



**Ministry of Attorney General
Justice Services Branch
Family Justice Services Division**

Comprehensive Child Support Services Pilot Project

Formative Evaluation (Final Report)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Highlighted in this report are the key findings of the *Formative Evaluation of the Comprehensive Child Support Service (CCSS) Pilot Project* in Kelowna implemented by the Ministry of Attorney General, Justice Services Branch, Family Justice Services Division. The CCSS Pilot Project is a short-term pilot project implemented in February 2002 federally funded by the Department of Justice Canada.

The CCSS was implemented under Rule 5 and integrates a comprehensive array of child support services. The CCSS includes a range of inter-related family justice programs and services offered through a number of service providers. Some programs and services were available prior to the implementation of the CCSS Pilot Project. Existing programs and services included: Rule 5 Triage, mediation with a Family Justice Counsellor (FJC) and Parenting After Separation (PAS). Rule 5 Triage requires parties to meet with an FJC prior to court for information about the range of options for issue resolution and for assistance in clarifying/narrowing issues. FJC mediation is the process through which parties work with an FJC to help the parties reach an agreement. PAS is an information session for parents and other family members dealing with child custody, guardianship, access and support issues.¹

In addition to the existing services, the implementation of the CCSS project introduced a number of new services. These services include the following:

- CCSS (through the Child Support Officer): an array of services and assistance provided to parents to help them navigate the procedural steps involved in obtaining and changing child support orders/agreements;
- Debtor Assistance: assistance provided to parents in assessing and resolving their financial situation, personal debt and related lifestyle issues;
- Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP) Outreach: support services and information provided to parents about maintenance enforcement; and,
- Limited Legal Advice: provides limited legal information to parents to help clarify their legal options and obligations under the Child Support Guidelines (CSG).²

In addition, referrals can be made to and from the FMEP, which monitors and enforces maintenance orders/agreements filed under the program, and the Family Maintenance Program (FMP), a mandatory program for parents in receipt of BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) provided by the Ministry of Human Resources (MHR)³. Although many of the family justice services provided in Kelowna are also provided at other sites around the province, the particular array of services and the case management approach are unique to Kelowna.

The mandated two-part goal of the CCSS is to provide "assistance to parents to resolve disputes and speed up changes to child support orders and written agreements that are

¹ While PAS is not considered part of the case management model in place through CCSS, the program has similar service objectives.

² Definitions are provided in the glossary of terms provided in Appendix A.

³ The FMP is offered through the Ministry of Human Resources (MHR).

consistent with the Child Support Guidelines". The service objectives of the CCSS are as follows:⁴

1. Co-ordinate child support services and government agencies that help parents assess, manage and speed up changes to child support orders and written agreements.
2. Clarify and organize information from parents that is required to make changes to child support.
3. Recommend ways to change child support; when appropriate, advise parents of resources available through the CCSS to resolve support issues related to their children.
4. Provide services that assist parents to resolve disputes related to changing child support and attending to the best interests of their children.
5. Help parents identify changes in income information and recalculate child support amounts according to the Child Support Guidelines.
6. Help parents assess money issues for the purpose of making their child support payments.

The service objectives define the services and activities through which the project goal is to be met.

Evaluation and Research Overview

The purpose of the formative evaluation is to assess project implementation and delivery and, although incremental effects have not been quantified, to explore outcomes that could be attributable to the CCSS through qualitative and quantitative methods. The evaluation findings represent a synthesis of the research process, which included the following activities:

- review and analysis of administrative data (45 cases);
- completion of a telephone survey with 32 individuals who accessed the CCSS; and,
- completion of interviews with 10 key stakeholders.

The following three objectives were identified to guide the evaluation:

1. Determine the degree to which the CCSS assists parents to resolve issues regarding child support pursuant to consent orders, court orders and agreements.
2. Determine the effectiveness of the integrated case management model of service delivery in the CCSS.
3. Identify effective practices and/or any barriers in the implementation of the project to inform future project implementation.

The evaluation was conducted post-implementation and consisted of an internal analysis (i.e., non-comparative) of the CCSS pilot project in Kelowna. The evaluation period covered a period of six months after the initial implementation of CCSS.

⁴ Ministry of Attorney General, Justice Services Branch, Family Justice Services Division: *Comprehensive Child Support Manual*, July 2001.

KEY FINDINGS:

The key findings are organized according to the three evaluation objectives identified for the evaluation and eight questions associated with the objectives (the full evaluation matrix is contained in Appendix B).

Evaluation Objective 1: Determine the degree to which the CCSS assists people to resolve issues regarding child support pursuant to consent orders, court orders, and agreements.

There is evidence that the array of services provided through the CCSS assists parents to resolve issues related to child support amounts.

The research results provide multiple lines of evidence that the CCSS assists parents in resolving issues related to child support amounts. The following results substantiate this claim:

- Close to 60% of clients resolved their child support related issues through the CCSS;
- Overall, clients were satisfied with the information and services received from the CSO and other CCSS service providers; and,
- Fourteen out of 15 survey respondents who followed up on the referrals made by the CSO felt they had received all the services they needed.

While service providers were generally positive in their views of the CCSS, gaps in services were identified by some interviewees. First, at the time of the evaluation, the CSO had not yet received training to assist people with the completion of Supreme Court documents and forms. Full training of the CSO for dealing with Supreme Court cases was scheduled to coincide with the implementation of the Supreme Court self-help kits available on the Legal Services Society (LSS) website.⁵ As a result, for cases under the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court, the CSO provided information about Supreme Court procedures but was unable to assist with completing Supreme Court forms.

A second gap identified by service providers was the lack of authority of the CSO or FMEP Outreach Worker to change or cancel child support arrears. However, it is important to note that dealing directly with arrears was never within the scope of the CCSS. Cases where child support arrears exist typically are complex and involve multiple issues. As such, by policy, arrears issues are best addressed under judicial scrutiny. This policy applies to family justice services, generally.

Facilitated negotiation appears to be somewhat underused by clients but is a valuable tool for parents in resolving issues related to child support.

Facilitated negotiation, while not utilized in many of the cases included in the administrative data, was successful in facilitating an open exchange of information for the purpose of resolving the issues at hand. In fact, all survey respondents who participated in the service indicated that they and the other parent had been able to reach an agreement about child support amounts during the session.

⁵ At the time of the present report further training of the CSO in Supreme Court matters is underway

After contacting the CSO, parents felt they were well advised of their options within CCSS.

During intake, the CSO discusses the range of options, including referral options, available to parents to assist them with child support issues. Parents felt they had been well informed of the options available to them within the array of CCSS after their initial contact with the CSO.

The CCSS is effective in helping clients assess financial issues and/or re-calculate child support amounts.

Results suggest that assessment of financial issues and re-calculation of child support amounts is a valuable service in several respects. Clients assigned a high level of importance to the assistance they received in assessing financial issues and the re-calculation of child support amounts. Overall, clients were generally satisfied with the types of services provided by the CSO.

Service providers identified the assessment of financial issues and re-calculation of child support amounts as a valuable service for several reasons:

- identification of correct child support amounts for each party clarifies the level of responsibility of each parent;
- the information and assistance helps keep cases out of the courts; and,
- clients are more prepared with documentation and information.

Evaluation Objective 2: Determine the effectiveness of the integrated case management model of service delivery employed by the CCSS.

The case management model is successful in coordinating referrals and services for clients.

The integrated case management model employed at the Kelowna Family Justice Centre facilitates coordinated services for CCSS clients in a variety of ways.

- A key factor in the successful resolution of cases through the CCSS is the informal communication that occurs between the CCSS service providers. As a result, the CCSS provides a seamless process for clients accessing the array of services.
- Survey respondents indicated that they did not feel as if they had been made to “jump through a new hoop” each time they were referred to a different service, rather the process was coordinated and managed by the CCSS staff.
- Some of the clients surveyed indicated that they often had to repeat the same information to the different service providers they met with, however, the repetition of information was expected and considered to be necessary.

Research results indicate that the CCSS case management model facilitates timely resolution of child support issues.

Evidence that the CCSS facilitates timely resolution of issues is apparent in the following results:

- 94% of clients surveyed indicated that they were able to make an appointment with the CSO within a reasonable amount of time; and,
- 76% of clients surveyed believed that the services provided by the CSO helped to speed up making changes to child support amounts.

Another factor facilitating timely resolution of case issues is the “one-stop-shop” approach used in the CCSS whereby the non-court family justice service are located at a single site.

Evaluation Objective 3: Identify effective practices and/or any barriers in the implementation of the CCSS pilot to inform future program implementation.

Service providers identified a number of effective practices in the implementation of the CCSS project that could be used to guide the implementation of other family justice programs.

In reflecting upon their experiences with the CCSS, service providers identified a number of practices that were effective and enhanced implementation of the CCSS at the Kelowna Family Justice Centre. Based on the opinions of the service providers, the main lessons that can be drawn from the successful implementation of the CCSS include:

- create and maintain a supportive internal environment among program staff;
- ensure an appropriate level of expertise for service providers in addition to the comprehensive training and orientation provided;
- provide orientation and information to all relevant stakeholder groups; and,
- provide related services at a single location or a “one-stop-shop” to facilitate coordinated and seamless service delivery.

Although 44% of the cases examined for the evaluation were self-referred, it was suggested by some of the service providers that up-take could be enhanced through additional advertising of the CCSS to the general public.

The successful partnerships developed provide a model for similar endeavours in the future.

The CCSS was developed to operate in partnership with existing programs offered by the Ministry of Attorney General (i.e., the regular FJC program, Rule 5, and the FMEP) and the Ministry of Human Resources (MHR) Family Maintenance Program (FMP). Research results suggest that these partnerships have been successful. For example, service providers within the family justice systems make and receive referrals from other members of the case management team and regularly (although informally) up-date each other as to case progress in cases where clients have consented to the sharing of information between service providers. In addition, the partnerships also link together programs that provide complementary services.

Clients generally felt that they received the services and assistance they required through the referrals made in their cases. Service providers felt that they receive support from the other members of the case management team.

Clients value one-on-one interactions that facilitate more personalized and individualized service.

Survey respondents indicated a preference for obtaining assistance through the CCSS over their past experiences with the family justice system. Characteristics of the CCSS that were noted by clients as particularly beneficial included:

- more personalized service that considers individual case characteristics;
- the neutrality for the service provider; and,
- the non-confrontational approach to issue resolution.

REMO cases face specific barriers.

The CSO indicated that dealing with REMO cases can present a particular challenge related to geographic location. In cases involving REMO, parents live in different jurisdictions. Therefore, the ability of the CSO to deliver facilitated negotiation is limited because of the physical distance between the parents.

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 Introduction

The present report outlines the findings of the *Formative Evaluation of the Comprehensive Child Support Services (CCSS) Pilot Project* completed during the first six months of implementation.

Contained in this section of the report is a description of the family justice programs available at the time the CCSS was introduced in Kelowna, an overview of the array of services available through the CCSS, and a summary of characteristics of CCSS cases. Project goals and service objectives and unique characteristics of the pilot project are also summarized.

1.2 Project Background

The Ministry of Attorney General, Justice Services Branch, Family Justice Services Division implemented the Comprehensive Child Support Service (CCSS) Pilot Project in Kelowna as a complement to the Family Justice Registry (Rule 5) Project. The pilot is a short-term project (i.e., from February 2002 to March 2003) funded by the Department of Justice Canada.

1.3 Context: Rule 5 and Other Kelowna Family Justice Registry Programs

The Family Justice Registry (Rule 5) Pilot Project was implemented in December 1998 in five provincial court registries: Robson Square, Surrey, Castlegar, Nelson and Rossland. Rule 5 was implemented in Kelowna in May 2001.

Rule 5 requires that parties with issues related to the *Family Relations Act* (FRA) that are not urgent⁶ meet with a Family Justice Counsellor (FJC) prior to court so that parties are informed about the range of options for resolving custody, access, guardianship or support issues and their right to choose the best option for themselves and their children. The FJC also provides access to resources which can assist parties in resolving their family issues. In cases where parties proceed to court, an attempt is made to clarify and narrow the issues prior to appearing before a judge.⁷

The CCSS was provided under Rule 5 to offer non-mandatory services that deal specifically with issues associated with establishing new orders or making changes to existing child support orders and agreements. The CCSS includes a range of inter-related programs and services provided through a number of service providers. The range of family justice programs and services available at the time Rule 5 was introduced (May 2001) at Kelowna included: Rule 5 Triage, regular Family Justice Counsellor (FJC) services, and Parenting After Separation (PAS).⁸ The implementation of the CCSS included the delivery of the following interrelated services: the CCSS (through the Child Support Officer), Debtor Assistance, Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP) Outreach, and Limited Legal Advice. Clients can also be referred to and from the FMEP and the Family Maintenance Program (FMP) offered through the Ministry of Human Resources (MHR). The FMEP monitors and enforces maintenance orders and agreements filed with the program. The (MHR) FMP is a

⁶ Urgent cases include Section 37 and Section 38 issues and are typically exempt from Rule 5. Other issues can be submitted as a claim of urgency.

⁷ Ministry of Attorney General, 1998. *Family Justice Registry (Rule 5) Pilot Project: Policy and Procedures*.

⁸ While PAS is not considered part of the case management model in place through CCSS, the program has similar service objectives. As such, effects of PAS may be difficult to distinguish from the effects of CCSS.

mandatory program for individuals on BC Employment and Assistance (BCEA) to obtain or vary child or spousal support orders.

Since the project's implementation, there have been some modifications with respect to the services provided. Specifically, the Debtor Assistance Program (DAP) has continued to be offered but has been reduced in its availability. The program is situated at a Lower Mainland location and services are provided to Kelowna CCSS clients over the telephone. Also since project implementation, the number of Legal Advice Lawyers (LALs) who provide Limited Legal Advice has been increased to include a third lawyer for instances where two lawyers providing legal advice to CCSS clients both cite a conflict of interest for a particular case.

1.4 CCSS Project Description and Pilot Implementation

As indicated above, parties with issues specific to establishing or changing existing child support arrangements are eligible to receive a range of services through the CCSS. In triage and regular FJC services, trained family mediators conduct case assessments and provide mediation services. A key component of the CCSS is the service provided by the CSO and the FMEP Outreach Worker. The CSO provides parents with assistance in navigating the procedural steps involved in obtaining and changing child support orders/agreements and the FMEP Outreach Worker provides information and support provided to parents in relation to maintenance enforcement. Debtor Assistance is a program within the array of CCSS services that assists families with financial and debt issues. Limited Legal Advice services are available to CCSS clients who wish to obtain legal information to help clarify their legal options and obligations.

The following four types of cases are included in the CCSS target client group:

1. Parties with existing orders/agreements enrolled in the FMEP.
2. Parties with existing Provincial Court orders or agreements not registered in the FMEP.
3. Parties with existing Supreme Court orders or agreements not registered in the FMEP.
4. Cases that involve Reciprocal Enforcement of a Maintenance Order (REMO).⁹

Individuals who wish to receive services provided through the CCSS are able to access the CSO through a number of "gateways", including: self-referrals, triage services, regular FJC services, the FMEP Outreach Program, the court registry, the judiciary or other family justice services (e.g., private lawyers and other legal services).

