

OCSE Child Access & Visitation Program

Name of State: Rhode Island

Part I: Contact Information

- Name of State Program Contact Buddy Croft
- Name of Designated State Agency Rhode Island Family Court
- Street Address One Dorrance Plaza
- City, State, & Zipcode Providence, Rhode Island 02903
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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) 44,712

Part III: Previous and Current Year Funding Levels

	<u>Federal \$ Grant</u>	<u>State \$ Match</u>	and	<u>Percentage</u>
• FFY 1997	\$ 50,000	\$ 5,556		10%
• FFY 1998	\$ 50,000	\$ 5,556		10%
• FFY 1999	\$100,000	\$15,990		14%
• FFY 2000	\$100,000	\$15,900		14%

- **Development of Guidelines**

Visitation	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alternative custody arrangements	Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>

Summary Narrative: Proposed Use of FFY 2000 Funds

The Rhode Island Family Court is requesting funding to continue the court-based mediation program and the supervised visitation schedule designed to accommodate parents with traditional working hours. The court-based mediation program provides a non-adversarial forum for the custodial and non-custodial parents to meet and agree upon an acceptable visitation schedule under the guidance of a neutral third part. The Family Court also is seeking funding to develop and implement a children’s educational video that specifically addresses the issues facing children of divorce.

Objectives and Need for Assistance:

The Rhode Island Family Court has seen an emerging trend of payment of child support with a direct correlation to access and visitation availability.

Supervised Visitation:

The Family Court has implemented over the fiscal years 1997, 1998, and 1999, an alternative hour supervised visitation program. Three Family Service Representatives have been hired and trained to deal with the issues of custody and child protection. The program has resulted in a 32% decrease of scheduled visitation cancellations.

Court-Based Mediation:

This part of the program has substantially cleared the congestion of the domestic court docket. It has also demonstrated a 65% rate of successful mediation versus unsuccessful mediation. Over 500 cases have been processed through the mediation program.

Results or Benefits Expected:

The intended results of the video will be to improve the children’s well-being by allowing them to realistically confront the consequences of, and issues surrounding, divorce. It is also hoped that their well-being will be improved, as will their relationships with their parents.

Three primary benefits are expected from the mediation process: (1) development of a cost-efficient and user-friendly process; (2) steady increase in pro se litigants will lessen costs involved for the persons; and decrease in court costs. Another benefit is that parties who resolve their differences in mediation are more likely to abide by the agreements.

Approach:

A Family Service Representative will meet with the parties and explain the procedures. Scheduling will be done to adjust to families’ schedules. Extended security personnel will be made available. The Rhode Island Family Court will monitor the program insuring that all necessary reporting will be done.

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. Rhode Island Family Court		71	65	6
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. Rhode Island Family Court		10%	85%	5%
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. Rhode Island Family Court	95%	2%	3%			
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. Rhode Island Family Court						X	
2.							
3.							
4.							
5.							
6.							