

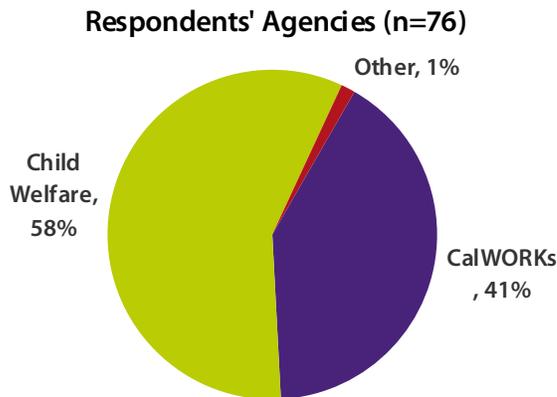
The Linkages Project

Fall 2010 Staff Survey Results

In fall 2010, the Statewide Linkages evaluation team conducted the second Staff Survey to hear from both Child Welfare and CalWORKs case workers about their Linkages experiences with case coordination and direct work with families. All active Linkages counties were asked to participate. Depending on the size of their county, Linkages coordinators were asked to have two to four case workers complete the survey. Case workers were not identified by name on the survey, and they individually mailed or faxed completed surveys back to the evaluation team for purposes of confidentiality. Of the 26 active counties asked to participate, responses were received from all 26 counties (100 percent); 55 requested surveys (82 percent) were returned by individuals along with extra surveys sent by two counties, bringing the total to 76 responses. Where responses from CalWORKs staff differed substantially from those of Child Welfare staff, responses are shown by agency. Selected results are compared with those of the previous Staff Survey, which took place in January 2009.

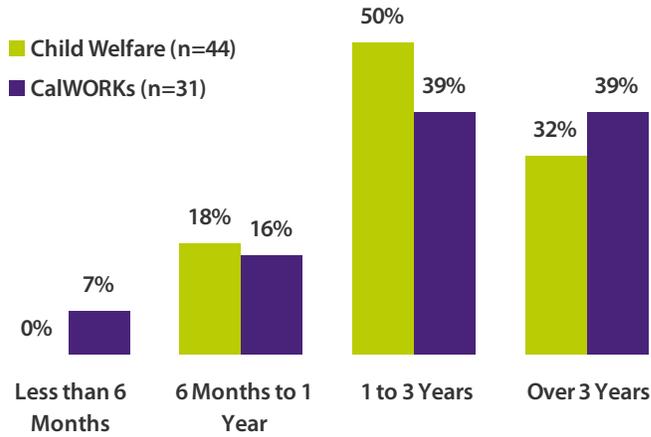
General Information

Linkages Counties that Provided Staff Survey Data			
Alameda	Calaveras	Contra Costa	Del Norte
El Dorado	Fresno	Humboldt	Imperial
Kern	Los Angeles	Madera	Merced
Orange	San Bernardino	San Francisco	San Luis Obispo
Santa Barbara	Santa Clara	Siskiyou	Sonoma
Stanislaus	Sutter	Tehama	Trinity
Tulare	Yolo		

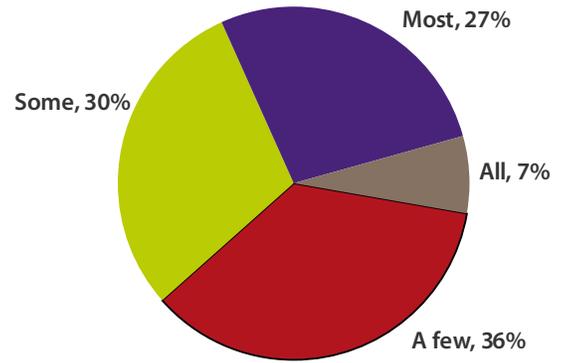


Extent of Staff Experience with Linkages

Length of Time Working in County's Linkages Initiative (n=75)

