



Linkages 2.0 Outcome Evaluation



RDA
CONSULTING



LINKAGES
CalWORKs & Child Welfare Collaboration **2.0**

RDA Consulting

- A mission-driven, employee-owned, majority woman-managed, full-service consulting firm established in 1984 in Oakland, CA
- Works within and across public safety net systems on program design, fund development, planning, implementation, and evaluation
- Supports counties and community-based organizations of all sizes and geographic and demographic complexity
- Practices continuous learning around inclusive, culturally responsive planning, evaluation, and community engagement
- Brings a firm of 22 consultants plus partners who bring necessary subject matter expertise to tailor our work to the local context and to meet the ongoing needs of each engagement



RDA
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40 YEARS
of Systems Change



What We'll Cover

- Why Linkages?
- Evaluation Overview
- Key Findings
- Insights & recommendations



Why Linkages?





As you know...

**Families interact
with multiple
systems**

**Fragmented
services create
barriers**



**Collaboration
between service
providers can
meet families'
needs**

If families receive...

- Child abuse prevention information
- Services to address potential barriers
- Early intervention services
- Coordinated case planning services
- Resources leveraged by both CalWORKs and Child Welfare

***The way we think
Linkages works***



Then...

- Financial and housing stability
- Strengthened parenting skills
- Strengthened family wellbeing & resiliency
- Decreased barriers to employment
- Decreased barriers to completing case plans
- Children remaining or returning to their parents



So that...

- Decrease in child welfare referrals for CalWORKs recipients
- Safe, stable, nurturing family relationships and environments
- Decrease in the likelihood of children entering foster care
- Decrease in time to reunification
- Decrease in re-referrals to Child Welfare post-case closure

Theory of Change

If families receive...

- Child abuse prevention information
- Services to address potential barriers
- Early intervention services
- Coordinated case planning services
- Resources leveraged by both CalWORKs and Child Welfare

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Then...

So that...



Evaluation Overview





Evaluation Participation

Three counties with distinct attributes and characteristics participated in this evaluation

County	Region	Linkages Continuum
County A	Southern California	Secondary & Tertiary Prevention
County B	Southern California	Secondary & Tertiary Prevention
County C	Bay Area	Secondary & Tertiary Prevention

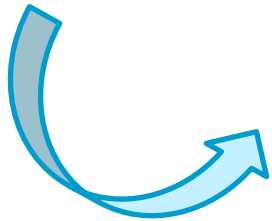


Methodology



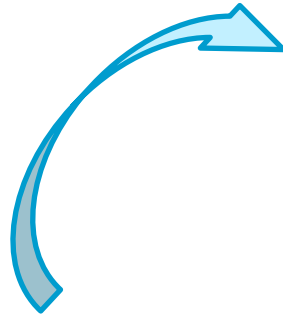
Leadership Interviews & Staff Focus Groups

Agency structures, team structures, service delivery models, experiences of staff



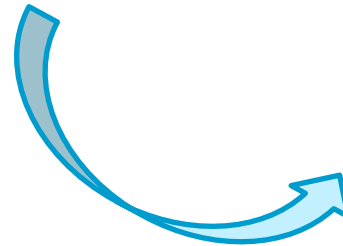
Service Recipient (Family) Survey

Family experience, challenges, and benefits



Case Review Tool

Coordinated case planning activities & consistency



CDSS Administrative Data

Family outcomes like allegations, reunification, wages, participation



Findings: Linkages Outcomes





Key Findings

1 

Child
Maltreatment

2 

Sharing Family
Needs &
Recommending
Services

3 

CalWORKs
Participation
& Family
Reunification

4 

Meeting
Program
Requirements

5 

Access to
Resources

1

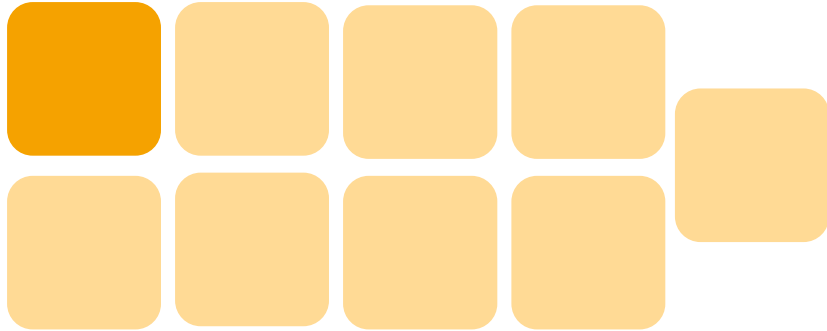
Child Maltreatment

Once families started coordinated case planning through the Linkages approach, they had fewer child maltreatment referrals than before for both unfounded and substantiated

