

**Alaska Child Welfare Disproportionality Reduction Project**  
**Western and Pacific Child Welfare Implementation Center**  
**Implementation Project Plan**  
(revised 10/23/09)

## INTRODUCTION

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The Alaska Child Welfare Disproportionality Reduction Project is being proposed as a four- year implementation project that embraces cultural competence and interagency collaboration as its core operational framework. The project is a collaboration of Alaska Title IV-B tribal partners supported by the Office of Children’s Services (OCS) and the Court Improvement Project (CIP). The project is designed to significantly reduce disproportionality through practice and decision-making changes at the front end of the child welfare system. This implementation project is part of a larger Alaska Child Welfare Initiative that is still under development. The proposed implementation project will allow tribal partners to develop and implement changes in child welfare practice for Native American children, youth, and families that focuses on key changes in initial safety assessments and placement decisions. The Implementation Project will promote the use of a family-centered, state-tribal bi-lateral, collaborative approach in which the State OCS will rely more heavily on tribes to participate in the initial decision making and service delivery. The project will also build the capacity of the tribes to conduct services needed by identified families to prevent out-of-home placement whenever possible and to promote community based services when placements are necessary.

### Context

According to the 2007 census estimate, the Alaska Native/American Indian population comprises 15.2 percent of the state’s population (2007). At the same time, **62 percent of all children in out-of-home placement within the state are Native**. In February 2009, 71 percent of children in foster care in Juneau, Alaska’s capital, are Alaska Native/American Indian while Natives are only 11.4 percent of the city’s population. This is not unlike the situation in other areas of the state and motivated participating Title IV-B Alaska tribes to seek systems-level change across the state.

Over 250 Alaska Native Villages are located across a huge geographical area twice the size of Texas, with challenging access, often only by sea or air. Tribal communities are also affected by unpredictable and often harsh weather conditions and diverse cultural and linguistic regions. They have limited formal child welfare client support services and often have been thought to have insufficient resources to deal with complex child welfare issues. Consequently, hundreds of Alaska Native children are removed to nearby urban communities to non native care with a poor prognosis for reunification or family permanency outcomes.

Due to its unique history of recent statehood and the resulting relationship between the state and the Alaska Native tribes, fundamental differences in legal opinions exist between the state government and tribal governments about the limits and scope of authority regarding a broad range of issues, including matters of child welfare. Consequences of these historic and current disputes have made solutions applied in other states difficult to apply in Alaska. Current policy conditions in tribal-state relations hinder compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), contribute to disproportionate placement, and inhibit the expansion of tribal services, including access to federal resources that tribes are eligible to receive.

The State of Alaska’s performance in the recent Federal Child Family Service Review (CFSR) identified problems with child safety, permanency outcomes, for all children as well as concern with over

representation of Native children. Additionally, the recent settlement of the Alaska Superior Court Curyung Decision requires Office of Children Services (OCS) to engage in improved ICWA compliance practice. These policy environment conditions have provided new and additional motivation for the State to improve collaboration with tribes.

## **Vision**

Keeping Alaska Native families intact while providing a culturally competent continuum of services to protect and promote healthy communities.

## **Values**

As part of the structured planning process, the tribal partners and project stakeholders took part in a values mapping exercise to identify the most commonly shared values as well as to acknowledge the differences in cultural world views that contribute to what values are most important in child welfare. As a basis for discussion, the exercise used CFSR principles and values, system of care values, the Touchstones of Hopes values<sup>1</sup>, as well as a short list of values generated in the meeting. These values were plotted on a grid as a visual reference and then analyzed for this planning document. CFSR outcome areas of safety, permanency, and well-being are highly valued across all parties in this planning process and provide an important foundation for common ground. However, the means to accomplish these principles diverge significantly between the tribes and state indicating a strong need for dialog. Other strongly shared values included the following CFSR practice principles, family-centered practice, community-based services, strengthened parental capacity, and individualized services. Two systems of care values were also strongly shared; coordinated and collaborative services, and accessibility. In addition, prevention, and Alaskan uniqueness were shared values.

Several values were highly important to tribal partners and less valued and, in some cases, not perceived as valued by State stakeholders. These include cultural identity, self determination, kinship ties, continuity of relationship, tribal sovereignty, holistic approaches, lifelong approaches, cultural and linguistic competence, and active efforts to promote family preservation. Values that are perceived as more strongly held by the State than tribes include procedural fairness, states rights and authority, and individualized and child-centered services. The values differences signal significant content areas for courageous conversation, dialog, and training. They also represent the core of service design strategies that will emerge from the tribal partners as a result of the project. For example, case management contracts that emerge from the project will need to be structured to express these values, and measures of their success will need to be structured to reflect the desired outcomes.

Data from the structured planning values mapping exercise is being compiled by NICWA and will be analyzed and will be provided to the tribal partners and stakeholders for review and comment. The data will be used to inform the Touchstones of Hope Curriculum for the initial courageous conversation sessions as a reminder of both common ground and divergent views that may either help or hinder the project.

## **Project Partners and Stakeholders**

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<sup>1</sup> Touchstones of Hope, is a publication from an international movement for Truth and Reconciliation in Child Welfare which describes a new path of cooperation between mainstream child welfare agencies and Indigenous peoples—see: [www.reconciliationmovement.org](http://www.reconciliationmovement.org)

The Alaska Tribal Title IV-B partners have collaborated in this Alaska child welfare project to develop a targeted strategy and action plan for addressing systems change in the arena of child welfare. They have collectively participated in a number of efforts over the past 30 years to improve child welfare practice for their communities. Support of the OCS and the Court Improvement Project (CIP) for this Implementation Project provides an opportunity to address child welfare improvement recommendations identified in several State and Federal child welfare reviews.

