**Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance
Regions VI and VIII**

*Improving Families' Well-Being
During Challenging Times:*
**2011 Bi-Regional State
TANF and Tribal TANF
Directors' Conference**

Summary
Report

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Background and Introduction

According to the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), the current recession began in December 2007 and officially ended in June 2009. Although the economy grew slowly in 2009 and 2010, many policy officials declare the recovery a "jobless recovery" based on the continuing challenges of the economy to reduce the unemployment rate and increase the number of Americans becoming employed. The overall unemployment rate hit 10 percent in October 2009, and as of August 2011, it continued to hover around nine percent.[1] Families and individuals across the nation have been significantly affected by this economic recession. According to the U.S. Census Bureau 14.3 percent of Americans were living in poverty in 2009,[2] and in particular, low-income families, including those on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), have disproportionately experienced increased poverty, unemployment, and underemployment, which refers to those people who are working part-time due to economic reasons. According to the Center for Labor Market Studies, the consequences of underemployment are typically severe as they result in a combination of lost work hours and lower wages.[3] An analysis of the Health and Human Services (HHS) data conducted by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities shows that as of February 2010, national TANF caseloads had increased by 10 percent since the beginning of the recession nationwide.[4]

With an increase in both unemployment rates and underemployment rates, coupled with higher TANF caseloads and little job creation taking place, TANF and other low-income populations are most severely affected. As States, Tribes, and localities continue to support families it will take innovation and initiative to determine the most effective strategies to assist in their movement out of poverty.

Overview of the Meeting

Held August 1-4, 2011 in Denver, Colorado, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families, (ACF) Office of Family Assistance (OFA) Regions VI and VIII *Improving Families' Well-Being During Challenging Times: 2011 Bi-Regional State TANF and Tribal TANF Directors' Conference* brought together more than 50 representatives from 11 States and 10 Tribes in the southwest and western regions of the United States. The conference attendees were provided with opportunities to discuss the impact of the current economic recession on TANF programs and engage in peer dialogue around practical solutions to challenges facing TANF programs and participants. This first ever combined Regions VI and VIII State TANF and Tribal TANF conference provided TANF Directors with

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[1]Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2011). *Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey.* Retrieved September 15, 2011 from http://www.bls.gov/cps/

[2]U.S. Census Bureau. (2010). *Income, poverty and health insurance coverage in the United States: 2009.* Retrieved September 15, 2011 from: http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/income_wealth/cb10-144.html

[3]Sum, A. & Khatiwada, I. (2010, February 1). *Labor underutilization problems of U.S. workers across household income groups at the end of the great recession: A truly great depression among the nation's low income workers amidst full employment among the most affluent.* Northeastern University Center for Labor Market Studies. Retrieved October 19, 2011 from: http://iris.lib.neu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1025&context=clms_pub

[4] Pavetti, L. & Rosenbau, D. (2010, February 25). *Creating a safety net that works when the economy doesn't: The role of the Food Stamp and TANF programs.* Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Retrieved September 15, 2011 from: http://www.cbpp.org/files/2-25-10fa.pdf

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the opportunity to engage with Federal, State, and Tribal partners through interactive sessions and discussions around promising program models and strategies for improving service delivery to families.

Over the conference's four days, State and Tribal attendees from OFA Regions VI and VIII engaged in sessions on a variety of topics including:
- Impacts and responses to the recent recession;
- The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act;
- Increased program efficiencies and streamlined services;
- Enhancing career pathways;
- TANF Flexibility and Reauthorization;
- Effective assessment and service options for domestic violence survivors;
- Tribal and State TANF child welfare and kinship care;
- Improving State-Tribal relations;
- Preventing fraud, waste and abuse; and
- Tribal TANF program accountability and implementation.

Day One: Monday, August 01, 2011

Welcoming Remarks and Overview

Dr. Felicia Gaither, TANF Program Manager, ACF, OFA Region VIII and Larry Brendel, TANF Program Manager, ACF, OFA, Region VI, welcomed the conference attendees to Denver and introduced the respective regional staff. Dr. Gaither explained that this important technical assistance gathering represented the fourth straight year of partnership between Regions VI and VIII. The *Improving Families' Well-Being During Challenging Times: 2011 Bi-Regional State TANF and Tribal TANF Directors' Conference* was developed to be a valuable resource for all attendees and includes speakers, content experts, and policy consultants that are uniquely qualified to respond to the needs of TANF programs. Peer-to-peer engagement and presentations by State representatives on promising practices were hallmarks of the event.

The purpose of Day One was to set the stage for the conference by providing a macro-analysis of the economy and how it has been impacting TANF participants. The subsequent days of the conference were broken into three distinct tracks—one targeted to State TANF Directors, one focused on joint State and Tribal TANF Director programming, and a third specific to Tribal TANF Directors. Each track was comprised of topics identified by the regional program teams, States, and Tribes and specifically targeted to topics of most concern for TANF programs.

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The Rocky Road Back: Prospects for Low-income Clients to Become Self-Sufficient (Impact on Clients of the Recent Recession)- Richard Froeschle, Director of Labor Market and Career Information, Texas Workforce Commission[5]

The recent recession has increased poverty, unemployment, and underemployment for low-income families and challenged States and localities to develop strategies to create jobs and improve the economic security for low-income families. During this presentation to the State attendees, Mr. Richard Froeschle discussed the impacts of the recent recession on low-income families. He also provided a clear perspective about the pace of the economic recovery, and outlined to attendees strategies for determining indicators of recovery important for local families.

Figure 1. Unemployment Rate across the United States

Based on analyses completed by Mr. Froeschle, there are some significant details about this recession that in several ways differ from recessions in the past. For instance, the middle part of the country has experienced a different kind of recession than the rest of the United States (see Figure 1) and the coasts have experienced disproportionately higher rates of unemployment—and higher rates of home foreclosures which impact local economies and reduce the relative labor force—when compared to the middle States.
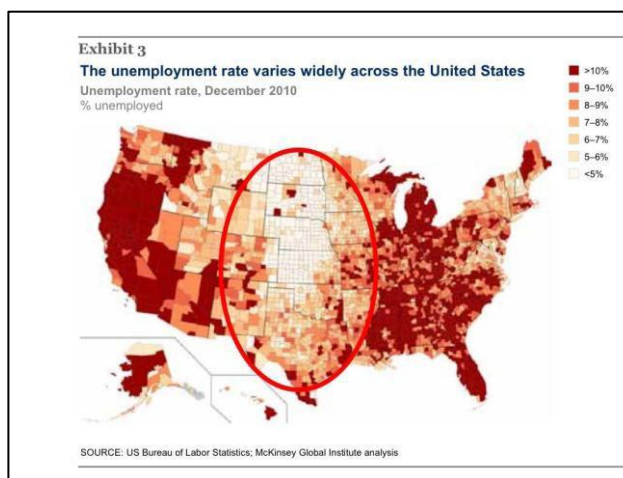
Additionally, the official unemployment rate masks some significant weaknesses in the American labor picture because it does not count those who are no longer actively seeking employment, nor does it count the underemployed. Mr. Froeschle explained that the *real* unemployment rate—which includes underemployed persons—when compared to the official unemployment rate, is closer to 16.6 percent, which equals about 25 million Americans.

Another key finding from recent research conducted by Mr. Froeschle finds that the face of the unemployed is varied and there are basically two types of unemployment that are impacting the changing American workforce. On the one hand, structural unemployment—a measurable mismatch between skills in demand and workforce skills, or a mismatch between the locations of the job versus the location of the unemployed person—is becoming more frequent and prominent. On the other hand, some instances of unemployment are cyclical or demand deficient and are directly proportional to the economic cycles. These instances are obvious when there are more workers than jobs because of decreased economic output resulting in less demand.

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[5] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at:
http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Changing%20Face%20for%20Denver%20TANF.pdf

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Just as demographics are changing as the labor force becomes older, filled with more female workers, and individuals who are in the labor force for longer periods of time, the demand for employment-related skills is also shifting. Figure 2 shows what the labor market structure is projected to look like in 2016. According to the most recent data, while 45 percent of all jobs will require less than one year of on-the-job training and will pay $30,000 per year, the new entry level credential will be a Bachelor's Degree. With these increased requirements for new hires, there will be growing challenges for low-income and low-skilled workers which will cause an even bigger structural

Figure 2. Labor Market Structure in 2016

challenge for TANF participants. Added to the challenges for low-skilled workers, there are increased demands for technical skills linked to specific career sectors.

Although the nation as a whole has seen considerable job loss over the course of the recession, there have been pockets of job growth, and from 2009 to 2010, Texas and Oklahoma had the most job growth among the two regions (VI and VIII) represented at the conference. According to Mr. Froeschle, from a purely economic standpoint, the States in OFA Regions VI and VIII look very similar to the rest of the country in terms of the sectors in which jobs are growing, with certain sectors—healthcare and education—growing more significantly than others. Linking low-income workers to employment-rich sectors is essential to longer term economic self-sufficiency.[6]

Mr. Froeschle concluded his remarks by discussing several of these challenges that may impact the ability of low-skilled and low-income workers to achieve self-sufficiency. Employers, according to Mr. Froeschle, are seeking employees with good communication skills; critical thinking skills; technical knowledge; a can-do or pleasant attitude; and the ability to work with people who are of different age, race, gender, and education levels. As a result, TANF programs and workforce stakeholders should invest in training and development to increase the employability of participants in an already competitive job market.

Discussion Session

Following the presentation by Mr. Froeschle, attendees were provided with the opportunity to ask questions. The questions and answers are outlined below.

Attendee Question: You talked about how the labor force in total is dropping. Since people are not retiring, what is the drop attributed to?
> **Presenter Response:** Though the baby boomers are working longer, they are still getting older and retiring. The other major part of it is discouraged workers. If workers are discouraged long enough and are not actively seeking work, they are not included in the unemployment rates.

Attendee Question: One of the reasons people who are using financial assistance services are continuing to find work is because they are willing to take the lower wage jobs. What is going to happen when the

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[6] For more information on job growth, please access Mr. Froeschle's presentation on the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at: http://peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Changing%20Face%20for%20Denver%20TANF.pdf

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people on Unemployment Insurance (UI) have to take the lower wage jobs – what will happen to our participants?

> **Presenter Response:** There is some argument that would say yes, that will happen. The other argument says that no, if those people want to work, they could be working. From there, there will be more people in more dire situations, becoming a bigger burden to the social safety-net. There is no clear-cut answer; both sides are right to some degree, but it has implications on the policy side.

State Policy Responses to the Recent Recession and their Impacts on Low-Income Families- Liz Schott, Senior Fellow, Welfare Reform and Income Support Division, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP)
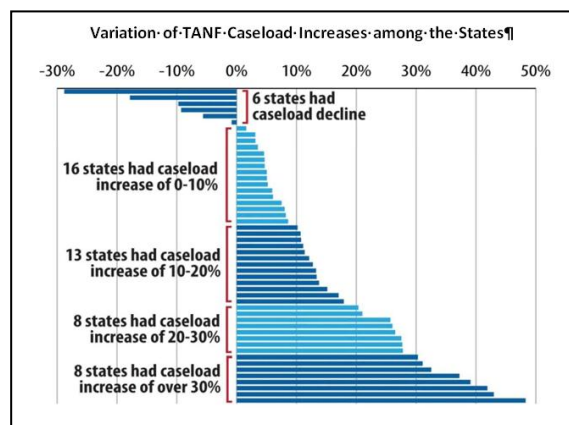
With the impact of budget cuts on TANF programs as a backdrop, Ms. Liz Schott reviewed the role of a work-first welfare system during a recession and discussed the impact of various TANF policies on the employment outcomes of low-income individuals to the State attendees. The attendees were engaged in discussions about the responsiveness of the TANF program, effective program strategies that States should invest in, and strategies for improving overall TANF participant outcomes. Although many States are focused on the work-first model, there is some evidence that work-first and some job search activities may not lead to employment. Ms. Schott recommended that States support programs guided by a focus on education and training, building skills for job seekers, or addressing barriers in order to strengthen the effectiveness of TANF as a safety net program that responds to the needs of low-income families. There should be, according to Ms. Schott, increased research on the role of subsidized employment in improving the employment outcomes of low-income individuals and investment in supported works programs for populations struggling to achieve employment.

Ms. Schott highlighted some key research pertaining to TANF programming during the recession and recovery and highlighted some interesting findings from work that CBPP and others have done. Among the most striking findings, it has become apparent that the current recession has challenged TANF programs and workforce officials to develop strategies for increasing opportunities for TANF participants and low-income families. According to research conducted by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP), TANF caseloads rose 13 percent from December 2007 to December 2009. Additionally, the responsiveness of TANF to those most in need—as measured against those in poverty—shows that for every 100 families in poverty, 77 families received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) from 1994 to 1995.

However, from 2008 to 2009, of every 100 families in poverty, about 30 of those families received TANF.[7]

Figure 3. Variation of TANF Caseload Increases among the States

Although there are considerable differences between aggregated Federal data and each individual State, it is commonly acknowledged that TANF caseload changes may lag behind the economy and economic

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[7]For further analysis on this and related information, please refer to: http://www.cbpp.org/files/7-14-11tanf.pdf

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trends. From December 2007 to December 2009, there was significant variation of TANF caseload increases among the States (see Figure 3).

State spending on TANF and Maintenance of Effort (MOE) has changed from 1997 to 2009 (see Figure 4). During this time, spending on basic assistance declined steeply and spending on TANF/MOE declined from 70 percent in 1997 to 28 percent in 2007. Spending on child care and work activities doubled in the early years after the passage of TANF and, beginning in 1997, stagnated or declined. Now child care and work activities together are about one-quarter of TANF/MOE spending. The increased share of spending is

Figure 4. Total Federal TANF and MOE Spending by Category
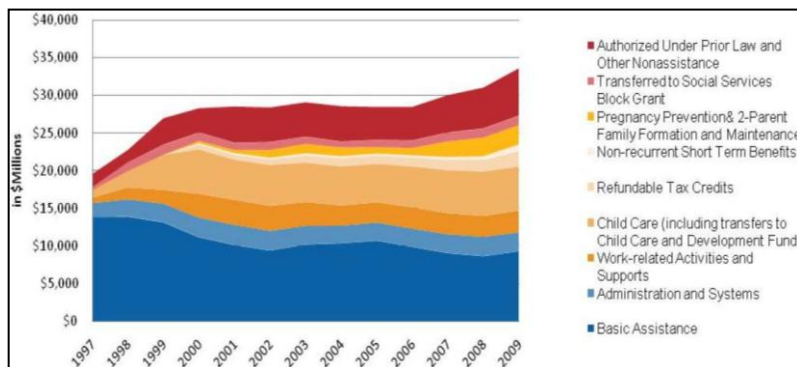
also falling in other State budget categories such as Authorized Under Prior Law (AUPL) and TANF Purposes Three and Four. State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) programs have also grown from seven percent to 30 percent of total spending. The national trend of TANF/MOE spending is not accurate for each State's situation so it is critical to review each State's data separately to examine State's spending across categories.

