

# Nez Perce Tribe's *Child Support Enforcement Program*

## *Introducing the New CSEP Director*

**If you have any questions  
or need additional information,  
please contact us  
at (208)843-7362**

- Crescentia Hills  
CSEP Director
- Michelle Penney  
Admin./Financial Spec.
- Hattie Brown  
Office Assistant II
- Consuelo Guillory  
Lead Case Manager
- Lana Rickman  
Caseworker
- Tom Williamson  
Caseworker
- Janice Ellenwood  
Community Outreach Spec.
- Jessica Moser  
Prosecuting Attorney



Crescentia Hills has accepted the position as the new CSEP Director and began on March 19, 2012. She is no stranger to CSEP as she worked as the Lead Caseworker in 2010. She graduated from Lapwai High School with the class of 1996. She went on to college at Lewis-Clark State College to earn her Bachelors of Social Work Degree, and was admitted to Boise State University where she earned her Masters of Social Work Degree. Crescentia has practiced in providing direct social work, clinical social work, and in administrative arenas.

She enjoys her time spent working in these various sectors, where she gained experience working with children and families, administrative practices, and collaboration with tribes, and the states.

Crescentia is an enrolled Nez Perce Tribal member and has been raised in Lapwai her entire life. She understands the rich heritage shared amongst the NiMiiPuu community. Crescentia is a proud wife and mother of four boys ages 8 months to 14 years old. On her down time she enjoys reading, watching her children play hockey and soccer, and going for walks along the river.

The CSEP staff is excited to have Crescentia as the Program Director and look forward to her future expectations and program goals for CSEP.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>p.a.p.a Presentation</i>	2
<i>Child Support Isn't a Negative Thing</i>	2
<i>Tips for Single Moms After Divorce or Separation</i>	3
<i>Look For Us...</i>	3
<i>Check out CSEP Website</i>	4
<i>Upcoming Holidays</i>	
<i>Join Us on Facebook</i>	

## *FY 2011 Annual Statements*

*By: Michelle Penney, Financial Specialist*

The NPT-CSEP would like to inform the public that the FY 2011 Annual Statements will not be mailed out due to major revisions. However, any client who is receiving services from the CSEP program can request a payment history at any time. The revised fiscal year 2012 Annual Statements can be expected at the end of October 2012. If you have any questions regarding your payment history, please contact Michelle Penney, Financial Specialist at 208-843-7362 extension 4688. We apologize for the inconvenience but we feel with the revised statements we can better serve our clients. Thank you.

## *Parenting and Paternity Awareness (p.a.p.a) Program*

CSEP has been implementing the family-centered approach for child support services that OCSE Commissioner, Vicki Turetsky, has been advocating thru the bubble chart which can be seen below.



This past quarter, the Outreach Specialist, Janice Ellenwood, has focused on the Child Support Prevention piece of the bubble chart to raise awareness

on the financial, legal and emotional responsibilities of parenthood to middle and high school students on the reservation. CSEP has adapted the Parenting and Paternity Awareness curriculum or p.a.p.a that was originally developed by the Texas Office of Attorney General's Child Support Division. They were happy to know that the Nez Perce Tribe was going to use their curriculum to teach in the reservation schools. The curriculum has been modified to meet Tribal and Program needs.

Presentations have been made at the Kamiah and Lapwai sophomore health classes January 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. It got positive responses from students during the presentation and the kids asks lots of questions relating to child support. They were surprised to hear how much it costs to raise a child, how much child support can be garnished from wages, and that child support arrears never go away, even if a child has reach the age of majority. They were also stunned to find out that arrears can follow them into retirement, affect social security benefits, unemployment benefits, and even take their probate when they are deceased.

In summary, it was very successful in educating the youth. Janine Wilson, Lapwai High School PE/Health teacher stated that, "The students have more knowledge now about what really happens if there is a child custody case and their obligations to that child." Katie Ball, Kamiah High School Health teacher said that she thought the presentation was "well organized and informative".

## *Child Support Isn't a Negative Thing*

*By: Tom Williamson, Caseworker*

We have heard several times, "My babies mama is coming after for me for child support!" This is to educate non-custodial parents and custodial parents that this is not always the case. Anytime the custodial parent applies for assistance, such as TANF, food stamps and/or Medicaid, the State always looks to the non-custodial parent to reimburse these benefits. This is when the child support agency is notified to start the collection process. Currently, the majority of our cases were established in the State of Idaho jurisdiction, these cases almost always have the child support order in place and CSEP will enforces these orders.

Child Support does not have to be a negative thing. Instead, think of child support as being for the children to help pay for things they need like food, shelter, electricity and clothing. Every child deserves to be taken care of physically, emotionally, and financially. It is the responsibility of both parents to provide these to their children, whether they live together or not. Think of your child support payment as an investment in the future of your family.

We hope this article educates and clears any misconceptions of what child support is about. We encourage anyone with questions or concerns to please feel free to call or stop by the CSEP office. The CSEP staff is here to help.

## *Tips for Single Moms After Divorce or Separation*

**B**reaking up is hard on everyone, especially children. That's why it is so important to consider the children's wellbeing when dealing with a divorce or separation.

*Here are a few suggestions by experts for single moms when it comes to parenting, including:*

- Keep children out of communication with your Ex. Children should not be allowed or expected to deliver messages between parents or listen to any arguments.
- Don't rely on your Ex for advice or emotional support. Single mothers should avoid any emotional entanglements with their Ex's and keep the contact short and sweet.
- Discussions between divorced/separated parents should focus on the children.
- Insist on being spoken to in a calm and respectful manner or not at all by the children's father. Any phone conversations that escalate into shouting matches should be ended immediately.
- Single moms and dads should communicate when conversations can be civil. When there is tension, consider communicating in writing if a phone conversation isn't possible.