The Title IV-B Tribal partners are:

Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association  
North Slope Native Association  
Association of Village Council Presidents  
Bristol Bay Native Association  
Central Council Tlingit & Haida  
Chugachmiut  
Cook Inlet Tribal Council  
Kawerak, Inc.  
Ketchikan Indian Corporation  
Kodiak Area Native Association  
Maniilaq Association  
Metlakatla  
Native Village of Kotzebue  
Orutsararmuit Native Council  
Sitka Tribe of Alaska  
Tanana Chiefs Conference, Inc.

### **Project Collaborators and Stakeholders**

The systems change goals of this project are highly dependent on collaboration and coordination of multiple stakeholders. No single entity will be able to resolve the complex and interdependent issues contributing to disproportionality. Additionally, several efforts have come before and many are still underway, while others are just emerging. An essential element of this project will be to effectively conduct high-leverage activities that facilitate cohesion across the various efforts and allow each stakeholder to contribute to the desired outcomes. High leverage activities are those that bring about change that then make other changes possible. For example, collaborative problem solving is impossible without a communications link, dependable feedback loops, and a shared understanding of the influences that help or hinder joint action.

The currently identified collaborating stakeholders and related efforts include:

- Alaska Office of Children Services
  - CFSR/Program Improvement Plan
  - Child and Family Service Plan (CFSP)
  - Cuyrung Court Settlement (ICWA compliance settlement)
- Tribal-State Collaboration Group (TSCG)
  - Tribal Caucus (sub-group of TSCG)
  - Case Management Committee (sub-group of TSCG)
  - Tribal Foster Care Licensing Committee (sub-group of TSCG)
- Tribal TANF and Child Support Programs
- Alaska Federation of Natives
- Alaska Court Improvement Project

- Casey Family Programs
  - IV-E Workgroup
  - Facing Foster Care (Youth Group)
  - Knowing Who You Are Training
- Annie E. Casey Foundation
  - Family to Family Initiative
- Bureau of Indian Affairs
  - BIA Providers Conference
- Region X Children’s Bureau
  - CFSR/Program Improvement Plan monitoring
  - CFSP monitoring
  - State IV-E compliance review
  - Tribal IV-E Access Support

**IMPLEMENTATION CENTER ACTIVITIES**

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The Western and Pacific Implementation Center (WPIC) will utilize best practices in implementation and change management to assist with the implementation of the tribal-state bi-lateral differential response model and help stakeholders plan for statewide implementation. WPIC will work to build organizational capacity that will sustain the practice changes of this project, as well as provide capacity to implement other future reforms. Workgroups, made up of the stakeholders will provide structure and direction to the project and function as a hub communications link in each area. WPIC will work closely with the workgroups, ensuring that feedback is maximized.

WPIC, with its project partners, has identified practice innovations that all parties believe will reduce disproportionate representation of Native Alaska (NA) children in the child welfare system. Assessment and design work will further refine the preferred models. Acting as the primary communications link among the partners and stakeholders, WPIC will consult on the final design and then train, coach, facilitate, and document progress. Additionally, WPIC will ensure that feedback loops are established between those who are directly implementing the practice changes and those involved in policy and systems level change strategies. WPIC’s evaluation activities will help to inform the feedback and help to identify challenges, which if not addressed by stakeholders, might hinder implementation progress.

**Project Structure and Implementation Project Leadership**

The project scope is very large and would not be possible without the work that already has been done through the structured planning process and the existing ongoing workgroups that are addressing significant aspects of the project goals. During the structured planning process, partners and stakeholders committed to take the lead on specific implementation strategies. Following are the roles and functions that have been committed to this project.

Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska	Project management, point of contact for WPIC, Alaska coordination, meeting planning, tribal partner communication, grantee for partner funding, project leadership team member
Tribal Caucus (sub-group of Tribal State Collaboration Group)	Project steering group, oversight of project plan, Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI), evaluation feedback
Tribal State Collaboration Group	Lead systems level change steering committee and workgroup
Case Management Committee (sub-group of TSCG)	Bi-lateral differential response workgroup, lead on in-home service implementation strategies
Tribal Foster Care Licensing	Resource family workgroup, lead on tribal resource family

Committee (sub-group of TSCG)	development implementation strategies
Alaska Court Improvement Project	Will lead workgroup on collaboration with the courts
Alaska Office of Children Services	Lead on state policy implementation, feedback process
Casey Family Programs	Lead on youth and family participation (Facing Foster Care Alaska youth group), and provide travel and training match
WPIC	Convener, coach, trainer, communications link, consultant, facilitator, and feedback and evaluation

### **Assessment and Readiness**

Implementing the necessary practice, policy and systems changes requires training, technical assistance (TA), and readiness activities at a variety of levels within Tribal and State organizations and infrastructures. WPIC will undertake these activities in order to prepare the project partners to implement key practice changes. Two major readiness activities are planned to mediate the historic and contextual issues, described above, that have hindered positive tribal-state collaborations. These include:

- Facilitation of courageous conversation using the Truth and Reconciliation: Touchstones of Hope approach and curriculum, and
- Help to project leaders, including stakeholder leaders, develop collaborative leadership skills using the American Leadership Forum Leadership Curriculum. The WPIC is skilled and experienced with these curricula. This approach will build general skills and leadership capacity of the stakeholders with an approach that is specifically designed to facilitate collaborative problem solving across culturally and politically diverse perspectives. Leadership development and Truth and Reconciliation activities will commence in the first quarter of the project and will be integrated throughout the four years and imbedded in the collaborative designs of the practice changes.