Based on the most recent report on engagement among States' TANF participants, Ms. Schott, also provided an overview of reasons for non-participation among work-eligible individuals:
- Thirty percent were State exempt;
- Nineteen percent were in sanction process and not disregarded;
- Fifteen percent did not participate because the State/local agency failed to engage the individuals;
- Fourteen percent were due to other facts;
- Thirteen percent were disregarded from participation;
- Four percent did not participate because it was the individual's first month on TANF; and
- Three percent did not participate for administrative reasons.

In order to create a more responsive TANF program there are some changes that can be developed within the current structure and Ms. Schott outlined methods for improving TANF as a safety-net and as a work program in today's economy. According to Ms. Schott, TANF should improve the share of very poor families receiving cash and if families are not receiving cash, other ways of assisting families need to be created. In order to improve TANF as a work program, resources must be used as effectively as possible and States need to develop goals for increasing and measuring engagement.

Discussion Session

To close her presentation, Ms. Schott provided an overview of policies and activities pertaining to strength and barrier-based assessment and the need to ensure that work participation hours include the time that a participant devotes to progressing through the service continuum. There was also an expressed need for

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targeted assistance pertaining to remediation, barrier reduction, and skill development and Ms. Schott pointed to the activities of some other States that have focused on barrier removal and remediation. Specifically:

- South Dakota's caseload has dropped 200 cases due to subsidized employment.
- Oklahoma has a program that subsidizes the wages of public employees at the minimum wage. This program has a record of an 85 percent retention rate on placements.
- Texas used TANF ARRA funds and State general revenue to create a subsidized employment program for low-income individuals who had been receiving unemployment insurance. Retention rates for adults were over 60 percent. After ARRA funding expired, the State continued a smaller program using only State general revenue.

Additional conversations between attendees included examples of tough choices that programs have had to make because of legislative changes at the local levels. New Mexico, for one, remarked that due to fund reallocations and increased caseloads, the program has had to cut child care, reduce work support payments, cut transition bonus programming, and end the clothing assistance program. In Arkansas, staff has been reduced and the State is changing its child care program and limiting the transfer of TANF funds to the Child Care Development Fund (CCDF). Colorado explained that there are not extremely harsh cuts right now, but the State is in the process of addressing shortfalls. There are not any more reserves at the State level, and it is unknown whether or not funds that have disappeared will be restored.

Day Two: Tuesday, August 2, 2011

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and its Impact on Low-Income Families and Workers- Richard C. Allen, Associate Regional Director, Denver Division of Medicaid and Children's Health, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS)-Region VIII[8]

The Affordable Care Act (ACA) is made up of two parts. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA)[9], signed into law on March 23, 2010, and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act of 2010 (HCERA), signed into law on March 30, 2010.
During this presentation to the State attendees, Richard C. Allen discussed the impact of the PPACA on the healthcare system in America and outlined some key provisions that may impact low-income families.

Health reform provides Americans with new rights and benefits and in 2014 it will also provide near Universal Coverage. The ACA[10] provides immediate benefits to Americans and rebuilds the primary care

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[8] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/HR%20AC%20Act.pdf

[9] The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPAC) was signed into law to improve access and affordability of health insurance for more than 32 million Americans. Once fully implemented, the bill is expected to cover nearly every American and increase the ability of low-income families to access Medicaid, Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and new health insurance exchanges. Additionally, the PPAC provides further funding for healthcare workforce development targeted to low-income individuals and unemployed workers.

[10] For a complete overview of the provisions contained in the ACA refer to: https://www.cms.gov/Affordable-Care-Act/

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workforce. It provides new funding for the construction and expansion of Community Health Centers as well as increases payments to Rural Health Care Providers.

Figure 5 describes the ACA of the next four years. The ACA will establish the Health Insurance Exchange which creates State or Federally administered health insurance marketplaces for individuals and small businesses whose employers do not offer insurance. Only qualified health benefit plans meeting specific criteria can be sold in the exchange. According to the Act, large employers will be phased into the Health Insurance Exchange in 2017. The Health Insurance Exchange will make buying insurance more competitive and require more openness of information.

Figure 5. The Affordable Care Act (ACA) from 2011-2014

The ACA in 2011:	The ACA in 2012:	The ACA in 2013:	The ACA in 2014:
Includes limits on non-medical spending by insurance plans: - 85 percent of premium dollars collected by large employers must be spent on health care services; and - 80 percent of premium dollars collected by small employers must be spent on health care services. Requires employers to disclose the value of the health care benefit on W-2 tax forms.	Includes Health Equity, a National Data Collection effort to detect and monitor disparities, which requires federally conducted or supported activities to collect data on race, gender, ethnicity, primary language and disability status. Establishes voluntary, Long-Term Care Insurance program, the Community Living Assistance Services and Supports (CLASS). Reduces paperwork and administrative costs through required electronic health information exchange.	Requires insurers to follow Administrative Simplification Standards for exchange of health information. Includes a push towards electronic health records. Focus on bundling payments, which establishes a national pilot program to encourage payment for episodes of care rather than per service.	Includes an "individual mandate" that requires most individuals to have the minimum acceptable coverage or pay a tax penalty. This mandate involves: - Guaranteed issue, coverage of pre-existing conditions; - No premium variation based on health status and gender and limited premium variation based on age and tobacco use; - No annual limits for most people; and - Physician payment required to align with quality by 2015. Includes a Health Insurance Exchange.

The ACA will modify Medicaid and CHIP because, beginning in 2013, it will increase payments for primary care services to 100 percent of the Medicare payment rates for 2013 and 2014. Figure 6 provides an in-depth look at what Medicaid will look like in 2014.
Additionally, new funding for Medicaid will provide preventive health coverage. The ACA maintains the current structure of CHIP, with a 23 percent increase in the match rate in 2015 through 2019.
Early Expansion, an option for States to begin expansion for certain non-elderly individuals with incomes up to 133 percent of the Federal Poverty Level, became effective on April 1, 2010, which means that coverage is reimbursed at the State's regular Federal Medical Assistance Percentages (FMAP).

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The ACA establishes the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Innovation which will look at new ways of delivering care to patients as well as test reforms that reward providers for quality, not quantity. The Center will also include the Community First Choice Option, and with medication innovation, States may offer home and community-based services (HCBS) to disabled individuals. Starting in 2017, there will be Medicaid State Innovation Waivers, which will give States the flexibility to pursue innovative strategies.

Discussion Session

Following the overview of the various provisions of the ACA, the attendees and

> **Figure 6. Medicaid in 2014**
>
> - Coverage will reach across Medicaid, Insurance Exchange, and Employer Sponsored Insurance (ESI).
> - Will establish national minimum eligibility levels at 133 percent of the Federal Poverty Level.
> - Will provide 100 percent federal funding to States for costs of newly eligible inidividuals for 2014-2016.
> - Tax credits and exchange will include individuals between 100 percent and 400 percent of the Federal Poverty Level, and premium payments will be lowered each month.
> - Expansion will involve eligibility based on Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) with no asset tests. MAGI will establish one standard for all the States to use, and CMS will publish rules on what is the MAGI.
> - Expansion will add new mandatory categories of Medicaid-eligibles, which will include single, childless adults who are not disabled, parents, and former foster care children who aged out of foster care and are up to the age of 26.

Mr. Allen engaged in a discussion about the ACA and TANF and also healthcare-related issues. Questions pertained to the funding of the ACA, the new web-based systems and eligibility systems that will be needed, and other key policy and program issues of interest. The funding for the ACA is provided by the Federal government and in some instances, like those relating to information technology, there are shared funding streams with 90 percent of the funding coming from the Federal government and 10 percent coming from a State match. Currently there are six newly-funded innovative States in Health Information Technology (IT) programs that are piloting new IT activities under the ACA. The five States that continued with the initiative are Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts (which is leading a consortium of northeastern States), Oregon, and Wisconsin.

As it relates to TANF and Tribal TANF, the ACA provides more options to reduce the challenges faced by low-income families needing health insurance coverage. In 2014 more American Indians and Alaska Natives will be eligible for Medicaid and CHIP. Mr. Allen elaborated on how the program will be monitored and how HHS will ensure program integrity and quality control.

Improving Economic Self-Sufficiency through Increased Program Efficiencies and Streamlined Services in the Face of Budgetary Constraints and other Challenges being faced by State TANF Programs

States and localities are looking to improve the economic self-sufficiency outcomes of TANF families by providing increased employment opportunities and supports by designing and implementing streamlined services. By targeting services to the needs of participants these initiatives effectively reduce costs, encourage integration, and improve outcomes for programs and families. Highlighting the Work Support Strategies Initiative, this session outlined a set of promising practices integrated at the local level to enhance and streamline services. The session for the State attendees was moderated by Liz Schott, Senior Fellow Welfare Reform and Income Support Division, Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

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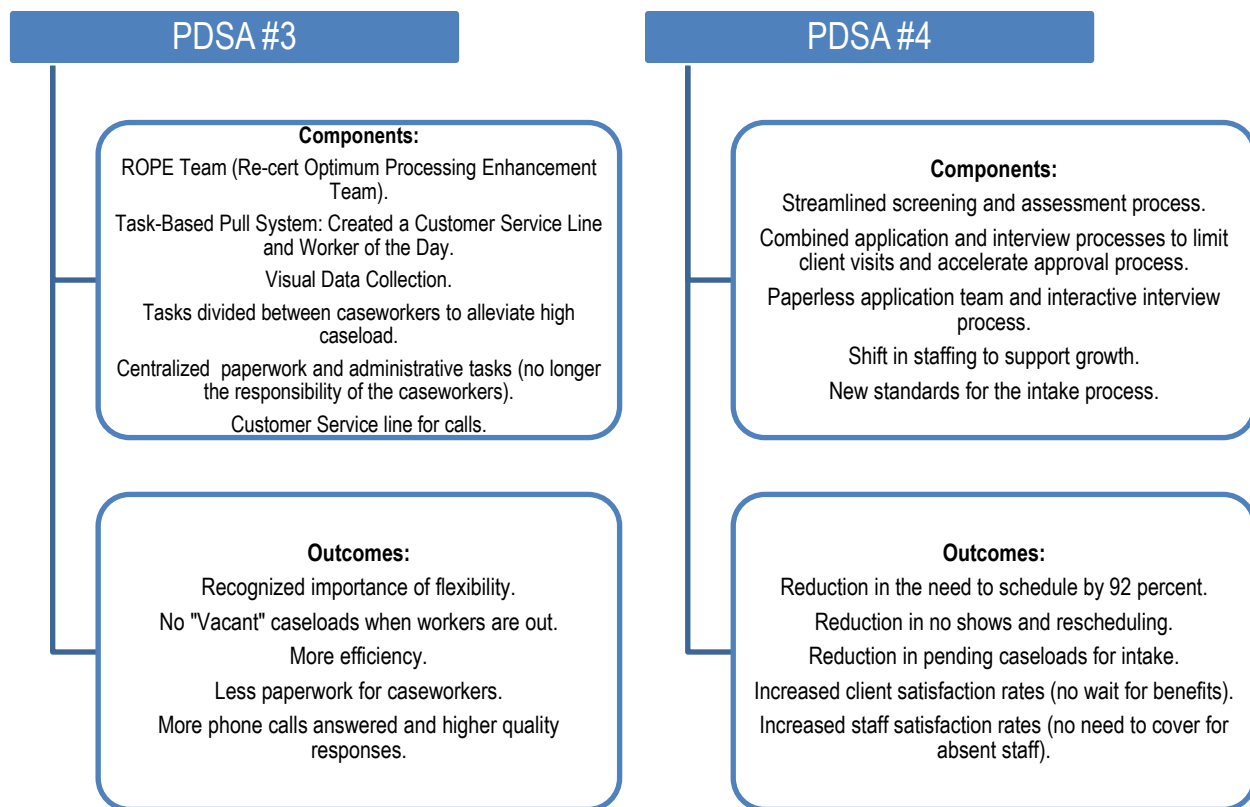*August 1-4, 2011*

Arturo Serrano, Economic Assistance Manager, Work Support Strategies Initiative, El Paso County, Colorado[11]

In El Paso County, streamlining programs improved services. In order to maximize resources and increase collaboration, Colorado engaged 13 counties to be part of a Collaboration Institute called, the Colorado Eligibility Process Improvement Collaborative (CEPIC), which helped El Paso County move forward and make improvements. Based on the "Plan, Do, Study, Act" (PDSA) model[12], CEPIC has been very successful. The county created about seven different PDSAs. Mr. Serrano's presentation focused on two of them:

- PDSA #3 - Increase ongoing productivity, efficiency, and customer service. Establish ongoing task based system along with a data *pull system* designed to extract applicable data for program activities; and
- PDSA #4 - Establish a paperless application process ensuring timely processing of applications and benefit issuance.

Figure 7 provides detailed descriptions of each PDSA, along with outcomes of each.

Figure 7. "Plan, Do, Study, Act" Models #3 and #4

PDSA #3	PDSA #4
Components:	**Components:**
ROPE Team (Re-cert Optimum Processing Enhancement Team).	Streamlined screening and assessment process.
Task-Based Pull System: Created a Customer Service Line and Worker of the Day.	Combined application and interview processes to limit client visits and accelerate approval process.
Visual Data Collection.	Paperless application team and interactive interview process.
Tasks divided between caseworkers to alleviate high caseload.	Shift in staffing to support growth.
Centralized paperwork and administrative tasks (no longer the responsibility of the caseworkers).	New standards for the intake process.
Customer Service line for calls.	
Outcomes:	**Outcomes:**
Recognized importance of flexibility.	Reduction in the need to schedule by 92 percent.
No "Vacant" caseloads when workers are out.	Reduction in no shows and rescheduling.
More efficiency.	Reduction in pending caseloads for intake.
Less paperwork for caseworkers.	Increased client satisfaction rates (no wait for benefits).
More phone calls answered and higher quality responses.	Increased staff satisfaction rates (no need to cover for absent staff).

