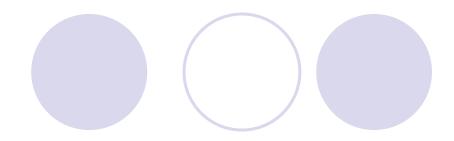
## Linkages

How do we work together to help families in Humboldt County meet their needs?

#### Welcome!



- Introductions
- "Meeting the Linkages Challenge" short video

### What is Linkages?

- Linkages is a coordinated service approach between CWS and CalWORKs/WtW to better serve families.
- Linkages eligibility occurs when a client is actively enrolled in WtW and also has an open case with CWS.
- Brings staff together from CWS and CalWORKs/WtW to share information and coordinate services to better assist families to meet their needs.

#### **Linkages Goal & Purpose**

- Goal is to create and maintain a family-centered, integrated service system that supports the "whole family."
- Purpose is to identify families in common between CWS & CalWORKs/WtW to coordinate and enhance service delivery.
- For clients engaged in both programs, providing cooperative assessment, service planning and case management improves outcomes for at-risk families.
- To ensure engagement and full participation of Linkages families to meet Work Participation Rate.

## **Linkages Mission**

- Strengthen families
- Ensure safety
- Promote self-sufficiency
- Eliminate poverty
- Improve the quality of life in our community

#### Terms - CWS

- **CWS/CMS**: CWS Case Management System, the CWS computer database
- ER: Emergency Response
- FM/FR: Family Maintenance (court and non-court) & Family Reunification
- PP: Permanency Planning
- **SW**: Social Worker
- TDM: Team Decision-Making meeting

#### What is Child Welfare Services (CWS)?

- CWS receives referrals from mandated and non-mandated reporters who are concerned that a child may have been abused or neglected.
- If a referral meets criteria, an Emergency Response (ER) SW conducts an investigation. If the risk of future maltreatment is high or very high, the referral may be promoted to a case.

## What is CWS? (con't.)

- Cases may be either FR or FM
- FM Services
  - Services provided to the family while the child is in the home
  - Non-court or court-ordered
  - ➤ Usually 6 months to 1 year for Non-court FM
  - ➤ As long as court ordered for court FM

## What is CWS? (con't.)

#### FR Services

- Services provided while the child is placed out of their home
- SW works with the family to resolve the safety concerns that led to removal so that the child(ren) may return home
- Timeline is 6 to 18 months of services, depending on the age of the child(ren)
- Typically followed by court FM after child(ren) go home

#### Terms - CalWORKs/WtW

- CalWORKs: California Work Opportunities & Responsibility to Kids (cash aid)
- **C-IV:** "C-four," the Eligibility & Welfare to Work computer system
- **EDD**: Employment Development Department
- ETD: Employment Training Division
- ETW: Employment & Training Worker Works with Welfare to Work participants
- EW: Eligibility Worker Determines ongoing cash aid, CalFresh & Medi-Cal eligibility
- GR: General Relief

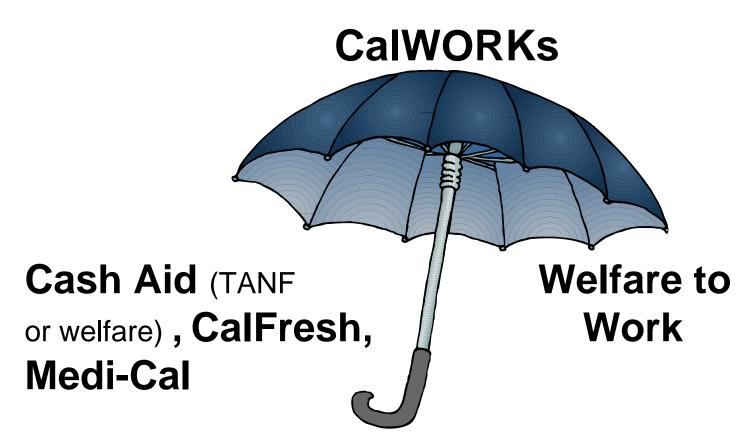
## Terms - CalWORKs/WtW (con't.)