Assessment activities are also built into implementation of each practice described (Alaska Safety Assessment Model, differential response model, Family Group Decision Making (FGDM), and resource family development). It will be important to begin with a thorough environmental scan that includes a needs assessment, capacity mapping, identifying resource strengths and challenges and emerging best practices. WPIC will conduct the assessments for each of the identified practice changes by facilitating a self study by each tribal partner. By adapting a self study model designed for Washington tribes, WPIC will be able to modify, launch, and complete data gathering for the self study in the first quarter of the project. Findings will be compiled into reports that will inform training plans in the second quarter allowing practice implementation on at least one practice to begin in the second half of the first year.

### **Coordination with Larger Initiative**

The tribal partners will use resources separate and apart from the WPIC to convene, broker, and make decisions about how TA efforts are integrated, which entities will assume responsibility for different tasks, and what decisions will drive their positions in any necessary tribal state negotiations that may emerge as a result of this implementation project. WPIC will not participate, advise or consult on government-to-government level negotiations, advocacy, or funding arrangements in alignment with stated Children’s Bureau policy for TA providers.

The full initiative is described in a holistic logic model that was developed by project partners and stakeholders of the proposed implementation project. The larger initiative will be dependent upon other funding sources and will be managed separately and apart from this implementation project. The larger child welfare initiative is also contingent on stakeholders raising sufficient funds to support the effort.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

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### **Practice Level Implementation**

This four year project proposes several key practice changes that need to be implemented in order to reduce over-representation of NA children. Alaska data provided by OCS during the strategic planning process indicates that most of the disproportionality can be accounted for at the reporting and initial decisions to investigate and to place in out-of-home care. This implementation project is focused on key changes that can impact decision points at the front end of the child welfare system such as initial safety assessments and placement decisions. The Implementation Project will promote the use of a family centered, state-tribal bi-lateral, collaborative approach in which the State OCS will rely more heavily on tribes to participate in the initial decision making and service delivery. The project will also build the capacity of the tribes to conduct services needed by identified families to prevent out of home placement whenever possible and promote cultural and community connections.

The Implementation Project will achieve key outcomes over the four-year period by implementing specific practices and decision-making processes including the Alaska Safety Assessment Model, differential response, FGDM, and identification and development of resource families.

Key practice level outcomes that the Tribes and State plan to effect are to:

- Decrease the proportion of NA children in OCS care,
- Increase the number of NA children receiving services in their own homes,
- Increase the proportion of NA children in tribal versus state in-home services and placements, and
- Increase the number of NA children with safe and stable connections to their birth family, siblings, extended kin, community, and tribe.

In addition to directly linking the desired outcomes with specific changes in decision-making practices this project will develop a collaborative process between tribal services and the courts. Activities in the work plan are designed to support the implementation of these practice changes, the policy and management changes needed to operationalize them, and the systems changes needed to sustain them. In addition, WPIC will conduct assessment and readiness activities that prepare stakeholders for the implementation of the desired practice changes.

### **Practice Level Implementation Goal**

The staff and supervisors of project partners will implement a family-centered, differential response service model to meet child and family safety needs and to avoid unnecessary out-of-home placements.

### **Practice Level Objectives**

Tribal partners will have staff and supervisors (approximately 50 trainees) that are skilled in the Alaska Safety Assessment Model, FGDM, and other culturally specific in-home services.

Tribal partners will have staff and supervisors that are knowledgeable and skilled in resource family development, recruitment, licensing and training.

Tribal partners will have staff and supervisors that are skilled and knowledgeable in case level collaboration with state and tribal courts.

### Practice Level Activities

WPIC will help develop tribal staff skills and knowledge through assessing current capacity, providing training and coaching, and by facilitating peer-to-peer mentorship in the processes of conducting the following:

- Assessment of child safety using the Alaska Safety Assessment Model
- Family Group Decision Making (FGDM)
- Culturally specific in-home service models
- Tribal resource family development
- Placement decision making
- Case level collaboration the courts

### *Practice Level Implementation Strategies: Tribal Differential Response/In-home Services*

- Using existing culturally specific training curricula (Heritage and Helping), WPIC, in partnership with the National Resource Center for In-home Services (NRCIHS) will provide training and coaching to tribal partners on culturally specific in-home service models and differential response. (WPIC and NRCIHS) (Note: approximately 10 days of on-site training will be necessary in each of years one and two from each resource center.)
- WPIC will provide consultation, training, and coaching to tribal partners on integration of the Alaska Safety Assessment Model, into their culturally based in-home practices. (WPIC and OCS)
- WPIC will partner with Alaska Court Improvement Project (CIP), Family Group Conferencing Steering Committee to extend their FGDM training to participating tribes. (WPIC and CIP)
- WPIC will engage tribal staff and supervisors as co-trainer using train the trainer methodology to build sustainable capacity.