In addition to functioning in a case management role (see Section 1.6 below), the CSO provides informational and other services to individuals accessing the CCSS. Key services provided by the CSO are: brief services, intake services, and referral services. Brief services involve initial contact of the parties with the CSO to determine the type of assistance the parties may require. Intake services involve issue resolution with respect to varying orders and agreements, including facilitated negotiation between parties in dispute over child support matters and the calculation of child support amounts. The CSO will also refer the party/parties to other services that are complementary and/or necessary for the purposes of addressing the issues affecting child support (e.g., FMEP Outreach, regular FJC services).

⁹ Individuals from each of the four groups received CCSS from the onset of implementation. In addition, individuals without an existing order seeking to establish an original child support agreement or order also accessed the CCSS.

When the CCSS project was implemented, assistance available to individuals involved in a Supreme Court case included:

- provision of information about the Child Support Guidelines,
- provision of information about Supreme Court procedures,
- Limited Legal Advice services, and
- facilitated negotiation.

At the time of the evaluation, the CSO had not yet received training to assist people with the completion of Supreme Court documents and forms. Full training of the CSO for dealing with Supreme Court cases was scheduled to coincide with the implementation of the Supreme Court self-help kits available on the Legal Services Society (LSS) website. At the time of the present report further training of the CSO in Supreme Court matters is underway.

The CSO also has no authority to cancel or change child support arrears. Cases where child support arrears exist typically are complex and involve multiple issues. As such, by policy, arrears issues are best addressed under judicial scrutiny and were never intended to be within the scope of the CCSS. This policy applies to family justice services, generally.

1.5 Case Characteristics

Administrative data collected and maintained by the CSO were used to capture profile information of clients who had received intake services since project implementation and whose cases had been closed by the end of July 2002. The administrative data consisted of running records and the case management tracking sheet contained in each CCSS case file. Only those cases where the parties were seeking to vary an existing order/agreement (formal or informal/verbal) were included in the administrative data.

Administrative data supplied to the Consultant by the Kelowna Family Justice Centre were the primary source of information used to examine case characteristics. However, where information was not contained in the administrative data, survey data are reported. Unless otherwise noted, administrative data were used.

Since the implementation of the pilot project in February 2002 and the end of the evaluation period (July 31, 2002), 224 people received brief services and 111 people completed an intake interview. The administrative data contained information only for those cases (n = 45) that had been closed prior to August 1, 2002. Summarized in Table 1-1 are characteristics of cases contained in the administrative data.

**Table 1-1
Case Characteristics**

Case Characteristics	Number	Percent
Initiating Client		
<i>Payor</i>	26	58%
<i>Recipient</i>	18	40%
<i>Other</i>	1	2%
Type of Case		
<i>Provincial (non-FMEP, non-REMO)</i>	15	33%
<i>FMEP (Supreme or Provincial)</i>	14	31%
<i>REMO (Supreme or Provincial)</i>	12	27%
<i>Supreme Court (non-FMEP, non-REMO)</i>	4	9%
Reason for Accessing CCSS		
<i>Vary an existing order/agreement</i>	33	73%
<i>Establish a new order/agreement</i>	8	18%
<i>Other</i>	4	9%

Source: Administrative data, n = 45.

The parent most frequently initiating contact with the CCSS was the payor, the person responsible for paying child support. Twelve of the cases recorded in the administrative data were REMO cases and 15 cases were enrolled in FMEP. Slightly more than one-quarter (27%) of cases involved a Supreme Court matter and close to one-half (49%) of cases involved arrears issues¹⁰. The majority of CCSS clients (73%) were requesting a change to an existing consent order or written agreement, and 18% of clients were requesting a new consent order or written agreement.¹¹ Another reason for accessing CCSS cited by survey respondents was to obtain or clarify information about associated legal obligations and child support, in general. Overall, clients who most frequently initiated contact with the CCSS were payors involved in provincial court cases enrolled in FMEP who were seeking to change an existing order/agreement.

Although parents typically have a number of interrelated issues to address when they first contact the family justice system, the majority of clients surveyed (75%) indicated that there were no issues related to their case other than child support.

1.6 Unique Characteristics of the CCSS Pilot Project

Unlike the other five sites involved in the Rule 5 pilot project, the Kelowna site integrates a comprehensive range of services, in addition to triage (Rule 5), to provide assistance to individuals involved in a range of family-related disputes. Although many of the family justice services provided in Kelowna are also provided at other sites around the province, the particular array of services and the case management approach are unique to Kelowna.

A key feature of the CCSS project is the CSO's responsibility to actively manage cases. The CSO, in consultation with the client, manages the flow of the case once the client has had an intake interview with the CSO. Case management activities include several planning and tracking tasks. For example, the CSO develops a customized case management plan for each client by:

- assessing the options related to obtaining or changing a child support order and describing the general steps to be followed;

¹⁰ These characteristics are not mutually exclusive with REMO/FMEP.

¹¹ In fact, in cases identified as seeking to establish a new order or agreement, the parties had an existing informal agreement, therefore, these parties were actually seeking to vary their existing informal agreement.

- identifying appropriate services for each case (including services offered by the CSO) and making referrals; and,
- considering the priority of each case.

Tracking activities include monitoring the case file and recording and reviewing outcomes from service referrals. The case management process gives the CSO broad oversight of the case, ensuring that clients are prepared to attend appropriate services in a logical sequence and in a timely fashion.

The CSO's function is different from the role of Child Support Clerks (CSCs). The CSO provides facilitated negotiation to parents¹² to assist in the resolution of child support issues and the assessment of money issues that affect child support. Unlike the CSC, the CSO also has the case management responsibilities described above. In general, the CSO has more authority than does the CSC to effect changes to existing child support arrangements.

The CCSS Pilot Project provides an opportunity to examine the extent to which the resolution of issues related to existing child support agreements/orders can be made more effective and efficient as a result of payors and/or recipients receiving assistance through this particular array of services. In addition, the pilot project provides a test of a case management model of service delivery in the family justice system.

1.7 Project Goals and Service Objectives

The mandated two-part goal of the CCSS is to provide "assistance to parents to resolve disputes and speed up changes to child support orders and written agreements that are consistent with the Child Support Guidelines". The service objectives of the CCSS are as follows:¹³

1. Co-ordinate child support services and government agencies that help parents assess, manage and speed up changes to child support orders and written agreements.
2. Clarify and organize information from parents that is required to make changes to child support.
3. Recommend ways to change child support; when appropriate, advise parents of resources available through the CCSS to resolve support issues related to their children.
4. Provide services that assist parents to resolve disputes related to changing child support and attending to the best interests of their children.
5. Help parents identify changes in income information and recalculate child support amounts according to the Child Support Guidelines.
6. Help parents assess money issues for the purpose of making their child support payments.

The service objectives define the services and activities through which the project goal is to be met.

¹² The definition of "parents" to be applied in this document is the same definition used in the Comprehensive Child Support Service: Policy and Procedure Manual. "Parents" is used to identify members of the public who are assisted by CCSS and can include biological parents, stepparents, grandparents or guardians. "Parents" and "clients" are used interchangeably throughout this document.

¹³ Ministry of Attorney General, Justice Services Branch: *Comprehensive Child Support Services Manual*, July, 2001.

SECTION 2: TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE EVALUATION

2.1 Evaluation Framework: Overview

The approach of the evaluation is formative, therefore, a major portion of the project focuses on the implementation and delivery of the CCSS to provide information enabling revisions to be made to the process as required. The evaluation assesses information from the post-implementation period only, and although the attainment of project goals is examined, it is done at a descriptive, formative level only.

The evaluation is not intended to reach definitive conclusions about the attainment of the overall project goal. The research is primarily qualitative and focuses on the perceptions of clients, service providers and related family justice partners, as well as on describing patterns of case resolution. Quantitative information collected through administrative data and scaled survey responses is also analysed to permit an examination of access, case referral and settlement patterns, and client satisfaction.

2.2 Evaluation Objectives

The following three objectives were identified to guide the evaluation:

1. Determine the degree to which the CCSS assists parents to resolve issues regarding child support pursuant to consent orders, court orders and agreements.
2. Determine the effectiveness of the integrated case management model of service delivery in the CCSS.
3. Identify effective practices and/or any barriers in the implementation of the project to inform future program implementation.

These objectives were set bearing in mind the nature of the pilot project (i.e., that it is new, exists in only one location, and will serve a relatively small client base). Hence, the objectives of the evaluation were aimed primarily at determining whether the CCSS was effectively implemented and whether there is evidence that it assists clients in addressing and resolving their issues.

2.3 Evaluation Questions

Evaluation questions were developed to address each of the evaluation objectives. Given the formative nature of the evaluation, the questions focus primarily on areas such as the processes and outputs of the project, as well as any immediate substantive outcomes that could be identified through the research.

The full evaluation matrix is set out in Appendix B and includes the following:

- the three evaluation objectives;
- project goals and service objectives associated with each objective;
- evaluation questions;
- related topics (or sub-questions) to be explored for each evaluation question;

- performance indicators; and,
- data sources.

Listed below are the evaluation objectives and the questions that flow from each objective. (The questions are numbered sequentially to match the matrix in Appendix B.) Also listed are the project goals and service objectives that relate to each evaluation objective.

Evaluation Objective 1: Determine the degree to which the CCSS assists people to resolve issues regarding child support pursuant to consent orders, court orders, and agreements.

Associated project goals and service objectives:

- Project goal: to assist parents to resolve disputes surrounding child support issues;
- Service objectives 2 through 6.

Evaluation Questions:

1. How well does the array of services provided by the CCSS assist parents to resolve child-support issues?
2. How well are parents advised of and prepared for referrals to CCSS resources?
3. How well does facilitated negotiation help parents to resolve child support issues?
4. To what extent do the CSO and CCSS-related services assist parents to assess financial issues and, when appropriate, re-calculate child support amounts?

Evaluation Objective 2: Determine the effectiveness of the integrated case management model of service delivery employed by the CCSS.

Associated project goal and service objective:

- Project goal: speed up changes to child support orders and written agreements;
- Service objective 1.

Evaluation Questions:

5. How well are CCSS services co-ordinated through the case management model?
6. Are changes to existing child support orders and agreements made in a timely manner through the CCSS case management model?

Evaluation Objective 3: Identify effective practices and/or any barriers in the implementation of the CCSS pilot to inform future program implementation.

Associated service delivery mechanisms: participation; communication; service accessibility; training; support; caseload (workload); and, resources.

Evaluation Questions:

7. In what ways are CCSS service delivery processes and practices effectively implemented?
8. To what extent are any barriers to the implementation of the CCSS service delivery processes and practices impeding effective delivery of services?

2.3.1 Performance Indicators

Performance indicators are the specific measures that, collectively, provide the data to assist in answering the evaluation questions. They are derived from the project goals, service objectives and evaluation objectives. Performance indicators can be grouped into the following categories:

- issue resolution patterns;
- referral patterns;
- participant satisfaction/perceptions;
- service provider satisfaction/perceptions; and,
- other stakeholder satisfaction/perceptions.

Any given performance indicator can inform more than one evaluation question. A detailed list of performance measures is included in the evaluation matrix (Appendix B).

2.4 Research Methodology

The evaluation was conducted post-implementation and consisted of an internal analysis of the CCSS pilot project in Kelowna. The evaluation period covered a period of six months after the initial implementation of the CCSS (i.e., February 4 through July 31, 2002).

The research design was comprised of components and activities, including: an administrative data review and analysis, in-person interviews, and a client satisfaction survey. The scope of work completed and the data resources used are described in greater detail below.

2.4.1 Administrative Data Review and Analysis

Administrative data for a census of the 45 cases that accessed the CCSS and had been closed prior to August 1, 2002 were reviewed, entered and analysed to obtain information regarding the referral patterns, services received, issue resolution patterns and case outcomes. Quantitative data were used for descriptive purposes (i.e., not inferentially) and could be used as a baseline with which to compare other projects implemented in the future.

Case files contained current information regarding clients, case progress and case outcomes. The following information collected in client case management files was examined in the administrative data review component of the research:

- gateway referral/point of access to the CCSS;
- services received prior to the CCSS;
- types of issues to be resolved (i.e., child support and other FRA related issues);
- date of first contact with the CSO (i.e., receipt of brief services);
- case type (e.g., FMEP, Provincial Court, Supreme Court, REMO);
- CCSS services received;
- referral outcomes;
- date of last contact with the CSO;
- date and result of CSO follow-up activities;
- outcome(s) at case closure; and,

- date of case closure/final activity.

2.4.2 Participant Survey

A telephone survey instrument was designed to collect information pertaining to client satisfaction with the CCSS (a copy of the survey instrument is contained in Appendix C). The survey instrument also examined issues related to the usefulness of services received, gaps and overlap in services, and co-ordination of services provided through the CCSS.

The survey sample consisted of 50 clients who had accessed the CCSS, who had given their written consent to be contacted for research purposes and whose case files had been closed on or before July 31, 2002. Potential survey participants included:

- Initiating parties (parents who initiated contact with the CSO); and,
- Other parties (parents whose contact with the CSO was in response to the initiating parent).

Prior to full survey administration, all potential participants (i.e., CCSS clients who had completed consent forms) were sent an information letter outlining the purpose of the evaluation. The letter also informed participants that they would be contacted for the purpose of completing a survey over the telephone.

Surveys were completed with 32 of the 50 potential participants whose names were provided by the project's administrative records. Response rates for each of the respondent groups are outlined below.

**Table 2-1
Survey Response Rates
by Respondent Group**

Respondent Group	Sample Size	Not-in-Service	Refusal	Other*	Completions	Valid Response Rate¹⁴
Initiating Parent	45	7	1	10	28	73.7%
Other Parent**	5	–	–	1	4	80.0%
Totals	50	7	1	11	32	74.4%

*"Other" includes cases where a minimum of five attempts was made to complete the survey with an individual (e.g., message left; unsuccessful attempts to make a firm appointment to complete the survey).

**The low number of non-initiating parents participating in the survey is a result of these parties not participating in the CCSS or not providing written consent to be contacted for research purposes.

2.4.3 Key Informant Interviews

As one component of this evaluation the Consultant conducted 10 interviews with individuals involved in the delivery of the CCSS and related services, including:

- three Family Justice Counsellors;
- the Child Support Officer;
- the FMEP Outreach Worker;
- one Family Maintenance Worker (MHR);
- one Court Registry Clerk;

¹⁴ The valid response rate is calculated as follows: (total completions) / (total sample size – numbers not-in-service)

- one Legal Advice Lawyer;
- the Local Manager, and
- one administrative support staff.

The Consultant developed three interview guides containing questions relevant to the person's position or relationship to the project (interview guides are contained in Appendix D). The guides were designed to capture the interaction between the various services provided to individuals accessing the CCSS. The interviews also collected information regarding the effectiveness of the case management model and perceived effects of the CCSS.

