Linkages:
CalWORKs and Family Maintenance

An Essential Partnership

Participant Manual

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Acknowledgements

Learning Objectives

1. Define the need for collaboration between Family Maintenance (FM) and CalWORKs
2. Identify the crossover and intersection between FM and CalWORKs
3. List the steps to interdisciplinary collaboration
4. Review processes that impact collaboration such as planning and assessment
5. Using a scenario, practice steps for collaboration
6. Create an action plan for working together

Agenda
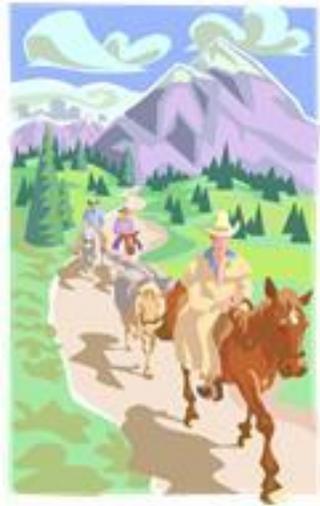
- Introductions
- Link between FM and CalWORKs
- What is my role?
- Assessment and Collaboration
- Steps to Interdisciplinary Collaboration
- Case Planning and Collaboration
- Working Together to Build Self Sufficiency
- Action Planning for the future!

Linkages OVERVIEW

A CalWORKs and Child Welfare collaboration, also known as Linkages, has been to translate into practice the twin philosophy laid out by the visionary David Berns, former Director of Human Services in El Paso County, Colorado: that CalWORKs (or TANF) should serve as a child abuse prevention program, and that CWS should work to prevent poverty. For families involved in both CalWORKs and CWS, coordinated services can reduce the burdens of bureaucracy and can heighten opportunities for success. In the words of leaders from Merced County, Linkages helps "fight poverty and abuse."

It starts with a simple observation: Families in crisis are not well served when faced with two service delivery systems, two sets of workers, two case plans, and sometimes conflicting goals and requirements. For families involved in both CalWORKs and CWS, we learned that Linkages services can reduce the burdens of bureaucracy and heighten opportunities for success. Today, we know that when we work *together*, we work more effectively to help families succeed.

In many counties throughout California, Linkages has become "not a project, but a way of doing business," an approach to serving families that puts their needs first.

Understand the Twin Philosophy of Linkages

The Linkages philosophy can be succinctly summarized:
Through improved coordination, Child Welfare Services can serve as an anti-poverty program; and CalWORKs can help prevent child abuse and neglect.

A study from the United States Department of Health and Human Services found that children from families with annual incomes below $15,000, as compared to children from families with annual incomes above $30,000, were more than 22 times likely to experience some form of maltreatment. Due to the frequent co-occurrence of poverty and abuse or neglect, it is not surprising that many welfare and child welfare agencies have clients in common.

In addition to struggling with poverty and the possible or actual removal of their children, families in both systems must navigate two bureaucracies that often impose conflicting requirements, goals, and timeframes. In many cases, a county's welfare and child welfare services are provided in different locations, which creates scheduling and transportation challenges. Clients typically go through separate and lengthy screening processes, yet answer many of the same questions for each program. Clients must also negotiate with two different service systems that do not communicate with each other.

Workers themselves face frustrations when serving clients involved in both systems. Parents miss appointments because of scheduling conflicts and are highly stressed trying to meet the demands and requirements of two case plans. Moreover, Child Welfare workers often are not given the authority or resources to provide child care, transportation, housing and other poverty mitigations that can help create a safe and stable environment for the family – resources that CalWORKs can provide. CalWORKs workers typically do not have the authority or resources to provide voluntary Family Maintenance services that can strengthen family interactions and help a client enter the job market – resources available through CWS.

Without coordination, the different approaches of CWS and CalWORKs can jeopardize the likelihood of a client succeeding in either program. The alternative is to reconfigure the service system to help workers collaborate to help families. That is the purpose of Linkages.