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[11] For more information regarding this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/El%20Paso%20County%20DHS.PDF
[12] PSDA models are the processes through which programs can be streamlined.

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Vida Tapia-Sanchez, Chief, Policy Bureau – Income Support Division, New Mexico Human Services Department[13]

An important point of reference about New Mexico is that one-third of the total population is served by TANF, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and/or Medicaid. Because of this, New Mexico leadership and staff felt pressured from rising caseloads to make changes. From 2008 to 2011, SNAP caseloads had increased by 46 percent and TANF caseloads had increased by 27 percent. Other pressures include limited and unstable staffing from a hiring freeze, furloughs, turnover, limited and unstable technology, changing regulations, multiple categories of assistance, multi-tasking and complexity of jobs, rising error rates, customer demand, customer service frustrations, and staff frustrations. The State leadership recognized that many customers were not being properly served by the safety-net programs and as a result there were many inconsistencies and overlaps. In order to reduce programmatic frustrations and to maximize resources, the leaders in New Mexico chose to streamline services and take a statewide approach to program development.

> **Figure 8. New Mexico Human Services Department Teams**
>
> **Two-Track Triage Team:**
> - Greeters are assigned as the initial contact and to access client information before transferring client file to caseworkers who are now stationed in new areas and more accessible to clients.
> - Depending on the type of interview required, participants go on a different track, or go to a drop-off window operated by a caseworker.
> - Caseworkers can communicate with a participant directly and take care of things right away related to case inquiries, questions, etc.
>
> **Maintenance Team:**
> - Responsible for renewals and processing interim reports.
>
> **Intake Team:**
> - Determines the interview type and works on policy changes.
>
> **Paperwork and Processing Team:**
> - Looks at pending applications and renewals.
> - Reviews forms and notices.

To respond to the challenges of rising caseloads and fewer resources, New Mexico leadership made systemic changes in the provision of services to low-income families.

The team shifted to the philosophy of product versus service. New Mexico's old model was a traditional case management approach, but the new model is focused on process management that looks specifically at the service continuum from the process of intake to interview, to pending/verification status, to processing and eligibility determination, to recertification, and concluding with service changes. A core objective of the redesign was to improve the efficiencies of the program, and the agency was able to dedicate staff to the process model and not to the caseloads.

Assessing the existing process through data evaluation, customer interviews, and staff discussion was the first step in streamlining. Front line staff and caseworkers were taught to prioritize their work and the leadership team also outlined outcomes of the teams. Ms. Tapia-Sanchez and her staff also established teams made up primarily of front line staff of caseworkers and clerks (see Figure 8). New Mexico leadership also made changes to State policy (see Figure 9).The State also established a steering committee made up of department leaders and directors from information technology (IT), policy, accounting, quality assurance (QA), property management, personnel, and general counsel.

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[13] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/The%20Path%20to%20Change.pdf

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Benefits of the new structure include a reduction in application processing wait time, improved quality assurance measures, and a newfound ability to manage under hiring freeze, turnover, furloughs, and staff reductions. Currently, New Mexico is managing high caseloads and growth successfully by returning phone calls in a timely manner and reducing lobby wait times and traffic. In addition, the State increased the renewal rate (decreased rework), improved supervisory involvement through training and mentoring, simplified forms to meet customer and staff needs, and improved anticipation of IT needs. The cultural change in New Mexico is sustainable and the stress level of staff has decreased substantially as a result of the streamlined structure.

> **Figure 9. Policy Changes in New Mexico**
>
> • Increased number of phone interviews.
> • Revised verification requirements.
> • Evaluated signature requirements.
> • Determined Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (165% gross test).
> • Changed conversion factors (from 4.3 to 4.0).
> • Used Voluntary Employment and Training.
> • Instituted mandatory HCSUA.
> • Expanded simplified reporting.
> • Developed cross-program regulation alignments.
> • Combined application project.

Helen Thatcher, Program Manager, Utah Department of Workforce Services[14]

Utah has been going through some significant program changes. Utah has designed a Division of Eligibility, separate from the Division of the Family Employment Program (FEP), and it will be used to improve eligibility activities and reduce some of the pressures placed on FEP staff. In addition to the new Division, Utah is allowing staff to conduct phone interviews and complete applications online and is shifting to a more self-service-based model. An important component of the Utah streamlining shift has been an increased focus on identifying work-ready individuals and determining the most appropriate engagement strategies for those with stronger work histories and higher levels of work readiness.

In order to begin a process improvement model, Utah recommends that any locality first look for and decide what is good in the program and identify all the programs that might be affected. Additionally, when redesigning services, States should strategically think through the entire system, engage all applicable partners and stakeholders, and then decide what will be the most effective. The Utah redesign has been successful in achieving better programmatic outcomes. The FEP program was re-defined and re-introduced to State leadership. As a result, Utah has implemented new activities for the FEP and self-sufficiency programming, including:

> **Figure 10. Lessons Learned in Streamlining**
>
> *Tip 1:* Self-serve is critical – manually collecting information is time consuming, costly, and a distraction from the critical conversation about progress and work.
>
> *Tip 2:* Connection to the workforce takes concentrated, intensive focus, so distractions should be limited.
>
> *Tip 3:* It is important to know employers and the demand. Meet employer's needs and they will come back for more.
>
> *Tip 4:* Finding the time wasters or constraints that do not contribute to the goal of the service is a full-time, on-going effort.
>
> *Tip 5:* Keeping services similar for all customers provides a less confusing experience.
>
> *Tip 6:* Preparation activities have to be relevant to the goal.
>
> *Tip 7:* Retention starts before finding the job. Any job is not the goal – the job that fits the circumstances of the individual has the best chance for success.

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[14] For more information on this presentation, please access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Web site at:
http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Streamline%20Srvcs.pdf

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- Shortened Assessment — Determining the work-readiness of participants and which participants are able and available for full time employment.
- Improved Job Club Model (Work Success) —Providing very intense, two- to four-week participant engagement, related to employment that seeks to improve knowledge, confidence, relationships, and support.
- Work Success activities are the "rest of the assessment" process because there is approximately a 38 percent recidivism rate. Using work success activities, Utah's program has resulted in 53 percent of participants finding work in one to four weeks and 87 percent of those participants are still working at 60 days.

> **Figure 11. Remaining Challenges and Questions in Streamlining**
>
> - What are the retention services that are best?
> - Is Utah's work-ready definition right?
> - What is the best way to train staff?
> - What makes sense in terms of career counseling for a single parent with a full time job?
> - Can we impact wage progression?

Ms. Thatcher summarized some key discoveries in streamlining (see Figure 10) and concluded her presentation by listing what Utah still needs to learn in terms of increasing program efficiencies and streamlining services (see Figure 11).

Discussion Session

Following the presentations, attendees were invited to ask questions of the three presenters. The questions and answers are outlined below.

Attendee Question: New Mexico discussed cross-program regulation alignments. Can you explain this?
> **Presenter Response:** New Mexico focused on verifications. It is important to look at the verification requirements for the programs. Ms. Tapia-Sanchez and her team look at how the verification is provided and where to verify to keep the program integrity. In reporting changes and simplified reporting, New Mexico's TANF cases have the same reporting requirements as its SNAP program. Similar reporting requirements were the main changes New Mexico made regarding cross-program alignment.

Attendee Question: Mr. Serrano's program in El Paso County has not yet been extended to TANF cases (just Medicaid and SNAP). Can the presenters discuss the challenges faced in incorporating TANF eligibility?
> **Presenter Response:** Ms. Tapia Sanchez said that in New Mexico all of the caseworkers are general and work on SNAP, TANF, and Medicaid. Therefore, it was never a question of including TANF.
>
> **Presenter Response:** El Paso County has not yet incorporated TANF. We have a unit in our county focused on eligibility, so we could incorporate a central task model with these particular units. It all depends on creating a flow that works best for your particular area. It lends itself more to a uniform model statewide, which Colorado does not have. We are trying to improve program efficiencies when and where available.

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Presenter Response: In Utah there are several things we have discovered. In terms of the eligibility piece, we have discovered that our eligibility staff is not good at describing job programs. This is an issue for the customer. Customers have to get set up with the One Stop before eligibility is determined. We are having the One Stop staff explain the case management part of the program. If you can get your computer systems to talk instead of your staff, it works better.

Attendee Question: How do staff handle hand-offs in El Paso County?
Presenter Response: With implementing on one side of the office and not the other side, there can be some duplication. If staff members know someone is TANF eligible, they will have them skip the process. It is not a generalist model. This is done based on the resources available.

Attendee Question: Can you explain the eligibility process and timeline in Utah?
Presenter Response: Before someone commits to all of the program's expectations they need to fully understand them. Although there are a lot of referrals to the One Stop, the whole process is that the eligibility workers have to explain where the One Stop is and what will happen. They do not explain the assessment or diversion process. The employment counselor makes those decisions. The reason for this is that it will be repeated when they show up, and it has also been difficult to get consistency. Once someone applies, they will have a phone interview with eligibility. From there they are referred to the One Stop. The communication needs to be complete and the customer needs to completely understand what they signed up for. The timeline must be within 30 days and Utah is hitting 30 a lot, which is a problem. In terms of getting through the eligibility process, it is important to get through it quickly or else services are being delayed.

Attendee Question: With the computer system in Utah, usually customers are meeting with the caseworkers before eligibility is determined. Mr. Serrano, can you describe how El Paso County is getting the word out to customers to bring in verifications since staff members are determining eligibility in one day?
Presenter Response: El Paso County is using collateral contact with employers for verification. It is getting workers out of the mindset of pending cases and doing it right there. The agency has moved to a new facility and they are increasing communication with the public and other stakeholders.

Attendee Question: In terms of collateral contact to employers, how does that work for El Paso County? Other States have had issues with calling employers.
Presenter Response: Mr. Serrano said that sometimes there will be issues. When someone is doing work hours for school, they have to get verification for that school. There could be hurdles, but from the county's work-end it is a two-way street. If someone does not want El Paso County staff to call their employer, they will not, but the face-to-face time is important for staff to explain the importance of getting the verification from employers.

Presenter Response: Ms. Thatcher added it is important to be careful with employers because it is in their market where potential opportunities are available.

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Enhancing Career Pathways through Community College Connections and the Affordable Care Act (ACA)/Health Professions Opportunities Grants Program

During this forum, attendees engaged presenters and peers in discussions around innovative approaches to improving access to education and training opportunities, and learned strategies for improving partnerships with community colleges and placing TANF participants in education and training activities. Additionally, during this session State attendees received an update on the Health Professions Opportunity Grants Initiative, discussed healthcare career pathways, and learned strategies for integrating career pathway development into TANF programs with a specific emphasis on the healthcare workforce.

Shauna King-Simms, Director of Transitions Programs, Kentucky Community and Technical College System[15]

Kentucky has embraced education as an economic development strategy because of the State's lower levels of education and adult credentials. The State has implemented several different strategies that include the following:

- The "where education pays" movement, which advertises education as a key economic development strategy;
- The "double the numbers" initiative, where the mission is to double Kentucky's number of degree holders within the next several years; and
- The Kentucky Transitional Assistance Program (K-TAP), which is a direct response to TANF participants' need for education and credentials.

Ninety-three percent of individuals entering community and technical colleges are not college ready, which causes these individuals to be bogged down by remediation programs and other services. An examination of Kentucky's Community and Technical College System population reveals that:

- Thirty-seven percent of K-TAP adults have less than a high school degree;
- Sixty-three percent of K-TAP adults' education level is a high school diploma or GED; and
- Only 28 K-TAP adults have obtained a college-level education.

The Ready-to-Work Initiative[16] is a collaborative between the State TANF agency and the Community and Technical College System. The program employs an intensive case management strategy that has cut across many different levels of involvement, including the community, family, and college. Case managers work with "early alert" systems for students using the students' academic progress and grades, which allows the case managers to engage the students and provide support proactively. Another aspect of student involvement is the TANF work-study component, an activity that meets the TANF work participation requirement. This activity must align with the student's studies and provide a resume-building experience. The case manager works with the participant and packages school and work activities in order to meet

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[15] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Promoting%20Career%20Pathways.pdf

[16] The history of the Ready-to-Work Initiative extends back more than a decade; in 1998, Kentucky House Bill 434 was passed, which allowed for increased opportunities in education and training to the TANF population. This bill restored supportive services and directed the State TANF agency to report annually to the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission (LRC), honor requests to self-initiate and continue, and inform participants of educational options and services.

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Work Participation Rates (WPR). Case managers also provide attendance and other verifications. Earned income from the work-study activity is handled in the same manner as the Federal work-study program and is disregarded when calculating K-TAP or TANF eligibility.

The TANF-funded work-study program is focused around skill building, resume building, developmental activities, boosting WPR, increasing participant credentials, and achieving the process measures inherent in the TANF block grant and better employment outcomes for each TANF participant. Student outcomes reveal a high retention rate and frequent meeting of requirements. Overall, K-TAP serves 1,600-2,500 students annually and in the spring of 2010, 73 percent of students participated in TANF-funded work-study, 11 percent participated in Federal work-study, and 44 percent of K-TAP students' GPAs exceeded the average college GPA. In addition, K-TAP students' retention rate for the 2008-2009 school years exceeded the institution's retention rate by nine percent and K-TAP adults' participation in the Kentucky Community and Technical College System was also higher than other Kentucky adults. Ultimately, the TANF participants enrolled in K-TAP are working more than TANF participants who were referred to other services.

Figure 12. Statewide Earnings Returns to Highest Award by Gender
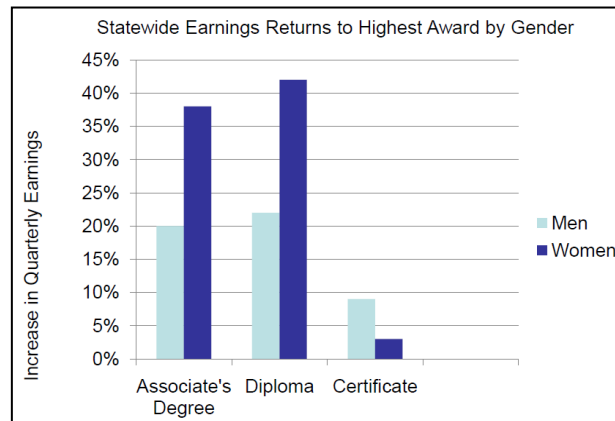
A study from the Kentucky Legislative Research Commission (LRC) Program Review shows that work-related higher education leads to increased income and financial security, especially among TANF participants (see Figures 12). A student's degree and field of study significantly impact the student earnings. It is important that students consider these variables when making decisions related to higher education programs.

