

The CalWORKs Project

Domestic Violence Survey

Executive Summary



The CalWORKs Project
Domestic Violence Survey

Executive Summary

June 2002

California Institute for Mental Health
2030 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-3120
(916) 556-3480

CALWORKS PROJECT

COLLABORATING ORGANIZATIONS AND STAFF

California Institute for Mental Health (www.cimh.org)

2030 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95814
(916) 556-3480
FAX: (916) 446-4519

Sandra Naylor Goodwin, PhD, MSW, Executive Director/Project Director
Joan Meisel, PhD, MBA, Policy and Practice Consultant
Daniel Chandler, PhD., Research Director
Pat Jordan, MSW, Consultant
Shelley Kushner, Program Manager

Children & Family Futures (www.cffutures.com)

4940 Irvine Blvd., Suite 202
Irvine, CA 92620
(714) 505-3525
FAX: (714) 505-3626

Nancy K. Young, PhD, Director
Sid Gardner, MPA, President
Shaila Simpson, MSW, Executive Assistant to the Director
Terry Robinson, Program Director

Family Violence Prevention Fund (www.fvpf.org)

383 Rhode Island Street, Suite 304
San Francisco, CA 94103
(415) 252-8900
FAX: (415) 252-8991

Janet Carter, Managing Director
Donna Norton, Program Manager
CarolAnn Peterson, MPA, Consultant

Acknowledgements

We wish to express our appreciation to those 43 counties and domestic violence agencies that participated in this survey. They graciously gave of their time to answer our survey and assist us in providing this valuable information.

We were impressed by the domestic violence agencies that continue to work with CalWORKs clients in spite of obstacles; and to those counties that continue to keep CalWORKs domestic violence victims in the forefront of services.

Generous funding for this project has been provided by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and by voluntary payments from California counties; as well as from the California Wellness Foundation. We continue to appreciate the ongoing guidance from the Joint CalWORKs Committee, a collaboration of the California Mental Health Directors Association, County Alcohol and Drug Program Administrators Association of California, and the County Welfare Directors Association.

CarolAnn Peterson, Consultant
Family Violence Prevention Fund

State of DV Funding and Services in California

County by County Summary

Introduction

The CalWORKs Project is a collaborative project among the California Institute for Mental Health, Children and Family Futures, and the Family Violence Prevention Fund. This four-year project has examined the impact of mental health (MH), alcohol and other drugs (AOD) and domestic violence (DV) on TANF (called CalWORKs in California) participants. The CalWORKs Project conducted two interviews (at a year's interval) with approximately 800 women in the CalWORKs population in Kern and Stanislaus Counties. Using standard diagnostic indicators, the interview revealed a high prevalence of AOD/MH/DV issues. Over the two years, 28% of the participants in one county had a serious DV issue. The corresponding figure in the other county was 36%.¹

The California Legislature adopted the Family Violence Option (FVO) as part of its CalWORKs plan. Under the Option, any county can waive any program requirement that would make it more difficult for a victim or survivor and/or his/her children to escape abuse, or that would be detrimental to or unfairly penalize past or present victims or survivors of abuse. Requirements that may be waived include, but are not limited to, time limits on receipt of assistance, work requirements, educational requirements, paternity establishment and child support cooperation requirements, and family cap/Maximum Family Grant provisions.

In order for the FVO to provide a meaningful alternative for women in abusive relationships, a number of services and practices must be in place. These same program elements are needed to help women in abusive relationships that choose not to use the FVO. Domestic violence agencies in the community must have adequate resources to assist CalWORKs recipients with domestic violence issues. County welfare workers must be trained about the dynamics of domestic violence, about the FVO, and about the resources and services available at their community domestic violence agencies, and county welfare departments must work closely with these domestic violence agencies to ensure the effective implementation of the FVO.

¹ Serious abuse was defined as a physical injury, choking or beating-up, stalking, forced or coerced sex, threats to kill woman or self, threats to hurt children or report her to CPS, preventing woman from working or harassment on the job.

