

Strengthening Services and Supports for Diverse Types of Families in Tribal TANF

Terry L Cross (Seneca Nation), Bear Clan
DHL(hon), MSW, ACSW, LCSW,
Founder & Senior Advisor, NICWA

2023 OFA Tribal TANF Technical Assistance
Meeting: A Threaded Connection: Weaving
the Path to Creative Solutions

August 22, 2023
River Spirit Casino Resort
Tulsa, Oklahoma




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

1

Objectives

Participants will:

- Learn about the National Technical Assistance Center on Kinship and Grandfamilies
- Learn about available Network resources
- Identify technical assistance opportunities
- Discuss how TANF programs are working to support relative caregivers




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

2

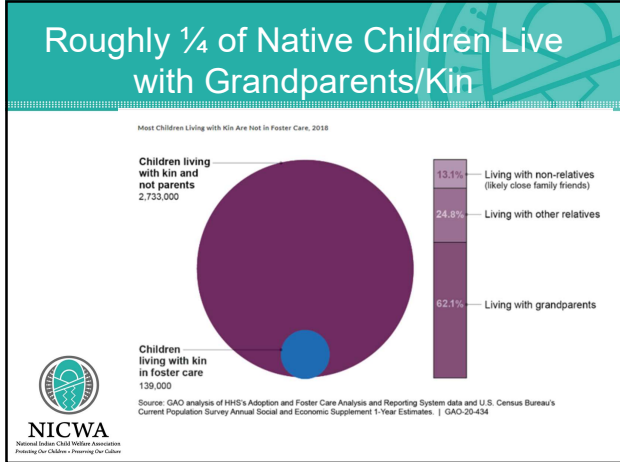
Children in Grandfamilies (Kinship Care)

- For every child raised by Kin in foster care 18 are being raised by Kin outside the child welfare system
- More than one-third of the children in foster care are being raised by their relatives
- 8% of children raised by relatives are Native



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

3



4

Grandfamilies and Kinship Support Network: A National TA Center

<https://www.gksnetwork.org/>

GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP SUPPORT NETWORK
A National Technical Assistance Center

WHO WE SERVE ▾ RESOURCE LIBRARY EVENTS ABOUT US ▾

Request Assistance →

The First-Ever National Technical Assistance Center for those who Serve Kinship/Grandfamilies

5

Primary Partners


- Generations United (Lead)
- Child Trends
- National Caucus and Center on Black Aging
- USAging
- Zero to Three
- NICWA

NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

6

Overview of the Grandfamilies and Kinship Support Network

- \$10 million over 5 years as part of the American Rescue Plan Act to create the TA Center
- Administration for Community Living (HHS)
- Generations United was awarded the cooperative agreement




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

7

Overview of the Grandfamilies and Kinship Support Network (continued)

- Network provides holistic TA, training, and tools to states, tribes, and territories as well as organizations that serve kinship families
- Not designed to help families directly—it will improve systems and create tools for families to support their health and well-being



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

8

Technical Assistance

Providing Technical Assistance to Enhance the Level of Support Grandfamilies & Kinship Families Receive

Our umbrella of technical assistance provides professionals with opportunities to engage in learning, enhance quality of services, and build capacity to better serve kinship/grandfamilies.




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

9

Grandfamilies and Kinship Support Network Activities

Engage experts to help improve services and practices in:



- Health
- Education
- Nutrition
- Housing
- Financial Needs
- Legal Issues
- Disabilities
- Caregiver Support



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

10

Helping Systems Respond





NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

11

Grandfamilies and Kinship Support Network Activities

- Encourage implementation of EB/EI/E practices and programs, and promote coordination of services across systems
- Facilitate learning across systems
- Help systems plan and coordinate responses during emergencies and disasters
- Assist systems in promoting equity and culturally and linguistically appropriate approaches




