TANF AND CHILD WELFARE INTEGRATION:

Supporting Tribal Children and Families

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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 neglected

than 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

- Context
- Mind
- Spirit
- Body
Service examples

Addressing at-risk families
- Coordinated intake/referral for services
- Risk assessment
- Intensive case management/Multidisciplinary teams
- Family resource centers
- Parent Navigators
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
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”

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

- Sitting Bull