2.5 **Research Limitations**

There are three key caveats associated with the evaluation:

1. The extent to which the results can be attributed to the CCSS project itself are limited because of the following:
 - the research design does not allow for comparative analyses due to a paucity of pre-implementation or comparison group data. As a result, incremental effects of the CCSS cannot be measured in isolation from other family justice programs (e.g., Rule 5, PAS) and the ability to attribute project effects to only the CCSS is limited.
 - there is only one CSO delivering services, therefore, project outcomes could be associated more with the individual qualities of the CSO than with the CCSS itself. This problem was addressed by ensuring the evaluation remained focused on the mode of delivery rather than on the performance of the individual delivering the service. That is, the focus was on the performance of CCSS related tasks rather than on the individual performing those tasks.
2. The CCSS had been in operation for only a short time when the research activities were conducted. Past experience in the evaluation of pilot projects suggests that there are typically start-up or early implementation problems to be addressed. Such issues are likely to have some effect on the outcome of the evaluation and will not necessarily reflect future issues or project success.
3. The accuracy with which the resolution of issues related to varying child support arrangements can be measured is questionable given the large number of factors or intervening variables that could affect case resolution. For example, CCSS exerts no influence over case resolution if it proceeds to court, nor can service providers control the length of time that passes before a client makes an appointment to follow up on a referral. These issues and their effects were not explored in the research.

SECTION 3: INTEGRATED CASE MANAGEMENT

There are two evaluation objectives relevant to the assessment of the integrated case management model applied in the CCSS Pilot Project. The evaluation objectives and associated evaluation questions addressed are as follows:

Objective : *Determine the effectiveness of the integrated case management model of service delivery employed by the CCSS.*

Evaluation Questions:

- How well are CCSS services coordinated through the case management model?
- Are changes to existing child support orders and agreements made in a timely manner through the CCSS case management model?

Objective : *Identify effective practices and/or any barriers in the implementation of the CCSS to inform future project implementation.*

Evaluation Questions:

- In what ways are CCSS service delivery processes and practices effectively implemented?
- To what extent are any barriers to the implementation of CCSS delivery processes and practices impeding effective service delivery?

Summarized in this section are the results for the following aspects of the case management model and service coordination:

- Accessibility
- CCSS Services
- Referrals and Coordination of Services
- Case Management Support
- Gaps and Overlaps in Services
- Challenges to Service Delivery and Lessons Learned

Key highlights and overall conclusions as they relate to the evaluation objectives are presented in **Section 5: Consultant's Conclusions**.

3.1 Accessibility

Survey participants were positive in their views of the accessibility of services and resources available through the CCSS. Almost all (94%) clients surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they were able to make an appointment with the CSO within a reasonable amount of time.

Information collected through informant interviews suggests that access to services is enhanced by the location of the services at a single site. Informant interviews revealed that service providers employ a somewhat informal communication system (i.e., knock on the door

to see if and when a person is available) and, where possible, practice an open-door policy. As a result, some clients have the opportunity to meet with more than one service provider while they are at the Family Justice Centre. Clients seeking Limited Legal Advice are more limited as the lawyers are available on-site for two hours each week. Individuals can book one-half hour appointments with a lawyer and can have a maximum of three hours of legal advice time.

3.2 Gateway to the CSO

Individuals can access the services provided by the CSO through a number of gateways such as the FMEP Outreach Worker, FJCs, the FMP (MHR), the court registry, lawyers or through self-referral. At the Family Justice Centre, staff who provide administrative support for FJC services provide basic screening of clients who contact the Family Justice Centre¹⁵. During the informal screening administrative staff attempt to determine the resource most suitable to the client (i.e., an FJC, the CSO or the FMEP Outreach Worker), depending on the individual's stated needs/issues. Administrative support staff estimated that 20% of these types of cases involve only child support issues and that these individuals are provided with the contact information for the CSO. Similarly, cases that involve only FMEP issues are directed to the FMEP Outreach Worker.

Administrative data reveal that many clients who accessed CCSS had not been referred to the service through family justice or court services. Referral sources are summarized in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1
Distribution of Referral Sources to CCSS

Referral Source	% of Cases (n=45)
Self-Referred	44%
Family Maintenance Program	16%
Family Maintenance Enforcement Program	13%
Court Registry	7%
Family Justice Counsellors	4%
Debtor Assistance Program	2%
Private Lawyer	2%
Other	2%
Unknown	10%
Total – All Sources	100%

Source : CCSS Administrative Data

The largest proportion (44%) of cases was recorded as having been self-referred. Self-referred clients who participated in the survey cited the phone book, Internet and advertising leaflets (22%) or friends/relatives (19%) as the way in which they first heard about the CCSS. In terms of making the public aware of a new project it was noted in three interviews that fairly extensive advertising is important to maximizing the use of the CCSS. Two service providers felt that “drop-in” rates could be improved through more advertisement of the project.

¹⁵ Administrative support staff do not provide brief services. Rather, the brief services interview is conducted by the CSO.

It is possible that the high self-referral rate is, in part, a result of the research design imposed by the relatively short period the project had been in operation at the time of the evaluation. For example, some service providers could have been under-utilizing the new services offered through the CCSS. Indeed, information collected through informant interviews provides some support for this explanation. Specifically, the FJCs mentioned that it had taken them two to three months to become accustomed to referring cases to the CSO. It was also noted that (MHR) FMP Workers had been under-utilizing the new project. However, interviewees also indicated that FJC referral practices had improved since the beginning of the project and that referrals from the (MHR) FMP were expected to increase in the near future (i.e., a second orientation with FMP Workers was being planned at the time of the evaluation).

3.2.1 Referrals to the CSO

The CCSS service providers estimated that approximately 90% of cases referred to them were appropriate. Inappropriate cases tended to be those that were self-referred. As indicated previously, in an attempt to direct clients to the most appropriate service provider, some informal screening is provided by administrative support staff for clients who phone or walk in to the Family Justice Centre.

Upon receipt of a referral, the CSO generally contacts the parent within one day and provides brief services over the telephone. In some cases an appointment is made for an intake interview while in other cases it is left with the client to make an appointment for intake services, depending on the wishes of the client. As mentioned by one of the FJCs interviewed, the CSO conducts timely follow-up with clients referred by the FJC.

3.3 CCSS Services

The CSO provides a number of different information services and assistance, including:

- brief services,
- intake interview and services,
- information about child support guidelines,
- assistance with obtaining and/or completing financial documents,
- assistance determining and calculating child support amounts,
- facilitated negotiation,
- assistance with Provincial Court forms and procedures,
- information about Supreme Court procedures, and
- review of Supreme Court documentation.

The types of services received from the CSO and the rated importance of each of the services received by survey participants are described below.

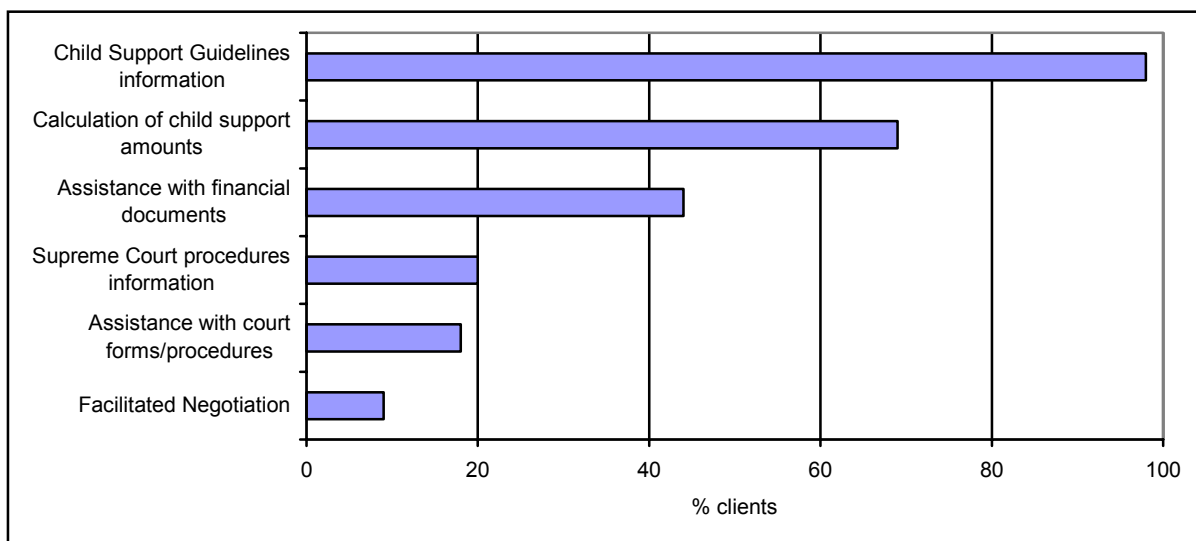
3.3.1 Types of Services Received

The administrative data contained information only for those clients who had received services from the CSO, therefore all individuals had received brief-services and all had completed an intake interview¹⁶.

¹⁶ Five participant survey clients received both brief services and intake services at their first meeting with the CSO.

As outlined in Chart 3-1, the majority of clients who accessed CCSS received the following types of services and assistance from the CSO: information about the Child Support Guidelines (98%), calculation of child support amounts (69%), and assistance with identifying and obtaining the necessary financial documents required to change existing child support agreements (44%). One-fifth of the cases received information about Supreme Court forms and procedures.¹⁷

Chart 3-1
Types of Service Received from the CSO



Source: CCSS Administrative Data; n=45

Note: Categories are not mutually exclusive, therefore, percentages sum to more than 100%

According to the information contained in the administrative data, facilitated negotiation was not used extensively. In 13 cases (29%) facilitated negotiation was offered to both parents and four cases actually participated in the process. However, there is evidence suggesting that the proportion of cases receiving facilitated negotiation is higher. In contrast to the information contained in the administrative data analysis, the CSO estimated that between 50% and 60% of cases have received facilitated negotiation. The discrepancy between the CSO's estimate and the administrative data could be due to the database containing only closed cases.

The somewhat limited use of facilitated negotiation can be explained, in part, by the requirement that both parents must consent to the process. The main reasons why facilitated negotiation is not consented to by both parents include:

- attempts made by the CSO to contact the other parent are unsuccessful;¹⁸
- six cases were precluded from receiving facilitated negotiation due to a history of violence in the relationship; and,
- one party lives in another area¹⁹.

¹⁷ Although 27% of the cases involved Supreme Court matters, not all of the clients required information regarding Supreme Court procedures.

¹⁸ There is evidence in the administrative data that the CSO typically attempts to contact the non-initiating parent. However, it is the individual's choice as to whether or not they, in turn, contact the CSO.

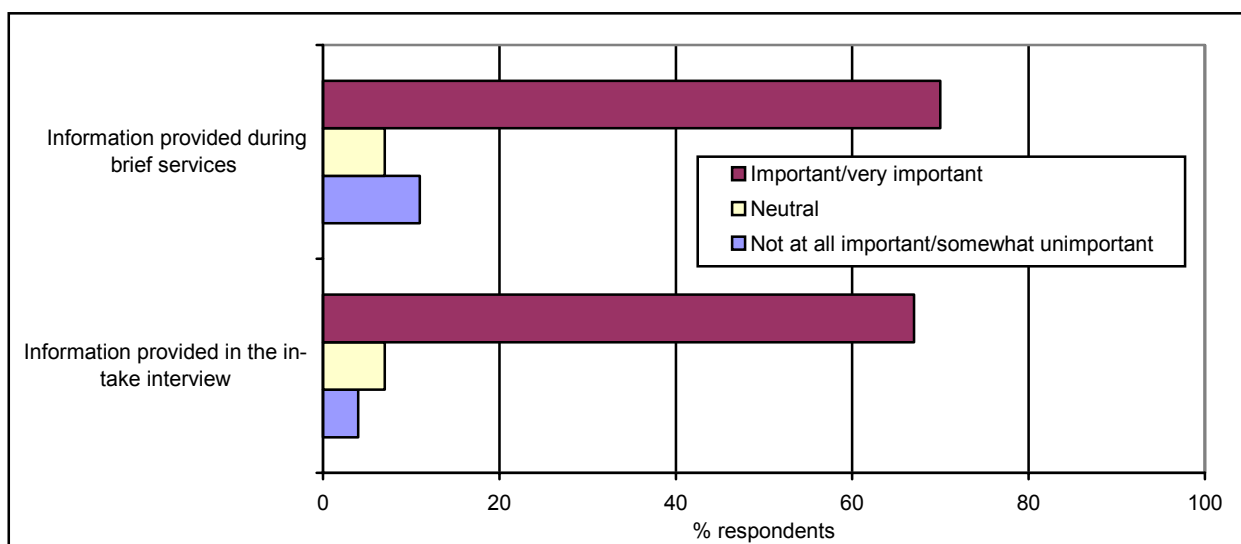
¹⁹ Conference calls have been offered to these parties but, so far, have been refused.

Another explanation for the limited use of facilitated negotiation is that, upon meeting with the CSO and receiving information about the Child Support Guidelines and the options available to the client, the initiating parent is willing to come to an agreement without the need for facilitated negotiation or decides not to pursue the change. That is, the information provided through the CCSS clarifies the parents' responsibilities pertaining to child support issues and amounts. Administrative data provide evidence in support of this explanation. Of those who did not participate in facilitated negotiation (n = 41), six individuals (15%) made a change in child support by consent and 12 individuals (29%) decided not to make a change.

3.3.2 Importance of CCSS Services

In the client satisfaction survey, respondents were asked to rate the importance they attributed to the information and assistance provided through the services delivered by the CSO. Highlighted in Chart 3-2 are the importance ratings assigned by survey respondents to the information received during brief services and during the in-take interview.

Chart 3-2
Importance of Information Received



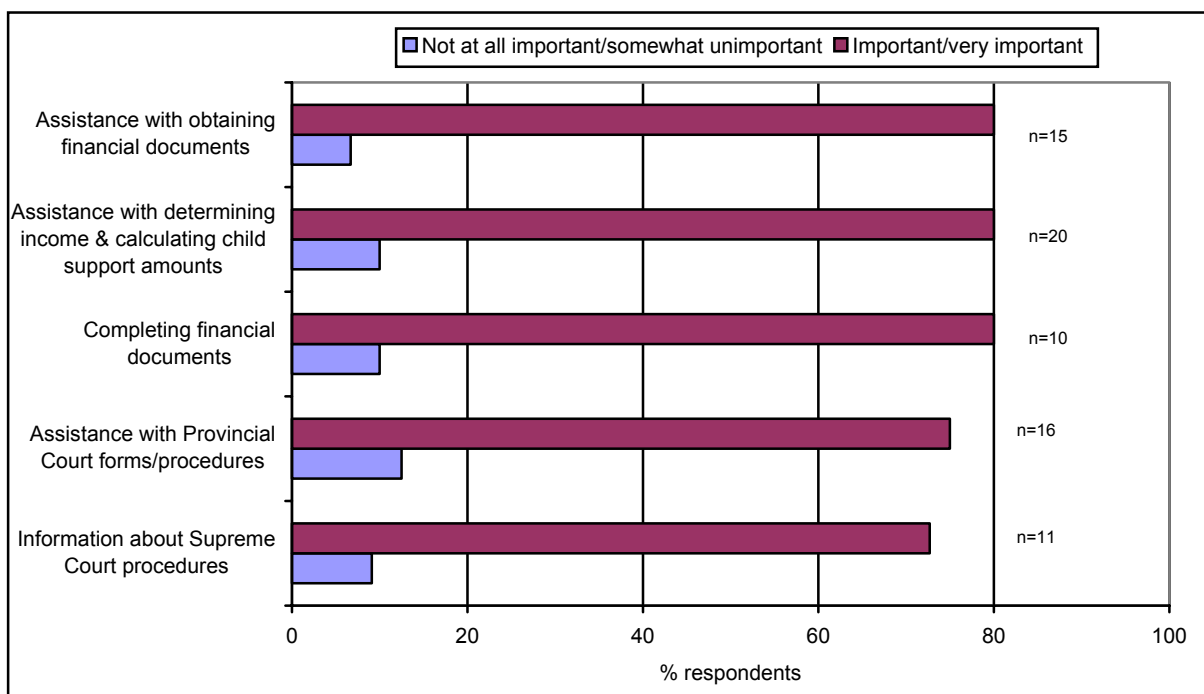
Source: Client Satisfaction Survey (n=27)

Note: Totals do not sum to 100% as "Don't Know" and "Not Applicable" responses are not reported.

