



Central Council Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska
Department of Tribal Family and Youth Services

**Collaborative Planning
to Increase Interjurisdictional Adoptions Project**

Grant #90CO0944/03

FINAL Progress Report

Submitted by

**Leonora Florendo, Project Specialist
Annie Caikins, Evaluation Consultant**

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Inter-jurisdictional Adoptions Project of the Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska (CCTHITA) was developed in order to remove some of the long standing barriers that stand in the way of cross jurisdictional adoptive placements and to increase the delivery of post adoptive services for Native children. It was hoped that by having this tribe in Southeast Alaska work through a number of complex issues causing barriers that the lessons learned might help other American Indian/Alaska Native tribes confronting similar issues and challenges.

When the implementation project was started in 2001 there were an estimated 375 Tlingit and Haida children in out-of-home placements. Today there are 93 Alaska Native children in custody and out-of-home placements. There were two tribal caseworkers in 2001; today there is a team of 8 well trained Family Caseworkers. The number of ICWA cases processed rose from 419 in FY2001 to 579 in FY 2003. Though the number of Indian placement homes did not increase overall, in one year the number of children placed with relatives or family reunifications increased by 22% from 86 to 110.

As a result of this grant project there are now formal, inter-jurisdictional agreements signed with the state of Oregon, and the regions surrounding the cities of Seattle and Tacoma. There is a productive and supportive association between tribal caseworkers and the Casey Family Programs, which helps ensure the continuous improvement of services. Caseworkers use a family-centered approach and track cases in a consistent, credible process. A handbook describing that process has been developed over the last two years and is ready to disseminate to tribes and agencies around the country who are involved with the Indian Child Welfare Act. Foster care and adoptive families have received new publications and support materials, including a recommended, annotated reading list about Northwest Coast Indian tribes, so that they can deepen their children's understanding of heritage and language.

Significant progress was made in relation to each of the four original project goals and seven specific outcomes. The project also had its fits and starts throughout the three year process. Unanticipated staff turnover called for a continuous cycle of training and intermittent lags in the timely handling of cases – an important objective of the original proposal. Changes of administration at the state level in Alaska led to long delays in processing the formal memorandum of agreement and required additional meetings to establish trust and credibility with state agency officials. As tribal caseworkers learned more about the legal system, cross-cultural communication issues rose to the surface and highlighted the need for broader and deeper cultural competency training of all those involved with the Indian child welfare system.

So while goals were met and significant, noteworthy progress was made, there is still work to do. According to a state of Alaska report in May, 2004, the 1,000 Alaska Native children in Juneau are 29 times more likely than Caucasian children to be in out-of-home care. Collaborative meetings, focused action plans and an enduring commitment, not present when this project began, will mark the way for a larger group of committed service providers and Native families to continue improving the lives of Native children, no matter who their family might be.

INTRODUCTION

The Central Council of Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska serves 20 villages and communities spread over 43, 000 square miles within the Alaska panhandles known as Southeast Alaska. Tribal membership is among the largest, most isolated and most geographically dispersed tribal populations nationwide. The Central Council provides services to 20,000 members of the Tlingit, Haida and Tsimpshian Tribes, each of which has its own distinct culture, language and traditions. The Council, created by the Jurisdictional Act of 1935, operates over 50 programs providing direct services in the areas of public safety, social services, economic development, housing, education, youth and elders services and substance abuse prevention.

The Central Council's Tribal Family and Youth Services (TFYS) Department plays a leadership role in direct service delivery and regional capacity building. Over the last eight years the Department has initiated and nurtured relationships with state, regional, local and private service providers. TFYS staff have developed alliances beneficial to inter-jurisdictional issues of home placements, permanency planning, adoptions and foster care.

The Inter-jurisdictional Adoptions Project was designed as a 3 phase model, with pilot implementation in the first phase, evaluation, refinement and expansion in the second and transition of the model and functions to sustainability in the third phase. A major accomplishment of the Phase 1 planning effort was the creation of the Alaska Northwest Native Partnership (ANNP). This ten year collaboration was formalized with a Technical Assistance Agreement with CCHTITA Casey Family Programs and the state of Alaska. Each agency pledged financial support and staff participation in an initiative which outlined goals for prevention, permanence, transition and positive cultural identity. Administrators at the highest level, including Alaska's Governor, signed this agreement in 2002. This collaboration is in direct support of the Inter-jurisdictional Adoptions Project federal intent.

