TASK FORCE ON CHILD SUPPORT GUIDELINES

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Change

- “The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.” Socrates

- “My father used to say don’t raise your voice. Improve your argument.” Desmond Tutu

- “You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” Mahatma Gandhi
The perfect package?
The current guidelines can be challenging for low income households

- Minimum wage to $15 per hour
- Imputing income
- Consistent income best for children
Noddle Story

Teenage child earns more than imputed non-custodial parent

Minimum Support Order for $50.00 per month does not cover half of a child’s basic needs

Stories of difficulties paying for parenting time expenses

Struggles to pay rent/mortgage and concerned they would loose home

Forced to live with relatives
$290.00 per month is the average child support order for Mille Lacs County

81% of cases in Mille Lacs County have an obligation less than $500.00 per month.

Less than 1% of cases in one metro county had court orders with basic support obligations over $1,000.00 per month.
100% of PICS (parental income for support)

- Is it fair to the children when a non custodial parent pays 100% of the support when the custodial parent is on assistance or is disabled?

- Is it fair to the children when a custodial parent pays 100% of the support when the non custodial parent has no income, is disabled or does not make payments?
Current guidelines only allow for a deduction for up to TWO non joint children in the home.

Court ordered obligations for all children are considered in current guidelines.

Is this Fair?
Improvements to Consider
Consider a cap or limit on gross income for low income obligors

Orange County, California study

Consider

- 20% of gross for 1 child
- 25% of gross for 2 children
- 30% of gross for 3 or more children
Consider an increase in the self support reserve

Currently 120% of Federal Poverty Guidelines ($1206.00) per month

Task force is charged with looking at self support reserve for both parents.
The current guidelines give a deduction for non-joint children’s court ordered support, spousal maintenance, and children in the home.

- Rush to the Courthouse
- Round Robin Deductions
- Custodial Parents have varying incomes making income shares model difficult in these cases

Previously preference was given to the oldest born child.
Consider a different grid for non-custodial parents with multiple cases
- A total for four children with each child getting a fourth of the total amount determined for child support

Custodial Parent Fairness
- Prevents one family from getting the largest sum and three others getting $50 per month
How Many Different Grids?

- Low Income
- Multiple Children
- Large Family
- High Income

We want something simple so consider how many charts would keep it simple
Deviation

- Keep the ability to deviate
- Difficult to predict the future
- Definition of a family
  - Merriam Webster currently has 8 definitions
  - Complexities of Life
Merriam Webster defines Family:

- **1**: a group of individuals living under one roof and usually under one head.
- **2**: a group of persons of common ancestry  
  - **b**: a people or group of peoples regarded as deriving from a common stock.
- **3**: a group of people united by certain convictions or a common affiliations  
  - **b**: the staff of a high official (such as the President)
- **4**: a group of things related by common characteristics: such as  
  - **a**: a closely related series of elements or chemical compounds  
  - **b**: a group of soils with similar chemical and physical properties (such as texture, pH, and mineral content) that comprise a category ranking above the series and below the subgroup in soil classification  
  - **c**: a group of related languages descended from a single ancestral language
- **5a**: the basic unit in society traditionally consisting of two parents rearing their children; also: any of various social units differing from but regarded as equivalent to the traditional family  
  - **a**: single-parent family  
  - **b**: spouse and children **want to spend more time with my family**
- **6**: a group of related plants or animals forming a category ranking above a genus and below an order and usually comprising several to many genera  
  - **b**: in livestock breeding (1): the descendants or line of a particular individual especially of some outstanding female  
  - **2**: an identifiable strain within a breed
- **7**: a set of curves or surfaces whose equations differ only in parameters
- **8**: a unit of a crime syndicate (such as the Mafia) operating within a geographical area
Thank you for this opportunity

Excited to see what this task force designs