While the California Legislature adopted the FVO, it did not allocate specific dollars to fund domestic violence services for CalWORKs recipients as it did for mental health and substance abuse services. But through the advocacy of the domestic violence community, supported by the State Department of Social Services, and in recognition of need, many counties have found some funds to implement a domestic violence component to their CalWORKs program. This survey was designed to determine: a) the extent and methods by which county CalWORKs programs are working with their domestic violence service providers to implement the Family Violence Option; b) the levels of funding for contracting with domestic violence agencies to assist in identification and for services; and c) the types of services that are being provided to CalWORKs domestic violence victims/survivors.

The County Welfare Director's Association (CWDA) conducted a survey whose purpose was to determine the level of county CalWORKs funding of domestic violence services. The respondents were county CalWORKs programs. This survey is designed to supplement the CWDA effort to document actual levels of funding by including local domestic violence providers as well as CalWORKs staff. Additionally, this survey provides information about issues critical to the implementation of the FVO, such as whether welfare workers are receiving training on domestic violence, who is conducting the training, how CalWORKs applicants are being screened for domestic violence, and whether efforts to address domestic violence amongst CalWORKs applicants are being coordinated with the community domestic violence programs.

Survey Methodology

The CalWORKs Project survey was sent to the domestic violence service provider(s) and/or the county welfare department in each of the 58 California counties.

- In counties where there is only one domestic violence provider, the survey went to that provider.
- In counties with no domestic violence provider, the survey went only to the welfare department.
- In counties with multiple domestic violence providers, the survey went to both the providers and the county welfare office.

Responses were received from 43 counties. The responses used came from 21 welfare departments and 22 domestic violence providers. Counties and providers received the survey request twice, and follow-up calls were made to large counties that had not yet responded.² The information obtained is for FY 01-02. The results of this survey are not meant to be definitive statements of funding levels of the Family Violence Option implementation efforts. Rather, the survey results are meant to be a tool with which domestic violence victim advocates and county administrators can make initial comparisons among counties, identify counties that may provide best practice examples, and initiate discussions regarding possible discrepancies between the perceptions documented in this survey and county accounts of expenditures and other implementation of the Family Violence Option.

Survey Findings

Funding for Domestic Violence Services – The successful implementation of the Family Violence Option necessitates that there be adequate funding for domestic violence agencies to provide support and services to victims. Building the capacity for domestic violence agencies to provide these services is an essential element of the Family Violence Option.

Results from the 43 counties returning surveys indicate substantial funding for domestic violence services is occurring, but there is a wide disparity in funding in relationship to the size of the adult caseload.

- A total of \$22.5 million is being allocated to domestic violence services, about half of it coming from Los Angeles.
- Five of the 43 counties (12%) provided no funding at all.³ While most of the five are fairly small, one has over 25,000 CalWORKs participants on average per month.⁴

Among those counties that do provide funding, the level of overall funding for domestic violence agencies is only partially related to average monthly caseload size. For example, two counties with nearly identical monthly caseload sizes of about 1,000 provide respectively \$36,000 and \$347,000 of contract funding for

² No response to the survey was received from the following counties: Amador, Calaveras, Colusa, Glen, Inyo, Lassen, Merced, Mono, Placer, San Benito, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Sutter, Tulare and Yolo.

³ Two counties are included in neither the “no funding” nor the “funding” categories. Shasta has hired staff from the local DV agency; and Siskiyou indicated an expenditure for staffing, but did not specify what kind of staff.

⁴ The monthly caseload figures are taken from the DSS CA 237 caseload report for the month of November 2001. Only adults are counted, not children.

local DV organizations. Two counties with higher caseloads—11,300 and 13,200—spent respectively \$123,000 and \$882,000 on contracts with local agencies.

There is no accepted standard for how much funding is appropriate or necessary for implementation of the FVO. In comparison to the funding provided per adult case to a third of the women in the state by Los Angeles (\$89), 26 out of 43 counties (60%) provide less (including the 5 who provide none).