Clients placed a fairly high level of importance on the information provided by the CSO at first contact. The majority of clients (70%) who received brief services and intake services at different times rated the information provided at first contact (i.e., through brief services) as "very important" or "important". Similarly, 67% of CCSS clients surveyed rated the information provided during intake services to be "very important/ important". All five of the individuals who received brief services and intake services at the same appointment rated the information they received as "very important".

Individuals who indicated in the survey that they had received a particular service or form of assistance from the CSO were asked to rate the importance of that assistance to their case. Importance ratings provided by survey participants are presented in Chart 3-3.

Chart 3-3
Importance of Assistance/Services Received



Source: Client Satisfaction Survey

Note: "Don't Know" and "Not Applicable" responses have been removed.

Overall, approximately 80% of clients surveyed felt the types of assistance they received from the CSO were important or very important. All of the service providers interviewed indicated that the types of assistance provided by the CSO (i.e., calculation and recalculation of child support amounts) were important to the resolution of issues related to child support amounts.

3.4 Referrals and Coordination of Services

Services available through the CCSS include FMEP Outreach, Limited Legal Advice, FJC mediation services, the (MHR) FMP, PAS, DAP and the judge/court registry staff. Highlighted in Table 3-2 is the distribution of referrals made by the CSO to the various services available to clients.

Table 3-2
Distribution of Client Referrals

Service	# Cases	% Cases
Limited Legal Advice	23	51%
FMEP Outreach Program	19	42%
Family Maintenance Program	13	29%
Judge/Court Registry Staff	8	18%
Family Justice Counsellor	2	4%
Debtor Assistance Program	2	4%

Source: CCSS Administrative Data; (n = 45)

Note: Columns sum to greater than 100% due to multiple referrals.

Clients were most frequently referred to Limited Legal Advice (51%) and to the FMEP Outreach Worker (42%).²⁰ Fourteen of the clients surveyed who had followed up on referrals made by the CSO indicated that the services they were referred to were appropriate to their case. Service providers within the CCSS indicated that client referrals typically are appropriate and that, after having met with the CSO, clients have a more “refined” knowledge and understanding of the child support issues involved in their cases.

Overall, service providers estimated that approximately 10% of the total cases (i.e., not just the closed files) they refer to other services do not follow-up on the referral. Service providers attribute the lack of follow-up on referrals to low levels of motivation or interest on the part of certain clients.

For cases where referrals to other agencies are required/recommended, the CSO attempts to coordinate an appointment with the respective service provider/agency. When possible the CSO arranges an appointment for the referral while the client is at the Family Justice Centre for intake services. Otherwise, the CSO arranges an appointment and advises the client of the details in a follow-up call. This practice enhances the flow of cases through the range of services and adds to the continuity of the process by minimizing the number of contacts clients are responsible for making with different service providers. Of the 15 individuals surveyed who followed up on the referrals made by the CSO, 12 agreed or strongly agreed that the CSO helped to coordinate the services they received through the CCSS.

3.4.1 Client Tracking

The CSO performs a variety of client tracking activities for each case, such as follow-up on referral outcomes, recording referral and overall case outcomes as they pertain to the issues involved, and closing case files. Review of the administrative data revealed that all closed case files have up-to-date information (i.e., date of referral, date of follow-up on referral) with outcomes for various steps (e.g., facilitated negotiation, referral outcome) and relevant dates recorded.

A large proportion (75%) of clients surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that they were satisfied with the level of follow-up activities conducted by the CSO for their case. One of the FJCs interviewed specifically commented on the consistency with which CCSS clients are followed up on and tracked by the CSO.

3.5 Case Management Support

Integral to the functioning of an integrated case management model is the support of the various CCSS service providers. This section examines the sufficiency of training and orientation provided to individuals involved in the delivery of family justice services or the CCSS referral stream, and the extent to which the case management process is supported by the various service providers.

²⁰There is discrepancy between referrals recorded in the administrative data and referrals cited by survey participants. In some cases, clients indicated that they had not been referred to a particular service where the CSO had recorded one. One possible explanation for this could be the “seamlessness” of the services as a result of the case management process and the continuity across the different services, whereby clients may not have recognized that they had actually received a different service. In other cases, clients indicated that they had been referred to certain services by the CSO, however, these had not been recorded in the administrative database. A potential explanation for the second type of discrepancy could be related to clients’ dealing with different service providers prior or subsequent to receiving CCSS. For instance, some clients might have confused legal advice received from Duty Counsel at the court registry with the term “Legal Advice Lawyer”. Definitive evidence for either explanation is not available in the present study.

3.5.1 Orientation and Training

A number of training and orientation activities occurred with respect to the CCSS. The type of activities and perceived adequacy of the orientation/training are presented below.

CCSS Service Providers

Prior to the implementation of the project, a one-day orientation session was provided to family justice service providers involved in the CCSS. This group included: the Kelowna FJCs, LALs, DAP staff and representatives from FMEP and (MHR) FMP. In addition, the FMEP Outreach Worker received comprehensive training from FMEP specific to the FMEP Outreach Program and for the CCSS overall. Similarly, the CSO was provided a comprehensive training package and policy/procedure manual to support the new position created for the CCSS.

Informant interviews revealed that family justice service providers felt they had received adequate and comprehensive orientation to the CCSS prior to its implementation. However, the CCSS staff noted that, in order to serve Supreme Court clients better, further training in the completion of Supreme Court documentation was needed.

It was mentioned by four of the individuals interviewed that, in implementing the CCSS, there has been a certain degree of learning as they go due to there being no other examples in operation from which to draw on their experience. However, the staff did not find the process cumbersome and attributed this to the nature of the existing team-like operations of the family justice system in Kelowna. As one interviewee pointed out, "it has been a process of learning and relationship building".

It was noted by five family justice service providers that a key reason for the fluidity in implementing the CCSS project was that core staff, the CSO and FMEP Outreach Worker, had entered the position with a high level of expertise in understanding and addressing child support issues. Key informants indicated that such a level of expertise and familiarity with the Child Support Guidelines was integral to the success of the CCSS and reduced the need for extensive training in this area. It was also noted that past experience dealing with parties involved in FRA and/or maintenance disputes was important.

(MHR) FMP Workers

A "train the trainer" approach was employed prior to implementing the project to introduce the CCSS to (MHR) FMP Workers whereby the program representatives who attended the one-day orientation session introduced the CCSS to (MHR) FMP field staff. It was noted that the initial orientation and train the trainer sessions were sufficient but that the more detailed information had been difficult for field staff to attend to due to the volume of the information and to heavy caseloads. At the time of the interviews (August 2002), the (MHR) FMP was planning to disseminate more information to field staff and expected referrals to CCSS from (MHR) FMP Workers to increase in the near future.²¹ Another individual indicated that occasional "reminders" about the project over the first months of operations could be helpful.

²¹ It was also mentioned that, as (MHR) FMP Workers become more accustomed to making referrals to the CCSS and more cases are referred, there could be a need for more than one CSO.

Judges and Court Registry Staff

An orientation was arranged for judges and court registry staff serving parties with FRA matters. Court registry staff indicated that the orientation they received was sufficient for the purposes of making referrals to the CCSS.

Other Stakeholders

An information session was offered to private family lawyers at a regularly scheduled family bar session but it was noted that few attended. However, minutes of the session were distributed to all members. In addition, there had been a mail-out of information about the CCSS to family lawyers. Informant interviews revealed that, since the implementation of the CCSS, members of the private bar, in fact, have referred clients to the CCSS for information and/or assistance.

3.5.2 Service Provider Support

Overall, it appears that service providers support the CCSS. One interviewee attributed the level of support for the CCSS to the high value assigned to the project by the various service providers. Comments from other individuals interviewed support the observation. For example, the CCSS was described as a necessary service to clients with child support amount issues and the types of services provided by the CSO were considered to be in high demand by clients. Court registry staff routinely refers individuals to the Family Justice Centre for information and other types of assistance that is not available at the court registry. In general, service providers felt there were generally positive feelings about the project and they would like to see it continue, or even expand.

Information collected through the informant interviews suggests that the case flow through the CCSS is supported, to some extent, by the informal communication processes practised by members of the case management team. The proximity of the CCSS service providers to each other facilitates discussion of or follow-up with referred cases when service providers have the opportunity (i.e., informal case conferencing). One FJC commented that the case flow has been improving as the exchange of information between service providers has improved. The CSO and FMEP Outreach Worker work closely on many of their cases and have frequent contact to discuss and track cases. Informal communications typically occur for cases referred to the CSO and for case tracking or follow-up. Information disclosed by and to clients who receive Limited Legal Advice is not discussed between service providers. Such information is disclosed to service providers by the client on a voluntary basis only. It is important to note that, within the informal communication structure, policies and legislation pertaining to protection of privacy and confidentiality of client information is adhered to.

The CSO acts as the key referral agent for cases with issues related to child support amounts. The CSO uses a more formal referral process for case management. The CSO provides written documentation to referral agencies providing a brief description of the case and, where necessary, the written authorization of clients to share their information with other agencies.

There are other formal processes in operation, depending on the service provider and how they are positioned with respect to the CCSS (i.e., in attendance at the Family Justice Centre part-time or not present on site at all). LALs receive a formal referral form and background information (by fax) from the CSO prior to meeting with a client. Using the background information, the LAL is able to assist individuals in the time allotted for an appointment (i.e., approximately one-half hour). A formal process is also employed for referrals from the CSO to

FJCs, to the (MHR) FMP, and to the FMEP due, in part, to the legislated requirements to obtain client authorization to share information between service providers.

Private lawyers were mentioned by the majority of interviewees as being least supportive of the CCSS. However, a number of interviewees noted that members of the private bar have referred clients to CCSS and one interviewee stated that he had heard positive feedback about CCSS from some family lawyers.

3.6 Gaps and Overlaps in Services

3.6.1 Gaps

Fourteen of the 15 clients who followed up on the referrals made by the CSO indicated that there were no services they felt they had needed but failed to receive. In contrast, there was mixed opinion among key informants as to gaps in service in the family justice system after the introduction of the CCSS. Three service providers identified two areas that they felt did not provide sufficient services or assistance to clients. However, it should be noted that in both cases, the problem is systemic rather than project related.

First, neither the CSO nor the FMEP Outreach worker has authority to assist FMEP clients referred to the CCSS in negotiating arrears settlements (i.e., changes or cancellations). They are only able to help clients develop a payment arrangement and therefore, some clients leave the CCSS without a complete settlement. As indicated in Section 1, cases involving child support arrears typically are complex and involve multiple issues. As such, by policy, arrears issues are best addressed under judicial scrutiny. This policy applies to family justice services, generally.

A second gap in the CCSS identified by three interviewees was the limited training provided to the CSO to assist in the preparation of Supreme Court documentation at the start of the project.²² As a result, individuals with matters before the Supreme Court are considered to have limited resources to assist in completing Supreme Court documents.

Two other gaps mentioned by two of the interviewees were:

- the decrease in the availability of the Debtor Assistance Program, which was identified as having been especially useful to payors involved in (MHR) FMP cases; and,
- an insufficient number of LALs available for instances where a conflict exists for both lawyers involved in CCSS; however, since the implementation of the CCSS, a third legal advice lawyer is available.²³

3.6.2 Overlaps

Fifteen (47%) of the total survey respondents indicated that they had been referred to and had received services after meeting with the CSO. Four (27%) of the 15 individuals indicated that they had to go over the same information each time they were referred to a different service.²⁴ However, some clients noted that the repetition of information was something they would

²² The reader is reminded that at the time of the report, further training for the CSO in Supreme Court matters is underway.

²³ In some cases two lawyers have had to disqualify themselves due to a conflict of interest

²⁴ Six survey respondents who received referral services indicated that they found there to be an overlap in services. However, review of the explanations provided by these individuals revealed that in four of the six responses the person mentioned only that they had to repeat information to each new service provider.

expect, given that each service provider would need to obtain enough information to help resolve issues. Several respondents also noted that the CSO had briefed the LAL before their appointment, thereby reducing the iteration of case details at the time of their meeting. The Limited Legal Advice available to CCSS clients was considered by several interviewees to be unique and complementary to the other types of assistance offered through CCSS.

Five of the key informants interviewed identified a slight overlap between the services offered by the FJCs and those offered by the CSO. Specifically, the overlap was noted as occurring because FJCs are authorized to deal with child support issues as is the CSO. However, it was also noted that overlap is minimized because the FJCs typically deal with simple, straightforward child support issues/calculations and refer more complex calculations (i.e., self-employment, seasonal employment, special expenses, etc.) to the CSO.

In other respects, the CCSS was noted to reduce the duplication of certain services. For example, once an FMEP case is referred to CCSS, case management is transferred to the FMEP Outreach Worker. Therefore, there is no overlap between the services provided by the CSO and the FMEP Outreach Worker nor between the CCSS and regular FMEP enforcement processes. It was also noted that there was no overlap between the CCSS and services provided by (MHR) FMP. The CCSS and the (MHR) FMP were seen to provide complementary services.

3.7 Challenges to Service Delivery and Lessons Learned

Although a number of key informants indicated that it was challenging to be the sole site implementing a new program and service delivery model as a pilot project, they were generally positive regarding the implementation and operation of the CCSS.

One challenge noted by the CSO was the potential difficulty of dealing with REMO cases due to the geographical location of the parents. In cases where parties are separated by a substantial physical difference, it is difficult, often impossible, to make contact with the non-initiating party.

Key informants identified a number of factors contributing to the successful implementation of the CCSS. The main lessons learned were as follows:

- ***Experienced Service Providers in New Programs:*** In addition to the orientation and training provided for the CCSS, the CSO and the FMEP Outreach Worker had extensive experience working with child support cases enrolled in the (MHR) FMP and in the FMEP. As a result, the CCSS staff had a high level of expertise and experience in working with child support related matters when they became involved in the pilot project. All CCSS service providers considered the strong background of the CSO and FMEP Outreach Worker in working with parents who have issues regarding child support to be an important element of successful program delivery.
- ***Supportive Internal Environment:*** The family justice service providers had worked together prior to the introduction of the CCSS and had already established a solid working relationship. Many of the individuals interviewed noted that the existence of a supportive internal environment at the onset of the project facilitated successful implementation.
- ***“One-Stop-Shop”:*** A number of service providers commented on the need to keep related services at the same site to facilitate seamless delivery and promote the timely resolution of issues. The Kelowna Family Justice Centre offers the full range of services available under the CCSS at a single site (with the exception of DAP which currently is

only available over the telephone). The “one-stop-shop” approach facilitates the open-door policy employed at the Kelowna Family Justice Centre which, in turn, has been attributed as adding to the continuity between services.

