



VDSS Division of Child Support Enforcement Receives Grant to Help Domestic Violence Survivors Safely Gain Access to Child Support

RICHMOND, VA (November 1, 2022) - The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) [Division of Child Support Enforcement](#) (DCSE) has been awarded a [Safe Access for Victims' Economic Security](#) (SAVES) grant by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to implement comprehensive, expert-informed domestic violence services to survivors who are in need of child support. Virginia is one of 13 state child support agencies in the country to receive the five-year grant. The grant-funded project is a new national demonstration model designed to develop, evaluate, and implement best practices to provide safe access to child support and parenting time services.

DCSE's project, titled "Virginia SAVES," will be a statewide collaboration with partners in all avenues of support systems that touch the lives of those who are experiencing or have experienced domestic violence. Key components of this project include a process map of child support and parenting time services to revise policies and protocols, integrating the voices of those with lived experience, implementing domestic violence and child support training for internal and external partners, and piloting triage teams to provide enhanced customer service to survivors. Together, these elements will form the basis for targeted outreach and new education-based materials.

"It is important that all parents, especially domestic violence survivors, have pathways to provide for their children's safety, health, economic security, and overall well-being. These demonstration grants will allow them to do just that by providing a mechanism for them to safely receive greatly needed child support to which they are entitled." said Administration for Children and Families Assistant Secretary January Contreras.

"Ninety percent of domestic violence survivors want child support if they can get it safely. The SAVES demonstration grants are one more step that OCSE is taking to make the desire for safe access to child support a reality." said Office of Child Support Enforcement Commissioner Tangler Gray.

DCSE acknowledges that addressing safe access to child support is an urgent and under-recognized matter of economic justice. Additionally, DCSE embraces the fact that consistent, safe access to child support can serve as a bridge to economic and financial security for survivors.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or intimate partner violence, please know that there is help. The Virginia Family Violence and Sexual Assault Hotline is available 24/7, 365 days a year at 1-800-838-8238.

Funding for this project was approved by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. For more information on DCSE and child support programs, visit the DCSE website at www.dss.virginia.gov/family/dcse.

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About the Virginia Department of Social Services

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), one of the Commonwealth's largest government agencies, is comprised of approximately 2,000 state staff who proudly serve alongside more than 10,000 employees of 120 local departments of social services and community action agencies to deliver critical social services to Virginia's most vulnerable citizens. VDSS is committed to ensuring Virginians have access to the high-quality human services and resources needed to enhance their individual and collective well-being, and shape strong futures for themselves, their families and communities. The agency provides a wide range of services and resources in the areas of food and energy assistance, foster care and adoption, child support, and abuse and neglect prevention, among others. For more information, visit dss.virginia.gov.