



## Wake County Model

### Child Support Enforcement & Problem-Solving Courts

#### *Finding Integrated Solutions*



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### Child Support: Scope of Need

- 28% of all children under 18 live in single parent homes
- 85% live with mother
- Only 50% receive child support payments
- Only 25% get full amount of payment

I-Fen, L. (2000) Perceived fairness and compliance with child support obligations. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 62(2) 388-398.

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### Problem-solving Court(s) as a Solution?

- Problem-solving courts: dockets that bring together community resources to address a specific problem
- 2004: the Conference of Chief Justices and Conference of State Court Administrators passed Resolution 22 which supports the use of problem-solving court principles and methods in all courts
- Partnerships between courts, public agencies and community-based organizations facilitate the delivery of services

Ashton, J. (2006) Child support dockets benefit from uprisng problem-solving court principle. *Juvenile and Family Justice Today*, 14 (4), 19-21.

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### The Goals

- Increased Child Support Payments
- Reduced Jail Overcrowding
- Jail-Avoidance savings

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### The Cycle

- Parent is ordered to pay child support
- Parent doesn't pay
- Parent is issued a show cause
- Parent is served and comes to court
- Parent is found in contempt
- Parent is ordered to pay a purge or go to jail
- Parent pays the purge and parent is released
- Cycle repeats itself over again

Ruth, K. (2006) Breaking the cycle: Alternatives to incarceration lead to collections in Wake Co., North Carolina. *Child Support Report*, 38 (1) 2.

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### Breaking The Cycle

Judge-Driven Hearings  
and  
Service Integration

Electronic  
Monitoring

Vocational/  
Counseling  
Services

Custody  
Visitation/  
Mediation

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**Wake County Model**  
Integrated Solutions

### The Process

Accountability + Opportunity + Judge = Success

<b>Electronic Monitoring</b> With Field Supervision	<b>Vocational/Counseling</b> With Visitation Mediation	<b>Status Hearings</b> With Performance Reports	<b>Increased Compliance</b> > Payments < Jail Days < Failures
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**Wake County Model**  
Integrated Solutions

### Procedure(s)

Show Cause

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Finding of Willful Contempt

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Conditions of Judges Order

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Regular Reviews

If participant violates conditions, arrest warrant may be issued

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**Wake County Model**  
Integrated Solutions

**Typical Conditions: Used Alone or in Combination Depending on the Specifics of Each Case**

- Electronic Monitoring: To Establish Daily Curfew
- “Working for Kids” Program
- Seek/Secure Employment
- Attend Substance Abuse Classes
- Address Mental Health Issues
- Address Education Needs

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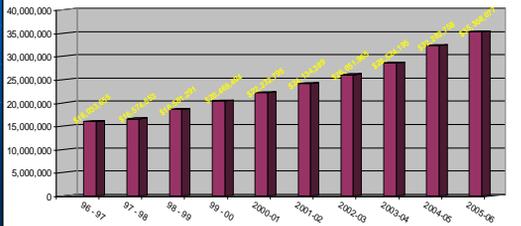
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**Wake County Model**  
**Integrated Solutions**

**Local Impact: Contributes to Overall CSE Collections**

**Wake CSE Collections - 10 Year Annual Trendline**




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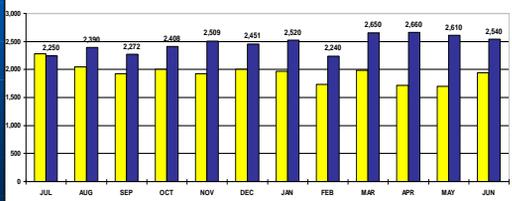
**Wake County Model**  
**Integrated Solutions**

**Local Impact – Jail Avoidance Savings**

**Wake Electronic Monitoring**

Service Days and Savings by Fiscal Year

In FY 2007: 29,500 Days... which = \$2,005,000 in Jail Avoidance Savings




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**Academic Research**  
**Meredith College**

**Phase I study named "Child Support Sanctions and Effects on Non-custodial Parent Compliance"**

Designed and led by Dr. Rhonda Zingraff, Professor of Sociology at Meredith College

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## Abstract

- The sanctions this research focuses on is the use of *Electronic House Arrest (EHA)* and *Working For Kids (WFK)* programs in increasing child support payment compliance.
- The analysis of compliance focuses on payment histories of non-custodial parents placed in the programs six months prior and six months after the sanction was implemented.
- The data is examined to see if the child support payment compliance sanctions have a significant effect on compliance of non-custodial parents vs. the traditional use of jail incarceration as the primary or sole sanction.

