



TO: NCCSD

FROM: Karen Hebert, Committee Chair

DATE: July 27, 2020

RE: Mentoring Committee Annual Report

Background Summary

Since approximately 2013, the National Council of Child Support Directors (NCCSD) has maintained a Mentoring Committee, initially created by a small number of state IV-D Directors who were new in their roles and eager to learn, build trust and overcome challenges. The Committee has become an essential part of the National Council for Child Support Directors, as Directors continuously face new challenges, evolutions in human services and technological systems, and complexities in state and federal policies, laws and rules. Over the years, Directors have repeatedly expressed the importance of having reliable exchanges and information sharing with other Directors to promote and accelerate professional development and leadership skills for the Directors' unique role and responsibilities within the Child Support Program.

Shortly following the NCCSD 2019 Annual Meeting, the Executive Committee appointed Karen Hebert of New Hampshire to Chair the Mentoring Committee, after Kate Richardson of Oregon had successfully led the Committee and its infamous Newbie Group for several years. Director Richardson had been newly appointed as Secretary to the NCCSD Board leaving the position of Mentoring Committee Chair open. The Mentoring Committee wishes to recognize Director Richardson for her dedication and commitment to the Newbie group and for the monthly calls at which she contributed tireless support and her endless wealth of knowledge, which she continues to so willingly share.

NCCSD Mentoring Committee 2020

In December 2019, the NCCSD Mentoring Committee was formed and the following Directors named as Committee members:

- Kristie Arneson, Wyoming
- Larry Desbien, Colorado
- Chad Dexter, Montana
- Karen Hebert, Chair, New Hampshire
- Eileen Stack, New York

Members are responsible for identifying the vision, purpose(s) and objectives of the Committee, and for developing and implementing activities that support Committee objectives, and for the dissemination of any relative information to the National Council Executive Committee and other Council members as applicable.

The Committee developed its Charter, which was submitted to the NCCSD Executive Committee in January 2020. The Committee's vision is that all state and territory IV-D Directors feel welcome and supported by their peers in a culture where learning is a constant and achieved more easily. The purpose of the Committee is to provide professional support to state and territory IV-D Directors and strengthen the National Council to ensure positive outcomes for families served by the Child Support Program. Primary objectives are to:

1. Share knowledge, experience and expertise among state and territory IV-D Directors;
2. Maintain a culture of support, reliability and trust among all state and territory IV-D Directors; and
3. Overcome challenges in meeting Child Support Program objectives.

To meet objectives, the Committee intends to continue the support for state and territory IV-D Directors already in progress, specifically targeting newer Directors (fondly known as "Newbies"). The activities include conducting outreach and welcoming communications to new state and territory IV-D Directors on behalf of the National Council, and facilitating monthly voluntary call-in meetings, and sharing documentation that may be provided during those calls. The Committee intends to seek new trends and experiences of states and territories to share with others.

Call-in Meetings

The monthly "Newbie Call" has been a proven winner for NCCSD, and widely valued and appreciated by Directors of states and territories for several years. Its success is a fine example of the long-supportive culture fostered by Directors. The calls have been a prime place and time to learn, and to share information, ideas and experiences. Agendas are director-driven and include anything related to Child Support that a director needs or needs assistance with.

Starting in March 2020, the world focus became consumed by the coronavirus pandemic. The monthly Newbie Calls became the perfect venue for Directors to come together in the crisis, facing the rapidly changing chaotic environment. Directors immediately shared service delivery status in their states as well as solutions with each other to help overcome extraordinary, unprecedented challenges. At the request of Directors, the frequency of calls was changed to twice per month. The name of the calls was changed (intended to be temporary) to "Time For You" to reflect the shifted intent and purpose, and to gain further participation from all Directors. True to its name, the calls have been providing Directors with time and opportunity specifically designated for them to help with pressing or significant IV-D related issues, congregate and share experiences, ideas and tips around crisis management and leadership, and very importantly, provide safe harbor to express concerns, stressors and to decompress and support each other. The Committee has received and continues to receive feedback from Directors regarding the value of the "Time For You" calls, which continue to-date.

Participation at each “Time For You” call since inception has been greater than 50% of NCCSD membership (highest attendance rate at 70%, March 25th). Calls will continue in the “Time For You” theme and format for the near future as challenges from COVID-19 are expected to continue in the coming months. The Committee does however anticipate some degree of transition over time that calls will incorporate agenda items related to daily operations and administrative matters as our environment evolves from chaos to more comfortably complex.

Mentoring Program

The Committee also intends to develop a structured mentoring program for newer state and territory Directors, and is in the very early stages of planning. The Committee meets quarterly¹, with its first meeting held in June 2020, and has initiated design discussions that include identification of knowledge-base, mentor/mentee matching, and identification of subject matter experts or enthusiasts. To help design the best support for directors, especially targeting new directors, the Committee is interested in knowing what peer support looks like to them, and what they think would be most helpful to new directors. Specifically, the Committee wants to know the following:

- Are the monthly calls delivering what directors need, or should the format, schedule or purpose should be modified (if so, how);
- Do directors think a structured mentoring program would be worth developing;
- What are the most important elements that should make up a NCCSD mentoring program;
- Should we identify directors who are willing to be a mentor for new directors, and how would we best match people;
- Do we want to identify areas of expertise that individual directors have for which they would be willing to provide guidance to others when needed; if so, what are those areas.

To answer these questions and aid the Committee in planning and design, the Committee is in the process of developing polling questions for Directors, to be submitted to the Executive Committee in the near future for approval.

¹ The first Committee meeting was scheduled for March 2020; however, this meeting was cancelled as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The Committee agreed to maintain the existing quarterly schedule and conduct its first meeting in June 2020.