In Phase One major policies and procedures from various agencies which affect out-of-home placements were reviewed and in several cases streamlined to reduce redundancies and confusing terminology. On-going meetings between tribal Family Caseworkers and state social workers continue to this day, to clarify what is meant in manuals and memorandums and to change language when necessary so that Native staff and families more easily understand pertinent policies. The beginnings of a handbook specifically for tribal caseworkers were also drafted during Phase One.

Phase Two included a round of meetings with state and regional social workers and agency administrators in Washington, Oregon and northern California – states where larger numbers of Tlingit and Haida children are in foster care. The Project Specialist traveled with the CCHTITA legal counsel and noted in detail key contacts and relevant procedures that need to be followed in each state. This information was shared with TFYS Family Caseworkers so that they were/are better equipped with knowledge to advocate for tribal children and families. As happens with state governments, there were frequent staff resignations and retirements, which caused further travel and meetings to continue to develop familiarity and trust across the

Northwest region. Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) were drafted for each region or state targeted by this project.

An expanded team of tribal Family Caseworkers occurred in Phase Two, to help meet the goal of reducing the number of Native children in out-of-home care in Juneau, in the Seattle area and in Alaska and the Northwest region. New caseworkers were oriented and trained in current policies and procedures. They also participated in a number of trainings which deepened their individual understanding of cultural identity and issues that affect Native families, ranging from domestic violence to mental health. Caseworkers received much “on the job training” in the ICWA process from veteran colleagues. They became more adept at researching tribal affiliation and family histories, making placement recommendations and decisions regarding interventions, completing reviews of case files and court judgments and carrying out post placement monitoring for those in their caseloads. Throughout Phases Two and Three the team regularly staffed cases together and at times moved cases, to ensure that the best person possible could handle the issues involved with each case.

Phase Three largely involved continuing refinement and expansion of the model components – formal agreements, working relationships, revisions of policies and procedures, editing of a tribal handbook and staff training. At monthly meetings with state of Alaska social workers and quarterly meetings the ANNP team sustainability was on the table as a topic. At a May, 2004 strategic planning session details were laid out for the next year. This session was particularly important, as the Casey Family Program has downsized its staff and programs and therefore will not be the key player as it had been over the last three years. The CCTHITA’s Title IV-E program is one program that will ensure a stable source of funding for long term foster care program services, including adoptions and permanency planning. The Project Specialist, now Deputy Director of the Tribal Family and Youth Services Department is working with others in the agency to pursue other sources of funding to sustain and continue the valuable work done under this initiative.

PROCESS EVALUATION

The Process Evaluation followed the progress in relation to the four broad goals of the Inter-jurisdictional Adoptions project. Through meetings, conference participation, interviews with Family Caseworkers and the Project Specialist, review of case forms, calendars and relevant materials progress was charted on a regular basis. The External Evaluator met routinely with the Project Specialist to review progress and to re-focus attention on the goals of the grant.

The following outline presents specific action taken in relation to each goal over the 36 month project.

Goal #1. Community Capacity Building and Training

With regard to Capacity Building:

- ◆ Indian Child Welfare Act Handbook for Tribal Caseworkers completed, ready for distribution to interested tribes and agencies in state, nation.