Gilda Kennedy, Program Coordinator II, South Carolina Department of Social Services[17]

The HPOG initiative in South Carolina is targeted to providing participants with healthcare training in response to the high demand for healthcare employees. To provide this training, South Carolina has used the HPOG grant to establish Project HOPE (Healthcare Occupations Preparation for Employment). Successful Project HOPE participants will be able to obtain and maintain healthcare jobs with sustainable incomes. Project HOPE is a statewide program and partnerships are important to its success. Project HOPE partners include:

- The South Carolina Department of Social Services;
- The State Workforce Investment Board;
- The Local Workforce Investment Boards; and

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[17] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Project%20Hope.pdf

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- Various other TANF offices and other parties such as the State Apprenticeship Office, the State Department of Education, the State Technical College System, the hospital systems, and the South Carolina Department of Employment and Workforce Strategies.

Project HOPE has various eligibility requirements and program components that have been developed to increase student success. It is important that each student meet all requirements throughout the Project Hope's five stages (see Figure 13). Project HOPE selects individuals 17 to 25 years old who possess a high school diploma or GED with a GPA of least 2.0 on a 4.0 scale. The students must be TANF participants or within a TANF family. Individuals that have been removed from the TANF family are still eligible students. SNAP recipients and those aging out of foster care are also recruited. Individuals aging out of foster care are granted a waiver for the GPA

> **Figure 13. Five Phases of Project HOPE**
>
> 1. Recruitment and Selection;
> 2. Boot Camp;
> 3. Introduction to Health Care;
> 4. Health Care Career Preparation; and
> 5. Employment Readiness and Placement.

requirement. During Project HOPE's four-week Boot Camp, the student is immediately immersed in healthcare training. Before the student begins Boot Camp, he or she develops his or her career path using tools such as the Online Work Readiness Assessment (OWRA) tool developed through HHS, a comprehensive internet-based assessment tool which South Carolina is currently piloting. During Boot Camp, students are provided with housing and scrubs as uniforms.

After Boot Camp, Project HOPE provides support services such as case management, healthcare professional mentors, and assistance with transportation, childcare, housing, and limited stipends. Graduates from Project HOPE's Boot Camp are preferred over other applicants because the employers are familiar with the regimen Boot Camp graduates have undergone and are aware that the graduates possess relevant workforce and professional skills. The third phase of Project HOPE, Introduction to Healthcare, is comprised of courses such as Computer 101 and Introduction to Health and Health Care 101. The program is focused on student outcomes where staff works with students to define and document achievable goals.

Lauren Eyster, Research Associate, the Urban Institute[18]

The Urban Institute is developing a web-based HPOG Performance Reporting System which will capture data and provide evaluators with information regarding the various HPOG programs. The main purposes of the Performance Reporting System are to facilitate Federal and grantee performance management and to provide data for current and future evaluations. This system searches for data that will be useful across many levels so that it is relevant to the participant, program, and the grantee. Overall, the evaluation is designed to address the HPOG implementation and programs, which relate to partnership relationships, how systems can change, and specific participant outcomes. HPOG programs will be operational through 2015. The Urban Institute will continue to collect data which will be released in annual reports and used frequently.

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[18] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Web site at:
http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/ACF%20National%20HPOG%20Study.pdf

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Discussion Session

Following this presentation, conference attendees were provided with the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters and make comments. The questions, answers, and comments are outlined below.

Attendee Question: In some cases, the data may have to be entered into two different places. Are there steps in place to make sure that the same data will not have to be entered twice?

> **Presenter Response:** Yes, the Urban Institute is in the process of streamlining data from community colleges and WIA. In this process, aligning different definitions of terms is important. This step tries to make it as easy as possible for grantees.

Attendee Question: There is a definite challenge among participants trying to balance work and education. Are there any participants who are trying to balance work and education?

> **Presenter Response:** Balancing work and education is difficult. There is a Federal rule limiting work hours and education while receiving funding. It states that if a student works for more than 10-15 hours per week, that student will not be devoting enough time to classes. Even with these hours, we have a high retention rate within the K-TAP program.

Attendee Question: Regarding the WPR and the TANF population, is there any difference between TANF and non-TANF populations in participant success? Secondly, if you are doing 20 hours, how does a participant fill the other 10 of the 30 hours total?

> **Presenter Response:** Participants can count the additional 10 hours of education time. Retention is tracked, but completion data is not tracked as closely. Completion rates are closely guarded within higher education institutions.

Concurrent Regional Meetings

During the final session of Day Two, State conference attendees were split up into two groups by Regional affiliation. The State attendees from OFA Region VI attended a session on the ASSET initiative which is summarized below. OFA Region VIII State attendees attended a discussion forum with the OFA Region VIII office staff and ACF leadership. The summary of this session is not included in this report.

The ASSET Initiative: Status of Asset-building Strategies in Region VI States

The ASSET Initiative is a collaborative effort that brings together ACF offices and their partner agencies and organizations to extend the benefits of Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), financial education, and related services to improve the economic status of working individuals and families.

Angela Duran, AFI Regional Consultant, Assets for Independence[19]

Ms. Duran provided a brief overview[20] of the ASSET initiative, which is run out of the Office of Community Services (OCS) within ACF. She explained asset building strategies in other OFA Regions around the U.S.,

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[19] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Asset%20Initiative.pdf

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and provided a breakdown of income and asset poverty in OFA Region VI (see Figure 14). Additionally, States were given recommendations and suggestions for developing additional Webinar topics, partnership opportunities, staff training activities, and options for requesting technical assistance for the development of asset building strategies.

Generally there are six asset building tools including financial education, savings and individual development accounts (IDAs), getting banked, managing credit and debt, tax credits and filing assistance, and accessing Federal and State benefits. The idea behind IDAs, or matched savings accounts, for example, is for the participant to save money in the account, purchase assets with the savings, and then achieve financial stability. Within Region VI, the asset-building strategies offered vary by State (see Figure 15).

Figure 14. Rates of Household Income Poverty and Asset Poverty in Region VI
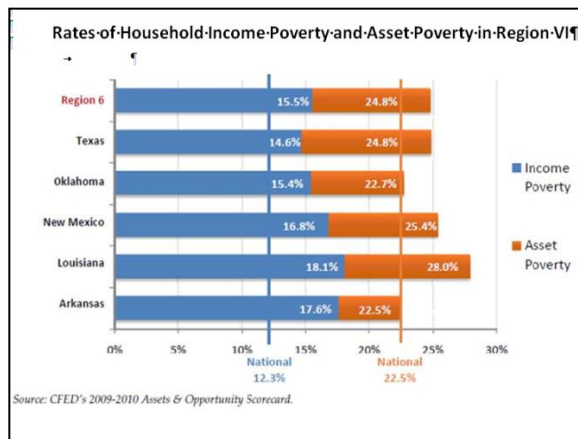

Source: CFED's 2009-2010 Assets & Opportunity Scorecard.

Figure 15. Asset Building Programs within Region VI States

Arkansas	• Fourty-four counties involved in IDA programs. • Various VITA site locations. • IDA programs and VITA sites are funded through TANF.
Louisiana	• IDA programs that are funded through TANF.
New Mexico	• IDA programs that are funded through general revenue.
Oklahoma	• Partnership with Oklahoma Association of Community Action for EITC Outreach Campaigns.
Texas	• Training for regional staff. • Various VITA sites. • EITC promotion. • Financial education through the Texas Workforce Commission. • Three AFI projects.

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[20] For additional information about the AFI program or to sign-up for an AFI grant, visit www.idaresources.org

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Discussion Session

Following the session, meeting attendees had an opportunity to ask additional questions regarding asset-building. The comments are outlined below.

Attendee Question: How do you work with the banks to hold the IDA accounts?
> **Presenter Response:** Individual programs negotiate bank relationships. This depends on communities that need to be served. The grantees complete this negotiation with the bank.

Day Three: Wednesday, August 03, 2011

Effective Assessment and Service Options for Domestic Violence Survivors

Together, State and Tribal conference attendees began day three with a session focused around domestic violence. Identifying, assessing, and providing services to TANF participants surviving domestic violence remains a challenge for many TANF programs. Although State and Tribal TANF programs have a variety of options for addressing the needs of domestic violence survivors, there still remain specific challenges in identifying victims and delivering appropriate services.

During this session, State attendees engaged with presenters and peers on successful strategies for addressing the needs of domestic violence survivors in the TANF caseload. With a specific emphasis on assessment and service provision, attendees learned about innovative approaches for ensuring that TANF participants are provided the comprehensive services needed to improve individual outcomes.

Anne Menard, Director of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence at the Pennsylvania Coalition against Domestic Violence[21]

To help assist the public with understanding the incidence and prevalence of violence in intimate relationships, the National Institute of Justice (NIJ) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) jointly sponsored the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS), conducted from November 1995 to May 1996.[22] The survey collected data on 8,000 women's and 8,000 men's experiences with violent victimization. Key findings from the survey show that nearly one in four women are beaten or raped by a partner during adulthood. Each year approximately 2.3 million people, mostly women, are raped and/or physically assaulted by a current or former spouse, boyfriend, or girlfriend. In addition to these statistics, the Bureau of Justice Statistics reports that every day in the United States, an average of three women is killed by a current or former intimate partner.

The combination of poverty and violence creates particular difficulties for women's well-being and the ability to achieve self-sufficiency because domestic violence and poverty exacerbate each other. For these

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[21] For more information on this presentation, please access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/MENARD-TANF-CD-DV%20Conf%20DENVER.pdf
[22] For more information on the National Violence Against Women Survey (NVAWS) Report, please see: https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/183781.pdf

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reasons, access to independent economic resources, including TANF, is central to abused women's decision-making and safety planning. Domestic violence victims often use TANF as a bridge out of these abusive relationships. Numerous studies have found that between 40 to 60 percent of current TANF participants have experienced domestic violence at some point in their lives and up to 25 percent report that the abuse is a current problem.

Ms. Menard shared results from a study, *Meeting Survivor's Needs: A Multi-State Study of Domestic Violence Shelter Experiences*,[23] for which the authors surveyed 3,400 shelter residents in eight States and found that 93 percent of these survivors reported needing help with economic issues, including finding affordable housing, job training, transportation, education, and assistance managing money. She emphasized that each domestic violence victim's circumstances, risks, and resources will be different, and may change as the tactics used by an abusive partner change.

A national survey entitled *Not Enough: What TANF Offers Family Violence Victims* was conducted in late 2009 by the National Resource Center for Domestic Violence and Legal Momentum.[24] Key results from the study show that TANF is important for supporting domestic violence victims and TANF can make a significant difference in the lives of domestic violence survivors. Collaboration between domestic violence, TANF, and Child Support agencies, trained respondents, and streamlined processes, flexibility, and targeted interventions for immigrant victims leads to positive outcomes for domestic violence survivors.

- Improved Family Violence screening;
- Shortened application process with less documentation;
- Flexible Family Violence exemption and work requirements;
- Access to mental health, substance abuse, and trauma services;
- Onsite advocates that may also be TANF workers;
- Pre-sanction screening for domestic violence;
- Improved confidentiality;
- Removal of barriers for immigrants;
- Training for Child Support and TANF workers;
- More specialized services; and
- Increased TANF benefit levels.

Figure 16 shows a list of recommendations that could help make TANF more effective in serving victims of domestic violence. Most TANF support services, including employment services, child care, domestic violence, relocation assistance, and transportation, will assist domestic violence victims in moving towards self-sufficiency.

Following her presentation, Ms. Menard facilitated a panel of State and Tribal domestic violence practitioners. Session contributors included:

- *Peggy Butcher, Program Administrator, Family Support Services Division, Oklahoma Department of Human Services*
- *Ruth M. Glenn, MPA, Director, Colorado Department of Human Services, Domestic Violence Program*
- *Karen Gaddis, LCSW, Director, Department of Safe and Stable Families, Chickasaw Nation*

The session was structured as an open discussion forum around effectively serving survivors of domestic violence.

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[23] For more information on the *Meeting Survivor's Needs: A Multi-State Study of Domestic Violence Shelter Experiences* study, please see: https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/225025.pdf

[24] For more information on the *Not Enough: What TANF Offers Family Violence Victims* study, please see: http://www.legalmomentum.org/assets/pdfs/not-enough-what-tanf-offers.pdf

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Facilitator Question: How does collaboration in Oklahoma work and how did it get started?

Panelist Response: Ms. Butcher started a domestic violence coalition with TANF partly because of Oklahoma's decision to transfer TANF dollars to a healthy marriage initiative. The Department of Human Services and other partners wanted to get more involved in training staff on domestic violence and how to provide services to victims. The State came up with the *Safe Town* training that begins with a simulation where people are assigned to different roles, such as the judge or children in the town. There have been 145 trainings so far and the *Safe Town* training is a requirement for TANF workers. It has also been used by many other agencies.

Facilitator Question: How does Oklahoma handle turnover and new workers coming in?

Panelist Response: In Oklahoma, there is a new worker academy and the *Safe Town* training is part of that.

Facilitator Question: Colorado is a county-based program. How does Colorado approach domestic violence training?

Panelist Response: The Colorado Department of Human Services trains the TANF county workers through the Family Violence Option (FVO) training. The FVO training has been offered for the past six years and has developed and changed over the years. The training is required for new workers. Veteran employees are encouraged to take the training again, but it is not required.

In addition to the training, Ms. Glenn recommends having a domestic violence advocate in the TANF office. In Colorado, the program was able to access TANF funds for a co-location project, and the State works with shelters to hire an advocate to work in the TANF offices. Currently, there are five advocates covering 11 counties. It is an effective strategy for addressing victims' needs. If TANF staff is not able to pick up on the subtle messages that come from a victim, there is an advocate on-site that can. The domestic violence program in Colorado has a very strong partnership with the TANF program.

Facilitator Comment: The goal is not to have TANF workers be the domestic violence advocates themselves, but for the TANF workers to be able to identify domestic violence and work with the advocates. It is important for the advocates and TANF staff to communicate and have strong relationships.

Facilitator Question: How does the Chickasaw Nation Department of Safe and Stable Families approach staff training and cultural considerations?

Panelist Response: All Tribal employees go through orientation and get a brief overview of the program. Once they are employed, the domestic violence program staff provides training to the individual Tribal programs. It is most effective to conduct this training in groups of 10 to 15 people, so the trainees get individual attention, can ask questions, and address real-life examples.