Coordinated services has the potential to impact the following outcomes:

- More families achieving self-sufficiency through increased work participation and monthly earnings
- More CalWORKs sanctions are resolved
- More families off of cash aid due to increased earnings
- More families successfully achieving reunification
- Fewer re-referrals to child welfare
- Fewer children entering out-of-home placement
- Fewer children who re-enter out-of-home placement

Roles in Case Management

CalWORKs Case Management	Child Welfare Case Work
Case managers perform numerous activities to help CalWORKs recipients prepare for and succeed at work activities:	The case work of child welfare workers is somewhat dependent on which program area they are serving such as: Emergency Response, Family Reunification, Family Maintenance, or Family Preservation.
▪ Assessment of Work abilities	▪ Assess safety and risk to child
▪ Track hours of participant work participation	▪ Assess strengths and needs of family
▪ Provide information about parenting classes	▪ Prepare court reports
▪ Help the participant explore employment opportunities	▪ Testify in juvenile dependency court
▪ Link the participant to training	▪ Recommend a course of action for the family to achieve safety
▪ Link the participant to employment	▪ Recommend a course of action for a child to achieve permanency
▪ Link the participant to substance abuse, mental healthy and domestic abuse counseling and services	▪ Develop case plans for families and children and youth
▪ Evaluate supportive services and ancillary needs	▪ Monitor compliance and progress with case plan and service goals
▪ Help remove barriers, such as lack of dependable transportation	▪ Identify and support out of home placements for children and youth who are not safe in

	their home of origin
▪ Provide referrals to and arrange payment for child care providers	▪ Refer family members to substance abuse, mental health, and domestic abuse counseling services
▪ Provide coaching on money management, conflict resolution, and appropriate work behaviors	▪ Facilitate health and dental checks for children in care
▪ Link participants to other community services	▪ Supervise visitation between children and their family
▪ Enter information into CalWORKs payment and Welfare to Work Tracking Systems	▪ Refer parents to parenting classes
▪ Provide orientation and appraisal	▪ Approve relative and non-relative placements
▪ Monitor WPR	▪ Enter information in CWS/CMS
▪ Determine sanctions and exemptions	▪ Assure educational goals and rights of children are being maintained

Program Mandates and Descriptions

Family Maintenance
Family Maintenance (FM) provides time-limited protective services to families in crisis to prevent or remedy abuse or neglect, allowing social workers to work with the family while keeping the child in the home. Services include counseling, emergency shelter care, respite care, emergency in-home caretakers, substance abuse treatment, domestic violence intervention, victim services, and parenting education. Family Maintenance may be based upon a voluntary agreement with the parents where the court is not involved or the juvenile court may order services to be provided under section 30 of the Welfare and Institutions Code. The state pays for services for 6 months that may be extended for an additional 6 month period if there is evidence that the objectives of the service plan can be achieved within the extended time period. If, after that time, the family is unable to adequately care for the child, the county agency may continue to deliver in-home services using county funds or petition the juvenile dependency court to place the child in out-of-home (foster) care.

CalWORKs
All CalWORKs families receive cash assistance and most receive employment and supportive services aimed at promoting self-sufficiency. To be eligible, families must meet income and asset requirements and must include a child who is "deprived" of parental support or care. Deprivation is defined as the absence, disability, or death of one or both parents. Deprivation can also exist when both parents are in the home and the principal earner is unemployed.

CalWORKs adult recipients are eligible to continue to receive a CalWORKs grant and services for up to one full month after their biological or adoptive child has been removed from the home and placed in out-of-home care (foster care). If, after the first month, all eligible children have been removed from the home, the parents can no longer receive a cash grant. However, while their children are in foster care, the parents are eligible for CalWORKs employment services for up to 6 months, or longer with good cause, if the county determines that the services are necessary for Family Reunification.

Federal and state law divides work requirements into core and non-core activities. Core activities include activities such as employment, work experience, community service, and the first 12 months of vocational education. Non-core activities include job skills training, adult basic education, mental health and substance abuse treatment, and domestic abuse services. Under CalWORKs, single-parent families are required to participate in work activities for 32 hours per week, averages over the month, including a minimum of 20 hours per week in core activities. Two-parent families must participate at least 35 hours per week, average monthly, including a minimum of 20 hours per week in core activities. Adults in two-parent families can share in meeting the requirement, but one of the parents must average at least 20 hours per week.

COLLABORATION

Collaboration is defined as the <u>act of working together</u>. Collaboration is an essential element of strengths-based family-centered social work practice. We have just identified roles of CalWORKs workers and Child Welfare Workers. Now lets consider how these two roles can work together.