- ◆ An overall Policy Manual for the Tribal Family and Youth Services Department was drafted in Year Two of the project, with significant input from the Project Specialist. The manual is in the final editing process and will soon be available to all staff. The manual and policies clarify operating procedures and increase consistency within the organization.
- ◆ Job Descriptions for Family Caseworker I and II were revised and submitted for an internal review, to ensure that staff responsibilities are in sync with comparable jobs within the agency. This action helped to clarify expectations and promoting upward mobility via a career ladder within the agency, which in turn affects the consistency of support to families.
- ◆ The Project Team moved into new offices in 2203, adjacent to one another in an area sequestered from other TFYS staff. The move allowed for more frequent communication, team building, and collaborative problem solving among the project staff.
- ◆ In September, 2003 Project Specialist Florendo was named Deputy Director of the Department of Family and Youth Services. The Department was re-organized into three managerial divisions with Florendo supervising the Child and Family Welfare Services area. Florendo continued her leadership of project activities. The new position enables further access to resources and support within the Department and the organization, and a higher level of awareness of foster care and adoption issues.
- ◆ In December, 2002 project staff made a site visit to Seattle, Washington, to meet with the Division of Child and Family Services (DCFS), the Seattle Native American Unit and the Casey Family Programs Seattle Division staff. The purpose of the meeting was to share case information and establish or support on-going collegial relations.
- ◆ On March 26, 2003 the Project Specialist was asked to present a historical perspective on ICWA and the IJA project to high level staff and administrators from foundations in and outside of Alaska. She also shared overall project goals and outlined the support necessary to sustain and expand the work of the project team.
- ◆ A new Team Coordinator of the Child Welfare team, Marilyn Doyle, replaced Florendo and began her role on April 4, 2004.
- ◆ Training funded by Casey Family Programs, on possible new database systems to track clients and cases occurred on May 11 – 13, 2004. It was particularly useful for the ICWA team as they consider case management across various programs operated by CCTHITA and ways to help to speed up the placement process by having easier access to data.
- ◆ An AANP Gathering on May 18, 2004 focused on building strategies to address increasing number of Native children and youth in out-of-home care. Three major strategies were to actively engage the community in anti-racism work, to further involve the tribe, youth, alumni and families in all processes, and to improve the stability of youth in foster homes through better training and culturally matched foster parents.
- ◆ With an eye toward long term sustainability, beginning in June, 2003 six of the rural Family Caseworkers are now funded jointly by Tribal Family and Youth Services Department and the Employment and Training Division.

With regard to Training:

- ◆ The 3rd annual regional ICWA conference sponsored by TFYS in 2002 was attended by 36 service providers, Family Caseworkers, state social workers and other service providers who work with Native children, youth and families.
- ◆ On April 13 – 15, 2003 the Project Specialist, TFYS Director and one family caseworker attended the national NICWA Conference in Portland, Oregon, furthering the tribal network of resources and contacts. The Specialist and Director then visited the Yakima Nation for two days, to observe the Kinship Care Program, which has been highly effective with the Yakima tribe. Based on their observations two Yakima staff members subsequently traveled to Juneau to participate in the 4th annual Southeast Regional ICWA Conference.
- ◆ On August 4 – 5, 2003 CCTHITA offered Advanced ICWA Training to over thirty participants. A summary of the evaluations indicated an increased level of knowledge concerning legal as well as procedural issues. They also provide a framework for continued training, particularly for those who work in the smaller communities in the region.
- ◆ The 4th Annual ICWA Southeast Regional Conference, "Cultural Diversity in Family Services" was hosted by CCTHITA and the State of Alaska on August 6 – 8, 2003. Project staff presented sectionals on "Recruiting and Retaining Native Foster Homes" and "Writing and Implementing a Case Plan". Over sixty individuals attended the conference in Juneau. Eight workshops in particular were developed to address the goals of this grant.
- ◆ The 5th Annual ICWA Southeast Regional Conference was held in Juneau on August 31 – September 2, 2004 and was co-sponsored by the State of Alaska Office of Children's Services. The focus of the conference was to reiterate the detailed requirements of ICWA and the state, supplemented by presentations on traditional tribal values, legal perspectives, the Ansell Casey Life Skills curriculum and the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder initiative.
- ◆ The ICWA team from Juneau along with the field staff participated in the "Weaving Hope through Unity" Conference on Domestic Violence on January 5 – 6, 2004. Evaluations indicated they gained new knowledge about the connections between alcohol/substance abuse and domestic violence and about helping to develop a community response to violence. In small groups they discussed client needs in relation to dealing with abuse and violence.
- ◆ The ICWA team attended a Circles of Care planning meeting on January 28, 2004 to learn about and discuss the Integrated Child Welfare System on the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. Guest presenter Ethleen Iron Cloud Two Dogs offered ongoing technical assistance to the team and the Tribal Family and Youth Services Department as they investigate similar possibilities.
- ◆ On May 13, 2004 Youth Caseworker specialist Jason Wilson trained all field staff in use of Ansell Casey assessment to aid in transitioning youth toward successful independent living status.
- ◆ Project Specialist Florendo participated in select tribal SAMHSA funded Circles of Care Planning Grant meetings during Year Two of the project, to assist with plans for care management of children in out of home care with mental health needs.