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

12

NICWA's Role

- Extended family responsibility for children and kinship care are embedded in tribal cultures
- The best way to protect children is through services that preserve and strengthen their families and extended families
- Research shows that children do better when they remain with or are placed with their relatives




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

13

NICWA's Role (continued)

- Support for family members in caring for relative children who can't remain at home is critical to their ability to provide care
- Service systems responsible for meeting the needs for children and families need access to information and resources on best practices
- To be effective service systems need to be collaborative




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

14

NICWA's Role (continued)

- Provide issue expertise and serve as the primary liaison to tribes, tribal organizations, and urban Indian organizations
- Provide training and technical assistance on grandfamilies/relative care
- Participate in in-depth holistic TA with two states and lead in-depth holistic TA with one tribe




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

15

NICWA's Role (continued)

- Provide resources for Network website
- Provide articles, toolkits and other resources
- Lead development of TA and materials for Native populations and review all Network materials using a DEI lens ensuring accessibility for these populations




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

16

NICWA's Role (continued)

- Identify exemplary, evidence informed, and innovative practices and programs serving Native grandfamilies
- Participate in learning collaborative discussions, webinars, and in-person or virtual trainings
- Participate in project evaluation, providing expertise on culturally appropriate evaluation




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

17

Giving Input - Discussion

- Do you know of examples of good intergenerational programming?
- What kinds of services and supports for grandfamilies and kinship families are you providing or interested in providing?
- How well do agencies collaborate to meet the needs of relative caregivers? What are the gaps?




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

18

Topical Example

**Training and Technical Assistance
to Improve Collaboration**




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

19

What Is Collaboration?

- A strategy that enhances an agency or department's strengths and expands its ability to accomplish its mission
- A decision to work jointly for a common cause
- Cooperation resulting in each agency, program or department benefiting and giving better service
- Collaboration supports and honors tribal sovereignty and culture through more holistic services




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

20

Key Points

- Collaborating programs develop a shared vision for positive outcomes
- Collaborative programs develop processes for joint work and strategies to sustain them
- Collaborating programs budget with collaboration in mind
- Collaborating partners are accountable to each other and set up routine check-ins
- Collaborating partners adapt to needs of the community, families, and children



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

21

Why Collaborate?

- Children get better care when the adults in their lives cooperate!
- It works in families, and it works in systems
- Scarce resources
- Grandfamily challenges are complex
- Every family matters!



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

22

Collaboration Challenges

- Conflicting values
- Historic distrust
- Implicit bias
- Funding silos
- Information sharing barriers



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

23

Collaboration Challenges (continued)

- Potential to compromise organizational integrity
- Risk of damage to reputation
- Boundary issues



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

24

What Helps Collaboration Work?

- Collaboration honors the autonomy of each partnering department
- Partners respect that each other's staff are under the direction of that department's management
- Partner's feedback or perspectives respect autonomy
- Partners rely on written agreements and clear obligations



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

25

What Helps Collaboration Work? (continued)

- Partners respect internal processes, time challenges, and workload
- Partners maintain confidentiality resolving issues with discretion
- Partners value the role that the partner brings as essential to mission
- Partners give each other the benefit of the doubt when something goes wrong



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

26

Building Blocks for Collaboration

- Documented needs
- Readiness/urgency
- Funder buy-in
- Trauma informed
- Care coordination design
- Screening tools
- Common assessment
- Open communication
- Confidentiality
- Shared case plans




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

27

**Building Blocks
for Collaboration (continued)**

- Data sharing
- Leadership support
- Staff buy-in
- Training/TA/Cross-training
- Budgeting/funding
- Shared vision
- Cultural integrity
- Commitment to healing
- Respect for others' missions
- Clear collaboration principles




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

28

**Discussion on TA Needs Regarding
Collaboration**

- What information, support, and/or skills would help facilitate effective collaboration across agencies to better support relative caregivers' needs?
- What qualities are important in a service provider that will serve grandfamilies well?
- What do service providers need to know to effectively serve grandfamilies?




