



**NICWA**

National Indian Child Welfare Association

*Protecting our children • Preserving our culture*

## **TANF AND CHILD WELFARE INTEGRATION:**

*Supporting Tribal Children and Families*

**Addie Smith, JD, MSW, NICWA Government Affairs Associate**

# Purposes of Child Welfare

1. Prevent child abuse and neglect
2. Respond to reports of child abuse and neglect
- 3. Keeping children safely in their own homes by providing families with support and rehabilitative treatment**
- 4. Providing temporary family-like out-of-home placements for children whose families are working toward safety**
5. Finding alternative permanent placements for children whose families cannot find safety
6. Helping youth who do find permanent placements successfully transition to adulthood

# Purposes of TANF

1. **Assisting needy families so that children can be cared for in their own homes**
2. Reducing the dependency of needy parents by promoting job preparation, work and marriage
3. Preventing out-of-wedlock pregnancies
4. Encouraging the formation and maintenance of two-parent families

# Considerations

- **Low-income families, such as those who qualify for TANF are generally at greater risk for child maltreatment than other families.**
- Children from a low socio-economic status are
  - 3X more likely to have been reported as abused
  - 7X more likely to have been reported as neglectedthan children of higher socio-economic status

# Considerations

- **Child only cases have increased nationwide, 40% of families receiving TANF are child only**
  - children's parents are ineligible for benefits, for example if they are ineligible due to their immigration status, or
  - child is living with a nonparent caregiver, who is either a relative or unrelated adult acting in place of a parent (1/3 of child only cases)
- **Relatives are often the primary source of care for children that cannot live at home**
  - Even if child welfare is involved, many of relatives cannot, or are unwilling, to meet foster care licensing standards
  - If child welfare is not involved TANF doesn't always provide supportive services for kinship care givers

# Considerations

- **32-40% of youth leaving foster care were found to rely on some form of public assistance**
- 40-60% of women who age out are pregnant within 12-18 months of leaving foster care
- 25-55% of youth are unemployed when discharged from foster care
  - only 38% of those employed are working one year after leaving foster care

# Integration Makes Sense

- The new TANF program placed more emphasis on facilitating self-sufficiency via job training and employment opportunities, **as well as encouraging stable families**
- Partnerships between CW and TANF provide opportunities to create a cohesive safety net that ensures children's needs are met
- Both systems share a common mission of ensuring the well-being of children and families
  - the welfare system is focused primarily on enhancing the economic self-sufficiency of families with children
  - the child welfare system is focused primarily on ensuring the safety of children

# Integration Makes Sense

- The needs of families, rather than funding streams or organizational structures, should drive the provision of services
- Collaboration between ICW & TANF can ease tribal social service burdens by:
  - pooling scarce human and material resources,
  - sharing expertise among staff,
  - expanding services,
  - reducing duplications of efforts,
  - fostering the exchange information about families' needs in order to formulate the most responsive approach



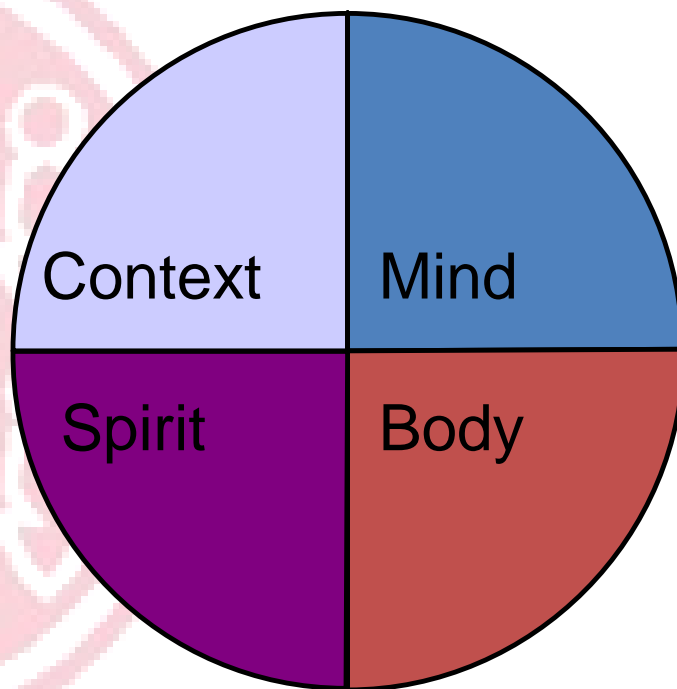
# Integration Makes Sense

- The needs of families, rather than funding streams or organizational structures, should drive the provision of services
- Collaboration between ICW & TANF can help ease family burdens by:
  - Providing more services
  - Providing coordinated services (less gaps)
  - Avoiding separate overlapping case plans and obligations
  - Identifying challenges early and providing preventative interventions

# Integrating Child Welfare/TANF

- Case plan coordination (team; case management; location)
- Service provision (holistic; culturally relevant; system-wide)
- Improved information sharing (data sharing – client and aggregate)
- New staff roles or positions (liaison, joint committees)

# Integrating Child Welfare/TANF



# Service examples

## Addressing at-risk families

- Coordinated intake/referral for services
- Risk assessment
- Intensive case management/Multidisciplinary teams
- Family resource centers
- Parent Navigators

# Service examples

Helping stabilize relative caregivers

- Child only payments for out of home care
- Providing supplemental payments to relative caregivers (school needs, legal, housing related)
- Supportive services (respite, home visiting, in-home services, support groups)
- Foster parent/Kinship caregiver navigators

# Service examples

## Supporting at-risk youth

- Work preparation
- Prevention programming (mentoring, academic tutors, healthy youth coaching, transitioning skills)
- Pregnancy prevention
- Healthy relationship skills