- **Sufficient “Up-front” Time:** One individual interviewed mentioned that when implementing a new pilot project it is important to schedule adequate time and resources for planning, organizing and developing policy and procedures.
- **Development of Partnerships:** An important quality of the CCSS are the partnerships developed between different programs (e.g., the CCSS and the FMEP) and between different ministries (MHR and MAG). Two interviewees identified two important aspects in the development of the successful partnerships between programs and ministries: the opportunity to have the appropriate and necessary policies in place in the partnering programs prior to implementing a new project or program, and flexibility in the development of relevant policies and procedures within the partnership.

An area of concern mentioned by two of the interviewees was the duplicate paper trails generated through triage/regular FJC services and through the CCSS. That is, if a party receives services from an FJC and from the CSO, files are opened in both processes and follow separate administrative paths. Although the administrative staff in place for the FJCs directs clients to contact the CSO or FMEP Outreach Worker if that is the type of assistance required, direct administrative support (e.g., booking appointments, data entry and management) is available only to FJCs. Administrative support has not been put in place for the CCSS, therefore, all administrative work is completed by the CSO and the FMEP Outreach Worker. It is possible that the situation could present a challenge if the CCSS caseload increases as predicted by some of the service providers interviewed.

SECTION 4: PROJECT EFFECTIVENESS

The results presented in this section address the following evaluation objective and associated evaluation questions.

Objective : *Determine the degree to which CCSS assists people to resolve issues regarding child support pursuant to consent orders, court orders, and agreements.*

Evaluation Questions:

- How well does the array of services provided by the CCSS assist parents to resolve child support issues?
- How well are parents advised of and prepared for referrals to CCSS resources?
- How well does facilitated negotiation help parents to resolve child support issues?
- To what extent do the CSO and CCSS-related services assist parents to assess financial issues and, when appropriate, re-calculate child support amounts?

Results are summarized in the following sub-sections:

- Effectiveness of the CCSS
- Client Satisfaction
- Other Benefits

4.1 **Effectiveness of the CCSS**

As discussed in the previous section, parents access the CCSS for a variety of reasons related to child support and require different types of assistance. Subsequently, cases can follow different referral paths and result in any one of a range of outcomes. Case outcomes are reviewed below. A discussion of referral patterns is contained in Section 3.

4.1.1 Issue Resolution

Administrative data and results of the client satisfaction survey reveal that clients were more likely to resolve child support issues through the CCSS than through the courts. As highlighted in Table 4-1, 16% of cases were proceeding to the Provincial or Supreme Court as compared to 31% of cases where the parents came to an agreement about a change in child support amounts. It is also worthy of note that in 27% of cases, the initiating parent decided against seeking a change in child support after meeting with the CSO.

**Table 4-1
Distribution of Case Outcomes**

Outcome	# of Cases	% of Cases
Parents agreed to a change in child support (formally or informally)	14	31%
Initiating parent decided not to pursue issues	12	27%
Case proceeding to court	7	16%
No further activity for 30 days after the last client contact	6	13%
Other	6	13%
Total	45	100%

Source: Administrative data

Overall, family justice service providers perceive the CCSS to be very effective in helping parents who are seeking to resolve child support issues. The assistance is considered invaluable to clients with issues involving child support amounts. In particular, the importance of having legal advice services available to parents with child support issues was mentioned by a number of informants.

Three reasons commonly cited in the key informant interviews as contributing to the effectiveness of the CCSS include:

- the specific expertise of the CSO and the ability to provide in-depth information to clients (mentioned by five individuals);
- increased client awareness of the issues, processes and requirements leads to clients who are better informed and/or prepared for the next steps (mentioned by four individuals); and,
- assistance provided by the CSO tends to focus clients on the issues and helps to isolate issues (mentioned by three individuals).

Court registry staff considers the CCSS to be a useful referral resource for parents seeking to obtain information about child support amounts. Individuals who access CCSS and return to the court registry are perceived to be more aware of “what they can and cannot do”.

4.1.2 Facilitated Negotiation

All of the cases where the parents participated in facilitated negotiation resulted in a resolution of child support issues and none returned to or went to court. The success of facilitated negotiation in helping parents to resolve issues can be attributed to the nature of facilitated negotiation. As noted by the CSO, both parents are present thereby increasing the opportunity for a discussion of the issues and obtaining resolution. In addition there may be certain case characteristics that enhance the probability that parties will agree to participate in facilitated negotiation. For example, of the four cases where the parents participated in facilitated negotiation, none of them had a history of violence and three did not involve arrears issues, REMO or FMEP.

Second, facilitated negotiation decreases the chance of a “back and forth” interaction between parents by facilitating discussion of the issues between the parties with a neutral party who can help focus the parents on the issues at hand. The CSO also noted that facilitated negotiation helped speed up the process of achieving a resolution.

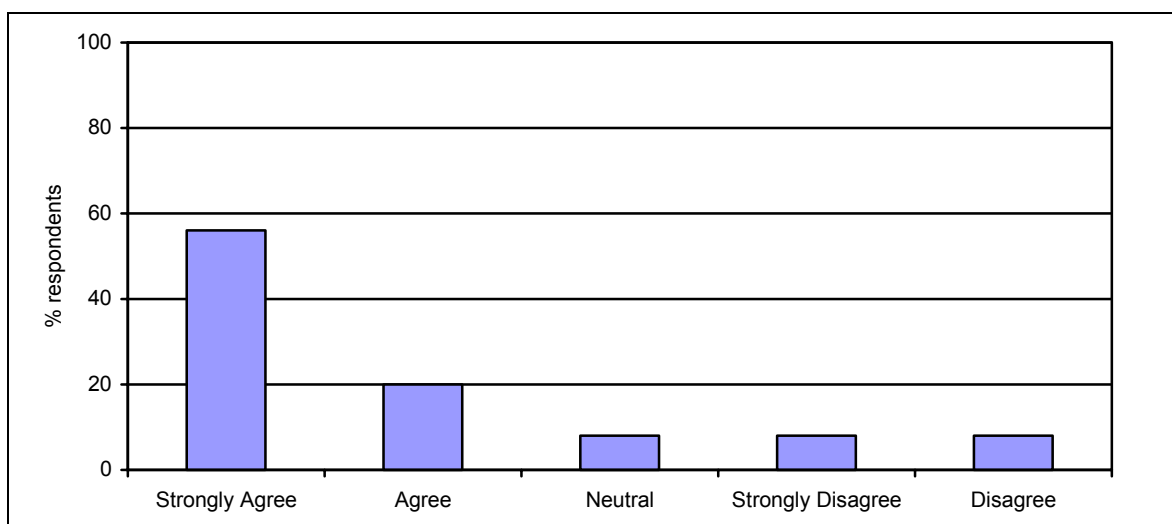
4.1.3 Timeliness of Issue Resolution

On average, the timeframe between a parent first accessing CCSS and the last date of contact was 71 days. CCSS policy and procedures require the CSO to close a file 30 days after the last client contact in cases where there is no apparent resolution or case outcome and no further client activity. While it is possible that the 30-day rule might inflate the average length of time before a case is closed, this, in fact, is not the case. When cases with no further client activity are removed from the analysis, the average length of time between opening a case file and a case outcome is 72 days.

The reader is reminded that there are a number of factors that influence the amount of time it takes for a case to conclude that are beyond the control of the service providers. As noted by one of the service providers, “some clients don’t call back for weeks or months”. The amount of time it takes to resolve child support issues was also noted to be influenced by the level of cooperation present between the parents. Therefore, the average time it takes for a case file to be closed after contacting the CSO should be considered only within the context of these other contributing factors.

Clients surveyed were asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement, “I believe the services/assistance I received from the CSO helped speed up changes to my child support arrangements”. Individuals who reportedly decided not to pursue a change in child support amounts, wanted to think about things further or decided to go to court indicated that the question was not applicable to their case (22% of total survey responses). Presented in Chart 4-1 are the levels of agreement of survey participants.

Chart 4-1
Client Ratings of How Well the CCSS Helped Expedite Changes



Source: Client Satisfaction Survey; (n=25). “Not applicable” responses have been removed.

More than three-quarters (76%) of the respondents felt that the CCSS served to decrease the amount of time it otherwise would have taken to make a change to their child support amounts.

Key informants interviewed were generally of the impression that issues related to child support amounts were dealt with in a timely manner through the CCSS and that issue resolution could be achieved more expediently through the CCSS than through the courts. It was also noted by one FJC that, since the implementation of the CCSS project, there has

been a large decrease in the amount of time it takes clients to access regular FJC services as a result of the FJC being able to divert cases with child support issues to the CSO. The “one-stop-shop” approach to providing family justice services was observed to be a “more professional and efficient” mode of service delivery for both the clients and the service providers. The model employed in the CCSS Pilot Project was seen by family justice service providers as promoting a “seamless” array of services and speedier resolution of issues.

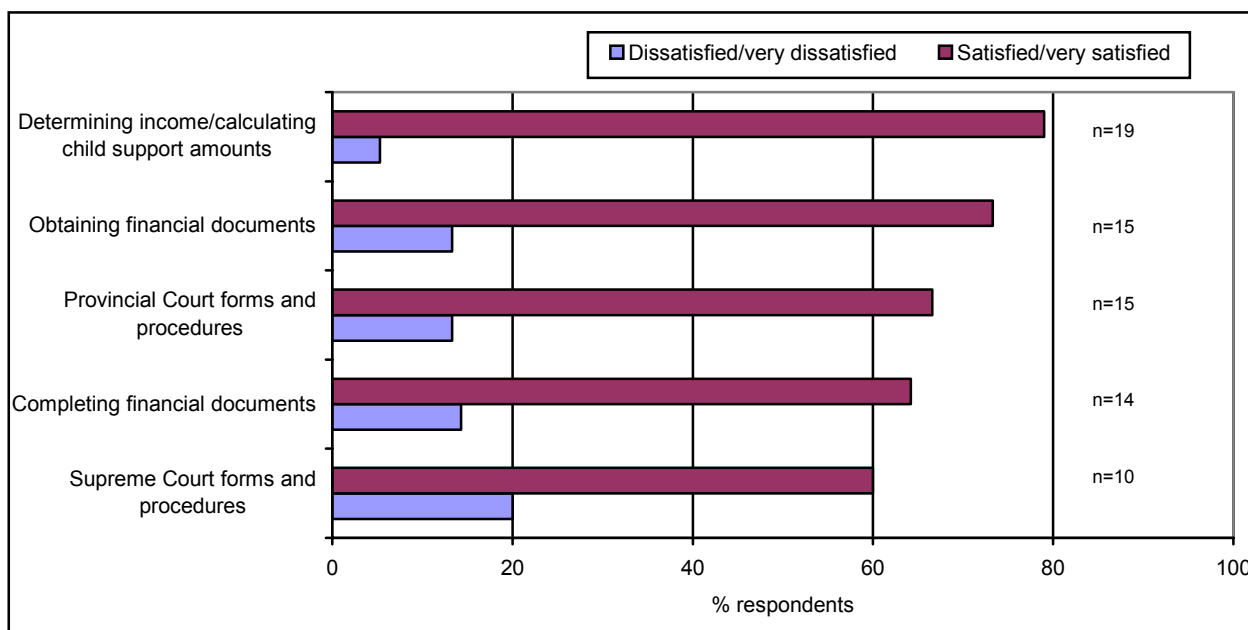
4.2 Client Satisfaction

CSO clients who participated in the survey were asked to rate their satisfaction with several types of assistance offered by the CSO, including assistance with the following:

- obtaining financial documents;
- completing financial documents;
- determining income and calculating child support amounts;
- completing Provincial Court forms and procedures; and,
- obtaining information regarding Supreme Court forms and procedures.

Note that not all clients received all types of assistance, therefore, results are reported only for those who indicated they had received each service. Summarized in Chart 4-2 are the levels of satisfaction reported for each type of assistance provided through the CCSS.

Chart 4-2
Client Satisfaction by Service Area



Source: Client Satisfaction Survey

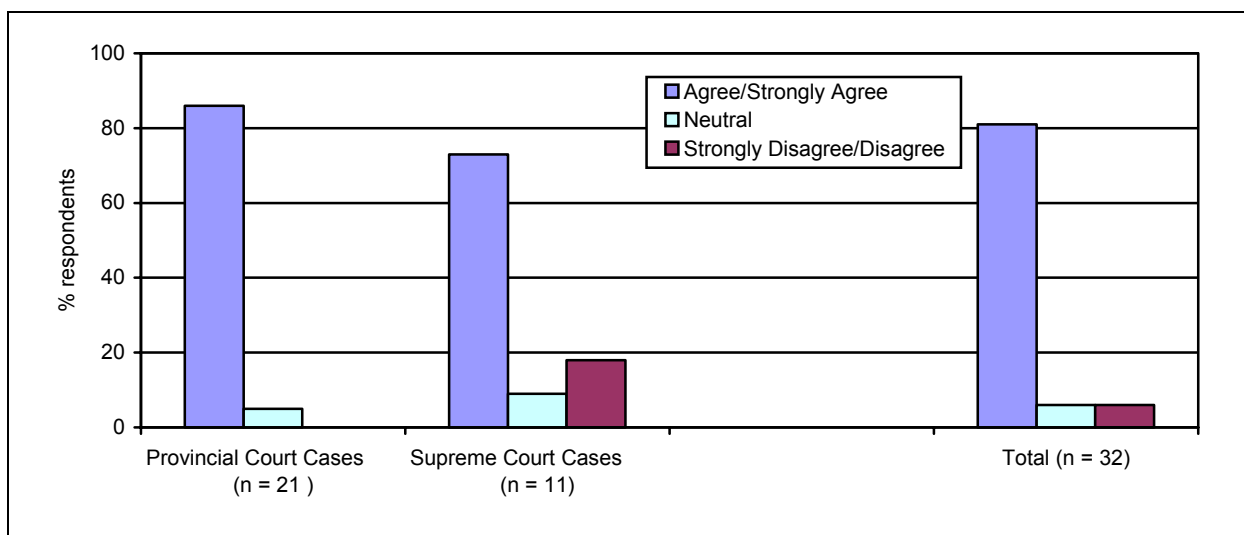
Note: “Don’t Know” and “Not Applicable” responses have been removed.

Of those who received assistance, the majority were satisfied or very satisfied with the assistance they received. The least satisfaction was reported for the assistance provided with Supreme Court procedures.

4.2.1 Overall Client Satisfaction

All respondents were asked several questions regarding their overall satisfaction with the CCSS. Detailed in Chart 4-3 is overall client satisfaction with the information and services provided through the CCSS.