The Department of Safe and Stable Families also looks at household violence. A lot of Chickasaw families have multiple generations living together, and violence may not be from an intimate partner relationship but from a family member living in the house. The program screens for household violence because it, too, can affect participant outcomes and success.

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The program has started job shadowing between the Child Support program and the domestic violence program. Staff from each program can sit in on interviews to learn how the other interacts with participants. This has been very valuable. The domestic violence program is also looking at how to help people get Child Support and employment for participants which have been very successful. In addition, the program trains child care staff because there is a large focus on cross-training staff between programs.

Facilitator Comment: Ms. Menard talked about the value of cross-training. It is not accurate to think domestic violence advocates understand the nuances of TANF, so it is important to cross-train and help them understand what the TANF staff is doing. Cross-training also helps build relationships.

Facilitator Question: What are staff required to do once domestic violence disclosure occurs? How are domestic violence advocates involved?

Panelist Response: In Colorado, all employees are trained to respond to disclosure, but Colorado is county-administered and the next steps are beyond the control of the Department. First, the participants are screened. When there is disclosure, the waiver for a six-month period is offered by training staff. The Department can provide more one-on-one consultations on procedures for implementing waivers.

Attendee Response: Ms. Mary Roberto, a meeting attendee and Manager at the Colorado Department of Human Services, added that the relationships staff establishes with participants are the key to disclosure. If participants do not feel like the case manager is on their side, they are not going to tell a case manager what is going on.

Facilitator Comment: There has been a lot of focus on waivers. The challenge is how to proceed cautiously with Child Support. The discussion has always been nothing or a waiver and developing clear options for that situation is important because the victims are not always looking for waivers.

Facilitator Question: How are domestic violence waivers dealt with in Oklahoma?

Panelist Response: Oklahoma did not adopt the domestic violence waiver at first, because the State did not want to stop the victims from taking part in services that would help them. In Oklahoma, the Department does not require victims to attend specific things depending on their situation.

Facilitator Question: How does the Chickasaw Nation handle domestic violence disclosures?

Panelist Response: When a disclosure happens, case managers should offer to call the domestic violence program with the victim to set up an appointment. Connecting victims to services quickly is important; because the victims might not make that connection once they leave and do not have the immediate support a case manager provides. The Tribes are at an advantage because programs are often co-located in the same building so case managers and other staff can walk victims down to an office or have someone meet with them right away.

Facilitator Question: What is the relationship between Child Support and domestic violence services in the Chickasaw Nation?

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Panelist Response: The domestic violence and the Child Support programs have both been providing services for a long time and the programs work very well together. The goal is to get the family self-sufficient, so the Tribe's Child Support director supports the staff in inquiring about individual child support payments. Both programs try to work together to make sure the victim is safe and the family can achieve self-sufficiency in a safe manner.

Facilitator Question: How are programs collaborating in Colorado?

Panelist Response: The program does not yet have a strong relationship with Child Support Enforcement. The domestic violence program and TANF are working very closely at the State and county level.

The Responsible Fatherhood program has been providing services for four years. The services are co-located, but because of the unnatural partnership, the first year was met with obstacles and challenges. To address these challenges, the State has identified commonalities and focused on these to advance the two programs' partnership. Cross-training and program collaboration are essential to the success of the program. The domestic violence program staff participate in every training opportunity involved with the fatherhood programs.

Through this collaboration, there has been a change in both the fatherhood programs and TANF. Staff is no longer asking why there are trainings, but asking for trainings about how to address issues.

Facilitator Question: What collaborative efforts are underway in Oklahoma?

Panelist Response: In Oklahoma's Child Care Subsidy program, cooperation with Child Support Enforcement is required in obtaining Child Support which brings more families into the domestic violence program. Many times families need the child support, but they do not want to ask for it because they do not want the perpetrator to find them. Confidentiality mechanisms have been instituted to address this concern.

Facilitator Comment: Following this conversation, Ms. Menard discussed the use of posters in TANF offices and domestic violence efforts, which communicate to the victims that the TANF program wants to know if this domestic violence is going on and why.[25] It is important to think about whether a TANF office looks like an informed, safe place to disclose. Posters, as well as training for workers so they know how to respond to domestic violence, are important for participants.

Facilitator Question: What is the biggest challenge your programs face going forward?

Panelist Response: In Oklahoma the biggest challenge is Child Support Enforcement. They are going to do more of the fatherhood agreement than ever before, and that is an opportunity. But, it is also a challenge because they will be identifying more domestic violence cases. The programs will continue to train their staff and ensure that information is disseminated throughout.

Panelist Response: In Colorado, the biggest challenge is addressing requirements while also ensuring that the needs of the participant are met. The other challenge is relationship building.

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[25] To view the domestic violence posters, please access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Web site located at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Denver%20TANF%20Mtg-POSTERS.pdf

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Panelist Response: In rural Oklahoma, there are a lot of challenges such as affordable housing and transportation for victims. For the past few weeks, all of the domestic violence shelters in Oklahoma have been full. The Chickasaw Nation program has a lot of challenges but they have come a long way in providing domestic violence services over the past few years.

Discussion Session

Following this panel discussion, Ms. Menard provided conference attendees with the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters and make comments. The questions, answers, and comments are outlined below.

Attendee Question: Can you provide suggestions for how staff should address disclosure if the participant does not actually disclose to them, but they find out in a different way.
　　Panelist Response: One method would involve approaching the victim from a perspective of concern and letting him or her know that the case manager wants to help, because it may open the door. Showing the victim support is essential because sometimes whether a person discloses depends on what happened the last time they disclosed. If it did not go well, they will be less likely to disclose again.

　　Panelist Response: Another option would be to provide information without acknowledging they need it by giving it to them for a friend or imbedding domestic violence information in other documents that provide information on all services. Some agencies are putting domestic violence information on posters in bathroom stalls or providing support numbers on the back of their business cards. Staff should not assume that everyone knows there are services and options available, so it is important for staff to highlight the ways they can help.

Attendee Comment: Several conference attendees discussed the Responsible Fatherhood and Healthy Marriage initiatives and the importance of those program partnerships to domestic violence programs.
　　Panelist Response: Whenever there is a male who is willing to work on a domestic violence issue, use the opportunity to have him discuss prevention with other men. That is a great tool.

Concurrent Child Welfare and Kinship Care Sessions

Following the combined domestic violence session, the State attendees and Tribal attendees split up to attend the concurrent Child Welfare and Kinship Care sessions.

State TANF, Child Welfare, and Kinship Care

During this session, State TANF administrators had the opportunity to discuss policies and procedures around providing service to kinship care cases. State administrators were given information on opportunities for collaboration with Child Welfare staff that could lead to successful partnerships.

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Myron Berzas, TANF Director, Division of Economic Stability, Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services[26]

Mr. Berzas provided a history of Louisiana's kinship care program which was developed out of Louisiana House Bill No. 1901 in 1999. The program provides cash assistance for each eligible child who resides with a qualified relative other than a parent and allows the State to tap into the TANF block grant for funding. The program was viewed by State leadership as "a great opportunity to utilize the TANF block grant fund to encourage the maintenance of relationships between children and their relatives when the mother or the father is not the primary care-giver."[27] The grant is a flat amount that provides $280 per month to each eligible child. On average there are about 3,600 kinship care cases throughout the State. A drastic drop in cases occurred after Hurricane Katrina, but case numbers have been relatively stable since then because many people have not moved back to the State. Currently, Louisiana pays about $26 million a year in kinship care benefits.

Tim Battreall, Kinship Caseworker, Youth and Family Services Division, El Paso County

Next, Mr. Tim Battreall discussed the fundamental aspects of El Paso County's kinship care program and its relationship to the TANF program. The kinship program works as an intermediary between intake workers and caseworkers in the TANF program. When a child comes into care and the county can identify a relative, the kinship program services are initiated. El Paso County has a very loose definition of kinship – it can be a close family friend or a person who is kin-like to the child. It does not have to be a blood relative.

Mr. Battreall discussed the kinship program processes (see Figure 17). He stressed the importance of discussing caring for a child and the impact it will have on the relative's life. Many times the children are placed with a relative who is not prepared to care for a young child, so preparing the relatives through this initial interview is critical. It is also important to determine if the placement is a permanent option. The worst case scenario is that the parents do not get back custody of the children and they end up permanently placed with relatives. Often times, parents do not always realize this, so it is important to tell them that that is a possibility.

El Paso County stresses to caseworkers that kinship placement is important because it is an alternative to foster care, is easier on the children than placing them with strangers, and saves the county money. However, one of the drawbacks of using kinship programs so frequently is that the parents may not work as hard towards reunification since they know that the children are with relatives. Caseworkers have to work especially hard in these circumstances.

Figure 17. El Paso County Kinship Care Process

Team Meeting with Family Members → Determine Best Placement Option (Relative) → Kinship Unit Refers Relative to Caseworker for Interview → Team Meeting with Family Members

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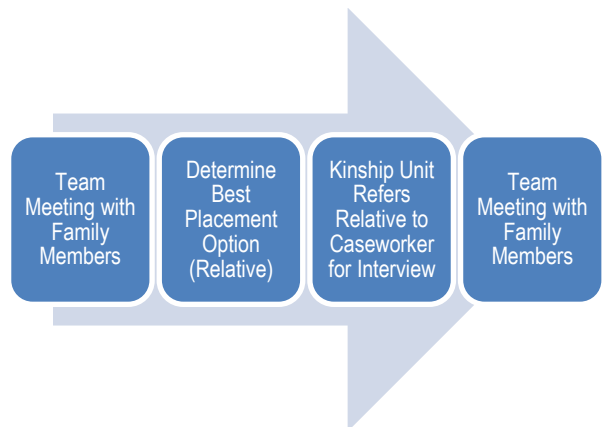
[26] For more information of this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Louisiana%20Kinship.pdf

[27] Vera W. Blakes, Assistant Secretary 1996-2001, Louisiana Office of Family Support.

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Sheryl Sablan, Family Services Team Supervisor, Employment and Family Support Division, El Paso County

Next, Ms. Sheryl Sablan elaborated on El Paso County's TANF application process for kinship care. The majority of kinship care cases applying for TANF come from participants filtered through Child Welfare, though some also come in off the street and some are referred by word of mouth. A caseworker in the department is dedicated to helping relative caregivers navigate the system.

The department also employs advocates who work as liaisons between the schools, health centers, and other relevant organizations and collaboration is important to the success of the program. The program works closely with the Department of Aging on activities for seniors since many relative placements are grandparents. Collaboration with the Departments of Aging and Child Welfare is critical and staff is cross trained in each of the systems so that they can work across multiple units.

Unlike Louisiana's flat rate for assistance, in El Paso County, the amount goes up incrementally depending on the number of children. Additionally, the county also helps families with child care, clothing, car seats, and other items needed to care for children. Many participants do not qualify for the low-income child care program, so instead the county helps by providing partial funds for child care payments. Children can stay on the county caseload until they graduate high school or receive more than $117 per month in income.

Discussion Session

Following the State TANF, Child Welfare, and Kinship Care session, meeting attendees had an opportunity to share comments and ask questions. Comments, questions, and answers are listed below.

Attendee Question: Please discuss the challenges involved in implementing the programs.
> **Presenter Response:** Working with the Department of Aging has been a success, but not without challenges. When the kids are teens and the grandparents are in their sixties, sometimes it is really hard on them; they do not have the energy to deal with that. We have a program that works with teenagers and helps them with life skills and job search and refer a lot of the youth to programs to help the grandparents out. El Paso County has put a lot of focus on grandparents and aging and tries to connect to current activities in the community.

> **Presenter Response:** In El Paso County, the case managers describe the process in detail to caregivers and stress the importance of moving quickly so there is no lag time between services.

> **Presenter Response:** Louisiana's Department of Children and Families program staff invited all the TANF case participants to come in to see if they were a better fit for kinship care since it is a higher grant. In Louisiana, the staff works to get participants into the best programs and services for which they are eligible. We are still in the infancy of our reorganization, but we are seeing offices take on their own initiatives and find partners.

Attendee Question: What do you do when the child has only an undocumented relative?
> **Presenter Response:** Ms. Sablan and Mr. Berzas said they provide the same services to that caregiver, since it is only the child receiving the grant.

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Tribal TANF, Child Welfare, and Kinship Care

While State representatives attended the State Kinship Care session summarized above, Tribal conference attendees attended a session specifically focused around Tribal child welfare and kinship care programs. Ensuring the health, safety, and general well-being of families is a critical step to building self-sufficiency. During this session, attendees discussed strategies for managing kinship care cases and developing services to better serve these populations.

Teri Haymond, Child Welfare Supervisor/Social Worker, Denver Indian Family Resource Center (DIFRC)[28]

The Denver Indian Family Resource Center (DIFRC) primarily serves Indian and Alaskan Natives and was founded in response to incorrect referrals for services. The mission of DIFRC is to strengthen vulnerable American Indian children and families through collaborative and culturally responsive services. In order to guide this strengthening, DIFRC has developed a comprehensive social services model (see Figure 18) and has created specific goals to:

- Keep children safely with their families and within their culture;
- Address the disproportionate number of Indian children in the child welfare system;
- Serve American Indian children and families with child welfare issues in seven counties of metro Denver through culturally appropriate services; and
- Advocate for active efforts toward family reunification following the standards of the Indian Child Welfare Act.

Figure 18. Denver Indian Family Resource Center (DIFRC) Services

The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA)[29] directs much of the DIFRC's work. ICWA is a Federal law that was passed in 1978 to protect cultural rights of Indian children, families, and Tribes. ICWA's goals are to:

- Establish minimum Federal standards for removal of Indian children from home;
- Place Indian children who are removed from their homes in another home that reflect their culture;
- Provide remedial and rehabilitative services and active efforts towards reunification; and
- Provide culturally congruent permanency planning.

In order to keep children with their families and culture, Tribal intervention is allowed at any point throughout child welfare cases and the ICWA creates a presumption in favor of Tribal jurisdiction transfers.

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[28] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/2011%20Tribal%20TANF%2008-03-11.pdf
[29] Indian Child Welfare Act, 25, U.S.C. Retrieved September 9, 2011, from http://www.nicwa.org/policy/law/icwa/ICWA.pdf

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Child welfare cases are transferred to Tribal courts unless the parent or child (over age 12) objects, the Tribe declines, or good causes exists. Additionally, ICWA mandates the State to make active efforts in providing services to the family and reuniting an Indian child with his or her parent after removal. ICWA placement preferences for adoptive placement are: 1) the child's extended family; 2) a family within the child's Tribe; and 3) a family of another Tribal descent. Adoption placements often involve placing children within the least restrictive setting, meeting the special needs of a child, and placing a child as close to his or her home as possible. ICWA works to maintain a child's roots which can prove to be challenging at times.