If we assume domestic violence to be fairly evenly distributed in the population, as studies show, then the present system of individual county initiative clearly leaves large numbers of California CalWORKs participants with unequal and often minimal or non-existent services provided by local DV agencies.

Please see the attached, “Breakdown-at-a-Glance,” for more detail. Note several qualifications regarding the data, however. The survey did not ask about the level of funding of staff within the CalWORKs agency who have a primary role in implementing the FVO or other aspects of the county’s CalWORKs domestic violence program component. Thus the total effort for most counties is understated. Also, some degree of unknown variability is added by using a monthly caseload rather than an unduplicated annual count. Since this is the first year we have asked counties to report this funding, the data is extremely valuable, but responses may not be entirely comparable (in ways that were not reported to us). For these reasons it is important not to single out any particular county or set of counties, but to consider the overall shape of the distribution of funding per case and its consequences for the likelihood that women in any county in the state have access to adequately funded domestic violence services from specialists.

Training of County Welfare Workers on Domestic Violence – Training of CalWORKs staff about the signs of domestic violence is important if women experiencing domestic violence are to be identified and referred for services. Additionally, CalWORKs staff must know the fundamentals of the FVO so that they can present it clearly to women, as appropriate, and incorporate its flexibility into its developing of a welfare-to-work plan with domestic violence survivors.

Training of CalWORKs staff was reported to be occurring in 40 of the 43 responding counties. The largest source of the training – in 24 counties – is the local domestic violence programs. The other sources of training – each present in one county – were as follows: District Attorney’s Victim Witness Program, a private family therapist, the Community Education Program, a local legal aid

agency, the county DV unit, and DSS staff. We were unable to classify the trainers in another 10 counties that reported there was domestic violence training but did not indicate who was conducting the training.

Co-location of Domestic Violence Victim Advocates at Welfare offices – The CalWORKs Project has identified co-location of AOD, MH, and DV advocates at the welfare offices as a county best practice. It allows for repeated formal and informal training of welfare staff, an ongoing heightened awareness of the importance of these issues, and a source of back-up support for CalWORKs staff should they encounter difficulties in raising these issues with participants.

Thirty-five of the 43 responding counties have domestic violence advocates located within their welfare offices. One county does not have an advocate located within its welfare office, but has easy access from the local shelter if one is needed in an emergency situation.

Presentations by Domestic Violence Victim Advocates to CalWORKs Applicants – Another best practice identified by the CalWORKs Project is the giving of presentations about AOD, MH, and DV issues to CalWORKs applicants and participants. The presentations can include information about how to identify the presence of an issue and what services are available to deal with these issues. The co-located AOD, MH, and DV specialists often do the presentations. These presentations can occur at Orientations, Job Clubs, or Re-determination. The more interactive and the longer the presentation, the more likely it is that the participant will feel comfortable disclosing an issue.

The percentage of counties using presentations about domestic violence issues and available services is lower than the percentage of co-located staff indicating a missed opportunity for many counties. Twenty-four counties have the domestic violence advocates do presentations at general orientation; and four counties have welfare staff do presentations at the orientations. A total of 20 counties have presentations at Job Club with 17 done by the domestic violence advocate, two by welfare staff and in one county the Family Inventory group. The least likely place for the presentations was at Re-determination, where domestic violence advocates did a presentation in 8 counties and welfare staff in three.

Notification – The federal and state laws require that each CalWORKs applicant and participant be informed orally and in writing about the FVO and available services. Results from the CalWORKs Project research suggest that without special efforts, information about the FVO and available services will not be

salient enough to be remembered. No more than 40% of the interviewees in the two counties, at either of the two rounds of interviews remembered being told about the FVO, and the percentages did not differ significantly between those with and without a domestic violence issue.

Thirty-five respondents indicated that they included information about domestic violence in the application materials.

Thirty-five of the counties indicated that they are providing some form of information regarding domestic violence services. However, two are providing only a brochure within the participant's information packet. Two counties have indicated that they are providing no information about domestic violence whatsoever. And four counties were unsure what information, if any was being provided to recipients.