Prior to being identified for Linkages



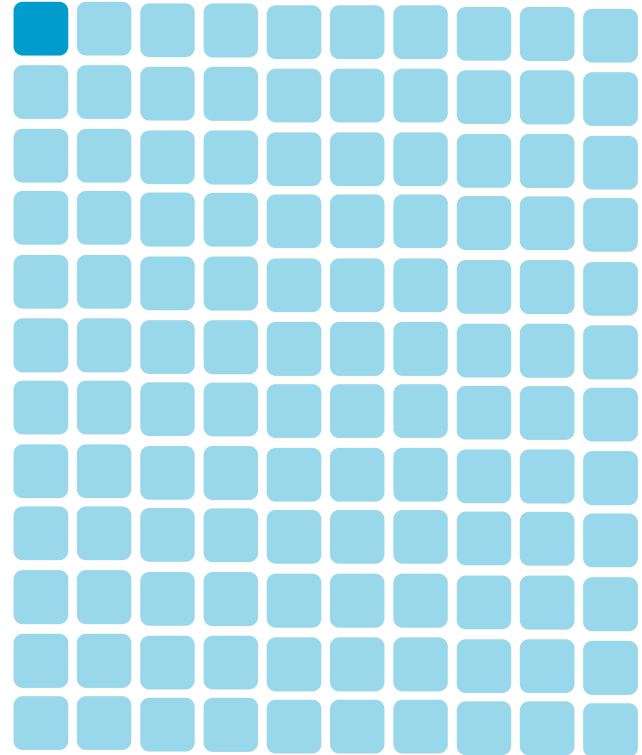
County A
1 referral every 4 months



County B
1 referral every 9 months

After being identified for Linkages

County A & B
1 referral every 120 months



2

Sharing Family Needs & Recommending Services

Coordinated case planning most often includes:



3

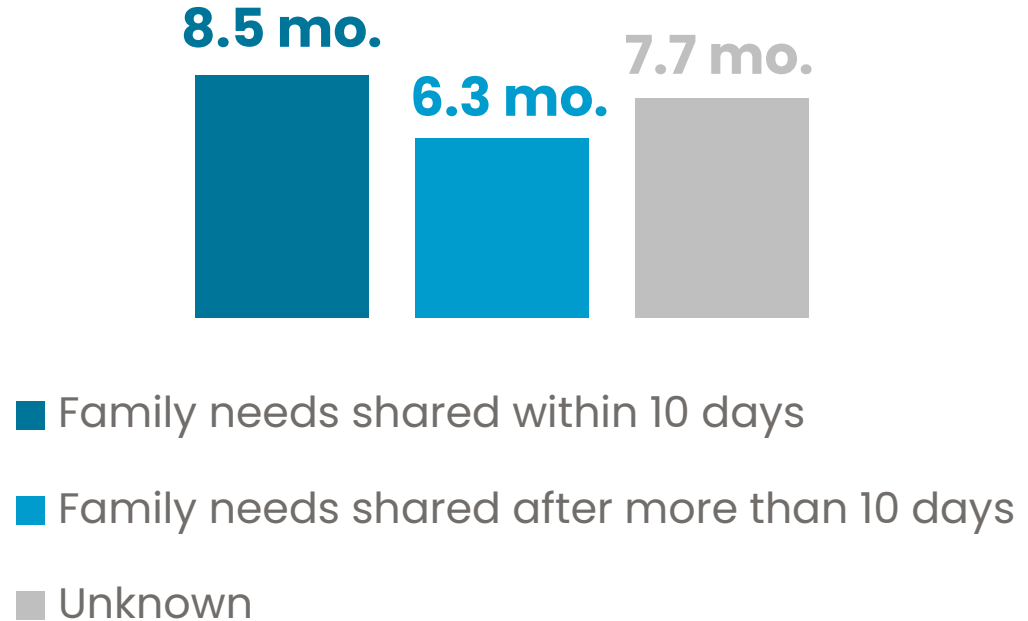
CalWORKs Participation & Family Reunification

Sharing family needs quickly may be most supportive for families' CalWORKs participation

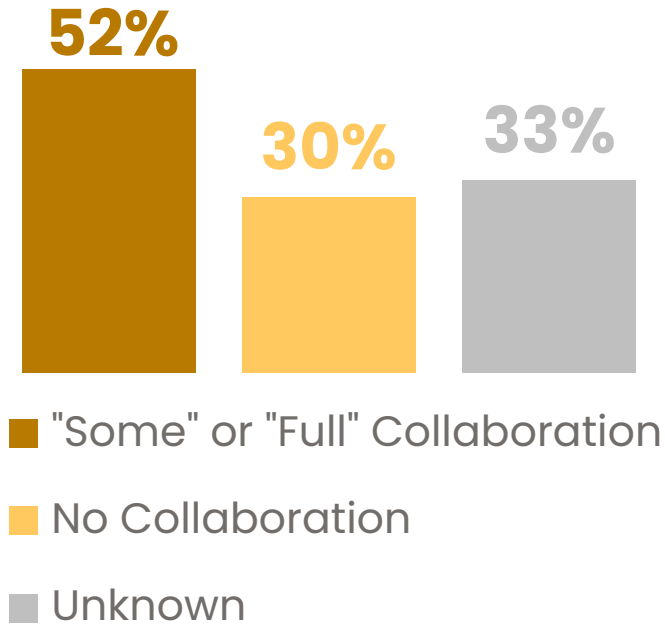
Collaboration between CalWORKs and CWS may be most helpful for reunifying families.