Patty LaPlant, Technical Assistance Specialist for Tribes and States on Family and Child Well-Being[30]

TANF child-only cases and kinship placement cases are responses to interruptions in the family order and work toward a goal of supporting the child. In the case of TANF child-only grants, caretakers are usually relatives and the transition is informal which can sometimes pose legal challenges. Child welfare kinship placements are formal, court-ordered removals of a child from his or her family and home as a result of abuse or neglect. In these placements, the State holds jurisdiction and the ICWA plays a significant role in the process of placing a child.

> **Figure 19. Alternative TANF Case Management Options and Partnerships**
>
> • Custom adoption.
> • Custom code definitions.
> • Custom law forums.
> • Direct Title IV, E program models.
> • Family group conferencing.
> • Indian Child Welfare Act and local system modifications.
> • Model programs: Denver and Minneapolis.

When placing a child, the most important aspects are guaranteeing a child's rights, health, and well-being. The process usually involves:

- Court ordered removal of the child;
- Placing the child with a family through a temporary State or Tribal custody order;
- A search for extended family that passes a foster care license and background check; and
- A determination of the family's Medicaid eligibility and verification to ensure that the new family meets the requirement of including the child in its medical plan.

Ms. LaPlant discussed alternative TANF case management options and partnerships for Tribes to apply within Tribal TANF programs (see Figure 19).

Arlene Templer, Department Head, Department of Human Resource Development, Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes

Ms. Arlene Templer explained that the Department of Human Resource Development (DHRD) within the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes is a one-stop program working to break generational poverty and mindsets of entitlement.[31]
In order to ensure safe family environments, the DHRD completes annual family visits. Methamphetamine labs have been discovered during these family visits which impact both the individual and his or her family.

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[30] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Denver%20Presentation.pdf
[31] For more information about the Department of Human Resource Development within the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, access its Web site: http://www.cskt.org/services/dhrd.htm

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Because of the prominence of this problem, the DHRD is in the process of developing a program for individuals who work with or use methamphetamine.

Figure 20 highlights the services provided to families through the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes DHRD.

> **Figure 20. Services provided by the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, DHRD**
>
> - Background checks;
> - Winter clothing;
> - Discounted clothing store;
> - Courses to fulfill education requirements;
> - Custody agreement forms;
> - Incentives to encourage school attendance;
> - Individual Family Plans; and
> - Second-hand furniture store.

Improving State and Tribal Relations

Following the concurrent session, attendees reconvened to discuss State-Tribal relationship building between both States and Tribes to more effectively serve children and communities.

Karen Quigley, Executive Director, Oregon Legislative Commission on Indian Services

Effective State-Tribal relations can be achieved by gathering information and effectively communicating. Including Tribal Nations and Tribal members in decision-making regarding State-Tribal relations is commonly a challenge to success but is a key component to establishing strong relationships. In order to improve State-Tribal relations, it is important for States and Tribes to be in frequent communication. Different methods and strategies for successful communication between States and Tribes include:

- Coordinating meetings between the State and Tribal representatives before passing new policies;
- Using the Internet as a resource and frequently updating Web sites so that information about agencies is readily available;
- Using or creating Tribal panels that include Tribal and State representatives;
- Having discussions to exchange ideas related to program design;
- Being aware of and understanding the differences between and among States and Tribes; and
- Participating in site visits to Tribal reservations.

By practicing these methods and establishing a constant line of communication, States and Tribes will be more aware of whom to contact, how to contact them, and when events of mutual interest are occurring. Applying these methods of collaboration and partnership creates opportunities for increased efficiency and resources among both States and Tribes.

Lesa Evers, Acting Director, Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, State of Montana[32]

The Office of Indian Affairs in Montana, established in 1951 as a part of the Executive Branch, serves as the Governor's liaison to Tribes, facilitates effective State-Tribal communications, and provides information and policy support on issues that impact Indians in Montana.
The Office of Indian Affairs also serves as an advisor to the executive branch and the Congressional Delegation. Montana uses a variety of communication methods to coordinate between the State and

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[32] To view Ms. Evers' full presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site:
http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/State-Tribal%20Relations%20%20Presentation.pdf

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Tribes. For example, the Tribes of Montana have a Montana Native American Indian Caucus and the State works closely with the Caucus.

In addition to serving as a means of communication and collaboration, the Office of Indian Affairs plays a role in effecting policy change, which ensures that the well-being of both States and Tribes are considered when creating policies. One example of a policy change that resulted from communication between the State and Tribes is the passing of House Bill 528, Indian Education for All, which re-energized Indian education history within the Montana public school system. Other initiatives that resulted from communication between States and Tribes include the Indian Country Economic Development (ICED) Program[33], diversity initiatives, and the Governor's American Indian Nations (GAIN) Council. Montana develops an annual Tribal relations report that documents how State activities may impact Tribes. This annual report holds both the State and the Tribes accountable for actions that may affect the other.

Discussion Session

Following these presentations, attendees were invited to ask questions of the presenters. The questions and answers are outlined below.

Attendee Question: Do you have any specific recommendations for initiating the relationship between Tribal governments and a State?
> **Presenter Response:** Ms. Evers encourages Tribal leaders to come to Montana's Office of Indian Affairs (OIA) and she hopes that by the time the visitor leaves, connections have been established. Communication is essential and it may be helpful to explore resources such as the training program on the OIA's Web site[34]. Ms. Evers also encourages State staff to become familiar with Tribal histories.

> **Presenter Response:** Ms. Quigley said that it is important to make sure that communication is routine between State agencies and Tribes. Another way States can build a relationship with Tribes is to attend public Tribal events.

Attendee Question: In meetings designated for Tribes and Tribal issues, how do you refocus conversations between the State agencies that are not familiar with one another?
> **Presenter Response:** Montana hosts smaller Tribal meetings. These meetings are held with single Tribes as Tribes do not always voice challenges in the presence of other Tribes. Each Tribe's meeting with the Governor is kept small in size and is one hour long to address different issues and revenue sharing agreements.

> **Presenter Response:** Oregon uses a similar strategy. To refocus conversations between State agencies, emphasize the importance of concentrating on Tribes and attempt to avoid inter-agency dialogue as collaboration adds value.

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[33] Indian Country Economic Development Program (ICED). (2011). Retrieved September 9, 2011, from http://iced.mt.gov/default.mcpx
[34] http://tribal.golearnportal.org/

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Attendee Comment*:* When my State held a consultation with the Tribes on Public Law (PL) 102-477[35], I was not allowed to attend because signing it was not a Tribal consultation and as a result, there is distrust from my Tribe toward the government.

> **OFA Response:** You raised a good point and this is a barrier we are trying to repair.

> **Attendee Response:** It would be helpful if representatives from the government visited the Tribes.

> **OFA Response:** Unfortunately, funding is limited and the State government staff cannot always afford to visit Tribal communities. This obstacle is something that the State needs to work to improve.

Attendee Question: What is a consultation?

> **OFA Response:** At the Federal level, there are rules around the engagement of leaders and program staff. The Federal government has a Regional Director who oversees a region of the country that falls under the guidance of Central Office. Every year this Regional Director hosts a Tribal consultation. This year, the Tribal consultation was in Rapid City, South Dakota. For each consultation, program staff members are invited. Individual Tribal Councils must approve the members of their community who attend. During the consultation, issues within Tribal communities are discussed with the Federal staff. A large portion of the focus of these consultations tends to be in Indian health services. Another consultation was held regarding PL 102-477[36] for the Tribes that have been approved under that title. These Tribes have different reporting requirements, because they report to the Department of Interior (DOI). All of the funds are funneled from HHS to DOI. Depending on the topic area or department, there are different consultations.

> **OFA Response:** Over the last few years, Tribal consultations were held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, and OFA Region Directors were unable to attend due to funding. The Tribal consultation in Albuquerque addressed all social service issues.

Attendee Question: How can States be more supportive to Tribes when Tribes are pursuing grants? As someone who is a representative of all Tribes within your State government, how do you balance this representation in terms of supporting competitive grants?

> **Presenter Response:** OIA asks who to contact to receive the letter of support and for the requestor to write the letter then send it to OIA.

> **Presenter Response:** At LCIS, letters of support are frequently requested, which is supported as long as there is notification of deadlines for submitting the letters of support.

> **Attendee Response:** In terms of competitiveness, I am concerned about supporting many applications for the same grant.

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[35] Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act, 25 U.S.C. § 3401 (1992). Retrieved from: http://www.doleta.gov/dinap/pdf/PublicLaw102-477.pdf Amendment to the Indian Employment, Training and related Services Demonstration Act. Retrieved from: http://www.doleta.gov/dinap/pdf/PublicLaw106-568Amend.pdf

[36] Indian Employment, Training and Related Services Demonstration Act, 25 U.S.C. § 3401 (1992). Retrieved from: http://www.doleta.gov/dinap/pdf/PublicLaw102-477.pdf Amendment to the Indian Employment, Training and related Services Demonstration Act. Retrieved from: http://www.doleta.gov/dinap/pdf/PublicLaw106-568Amend.pdf

ICF
INTERNATIONAL

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Presenter Response: This is a valid concern; however, there may be a greater risk in choosing who to support.

Attendee Question: Is there any news regarding TANF reauthorization?
   OFA Response: No, there are not any updates regarding TANF reauthorization and we are unaware of what will be decided.

Following these presentations, attendees participated in small Regional discussion groups. States and Tribes had the opportunity to use the techniques and strategies learned in the previous session to discuss collaboration and the delivery of services to Tribal TANF participants.

Day Four: Thursday, August 04, 2011

Preventing Fraud, Waste, and Abuse

This session provided Tribal TANF leadership with information to assist attendees in analyzing their internal controls and programs to ensure that attendees' programs are not at risk of fraud, waste, or abuse of Federal funds.

Leslie Hollie, Special Agent in Charge, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, US Department of Health and Human Services, Kansas City Regional Office

The purpose of the Office of Investigations (OI) within the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) is to provide services to individuals in need. OI has seven different field offices within Regions VI and VIII, located in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Denver, Colorado, Houston, Texas, Little Rock, Arkansas, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, Salt Lake City, Utah, and San Antonio, Texas (see Figure 21). OI has a variety of roles and responsibilities, which include:

Figure 21. Map of OIG Offices within Regions VI and VIII
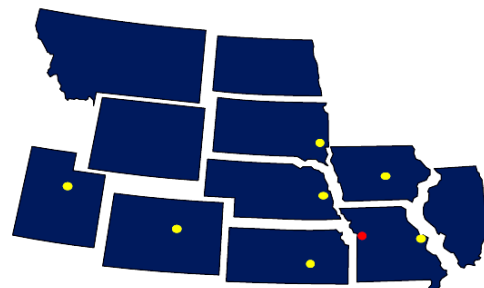
- Analyzing complaints or reports of fraud, waste, or abuse;
- Answering hotline complaints from private citizens and former and current employees within agencies;
- Educating program members and leaders about fraud, waste, and abuse of program finances and regulations; and
- Evaluating data to detect fraud, waste, or abuse.

When analyzing complaints or reports of fraud, waste, or abuse, there is a specific system that the OI applies to ensure accurate analysis. OI uses the first 60 days after identification of fraud to evaluate the

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report based on the data given. After this 60 day period, OI determines the merit of the claim. This classification is then confirmed by a field office. If a case is worthy of prosecution, the case will be presented to a U.S. District Attorney. There are a number of steps in place to report, analyze, and prosecute fraud, waste, or abuse to ensure that cases are taken seriously and accurately handled.

Curt L. Muller, Special Agent, Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations, US Department of Health and Human Services[37]

OIG was created under the Inspector General Act in 1978[38] with the purpose of providing independent oversight and protecting programs against fraud, waste, and abuse. It is the responsibility of the Office of Investigations (OI) to ensure that money provided by the government is distributed accurately and dispersed as efficiently as possible. OI is guided by its mission to:
- Conduct independent and objective audits, investigations, and inspections;
- Prevent and detect fraud, waste, and abuse;
- Promote effectiveness and efficiency;
- Review pending legislation and regulations; and
- Keep the agency head and Congress fully and currently informed.

Overall, OI's focus is on protecting the integrity of all HHS programs and the health and welfare of program beneficiaries[39].

OI conducts investigations through search and arrest warrants, OIG and Grand Jury subpoenas, consensual monitoring and surveillance, undercover operations, and strike force operations. OI authority resides under the Inspector General Act, as amended, Title 18 (Criminal Laws), Title 31 (Civil Laws), Title 42 (Public Health and Welfare), other Federal Laws, and the ability to investigate and present to State and Tribal jurisdictions. OIG employs a partnership approach. Partners of OIG include:
- HHS contractors;
- The Department of Justice (DOJ) and U.S. District Attorneys;
- Federal, State, and Tribal law enforcement organizations and agencies;
- Operations divisions and staff divisions; and
- State, local, and Tribal agencies.

Figure 22. Frequent Issues in Cases of Fraud
- Labor Hours;
- Wages;
- Types of equipment, supplies or events;
- Indirect cost rates;
- Program income;
- Matching funds;
- Multiple grants funding one program; and
- Financial certifications and draw-downs.

In order to lessen the likelihood of fraud, it is important that programs take preventative measures such as:

[37] To view Mr. Muller's full presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Overview%20HHS%20OIG.pdf
[38] Inspector General Act of 1978, Pub. L. 95-142 § 1, Oct. 12, 1978, 92 Stat. 1101. Retrieved from: http://www.usda.gov/oig/webdocs/igact1978.pdf
[39] Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2011). Retrieved September 9, 2011, from http://oig.hhs.gov/

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- Educating every employee, board member, and coalition partner about risks of fraud to increase deterrence and detection;
- Ensuring that internal controls are well-designed and properly implemented through separation of duties and recording and reviewing throughout the process;
- Carefully controlling debit, credit, gift cards, or checks;
- Monitoring payroll advances, employee reimbursement checks, IRS tax withholding payments, and other payroll issues or past-due vendor invoices; and
- Using a fiscal agent or bookkeeper.

Possible indicators of fraud may include altered or suspect records, incomplete prior audits, an individual living beyond his or her means, or lack of separation of duties within an organization. Other signs of fraud could be minimal oversight of enforcements or missing or incomplete internal controls, regulations, or operating procedures. Finally, people with recent financial problems, individuals who completely control an organization or display unusual behavior may be indicators of fraud. Awareness of fraud indicators is critical.

