

OCSE Child Access & Visitation Program

Name of State: Colorado

Part I: Contact Information

- Name of State Program Contact Cynthia Savage, Director
- Name of Designated State Agency State Court Administrator's Office
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Part II: Statistical Profile

- No. of minor children under 18 years of age living with one biological parent (1990 U.S. Census data) 182,320

Part III: Previous and Current Year Funding Levels

	<u>Federal \$ Grant</u>	<u>State \$ Match</u>	and	<u>Percentage</u>
• FFY 1997	\$ 93,206	\$10,356		10%
• FFY 1998	\$ 93,206	\$10,356		10%
• FFY 1999	\$ 100,000	\$11,111		10%
• FFY 2000	\$ 100,000	\$11,111		10%

Part IV: Summary of State's Proposed Use of FFY 2000 Grant Funds

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Process for Awarding Funds:		
• Request for Proposals (new & continuation)		
• New only	X	
• Continuation only	X	
• Other _____		

Time of Year RFP's are Issued and/or Funding Decisions Are Made:
 Fall _____ Winter _____ Spring _____ Summer _____

Award of Funds: Grants _____ Contracts _____ Cooperative Agreements _____

Targeted Priority Areas:

• Mediation			
voluntary	Yes <u> X </u>	No	_____
mandatory	Yes <u> X </u>	No	_____
• Counseling	Yes <u> X </u>	No	_____
• Education	Yes <u> X </u>	No	_____
• Parenting Plans	Yes _____	No	_____
• Visitation Enforcement			
monitoring	Yes _____	No	_____
supervision	Yes _____	No	_____
neutral drop-off/pick-up	Yes _____	No	_____

- **Development of Guidelines**

Visitation	Yes _____	No _____
Alternative custody arrangements	Yes _____	No _____

Summary Narrative: Proposed Use of FFY 2000 Funds

The State Court Administrator’s Office, Office of Dispute Resolution, has been designated administrative and financial responsibility for implementation of the Child Access and Visitation Grant program in Colorado. The state proposes to continue and expand, wherever possible, the following services to divorced, separated, or unwed parents with minor children.

1. Mediation – A major portion of the FFY 2000 grant will be used to fund mediation services for indigent and low-income divorcing parents, as well as never-married parents. All 22 judicial districts in Colorado will be offered these services for indigent and low-income parties as a way to reduce the effects of the parents’ conflict upon their children and to improve access of non-residential parents. Under current Colorado state law, “. . . parties must bear the costs of mediation or other dispute resolution services.” The Federal Child Access and Visitation grant provides Colorado with the funds to fully cover, or help defray, the costs associated with mediation for low-income parents.
2. Parenting Coordination Services – Qualified parenting coordinators will be selected to continue and expand a highly successful pilot program in the Denver Metro area as well as to begin to expand these parenting coordination services to other under-served areas of the state. Parent Coordinators assist judges by working with high-conflict families as a way to resolve parenting disputes and encourage parenting partnerships.
3. Never-Married Parents Services. In 1999, there were over 15,000 out of wedlock births in Colorado. Colorado’s ODR has initiated a comprehensive pilot program through the Denver Juvenile Court – the state’s largest juvenile/paternity court – to better serve this population’s access and parenting time needs. When fully operational, this program will include mediation

services to help parents work out parental responsibility and parenting time issues, parent education sessions specifically geared to this population, and parenting coordination in selected high conflict cases.

4. Parenting Education for Rural/Underserved Districts. Colorado statutes allow for mandatory parenting education seminars to provide information about the negative impact of conflict upon children of disputing parents. While most large metropolitan areas in Colorado provide court-appointed parenting education seminars, the smaller, more rural judicial districts have difficulty making this service available to non-urban families. Nonetheless, Colorado proposes to expand pilot projects in rural judicial districts in order to make available both co-parenting and high conflict/parallel parenting seminars.
5. High Conflict Parent Education - Judges and magistrates throughout the state are beginning to see a rise in the level of conflict between divorcing parents. As a result, the high conflict curriculum previously developed by ODR under the Child Access & Visitation Grant will be installed in up to seven judicial districts that have shown great interest in the program.
6. Dependency and Neglect Mediation – ODR will continue to provide mediation services under the grant for indigent parents in Dependency and Neglect cases to the extent that funds are available.
7. Interpreter Services and Translation of Selected Materials – Many ethnic groups are using alternative dispute resolution services in Colorado. In order to make these services meaningful, fair and available, ODR will provide interpreter services for some low income divorcing, divorced, and never married parents through a pilot program. In addition, selected parenting and dispute resolution materials will be translated into Spanish and made available.
8. Parent and Children Web Site – A court group in Colorado Springs has been working on a web site that will provide accurate, helpful information for both divorcing and never married parents and their children to encourage them to have enjoyable, conflict-free parenting time encounters. ODR will work with the court group to provide educational materials and links to sites in other parts of the state.
9. Native American Outreach – Established Native American Programs within three judicial districts will be contracted for assistance in developing a plan to make dispute resolution services available and attractive to Native Americans in Colorado.

10. Judicial Training – A portion of The A & V grant funds will be used to support a two day, statewide conference for judges and magistrates who hear domestic relations and juvenile cases, so that they are better attuned to the issues of child custody, visitation and parenting partnerships.
11. Assisting Supervised Parenting Programs Statewide – There is a recognized shortage of qualified supervised parenting programs in Colorado, but no formal survey has been conducted to pinpoint the need for services. As a result, a survey will be undertaken around the state and, depending on the results, educational materials may be developed and training offered as funding allows.
12. Staff Support for Supreme Court Committee – Staff support will be provided to a Colorado Supreme Court committee exploring non-adversarial approaches to divorce.

Part V: Projects Funded by States with FFY 98 OCSE Dollars

Grantee Name, Address & Phone Number mothers	Amount of Award & Services Provided	Number of Parents Served:		
		Total #	# fathers	#
1. Office of Dispute Resolution (Statewide)	\$103,562 Mediation & parent coordination to indigent parents	588	294	294
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

Participant Data: Part A
(by income and marital status)

Grantee Name & Program Title	Average Annual Income	Parent Participation Rates:		
		divorced	separated	unwed
1.				
2.				
3.				
4.				
5.				
6.				

Participant Data: Part B
(by race/ethnicity)

Grantee Name	<u>RACIAL / ETHNIC BREAKOUT:</u>					
	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native American	Pacific Islander
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						
6.						

Don't Know _____

Other, _____

Sources of Client Referral

GRANTEE							
Agency	Self-Referral	TANF	Child Welfare	Child Support	Social Services	Courts	Private
1.						X	
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							