

## Intervention 3: Streaming Radio Advertising

### Technical Assistance Guidance Brief

#### Overview



##### PURPOSE:

OCSE-sponsored demonstration to **explore the impact** of using digital marketing to increase child support enrollment



##### INTERVENTION GOAL:

**Increase** new voluntary (non-assistance) support and modification enrollments



##### ADVERTISING MEDIUM:

Streaming **iHeartRadio**



##### ADVERTISING OBJECTIVE:

**Drive traffic** to *Enroll for Child Support Services* webpage. Test impact of easy-to-remember webpage addresses. Compare responses from two targeted groups



##### ADVERTISING CONTENT:

Division of Child Support can help make things easier for parents and children



##### INTERVENTION DATES:

August 3 – October 11, 2020



##### IMPRESSIONS:

488,865 Streams



##### COVID ADJUSTMENTS:

- Postponed intervention dates
- Updated radio script to acknowledge uncertainty of times
- Increased supportive enrollment resources

## Key Results



### RESPONSE

iHeartRadio streams produced **853 clicks** and **645 sessions** on *Enroll for Child Support Services* webpage



### ACTION

**Generated 9% of sessions** on the *Enroll for Child Support Services* webpage



### BEHAVIOR

Website visits referred by clicks were brief, but visitors who typed in a memorable webpage address were **more engaged**, with more time spent, pages visited and return visits



### VISITORS

Attracted **mostly new visitors** to Division of Child Support website



### LEARN, INNOVATE, IMPROVE RESULTS

Many zip code areas in participating counties have higher rates of participation in child support services than others. Previous interventions targeted zip codes areas with lower participation rates, assuming these areas had greater need for child support services.

Analysis suggested past participation rates mirrored the rate of new enrollments, so the targeted zip code areas with lower past participation also had lower new enrollment rates. The reasons for these different rates of participation are unknown and more information is needed to inform efforts to increase enrollments.

*As an innovation in this final intervention, DCS sought to compare enrollments, response to advertisements, and feedback from these two distinct groups to learn more about how the groups are similar and different.*



## Target Group Comparison

Clicks on the advertisements' call to action and overall referrals to the *Enroll for Child Support Services* by the two targeted groups were similar. The target group with higher rates of DCS participation had more engagement once on the website than did the target group with lower participation.

The target group with more existing clients had a higher rate of new enrollments during the intervention period, with a smaller decline in enrollments from a baseline period than did the state as whole and the other target group. Feedback from new enrollees suggests the applicants from the group with more DCS participation had more experience and overall familiarity with child support services than the other group. New enrollees from the higher DCS participation group found the experience of applying for child support straightforward and accessed more resources, which they navigated with ease, while the group with less participation had the opposite experience.

	HIGH PARTICIPATION GROUP	LOW PARTICIPATION GROUP
Advertising Clicks	=	=
Referrals to Webpage	=	=
Engagement on Webpage	+	-
New Enrollments	+	-
Previous Experience with Child Support	+	-
Familiarity with Child Support	+	-
Application Process Ease	+	-
Website Experience	+	-

## Results

The COVID-19 pandemic likely impacted rates of new enrollment in child support services. The State of Washington witnessed a 20% decline in new enrollments during the intervention period, as contrasted to the same period in 2019. By comparison, the overall intervention target area experienced a 16% decline in the enrollments.



## Background

Washington State Division of Child Support (DCS) establishes paternity, locates noncustodial parents and establishes and enforces child support orders. DCS serves over a million parents and children in Washington. Like other child support agencies, the rate of enrollment of new clients has declined in recent years, and DCS sought to test digital marketing's potential for encouraging new voluntary client enrollment.

DCS partnered with marketing consultant Spearca Communications and evaluator Center for Policy Research to design, implement and evaluate three digital marketing interventions.

Eight counties in Washington, representing a mix of urban and rural communities with lower service use rates, were selected for participation in the digital marketing project.

## Approach

DCS' third digital marketing intervention featured advertising through streaming radio via iHeartRadio.

*A thirty second advertisement acknowledged the challenges for single parents in uncertain times and shared information on how child support services can help.*

The advertisement was set up in multiple formats to accommodate different platforms for consumers listening in their car or viewing and listening on a smart phone, tablet, or desktop computer. Listeners with screens were able to click on the call-to-action button that led viewers to the *Enroll for Child Support Services* webpage. The advertisements that streamed without a screen relied on the memorable nature of two webpage addresses or URLs (Wachildsupport.com and ChildsupportWA.com) to encourage listeners to type in the address later in a web browser. Listen to the advertisement [here](#).

## Targeting

### 60 zip codes in 8 counties

(Clark, King, Pierce, Snohomish, Spokane, Thurston, Whatcom, Yakima)

Two groups of 30 zip codes each; one group with more single parents than current DCS clients and the other group with more current DCS clients than single parents.