- ◆ Florendo attended the annual national Adoption Opportunities Grantees meeting in Washington DC in 2003, 2004.
- ◆ Florendo attended the NICWA “Protecting Our Children” conference in Denver on April 5 – 7, 2004 and attended sessions on Cultural Assessment Tools and Agreements, Updates on Federal Legislation, Native Fatherhood, the Impacts of Historical Trauma related to Culturally Competent Mental Health Care and Dual Diagnosis Issues, and Community Vision Building: A process to Empower Communities and Strengthen Partnerships to Improve the Lives of Children and Families.
- ◆ Florendo attended a national conference hosted by Casey Family Programs, called “Family, Community, Culture: Roots of Permanency” on April 7 – 8, 2004 in Denver and participated in the strand on Permanency Frameworks to garner new ideas for the TFYS team.
- ◆ Project Specialist Florendo, Department Director Eddy-Jones and one ICWA team member attended the National Child Welfare Conference on July 16 – 18 , 2004 in Washington D.C. increasing their skills and knowledge of effective programs and practices.

Goal #2. Direct Services, Referrals and Advocacy

- ◆ As an example of the level of direct service being delivered, between April 1 – August 31, 2004 the TFYS Child Welfare Team received 851 notices and petitions from across the Nation pertaining to 225 tribal children and secured the following:
 - Adoptive placements of **91** children
 - Completed adoptions of **9** children (8 within the jurisdiction of Juneau, the home community)
 - Legal guardianship placement of **37** children (2 within our jurisdiction)
 - **67** children and youth moved to Permanency (21 within our jurisdiction)
 - **71** children and youth reunified with their birth families.
 - **7** youth aged out of the system

To accomplish this, CCTHITA staff obtained the assistance of five tribes in Alaska, Washington and California. This data shows a significant increase of cases compared to Year One reporting.
- ◆ One Cultural Adoption, (where parental rights were not terminated) was completed.
- ◆ By the end of June, 2003 the Permanency Planning specialist completed adoption home studies for 12 children in six communities in Southeast, (including three sibling groupings) as a result of Project Succeed, a collaboration with the Bristol Bay Native Association. That collaboration ended June 30
- ◆ Based on research and observation the TFYS Team initiated a Family Youth Decision Making (FGDM) process in Juneau in March, 2003, modeled on one from the state Washington. Patricia Elofson, a veteran social worker from Lower Elwha Klallam provided training to staff in several settings. Three project staff are now certified in the Family Decision Making Model and will begin working with Juneau families. In Year Three this model will be offered to other communities in the region. In addition, the presiding judge of the 1st judicial district in Juneau is publicly supportive of the process.
- ◆ "Monthly Case Staffing" forums were held throughout Years Two and Three, where the status of all Tlingit and Haida child welfare cases in Juneau were discussed by project staff, state DFYS staff and members of the Alaska Northwest Native Partnership (ANNP).

- ◆ Three family group decision making processes were completed with families in Juneau in spring-summer, 2004.
- ◆ The designation of one TFYS staff as the youth advocate and specialist has helped improve support services and advocacy for older youth in out-of-home care. He is a staff member who has had extensive experience with the court system and the juvenile justice facilities in Juneau. This specialization has helped with the concentration of staff case loads in the Juneau area.
- ◆ TFYS sponsors “Native Storytelling Night for Foster Families” on a quarterly basis in Juneau
- ◆ In late 2004 a Fatherhood Initiative was jointly funded by three departments of CCTHITA in order to provide group and individual counseling to young, single and struggling fathers, a number of whom are involved with the child welfare system.