### *Child Support*

Child Support is ordered by the court in order to provide support for the children. It is not a gift, a luxury or a bonus for single mothers. Children of divorced/separated parents are entitled to support from both parties and single mothers should not feel guilt or remorse for accepting court ordered child support payments.

In some cases, non-custodial fathers who are ordered to pay child support may attempt to shame or pressure single mothers about child support issues. If a non-custodial father is ordered by a family court judge to pay child support, the mother shouldn't be concerned how he will come up with the money or if it will cut into his spare change.

Child support guidelines and child support factors determined by the court consider the income and financial obligations of both parents and ordered accordingly. If there are enough financial problems for the father, he can petition the court to modify his child support order if it has been over 3 years or if there has been significant financial changes. A single mother can also ask for an increase in child support, if the financial circumstances have changed since the court decree.

### *Its Not Easy Being Mom*

Single mothers with sole custody often are the ones to enforce bed times and curfews, ensure that homework is done, rooms cleaned and every rule is followed. When money is tight because of finances or unpaid child support, the mom will have to try to provide for the children as best she can on her own.

As many challenges as there may be to raise children in a single parent household, the rewards are also great. Single mothers can take great pride in knowing that they are working hard to raise great children who have all the potential to grow into secure, successful and happy adults.

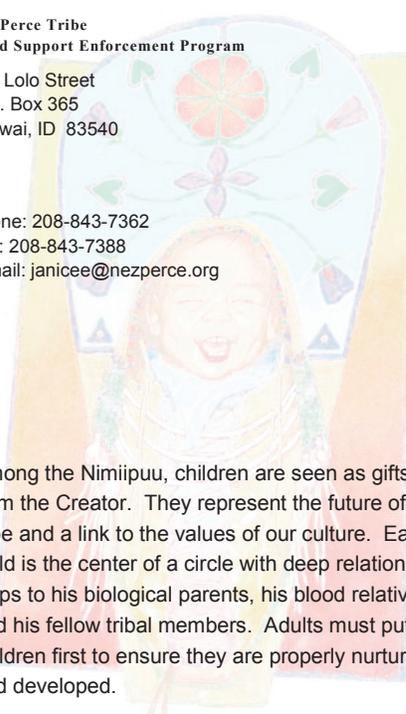
***Look for us at General Council in Lapwai May 3-5  
& Home Fair June 7 at the PiNeeWaus!***

***We will have new promotional items available and can  
answer questions you may have about child support.***

Nez Perce Tribe  
Child Support Enforcement Program

102 Lolo Street  
P.O. Box 365  
Lapwai, ID 83540

Phone: 208-843-7362  
Fax: 208-843-7388  
E-mail: [janicee@nezperce.org](mailto:janicee@nezperce.org)



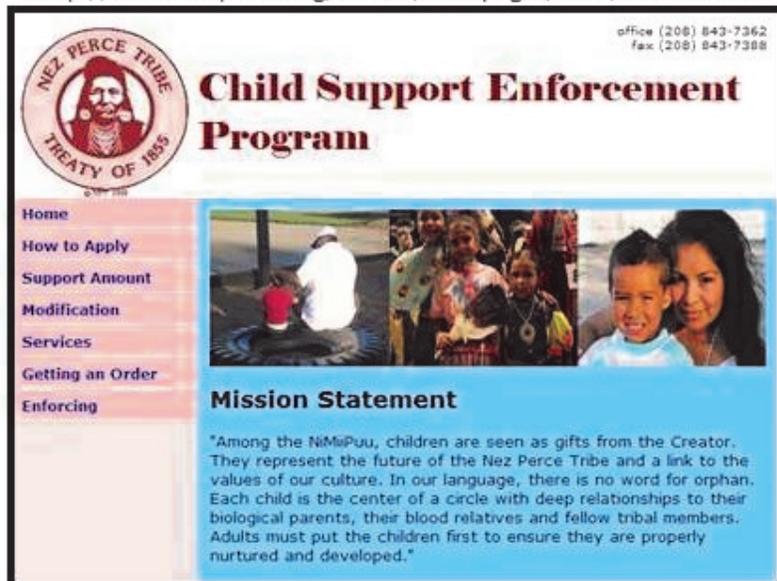
Among the Nimiipuu, children are seen as gifts from the Creator. They represent the future of the tribe and a link to the values of our culture. Each child is the center of a circle with deep relationships to his biological parents, his blood relatives and his fellow tribal members. Adults must put the children first to ensure they are properly nurtured and developed.

## CSEP's 3rd Anniversary April 1, 2012

# Providing Service to Children & Families for 3 years!

## Visit CSEP's Website @

<http://www.nezperce.org/Official/mainpages/CSEP/default.html>



The screenshot shows the website for the Nez Perce Tribe Child Support Enforcement Program. It features a navigation menu on the left with links for Home, How to Apply, Support Amount, Modification, Services, Getting an Order, and Enforcing. The main content area includes the tribe's logo, contact information (office: 208-843-7362, fax: 208-843-7388), a photo of a family, and a mission statement: "Among the Nimiipuu, children are seen as gifts from the Creator. They represent the future of the Nez Perce Tribe and a link to the values of our culture. In our language, there is no word for orphan. Each child is the center of a circle with deep relationships to their biological parents, their blood relatives and fellow tribal members. Adults must put the children first to ensure they are properly nurtured and developed."



A blue speech bubble graphic containing the Facebook logo, a thumbs-up icon, and the text "like us on Facebook". Below the bubble is the URL [Facebook.com/NPT-Child Support Enforcement Program](https://www.facebook.com/NPT-Child-Support-Enforcement-Program).