### *Practice Level Implementation Strategies: Tribal Resource Family Development*

- Using existing culturally specific training curricula (Heritage and Helping), provide training and coaching to tribal partners on tribal resource family development services, including recruitment, licensing, and training. (WPIC)
- Conduct peer-to-peer training activities on cultural best practices and community standards led by tribes that are currently licensing for the state, using state policies, procedures, and forms under agreements or existing grants. (WPIC and National Resource Center for Permanency and Family Connections (NRC-PFC) (Note: approximately 5 days will be expected for year one and 10 days in year two).
- Conduct peer-to-peer learning activities led by tribes that have already adopted licensing codes. (WPIC and NRC-PFC)
- Conduct peer to peer learning for new state workers in tribal programs led by tribes already providing foster care services including brief internships and job shadowing. (WPIC, NRC-PFC, OCS, Tribal Partners)

### *Practice Level Implementation Strategies: Case Level Collaboration with the Courts*

- WPIC will work with the CIP to design and implement a model of practice for tribal workers which actively engages them as collaborative parties in state court proceedings including guidelines for collaborative practice.
- WPIC, in partnership with CIP and the National Resource Center for Legal and Judicial Issues (NRCLJI), will provide training and coaching on presenting a case, acting as a witness, working with Guardian Ad Litem (GALs), Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), and public defenders, writing court reports, and implementing collaborative problem solving. Approximately 10 on site days will be required for this training. (WPIC, CIP, NRCLJI)

### **Policy and Program Level Implementation**

Changes to OCS and tribal policies, as well as the development of interagency protocols and agreements, will be important institutional steps toward operationalizing the practice changes. Management changes will be required to redirect work flow, share decision making, maintain communication links, provide feedback loops and conduct an ongoing evaluation. WPIC will consult with the tribal partners and OCS to analyze the work flow changes, identify the key policy and management level changes and develop the communications links needed for successful implementation. Policy and management changes will be aimed at producing the following specific outcomes:

- Enhanced capacity for safety and placement decision making
- Expanded use of culturally specific in-home service options
- Expanded use of tribal resource families

### **Policy and Program Level Implementation Goal**

The project partners will develop, test and implement a sustainable, tribal-state bi-lateral, family-centered, differential response model by building tribal and State capacity to work collaboratively to meet child and family safety needs and to avoid unnecessary out-of-home placements.

### **Policy and Program Level Objectives**

Native Alaska families reported to OCS will receive collaborative differential response services provided by tribal programs in coordination with State services and the courts.

Tribal partners will implement the policies and procedures needed to operate effective resource family development services with tribal families.

### **Policy and Program Level Activities**

WPIC will help develop tribal policy and program level capacity by providing consultation on development of a differential response model and staffing and supervision needs, coaching managers, facilitating peer-to-peer mentorship, and requesting training and consultation on these topics for the appropriate providers in the Children’s Bureau Training and Technical Assistance Network (T/TA Network).

The tribal partners will need to develop the necessary policies and procedures to operate the collaborative, culturally based in-home service models. Tribal partner and OCS will need to develop the communications links to ensure effective collaboration. WPIC will consult with the tribal partners on issues such as:

- Integrating Alaska Safety Assessment Model policies and procedures into tribal child welfare;
- FGDM policies and procedures; and
- Tribal resource family development program design, policies and procedures.

This will include policy level determinations by each individual tribal partner regarding whether these resource family development services are provided under tribal law, policy and procedures, or under State law, policies and procedures. WPIC will consult with tribes on the advantages and challenges of various options.

*Policy/Program Level Implementation Strategies: Tribal Differential Response/In-home Services*

- Building on recent tribal self assessment, WPIC will conduct a tribal capacity self study to document and disseminate the extent of current tribal services and the readiness and desire to assume additional responsibilities for providing in-home services as a participant in this project. (WPIC)
- Tribal partners and OCS will reconfigure the existing Tribal-State Work Group (TSWG) to lead the bi-lateral differential response/in-home services project elements and define its roles and functions as the steering and coordinating committee for this goal. (TSWG)
- OCS and the tribal partners will redesign existing Rural Social Service Grants to demonstrate the tribal-state bi-lateral differential response/ in-home service model (OCS and self selected tribal partners)
- OCS will establish protocols for referral, coordination, and communication, and will engage tribal services as the preferred early intervention strategy using a differential response practice model through policy statements, communications strategies, and referral changes. (OCS and Tribal Partners)
- OCS will sanction tribal FGDM meetings as a preferred culturally appropriate alternative to Team Decision Making and implement protocols for referral, coordination, and resourcing the service through policy statements, communications strategies, and referral changes. (OCS)

*Policy/Program Level Implementation Strategies: Tribal Resource Family Development*

- WPIC will conduct an assessment and create a matrix of current capacity, infrastructure, implementation successes, and barriers to tribal resource family development. (WPIC)
- Tribal partners will engage the existing Tribal-State Licensing Workgroup to lead tribal resource family development project elements, and define its roles and functions as the steering and coordinating committee. (Tribal-State Work Group)
- WPIC will identify and document emerging practice models in the current licensing efforts among the tribal partners and develop those sites for peer-to-peer learning. (WPIC and individual partners)
- Stakeholders will activate the existing training mechanisms and funding sources to support foster care related training using Title IV-E dollars. (Tlingit and Haida, OCS, and Casey Family Programs)

*Policy/Program Level Implementation Strategies: Case Level Collaboration with the Courts*

- WPIC will conduct a training needs assessment and produce a briefing report on the current tribal child welfare/judicial relationship, worker capacity in court work, lessons learned, and training resources and opportunities that will result in a training plan. (WPIC and CIP)
- The TSWG and CIP will establish a sub-workgroup from among tribal partners and the CIP to lead court related project elements and define its roles and functions as the steering and coordinating committee for this work. (TSWG and CIP)

## System Level Implementation

Implementation of practice changes will require several system level strategies that impact stakeholders and leadership. The WPIC will leave stakeholders with a framework for collaboration and leadership development that will be implemented and sustainable beyond the project. Using the principles of Truth and Reconciliation: Touchstones of Hope, and Collaborative Leadership, WPIC will provide guidance on best practices for achieving systems change. TA will be centered on effective practice in cross-system collaboration, inter-organizational communication links and feedback loops, and evaluation.