There are many types of collaboration which can be employed in the service of a client. In the case of a linked family between CalWORKs and Family Maintenance, collaboration will focus on welfare to work services and protective capacities. Some of these areas will overlap and intersect in the course of helping a family. Service provision is strengthened through collaboration.

Collaboration is effective because it places a value on what a family member, their community supporters, and respective case managers have to offer in providing solutions for safety, permanence and well-being within an economically stable family.

Collaboration's goal is to strengthen service provision. Collaboration involves the following:

- ➢ active listening
- ➢ asking informed questions
- ➢ mutual respect
- ➢ two way communication
- ➢ plan of action
- ➢ task assignment
- ➢ accountability.

Task assignment and accountability are important aspects of collaboration. When two individuals are working together, it is important to agree to tasks assigned to specific service providers in order to avoid overlap and maximize efficiency. However, without the team members being accountable to each other, the collaboration will be ineffective. Very simply, when tasks are assigned and agreed upon, individuals must follow through and complete the assignment within the agreed upon time frames. Frequently, one aspect of the case hinges on another aspect being completed-- by someone else! Without that direct work being done by that other person, the family's progress may be temporarily halted, sanctioned, or services may be lost.

Identify the tools/processes within your county that are set up to support collaborative efforts:

Which of these tools/processes could be used in collaboration between CalWORKs and Child Welfare? Any specific to FM? Explain how.

So Are We Doing Collaboration Yet[1]

Collaboration In Detail

1) Collaboration is a
    a) Process to reach goals that cannot be achieved acting singly or, at a minimum, cannot be reached efficiently.
    b) As a process, collaboration is a means to an end, not an end in itself.
    c) The desired end is more comprehensive and involves appropriate services for families that improve youth and family outcomes.

2) Why Collaborate?
    a) Increasing demands for services
    b) We have families in common
    c) Inadequate resources to meet need
    d) To create a system where children and families are served with the fewest possible barriers in the most comprehensive manner

3) Benefits of Collaboration
    a) Improved outcomes for children, families, and communities
    b) No one program or agency alone can meet complex needs
    c) More efficient use of resources
    d) Reduce duplication of effort

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[1] *Jones, L., Packard T., Hohman, M., Fong, T., Gross, E., Hardin, L., Roberts, C., and Becker, I. Interdisciplinary Training: Collaborative Approach to Helping Families. US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children Youth and Families. pp 5-8.*

4) Keys to Success
  a) Well-defined communication channels operating on many different levels
  b) Resources are contributed and pooled or jointly secured
  c) Broad based involvement
  d) Trust
  e) Commitment
  f) Strong leadership
  g) Credibility and openness of process
  h) To form effective collaborations, partners must work together to establish a common mission and vision for working together.

Barriers to Collaborations:

Attitude Challenges: I can't collaborate because....

Territorialism Ego-centered	*This is my turf.*	*Protection over work/domain/skills/profession/information*
Ambivalent commitment	*Do I really care?*	*Not fully invested. Reluctant to give it a try.*
Apathy	*Nothing will happen with this anyway.*	*Pessimistic. Shows no initiative. Burned out.*
Not a team player.	*I like to work alone. I get more done*	*Works well independently. Successful at independently making decisions.*
Too narrow focus or too rigid.	*It's not in the procedures.*	*Too narrow or too rigid focus demonstrated. Resistant to diversity, new ideas. Closed to new options. Problem solving limited.*

Structural: I can't collaborate because....

Time	*I don't have time.*	*Schedule conflicts with time needed for collaboration.*
Priorities	*It's not my job.*	*Higher or conflicting priorities. How much help can it be anyway?*
Confidentiality	*I can't share that information.*	*Poor knowledge of confidentiality and information access. Delay in gaining or sharing information.*
Funding	*I won't be here anyway.*	*Distracted by future, real or potential funding concerns.*
Confusion	*I don't know what to do.*	*Task direction and role boundaries unclear.*

(Jones, et al., 1999)

Steps Toward Collaboration

Attitude Challenges: I <u>can</u> collaborate because…..