Process for Self-Disclosure – Most instances of domestic violence are revealed through self-disclosure rather than through a screening process. All 43 counties indicated that they had a process for self-disclosure for victims.

Including Advocates in Collaborative County Welfare Meetings – In most counties there were not many formal relationships between welfare and the domestic violence community prior to the enactment of welfare reform. Thus special efforts were needed to develop the collaborative relationships that are necessary for the successful implementation of the CalWORKs domestic violence component. The inclusion of domestic violence advocates/providers in the planning of and implementation of the CalWORKs domestic violence component creates better communications between the welfare staff and the advocates, leading to a smoother working relationship resulting in better services for CalWORKs participants. This allows for issues of controversy to be discussed and resolved early and more readily.

Twenty-five of the 43 counties include domestic violence programs as part of either a quarterly, monthly or weekly welfare collaborative meeting.

Conclusions – This survey provides significant insights into the great variations between counties in the implementation of the Family Violence Option. The lack of statutory funding allocations for domestic violence services for CalWORKs recipients has led to a large discrepancy in funding of domestic violence services between counties. In many cases this has resulted in woefully inadequate levels of funding to support the provision of necessary services to make the Family

Violence Option effective. The discrepancies between the level of funding for domestic violence services reported by community domestic violence providers and funding levels reported by counties to the CWDA survey may be due in part to some counties allocating funding for these services without alerting domestic violence agencies to the availability of these funds.

On a positive note, co-location of domestic violence victim advocates at county welfare offices has been successfully implemented in the majority of responding counties in California. However, even where co-location has occurred, many counties are still missing the opportunity for domestic violence victim advocates to conduct presentations on domestic violence and the FVO to potential CalWORKs participants.

Only half of the counties appear to be including community domestic violence victim advocates in collaborative meetings. Since collaboration is an essential element of welfare reform, domestic violence services for CalWORKs participants would be enhanced by the greater inclusion of domestic violence partners in collaborative meetings. Including community domestic violence expertise into discussions of the successful implementation of the FVO is essential. Many counties appear to be limiting the effectiveness of their implementation. We hope that this survey will provide domestic violence advocates and county administrators an impetus for increasing their collaboration and support for each other's efforts.

Anyone interested in this full survey can request the reports at the California Institute for Mental Health's website – www.cimh.org.

The CalWORKs Project Team consists of:

The San Francisco-based ***Family Violence Prevention Fund*** is a national organization devoted to policy, advocacy, prevention, and education in the field of family violence. It was instrumental in the federal negotiations around the adoption of the family violence option. It has led the national initiative around training health care providers to recognize the signs of family violence; it has developed a training curriculum to improve the child welfare system's response to family violence issues; and its National Workplace Resource Center on Family Violence is pioneering efforts among corporations and unions to establish policies and procedures and educational materials to prevent family violence and to assist victims within the workplace.

The ***California Institute for Mental Health*** (CIMH) is organized to provide technical assistance, training, and policy information to California's 58 county mental health departments. It developed the initial project in conjunction with the California Mental Health Directors Association, the County Welfare Directors Association and the County Substance Abuse Directors as part of a planning grant from The California Wellness Foundation. Also as part of that grant it conducted a number of technical assistance conferences and developed a Resource Guide on mental health and substance abuse impacts on the employability of TANF recipients. CIMH is the recipient of a National Institute of Justice grant for an outcome research project following 880 TANF clients in two counties over a period of two to three years.

Children and Family Futures provides technical assistance, training, and program evaluation to government, community-based organizations, and schools on improving the lives of children and families, particularly those affected by alcohol and other drugs. They produced a widely circulated Guidebook entitled *Implementing Welfare Reform: Solutions to the Substance Abuse Problem* under a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. They are also working with the Center on Substance Abuse Treatment to conduct a national evaluation of Family Drug Treatment Courts.

