

Social Services to kick off Child Support Awareness Month

The Child Support Office of the Washington County Department of Social Services kick off August as National Child Support Awareness Month with several activities.

The aim of the monthlong awareness campaign is to highlight the benefits of having both parents take responsibility for the emotional and financial support of their children as well as to recognize the dedicated and high-performing Child Support staff.

Beginning Aug. 4, glow in the dark pinwheels will be posted strategically in four locations in the Hagerstown downtown square.

Signs will display the slogan, "Anchoring Your Child's Future," to attract the attention of the community to the mission of Child Support. A Child Support Awareness banner will hang on the front of the Social Services building at 122 N. Potomac St. during the month.

On Aug. 12, the Child Support Office will be represented at the annual community fair held at Elgin Station. Staff will answer questions about Child Support, promote the services that the office provides, and distribute school supplies to children.

During the month of August, student backpacks with school supplies will be delivered to designated schools for distribution to students. A short-term initiative called "Money Walks" will be implemented by the Child Support Office. This initiative will give noncustodial parents who are delinquent in their payments the opportunity to make lump sum payments that would allow their cases to be removed from contempt of court proceedings.

The goal of this strategy is to boost past-due collections from noncustodial parents and facilitate good customer service.

The Child Support Office collected and disbursed more than \$15 million in Child Support payments to children and their families for the state fiscal year ending June 30.

This represents collection of 73 cents for each \$1 of current support due.

During August, Child Support staff will be recognized for their dedication and commitment to establishing court orders and collecting Child Support for Washington County children.

For more information on Child Support services, call 1-800-632-6347 or go to [www. dhr.maryland.gov](http://www.dhr.maryland.gov).

The Washington County Department of Social Services is a field office of the Maryland Department of Human Resources under the direction of Governor Martin O'Malley, Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown, and Secretary Theodore Dallas