### System Level Outcomes

- Collaborative leadership model for tribal-state relations
- Collaborative process between tribal programs and the courts

### System Level Goal

The partner tribes and OCS will establish sustainable policies, procedures, and protocols necessary to maintain a tribal-state bi-lateral, family-centered, differential response model.

### System Level Objective

Project stakeholders will design and establish sustainable communication links and feedback protocols for effective implementation of collaborative services.

### System Level Activities

WPIC will provide consultation to stakeholders on communications links and feedback protocols, facilitate dialog to finalize the model design, and assist in the development of a detailed implementation work plan based on the final model. WPIC will identify resources from appropriate the Children's Bureau Training and Technical Assistance Network (T/TA Network) on the tribal-state bi-lateral differential response model as appropriate. WPIC will work closely with Region X staff in the system level design issues to ensure that the model is in alignment with Federal requirements.

### *System Level Implementation Strategies: Tribal Differential Response/In-home Services*

- WPIC will review and describe current tribal in-home practice models (including FGDM), Native Family Preservation, Healthy Families the (Yupik) Way, and other culturally specific in-home services, etc.). WPIC will articulate a tribal-state bi-lateral differential response model and help develop a plan for integration of that model with existing tribal in-home services models and the Alaska safety assessment model. (WPIC with tribal partners and OCS)
- WPIC will provide policy analysis and consultation on the emerging bi-lateral differential response/ in-home service model to help identify, plan for and provide implementation guidance on systems level changes needed to sustain the model beyond the life of the project.
- WPIC and the National Resource Center for Child Welfare Data and Technology (NRCCWDT) will provide consultation and training for tribal partners on the data collection, processing, and reporting requirements. (WPIC and NRCCWDT) (Note: approximately 20 days of on-site technical assistance will be necessary in each of the four years of the project.)

*System Level Implementation Strategies: Tribal resource family development*

- WPIC will consult with and provide coaching to Tribal/State Working Group (TSWG) on development of a work plan for system level implementation to identify and support tribal resource families. (WPIC)
- OCS will set up a procedure for regular communication and feedback in such areas as data sharing from State to tribes regarding where children are placed, types of homes, number of Native homes, relative placements, etc. (OCS)
- The TSWG will disseminate and facilitate the implementation of tribal foster care standards already developed by the TSWG. (TSWG)

*System Level Implementation Strategy: Case Level Collaboration with the Courts*

- Tribal partners and WPIC will design and tribes will implement a communications and education strategy in partnership with the Court Improvement Project (CIP) for the education of state judges through written communication, testimony and evidence presented in court, advocacy, conferences, joint meetings, legal briefs, written reports, and program visit. (Tribal Partners, CIP and WPIC)

## TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PLAN

This project requires several fundamental technical assistance methods applied to each task. The TA plan below includes the major TA methods associated with project goals, objectives, and strategies. Convening, facilitating, and networking methods are used to create opportunity for dialog, relationship development, brainstorming, coordination, and cooperation. Assessment, planning, policy analysis and documentation methods are used to prepare for meetings between key parties and ensure that physical meetings are conducted with maximum efficiency. Consultation is used to expand the project partners’ awareness of alternatives and for collaborative problem solving and to help stakeholders weigh alternatives. Consultation includes providing supporting documents, examples, or templates that support plan activities. Facilitation is used to maximize face-to-face interactions, to maximize cooperation, and to minimize conflict. Training, and peer learning are used to transfer knowledge and build skills in specific topic areas and includes the development of learning objectives, training curricula, instructional materials, and actual delivery of the instruction. Coaching is used on a one-to-one basis to reinforce training and peer learning content and to help the learner integrate the knowledge into practice. TA provides the communications links needed for implementation.

### Exhibit A: Technical Assistance Plan

Outcomes/Goals	Practice Level Implementation				
	Objectives/Deliverables	Date	Partners	Practice change	Population
Practice level outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>decrease the proportion of NA children in OCS care,</li> <li>increase the number of NA children receiving services in their own homes,</li> <li>increase the proportion of NA children in tribal versus state in-home services and placements,</li> <li>increase the number of NA children with safe and stable connections to their birth family, siblings, extended kin, community, and tribe</li> </ul>	<i>Objective 1.1. Tribal partners will have staff and supervisors that are skilled in the Alaska Safety Assessment Model, Family Group Decision Making (FGDM), and other culturally specific in-home services.</i>				
	1.1.1. Using existing culturally specific training curricula, Heritage and Helping, WPIC, in partnership with the NRCFCP, will provide training and coaching to tribal partners on culturally specific in-home service models and differential response.	YR. 1, 2 and 3	WPIC and NRCIHS	Greater use of culturally specific in-home service models  Better differential response decisions	Tribal Child Welfare (CW) line staff, supervisors, and managers
	1.1.2. WPIC will provide consultation, training and coaching to tribal partners on integration of the Alaska safety assessment model, into their culturally based in-home practices.	YR. 1 and 2	WPIC and OCS	Tribal use of the Alaska safety assessment model	Tribal CW supervisors, and managers