- ICW: Integrated Case Worker Completes intake interview and determines initial eligibility for cash aid, CalFresh & Medi-Cal and refers to WtW Orientation
- **QR7**: Quarterly Report
- TANF: Temporary Assistance to Needy Families
- VC: Vocational Counselor
- WEX: Work Experience
- WPR: Work Participation Rate
- WtW: Welfare to Work Employment program associated with CalWORKs.

#### What is CalWORKs?

 Designed for low- to no-income families to meet their basic needs on a temporary basis

#### The CalWORKs Umbrella



**Income & Benefits** 

**Employment** 

## **Eligibility Requirements**

- Applicants must have a child who has "deprivation," which means an absent or deceased parent; or in a two-parent household, a disabled or unemployed parent
- The family must meet income and property limits
- Children who are applied for must meet certain requirements, such as school attendance and immunizations
- Must meet citizenship requirements

#### Verifications

- If verifications are not provided by clients to the ICW or EW, this may result in an application denial, a discontinuance, or decrease of benefits.
- The EW/ICW notifies the SW of steps needed to support initial or continued granting of CalWORKs, such as birth certificates, Child Support Services, etc.

#### **Homeless Assistance**

- CalWORKs recipients may be eligible for additional assistance if they are homeless
- Up to 16 nights in a place that is in the business of renting (\$65 per night)
- May also be eligible for assistance moving in to a permanent residence, such as deposit, last month's rent (if required) and utility deposits
- Once in a lifetime benefit
- There are several requirements to be eligible for this assistance

## **Maximum Family Grant Rule (MFG)**

 The aid payment to the family will not increase for a newborn if any member of the household got cash aid for the 10 months in a row prior to the birth of the child without at least a 2 month break in aid.

#### Time on Aid, Safety Net & Renewals

- Adults can only receive 48 months of aid in California. There are certain exceptions.
- Even if parents time-out, children may remain on aid if they and the family are otherwise eligible through "safety net" regulations
- New county policy affords "safety net" parents opportunity to participate in limited work activities
- Clients must attend a renewal meeting to redetermine eligibility.

## What is Welfare to Work (WtW)?

- Mandatory employment program for cash aid recipients
- Goals include helping job seekers become more employable, find and keep employment and achieve self-sufficiency
- WtW clients are assigned an ETW

## **Exemptions**

- Adult recipients of CalWORKs are mandatory participants of WtW unless one of the following applies:
  - SSI/SSP recipient
  - Non-Needy Caretaker Aged 60 or older
  - Disabled (mental/ physical)
  - Young child exemptions

- CalWORKs timed-out
- Care of a disabled household member

## Work Participation Rate (WPR)

- Clients must meet monthly hour requirements:
  - 139 hours for one-parent households
  - 152 for two-parent households
- Federal law requires states to meet specific WPR or face a penalty by losing part of their TANF allocation.
- The goal is full client participation so that WPR is met.

#### WtW Activities & Services

- The ETW determines what work activities and services are appropriate to ensure full participation.
- Services to increase employability
  - Job search services
  - Vocational assessments
  - Vocational training & educational opportunities
  - Short-term & long-term subsidized employment
  - Short-term subsidized & short-term unpaid work activities for "safety net" parents

## WtW Activities & Services (con't.)

- Services to address barriers
  - Behavioral health services
  - Learning disability screening & evaluation
- Supportive services
  - Transportation
  - Child care
  - Work & training expenses
- Referrals to community resources
- Cal-Learn program changes

#### **WtW Sanctions**

- Non-participation may result in financial sanction – a reduction in the CalWORKs amount.
- If a client fails or refuses to participate in assigned activities, the ETW initiates a sanction. They notify the ICW or EW, who takes that individual off the Cash Aid grant for the family.

## WtW Sanctions (con't.)

- The ETW/ICW notifies the SW of the steps that are needed to cure the sanction. ETW & SW should work together to assist participant in preventing and/or curing a WtW Sanction.
- Even if there is a sanction in place, continue to treat the case as Linkages until determined it is no longer a Linkages case.