Discussion Session

Following this presentation, conference attendees were provided with the opportunity to ask questions of the presenters and make comments. The questions, answers, and comments are outlined below.

Attendee Question: Do other OIG components have exclusion lists?
> **Presenter Response:** Some OIG components have a debarment list, which is a list of those who are banned from conducting business with the government. There is also an exclusions list system online[40] and OI hosts a public database, the "List of Excluded Individuals/Entities Search"[41], which allows citizens to search names and uncover whether or not the names are excluded. More details such as the individual's full name, business, date of birth, site, exclusion type, specialty, and address at date of exclusion, date of exclusion, and whether or not the individual has been reinstated are also provided online.

Attendee Question: Can you please distinguish the difference between fraud and an audit finding?
> **Presenter Response:** OI searches for intentional mistakes, which would indicate fraud, and closely analyzes a case before fully investigating it as an instance of fraud.

Attendee Question: Can you provide more background on Child Support Enforcement cases?
> **Presenter Response:** Child Support cases are OIG's most frequent case type. Child Support case referrals are sent to the U.S. Attorney's Office where those referrals are presented and approved. From these cases, OI looks to detect prohibition of working so that money can be provided as initially directed. Different districts handle Child Support cases in different ways.
> Once the U.S. District Attorney's Office is involved, it is understood how important it is for the Child Support money to be provided.

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[40] Excluded Parties List System (2011). Retrieved September 9, 2011, from https://www.epls.gov/
[41] Office of Inspector General, U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. (2011). Retrieved September 9, 2011, from http://exclusions.oig.hhs.gov/

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Attendee Comment: One challenge that our program has encountered is the distribution of TANF funds to participants through debit cards.

> **Presenter Response:** One lesson learned through debit card programs is that it is important to delegate responsibilities of debit card distribution and management within the program while also maintaining efficiency.

Tribal TANF Program Accountability: Challenges and Strategies for Success

The final session of the conference was focused on improving Tribal TANF program policies, procedures, and program accountability. Effectively managing Tribal TANF programs requires a set of internal controls, policies, and procedures. During this session attendees gained a better understanding of policies and procedures that can be put in place to ensure successful program implementation and reporting.

Claude Endfield, Chair of Early Childhood Program, Northland Pioneer College[42]

It is important for Tribal TANF programs to have written policies and procedures (see Figure 23). Policy refers to something mandated by law and it should include required processes, which entity is responsible, and the areas of coverage. Policy should also be comprehensive and include a plan for the worst case scenario. Because needs change and evolve, policies need to be revised and updated on a continual basis.

Procedure is the mechanics of policy. It is a series of steps to be followed, usually in a specific order, to implement policies. Procedure, like policy, should be clear and uniform while allowing for creativity, flexibility, and input from other people.

Figure 23. Why should Tribal TANF Programs have written policies and procedures?

- To clarify direction and provide structure;
- To provide smooth operation of programs;
- To ensure consistency and equal treatment;
- To protect the rights of the program, the grantee, and the Tribe;
- To use in marketing and client recruitment;
- To reduce confusion during emergencies;
- To reduce misunderstanding between clients, staff and administrators; and
- To improve job satisfaction and morale.

There are a number of challenges to developing effective policies (see Figure 24). First, policies and procedures should be feasible for the program. The program should have the necessary resources to back up and enforce any policies and procedures put in place.
To avoid these pitfalls, policies and procedures should be written succinctly and should keep activities in sequence even if certain steps seem simple or common sense

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[42] For more information on the presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at: http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Developing%20Policies.pdf

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In reviewing policies and procedures, Ms. Endfield suggested seeking input from both participants and staff as well as developing a review timeline and process for updating policies and procedures regularly. It is important to make sure that each revision is backed by the necessary legal counsel or authority in the program in case the policy or procedure is ever challenged. Additionally, it is important to include a list of resources and a clear mission statement.

Dissemination is an important part of developing effective policies and procedures. Program leadership needs to decide who gets a copy of the policy or procedure, where to store them, and how to provide an orientation or training on the policy or procedure to the staff and partners who need to understand them.

Figure 24. Challenges to Implementing Policy

- Responsibility without authority;
- Lack of definite lines of authority;
- Low participation in decision-making;
- Lack of support;
- Isolation or lack of networking with other people and organizations with similar goals;
- Lack of organizational skills;
- Competition or lack of competition;
- Tribal politics;
- Stress of meeting the needs of families and workers; and
- "Turfdom", or the reaction of people not being willing to respond or cooperate because this is "their turf."

Geene Felix, TANF Coordinator, South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency[43]

Ms. Geene Felix spoke further about the importance of having a policy and procedure manual and shared some insights from the South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency (SPIPA) policy experiences. As Ms. Endfield stressed, policies are important because they are the playbooks that guide decisions for TANF. SPIPA has created their own policies and procedures for specific programs, and Ms. Felix shared the lessons learned from her experience in developing these policies and procedures.

Writing and updating the SPIPA policy manual took several years. SPIPA found that the most effective way to accomplish goals was to create teams and gather feedback from staff at all levels. Ms. Felix included her frontline staff in the development of policy because they have important insights on how the program may be run more effectively. She asked each staff member to provide honest feedback so they felt empowered.

Figure 25. SPIPA Policy Manual Sections

General Factors of SPIPA Intertribal TANF Program
Intake Standards
Program Standards
Participant Standards
Participant Services
Review of Adverse Determinations
Staff Standards
Employment and Training
Definitions

The executive team was composed of Ms. Felix, a fiscal staff member, a logistics person, a Child Support coordinator, and a lawyer. Once the policies were created, the team submitted them to both the advisory board and the Tribes' Board of Directors for review and approval.

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[43] For more information on this presentation, access the Welfare Peer Technical Assistance Network Web site at:
http://www.peerta.acf.hhs.gov/uploadedFiles/Tribal%20Accountability%20challenges%20and%20Strategies%20for%20success%20present.pdf

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Ms. Felix shared some general guidelines for successful policy development and explained that policy should be specific enough to help manage the program, but broad enough to allow for atypical situations. When developing policy, Tribes need to think about what the policy is trying to solve as well as who has been and who should be consulted when developing the policies. Additionally, policies should be participant focused, easy to understand, and improve the quality of the service. They should also be easy to find and access.

The SPIPA policy manual includes the Federally-approved TANF plan; Federal regulations, and State intergovernmental agreements, as well specific sections related to the program's standards (see Figure 25). After developing policy manuals, Tribal programs should distribute the manual to every TANF employee, Tribal Chairs and Tribal Council, and to anyone else who should have a copy. Distribution of the manual should be accompanied by training.

After developing policy manuals, programs should be sure to update and revise accompanying procedures as necessary. Additionally, programs should develop participant handbooks to give to all participants that spell out the big rules and creates an atmosphere of mutual respect between participants and caseworkers. Having a participant handbook helped reduce the number of appeals SPIPA has when they have to tell participants that they do not qualify for benefits.

Discussion Session

Following this discussion, Tribal conference attendees were provided with the opportunity to ask questions and make comments. The questions, answers, and comments are outlined below.

Attendee Question: How has SPIPA gathered support from the Tribe for the TANF program?
> **Presenter Response:** The SPIPA program went through a complete overhaul in 2005 and 2006 and, only then, did the program become completely transparent. The program does not silo services, and because of that, program leadership has gained trust from some of the Council members. The program has also gained a lot of support by having staff attend Council meetings to explain the TANF program.

Conclusion

On August 22, 1996, President William Jefferson Clinton signed the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunities Reconciliation Act (PRWORA) that created the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program which transformed the nation's welfare system for millions of families and ushered in a new era of public assistance focused on work and personal responsibility. For 15 years the TANF program has been considered the primary cash assistance program for low-income and working families and has provided short-term and conditioned assistance to families trying to make the transition from welfare to work. Although tested in the early 2000s by a brief recession and then tested by a slight recession in the mid-2000s decade, TANF's first test came with the beginning of the "Great Recession" and this test continues as the nation tries to recover from the overwhelming job losses and increased poverty.
As a response to the growing needs of low-income and workings families and in response to stagnating employment outcomes for many individuals, the Office of Family Assistance hosted States and Tribes from the 11 States within ACF Regions VI and VIII in Denver, Colorado to discuss the current economy and its

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impacts on the families served by the TANF program and to strategize about responsive program activities to achieve the purposes of the TANF program. A joint State and Tribal conference held August 1-4, 2011 *Improving Families' Well-Being During Challenging Times: 2011 Bi-Regional State TANF and Tribal TANF Directors' Conference* brought together more than 50 representatives to think innovatively and realistically about the state of the economy and how TANF can serve as a stronger lifeline for families trying to lift themselves from dependence to independence.   The conference attendees were provided with opportunities to engage in peer dialogue around practical solutions to challenges facing TANF programs and participant and allowed States and Tribes to engage each other on possible pathways of partnership meant to achieve greater economic self-sufficiency for the families served by both State TANF and Tribal TANF programs.

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MONDAY, AUGUST 1, 2011

12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Registration

1:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. **Welcoming Remarks and Overview**

Felicia Gaither, PhD, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VIII

Larry Brendel, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VI

1:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m. **The Rocky Road Back: Prospects for Low-income Clients to Become Self-Sufficient (Impact on Clients of the Recent Recession)**

The recent recession has increased poverty, unemployment, and underemployment for low-income families and challenged states and localities to develop strategies to create jobs and improve the economic security for low-income families. During this presentation, participants will gain a better understanding of the key impacts of the recent recession on low-income families, as well as a more clear perspective about the pace of the economic recovery, and be able to determine indicators of recovery important for local families.

Moderator: Larry Brendel, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VI

Presenter: Richard Froeschle, Director of Labor Market and
Career Information, Texas Workforce Commission

2:45 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. Break

3:00 p.m. – 4:45 p.m. **State Policy Responses to the Recent Recession and their Impacts on Low-Income Families**

Meeting the needs of low-income families during the recent recession led to ingenuity at the state level. During this session we will talk about how states responded to high unemployment and increased poverty by allowing caseloads to rise and by providing TANF-funded subsidized employment. We also will examine opportunities to improve employment and self-sufficiency outcomes for low-income families. During the second part of this session, Ms. Schott will facilitate a discussion to seek ideas for making the TANF program more responsive to its clientele, particularly during economic hard times, and how states can increase engagement of TANF participants in work or in work-preparation activities.

Moderator: Damon Waters, Technical Specialist
ICF International

Presenter: Liz Schott, Senior Fellow
Welfare Reform and Income Support Division
Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

4:45 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. **Wrap-up**

Moderator: Damon Waters, Technical Specialist
ICF International

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TUESDAY, AUGUST 2, 2011

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.　　Registration and Networking

8:00 a.m. – 9:15 a.m.　　**The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and its Impact on Low-Income Families and Workers**

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPAC) was signed into law to improve access and affordability of health insurance for more than 32 million Americans. Once fully implemented, the bill is expected to cover nearly every American and increase the ability of low-income families to access Medicaid, CHIP, and new health insurance exchanges. Additionally, the PPAC provides additional funding for healthcare workforce development targeted to low-income individuals and unemployed workers. During this roundtable discussion, participants will get an update on the PPAC and gain a clearer understanding of its provisions relating to low-income families and workers.

Moderator:　　Felicia Gaither, PhD, TANF Program Manager
　　　　　　　Administration for Children and Families- Region VIII

Discussant:　　Richard C. Allen, Associate Regional Director
　　　　　　　Denver Division of Medicaid and Children's Health
　　　　　　　Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS)- Region VIII

9:15 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.　　Break

9:30 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.　　**Improving Economic Self-Sufficiency through Increased Program Efficiencies and Streamlined Services in the face of budgetary constraints and other challenges being faced by State TANF programs**

States and localities are looking to improve the economic self-sufficiency outcomes of TANF families by providing increased employment opportunities and supports by designing and implementing streamlined services. By targeting services to the needs of clients these initiatives effectively reduce costs, encourage integration, and improve outcomes for programs and families. Highlighting the Work Support Strategies Initiative, this session will outline a set of promising practices integrated at the local level to enhance and streamline services. During this session, participants will have the opportunity to interact with State-level program discussants and national experts about key strategies for streamlining service delivery and more strategically meeting the various needs of TANF families. Participants will engage in discussions about how to improve program responsiveness to the needs of clients with limited resources and have an opportunity to hear about innovative strategies adopted by TANF programs from across the country and will learn how to apply this information to their own programs.

Moderator:　　Liz Schott, Senior Fellow
　　　　　　　Welfare Reform and Income Support Division
　　　　　　　Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Discussants:　　Arturo Serrano, Economic Assistance Manager
　　　　　　　Work Support Strategies Initiative, El Paso County Colorado

　　　　　　　Helen Thatcher, Program Manager
　　　　　　　Utah Department of Workforce Services

　　　　　　　Vida Tapia-Sanchez, Chief, Policy Bureau – Income Support Division
　　　　　　　New Mexico Human Services Department

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11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.	Lunch on your own

1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.   **Enhancing Career Pathways through Community College Connections and the Affordable Care Act (ACA)/Health Professions Opportunities Grants Program**

During this forum participants will engage presenters and peers in discussions around innovative approaches to improving access to education and training opportunities and will learn strategies for improving partnerships with community colleges, while understanding methods for placing TANF participants in education and training activities. Additionally, during this session participants will receive an update on the Health Professions Opportunity Grants Initiative, healthcare career pathways, and learn strategies for integrating career pathway development into TANF programs with a specific emphasis on the healthcare workforce.

Moderator: Damon Waters, Technical Specialist
ICF International

Discussants: Gilda Kennedy, Program Coordinator II
South Carolina Department of Social Services/Project Healthcare
Occupations Preparation for Employment (HOPE)

Lauren Eyster, Research Associate
The Urban Institute

Shauna King-Simms, Director of Transitions Programs
Kentucky Community and Technical College System

2:30 p.m. – 2:45 p.m.   **Break**

2:45 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.   **TANF Reauthorization/Flexibility Discussion (Part II)**

This facilitated discussion is designed to gather input from States on program priorities and challenges, culminating in ideas administrators would like to see as part of a TANF reauthorization effort.