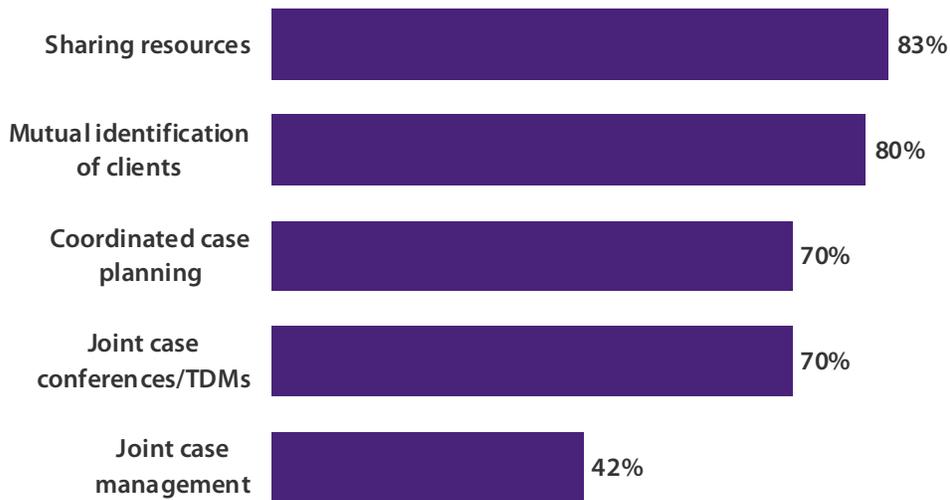


Of all the families you directly worked with during the past 12 months, how many were part of Linkages? (n=73)



Defining Linkages

In my county, Linkages includes... (n= 76)



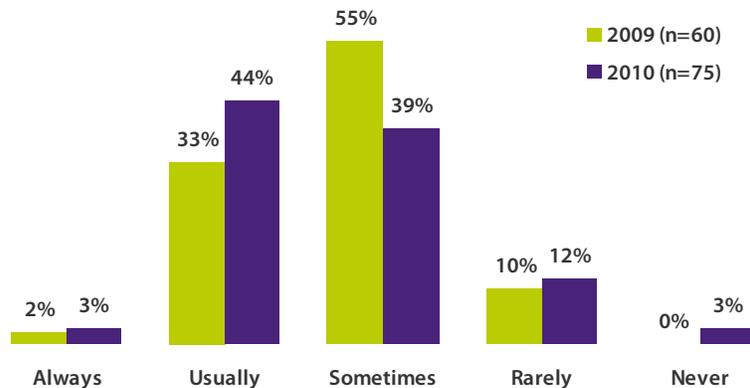
Workplace Practices and Experiences

Case Worker Methods of Identifying Mutually-Served Clients

	Percent of Child Welfare Respondents ^a (n=43)	Percent of CalWORKs Respondents ^a (n=31)
I sometimes cross-check to find out if the family has an open case in the other program.	16%	0%
I always cross-check to find out if the family has an open case in the other program.	23%	19%
I am informed by someone in CalWORKs when a new client has an open case in the other program.	14%	26%
I am informed by someone in Child Welfare when a new client has an open case in the other program.	19%	39%
I am informed by a flag or label in our computer data system .	5%	0%
I do not usually find out this information	7%	0%
Other	16%	16%

^aPercentages do not add to 100% in each column due to respondents providing more than one answer

CalWORKs and Child Welfare staff familiarity with policies and procedures of both agencies/departments



Staff were asked how Linkages has changed the way they interact with staff in the other department/agency. Themes from the responses were that workers have been able to draw from a more varied pool of resources to help families, collaborative work has made it easier to keep track of families, workers on both sides are better informed about the families they serve and able to lower stress for the families, processes happen in a more timely manner and with less duplication when the workers can easily communicate with each other, and workers enjoy the teamwork aspect. Several staff on the CalWORKs side did mention that communication is not occurring enough between CalWORKs and Child Welfare. Representative responses included:

We have come a long way towards opening the lines of communication... in order to provide better service and more resources for our mutual clients.

In some cases, Linkages provides some of the only resources or helpful avenues these families have the option of looking into. In other situations, the Linkages support was the only thing that allowed me to locate a missing family.

The partnership has greatly helped our ability to find out what CalWORKs can offer to our [CWS] families and what path to take.

Besides having mutual respect for one another and our area of expertise, it has helped the [CalWORKs] families going through the CWS process. We approach families as a team and work together for the same outcomes. This is less confusing and stressful for our families.

Linkages has torn down the walls that were built up between Child Welfare and CalWORKs.