# Tribal CW/TANF Grants

- 3-year grants –
- \$150,000 each year
- next grant cycle starts October 1, 2014
  - RFP isn't out yet



# Tribal CW/TANF Grants

To focus on the following services:

- improved case management for families eligible for assistance from a Tribal TANF program
- supportive services and assistance to tribal children in out-of-home placements and the tribal families caring for such children, including adoptive families;
- prevention services and assistance to tribal families at risk of child abuse and neglect



# Tribal CW/TANF Grantees

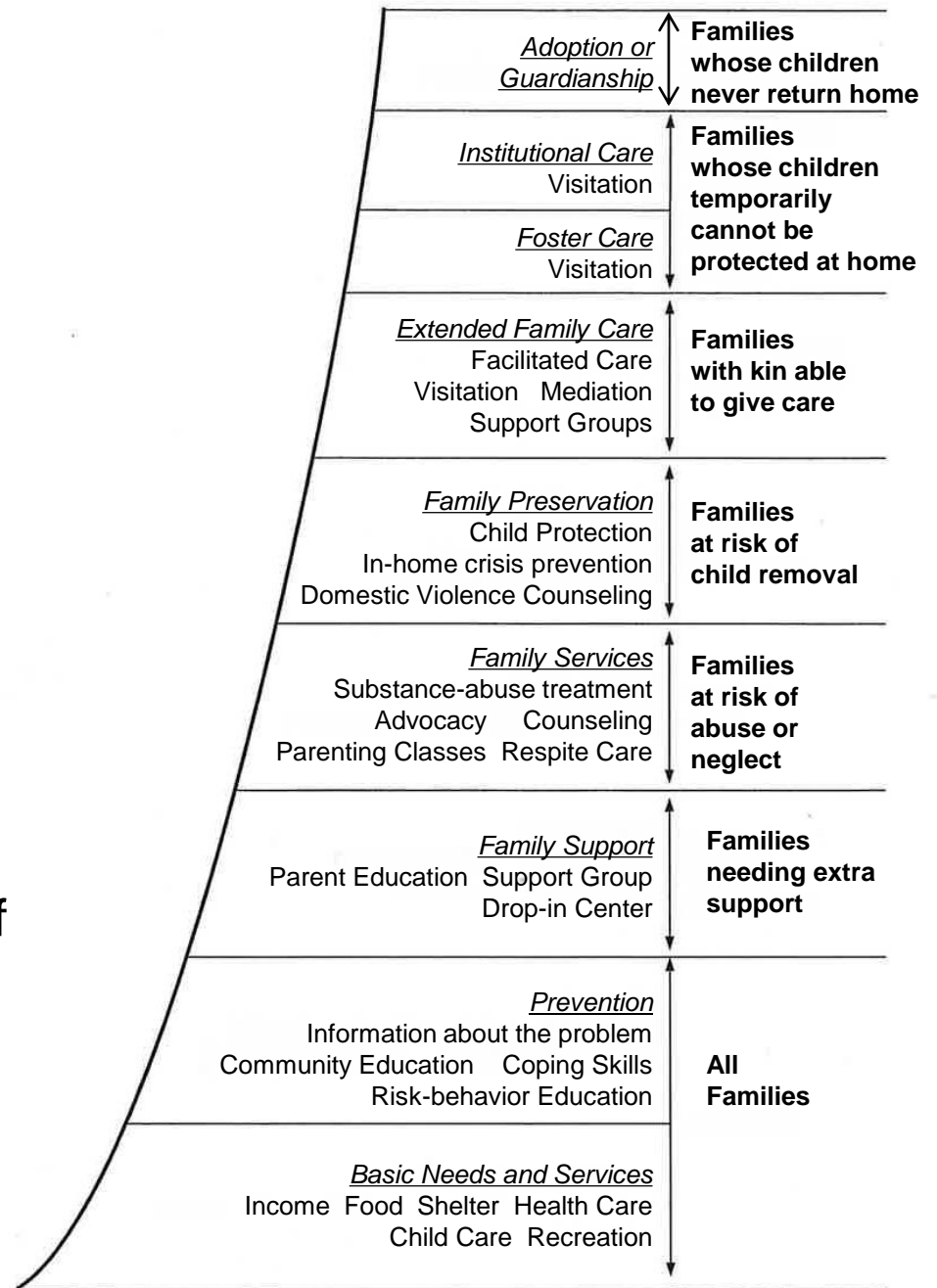
- Association of Village Council Presidents – Alaska
- Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes – Alaska
- Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation – Montana
- Coeur d'Alene Tribe – Idaho
- Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes – Montana
- Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians – Oregon
- Cook Inlet Tribal Council – Alaska
- Forest County Potawatomi Community – Wisconsin
- Hoopa Valley Tribe – California
- Nooksack Tribe – Washington
- Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe – Washington
- Quileute Tribe – Washington
- South Puget Intertribal Planning Agency – Washington
- Tanana Chiefs Conference – Alaska

# Tribal CW/TANF Report

- Google: “Coordination of Tribal TANF and Child Welfare Services: Early Implementation”
- Link:<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/opre/resource/coordination-of-tribal-tanf-and-child-welfare-services-early>

# Tribal Child Welfare

- Child Safety
- Family Preservation
- Parent Rehabilitation
- Holistic Care
- Kinship Care
- Community Support
- Acknowledgement of historic trauma
- Acknowledgement of the impact of deep poverty



[www.nicwa.org](http://www.nicwa.org)

# National Indian Child Welfare Association

*Let us put our minds together and  
see what kind of life we can build for  
our children  
-  
Sitting Bull*



**NICWA**

National Indian Child Welfare Association

*Protecting our children • Preserving our culture*