

KEEPING LINKED

A PUBLICATION OF CFPIC'S FEDERAL LINKAGES PROJECT
LINKAGES: CALWORKS AND CHILD WELFARE COLLABORATION TO IMPROVE OUTCOMES

JUNE 2010

Concord, to Long Beach, to Washington D.C.

It was a very busy month, but a good one, for the Linkages Project. It began on May 10th in Concord and May 11th in Long Beach when we brought together staff from the Linkages counties in the Bay/Central region and the Southern/Central region for the annual Mini-Convenings. The main purpose of the Mini-Convenings was to provide an opportunity for peer sharing and for counties to begin work on their 2010/2011 Work Plans. A special thanks to the following county staff for leading Peer Discussion activities: **Mari Solis, Donna Thoresen, Yvonne Moore, Mary Grimm, Janice Rector, Julie Seidenberg, Stephen Schrieber-Smith, Nancy Davis, Freya Schultz, Natalie Bolin, Susan Price, Linda Hibbard, Alma Vega, Diana Hall and Belinda Benassi.**

Paul Harder and Cristina Magana from Harder + Co provided an update on the statewide evaluation. **Jennifer Valencia** from Stanislaus and **Sandra Wakcher** from San Bernardino supplemented the Harder presentation by providing information about the databases that they have developed in order to evaluate their Linkages program and to provide outcome data to the Project. This information and the PowerPoint were emailed to the Coordinators and can also be found on the Linkages Intranet.

Peer Clusters

At the Mini-Convenings the formation of Peer clusters was explored. The idea is to form county clusters around issues or program implementation challenges that might provide an opportunity for dialogue via regular conference calls, use of the Intranet and other ways to share ideas with one another. Several Peer Clusters were suggested:

- ◆ AB 429
- ◆ Data/Evaluation
- ◆ CalWORKs Exemptions, and
- ◆ Coordinated Case Planning

If you signed up for one of those Peer Clusters you can expect to receive an email mid-June with possible conference call meeting times.

If you wish to join one of these Peer Cluster or would like to suggest another program issue, please contact project staff at Danna.Fabella@cfpic.org.

During lunchtime, the new Linkages Video, "*Meeting the Linkages Challenge*," was shown. As we mentioned in last month's newsletter this video, featuring staff and families from Los Angeles and Stanislaus, was developed to specifically address the question, "Why collaborate?"

The video was very well-received by those at the convening. Here are a few of the written comments from the evaluation:

- *The video was the most up-lifting and interesting*
- *Excellent*
- *I believe the video is the key element to empower and motivate counties to make Linkages a priority*
- *The video makes the objective of Linkages very clear in a more global perspective.*
- *Very Impactful!!*
- *Fabulous! What a great way to show staff outcomes and how their work makes a difference.*
- *Loved it! It always enhances training when you have a story to tell.*

Our plan is to complete the communication/training packet by the Fall Convening and to provide all Linkages counties with copies of "*Meeting the Linkage Challenge*" video for training and for building support for their Linkages practice.

Continued on Pg. 2

Concord, to Long Beach, to Washington D.C.

Continued from Pg. 1

Once the Mini-Convenings were over, before we knew it, we were off to Washington D.C. for the annual Grantee Meeting on May 17th– 19th. Project staff, Danna Fabella and Leslie Ann Hay were joined by **Jennifer Valencia** and **Bergen Filgas** from Stanislaus county and **Alma Vega** and **Harvey Kawasaki** from Los Angeles. We provided a brief overview of the activities sponsored by the project this past year as well as our plans for this next year; such as the distribution of the Linkages video with a Communication packet, the development of the Peer Clusters, and the development of a more comprehensive Linkages toolkit, or as we are calling it “*Linkages in a Box.*”

However, what seemed to make the biggest impression on our fellow TANF/Child Welfare grantees was the new Linkages video. Even though our projects are quite different, several asked for copies because they felt the video makes a strong statement about the importance of collaboration between TANF and Child Welfare and what you can do for families. We were pleased when Gail Collins from the Administration on Children and Family asked for a copy to share at a meeting she is planning to convene between the Children’s Bureau and the Office of Financial Assistance to show what can be done when staff collaborate and break down barriers.

In addition to the grantees’ sharing their successes and challenges from the past year, the meeting focused on sustainability, similar to our discussions at the Mini-Convenings. The presentation by Kate Gaughen with the Finance Project provided some useful information.

The key elements of sustainability that she listed are:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Vision | Results |
| Strategic Financing | Broad- base community support |
| Key champions | strong internal systems, and |
| a written Sustainability Plan | |

Of the elements she listed, the ones that seemed the most pertinent from our experience with Linkages are Vision, Key Champions and a strong internal system.

The closing session included a presentation by Mark Greenberg, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy, ACF who discussed TANF re-authorization which was due for re-authorization this year, but due to the recession the current policies has been delayed and will not be reconsidered until next year.

It is always a delight to visit our Capitol and to have the opportunity to talk about the great work you are all doing. So, keep up the great work!