TDM notification process is inconsistent and there is little follow up post-TDMs to ensure CalWORKs is aware of results of TDMs.

The enthusiasm of the program changes depending on how heavy our case loads are. We try to keep the motivation up by reminding everyone of the importance. Overall the communication is so much better.

Differential Response

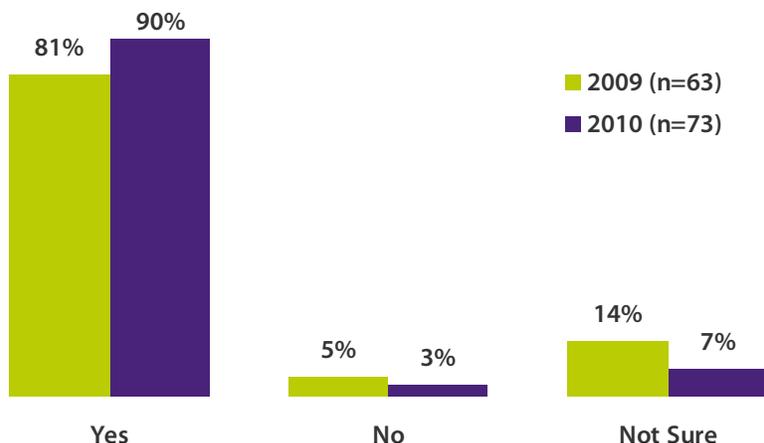
Differential Response (DR) is an approach to Child Welfare Services adopted by many California counties that allows social workers to employ a broader set of responses to reports of child maltreatment, including earlier involvement and community partnerships. Among Child Welfare staff surveyed in 2010, those from 15 of the 26 Linkages counties reported that their county was a DR county. These Child Welfare respondents were then asked how Linkages is incorporated into DR procedures. Results from 2009 are compared with those from 2010, below.

For DR Counties...	Number of Counties in which Child Welfare Staff Report "Yes"	
	2009 (n=16)	2010 (n=15)
Does your county have a written Linkages policy outlining the roles and responsibilities of the CalWORKs staff and the DR provider?	9 (56%)	5 (33%)
When families are given Path 1 referrals to community services, are they also screened to find out if they are being served by CalWORKs?	8 (50%)	9 (60%)

Linkages Effects on Families

Respondents were asked about their observations of Linkages effects on families.

Do you feel that the Linkages program improves outcomes for families?



Staff were asked how families benefit from Linkages. Themes from the responses were that parents get more complete information; parents receive a more effective, tailored, and timely set of services; coordinated planning and management helps reduce barriers and stress on families such as sanctions or conflicting requirements; families receive extra support to help them stay on track with their plan; and Linkages directly helps families reunify and stay together. Representative responses included:

Families are not being pulled in two different directions. It is less stressful for them.

When their funding is changed there is no surprise that creates unnecessary struggles or hardships for the families. It links them with necessary supports early on.

The clients are not confused by trying to sort through various program requirements, so [they receive] fewer sanctions. We know more about our clients so we can really target our services.

Working together, CWS + CalWORKs, allows the client to become successful in completing both plans. They reunify with their children and at the same time have the opportunity to receive services from both agencies.

Barriers are discovered earlier. They are made aware that what is requested of them by Child Welfare can be a Welfare to Work activity and serve as the hours required. They appreciate the coordinated case plan that has them moving toward the same goal for both Child Welfare and CalWORKs. Families feel the support of Linkages and don't feel like they are out there alone.

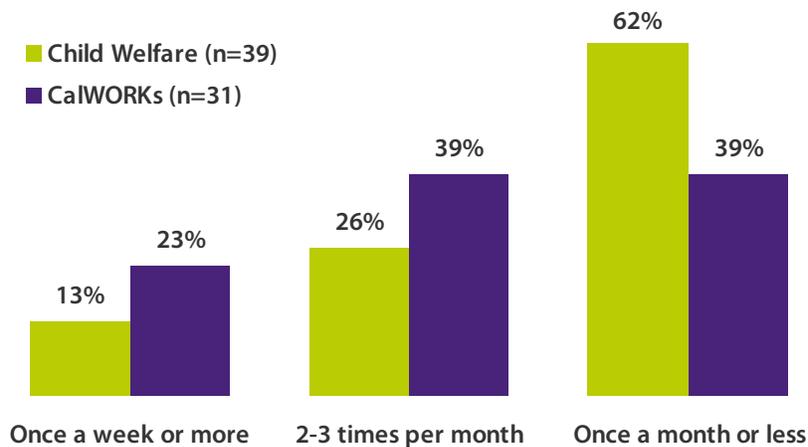
Families seem to reunify in half the time they used to.



