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Seven Down, One to Go: Most of Child Support's Most Wanted Are Captured

Cincinnati (Nov. 20, 2006) Seven of the eight people depicted on a Most Wanted poster for failing to pay child support have been rounded up within four months of the poster's release.

Only Juan Matthews, who owes more than \$40,000 to three children, remains on the run.

"This is only a small sample of the people we deal with who owe financial support to their children, but we're very happy to have had quick success with this short list," said Brian Gregg, spokesman for the Hamilton County Department of Job and Family Services, which is charged with collecting court-ordered child support in Hamilton County. "This goes to show many in this community have little tolerance for a parent who won't support their child and will not hesitate to turn them into law enforcement."

The Department's Child Support Enforcement Agency handles about 95,000 cases right now. Last year, it collected \$155 million for families that might not otherwise have had financial support to pay for items such as food, medical care, child care, school clothes and school supplies. Many children who do not receive child support turn to public assistance, with taxpayers providing financial support.

The poster was created in August as part of Child Support Awareness Month. The poster includes the person's photo, name, age, last-known address and occupation, number of children and amount owed.

To appear on the poster, the whereabouts of the absent parent must be unknown and the parent with custody of the children must sign a waiver. In addition, a person must have a warrant for failure to appear in court, something that occurs after all non-criminal attempts to collect the support have failed. The eight people depicted on the poster owed an average of \$50,000 in child support payments.

The latest on the poster to be apprehended was Edwin Miller, who was arrested Nov. 15, after a tip to police. Miller follows six others, two women and four men, who were apprehended and arrested for failure to pay child support. The arrests have resulted in the collection of more than \$19,000 in child support payments.

The Child Support Enforcement Agency sent the posters to community partners, post offices and tax preparation services throughout the Tristate area.

In addition to the Most Wanted poster, Hamilton County Child Support uses a variety of tools to collect child support, including freezing and seizing funds from bank accounts, intercepting tax refunds and suspending licenses.

Anyone who knows the whereabouts of Matthews can call the Sheriff's Office at 946-5350. Also, more parents wanted for failing to pay child support can be found at www.hcso.org. Choose Deadbeats from the Public Services menu. Tipsters can remain anonymous.

About Hamilton County's Department of Job and Family Services

The Department of Job and Family Services administers federal, state and local programs for those in need. The Department helps with local child protection, adult protection, child care, tuberculosis control, child support enforcement, workforce development, cash assistance, food stamp disbursement and Medicaid disbursement. Servicing Hamilton County since 1947, the Department helps hundreds of thousands of residents each year. The Department of Job and Family Services is accredited by the Council on Accreditation, an international, independent, not-for-profit child and family service accrediting organization.