Goal #3. Improved Collaboration and Networking between Jurisdictions

- ◆ A formal MOA with state of Oregon, Department of Human Services was signed on April 14, 2004.
- ◆ A formal MOA with Region 4, King County, Washington (Seattle area) was signed on January 13, 2004.
- ◆ A formal MOA with Region 5, Pierce County, Washington (Tacoma area) was signed on October 29, 2004.
- ◆ In November, 2002 Tribal President Edward K. Thomas signed an Amendment to the CCTHITA IV-E Agreement with the State of Alaska, thereby incorporating the Tribal Foster Care Licensing Standards within organizational operations.
- ◆ Teleconferences with state level staff in Wyoming resulted in permanent placement of five tribal children back in Alaska.
- ◆ A signed, ten year agreement with Casey Family Programs of Seattle was signed. This partnership assisted the CCTHITA project as Casey staff facilitated communication and trust building between the two tribes. A meeting with Casey staff in Denver on April 8 –9 included news that their overall support in the region, including Alaska, would be gradually reduced over the next six years.
- ◆ The IJA Project Specialist continued to participate in quarterly planning and project meetings with Casey Family Programs, and the Alaska Division of Family and Youth Services. The focus of this collaboration is the status of 76 Tlingit and Haida children under the jurisdiction of CCTHITA who are in state custody in Southeast Alaska. During Year Two this group and their staff began replicating the Idaho Permanency Planning and Independent Living “Technical Assistance Program” for four children in state custody.
- ◆ On May 17 – 18, 2004 a meeting of Project Specialist, new ICWA Team Coordinator and Director of TFYS with state of Alaska Office of Children’s Services was held, to do strategic planning for future case coordination and management. (82% of children in out of home care in Juneau alone are Alaska Native)

- ◆ The Alaska Office of Children's Services requested a presentation by TFYS case workers on the Family Group Decision Making process. On May 27 ICW Team Coordinator Marilyn Doyle and Caseworker Lenora Walker led a session for the region's social workers.
- ◆ Three ICWA staff members serve on the board of Juneau Youth Services, the main provider of mental health services for youth in Juneau. (one is the current Board President) This opportunity allows for more inter-agency collaboration regarding appropriate and effective services.
- ◆ Three ICWA staff were trained by OCS staff on writing Home Study reports in early summer, 2004, so that TFYS staff can complete all forms in future Home Studies which will be acceptable to the state.
- ◆ Project Specialist Florendo continued participation as the Co-Chair of the Foster Care Sub-committee of the state's Tribal - State Collaboration Group. The group is finalizing regulations to accompany the tribal foster care licensing standards previously developed and adopted by tribes such as Tlingit-Haida.

Goal #4. Information Dissemination and Communications

- ◆ "Questions and Answers About the Indian Child Welfare Act and Foster Care", an easy-to-read booklet was produced by the project team for wide distribution to parents and interested caregivers
- ◆ All foster and adoptive parents were sent copies of a new booklet listing works of child and adolescent literature about Tlingit and Haida culture, as part of the cultural competency efforts by the grantee. They also received a poster listing Traditional Tribal Values, that was developed in winter, 2004 and publicly presented at the 69th annual tribal Delegate Assembly in mid-April.
- ◆ A brochure, "Family Group Decision Making" was produced by the project team to inform families about the process and its possibilities. (In an independent survey of 227 Native parents in the region the vast majority reported that written materials such as newspapers, posters and brochures were their main source for awareness of services and programs.
- ◆ TFYS produced a new attractive poster "Help Pass on valuable Traditions and Culture to Our Children" designed to recruit more foster families in April, 2004

OUTCOME EVALUATION

Four of the seven, concrete outcomes identified in the original grant proposal were accomplished during the 36 month project. Detailed below are accomplishments in reference to each outcome and a listing of what evidence was considered in determining whether the outcome had been met.

OUTCOME #1: Inclusion of permanency planning in case plan development and recommendations.

Accomplished *Partially Accomplished* *In Progress*

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ◆ A detailed, written plan for permanency planning for Native children and youth has been drafted, piloted and revised and nears finalization.
- ◆ Two Family Caseworkers were designated as Permanency Planning Specialists and received specialized training. As they transferred, others were trained in effective strategies that lead to permanency placements.
- ◆ Project Specialist Florendo attended a national conference hosted by Casey Family Programs, called "Family, Community, Culture: Roots of Permanency" on April 7 – 8, 2004 in Denver and participated in the strand on Permanency Frameworks to garner new ideas for the TFYS team.