**BREAKDOWN AT-A-GLANCE
Domestic Violence Funding and Services
(of responding counties)**

<u>Number of counties/agencies responding to survey:</u>	43
<u>Number of counties providing funding:</u>	35

Detailed break-out of funding by county:⁵

Counties up to 1000 monthly caseload, sorted by dollars per case			
County	Adult Caseload	DV funding	\$ Per Person
A	792	60000	75.76
B	29	2500	86.21
C	218	25000	114.68
D	25	3000	120.00
E	613	100000	163.13
F	688	118436	172.15
G	411	100000	243.31
H	150	40000	266.67
I	111	30000	270.27
J	757	319000	421.40
K	288	260000	902.78
L	130	148000	1138.46

⁵ As noted above, the survey did not ask about the level of funding of staff within the CalWORKs agency who have a primary role in implementing the FVO or other aspects of the county’s CalWORKs domestic violence program component, although some counties volunteered this information. Thus the total effort of some counties may be understated. On the other hand – since county staff is included where we knew about them (in Alameda, Nevada, Orange, and Shasta) the survey results somewhat overstate actual support of domestic violence agencies. Also, some degree of unknown variability is added by using a monthly caseload rather than an unduplicated annual count. Since this is the first year we have asked counties to report this funding, the data is extremely valuable, but responses may not be entirely comparable (in ways that were not reported). For these reasons it is important not to single out any particular county or set of counties, but to consider the overall shape of the distribution of funding per case and its consequences for the likelihood that women in any county in the state have access to adequately funded domestic violence services from specialists.

Counties of 1,000 to 2,500 monthly caseload, sorted by dollars per case

County	Adult Caseload	DV funding	\$ Per Person
M	1175	660	0.56
N	1089	36000	33.06
O	1193	61680	51.70
P	2313	130000	56.20
Q	1696	240000	141.56
R	2086	362000	173.54
S	1085	346526	319.38

Counties 2,500 to 5,000 cases, sorted by dollars per case

County	Adult Caseload	DV funding	\$ Per Person
T	3047	35000	11.49
U	4319	102279	23.68
V	2607	100000	38.36
W	3207	200000	62.36
X	4589	425000	92.61
Y	2550	270000	105.88
Z	3330	1000000	300.30

Counties 5,000 to 15,000 cases sorted by dollars per case

County	Adult Caseload	DV funding	\$ Per Person
AA	12621	337586	26.75
BB	11953	603000	50.45
CC	5493	400000	72.82
DD	13232	1847647	139.63
EE	8550	1509000	176.49

Counties 15,000 to 30,000 sorted by dollars per case

County	Adult Caseload	DV funding	\$ Per Person
FF	16771	180000	10.73
GG	15660	228308	14.58
HH	25143	1500000	59.66

Los Angeles

County	Adult Caseload	DV funding	\$ Per Person
Los Angeles	129788	11590000	89.30

No Funding Ordered by Size of Caseload (CalWORKs adults November 2001)

County	Adult Caseload	DV funding	\$ Per Person
II	138	0	0.00
JJ	493	0	0.00
KK	1616	0	0.00
LL	1686	0	0.00
MM	25263	0	0.00

Other: Shasta provided no funding for services but hired a domestic violence liaison from the local shelter. Siskiyou provided no funding for services, but set aside funds for staffing.

Number of counties receiving domestic violence training: 40

Number of counties with domestic violence advocates co-located at welfare offices: 35

Number of counties with domestic violence advocates providing presentations:

Orientation: 25

Job Club: 20

Re-determination: 11

Notification/Self-disclosure: 35

2 counties give information only via a brochure

2 counties are providing no information

4 counties were unsure how information was provided

Number of counties where domestic violence providers are a part of quarterly/monthly/weekly collaborative welfare meetings: 25



The California Institute for Mental Health is a non-profit public interest corporation established for the purpose of promoting excellence in mental health. CIMH is dedicated to a vision of “a community and mental health services system which provides recovery and full social integration for persons with psychiatric disabilities; sustains and supports families and children; and promotes mental health wellness.”

Based in Sacramento, CIMH has launched numerous public policy projects to inform and provide policy research and options to both policy makers and providers. CIMH also provides technical assistance, training services, and the Cathie Wright Technical Assistance Center under contract to the California State Department of Mental Health.