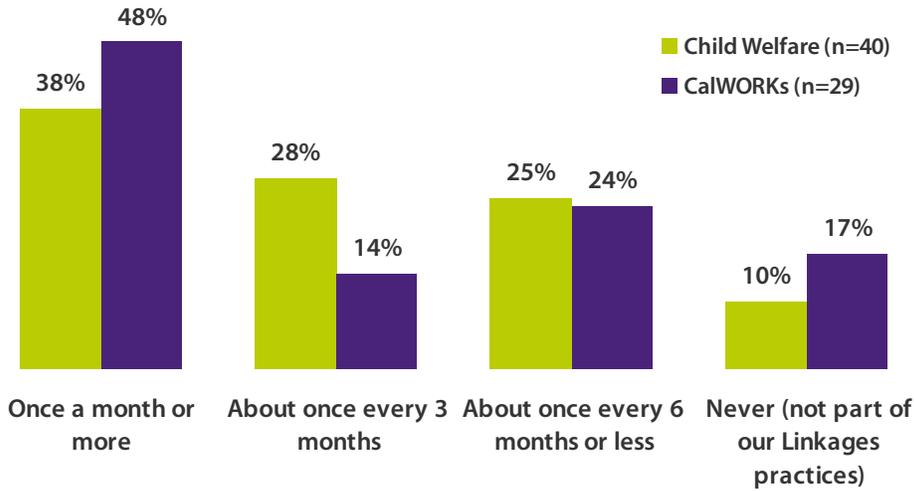
^aFor this question, n=41 for Child Welfare respondents.

Case Manager Experiences

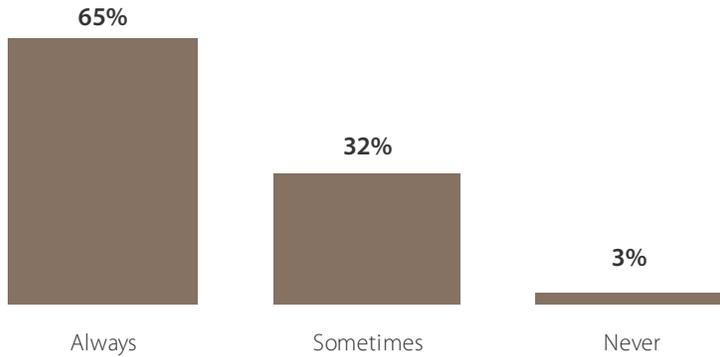
For a mutually-served client, how often on average do you talk to the other program's caseworker about that client?



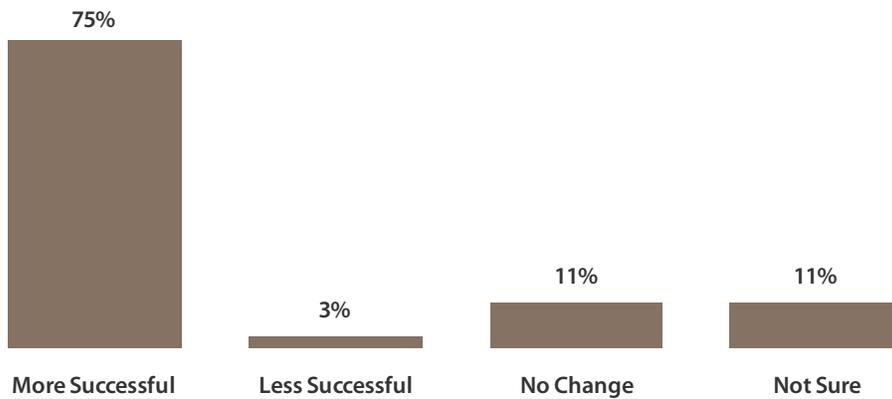
For a mutually-served Linkages client, how often do you participate in a TDM or other case conference with both CWS and CalWORKs staff?