Indicators and Evidence considered:

Case File Reports – Seattle area, Juneau, other areas

OUTCOME #2: Reduction in the time period between initiation and final disposition of cases. (to move from current 20 months to 9 months)

Accomplished *Partially Accomplished* *In Progress*

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ◆ TFYS has employed up to 9 full-time Juneau based Family Caseworkers over the last four years, as a result of partnership with Casey Family Programs. One staff member is designated as the adoption home studies specialist. One specializes in youth and transitioning from foster care to independent living. Two were "permanency workers" specifically tracking permanency plans until July, 2004 when one moved to work in a related but distinct program and the other was promoted to the ICWA Team Coordinator position. (Both remain committed to implementing permanency planning for children and youth in their respective positions.)
- ◆ Case workers participate in court hearings across the region telephonically.
- ◆ There were approximately 360 cases (November, 2002) kept open until there was an adoption decree or order, in a number of communities in Southeast (not all are under T & H jurisdiction). The average age range of children in care was 5 – 12 years. At the time it was noted that teens in care "are struggling" and staff began working toward helping more with transitional living skills, and investigating ways to get 18 year olds into General Assistance when they come of age, and

may need support. Within the next two years a Youth Specialist was hired and further trained, the Ansel Casey curriculum was implemented and TFYS initiated a broad-based Youth Leadership initiative with funding from multiple sources.

Indicators and Evidence considered:

- Case File Reports – dates
- Monthly Accomplishments - staff reports

OUTCOME #3: Access to greater array of support services and monitoring through case management approach.

Accomplished Partially Accomplished In Progress

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ◆ Because of increased staff, they are now able to actually manage individual cases.
- ◆ The TFYS ICW Team meets on a weekly basis to staff individual cases.
- ◆ Members of the TFYS ICW team meet on a monthly basis the state of Alaska social workers to staff pertinent cases.

Indicators and Evidence considered:

- Listing of support services
- Frequency of monitoring
- List of participants in case management teams
- Notes/minutes from case management meetings
- Recommendations regarding barriers, etc from collaborating agencies
- Reports of improved communications between case workers
- Reports of greater collaboration, networking among agencies, case workers

OUTCOME #4: Access to more accurate case file information, etc through signed MOUs with other states (California, Oregon, Washington)

Accomplished Partially Accomplished In Progress

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ◆ Signed, ten year agreement with Casey Family Programs and United Tribes of Seattle.
- ◆ Formal MOUs were signed by the state of Oregon, King County (Seattle) and Pierce County (Tacoma).
- ◆ Though written MOAs with the state of Washington was prepared in 2001 they have yet to be signed by appropriate state level administrators. Delays have been largely due to geographic distance, changes in administration, and the heavy workload of project staff. Project staff determined that the most effective way to reduce barriers to placement of children residing the Washington was to work with the counties where they live, rather than deal with the state

department bureaucracy. They were successful in that effort, signing MOAs with the two counties where the largest number of Tlingit and Haida children were in foster care.

- ◆ It must be noted that project staff identified 54 independent counties in California, making it impossible for them to develop productive working relationships with caseworkers and administrators. They found instead that by working with local California tribes they were better able to advocate for Alaska Native children in care in California. No formal MOAs were necessary to accomplish this work.

Indicators and Evidence considered:

Signed agreements

Interviews/ observations from case workers about degree of access

OUTCOME #5 : Access to effective advocacy services for Native children in dependency proceedings.

Accomplished *Partially Accomplished* *In Progress*

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- ◆ Produced a booklet for parents/families about what happens with children/youth in foster care.
- ◆ Drafted publication for parents/families/advocates about what happens in court hearings, so that greater understanding reduces stress and fear.

Indicators and Evidence considered:

Listing of advocacy services used on behalf of various children

Interviews/observations regarding amount/degree of trauma experienced during proceedings.

OUTCOME : Produce a guide, detailing ICWA process, to share with other tribes, organizations, states.

Accomplished *Partially Accomplished* *In Progress*

- ◆ An Indian Child Welfare Act Handbook for Tribal Caseworkers was completed in late 2004 and is ready for distribution to interested tribes and agencies in state, nation.