I can learn something interesting about services to my clients.	Other programs have services that I need to understand better in order to better serve my clients.
I want to be part of making this happen because I see it will help my clients.	Clarify your own values. I think I can help set the pace and expectations of how this can work better. Even if I am one of few, we can get started on behalf of our clients whether formally or informally.
I need five minutes of venting time.	Making venting time or writing time for yourself.
I can help lead my group.	Once I figure out how to make this work, I can share with others.
I can learn to be more successful.	Investigate successful collaboration efforts. Learn how rules were addressed. Pause when you have a problem. Practice being more open minded.

Structural: I can collaborate because….

Let's make a standing meeting.	Schedule meetings to work with your schedule. Evaluate if some communication can occur through other methods: telephone, email
Supervisor or team member, what is more important here?	Clarify priorities with management. Ask for their help in prioritizing. Range level of involvement in project. Gain additional support.
I think I'll get familiar with our confidentiality process and procedures.	Stay current with agency confidentiality, information access, and legislation. Get releases when necessary. Share need to know information.
As long as the budget allows, I have to be here.	Encourage clear communication on funding, especially with regards to saving in the area of Linkages, and special funding streams and diversions by being more informed about who can pay for what.
Please tell me (supervisor or team) your expectations for this group.	Develop procedures/expectations in writing. Consult with supervisor or others for problem solving.

Five Steps to Interdisciplinary Collaboration*

1. *Closed Systems: "Leave us alone"*
2. *Getting Ready: "So, what do YOU do?"*
3. *Implementing: "Okay, let's work together."*
4. *Performance: "Camera! Lights! Action!"*
5. *De-Integration: "Nothing Lasts Forever"*

* Material adapted from Ron Zuskin's research on interdisciplinary collaboration at University of Maryland, School of Social Work, Baltimore, Maryland.

1. Closed Systems: Leave us alone!

Closed systems are characterized by independent operations of agencies, group and organizations. The degree of separation depends upon community factors that affect the public and private funding streams. Groups in closed systems usually don't need each other to achieve their goals or mission, so they work to protect their resources and their niche in the community. Since groups are often competing for some of the same limited resources, their efforts to achieve their goals may be at the expense of others.

Strategy:

Get the groups in the same room! Beginning the Journey to Interdisciplinary Collaboration means starting where agencies or groups are at, not where you want them to be. Recognize the cultural and historical differences between groups and begin with minimal interaction and limited expectations. Invite groups to a lunch meeting that features a content expert that would appeal to all service agencies. Get people in the same room mingling with each other and experiencing a common interest. This is the beginning of familiarity and commonality, ingredients for collaboration.

2. Getting Ready: So, what do you do?

Opening the system and getting ready for future collaboration involves getting people together. Efforts must be made to have groups practice communicating with each other in a non-threatening context. Groups begin to practice decision-making, how goals get established, how communication is handled, and how to appreciate the group differences and similarities. Each group has its own role, but begins to work together, sharing experiences, materials and division of tasks and sees a picture of what may work in the future.

Getting ready creates activities that allow groups to work toward similar goals that don't conflict. Agencies with the least resources often are the best at networking and their skills can be valuable in working out ways for smooth interactions.

Strategy:

Enhance what groups already know and guide interactions that produce a tangible result from the work of the groups. Assessing a community's needs, for instance, produces information that is useful to all parties. Groups could be invited to participate in a comprehensive community needs assessment project, an information sharing day or a training day that would have mutual appeal.

Initial steps include:
a.) getting groups to share minimal information about parallel activities (e.g. how each group handles confidentiality, policies and procedures on worker safety, etc,);
b.) bringing the groups together with a consultant on a topic of mutual interest (e.g. child safety, parenting skills);
c.) establishing a community task force and having a role clarification day where each group can select a contributing role.

3. Implementing: OK, let's work together!

After groups have discovered that they have some common interests, and can benefit from common experiences, it is possible to create ad hoc teams. Team members begin to experience the Cultural Blindness stage, recognizing that other agencies have distinct

professional cultures that affect the protocols of the agency. Team members may also experience the Cultural Pre-competence stage, accepting professional differences: "we both have professional standards and they are different!" Difference is recognized as difference and not considered "wrong" or "less professional."

Strategy:

To implement a service delivery team, protocols must be established for working together. Initially, a team should be organized around achieving a limited objective, for instance working jointly on a case. Team members identify the beginning, middle and end of their work. The focus of the team is issue specific. Team members provide a single program or service to the joint project. Team members maintain their own group or agency identity. Team members operate within their agency's mission while sharing a common vision for the team. Team members begin to share resources and services for the benefit of the team objective. For instance, one agency may offer an interview or meeting room that the team members can use for this service project. Identify joint skills and opportunities for cross training. Provide opportunities for team members to ask questions about other disciplines and encourage team members to share about their own agency group.

