



WELCOME!

Child Welfare Services 101

“Linking the Pieces Together”

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Goals for Today:

- At the end of this workshop participants will:
 - Have a basic understanding of the various CWS programs & the laws that govern them
 - Have a basic understanding of the population served by county child welfare agencies
 - Have knowledge of current changes in the CWS system
 - Understand the juvenile court process as it relates to CWS



The Child Welfare System

- Federal Level
 - Develops & Implements national policies that establishes CWS framework
 - Title IV-B (services)
 - Title IV-E (FC & Adoption assistance)
- State Level – (state supervised/co. admin)
 - State Statutes Implemented
 - Interpreted in Regulations
 - CWS MPP: Division 31
- County Level
 - Primary governmental bodies that provide direct services to address child abuse & neglect



Key Child Welfare Federal Laws

Federal:

- Child Abuse Prevention & Treatment Act (CAPTA) 1974
 - Established reporting laws
 - Defined child abuse & neglect
- Adoption Assistance & Child Welfare Act 1980 (PL 96-272)
 - Funding for foster care
 - Preference to maintain & reunify families
 - Reasonable Efforts
- Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) 1997
 - Emphasizes child safety over family maintenance
 - Add'l reasons for terminating parental rights



Key Child Welfare State Laws

State:

- Senate Bill 14 (1982)
 - Established CWS system components
- Assembly Bill 1544 (1997)
 - Mandates concurrent planning
- Assembly Bill 636 (2001)
 - Established Child & Family Services Review



What is Child Abuse & Neglect?

Categories defined by the law:

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- General Neglect
- Severe Neglect
- Exploitation



Child Welfare Service Components:

Established through SB 14, enacted in 1982 to implement federal requirements under PL 96-272:

- Emergency Response
- Family Maintenance
- Family Reunification
- Permanent Placement



Emergency Response (ER)

- Local 24-hour Hotline
 - Screen calls to determine if there is enough evidence to warrant in-person investigation
 - Key questions:
 - Is the child in imminent danger?
 - What is the risk of maltreatment?
 - Does the suspected child abuse meet the legal definition?
 - Is an in-person response required and, if so, how quickly?
 - Evaluate out or In-Person Response
 - Immediate or within 10 days
 - Standardized Safety Assessment System
 - Structured Decision Making (SDM)
 - Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT)

Decision Points for Standardized Safety Assessment

- Determine Response
- Initial Safety Determination
- Placement
- Referral Disposition
- Case Planning: (Initial/Change)
- Reunification
- Case Closure



Differential Response

- Over 600,000 referrals annually
 - Prior to CWSI
 - Services provided only to cases that meet the threshold for abuse or neglect – 8% of referrals
 - New
 - Pilots: targeted geographically, by population or both
 - All referrals receive appropriate level of response
 - CBO response (Path 1)
 - CWS and CBO joint response (Path 2)
 - CWS response (Path 3)
 - Goal
 - Provide prevention/intervention services to at risk families
 - Reduce the number of children entering cws and the need for high-end services later

*From Linkages 07 PPT presentation



Family Maintenance

- Provides time-limited protective services to families in crisis to prevent or remedy abuse.
- Services may include:
 - Counseling
 - Emergency shelter care
 - Respite care
 - Substance abuse treatment
 - Domestic violence intervention
 - Parenting Education
- FM may be voluntary or court-ordered

*From Linkages 07 PPT presentation



Family Reunification

- Provides time limited intervention & support services to help reunify the family
 - 6, 12, 18 month hearings
- Case Plan established – services may include:
 - Counseling
 - Alcohol & Other Drug Issues
 - Mental Health
 - Housing
 - Employment services

Concurrent Planning (AB 1544)

The diagram features a blue circle on the left labeled 'Case Plan'. Two blue arrows labeled 'Reunification Services' point from the circle towards a large blue star on the right labeled 'Permanency'.

“...the case plan shall describe the services to be provided to assist in reunification and the services to be provided concurrently to achieve legal permanence with a new family if efforts to reunify fail.” WIC 16501.1

*from Linkages 01 PPT presentation

Permanent Placement

- Services to ensure that children can grow up in a permanent, safe, & secure living arrangement.
- Preferred options in order of preference:
 - Remain safely in home
 - Return Home
 - Adoption with Siblings
 - Adoption
 - Legal Guardianship with Relatives
 - Legal Guardianship
 - LTFC with Relative
 - LTFC with non-relative
 - Stable foster care with emancipation

Dependency Juvenile Courts

The icon shows a pair of golden scales of justice on a dark base.