**Practice Level Implementation**

<b>Outcomes/Goals</b>	<b>Objectives/Deliverables</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Practice change</b>	<b>Population</b>
<p><u>Practice Level Goal</u></p> <p>1. The staff and supervisors of project partners will implement a family-centered, differential response service model to meet child and family safety needs and to avoid unnecessary placements.</p>	1.1.3. WPIC will partner with the Alaska Court Improvement Project (CIP), Family Group Conferencing Steering Committee to extend their FGDM training to participating tribes.	YR. 1 and 2	WPIC and CIP	Greater use of FGDM	Tribal CW line staff and supervisors
	<i>Objective 1.2. Tribal partners will have staff and supervisors that are knowledgeable and skilled in resource family development, recruitment, licensing, and training.</i>				
	1.2.1. Using existing culturally specific training curricula, (Heritage and Helping), provide training and coaching to tribal partners on tribal resource family development services (e.g. recruitment, licensing, and training).	YR. 2 and 3	WPIC	Tribal development of resource families	Tribal CW line staff, supervisors, and managers
	1.2.2. Conduct peer-to-peer training activities on cultural best practices and community standards led by tribes that are currently licensing for the state, using state policies, procedures, and forms under agreements or existing grants.	YR. 2 and 3	WPIC and NRCPFC	Tribal development of resource families	Tribal CW line staff, supervisors, and managers
	1.2.3. Conduct peer-to-peer learning activities lead by tribes that have already adopted licensing codes.	YR. 2, 3 and 4	WPIC and NRCPFC	Tribal development of resource families	Tribal CW line staff, supervisors, and managers
1.2.4. Conduct peer-to-peer learning for new state workers in tribal programs led by tribes already providing foster care services including brief internships and job shadowing.	YR. 3 and 4	WPIC, NRCPFC, OCS, Tribal Partners	Increased referral to tribal services	State line staff and supervisors	

**Practice Level Implementation**

<b>Outcomes/Goals</b>	<b>Objectives/Deliverables</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Practice change</b>	<b>Population</b>
	<i>Objective 1.3. Tribal partners will have staff and supervisors that are skilled and knowledgeable in case level collaboration with State and tribal courts.</i>				
	1.3.1. WPIC will work with the CIP to design and implement a model of practice for tribal workers which actively engages them as collaborative parties in State court proceedings including guidelines for collaborative practice.	YR. 2 and 3	WPIC and CIP	Enhanced collaboration between CW and courts	Tribal CW line staff, supervisors, managers, and tribal and State court judges
	1.3.2. WPIC, in partnership with CIP and the NRCLJI, will provide training and coaching on presenting a case; acting as a witness, working with GALs, CASAs, and public defenders, writing court reports, and collaborative problem solving. (WPIC, CIP, NCRLJI).	YR. 2 and 3	WPIC and CIP and NCRLJI	Enhanced collaboration between CW and courts	Tribal CW line staff and supervisors

**Policy/Program Level Implementation**

<b>Outcomes/Goals</b>	<b>Objectives/Deliverables</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Practice change</b>	<b>Population</b>
Policy and management changes will be aimed at producing specific outcomes:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhanced capacity for safety</li> </ul>	<i>Objective 2.1. NA families reported to OCS will receive collaborative differential response services provided by tribal programs in coordination with state services and the courts.</i>				

**Policy/Program Level Implementation**

<b>Outcomes/Goals</b>	<b>Objectives/Deliverables</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Practice change</b>	<b>Population</b>
<p>and placement decision making</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expanded use of culturally specific in-home service options</li> <li>Expanded use of tribal resource families</li> </ul> <p><u>Policy and Program Level Goal</u></p> <p>2. The project partners will develop, test and implement a sustainable, bi-lateral, family centered, differential response model by building tribal and state capacity to work collaboratively to meet child and family safety needs and to avoid unnecessary placements.</p>	2.1.1. Building on recent tribal self assessment, WPIC will conduct a tribal capacity self study to document and disseminate the extent of current tribal services and the readiness and desire to assume additional responsibilities as a participant in this project.	YR. 1	WPIC	Use of differential response  Greater use of in-home services  FGDM	Tribal CW managers, leaders
	2.1.2. Tribal partners and OCS will reconfigure existing Tribal-State Work Group to lead the bi-lateral differential response/in-home services project elements and define its roles and functions as the steering and coordinating committee for this goal.	YR. 1	Tribal-State Work Group	Use of differential response  Greater use of in-home services  FGDM	Tribal CW managers, leaders and OCS leadership
	2.1.3. OCS and the tribal partners will redesign existing Rural Social Service Grants to demonstrate the bi-lateral differential response/ in-home service model.	YR. 1	OCS and self selected tribal partners	Use of differential response  Greater use of in-home services  FGDM	Tribal CW managers, leaders and OCS leadership
	2.1.4. OCS will establish protocols for referral, coordination, and communication, and will engage tribal services as the preferred early intervention strategy using a differential response practice model through policy statements, communications strategies, and referral changes.	YR. 1	OCS and Tribal Partners	Increased use of tribal services	State line staff and supervisors
	2.1.5. OCS will sanction tribal FGDM meetings as a preferred culturally appropriate alternative to Team Decision Making and implement protocols for referral, coordination, and resourcing the service through policy statements,	YR. 1	OCS	Increased use of tribal services	State line staff and supervisors