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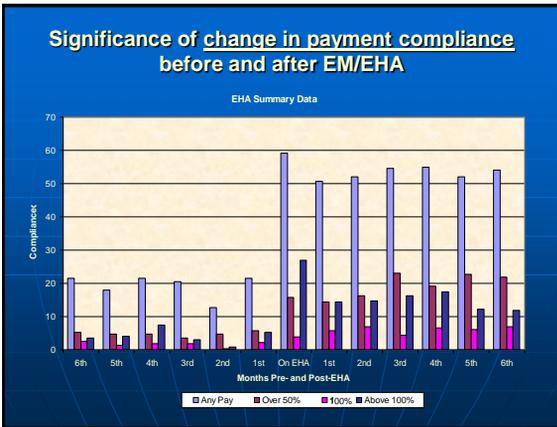
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### Significance of change in payment compliance before and after EM/EHA




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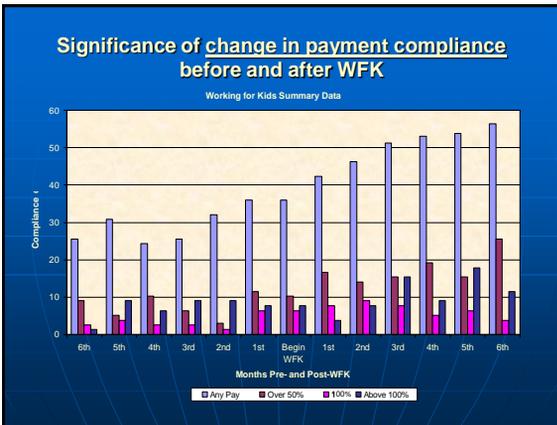
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### Significance of change in payment compliance before and after WFK




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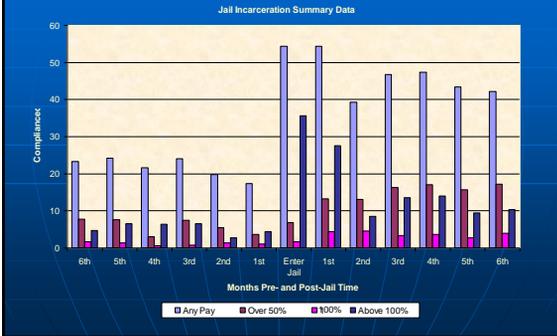
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## Significance of change in payment compliance before and after JAIL




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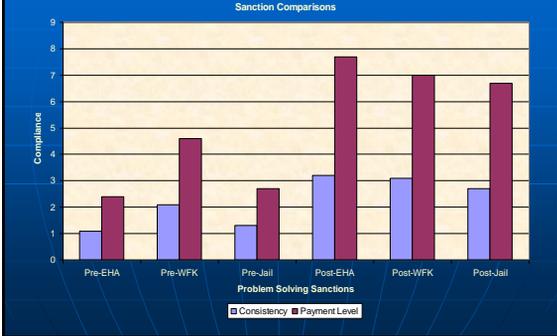
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## Comparison of change in payment compliance by Sanction




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## Conclusions

- Strong implications that the EHA and WFK sanctions do impact payment compliance and performance.
- Evidence that both sanctions increase child support compliance in terms of frequency of payment and levels of payment.
- Evidence of increased employment particularly after EHA sanction.
- Evidence that EHA compares favorably to Jail and WFK as effective sanction.

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# PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

## Drug Treatment Enhancement to EHA within the Wake County Model

This program enhancement seeks to improve CSE collections by providing assessment and specialized drug treatment/testing services to targeted addicted and abusing nonpayers of child support on EHA.

The measurements of success are increased sobriety, employment and compliance with court-ordered child support payments.

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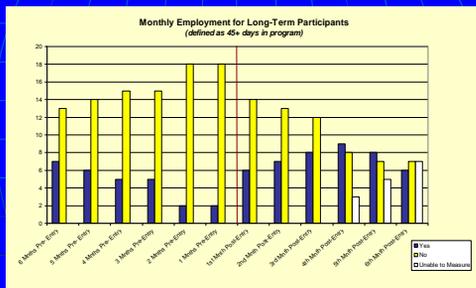
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## Employment Compliance before and after EM/EHA with Drug Treatment




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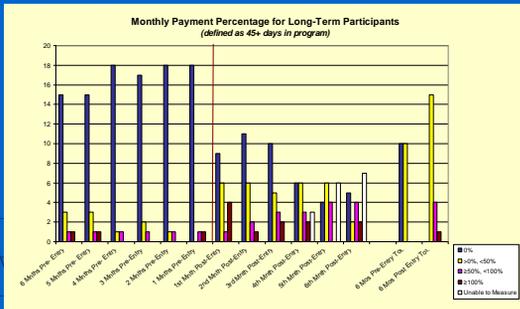
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## Payment % Compliance before and after EM/EHA with Drug Treatment




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