OUTCOME: Plan, arrange, and coordinate training opportunities for village social and human services staff re: case management, assessment, prevention, counseling, referral procedures.

Accomplished *Partially Accomplished* *in Progress*

At the start of the project, Specialist Le Florendo met with Juneau based Family Caseworkers on a bi-weekly basis, or, given travel schedules, at least monthly to do individual case updates. In April, 2003 that responsibility was taken over by the newly promoted ICWA Team Coordinator.

In addition, the Alaska State Office of Children's Services (OCS) sponsors a monthly series of "IV-B reviews" of cases. Appropriate TFYS staff meet before those sessions to review cases in depth, in case the state contacts them for further details.

- ◆ On quarterly basis all village field staff come to Juneau for meetings, which include orientation and discussion of new programs and resources.
- ◆ Staff routinely do cross training of each other, when all are not able to attend a specialized training or workshop.
- ◆ All staff must complete the two week training (TONE - Training and Orientation for New Employees) for state social workers before they take on any cases.

Training topics which some or all village field staff and TFYS staff attended in 2002 included:

August	Regional ICWA Conference
September	Transitional Living (Anchorage Conference)
October	Historical Trauma 7 Habits of Highly Effective People Computer training
December	Service Providers Statewide Conference (Anchorage)

Training topics which some or all village field staff and TFYS staff attended in 2003 included:

January	Strength-based Case Management
April	National NICWA Conference
August	Regional ICWA Conference

Training topics which some or all village field staff and TFYS staff attended in 2004 included:

May	Use of Harmony software designed for case management Child sexual abuse Ansell Casey assessment to aid in transitioning youth toward successful independent living status
August	Wrap Around in Indian Country Historical Trauma and Cultural Perspectives Regional ICWA Conference

Indicators and Evidence considered:
Conference Agendas, notes, evaluations

RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Recommendations to Program Administrators

1. Contact the Casey Family Programs to forge alliances and draw on their experienced staff to provide technical assistance and advice.
2. Focus on the legal aspects of the ICWA process with caseworkers and other staff. Social workers tend to have limited knowledge, understanding and experience with legal proceedings and need to build confidence in their ability to verbally advocate for tribal children and families in such formal settings. Invite local judges and lawyers to participate in tribal meetings and conferences.

B. Recommendations to Program Funders

1. Fund projects and programs for longer durations. Building trust and positive working relationships with state, county and local agencies takes time, especially given the typical turnover and changes in administration in governmental agencies. The complexities of governmental laws and regulations require on-going training of staff and adjustments to forms and protocols. Long term sustainability requires a longer than 3 year term investment in planning and initial implementation.
2. Continue increasing the capacity of American Indian/Alaska Native tribes to implement the Indian Child Welfare Act. The CCTHITA experience was productive not only for Native children, youth and families, but also for the many state, local and private service providers who participated in and benefited from the trainings made available through the project, and through individual interactions with Native caseworkers. Knowledge and trust among agencies was built, resulting in more productive and efficient handling of cases.

C. Recommendations to Adoption Field

1. Make sure that someone in your agency is knowledgeable about ICWA and the minimum federal standards required by the act.
2. There are American Indian/Alaska Native children in out of home care in every state. Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) training should be provided to caseworkers, even though there may not be reservation tribes or concentrated groups of Native people. The Indian Child Welfare Act applies to all Native children, no matter where they are.
3. Adoption caseworkers should approach tribal caseworkers at the onset of any case dealing with an American Indian/Alaska Native child. It's important to understand that tribal caseworkers will also pursue the best outcomes for children, and that they are not perceived as "fighters against the state/local caseworkers."