4. Performance: Camera, lights, action!

The hallmark of interdisciplinary collaboration is the trust in the process. Trust is consistent behavior over time. As teams consistently work well together, they create a joint identity and members are seen as part of the team. Collaborative teams have a decision making process that works within the context of their needs. The process can

vary from consensus to individual chains of command. There are set mechanisms to surface conflict issues and resolve them. Collaborative team members can agree to disagree. Team members constantly work to increase honesty and cooperation in their interactions. Collaborative team functioning is seen as everybody's responsibility with different team members "stepping up" when it is their time. The team achieves synergy when their collective efforts benefit a customer more than their individual contributions would.

Strategy:
Find opportunities to gain recognition of the benefits of collaboration. Make group presentations of collaborative efforts at community, state or national forums. Work together with experts to increase mutual professional respect. Cross-train team members to increase versatility and appreciation for professional culture.

5. De-Integration: Nothing last forever!

De-integration is a natural by-product of high functioning, collaborative teams. It doesn't happen if teams don't reach the collaborative functioning level and sustain it for a period of time. De-integration is not disintegration. The collaborative team is not flying apart, it is gradually reestablishing its identity. Collaboration requires considerable closeness and proximity to each team member. Over time, individuals need to reestablish their professional identities separate from each other and the team. Team members' identities may have become blurred in the course of shared efforts for a common outcome. Some team members may feel that they have been swallowed by the collaborative whale or that they have been morphed into some other identity too distinct from their former colleagues. Team members may decrease their efforts to maintain the dynamic tension of being part of a unit and a unit apart. Team members slip into a "getting along" mode of maintaining cooperation but becoming less honest in their feedback: "OK, whatever you want" or "I don't care" replaces "Let's talk about this some more to see if we need to agree or disagree." Or, team members may maintain a level of honesty without the cooperative feedback loops: "Let's face it…that stinks!" or "OK, so you are right again…so what!"

De-integration is akin to the honeymoon being over. Team members are acting out a need for distance, not disengagement. Just as couples' relationships go through stages of distance and proximity, so do teams. De-integration is more a rebelling than an unplugging and can be seen as a temporary phenomenon.

Failure to recognize de-integration as a byproduct of the collaboration may lead to failure of the team. However, even if the team disassembles and does not continue collaborative functioning, each team member has experienced significant change in their professional careers. Both team members and their agencies are changed by the process and do not return totally to the "closed" system model. Team members continue to be more likely to reform the collaborative team or carry over learned skills to new ventures.

Strategy:
Back to basics! Recharge batteries by returning to some familiar activities, limit issues or scope of operation with time frames for beginning, middle and end. Set up processes to rotate other professionals through the team to increase the exercise of appreciating different perspectives. Validate the disciplines on team historical recognition days.   Find opportunities for team members to stretch behaviors and redirect strengths to maintain interest in the activities of the team.

COMPARING UNCOORDINATED AND COORDINATED PLANS:

Below are two descriptions of case plans for the same family, a composite of actual circumstances for families in CalWORKs and Child Welfare Services (CWS). These descriptions illustrate how uncoordinated and coordinated case plans can impact family life in dramatically different ways.

An Uncoordinated CalWORKs and CWS Plan

CalWORKs Plan
Barbara and Ted* are on CalWORKs. The CalWORKs worker did not inquire whether they are also receiving CWS services, and the clients did not mention it.

Ted is participating 35 hours per week in approved CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work activity. His CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work plan includes 32 hours of vocational training at the community college in a four-month intensive training program. Ted will have a refrigeration repair certification at the end of the class. Ted must also receive three hours a week of Behavioral Health Services. No child care is provided because Barbara is staying home with the children.

CWS Plan
The CWS worker did not inquire whether the family is on a CalWORKs Welfare-to-Work plan, and the clients did not mention it. Child Welfare Services activities require parenting education classes and counseling three times a week for three months for both parents.

Barbara has mandated drug testing weekly and is required to participate in substance abuse treatment. In addition to a weekly therapist session, she has to attend a one-hour group session at least four times a week. Ted must attend Al-Anon once weekly.