Moderator: Felicia Gaither, PhD, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VIII

Discussants: Mark Greenberg, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy
Administration for Children and Families

Earl S. Johnson, PhD, Director
Office of Family Assistance
Administration for Children and Families

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4:15 p.m. – 5:15 p.m.	Concurrent Regional Meetings	
	Region VI	**Region VIII**
	The ASSET Initiative: Status of Asset-building Strategies in Region VI States The ASSET Initiative is a collaborative effort that brings together the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) offices and their partner agencies and organizations to extend the benefits of Individual Development Accounts (IDAs), financial education, and related services to improve the economic status of working individuals and families. During this session, our Regional Consultant for the AFI project will provide an overview of the initiative and share asset-building strategies being employed by Regions around the country. Region VI TANF Directors will have the opportunity to share their states' innovative strategies and engage in an interactive discussion regarding next steps that are available to provide for even more robust asset-building practices within our respective communities. Presenter: Angela Duran, Regional Consultant Assets for Independence (AFI)	Region VIII Discussion Forum During this discussion, Region VIII attendees will have the opportunity to share specific program updates and/or policy challenges they are facing in delivering services to TANF families. Region VIII participants will also have an opportunity to reflect on the conference and discuss ideas for further technical assistance.

3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	Registration for Tribal Participants
5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.	State/Tribe Networking Reception

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WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 3, 2011

7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.	**Registration for Tribal Participants and Networking**
8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	**Tribal TANF Forum (for Tribal participants only)**

Moderator: Felicia Gaither, PhD, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VIII

Mark Greenberg, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Policy
Administration for Children and Families

Earl S. Johnson, PhD, Director
Office of Family Assistance
Administration for Children and Families

8:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m.	**Registration for State Participants and Networking**
9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.	**Effective Assessment and Service Options for Domestic Violence Survivors**

Identifying, assessing, and servicing TANF participants surviving domestic violence remain challenges for many TANF programs. Although State TANF programs have a variety of options for addressing the needs of domestic violence survivors, there still remain specific challenges relating to identifying victims and delivering appropriate services. During this session, participants will engage with presenters and peers on successful strategies for addressing the needs of domestic violence survivors in the TANF caseload. With a specific emphasis on assessment and service provision, participants will learn innovative approaches for ensuring that TANF participants are provided the comprehensive services needed to improve individual outcomes.

Moderator: Carol Sedanko, TANF Program Specialist
Administration for Children and Families- Region VI

Discussant(s): Anne Menard, Director of the National Resource Center on Domestic Violence at the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence

Karen Gaddis, LCSW, Director
Department of Safe and Stable Families, Chickasaw Nation

Peggy Butcher, Program Administrator
Family Support Services Division
Oklahoma Department of Human Services

Ruth M. Glenn, MPA, Director
Colorado Department of Human Services
Domestic Violence Program

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m.	**Break**

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10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.	Concurrent Child Welfare and Kinship Care Sessions

Tribal TANF, Child Welfare, and Kinship Care	State TANF, Child Welfare, and Kinship Care
Ensuring the health, safety, and general well-being of our families is one critical step to building self-sufficiency among any TANF participant. In Tribal communities, this is essential. During this session, participants will discuss strategies for managing kinship care cases and developing services to better serve these populations.	TANF State administrators will have the opportunity to discuss their policies, and procedures regarding how they service kinship care cases. State administrators will be given information on opportunities for collaboration with child welfare staff, leading to successful partnerships to service their population.
Moderator: Jennifer Rackliff, Manager, ICF International	**Moderator:** Damon Waters, Technical Specialist, ICF International
Discussants: Teri Haymond, Child Welfare Supervisor/Social Worker, Denver Indian Family Resource Center	**Discussants:** Tim Battreall, Kinship Caseworker, Youth and Family Services Division, El Paso County
Patty LaPlant, Technical Assistance Specialist for Tribes and States on Family and Child Well-Being	Sheryl Sablan, Family Services Team Supervisor, Employment and Family Support Division, El Paso County
Arlene Templer, Department Head, Department of Human Resource Development (DHRD), Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes	Cheryl Schnell, Manager, Employment and Family Support Division, El Paso County
	Myron Berzas, TANF Director, Division of Economic Stability, Louisiana Department of Children & Family Services

12:15 p.m. – 1:30 p.m.	Networking Lunch

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1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.	**Improving State/Tribal Relations**

This session will highlight strategies for developing effective partnerships as both States and Tribes work towards the goal of building self-sufficiency among TANF participants. Communication between Tribes and States needs to be effective and open in order to ensure that successful collaboration around building self-sufficiency among Tribal TANF participants can come to fruition.

Moderators: Felicia Gaither, PhD, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VIII

Larry Brendel, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VI

Discussants: Karen Quigley, Executive Director
Oregon Legislative Office on Indian Affairs

Lesa Evers, Acting Director
Governor's Office of Indian Affairs, State of Montana

3:30 p.m. – 3:45 p.m.	**Break**

3:45 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.	**Small State/Tribal Group Discussions**

States and Tribes will have an opportunity to use the techniques and strategies learned in the previous session to discuss the delivery of services to Tribal TANF participants.

Moderator: Jennifer Rackliff, Manager
ICF International

4:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.	**Wrap-up/Closing**

Moderator: Jennifer Rackliff, Manager
ICF International

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THURSDAY, AUGUST 4, 2011

8:15 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. **Welcome**

Felicia Gaither, PhD, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VIII

Larry Brendel, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VI

Earl S. Johnson, PhD, Director
Office of Family Assistance
Administration for Children and Families

8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m. **Preventing Fraud, Waste, and Abuse**

This presentation will provide information that will assist attendees in analyzing their internal controls and programs to ensure that they are not at risk of fraud, waste or abuse of Federal funds. Participants will have potential resources and strategies identified by Office of Inspector General Staff.

Moderator:	Felicia Gaither, PhD, TANF Program Manager
	Administration for Children and Families- Region VIII
Presenter:	Leslie Hollie, Special Agent In Charge
	Office of Inspector General- Office of Investigations, US Department of Health & Human Services, Kansas City Regional Office
	Curt L. Muller, Special Agent
	Office of Inspector General - Office of Investigations
	US Department of Health & Human Services

10:30 a.m. – 10:45 a.m. **Break**

10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. **Tribal TANF Program Accountability: Challenges and Strategies for Success**

Effectively managing Tribal TANF programs requires a set of internal controls, policies, and procedures. During this session participants will gain a better understanding of policies and procedures that can be put in place to ensure successful program implementation and reporting.

Moderator:	Claude Endfield, Chair of Early Childhood Program
	Northland Pioneer College
Discussant:	Geene Felix, TANF Coordinator
	South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency

12:15 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. **Working Lunch - Individual Technical Assistance Discussion of Putting Accountability Process in Place**

Discussants:	Claude Endfield, Chair of Early Childhood Program
	Northland Pioneer College
	Geene Felix, TANF Coordinator
	South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency

2:00 p.m. **Adjourn and Evaluations**

Felicia Gaither, PhD, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VIII

Larry Brendel, TANF Program Manager
Administration for Children and Families- Region VI

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Tribal TANF Directors' Conference

Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance
Regions VI and VIII

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Regions VI and VIII

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**Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance
Regions VI and VIII**

Improving Families' Well-Being During Challenging Times:
2011 Bi-Regional State TANF and Tribal TANF Directors' Conference

Evaluation Analysis

ICF
INTERNATIONAL

Improving Families' Well-Being During Challenging Times
2011 Bi-Regional State TANF and Tribal TANF Directors' Conference

Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance
Regions VI and VIII

Evaluation Analysis

The Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, Regions VI and VIII *Improving Families' Well-Being during Challenging Times: 2011 Bi-Regional TANF and Tribal TANF Directors' Conference* was held August 1-4, 2011 in Denver, Colorado at the Magnolia Hotel. This year's meeting provided State and Tribal TANF directors from Regions VI and VIII with the opportunity to engage with Federal, State and Tribal partners through interactive sessions and discussions around promising program models and strategies for service delivery to families the recent economic recession.

Over the conference's four days, attendees engaged in a variety of sessions by 26 distinguished experts and peers. Specific topic areas discussed during the conference included:

- Impact of the recent recession on low-income participants;
- State policy responses to the recent recession and the impacts on low-income families;
- The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act;
- Increased program efficiencies and streamlined services;
- Enhancing career pathways through community college connections and the Affordable Care Act (ACA)/ Health Professions Opportunities Grants Program;
- TANF Flexibility and Reauthorization;
- The ASSET Initiative and asset-building strategies;
- Effective assessment and service options for domestic violence survivors;
- Tribal and State TANF, child welfare and kinship care;
- Improving State-Tribal relations;
- Preventing fraud, waste and abuse; and
- Tribal TANF program accountability and implementation.

Findings from participant evaluations of the sessions focusing on these topics are presented below.
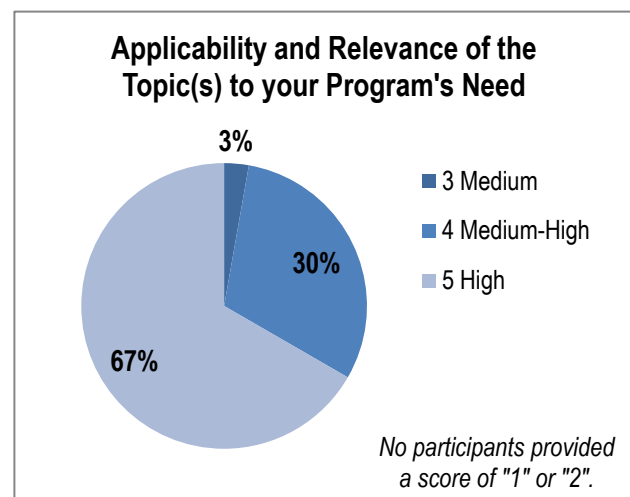
Improving Families' Well-Being During Challenging Times
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Administration for Children and Families
Office of Family Assistance
Regions VI and VIII

Evaluation Analysis

Overall Evaluation Analysis

Of the 50 total State and Tribal attendees, 36 overall evaluation forms were completed, equaling a 72 percent response rate. This response rate was most likely a result of attendees leaving the meeting early without completing the final evaluation form as well as the fact that some sessions were specific to State or Tribal attendees. Overall, the conference was well received. Highlights of the evaluation results reveal that:

- All respondents indicated that the presenters were skilled in the topical areas.

- All respondents thought that the information provided at the conference was clear.

- All respondents thought that the topics were applicable and relevant to their programs' needs. Ninety-seven percent of respondents rated the applicability of the topics to their needs as "medium-high" or "high."

- The majority of respondents positively viewed the responsiveness of the technical assistance strategy to their program's needs, with 92 percent of the respondents providing a score of either "medium-high" or "high."

- The majority of respondents (97 percent) viewed the meeting materials as relevant, and 100 percent of respondents rated the meeting materials as usable.

- All of the respondents viewed the meeting itself as an appropriate vehicle for achieving their programs' technical assistance needs, with 75 percent of respondents providing a score of either "medium-high" or "high."

Applicability and Relevance of the Topic(s) to your Program's Need

3%
30%
67%

- 3 Medium
- 4 Medium-High
- 5 High

No participants provided a score of "1" or "2".

Responsiveness of Technical Assistance Strategy to your Program's Needs

3% 5%
39%
53%

- 1 Low
- 3 Medium
- 4 Medium-High
- 5 High

No participants provided a score of "2".

- Overall, the respondents' comments about the meeting and the sessions were positive and complimentary, citing useful information, resources and instruction regarding implementation methods.
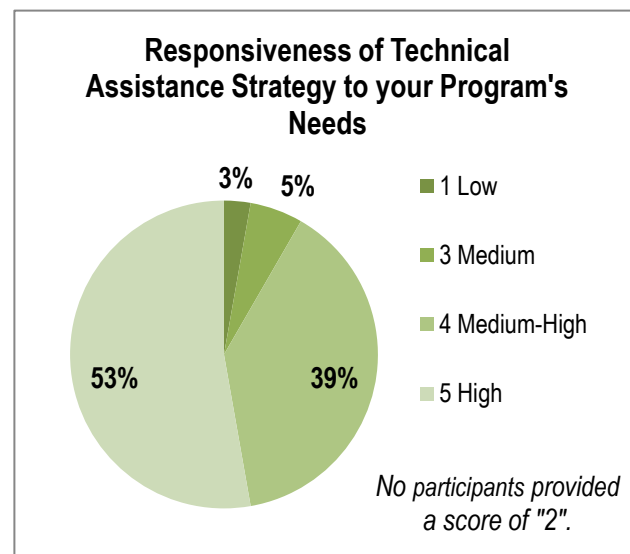
Improving Families' Well-Being During Challenging Times
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Evaluation Analysis

- One common suggestion in the respondents' comments was to create additional small discussions, especially between States and Tribes, in the future.
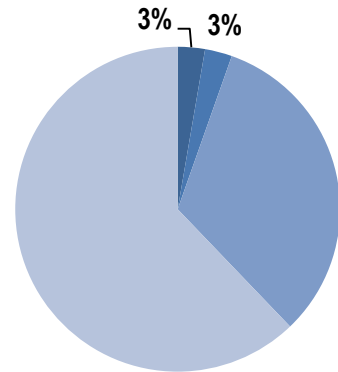
The highlights of the conference, as indicated by respondents, included the knowledge gained about preventing fraud, waste and abuse as well as the guidance regarding policy revision and program flexibility. Many respondents indicated that they plan on returning to their offices to discuss the lessons learned with staff, reviewing their program's policies and coordinating a meeting or visit with Tribal or State agency members.

Attendees were asked to provide responses indicating what new knowledge and/or skill they learned; how they plan to apply the new knowledge and/or skills; whether they anticipate any barriers to implementing the new knowledge and/or skills; and, what additional technical assistance they needed to implement the knowledge and/or skills.

Relevance of Materials Provided

■ 1 Low ■ 3 Medium ■ 4 Medium-High ■ 5 High

3% 3%

No participants provided a score of "2".

In conclusion, the Administration for Children and Families, Office of Family Assistance, Regions VI and VIII *Improving Families' Well-Being During Challenging Times: 2011 Bi-Regional State TANF and Tribal TANF Directors' Conference* was a success in the eyes of the attendees. Attendees appreciated the networking opportunities and knowledge gained from the technical assistance around program improvement and best practices. Respondents also referenced the dedication of the conference coordinators and appreciated the meeting content as well as the wealth of material covered by State and Tribal TANF experts and peers in Regions VI and VIII. Many attendees cited intended application of the subject matter when they return to their programs, and many had already initiated new partnerships to continue to learn more about enhancing their programs.