Purpose of Dependency Juvenile Courts

- Court handles dependency and wardship (601, 602).
- Dependency proceedings are civil in nature and are designed to protect the child, not to punish the parent.
- Statutes provide:
 - Protection of children
 - Preservation and reunification of families
 - Permanency
 - Fostering best interests of child in all decisions



Responsibilities of Dependency Juvenile Courts

- Ensure appropriate reunification plan & services to child
- Monitor parent's progress
- Ensure CWS agency makes reasonable efforts to reunify and to obtain alternate safe, permanent home
- Monitor and ensure child's progress toward safety & permanence
- Monitor availability of adequate services in community



Juvenile Court's Legal Jurisdiction

- Welfare & Institutions Code sets conditions under which court can take jurisdiction.
 - 300 (a) Physical Abuse
 - 300 (b) Neglect
 - 300 (c) Emotional Abuse / Inability to meet needs
 - 300 (d) Sexual Abuse
 - 300 (e) Severe Physical Abuse of Child Under 5
 - 300 (f) Death of another Child by Abuse/neglect
 - 300 (g) Abandonment
 - 300 (h) Freed for adoption
 - 300 (i) Cruelty
 - 300 (j) Abuse or Neglect of Siblings

Statutory Exceptions to Reunification Orders – cont'd

9. Child abandoned & placed in serious danger
10. Parent not receiving services for sibling previously removed for same reasons
11. Parental Rights terminated as to sibling
12. Parent convicted of violent felony
13. Parent has chronic substance abuse over 3 yrs & two failed programs
14. Parent waives services
15. Parent has previously abducted a child from placement



Reasons for CW Involvement

- Let's look at the data!
 - Referrals, Allegations & Dispositions
 - Foster Care Prevalence Rates
 - By Age
 - Gender
 - By Ethnicity



The Case for Change in CA

- 492,645 referrals of child abuse/neglect in one year
(for the 12 months ending December 2007)
 - 106,706 children with substantiated allegations of abuse/neglect
(for the 12 months ending December 2007)
 - 72,557 children in foster care *(Point in time on July 1, 2007)*
- from CA Common Core Framework



The Case for Change in CA

- 65% of foster children in care for at least 2 years experience 3 or more placements
- 6% of children in CA are African American, but 26% of children in CWS are African American

(Data for the period of July 06-June 07)

© 2007 CA Common Code Framework



CHANGE

- Improving the way we do business in child welfare





A System of Continuous Improvement

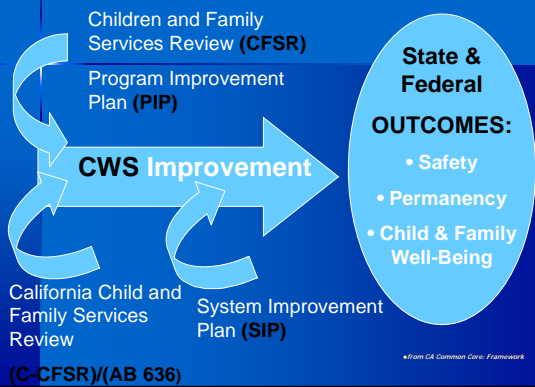
- California Child and Family Services Review
- AB 636 or C-CFSR



Purpose

- To ensure county child welfare and probation agencies improve outcomes for children and families.
- To measure, track, and monitor counties on an ongoing basis.
- To align California's oversight system with the Federal system.

ALIGNING SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS





Major Efforts to Achieve Outcomes

- Standardized Safety Assessment System
 - Structured Decision Making (SDM)
 - Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT)
- Differential Response
 - (Path 1)
 - (Path 2)
 - (Path 3)
- Permanency and Youth Transition



All three efforts underscore the principle of fairness and equity for all children and families touched by the CWS system. These efforts are rooted in the desire to generate more positive and lasting results for California's most vulnerable children by building on family strengths, developing community support, and directly engaging family members and youth in decision-making about their lives.



Federal & State Outcomes

Safety:

1. Children are protected from abuse and neglect.
2. Children are safely maintained in their own homes whenever possible and appropriate.

Permanency:

3. Children have permanency and stability in their living situations.
4. The continuity of family relationships and connections is preserved for children.



Federal & State Outcomes – cont'd

Well Being:

5. Families have enhanced capacity to provide for their children's needs.
6. Children receive appropriate services to meet their educational needs.
7. Children receive adequate services to meet their physical and mental health needs.
8. Youth emancipating from foster care are prepared to transition to adulthood.





How Do We Know if We're Doing A Better Job?

- Quarterly County Data Reports
 - http://cssr.berkeley.edu/ucb_childwelfare/
- County Self Assessments
- Peer Quality Case Reviews
- County System Improvement Plans
- State Self Assessment



The Need For Coordination

- Reduce bureaucracy.
- Coordinate services for families to help meet requirements, goals, and timelines.
- Promote better outcomes.
- Together CWS and CalWORKs put parenting first.

*From Linkages 07 PPT presentation

Burning Questions?



THANK YOU!



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