

Division of Vocational Rehabilitation – Office of Child Support

Program Overview

Many individuals cannot meet their child support obligations because they are not fully engaged in the workforce and thus do not earn enough money to meet their obligations. Many individuals with a child support order face employment barriers – often disabilities – that prevent them from meeting their support obligations. Through the Work4Kids program, EAP counselors meet with these individuals to assess these barriers, connect them to key resources and treatment that reduce barriers to employment, and provide emotional and motivational support. EAP counselors then work with DVR and Vermont Association of Business, Industry and Rehabilitation (VABIR) partners to help these individuals secure suitable employment.

Staff and Partners

Twelve EAP Counselors, twelve DVR Counselors and a similar number of VABIR Employment Consultants provide support to individuals participating in Work4Kids. VABIR staff provide important access to private sector employers throughout the state.

Recent Developments and Accomplishments

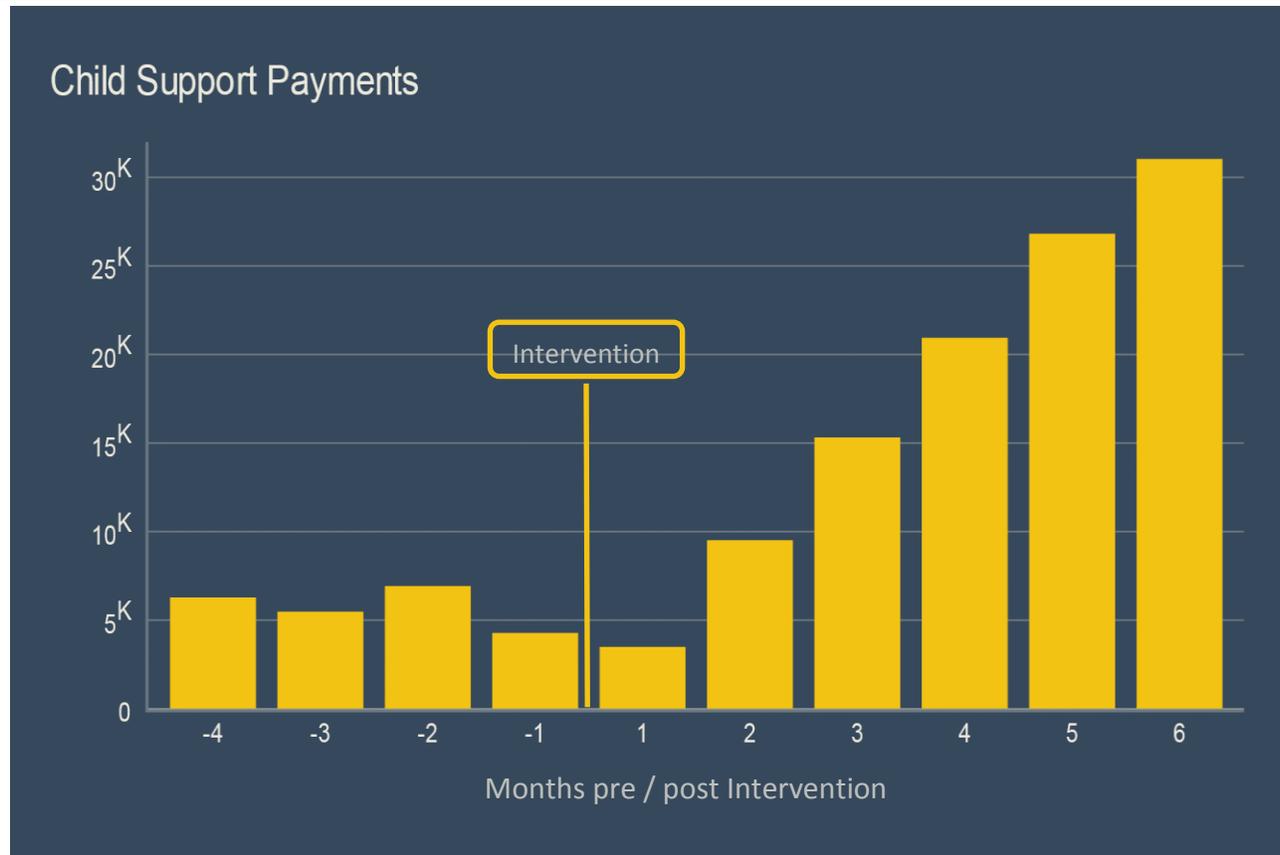
DVR partners with the Office of Child Support (OCS) in addressing non-payment of child support. The people served by the program have increased their child support payments between five and seven-fold. The success of an OCS pilot project led to expansion to all regions of the state in the past year.

Future Directions

Work4Kids currently focuses on individuals who are already out of compliance with child support payments. The Office of Child Support has an interest in expanding the reach of Work4kids to include those who are at risk of not meeting future child support obligations.

Results

Child support payments by Work4Kids participants increased seven-fold, comparing the month prior to referral to the month six months after referral:



Success Story:

Carlos (pseudonym) was referred to the Work4Kids program. He came to the assessment reluctant to trust program staff. He had been in and out of homeless shelters, often living in a tent.

Carlos made a connection with an EAP counselor, and his trust gradually increased. He came to understand that his challenges included physical limitations from years of manual labor, which he could no longer do, as well as emotional challenges from PTSD, depression and anxiety.

Carlos connected with appropriate treatment. Work4Kids staff helped him find stable housing, as well as a job that fits his interests and abilities.