#### Linkages

- Linkages eligibility occurs when a client is enrolled in WtW and also has an open case with CWS.
- The ETW and SW collaborate closely to ensure that program requirements and family needs are met through coordination of the WtW and CWS case plans.
- ETW & SW must involve EW in Linkages cases to ensure any and all benefits are granted accurately.

## The Linkages Process

#### 1. Clients are identified

- A client can be identified as Linkages in Eligibility, WtW or CWS.
- If you have a case you think might be Linkages, talk to the EW, ETW or SW!

#### 2. Cases are flagged

A flag is entered into C-IV and a Special Project code is put into CMS.

## The Linkages Process (con't.)

#### 3. SW calls ETW

The CWS Social Worker calls the ETW to exchange program information and set up a coordinated case planning meeting.

The ETW provides a copy of the client's WtW case plan to the SW. The SW will provide a copy of CWS case plan that is in effect, if available.

## The Linkages Process (con't.)

# 4. Coordinated Case Planning The meeting happens and the coordinated case plan is completed.

#### 5. Ongoing Communication

Must occur at least monthly between the SW, ETW and EW for the duration of the Linkages status.

## **Coordinated Case Planning**

- The SW contacts the ETW to set up a coordinated case planning meeting with the client.
- The SW brings the Coordinated Case Plan form to the meeting.
- Information from both programs is discussed.
- The Coordinated Case Plan is completed.

## Coordinated Case Planning (con't.)

- Copies of the Coordinated Case Plan go to the parents, SW, ETW and EW.
- The CMS case plan should include a Service Objective (Other) that states, "Parent will comply with their CalWORKs/Welfare to Work case plan."
- The SW and ETW also send each other copies of the program case plans.

## Coordinated Case Planning (con't.)

- Each case plan will be monitored for progress and compliance. All workers will notify one another of any non-compliance issues.
- Coordinated case planning meetings should happen every time there is a case plan update.

#### Where Linkages Happens

- Coordinated case planning for initial case plans
- TDMs
- Client appointments with the ETW
- Annual renewals with the EW
- Case plan updates
- Time studies
- Anywhere else that is appropriate!

## Team Decision-Making (TDM)

- Goal is to involve birth families and community members, along with substitute care providers, service providers and agency staff, in all placement decisions.
- A TDM is held for all decisions involving child removal, change of placement, and exit from placement.
- The SW should always ask the family if they would like to have the ETW and/or EW invited to the TDM.

## **Ongoing Linkages Work**

- The ETW will contact the SW when a client is scheduled for a WtW appointment.
- The ETW, EW and SW will have at least one monthly contact with each other.
- Involve EW as needed.

#### Linkages Ends

- SW, ETW and/or EW will communicate with each other if any of the following occur:
  - > All adults time out
  - Someone becomes a drug felon, fleeing felon, or status change
  - Terminate FM or FR services
  - Case closure
  - >FM changes to FR services
  - >FR changes to PP services

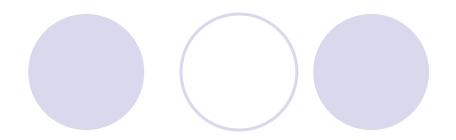
#### **AB 429**

- AB 429 allows CalWORKs <u>services</u> to continue to parents in CWS FR cases, even though cash aid and Medi-Cal stop when children are removed.
- Parents get transitional CalFresh (food stamps) for five months and can apply for medical coverage.
- SW to keep the ETW and EW updated on the CWS status of these cases

#### **Intended Linkages Outcomes**

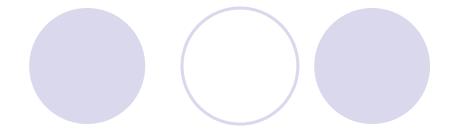
- Lower risk of re-entry to care than non-Linkages families
- Lower rate of subsequent substantiated allegations
- Higher percentage of WtW sanctions resolved and lower percentage of WtW sanctions imposed
- Increased WPR for Linkages families

## **Time Studies**



• Follow your unit's time study directions.

### **Questions?**



 Thank you for being here and for all of your work with Linkages families!