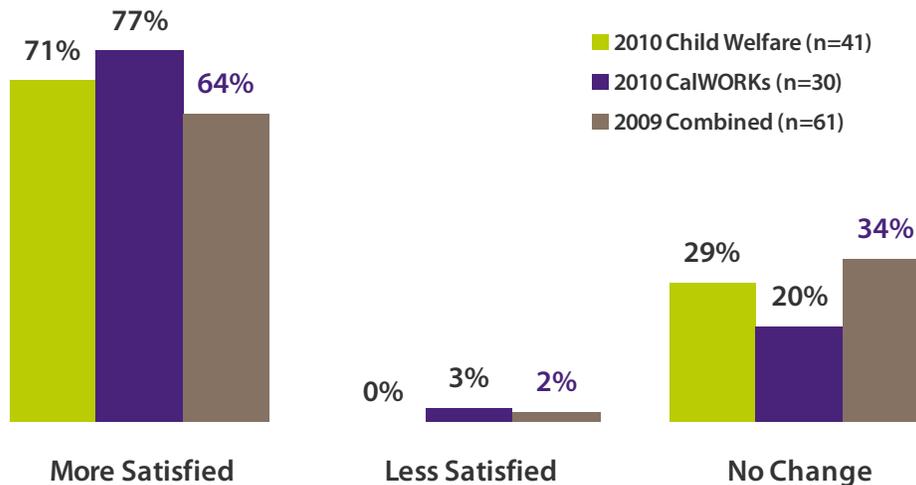
Do these TDMs or other case conferences involve the family? (n=65)



Over the past year, how has Linkages affected your ability to be successful with your clients? (n=73)



How has being a part of a Linkages team changed your personal satisfaction with your work?



Staff were asked to explain how Linkages has changed their personal satisfaction with their work. Themes from the responses were that satisfaction came from a feeling of increased capacity on the job, from a better-working system that causes less frustration on the job, as well as from observing more positive results among families served. Increased job capacity included the ability to provide a wider range of services, more realistic case management, more efficient and effective service, and pride in knowing more about the whole system faced by the family and how to better help them navigate it. A few respondents noted that communication need to be better cultivated in their Linkages initiatives. Representative responses included:

Sharing information has been very helpful. We no longer have a duplication of efforts and resources.

I am more satisfied as I get CalWORKs related questions answered a lot faster. My families are happier and less stressed since their cases are better managed

I appreciate being able to provide better service and really fine tune what our families need during crisis situations. Being able to partner with other agencies really makes quality service a reality.

Linkages has provided me with additional support that has helped me to carry out my duties more efficiently.

I enjoy the team work, but more needs to be done to build communication and respect for each other and our roles.

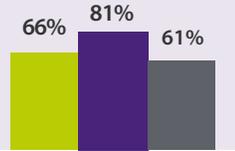
It is comforting to know that there are other staff having the same issues and outcomes. Working toward a common goal helps the worker know that their efforts are not in vain.

How much of the time do you think each statement below is true?

Percent who responded "Always" or "Usually"

- 2010 Child Welfare (n=40)
- 2010 CalWORKs (n=31)
- 2009 Combined (n=61)

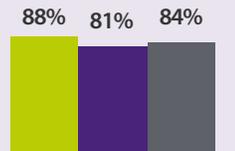
I feel like I am part of a Linkages team when I serve clients. ^a



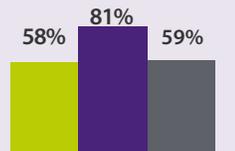
The Linkages program increases my workload for no apparent benefit. ^b



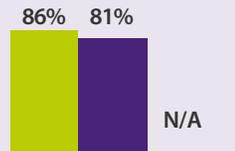
Working with the other program's caseworker helps me provide clients with better services. ^c



I am held accountable for following coordinated service protocols for all Linkages cases. ^d



Linkages is the way we do business in my county. ^a



^aFor this question, n=42 for 2010 Child Welfare respondents.

^bFor this question, n=60 for 2009 Combined respondents.

^cFor this question, n=41 for 2010 Child Welfare respondents.

^dFor this question, n=58 for 2009 Combined respondents.