

SIPR News

Sagamore Receives Federal Grant to Assist Prisoner Re-Entry and Child Support Modification Efforts

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Sagamore Institute for Policy Research has been awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Child Support Enforcement, to complement developing prisoner re-entry efforts in Marion County, Indiana. The Special Improvement Project grant was competitively bid. The grant will be used to initiate and integrate a set of policy and program initiatives intended to increase employment, earnings, child support payments, and parental involvement of non-custodial parents after they are released from prison. It will also help to educate the public on how rewarding responsibility is cost effective and promotes parental responsibility.

Sagamore Institute is partnering with the State of Indiana, Department of Child Services; the Marion County IV-D Court; and Workforce Inc., a not-for-profit job placement and retention agency in Indianapolis. Among additional collaborators on the project are the Marion County Prosecutor's Office; the Marion County Public Defender's Office; and the Marion Superior Court. It is further anticipated that the project will align itself with the goals of the "Promoting Responsible Fatherhood" grant that the Department of Health & Human Services awarded to Christamore House in April 2007 and work closely with that effort to reunify families when appropriate. "We are gratified to have been awarded this opportunity to help identify workable solutions to a problem of tremendous concern here in Central Indiana and elsewhere," said Deborah J. Daniels, Sagamore's President. "As many as 5,000 prisoners return to this community each year; if we are unable to assist them in overcoming the obstacles to their ability to become law-abiding citizens who support themselves and their families, we cannot expect to reverse recent trends in violent crime in Indianapolis." The effort will be part of a broader initiative being undertaken by the State of Indiana and Marion County officials to design a comprehensive prisoner re-entry effort for Marion County. It will facilitate child support enforcement reform brought about by the Indiana Supreme Court decision in Lambert v. Lambert (2007).