for the final report. Below we discuss the proposed approach for the two main components of the evaluation: the implementation and participation studies.

A. Implementation Study

The implementation study will document how each of the two sites implemented BAFF. In particular, it will describe the context in which the intervention was conducted, including development of service delivery models, referral processes, and experiences by the AFI grantees and DCS field offices in providing services.

A largely qualitative endeavor, this component of the evaluation will provide insight into the way in which the sites developed their collaborative approaches and the way in which partners delivered services to NCPs, clients who are often disengaged from the formal financial system and who have a unique set of needs.

Key topics that the implementation study will address include:

- Program design and agency roles. We will describe the process used jointly by the DCS
 Field Office and the AFI grantee to design the BAFF intervention. In particular, we will
 explore how partners identified key program goals and the distribution of roles and
 responsibilities in the referral and service delivery model. We will also document any
 adjustments to the design that occurred over the course of the project.
- *Enhancement of existing services*. Given the existing overlap in clientele, how did the two partners work together to identify processes to support more active communication and collaboration? Which asset building services were identified as being most important

for low income NCPs? What steps did DCS take to modify existing child support orders to support increased financial stability among NCPs?

- *Targeting program participants*. How did the sites identify their target population? What were the key NCP characteristics that the sites thought were important in identifying program participants? Which agencies and organizations were involved in this process?
- Referral process. After identifying potential participants, what was the referral mechanism? What were the responsibilities of each program partner? What infrastructure was developed to support the referral process and facilitate information sharing across the agencies? Which strategies appeared to be most successful? What barriers emerged when looking at referrals that did not lead to services? What were common concerns voiced by NCPs who either declined or were hesitant to participate?
- Service delivery model. What services were provided to NCPs by AFI grantees and DCS?
 What screening processes did project partners use to identify appropriate asset building
 services for NCPs? What methods did project partners use to increase program retention?
 To what extent did AFI grantees need to develop more specialized packages of services to
 accommodate the needs of NCPs?

Within each of these topics, we will pay particular attention to specific program modifications as well as any barriers that the sites encountered. We will document the issues, both expected and unexpected that emerged, as well as the solutions developed by the sites to address these barriers.

The implementation study will also be able to capture any differences that exist across the two sites and other regional characteristics that influenced implementation. To meet these objectives, the evaluation team will collect information from program documents and staff interviews. Over the course of the project, the evaluation team will participate in combined monthly calls with the two sites to keep abreast of the implementation process. These conversations will serve as an opportunity to review changes to the proposed approach over the life of the project as well as a chance to document the issues that emerge and the programs' responses. In addition to monthly calls, the evaluation team will conduct three sets of implementation status calls with each of the sites. This will involve separate conversations with program staff that will allow for a more in depth discussion of implementation. These calls will make use of structured protocols that explore the different roles and responsibilities of project partners in the broader context of implementation.

Finally, at the conclusion of the project, we will conduct site visits to both sites. These visits will be an opportunity to get staff to reflect about their experiences with BAFF and to look back on the implementation experience. These conversations will spend less time discussing service delivery and referral processes, focusing more on barriers and lessons learned. In addition, the evaluation team will use these visits to conduct a limited number of case file reviews. This will allow us to track the service delivery trajectory of a given case and to get a more detailed perspective on the services being provided. Similarly, these reviews will serve as an opportunity to probe program staff about the decisions they made regarding service delivery and the different service provided to NCPs based on case characteristics.

B. Participation Study

The participation study represents an important opportunity to document the scale and scope of the services received through the intervention and any outcomes that resulted. While the proposed approach and the diffuse service delivery model do not lend themselves to a random assignment evaluation, a nonexperimental study can still provide valuable insights on the intervention, especially in the context of program expansion and sustainability following the demonstration period.

Given the relatively systematic approaches proposed by both sites, we expect to be able to generate descriptive statistics summarizing the profile of those individuals targeted by each of the sites from recruitment. We will include statistics on the number of participants identified and the number referred.

Similarly, we will be able to document the take up rate among eligible participants, including the extent to which this varied across the sites or by referral mechanism. This will provide insight as to the relative effectiveness of different recruitment mechanisms and the characteristics of those NCPs more or less likely to enroll.

Data collected by DCS and the sites will also allow us to describe the array of services received by NCPs. This will include the number receiving individual intakes and the three follow-up appointments, saving for IDAs, and participating in the host of other asset building services the sites anticipate providing to NCPs. Individual level data on NCPs will provide insight into the characteristics of those receiving each of these different types of child support and asset building services. To collect this information, DCS is developing its own data collection tracking tool. The tool is designed to ensure that DCS and the AFI grantees easily and quickly capture consistent information about NCP characteristics and participation. For example, it will include information about financial goals, participation in different program components, and client outcomes.

In addition to documenting service delivery, we will also explore the percentage of NCPs completing each of the service modules. Program retention will likely vary between the sites as well as based on the type of services and participant characteristics. The participation study will include descriptive statistics that highlight the profile of program completers.

Finally, we will examine key outcomes and outputs of program participants. We will use data provided by DCS and the AFI grantees to explore key characteristics of the NCPs recruited, referred, enrolled, and who complete the program.

Questions we will seek to answer with the data include:

- *Targeting and Referrals*. How many NCPs were identified by each site as potential participants for the intervention? Of those targeted for recruitment, how many contacted DCS or the AFI partner for more information? How many NCPs were referred, by each referral source, to the program?
- **Program enrollment.** How many NCPs were enrolled in the program and its various components? We will capture enrollment in the general asset building and financial

education component as well as the number referred to and enrolled in the IDA component.

- Services received and completion. How many NCPs completed each of the different program modules (i.e., initial enrollment, 30-60-90 follow-up, financial education, credit repair)? How many NCPs were referred to program partners (e.g., WorkSource)? How many NCPs successfully purchased an asset with IDA funds? How many NCPs received order modification, debt forgiveness, or protection from DCS enforcement activities? How long were participants enrolled in the various components?
- *Child support outcomes*. Using DCS administrative data, we hope to capture any shifts in payments and debt amounts among program participants. This will include descriptive statistics on the frequency of payments, the size of payments, the ability of NCPs to meet current obligations and repay past support due.

For each of the questions above, we will explore the data in the context of participant characteristics. We will present economic and demographic information about the individuals that fall into each category. In addition to basic demographic information (e.g., age, marital status) this will include information such as: number of custodial and noncustodial children, age of children, order amount, debt amount, payments on current support, payments on arrearages, employment status, income, and savings and asset levels.

C. Final Report

At the conclusion of the project MEF Associates will complete a final report that includes the following components:

- Design Report (this document)
- Annual Progress reports
- Copies of monthly call summaries
- Implementation Study
- Participation Study

In addition, the report will include an overview section that synthesizes findings from the two sites and the Participation and Implementation studies. This section will put special emphasis on the lessons learned and promising practices identified during the evaluation. It will discuss the implications for program sustainability and replication of the model to other sites in the state. Along the same lines, it will discuss the implications for a more rigorous national level analysis of similar interventions. This will include both program design and evaluation issues that a larger scale study might encounter.