

# CCWRO Welfare News

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## Who is Abusing Children?

On May 18, 2007, Ms. O.B. who is a US citizen living in Sacramento County, lost her 10 children to the state and county. They were removed from her care and control "due to lack of food and conditions of the home." The condition of the home of this welfare mom, who lives on a fixed income, (the same amount that parents like her with the same number of children received in 1990) did not meet the social worker's middle class standard for "condition of a home." Welfare and Institutions Code does not authorize counties to remove children from their parents because they have a "lack of food" What defines lack of food? There were no allegations that the children were starving.

When the children were removed and placed in foster care, the cost to taxpayers for this family went through the roof. Rather than costing about \$1,200 a month in welfare monthly payments, this family is now costing taxpayers at least \$20,000 a month.

One of the children, T.B., is currently in the fifth grade. Our sources inform us that the social worker's report reveals that T.B. believes her mother is important in her life and wants to go back home and live with her. The mother visits with T.B. every week, according to the report.

The law requires that siblings be placed together. The report shows that these siblings are not placed together because they have allegedly bonded with their caregivers, thus, they will be kept separate. The younger siblings are not allowed to visit their older siblings at the request of caregivers. This is to assure that the children do not maintain ties with each other. It is the intentional breaking up of the family by social workers and the courts. Do these people care what happens once the child reaches 18? Do they know that 70% of the foster care children end up in prison?

The report reads: "T.B. stated her wish for permanent plan/placement is to go home. T.C. would like to reunify with her mother. The mother is currently participating in services, but is not prepared to reunify." (Actual names have been redacted). The report does not say exactly why the mother is not prepared to reunify.

Ms. O.B. is another low income person ensnared by the child welfare system. According to a DSS report only 22% of the children in the California child welfare system are removed due to sexual or physical abuse. The remainder are removed due to "neglect", which is a by-product of poverty. The question is, is it worth destroying 7 kids' lives to protect 3? And why can't we save 3 lives without destroying 7?

Why not assist this family with \$200 for food and maybe \$1,000 to make the condition of the home acceptable and keep this family together, rather than spending \$240,000 a year to spread the children into several foster homes. Not to mention the trauma of separating children from their mother. To date, "lack of food" has resulted in taxpayers doling out over half a million dollars in foster care costs.

August 2009	Cases Sanctioned	Unduplicated Participants	Percentage of Unduplicated Participants Sanctioned	Dollar Cost to Impoverished CalWORKs Families (in thousands)	No. of Children Who Suffered in 8/09	Table #1 reveals the percentage of WtW participants that have been sanctioned by major counties, the economic cost of those sanctions to impoverished families in these counties and the number of children who suffered due to these sanctions.  Most sanctions are caused by county failure to provide supportive services, such as child care and transportation.  In California about 50% of the WtW participants are not being paid for transportation. Child care cannot be paid unless the provider is trustlined.
TABLE #1						
Statewide	47,859	148,122	32%	\$6,221,670	95718	
Alameda	1,410	5,942	24%	\$183,300	2820	
Fresno	3,156	8,728	36%	\$410,280	6312	
Kern	4,430	5,379	82%	\$575,900	8860	
Los Angeles	12,849	36,108	36%	\$1,670,370	25698	
Madera	291	725	40%	\$37,830	582	
Merced	1,085	1,822	60%	\$141,050	2170	
Riverside	4,108	7,963	52%	\$534,040	8216	
San Bern.	6,618	12,373	53%	\$860,340	13236	
San Diego	1,303	10,191	13%	\$169,390	2606	
San Francisco	419	1,678	25%	\$54,470	838	
San Joaquin	949	4,267	22%	\$123,370	1898	
Santa Clara	1,240	4,657	27%	\$161,200	2480	
Santa Cruz	268	731	37%	\$34,840	536	
Stanislaus	1,189	2,597	46%	\$154,570	2378	

Source; DSS August, 2009  
 WtW 25 and 25A reports

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