Susan Price & Linda Hibbard lead Peer Group Discussion



Bay/Central Peer Sharing

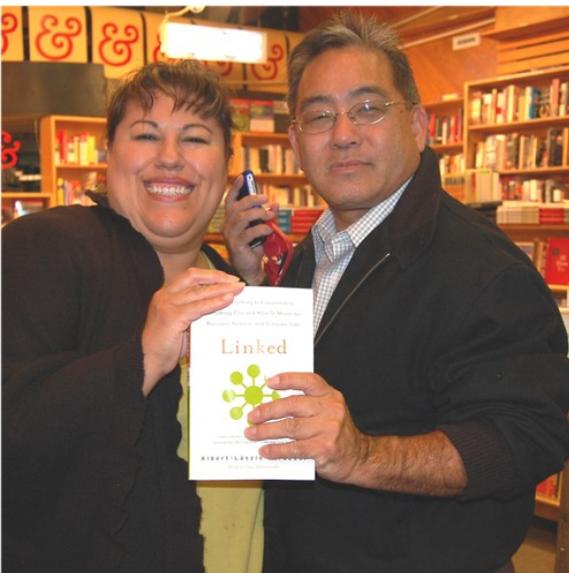
Washington DC Grantee Meeting

Bergen Filgas, Stanislaus County

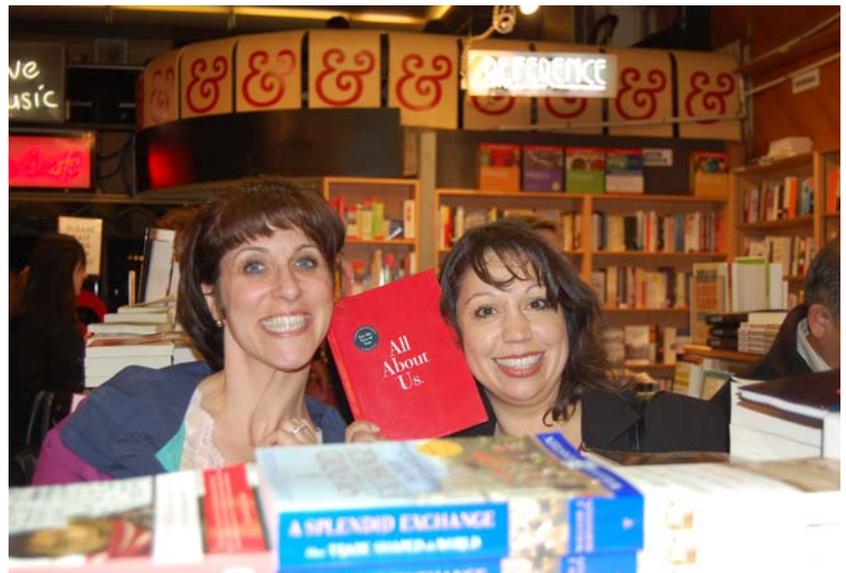


The Linkages representatives who traveled to the Washington DC grantee meeting were undaunted as they met the challenges of cross country travel, time change, and inclement weather. With the same heartfelt commitment that they have to their own programs they met to learn, share, and collaborate with others from across the United States.

Every moment of the trip was utilized soaking in all of the knowledge that the “environment” had to offer. The breakout sessions were informative, exhibit tables overflowing with resources, and the local flavor digested. The many highlights of the trip included: the recently produced CFPIC linkage video, discussions among the grantees regarding challenges and solutions, and what the future holds for the families we serve. As with all enriching experiences our travelers returned home with a renewed spirit, new friends, and innovative strategies to strengthen existing programs.



DPSS & DCFS “Linked”



All About Us!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Linkages Project Annual Convening *Effective, Efficient, Essential*

September 14-15, 2010
Doubletree Hotel, Sacramento

Attendees should include members of the counties Linkages Planning/Implementation Team

Registration Information will be available in summer.

CFPIC Linkages Project will pay
for the cost of travel including mileage
or air-travel and hotel.

Santa Clara &
San Luis Obispo Teams
at the Mini Convenings



UPDATES...UPDATES...UPDATES...UPDATES

County Self-Assessments and County 2010/2011 Work Plans are due on July 30, 2010. If you need a copy of these documents you can find them on the Linkages Intranet or contact the Project at Danna.fabella@cfpic.org

Peer Clusters are being formed in the following areas:

- *AB 429*
- *Evaluation/Data*
- *CalWORKs Exemptions, and*
- *Coordinated Case Planning.*

If you signed up at the May Mini-Convening you should have received an email advising you of your inclusion on this Cluster. If you wish to join please send an email to Danna.

Topic of Interest Call:

June 16, 2010 8:30 am

Self-Assessment/Work Plan

Leslie Ann Hay

Linkages Call-in Line: 1-866-210-1669

Code: 5088172#

CHILD & FAMILY POLICY INSTITUTE OF CALIFORNIA

Stuart Oppenheim

Executive Director

415-317-4568

Stuart.Oppenheim@cfpic.org

Danna Fabella

Linkages Project Director

925-324-5258

Danna.Fabella@cfpic.org

Leslie Ann Hay

Project Associate

Leslieann.Hay@cfpic.org

Sacramento Office

925 L Street, Suite 350

Sacramento, CA 95814

Phone: 916-443-1749

Fax: 916-443-3202



Child & Family Policy Institute of California

The Child and Family Policy Institute of California (CFPIC) is a private non-profit organization incorporated in 2004 as a 501 (c) 3 entity under the auspices of the County Welfare Directors Association (CWDA). The purpose of the CFPIC is to “advance the development of sound public policy and promote program excellence in county Human Services Agencies through research, education, training and technical assistance.”

Linkages is a strategic effort by thirty-two California’s counties to improve coordination between CalWORKS and Child Welfare through development of county specific work plans and leadership. The initiative is supported by CFPIC through trainings, convenings, peer support and technical assistance. These supports initially received private foundation funding and are currently funded through a Federal Grant and the California Department of Social Services.