Chart 4-3
Overall Client Satisfaction with Information and Assistance
by Provincial and Supreme Court Case Type

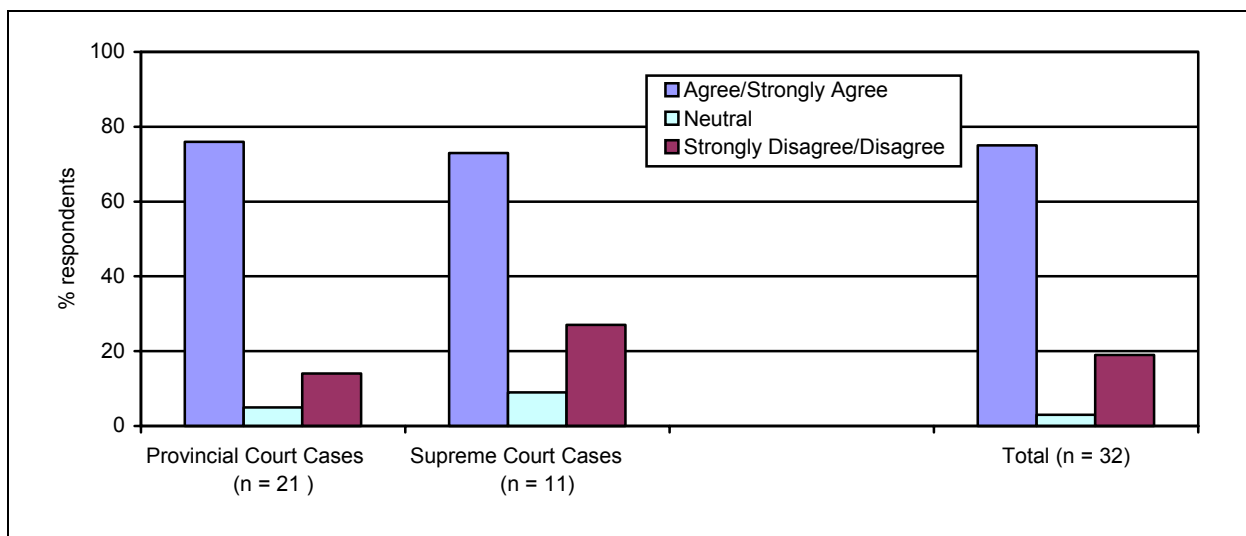


Source: Client Satisfaction Survey; n = 32; "Don't "Know" responses are not included, therefore, results may sum to less than 100%.

Of the total clients surveyed, 81% agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I was satisfied with the information and assistance provided by CCSS". Two individuals surveyed expressed dissatisfaction with the range of services available and indicated that they had not received sufficient information or assistance to address the issues of their case. Both of these individuals were involved in Supreme Court cases and, as stated by one of the respondents, "the CSO was unable to help". One of the two respondents who were not satisfied with the information and assistance provided also had arrears issues. These results corroborate observations noted by three family justice service providers that clients with Supreme Court matters do not always receive sufficient assistance due to the limited training of the CSO to assist in Supreme Court matters. (Note, however, that the majority of individuals who received information about Supreme Court procedures and documentation and/or had arrears issues were satisfied with the level of assistance provided.)

Respondents were also asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement, "Overall, I was satisfied with the range of services available to me through CCSS" and, as highlighted in Table 4-4, 75% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Here again, two of the respondents who reported lower levels of satisfaction (i.e., dissatisfied/very dissatisfied) were involved in Supreme Court cases, one case involved arrears issues and one case involved both.

Chart 4-4
Overall Client Satisfaction with the Range of Services Available
by Provincial and Supreme Court Case Type



4.3 Other Benefits

Nine respondents reported having had previous experience with the family justice system. These individuals were asked to explain how their experience with the CCSS compared to their past experience within the family justice system.²⁵ The results are as follows:

- six clients stated their experience with the CCSS was better than their previous experience;
- two individuals reported that they did not notice a change in their experience; and,
- one respondent could not comment.

Of those who found the experience within the CCSS to be better than their previous experience within the family justice system, three found the process to be simplified and three mentioned that the process was less confrontational. In addition, three of the individuals felt that they had received more personalized service in that the details of their particular cases were taken into consideration. Examples of comments made by survey respondents include:

“The CCSS was ten times better. I found it to be much more personal, faster and more helpful. Most of all I felt like the CSO was not trying to hurry me out of her office . . . I left with a lot more knowledge and confidence. I felt that this time the process helped my situation instead of making it more complicated.”

“I was much more impressed this time around . . . This time was much different in that [the CSO] treated me fairly and listened to my point of view without automatically lumping me in with the stereotype of the dad who is trying to get out of paying child support.”

“The difference was night and day . . . CCSS was a lifeline and it treated me individually, giving me options specific to my case and not just general information about the system.”

²⁵ Note that the responses reported here are the results of an open-ended question in the client satisfaction survey. As such, some respondents mentioned more than one improvement to their experience.

“In my past experience I would have to say it was a fight to settle issues. In my experience with the CCSS, it was just a matter of drawing up a form.”

Some of the service providers interviewed for the evaluation also felt the neutrality of the CSO’s position to be beneficial to clients with child support issues. The CSO does not represent either parent’s position and presents child support amount calculations and information factually and neutrally. Another service provider stated, “face-to-face, one-on-one contact goes a long way to get the payor to understand and accept the process.”

Service providers also considered clients to receive more personalized and efficient service through the CCSS than they would receive through the courts. In addition, they felt that clients perceived the CCSS to be more neutral (i.e., not taking the side of either the payor or the recipient) and more objective (i.e., based on the Child Support Guidelines and specific formulae). One interviewee indicated that the information and assistance provided through the CCSS might also help some parents with other financial problems they might be dealing with.

The Limited Legal Advice offered through the CCSS was noted by several family justice service providers as particularly beneficial to clients, especially in light of recent reductions in the availability of legal aid. The legal advice available to parties was noted to serve as a confirmation of the parents’ legal obligations and options.

FJCs noted that they found the more specialized service of the CSO to be convenient given their caseloads and beneficial to the flow of FJC cases. In particular, it was noted that since the implementation of the CCSS, the waiting time for an appointment to receive regular FJC services has decreased.

SECTION 5: CONSULTANT'S CONCLUSIONS

Presented in this section are the Consultant's conclusions based on the results reported throughout this document. The key findings are organized according to the three evaluation objectives identified for the evaluation and address the eight questions associated with the objectives (see the evaluation matrix contained in Appendix B).

Evaluation Objective 1: Determine the degree to which the CCSS assists people to resolve issues regarding child support pursuant to consent orders, court orders, and agreements.

There is evidence that the array of services provided through the CCSS assists parents to resolve issues related to child support amounts.

The research results provide multiple lines of evidence that suggest the CCSS assists parents to resolve their issues related to child support amounts. The following results substantiate this claim:

- Close to 60% of CCSS clients resolved their child support related issues through the CCSS: in 31% of cases, parents resolved their issues by consent and in 27% of cases, the initiating parent decided against seeking a change in the child support amounts altogether.
- Overall, clients were satisfied with the information and services received from the CSO and other CCSS service providers. Survey participants generally considered the types of services or assistance received through CCSS to be important and comprehensive.
- Fourteen out of 15 survey respondents who followed up on the referrals made by the CSO felt they received all the services they needed.

Limitations to the extent of assistance that can be provided in certain types of cases were identified as potential gaps in the array of services provided through the CCSS.

While service providers were generally positive in their views of the CCSS, some noted gaps in the array of services available: the lack of authority of the CSO or FMEP Outreach Worker to change or cancel arrears and the limited assistance that the CSO was trained to provide to individuals with Supreme Court cases. However, as noted previously in the report, the CSO is currently receiving further training for Supreme Court cases and changing or cancelling arrears was never intended to be within the scope of the CCSS.

Members of the case management team indicated that referrals made to their services were appropriate and that referred parties were better prepared after meeting with the CSO.

In general, service providers felt that the majority of referrals made were appropriate. Service providers also indicated that, upon referral, parents were better prepared for their meeting than were parties who had not accessed the CCSS. Parties referred from the CSO were considered to have a clearer understanding of the issues to be addressed and their responsibilities with respect to child support.

Facilitated negotiation appears to be somewhat under-used by clients but is a valuable tool for parents in resolving issues related to child support.

Facilitated negotiation, while not utilized in many of the cases included in the administrative data, was successful in facilitating an open exchange of information for the purpose of resolving the issues at hand. All client survey respondents who participated in facilitated negotiation indicated that they and the other parent had been able to reach an agreement about child support amounts during the session. Facilitated negotiation is a valuable tool for parents willing to discuss child support issues in the presence of a neutral party (the CSO) with knowledge of the guidelines surrounding the issues.

After contacting the CSO, parents felt they were well advised of their options within CCSS.

During intake, the CSO discusses the range of options, including referral options, available to parents to assist them with child support issues. Parents felt they had been well informed of the options available to them within the array of CCSS after their initial contact with the CSO.

The CCSS is effective in helping parents assess financial issues and/or re-calculate child support amounts.

Results suggest that assessment of financial issues and re-calculation of child support amounts is a valuable service in several respects. Clients assigned a high level of importance to the assistance provided by the CSO in assessing financial issues and re-calculating child support amounts. Overall, clients were generally satisfied with the services provided by the CSO.

Service providers also identified the assessment of financial issues and re-calculation of child support amounts as valuable services. The CCSS better prepares clients for other family justice services and clarifies the level of responsibility of each parent to the child(ren) involved. In addition, the financial information and assistance recalculating child support amounts provided by the CSO keeps cases out of the courts.

Evaluation Objective 2: Determine the effectiveness of the integrated case management model of service delivery employed by the CCSS.

The case management model is successful in coordinating CCSS services for clients.

The integrated case management model employed at the Kelowna Family Justice Centre facilitates coordinated services for CCSS clients in a variety of ways. It was noted in several of the interviews that a key factor in the successful coordination of cases through the CCSS is the informal communication that occurs between service providers for those cases where the parties provided consent for their file information to be shared between the service providers.

In addition, comments made by survey respondents indicated that they did not feel that they had been made to “jump through a new hoop” each time they were referred to a different service rather the process was coordinated and managed by the CCSS staff.

Research results indicate that the CCSS case management model facilitates timely resolution of child support issues.

The integrated case management model helps to resolve child support issues in a timely manner due, in part, to its elimination of the client as case manager. The CSO’s ability to provide accurate information and appropriate service referrals has effectively eliminated any

time wasted by clients trying to navigate the family justice system and possibly accessing inappropriate or replicated services. Instead, clients are directed to appropriate channels to have their issues resolved with a minimum of overlap or wasted time.

Evidence that the CCSS facilitates timely resolution of issues is apparent in the following results:

- 94% of clients surveyed indicated that they were able to make an appointment with the CSO within a reasonable amount of time; and,
- 76% of clients surveyed believed that the services provided by the CSO helped to speed up the process of making changes to child support amounts.

Another factor identified as facilitating timely resolution of case issues is the “one-stop-shop” approach whereby the non-court family justice services are located at a single site.

Evaluation Objective 3: Identify effective practices and/or any barriers in the implementation of the CCSS pilot to inform future project implementation.

Service providers identified a number of effective practices in the implementation of the CCSS that could be used to guide the implementation of other family justice programs.

Implementation of the CCSS Pilot Project was considered by service providers to be successful, in general. In reflecting upon their experiences with the CCSS, service providers identified a number of practices that were effective and that, they felt, enhanced implementation of the CCSS at the Kelowna Family Justice Centre. The main lessons that can be drawn from the implementation of the CCSS include:

- create and maintain a supportive internal environment among program staff;
- ensure an appropriate level of expertise for service providers in addition to the comprehensive training and orientation provided;
- provide orientation and project information to all relevant stakeholder groups; and,
- provide related services at a single location or a “one-stop-shop” to facilitate coordinated and seamless service delivery.

Although 44% of the cases examined for the evaluation were self-referred, it was suggested by some of the service providers that up-take could be enhanced through additional advertising of the CCSS to the general public.

The successful partnerships developed between programs provide a model for similar endeavours in the future.

The CCSS was developed to operate in partnership with existing programs offered by the MAG (i.e., the regular FJC program, Rule 5, and the FMEP) and the (MHR) Family Maintenance Program (FMP). Research results suggest that these partnerships have been successful. For example, service providers within the family justice systems make and receive referrals from other members of the case management team and regularly (although informally) up-date each other as to case progress. In addition, the partnerships also link together programs that provide complementary services.

Clients value one-on-one interactions that facilitate more personalized and individualized service.

Survey respondents indicated a preference for obtaining assistance through the CCSS over their past experiences with the family justice system. Characteristics of the CCSS that were noted by clients as particularly beneficial included:

- a more personalized form of service that considers individual case characteristics;
- the neutrality for the service provider; and,
- the non-confrontational approach to issue resolution.

REMO cases face specific barriers.

The CSO indicated that dealing with REMO cases can present a particular challenge related to geographic location. In cases involving REMO, parents live in different jurisdictions. Therefore, the ability of the CSO to deliver facilitated negotiation is limited because of the physical distance between the parents.

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY OF TERMS²⁶

Brief services: the initial interview with CSO that determines how CCSS can best service parent(s).

Case management: the process by which the movement of cases through family justice services is managed. In CCSS, the CSO is the centre of the case management process.

Child Support Clerk: trained staff who assist parents wishing to obtain or change support agreements/orders by providing information, assisting with the completion of required documentation and calculating child support amounts using specialized software.

Child Support Guidelines: The rules for calculating the amount of child support one parent must pay to the other parent to help support their child or children. The guidelines apply to all couples with children who are no longer together - whether they were married, in an opposite- or same-sex common-law relationship, or no relationship at all.

Child Support/Maintenance: financial support for children that must be paid under a court order or agreement.

Child Support Officer (CSO): assists parents in navigating the procedural steps involved in obtaining and changing child support orders and written agreements by case managing the process. The CSO provides an array of services such as facilitated negotiation, referrals to other programs/services and monitoring case progress.

Child Support Order/Agreement: Specifies how much one or both parents will need to pay in child support. It may be a separate order or agreement, or may form part of a larger divorce order or separation agreement.

Debtor Assistance Program (DAP): provides assistance to parents to help assess and resolve their financial situation, personal debt and related lifestyle issues.

Facilitated negotiation: a timely exchange of information between parents with the goal of providing understanding regarding the Child Support Guidelines and reaching a settlement.

Family Justice Centre: physical location of the non-court-related family justice services.

Family Justice Counsellor (FJC): accredited family mediators who provide dispute resolution services to help parents and spouses resolve issues. They can also make referrals to parenting after separation programs, other family justice

²⁶ Where available, the definitions used are from the Ministry of Attorney General website or from the *Comprehensive Child Support Manual*, July 2001, Ministry of Attorney General, Justice Services Branch, Family Justice Services Division.

- services (e.g., CCSS), legal aid, other legal services, and community resources for families facing separation.
- Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP): monitors and enforces (under the Family Maintenance Enforcement Act) all maintenance orders and agreements that are filed with the program.
- Family Maintenance Program (FMP): Ministry of Human Resources (MHR) mandatory program for parents in receipt of BC Benefits to obtain or vary child and spousal support orders. The support orders are automatically enrolled in the FMP.
- Family Relations Act (FRA): provincial legislative authority that governs changes made to child support orders/agreements and other family-related matters such as: child custody and access arrangements, guardianship, spousal/parental support and division of property.
- FMEP Outreach Program/Worker: provides support services and information to parents about maintenance enforcement through client meetings and workshops, payment conferences and liaison between FMEP and CCSS.
- Intake Interview: completed during the client's initial visit to establish eligibility for CCSS and gather information that substantiates a requested change in child support.
- Intake Services: discussion of range of service options available to assist with child support issues including referral options. During intake services, the parent provides the CSO with required documentation and where applicable, the CSO will explain court process and assist in completion of forms.
- Legal Advice Lawyer: provides information to parents at the Family Justice Centre to help clarify their legal options and obligations according to the Child Support Guidelines.
- Parenting After Separation Program (PAS): Parenting After Separation is a free, three-hour information session for BC parents and other family members who are dealing with child custody, guardianship, access and support issues.
- Parents: members of the public who access the CCSS, including biological parents, step-parents, grandparents or guardians.
- Payee (Recipient): parent in receipt of child support payments from the other parent or payor.
- Payor: parent responsible for remitting child support amounts to the payee/recipient parent.
- Mediation: the process through which parties work with a person who is specially trained (a Family Justice Counsellor) to help parties reach an agreement.

Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders (REMO): child support orders where the parents live in different jurisdictions with reciprocal enforcement arrangements.

Rule 5 Family Justice Registry Pilot Project: A new family court case management scheme is being piloted to increase the availability of early, collaborative, non-adversarial settlement opportunities.

Triage: a mandatory meeting between the FJC and parties with non-urgent issues related to the FRA (e.g., custody, access, guardianship and maintenance) to inform parties of the range of options for issue resolution and to clarify or narrow issues prior to appearing before a judge.

APPENDIX B: EVALUATION MATRIX

APPENDIX B: CCSS EVALUATION MATRIX

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE 1: Determine the degree to which CCSS assists people to resolve issues regarding child support pursuant to consent orders, court orders and agreements.				
Associated Program Goal and Service Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Topics to be Explored	Performance Indicators / Measures	Research Activities & Data Sources
<p>Program Goal: Assist parents to resolve disputes surrounding child support issues.</p> <p>Service Objectives: Clarify and organize information from parents that is required to make changes to child support; Recommend ways to change child support; when appropriate, advise parents of resources available through the CCSS to resolve support issues related to their children; Provide services that assist parents to resolve disputes related to changing child support and attending to the best interests of their children;</p> <p>Help parents identify changes in income information and recalculate child support amounts according to the Child Support Guidelines; and, Help parents assess money issues for the purpose of making their child support payments.</p>	1. How well does the array of services provided by CCSS assist parents to resolve child-support issues?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue resolution patterns • Referral patterns • Outcomes of successful resolution of child support issues • Benefits to clients • Unintended outcomes/impacts of CCSS • Array of services, including gaps or overlaps 	<p>-types of outcomes associated with CCSS cases; -contributions of different services to the outcome of cases; -number/proportion of cases where new child support amounts are determined by the CSO; -number/proportion of cases where a written agreement/desk order results from the receipt of CCSS; -number/proportion of cases that proceed to court because child support issues have not been resolved; -CCSS services most accessed by parents -client perceptions as to the benefits of receiving CCSS services -key informant perceptions of the effectiveness of CCSS services in helping parents to resolve child support issues -perceptions of judiciary and court registry staff as to the level of preparedness of parties for court (e.g., documentation, focussing of issues)</p>	<p>-administrative data review and analysis -participant survey -key informant interviews: CSO Debt Advisors FMEP Outreach workers Legal advice lawyer Triage FJC Regular FJC FMEP Enforce't Officers FMP Workers Members of judiciary Court registry staff</p>
	2. How well are parents advised of and prepared for referrals to CCSS resources?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about CCSS and related services delivered through brief services and intake • Usefulness and appropriateness of referral information • Client follow-up on referrals 	<p>-client awareness and understanding of options available to them after brief services -client understanding of the types of services available to them through the CCSS -client satisfaction with the usefulness of information and assistance received through CCSS brief and intake services -client follow-up on referrals - client and service provider satisfaction with appropriateness of referrals -key informant perceptions about the value of clarifying and organizing issues -perceptions of judiciary and court registry staff as to the level of preparedness of parties for court (e.g., documentation, focussing of issues)</p>	<p>-participant survey -key informant interviews: CSO Debt Advisors FMEP Outreach workers Triage FJC Regular FJC FMEP Enforce't Officers FMP Workers Members of judiciary Court registry staff</p>

APPENDIX B: CCSS EVALUATION MATRIX

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE 1: Continued.				
Associated Program Goal and Service Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Topics to be Explored	Performance Indicators / Measures	Research Activities & Data Sources
As above	3. How well does facilitated negotiation help parents to resolve child support disputes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client uptake of facilitated negotiation Benefits to clients Ability of parents to focus on the best interests of the children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -number/proportion of cases that proceed to facilitated negotiation -outcomes of facilitated negotiation -client perceptions of the benefits of facilitated negotiation -service provider/CSO perceptions of the impact of facilitated negotiation on the resolution of child support issues -client and service provider perceptions of whether facilitated negotiation sessions help parents to better focus on the best interests of their children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -administrative data review and analysis -participant survey -key informant interviews: CSO Regular FJC Members of judiciary
	4. To what extent do the CSO and CCSS-related services assist parents to assess financial issues and, when appropriate, recalculate child support amounts?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clarification and organization of issues during CCSS brief services and intake Type and usefulness of financial services received from the CSO and referrals Preparedness of CCSS clients for court CCSS cases resulting in recalculated child support amounts Cases in which a change in income or circumstances leads to changes in child support Client understanding of changes in income or circumstances that leads to changes in child support Assessment of financial issues related to child support amounts Client co-operation regarding disclosure of financial information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -client understanding of the information required to recalculate child support amounts after brief services and the intake interview -client perceptions of the appropriateness and usefulness of referrals to other services -the degree to which clients follow up on referrals made by the CSO for financial services -client satisfaction with the usefulness of CCSS financial services (recalculation, financial management issues) -service provider perceptions of the usefulness of CCSS financial services -completeness of income documentation submitted by parents to the CSO and other relevant stakeholders (e.g. judiciary) -number/proportion of cases affected by non disclosure of income information -number/proportion of cases in which CSO assisted parents to recalculate child support amounts -perceptions of judiciary and court registry staff as to the level of preparedness of parties for court (e.g., documentation, focussing of issues) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -administrative data review and analysis -participant survey -key informant interviews: CSO Debt Advisors FMEP Outreach workers Triage FJC Regular FJC Members of judiciary Court registry staff

APPENDIX B: CCSS EVALUATION MATRIX

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE 2: Determine the effectiveness of the integrated case management model of service delivery employed by the CCSS.				
Associated Program Goal and Service Objectives	Evaluation Questions	Topics to be Explored	Performance Indicators / Measures	Research Activities & Data Sources
<p>Program Goal: Speed up changes to child support orders and written agreements</p> <p>Service Objective: Co-ordinate child support services and government agencies that help parents assess, manage and speed up changes to child support orders and written agreements</p>	<p>5. How well are CCSS services co-ordinated through the case management model?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanisms that support the case management team • Communication/information flow between family justice service providers • Gateways through which CCSS is accessed • Referral patterns to CCSS-related services • Effectiveness at helping clients resolve issues • Efficient delivery of services • Client follow-up activities • Gaps or overlaps in services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -identification of support and communication mechanisms applied to the case management of CCSS services -CSO/CCSS service provider satisfaction with the support mechanisms in place for the case management team -CSO/service provider perceptions of efficiency of case flow -client satisfaction with the type/extent of services available to them -client perceptions of repeated services or assistance across referrals -client satisfaction with the coordination of CCSS services -client satisfaction with the coordination of information across the various CCSS services received -client satisfaction with the level of follow-up activities conducted by the CSO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -administrative data review and analysis -participant survey -key informant interviews: CSO Local FJC Manager Debt Advisors FMP Workers FMEP Outreach workers Legal advice lawyer Triage FJC Regular FJC
	<p>6. Are changes to existing child support orders and agreements made in a timely manner through the CCSS case management model?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Timeframes associated with the progress of a case through the array of CCSS services (Note: this information may provide baseline information if CCSS is implemented at other sites.) • Timeliness with which issues are resolved • Perceived changes in the length of time it takes to resolve clients' issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -the average length of time for CCSS cases to proceed through the recommended CCSS services, from the initial meeting to CCSS case conclusion (e.g., agreement, referral to court, etc.) -client satisfaction with timeliness of issue resolution through the use of CCSS -CCSS service provider perceptions of the timeliness with which CCSS cases are concluded (within the array of CCSS services) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> administrative data review and analysis -participant survey -key informant interviews: CSO Debt Advisors FMEP Outreach workers FMP Workers

APPENDIX B: CCSS EVALUATION MATRIX

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE 3: Identify effective practices and/or any barriers in the implementation of the CCSS pilot to inform future program implementation.				
Associated Service Delivery Mechanism	Evaluation Questions	Topics to be Explored	Performance Indicators / Measures	Research Activities & Data Sources
<p>Service Delivery Mechanism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -program participation -communication -service accessibility -availability of resources -training -support 	<p>7. In what ways are CCSS service delivery processes and practices effectively implemented?</p> <p>8. To what extent are any barriers to the implementation of CCSS service delivery processes and practices impeding effective delivery of services?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target groups • Communication among service providers • Communication with the public • Support from non-CCSS related service providers • Interaction with Rule 5 • Training issues • Program participation • Support from non-CCSS related service providers • Availability of resources • Accessibility of services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -number and type of clients referred to/accessing CCSS (i.e., FMEP, REMO, etc.) -effectiveness of CSO training and the (potential) need for follow-up or complementary training for the CSO -effectiveness of orientation to CCSS of other service providers -satisfaction of CCSS service providers with the support received from other individuals involved with the family justice system (e.g., court registry staff, judges, lawyers)? -the identification of necessary resources for the effective implementation of CCSS -opinions of CCSS service delivery staff as to effective program implementation, service delivery, and case management practices -review of the proportion of individuals from each client group accessing CCSS -the means and the adequacy of means through which clients become aware of CCSS -the ease with which parents are able to access the various types of service on an as-needed basis -satisfaction of CCSS service providers with the support received from other individuals involved with the family justice system (e.g., court registry staff, judges, lawyers)? -the availability/adequacy of the resources for the effective implementation of CCSS -barriers to effective implementation identified by CCSS service delivery staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> --administrative data review and analysis -participant survey -key informant interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CSO Debt Advisors FMEP Outreach workers Legal advice lawyer Triage FJC Regular FJC FMEP Enforce't Officers FMP Workers Members of judiciary Court registry staff

APPENDIX C: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

CCSS Client Satisfaction Survey

Introduction

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling on behalf of Family Justice Services and the Ministry of Attorney General. Our firm, R.A. Malatest & Associates Ltd., has been contracted by the Ministry of Attorney General to conduct an evaluation of the Comprehensive Child Support Services Pilot Project in Kelowna. This survey is an important part of the evaluation.

We are contacting people who met with the Child Support Officer at the family justice centre in Kelowna to work out issues related to child support. At your meeting, you signed a form that gave the Ministry permission to use the information you provided for research purposes. Your participation in this survey is **completely voluntary**.

It is important to note that, in this survey, your identity will remain anonymous and your responses will in no way affect any current or future relationship you might have with the Ministry of Attorney General or with Family Justice Services. The information collected in the survey will be presented in summary format; that is, your individual responses will not be identifiable in the final report.

The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. Do you have time to do the survey now?

SECTION A: CASE CHARACTERISTICS

The first section of the survey is designed to gather background information about your case.

[SURVEYOR NOTE: WHEREVER "CCSS" OR "CSO" APPEAR, PLEASE USE THE FULL NAME—I.E., COMPREHENSIVE CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES OR CHILD SUPPORT OFFICER, AS APPROPRIATE]

A1. *How did you hear about the CCSS?*

A2. *What was the main reason for going to see the Child Support Officer? That is, what kinds of issues needed to be dealt with? **[SURVEYOR PROBE FOR DETAIL]***

A3. *Was your case enrolled in the Family Maintenance Enforcement Program (FMEP) at the time you received Comprehensive Child Support Services?*

1. Yes 2. No 8. Don't Know 9. No Response

SECTION B: CSO SERVICES

The following questions are related to the services you received from the Child Support Officer only, not the services you may have been referred to (by the child support officer). I will be asking you about referrals in the next section.

B1. Using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is “Not at all important” and 5 is “Very important”, please indicate how *important* each of the services/assistance you received from the CSO were to you/your case. [PROBE TO DETERMINE IF “DON’T KNOW” RESPONSES ARE ACTUALLY “NOT APPLICABLE” BECAUSE THIS TYPE OF SERVICE/ASSISTANCE WAS NOT PROVIDED/NOT NECESSARY]

	Not at all Important	Somewhat unimportant	Neutral	Important	Very Important	Not Applicable	Don't Know
[ASK B1a IF PERSON BRIEF SERVICES AND INTAKE DELIVERED AT THE SAME TIME AS PER UPLOAD INFORMATION—OTHERWISE SKIP TO B1b]							
a. Information provided to you by the CSO during your first appointment. [GO TO B1d]	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
b. Information provided during initial contact	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
c. Information provided in a second in-depth interview/appointment with the CSO	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
d. Assistance with obtaining financial documents	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
e. Completing financial documents							
f. Assistance with determining income and calculating child support amounts	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
g. Assistance with provincial court forms and procedures	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
h. Information about Supreme Court procedures	1	2	3	4	5	7	8

B2. Using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is “Very Dissatisfied” and 5 is “Very Satisfied”, please indicate how *satisfied* you were with the following services/assistance you received from the CSO. [PROBE TO DETERMINE IF “DON’T KNOW” RESPONSES ARE ACTUALLY “NOT APPLICABLE” BECAUSE THIS TYPE OF SERVICE/ASSISTANCE WAS NOT PROVIDED/NOT NECESSARY]

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	Don't Know
[ASK B2a IF PERSON BRIEF SERVICES AND INTAKE DELIVERED AT THE SAME TIME AS PER UPLOAD INFORMATION—OTHERWISE SKIP TO B1b]							
a. Information provided to you by the CSO during your first appointment. [GO TO B2d]	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
b. Information provided during initial contact	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
c. Information provided in a second in-depth	1	2	3	4	5	7	8

	Very Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral	Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Not Applicable	Don't Know
interview/appointment with the CSO							
d. Assistance with obtaining financial documents	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
e. Completing financial documents	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
f. Assistance with determining income and calculating child support amounts	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
g. Assistance with provincial court forms and procedures	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
h. Information about Supreme Court procedures	1	2	3	4	5	7	8

B3. **[ASK ALL]** Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “Strongly disagree” and 5 is “Strongly agree”.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	NA	DK/ NR
a. When I first contacted the office/the CSO, the options available to me were clearly explained.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
b. I have a good understanding of the types of services/assistance available to me through the CSO/CCSS.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
c. I was able to make an appointment with the CSO within a reasonable amount of time.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
d. The CSO helped me to better understand the information required to calculate child support amounts.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
e. I was satisfied with the follow-up activities conducted with me by the CSO (e.g., contacting client after being referred to other services).	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
f. I believe the services/assistance I received through the CSO helped to speed up the process of making changes to my child support arrangements.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8

[GO TO SECTION C IF THE PERSON DID NOT RECEIVE FACILITATED NEGOTIATION AS PER THE ADMINISTRATIVE DATA]

According to our records, you and the other parent/person involved in the case met with the CSO together to exchange information and to try to settle the child support issues.