## iHeartRadio and Google Analytics Metrics

Click	Clicking on the call-to-action button or other interaction with an advertisement
Impressions	Number of times advertisement streamed.
Click Through Ratio (CTR)	Number of clicks relative to open rates
User	Each unique internet protocol (IP) address visiting a website
Sessions	A group of user interactions with your website that take place within a given time period.
Landing Page	The starting page of a user's website experience
Referral Source	External source linking to webpage
URL	Uniform Resource Locator or webpage address

## iHeartRadio Intervention Outcomes

### GENERATED



857 clicks



645 sessions on the *Enroll for Child Support Services*

### ATTRACTED



522 users engaging in 645 sessions

### STREAMED



488,865 Impressions



92% of visitors were new to DCS' website



Promoted two easy-to-remember URLs

### PERFORMED

97% Listen-through rate

.6% Click rate

## COVID Adjustments

The iHeartRadio intervention was originally scheduled to launch in April 2020, but the COVID-19 pandemic upended these plans along with normal business throughout the State of Washington. DCS offices were closed to in-person visits, eliminating an important resource for individuals applying for child support and a critical avenue for submitting application forms.

*DCS developed and launched resources to mitigate the impact of office closures, including a new “how-to” video on completing the application forms, an email option for requesting mailed forms, and an updated iHeartRadio script acknowledging the uncertainty posed by the pandemic.*

Once these resources were in place, the intervention was implemented.

## Enrollments in Child Support

Enrollments in child support within the targeted zip codes during the intervention period were compared to a baseline period to examine if the iHeartRadio advertisements contributed to an increased rate of new child support enrollments. On a statewide basis, the comparison between the two periods shows new voluntary applicants to child support decreased by 20%. In the areas targeted by the iHeartRadio intervention, enrollments decreased 16% from the baseline to the intervention period. Within the higher DCS participation group, new applications declined by 13%, while the target group with lower existing participation experienced a decline in new applications of 22%.

*The COVID-19 pandemic and the related closure of DCS offices likely played a large role in the high rate of decline in applications across the state.*

### STATEWIDE APPLICANTS

 20%

### INTERVENTION TARGET AREAS' APPLICANTS

 16%

### HIGH PARTICIPATION GROUP:

 13%

### LOWER PARTICIPATION GROUP:

 22%



## Feedback from New Child Support Enrollees

New enrollees from the targeted areas during the intervention period were invited to participate in an online feedback survey. One hundred ninety-nine individuals completed the survey, for a return rate of 36%.

*The most common reasons and influences contributing to new enrollments were the **need for financial support from the other parent**, the notion that it is only fair the other parent contribute, and the other parent stopped or never paid child support.*

*Most enrollees contacted DCS and visited the DCS website **multiple times prior to submitting application forms.***

***Most new enrollees applied to establish a new child support order,** while a third applied for collections/enforcement on an existing order.*

*While **60% of respondents felt the application process was easy**, 20% felt the process was somewhat or extremely difficult. Similarly, while 67% of respondents felt the website provided the information needed and 76% were able to navigate with ease, 17% felt the website was not helpful.*

***One third of new enrollees had previous experience** with child support services.*

*A small percentage of new enrollees **recalled seeing or hearing a digital marketing advertisement.***

*Individuals who saw/heard an advertisement agreed **the ad provided new information on available services and positively influenced their decision** to enroll in services.*

## Conclusions and Applying Lessons Learned



Streaming advertising on iHeartRadio, like advertisements on the other interventions' platforms, is effective at generating responses from listeners.

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The use of memorable webpage addresses (URLs) prompted listeners to visit and engage with the *Enroll for Child Support Services* webpage more extensively than visits referred by advertisement clicks. The fleeting nature of advertisements can limit engagement to only those times when the advertisement appears, but the use of an easy-to-remember web address enables listeners/viewers to visit and revisit a webpage on their own time and when they can better explore and utilize the resources found there. DCS should continue to use the memorable URLs created for this intervention as an important and accessible resource for potential applicants.

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There are influences and differences among applicants from areas with different rates of existing participation in DCS services. While some applicants access resources with ease and find the process of applying for child support straightforward, others have the opposite experience. Enrolling in child support may prove more difficult for some due to a lack of experience, familiarity and knowledge about child support services. Digital marketing can play a very valuable role for this group by widely sharing information about services available.

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This intervention, like the two previous, has demonstrated the digital marketing's effectiveness in generating responses, particularly from visitors new to DCS' website. Survey responses from new enrollees suggest applicants reach out to DCS multiple times by phone, in-person visits, or through the website, prior to submitting the enrollment forms. Visits to the DCS website prompted by digital marketing advertisements likely provided an important first step for this multi-step process, especially for those unfamiliar with services provided.

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The creative content developed for this and previous interventions is available for continued use by DCS for future paid and unpaid digital marketing use.



**Support for your  
child to have a  
bright future.**

**Get started with  
child support now.**