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

29

Resource Example

Policy Toolkit - Kinship Services
in Tribal Child Welfare



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

30

Policy Toolkit - Kinship Services in Tribal Child Welfare



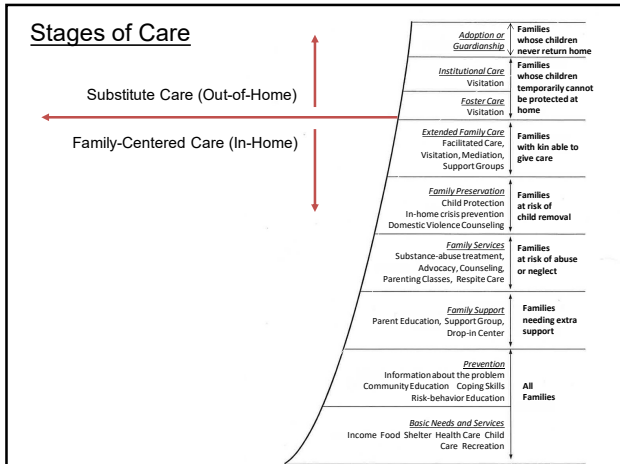
Terry Cross
Founder & Senior Advisor

Mariah Meyerholz
Govt Affairs & Comm Development Specialist



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture


31



32

Toolkit Overview

- Intersections between policy and kinship services
- Engaging extended family networks at different stages of child welfare intervention
- Supporting relatives who step into parenting roles
- Crafting policies consistent with tribal culture, values, and teachings
- Policy as a means to honor and support the integrity of extended family systems




NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

33

Policy Toolkit Summary

- Policy must support cultural integrity
- Policy must support the safety and well being of the children, families, and community
- Policy can provide consistent practice over time if used as living guidance
- Policy is only one tool to support good practice



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

34

Other Resources

- Tip sheets
- Fact sheets
- Videos
- Webinars
- Topical Briefs
- Toolkits
- Publications

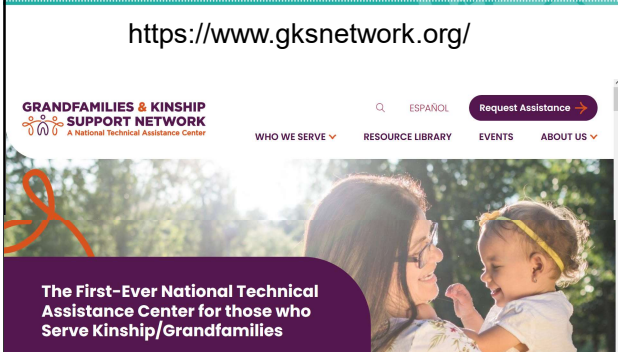


NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture

35

Remember to Visit

<https://www.gksnetwork.org/>



GRANDFAMILIES & KINSHIP SUPPORT NETWORK
A National Technical Assistance Center

WHO WE SERVE ▾ RESOURCE LIBRARY EVENTS ABOUT US ▾

The First-Ever National Technical Assistance Center for those who Serve Kinship/Grandfamilies

36


Resources




Native Grandfamilies Toolkit
<https://www.nicwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/AIAN-Toolkit-WEB.pdf>
 or
<https://www.gu.org/racial-equity-toolkits-featuring-grandfamilies/>

37


Resources (continued)





- Watch for NICWA's upcoming toolkit on policy development to support relative caregivers and tribal kinship services.
- If you need technical assistance or training regarding kinship related policies, contact Tara Reynon at tara@nicwa.org
- Check out [Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center](#)
- Next year NICWA will revise our toolkit for setting standards for relative foster family homes

38

Additional Resource on Collaboration







<https://www.jbassoc.com/resource/tribal-tanf-child-welfare-coordination-collaboration-assessment-tool/>

39

Thank you

National Indian Child Welfare
Association

www.nicwa.org
(503) 222-4044



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting Our Children • Preserving Our Culture