A Coordinated CalWORKs /Child Welfare Services Plan

Agency identifies clients who are in both programs and informs both the CalWORKs and CWS workers that Barbara and Ted are in CalWORKs and CWS. The CalWORKs worker calls the CWS worker to discuss the case and coordinate their case plans. The coordinated case plan includes the following elements:

For CalWORKs, Ted is participating 35 hours per week in an approved Welfare-to- Work activity. Ted's CalWORKs plan includes CWS activities: parenting classes and Al-Anon totaling ten hours per week and three hours coordinated with Behavioral Health Services.

The CWS worker uses participation in CalWORKs Behavioral Health Services to meet Barbara and Ted's counseling and parent education requirements. The CWS worker also uses the CalWORKs requirement of 20 hours of vocational training, which will be completed in six months, to demonstrate Ted's cooperation and efforts towards stability.

Child care for the children will be paid through CalWORKs while Barbara attends drug counseling and testing as required by the CWS case plan.

The CWS and CalWORKs workers jointly address the appropriateness of the child care provider. Transportation is paid through CalWORKs for parents to get to various CWS and CalWORKs activities. Throughout, the CalWORKs and CWS workers maintain contact to monitor the family's progress and revise their case plan as needed.

Case Collaboration

Things to discuss:
- Reason for meeting
- Family strengths and goals
- What can either program provide that will create protective capacity and make this family stable and secure?
- Concerns: welfare-to-work sanctions, drug testing, housing, permanency timeline, childcare, etc.
- Service plan requirements of each program
- Parent's current status: substance abuse, housing, parenting classes, mental health, welfare-to-work activity
- Child's current status: education, medical, therapeutic issues
- Progress

Developing a coordinated plan:

1. Case Presentation: both CalWORKs and Child Welfare share current and historical information
2. Identify current problems to address
3. CalWORKs identify areas to target
4. Child Welfare identify areas to target
5. Identify overlap
6. Identify separate tasks and goals
7. *Remember tasks on both plans should address goals of both programs as much as possible*
8. Re-examine for overlap and cross over
9. Determine service objectives and client responsibilities for both child welfare and CalWORKs.
10.   Task assignment with Timeframes

Vignette

Lorna is seeking assistance. She and her two children ages 8 and 10 have been living in a Shelter for 4 weeks. She took her children there after she was asked to leave her mother's apartment due to age restrictions in the assisted living facility. Lorna has only two weeks left at the shelter.

She has no other lodging available to her. She has been a homemaker having held only temporary jobs since graduating from high school. Her children's father passed away last year and he had been the sole source of income for the family.

Recently, Lorna was referred to child protective services when her eight year old daughter disclosed that a family friend had molested her. Lorna has used this friend as periodic child care since she met him in rehab 6 years ago. He was her addiction counselor. He is currently under investigation in another city.

Lorna has a history of heroin addiction but has been clean for 3 years. She told the counselors at the shelter that her sobriety is threatened with all of the stress; and she is afraid she will use again. Her NA support group is in another town and she does not have the means to get back and forth to those meetings.

Upon arriving at the shelter one month ago, the counselor at the Shelter overheard her yelling at the children and walked in to see Lorna grab her ten year old son by both arms and shake him. He was later observed to have fingerprint bruises on both arms and his right arm hung limply. The shelter demanded he go to the emergency room and he was found to have a dislocated elbow. The counselor called the hotline to make a report for abuse including her concerns about relapse and mother's self-described history of bi-polar disorder.

Mother agreed to voluntary family maintenance and has been working with CalWORKs and FM.

When should the collaboration begin between CalWORKs and Family Maintenance?

Identify case plan tasks and goals.

Identify work plan tasks and goals.

Is there overlap?

Can the tasks from one plan serve the other plan?

Discuss the timeframes and urgency.

Discuss sanctions as they would or would not apply.

Action Planning

_____
Action Date

_____   _____
Name   **Phone Number Where You can be reached on Above Date**

Name one thing you will do to improve your understanding of CalWORKs/Family Maintenance.

Identify one action you will take to Link your cases?

Why is Linkages a good idea for linked families?

Name one person you met today from CalWORKS/Family Family Maintenance that you can collaborate with in the future.

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