

STABILIZING FAMILIES IN A MORE CUSTOMIZED WAY

Best and Promising Practices

Linkages: CalWORKS & Child Welfare Collaboration to Improve Outcomes for Children and Families



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October 3, 2013

What is Linkages?

Linkages is an approach to social service work that promotes collaboration between CalWORKS and Child Welfare Services when serving a mutual family.

- Goal: To improve outcomes for children and families by providing needed services and supports through collaboration.



Why is Linkages Important?

Research has found that factors such as parental stress from economic hardship can detrimentally affect parenting behaviors and result in neglect and abuse.

Studies have shown that:

- *Parental stressors were significant predictors of child welfare involvement*
- *Increased poverty rates correspond to a rise in child maltreatment rates*

Linkages

CalWORKS

CalWORKS can serve as a child abuse and neglect prevention program by providing services that support family stabilization.

Child Welfare

Child Welfare can serve as an anti-poverty program by supporting self sufficiency strategies.

Statewide CWS & TANF Match Data

Timeframe Referral Allegations Between 2009-2010

All TANF Children	1,785,978
TANF – CWS Match	250,132 = 14%
All CWS (referral) unduplicated children	690,593
CWS – TANF Match	250,139 = 36%
All CWS (cases) Associated with a Referral	126,270
CWS TANF Match	59,921 = 47%

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CalWORKS & Child Welfare
Collaboation is

**Effective, Efficient, and
Essential**

Effective

For Families:

- By working together we help families to become self sufficient and create safe and stable environments for their children

For Programs:

- By leveraging resources and strengths of both programs



Efficient



Leverages Resources

- Each program can do what it does best

Less Duplication

- Families receive streamlined services and benefits from coordinating case plans

Team Approach

- A team gives families more people to help solve issues

Essential

Success is Connected

- These programs have similar missions and serve the most vulnerable families

Working Smarter

- Collaboration can save time and money

Critical In Tight Budget Times

- We need to maximize public dollars



Meeting the Challenge



- www.cfpic.org/toolkit/

Paula and Family Update

Paula graduated from college and works as a Program Manager at the drug treatment center that she lived in while her CWS case was open.

Mark became the first in his extended family to graduate high school.

Alecia attends high school and is set to graduate summer of 2014.

Ten year old **Ryan** is growing into a great young man.



Best Practices from Linkages

- Join Meetings for Assessment Planning
- Coordinate Case Plans (CWS & WtW)
- Joint Trainings Between CalWORKS/ WtW & CWS
- Shared Fiscal Resources from Each Program for Necessary Services
 - ▣ Transportation
 - ▣ Housing
 - ▣ MH Treatment
 - ▣ AOD Treatment
 - ▣ Child Care
 - ▣ Other Concrete Services



Lessons Learned

Visionary County Leadership

- Alignment between Management and Staff creates a coordinated service system to more comprehensively serve families.

Collaboration Requires Culture Change

- Shared Program Goals
- Creating Joint Missions
- Breaking Out of Silos
- Readiness to Share Resources
- Communication Between Programs at Line and Management levels

Lessons Learned

Data Systems That Do Not Support Cross-Systems Work are Barriers

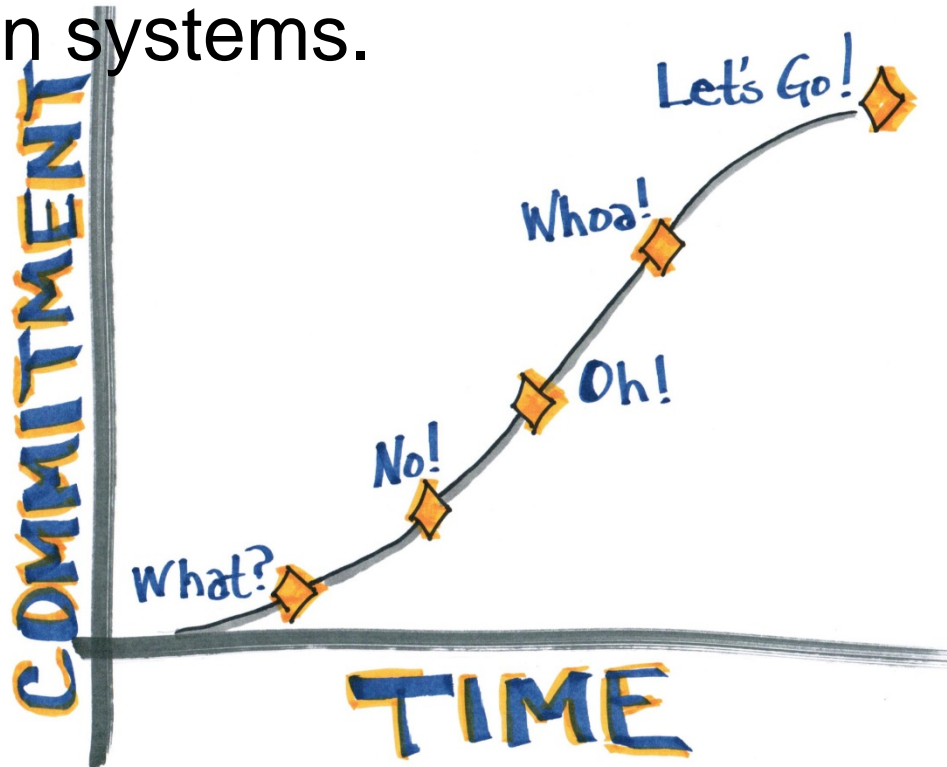
- Mutual identification of clients can be time consuming
- Tracking ongoing co-case management requires special actions

Need Supports for Evaluation

- Counties must be willing to provide resources for data gathering

It Takes Time to Install

Coordination requires long term commitment and changes in systems.



LINKAGES



Thank You!

For more information visit:

<http://www.cfpic.org/toolkit>