Central Council Tlingit and Haida Tribes of Alaska
Department of Tribal Family and Youth Services

Collaborative Planning to Increase Interjurisdictional Adoptions Project, 2001-2004

ATTACHMENTS

- ♥ Indian Child Welfare Act Tribal Caseworker Handbook
- ♥ 5th Annual Indian Child Welfare Southeast Regional Conference agenda
- ♥ Wrap-around in Indian Country: article from CCTHITA Tribal News
- ♥ Recommended reading list for tribal foster parents
- ♥ Poster: Southeast Traditional Tribal Values
- ♥ Poster re: Tribal Foster Care

Le Florendo

From: Francine Jones
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2005 5:31 PM
To: 'Joecush@hotmail.com'
Cc: 'jnujones@ptialaska.net'; Le Florendo
Subject: FW: RFP for Rural Social Services Grant Program Service Area 1 Kawerak
Importance: High

Attachments: RFP Appdx A - Grant Applic_Rev10-04.doc; RFP Appdx B - DHSS Assurances.doc; RFP Appdx C - Budget Guidelines_11-04.doc; RFP Appdx D - Audit Requirements.doc; RFP Appdx F 1-Travel Policy Compliance Statement_10-28-04.doc; RFP Appdx F 2-Purchasing Practices Compliance Statement_10-28-04.doc; Appdx I Client Report.xls; RFP Appdx G - Resolution for Waiver of Sovereign Immunity1.doc; Rural SSPG RFP NON-COMPETATIVE.doc

Joe:
 URGENT! Please note that the due date is June 7.
 Francine

-----Original Message-----

From: Stevens, Diana [mailto:diana_stevens@health.state.ak.us]
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2005 9:22 PM
To: Francine Jones
Cc: Brodersen, Sandra O.
Subject: RFP for Rural Social Services Grant Program Service Area 1 Kawerak
Importance: High

This Non-Competative Request for proposal for the Rural Social Service Grant Program. This is in response to the Online Public Notice posted 4-1-05 as a Request for Letters of Interest . This is a NON-COMPETATIVE RFP from the Department of Health and Social Services, Office of Children's Services. This RFP is for Service Area 111 only.

To be considered for funding for the Rural Social Service Program, proposals must be received at the address provided in Section B(5) of this RFP on or before **4:30 p.m. Alaska Daylight Time, Tuesday, June 7, 2005.**

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS PLEASE E-MAIL ME OR CALL. Thank you.

Diana Stevens
 EMAIL: diana_stevens@health.state.ak.us
 465-4823

Diana Stevens
 Grants Administrator
 Alaska Grants & Contracts Support Team
 P.O. Box 110650
 Juneau, AK 99811-0650
 465-4823 phone
 465-8678 Fax

Le Florendo

From: Francine Jones
Sent: Tuesday, May 24, 2005 5:31 PM
To: 'Joecush@hotmail.com'
Cc: 'jnujones@ptialaska.net'; Le Florendo
Subject: FW: RFP for Rural Social Services Grant Program Service Area 1 Kawerak
Importance: High
Attachments: RFP Appdx A - Grant Applic_Rev10-04.doc; RFP Appdx B - DHSS Assurances.doc; RFP Appdx C - Budget Guidelines_11-04.doc; RFP Appdx D - Audit Requirements.doc; RFP Appdx F 1-Travel Policy Compliance Statement_10-28-04.doc; RFP Appdx F 2-Purchasing Practices Compliance Statement_10-28-04.doc; Appdx I Client Report.xls; RFP Appdx G - Resolution for Waiver of Sovereign Immunity1.doc; Rural SSPG RFP NON-COMPETATIVE.doc

Joe:
 URGENT! Please note that the due date is June 7.
 Francine

-----Original Message-----

From: Stevens, Diana [mailto:diana_stevens@health.state.ak.us]
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2005 9:22 PM
To: Francine Jones
Cc: Brodersen, Sandra O.
Subject: RFP for Rural Social Services Grant Program Service Area 1 Kawerak
Importance: High

This Non-Competative Request for proposal for the Rural Social Service Grant Program. This is in response to the Online Public Notice posted 4-1-05 as a Request for Letters of Interest . This is a NON-COMPETATIVE RFP from the Department of Health and Social Services, Office of Children's Services. This RFP is for Service Area 111 only.

To be considered for funding for the Rural Social Service Program, proposals must be received at the address provided in Section B(5) of this RFP on or before **4:30 p.m. Alaska Daylight Time, Tuesday, June 7, 2005.**

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS PLEASE E-MAIL ME OR CALL. Thank you.

Diana Stevens
 EMAIL: diana_stevens@health.state.ak.us
 465-4823

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