Outcomes/Goals	Policy/Program Level Implementation				
	Objectives/Deliverables	Date	Partners	Practice change	Population
	communications strategies, and referral changes.				
	<i>Objective 2.2. Tribal partners will implement the policies and procedures needed to run effective resource family development services with tribal families.</i>				
	2.2.1. WPIC will conduct an assessment and create a matrix of current capacity, infrastructure, implementation successes, and barriers to tribal resource family development.	YR. 1	WPIC	Increased use of tribal placement resources	Tribal CW managers, leaders and OCS leadership
	2.2.2. Tribal partners will engage the existing Tribal/State Licensing Workgroup to lead tribal resource family development project elements, and define its roles and functions as the steering and coordinating committee.	YR. 1	Tribal-State Work Group	Increased use of tribal placement resources	Tribal CW managers, leaders and OCS leadership
	2.2.3. WPIC will identify and document emerging practice models in the current licensing efforts among the tribal partners and develop those sites for peer to peer learning.	YR. 1	WPIC and individual partners	Increased use of tribal placement resources	Tribal CW line staff and supervisors
	2.2.4. Stakeholders will activate the existing training mechanisms and funding sources to support foster care related training using Title IV-E dollars.	YR. 1	Tlingit and Haida, OCS, and Private Partners	Increased use of tribal placement resources	Tribal CW managers, leaders and OCS leadership
	<i>Objective 2.3. Enhanced case level collaboration with courts</i>				

**Policy/Program Level Implementation**

<b>Outcomes/Goals</b>	<b>Objectives/Deliverables</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Practice change</b>	<b>Population</b>
	2.3.1. WPIC will conduct a training needs assessment and produce briefing report on current tribal child welfare/judicial relationship, worker capacity in court work, lessons learned, and training resources and opportunities that will result in a training plan.	YR. 1	WPIC and CIP	Enhanced collaboration between CW and courts	Tribal CW leadership and managers
	2.3.2. The TSWG and CIP will establish a sub-workgroup from among tribal partners and the CIP to lead court related project elements and define its roles and functions as the steering and coordinating committee for this work.	YR. 1	Tribal State Workgroup and CIP	Enhanced collaboration between CW and courts	Tribal CW leadership and managers

**System Level Implementation**

<b>Outcomes/Goals</b>	<b>Objectives/Deliverables</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Practice change</b>	<b>Population</b>
System Level Outcomes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborative leadership model for tribal state relations</li> <li>• Collaborative process between tribal programs and the courts</li> </ul>	Objective 3.1. Project stakeholders will design and establish sustainable communication links and feedback protocols for effective implementation of collaborative services.				
<u>System Level Goal</u> 3. The partner tribes and OSC will	<i>Tribal Differential Response/In-home Services</i>				

**System Level Implementation**

<b>Outcomes/Goals</b>	<b>Objectives/Deliverables</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Partners</b>	<b>Practice change</b>	<b>Population</b>	
establish a sustainable set of policies, procedures and protocols necessary to maintain a bi-lateral, family centered, differential response model.	3.1.1. WPIC will review and describe current tribal in-home practice models, including FGDM, Native Family Preservation, Healthy Families the (Yupik) Way, and other culturally specific in-home services, etc. and articulate a bi-lateral differential response model and help develop a plan for integration of that model with existing tribal in-home services models and the Alaska safety assessment model.	YR 1	WPIC with tribal partners and OCS	Targets decision making at early stages of contact where disproportionality is greatest  Collaborative interagency services design  Shift to community based  Greater use of In-home services	Tribal CW and OCS leadership and managers	
	3.1.2. WPIC will provide policy analysis and consultation on the emerging bi-lateral differential response/ in-home service model to help identify, plan for, and provide implementation guidance on systemS level changes needed to sustain the model beyond the life of the project.	YR 2-4	WPIC	Collaborative interagency services design	Tribal CW and OCS leadership and managers	
	<i>Tribal Resource Family Development</i>					
	3.1.3. WPIC will provide policy analysis and consultation on tribal resource home development to help identify, plan for and provide implementation guidance on system level changes needed to sustain the implementation beyond the life of the project.	YR 2-4	WPIC	Increased use of tribal placement resources	Tribal CW managers, leaders and OCS leadership	
3.1.4. WPIC and the NRCCWDT will provide consultation and training for tribal partners on the data collection, processing, and reporting needs created by this project.	YR. 3	WPIC and NRCCWDT	Collaborative interagency services design	Tribal CW and OCS leadership and managers		

Outcomes/Goals	System Level Implementation				
	Objectives/Deliverables	Date	Partners	Practice change	Population
	<i>Case Level Collaboration with the Courts</i>				
	3.2.1. Tribal partners and WPIC will design and tribes will implement a communications and education strategy in partnership with the CIP for the education of state judges through written communication, testimony and evidence presented in court, advocacy, conferences, joint meetings, legal briefs, written reports, and program visit.	YR. 2	Tribal Partners, CIP and WPIC	Enhanced collaboration between CW and courts	State and tribal court judges
	<b>Assessment and Readiness Activities</b>				
Goal 4: To Mediated the hindering influence of historic distrust.	<i>Objective 4.1. Engage in courageous conversations using the Truth and Reconciliation: Touchstones of Hope approach and curriculum</i>	YR. 1 & YR. 2	WPIC	Collaborative services	Tribal CW line staff, supervisors, and managers  OCS line staff, supervisors, managers and leadership.
Goal 5. To enhance collaborative leadership skills using the American Leadership Forum Leadership Curriculum.	4.1.1. Conduct training and dialog session quarterly at meetings of the TSWG 4.1.2. Conduct check in dialog building communication links  <i>Objective 5.1. Build general skills and leadership capacity</i>	YR. 1 YR. 2 YR. 1	WPIC	Collaborative services	Tribal supervisors, and managers, leaders  OCS leadership.
	5.1.1. Conduct training and coaching sessions quarterly at meetings and during site visits	YR. 1			

Outcomes/Goals	System Level Implementation				
	Objectives/Deliverables	Date	Partners	Practice change	Population
	<i>Objective 5.2. Support collaborative problem solving across culturally and politically diverse perspectives.</i>	Yr. 1 Thru Yr. 4	WPIC	Collaborative services	Tribal supervisors, and managers, leaders  OCS leadership.
	5.2.1. Conduct check in collaborative leadership building coaching	Yr. 1 Thru Yr. 4			

## EVALUATION

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The WPIC partner, University of South Florida (USF), will work closely with NICWA to partner on the evaluation of the Alaska implementation project. USF and NICWA will share responsibility for data collection, with USF assuming primary responsibility for data analyses and reporting.

