

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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**MEDIA CONTACT**  
**Nicole Moon**  
**602-542-2553**  
[nmoon@azdes.gov](mailto:nmoon@azdes.gov)

## **DES Launches Statewide Educational Campaign Focusing on Child Support Awareness Month**

*Encourages Parents to be Engaged at Every Stage of a Child's Life*

**PHOENIX** – The Arizona Department of Economic Security (DES) is launching a new campaign in August surrounding the nationwide focus of Child Support Awareness Month. The Department's Division of Child Support is planning outreach activities to educate parents, employers and the community about the very important role each plays and the support the Department gives in improving the lives of Arizona's children through the state's child support system.

"Child support is much more than a monetary obligation," said Director Clarence Carter. "It's a contribution to your child's future. For many families, these crucial funds provide the essentials like clothing, food and child care. We want to make it as easy as possible for parents to step up and provide that support to their children."

According to the latest numbers, DES had 195,151 open child support cases during the month of June 2012 and collected nearly \$30,209,115 for clients. Over the past five fiscal years DES has collected some \$3.4 billion in child support payments.

DES has the administrative authority to enforce court ordered child support with a variety of tools in an effort to prevent a backlog of unpaid child support. Federal and state tax intercepts, bank account seizures, lottery intercepts and administrative liens are only a few of the tools granted to the DES program that differentiates it from the authority of the local clerk of the court.

As part of its month-long campaign, DES will reach out to parents and the community that supports them to create the best outcome for their child support case. The campaign will also focus on Arizona businesses to assist and encourage compliance with state laws that require withholding of court-ordered child support monies.

Employers' actions impact not only the productivity of their workers, but also the potential for custodial parents -- especially single mothers -- from falling into poverty. Some 42 percent of all custodial parents (those who are raising the children in their household) live at or below the poverty level, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Office of Child Support Enforcement.

Businesses play a large role in helping parents meet child support obligations. In fact, employers are responsible for **more than 80 percent** of all child support payments in the state. In fiscal year 2011, reporting by Arizona employers contributed more than \$551 million to the \$689 million collected for Arizona families.

Anyone can apply for child support services, regardless of income, residency, nationality or gender, or if a previous child support agreement has been reached through the court system. DES has the ability to establish paternity of the father; establish child support payments for the parent whose children live in the home; modify child support payments; enforce child support (including spousal maintenance) and locate absent parents. Either parent may apply for services. Grandparents or other custodians may also apply. The management of cases is as individual as the families.

**The Division of Child Support services include:**

- [Establishing Paternity](#)
- [Establishing a Child Support Order](#)
- [Establishing Medical Support](#)
- [Enforcement Actions](#)
- [Modifying Your Child Support Order](#)
- [Finding Non-Custodial Parents](#)

If you are interested in learning more about the Arizona Child Support Program or apply for services, please call 602-252-4045 (toll-free at 1-800-882-4151) or visit the [DES Child Support website](#).

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