[SURVEYOR NOTE: THIS PROCESS DEALS WITH CHILD SUPPORT ISSUES ONLY]

B4a. Again, using a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is “Not at all useful” and 5 is “Very useful”, please indicate how **useful** you found this service in helping you settle the child support issues in your case.

Not at all useful	Somewhat useful	Neutral	Useful	Very useful	Don't Know	No Response
1	2	3	4	5	8	9

B4b. *Were you and the other parent able to come to an agreement about child support arrangements during this meeting? [DO NOT READ LIST]*

1. Yes (i.e., came to a full agreement about child support)
2. Partially (i.e., agreed on some things but not others)
3. No (i.e., could not agree on child support arrangements)
8. Don't Know
9. No Response

SECTION C: CCSS REFERRALS

In this part of the survey I'd like to ask you about other services, agencies or programs the Child Support Officer may have referred you to.

C1. *Did the CSO refer you to other services?*

1. Yes
2. No
8. Don't Know
9. No Response

[GO TO SECTION D IF C1 = 2, 8, OR 9]

C2. *To which of the following services were you referred? [SELECT ALL THAT APPLY]*

1. Debtor Assistance Program
2. Family Maintenance Enforcement Program/FMEP (i.e., client has talked to someone in the FMEP located in Kamloops, Burnaby or Victoria)
3. FMEP Outreach Program (i.e., met/spoken with program staff located in the Kelowna family justice centre)
4. Legal advice lawyer (i.e., lawyer located in the Kelowna family justice centre)
5. Family Justice Counsellor
6. Family Maintenance Program (FMP) of the Ministry of Human Resources (i.e., one of the parties is on income assistance and has signed their rights over to MHR)
7. Parenting After Separation Program (PAS)
8. Court/court registry
9. Other (please specify): _____
88. Don't Know
99. No Response

C3. *Did you go to the agency/service(s) you were referred to?*

1. Yes, went to all of them
2. Went to some but not all referrals
3. Started but did not complete program/service
4. No, did not go to any referrals **[GO TO SECTION D]**
8. Don't Know/No Response

C4. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements using a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is “Strongly disagree” and 5 is “Strongly agree”.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	NA	DK/ NR
a. The agencies or services I was referred to were appropriate for my case.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
b. The CSO helped to coordinate the services I received through the CCSS and other agencies (e.g., legal advice, FJC).	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
c. I had to go over the same information each time I went to a different agency the CSO had referred me to.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8
d. There was repetition between the different types of services/assistance I received from the CSO and the other agencies.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8

C5. **[GO TO SECTION D IF C5d ne 4, 5]**

Please describe what types of assistance were repeated.

C6a. Were there any other kinds of services or assistance you felt you needed to help make changes to your child support but did not receive or were not referred to?

1. Yes 2. No 8. Don't Know 9. No response

C6b. **[GO TO SECTION D IF C7a = 2, 8, OR 9]**

What other kinds of services/assistance?

SECTION D: OUTCOMES

The next few questions deal with the outcomes/results related to your case.

D1. What was the final result for the child support issue in your case? **[SELECT ONE]**

1. The parents/parties agreed to a change in child support (formally or informally)
2. Court application made to change child support/case went before a judge
3. Initiating parent decided not to pursue the issues
4. Referred to other, more appropriate services
5. It was determined that no changes, new orders or agreements were required
6. Other (please specify): _____
8. Don't know 9. No response

D2a. *Were there issues related to your case other than child support?*

1. Yes 2. No 8. Don't Know 9. No Response

[GO TO SECTION E IF D2a = 2, 8, OR 9]

D2b. *What were the outcomes associated with these issues?* **[SURVEYOR PROBE: E.G., NEW CUSTODY OR ACCESS ARRANGEMENTS]**

SECTION E: GENERAL SATISFACTION

These last questions are related to your general satisfaction with the CCSS.

E1. *Using a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 is “Strongly disagree” and 5 is “Strongly agree”, please rate your level of agreement with the following statements:*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	NA	DK/ NR
a. Overall, I was satisfied with the information and assistance provided by the Comprehensive Child Support Services.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8

b. **[IF E1a = 4, 5, 7 GO TO E1c]**
Please explain your level of satisfaction

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	NA	DK/ NR
c. Overall, I was satisfied with the range of services available to me through the Comprehensive Child Support Services.	1	2	3	4	5	7	8

d. **[IF E1c = 4, 5, 7 GO TO E2a]**
Please explain your level of satisfaction

E2a. *Have you used the family justice system to settle child support issues before?*

1. Yes 2. No 8. Don't Know 9. No response

E2b. *How did your experience with the CCSS compare with your past experience? [Probe examples: less/more confrontational, easier/more difficult to settle the issues, etc.]*

THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO COMPLETE THIS SURVEY!!!

APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW GUIDES

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES EVALUATION
INTERVIEW GUIDE: SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Name: _____

Position: _____

INTRODUCTION

First, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to do this interview. I know you have a very busy schedule.

The Ministry of Attorney General is currently conducting an evaluation of the Comprehensive Child Support Services Pilot Project in Kelowna. A number of research activities are being implemented in order to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the project. One activity is to interview program staff involved in the delivery of the various services available to CCSS clients through the family justice system.

The information you provide will be used to inform the research process as well as to supplement and complement the data collected in the administrative data review and the client satisfaction survey. It should be emphasized that your individual responses will be presented in summary format; that is, your responses will not be identifiable in the final report.

The interview will take about an hour. Do you have any questions before we begin?

A. ARRAY OF CCSS SERVICES

As you know, CCSS provides parents access to an array of services, such as FMEP Outreach, Family Justice Counsellors, etc., to assist in the resolution of issues related to child support amounts and other issues, as required. The first set of questions examines the various forms of assistance available through CCSS.

1. Since the implementation of CCSS in February of this year, approximately what proportion of your case load have been CCSS cases (either a referral to you or a referral made by you)? That is, how would you describe your level of involvement with the CCSS?

2. **[Do not ask FMEP Enforcement Officer]** Do you find that the cases referred to you are appropriate? That is, are parents referred to you in need of the type of assistance your program provides? *[Probe for examples]*

3. To your knowledge, approximately what proportion of cases follow up on referrals you make to other services within the CCSS? Why do you think some cases do not follow up?

4. In your opinion, is there **overlap** in the services provided through CCSS? If yes, please explain. How does this overlap affect clients?

5. In your opinion, are there any **gaps** in the services provided through CCSS? If yes, please explain. How does this overlap affect clients/

[Do not ask FMEP Enforcement Officer]

6. Do you consider the types of assistance provided by the CSO, specifically calculation and recalculation of child support amounts, to be useful in the resolution of issues related to child support amounts? Please explain your answer.

B. CASE MANAGEMENT

Part of the CCSS pilot project is the implementation of a case management system to coordinate a variety services for parents and to coordinate information between service providers. The following questions relate to the case management processes employed within the CCSS system.

[Skip to Section D for the FMEP Enforcement Officer]

7. In your opinion, how efficient is the case flow for CCSS cases (i.e., from the time parents enter the process to the time the case is closed)? Please explain.

8. What mechanisms are in place to coordinate CCSS for individual cases? That is, how are the direction and flow of cases managed as they progress through CCSS? Are these processes sufficient/effective?

9. What processes are in place for communication between the various service providers involved in CCSS? For example, what methods of communication do you typically use and how frequently do you communicate with the other service providers? How well does the communication process work? In what ways could it be improved?

10. How well do the case management team and its members function to support the flow of cases through CCSS? Please explain.

11. How well do other programs or components of the family justice system (i.e., judiciary, court registry staff, lawyers) support CCSS? Please explain.

12. Have you and other service providers on the case management team received sufficient orientation to CCSS? Please explain.

13. Have other individuals involved in the family justice system (e.g., judges, court registry staff, lawyers) received sufficient orientation to CCSS? Please explain.

C. IMPACT OF SERVICES

The last set of questions are designed to examine program impacts.

14. In your opinion, how effective is CCSS in helping parents to resolve child support issues? Please provide examples.

15. Overall, what would you say are the key benefits of helping parties to clarify and organize their issues around child support? For example, does it help them to prepare for referrals to other services?

16. Within the array of services provided through CCSS (i.e., services outside of court), would you say that cases are concluded in a timely manner? Please explain your answer.

17. In your opinion, are there barriers to the resolution of child support issues through CCSS? If yes, what could be done to address these barriers?

18. Based on your experience with CCSS, what do you consider to be an adequate level of resources for the effective operation of CCSS? Currently, are these resources available?

19. What would you consider to be the key “lessons learned” so far with respect to the implementation of the CCSS?

Thank you very much for your time!

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES EVALUATION
INTERVIEW GUIDE: JUDGES AND COURT REGISTRY STAFF**

Name: _____

Position: _____

INTRODUCTION

First, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to do this interview. I know you have a very busy schedule.

The Ministry of Attorney General is currently conducting an evaluation of the Comprehensive Child Support Services Pilot Project in Kelowna. A number of research activities are being implemented in order to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the project. One activity is to interview members of the judiciary, court registry staff and CCSS service providers.

The information you provide will be used to inform the research process as well as to supplement and complement the data collected in the administrative data review and the client satisfaction survey. It should be emphasized that your individual responses will be presented in summary format; that is, your responses will not be identifiable in the final report.

I have a few questions to ask you which should take only a few minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin?

A. ARRAY OF CCSS SERVICES

CCSS provides parents access to an array of services to assist in the resolution of issues related to child support amounts and other issues, as required. The first set of questions examines the various forms of assistance available through CCSS.

1. Typically, do court registry files contain information as to whether or not the parties have accessed Comprehensive Child Support Services offered through the Kelowna Family Justice Centre?

Yes _____

No _____ → Can you tell if the parties have been to CCSS/the Family Justice Center?

Yes _____ No _____ →

2. **[If person answers "Yes" to either part of Q1 ask . . .]** What proportion of child support cases that you deal with would you estimate to have been through CCSS? _____

3a. Prior to the implementation of the CCSS in February of this year, how complete was the income documentation submitted to the court by the parties with child support issues? Please describe.

3b. How complete was other types of documentation submitted to/required by the court?

4a. **If the person answered “No” to both parts of Q1, ask . . .]** Have you noticed a change in the completeness of income and other documentation submitted to the court in child support cases since the implementation of CCSS in February of this year? If yes, how would you describe the change?

4b. Have you noticed a change in the preparedness of parties with child issues that appear before the court? For example, have the issues been better defined or are the parties more focused on the issues at hand?

OR (depending on how Q1 is answered)

4a. **[If the person answered “Yes” to either part of Q1, ask . . .]** For those cases where parties have accessed CCSS, how complete is the income documentation that is submitted to the courts? Is it more /less complete or the same as cases that did not access CCSS?

4b. For those cases that have accessed CCSS, how prepared are the parties when that appear before the court in comparison to cases that have not accessed CCSS? For example, are the issues better defined or are the parties more focused on the issues at hand?

5. **[Court registry only]** How satisfied are you with the level of communication between the court registry and service providers in the CCSS? For example, do you receive sufficient information in a timely manner from CCSS service providers? What, if anything, could be improved?

6. Would you say that you have received sufficient information about/orientation to CCSS? Please explain.

7. In your opinion, have other individuals involved in the family justice system (e.g. lawyers) received sufficient orientation to CCSS? Please explain.

B. IMPACT OF SERVICES

The last set of questions are designed to examine program impacts.

8. Overall, in what ways do you consider the types of assistance provided through CCSS to be helping parents to resolve child support issues?

9. Can you describe any changes/differences in the timeliness of case completion for child support cases since the implementation of CCSS? For example, are there fewer appearances or hearings per application or are hearing/trials shorter? Please explain your answer.

10. **[Judge only]** In your opinion, what are the key barriers to the resolution of child support issues that CCSS faces? What could be done to address these barriers?

11. What would you consider to be the key “lessons learned” so far with respect to the implementation of the CCSS?

Thank you very much for your time!

**COMPREHENSIVE CHILD SUPPORT SERVICES EVALUATION
INTERVIEW GUIDE: JUDGES AND COURT REGISTRY STAFF**

Name: _____

Position: _____

INTRODUCTION

First, I'd like to thank you for taking the time to do this interview. I know you have a very busy schedule.

The Ministry of Attorney General is currently conducting an evaluation of the Comprehensive Child Support Services Pilot Project in Kelowna. A number of research activities are being implemented in order to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the project. One activity is to interview members of the judiciary, court registry staff and CCSS service providers.

The information you provide will be used to inform the research process as well as to supplement and complement the data collected in the administrative data review and the client satisfaction survey. It should be emphasized that your individual responses will be presented in summary format; that is, your responses will not be identifiable in the final report.

I have a few questions to ask you which should take only a few minutes. Do you have any questions before we begin?

A. ARRAY OF CCSS SERVICES

CCSS provides parents access to an array of services to assist in the resolution of issues related to child support amounts and other issues, as required. The first set of questions examines the various forms of assistance available through CCSS.

1. Typically, do court registry files contain information as to whether or not the parties have accessed Comprehensive Child Support Services offered through the Kelowna Family Justice Centre?

Yes _____

No _____ → Can you tell if the parties have been to CCSS/the Family Justice Center?

Yes _____ No _____ →

2. [If person answers "Yes" to either part of Q1 ask . . . } What proportion of child support cases that you deal with would you estimate to have been through CCSS? _____

3a. Prior to the implementation of the CCSS in February of this year, how complete was the income documentation submitted to the court by the parties with child support issues? Please describe.

3b. How complete was other types of documentation submitted to/required by the court?

4a. **If the person answered “No” to both parts of Q1, ask . . .]** Have you noticed a change in the completeness of income and other documentation submitted to the court in child support cases since the implementation of CCSS in February of this year? If yes, how would you describe the change?

4b. Have you noticed a change in the preparedness of parties with child issues that appear before the court? For example, have the issues been better defined or are the parties more focused on the issues at hand?

OR (depending on how Q1 is answered)

4a. **[If the person answered “Yes” to either part of Q1, ask . . .]** For those cases where parties have accessed CCSS, how complete is the income documentation that is submitted to the courts? Is it more /less complete or the same as cases that did not access CCSS?

4b. For those cases that have accessed CCSS, how prepared are the parties when that appear before the court in comparison to cases that have not accessed CCSS? For example, are the issues better defined or are the parties more focused on the issues at hand?

5. **[Court registry only]** How satisfied are you with the level of communication between the court registry and service providers in the CCSS? For example, do you receive sufficient information in a timely manner from CCSS service providers? What, if anything, could be improved?

6. Would you say that you have received sufficient information about/orientation to CCSS? Please explain.

7. In your opinion, have other individuals involved in the family justice system (e.g. lawyers) received sufficient orientation to CCSS? Please explain.

B. IMPACT OF SERVICES

The last set of questions are designed to examine program impacts.

8. Overall, in what ways do you consider the types of assistance provided through CCSS to be helping parents to resolve child support issues?

9. Can you describe any changes/differences in the timeliness of case completion for child support cases since the implementation of CCSS? For example, are there fewer appearances or hearings per application or are hearing/trials shorter? Please explain your answer.

10. **[Judge only]** In your opinion, what are the key barriers to the resolution of child support issues that CCSS faces? What could be done to address these barriers?

11. What would you consider to be the key “lessons learned” so far with respect to the implementation of the CCSS?

Thank you very much for your time!