The approach for assessing the training and technical assistance provided by WPIC and the impact of the Alaska implementation project includes evaluation activities conducted at four levels:

- Level 1: Reactions - the assessment of implementation project stakeholders' perceived effectiveness of the Center in supporting system change efforts,
- Level 2: Learning - changes in stakeholder knowledge, skills, and attitudes about value-based implementation strategies for system change,
- Level 3: Behavior - changes in child welfare organizations' and systems' infrastructure, and the strategies used to achieve the desired results, and
- Level 4: Results - the impact of these changes as demonstrated by improved performance on indicators related to organizational capacity, changes in practice, and decreases in disproportionality as identified on the logic model.

Progress toward the goals will be monitored during the quarterly tribal partner meeting where WPIC staff will present a status report on each of the agreed upon tasks and activities. USF will collect data on T/TA events and meetings to provide feedback for continuous project improvement. Specifically, at the beginning of the implementation project and at the end of year one, WPIC evaluation staff will conduct an annual organization/system assessment of the key elements for implementing sustainable system change which include: leadership/commitment, vision and values, environment, stakeholder involvement, and capacity/infrastructure (learning and behavior) and the effectiveness of the planning and implementation process (reactions). Based on these findings, evaluation reports will be completed to help identify strengths and challenges identified by the key stakeholders and implementation staff and provide feedback for implementation project improvement.

The Alaska implementation project's logic model will serve as a framework for evaluating fidelity to the identified implementation strategies and activities (learning and behavior) and progress toward the desired outcomes (results). Collaboratively, USF, NICWA and project partners will define the most appropriate indicators for each desired outcome and identify the availability of existing administrative data and the most appropriate methods for collecting additional data including but not limited to document review, the administration of standardized measures, case record review and stakeholder surveys and interviews. NICWA's internal evaluation staff will administer the Tribal Child Welfare Assessment Tool, a pre-post instrument, based on the relational worldview model that includes the areas of context, infrastructure, resources, and mission.

In summary, the evaluation will provide feedback to the implementation process and will assess the following questions:

- whether implementation of practices, policies and systems changes were successful,
- whether capacity of tribal child welfare was built,
- whether practices changed, and
- whether disproportionality numbers improved at key decision points (e.g. referral, investigation, and out of home placement) in the child welfare system.

Annually, the WPIC staff will meet with tribal partners to update the work plan and to set priorities for the next year. The revised work plan will then be presented to a meeting of stakeholders and partners for review and input.

The evaluation staff will also complete a comprehensive final report that presents an assessment of the degree to which the desired outcomes for the implementation project were met and an examination of the implementation strategies used to achieve the desired outcomes. See Exhibit B for a summary of the evaluation plan.

In addition, data collected for the Alaska implementation project will be aggregated and used in the cross-site evaluation being conducted by James Bell Associates.

**Exhibit B: Summary of Evaluation Approach**

<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Method/s</b>	<b>Time frame</b>	<b>Data source</b>	<b>Sampling</b>	<b>Collection</b>	<b>Analysis</b>
<i>Practice Level: Whether disproportionality changed?</i>						
Decrease the proportion of NA children in OCS care	Quantitative	Pre-Post	OCS data system	OCS referrals and open cases	OCS	WPIC (USF)
Increase the proportion of NA children receiving services in their own homes	Quantitative	Pre-Post	OCS data system	OCS open cases	OCS	WPIC (USF)
Increase proportion of NA children in tribal versus state in home services and placements	Quantitative	Pre-Post	OCS data system  Tribal data systems		OCS  Tribes	WPIC (USF)
Increase the number of NA children with safe and stable connections to their birth family, siblings, extended kin, community, and tribe	Retrospective case file reviews	Post only	Tribal and state case files	Pilot site comparison to non-pilot	WPIC (NICWA and OCS)	WPIC (USF)
<i>Program and Program Level: Whether the capacity was built and practice changed?</i>						
Enhanced	Qualitative/	At the start of	Stakeholder	Implementation	USF/	WPIC

capacity for safety and placement decision making	Quantitative	the Implementation Project and annually there after	interview/survey	Project Partners and Stakeholders	NICWA	(USF)
Expanded use of in culturally specific in-home service options	Qualitative/Quantitative	At the start of the Implementation Project and annually there after	Stakeholder interview/survey	Implementation Project Partners and Stakeholders	USF/NICWA	WPIC (USF)
Expanded use of tribal resource families	Qualitative/Quantitative	At the start of the Implementation Project and annually there after	Stakeholder interview/survey	Implementation Project Partners and Stakeholders	USF/NICWA	WPIC (USF)
<i>System Level: Whether implementation was successful?</i>						
Collaborative leadership model for tribal state relations	Qualitative/Quantitative	At the start of the Implementation Project and annually there after	Stakeholder interview/survey	Implementation Project Partners and Stakeholders	USF/NICWA	WPIC (USF)
Collaborative process between tribal programs and the courts	Qualitative/Quantitative	At the start of the Implementation Project and annually there after	Stakeholder interview/survey	Implementation Project Partners and Stakeholders	USF/NICWA	WPIC (USF)