



## Parents and Partner Organizations Agree: The OCSS Training Institute Is a Great Way to Learn about Child Support

The New York City Office of Child Support Services (OCSS) started its Training Institute as a way to shed light on sometimes complicated child support processes.

Initially dedicated to answering the questions of government and community-based partner programs—including family law legal services staff—Training Institute events now frequently attract a large number of parents who are currently connected to child support or are considering applying for services.

To expand access to Training Institute events, OCSS recently began to offer simultaneous translations into Spanish.

### Why Social and Legal Service Providers Should Learn More about Child Support

Current and potential participants in the program have an obvious reason to learn about child support: to better understand their own situation and the realistic paths forward for their case.

But why should outside agency staff and leadership take time to learn about the program? Because child support is a large, long-lasting program that has significant effects on many families in New York City and across the world.

One in five children nationwide are connected to the child support program. So child support clients inevitably participate in other government and nonprofit programs.

The receipt of child support income—or the results of not receiving it—can figure prominently in interactions with services related to child welfare, domestic violence, housing, corrections, Head Start, and public assistance, among many others.

The payment of child support—and the consequences of nonpayment—often figures into discussions with those same groups, as well as programs and agencies such as Veterans Affairs, Workforce 1, Department of Youth and Community Development (DYCD), and the justice system.

Training Institute information sessions can help the

### Contact OCSS

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*The presenters were excellent. They went above and beyond and stayed way over the time to make sure to address everyone's question. They even agreed to get back to me about a particular situation I asked. Really amazing, compassionate and sympathetic team of presenters.*

*--A recent Training Institute participant*

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professionals who lead and deliver services in those organizations better understand the intersection between our program and theirs.

### The Training Institute by the Numbers

Between July 2023 and June 2024, the Training Institute offered 25 free webinars to a mix of professionals from related programs as well as custodial parents and noncustodial parents as part of the OCSS Training Institute Child Support Information Hour.

During the same period, the Training Institute also conducted eight special sessions at the direct invitation of various groups.

These 33 events brought in 944 participants. While the average number of attendees per event hovered around 29, nearly a tenth of all participants came from one webinar in April, focused on parents just entering the program.

Evaluations for these sessions are almost always extremely positive, with more than 90% of partner program staff and parents routinely saying they found the presentations relevant to their work and answered their questions about the program.

## Upcoming Training Institute Presentations

OCSS's upcoming public presentations on critical child support topics include:

- **September 10:** What's New in Child Support
- **September 24:** An Introduction to Interstate Child Support Cases

All sessions are held virtually on Tuesdays from 10:00 to 11:00am, unless otherwise noted. To register, go to [www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/ocss-cbos.page](http://www.nyc.gov/site/hra/help/ocss-cbos.page).