Association of the timeliness of sharing family needs on months of continuous CalWORKs participation for County A

Sharing family needs **within 10 days** of identifying a client as eligible for coordinated case planning was associated **with longer periods of continuous (uninterrupted) engagement**



Association of level of joint monitoring on family reunification for County A



Collaboration in joint monitoring activities is associated with rates of reunification substantially higher than no collaboration

4

Meeting Program Requirements

Mutually involved clients perceive that **coordinated case planning** facilitates their **completion of CalWORKs and CWS requirements**

Survey Respondent Perspectives on Completing Requirements during Linkages Participation

Participating in this program made it easier for me to complete my CalWORKs requirements. (n=43)



Participating in this program made it easier for me to complete my CWS case plan requirements. (n=43)



■ Strongly Agree or Agree

■ Neutral

■ Strongly Disagree or Disagree

5

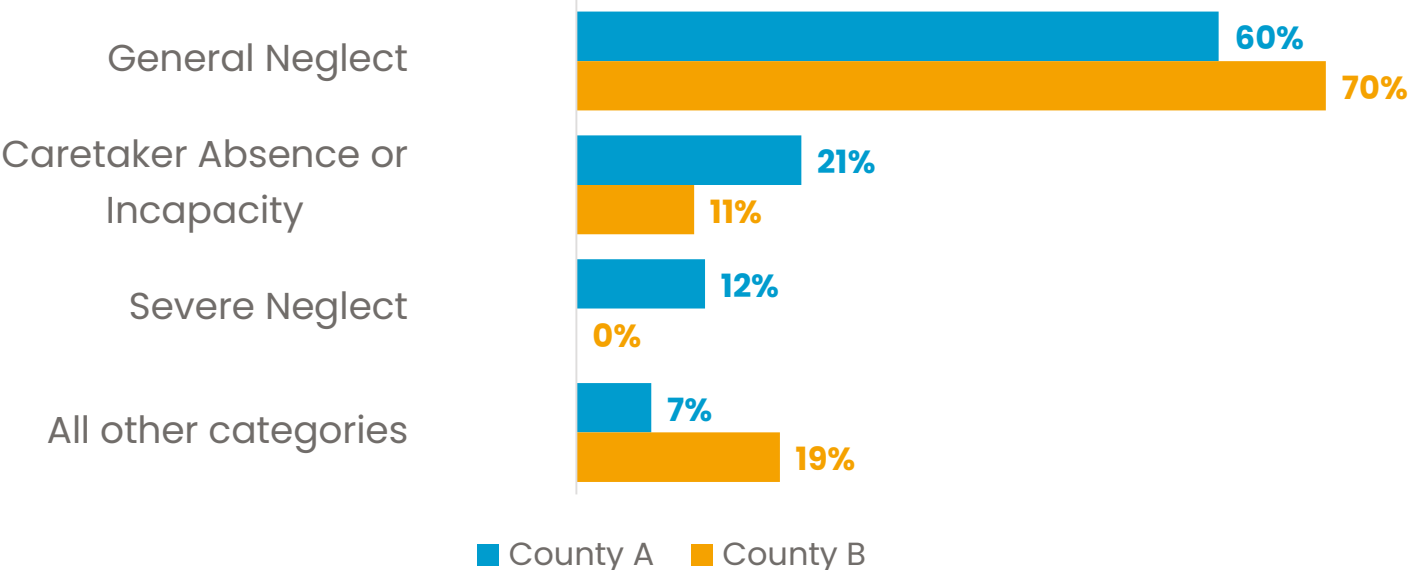
Access to Resources

***Workers
consistently provide
referrals and
promote access to
resources***

***Clients consistently
access multiple
supports for basic
needs***

Coordinated case planning promotes resources that **address some of the most common types of substantiated child maltreatment allegations: general or severe neglect**

Types of Substantiated Child Maltreatment Allegations by County





“I was able to finish and get my high school diploma, then continue to enroll in college and continue my education. Thanks to the Linkages program, I am able to get food and rent assistance while do so for myself and two babies.”–
Survey participant



**Insights &
Recommendations**



**Come learn about
how to utilize the
*Case Review
Tool***

**at our BI workshop
at 10:45 am today!**

Implementation

Centralized
Data Access

Designated
Roles

Co-Location

Venues for
Coordinated
Case
Planning

Leadership
Prioritization

Generate
Widespread
Awareness

Address
Turnover
Challenges

Pillars of Support

Recommendations

**Strengthen Implementation
of Coordinated Case Planning**

**Embed Continuous Quality
Improvement (CQI) Exercises**

**Advance Research and
Evaluation**



Thank you!

Reminder: Come learn about how to utilize the novel Case Review Tool at our BI workshop at 10:45 am today!