

Supporting the Development of Management Information Systems for Tribal Child Welfare Programs

NATIONAL CHILD WELFARE
RESOURCE CENTER FOR
TRIBES



A Service of the Children's Bureau, a member of the National T/TA Network

Presented By

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Purpose of Webinar

- Series of recommendations informed by the findings of the NRC4Tribes Needs Assessment
- Not less than one webinar per recommendation
- This webinar:
 - **Recommendation 3:** Supporting the Development of Management Information Systems for Tribal Child Welfare Programs.

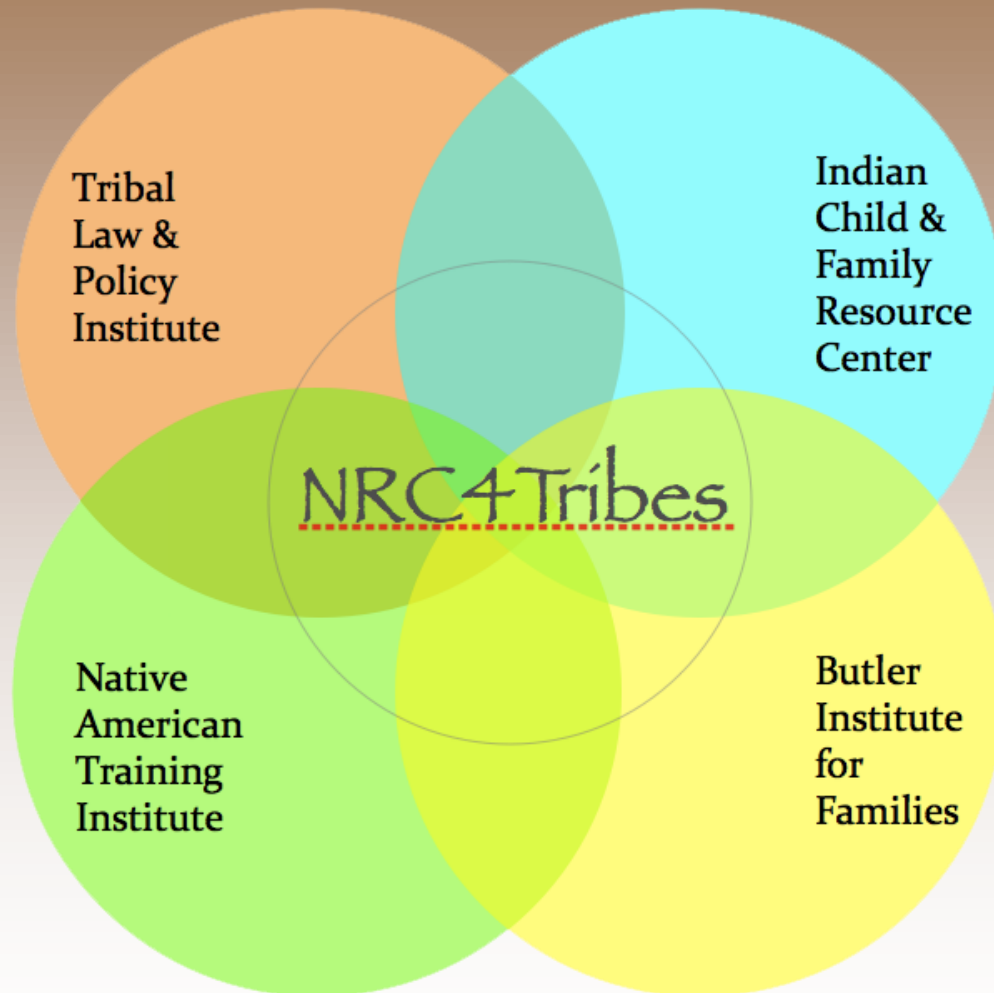
The National Resource Center for Tribes (NRC4Tribes)
is part of the Children's Bureau Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Network and provides training and technical assistance to support the enhancement of Tribal child welfare systems.

www.NRC4Tribes.org



A Service of the Children's Bureau
A Member of the T/TA Network

The Partnership



National Leadership

A ***National Advisory Council***, comprised of twenty five tribal child welfare professionals, tribal leaders, and community stakeholders from around the country reviews plans and activities of the NRC4Tribes and the larger T/TA Network, provide recommendations regarding the Networks approach to serving Title IV-B funded tribal child welfare systems and improving practices with American Indians and Alaska Native children and families.

The NRC4Tribes role in the T/TA Network

- The NRC4Tribes is not intended to be the *only* source of TA for Tribes.
- Tribes may access training and technical assistance through any of the national resources centers and implementation centers within the Children's Bureau national T/TA Network.
- The NRC4Tribes is the Network's focal point for coordinated and culturally competent child welfare training and technical assistance to Tribes.

Technical Assistance Needs Assessment

Reports are downloadable at:

WWW.NRC4Tribes.org

Needs Assessment Purpose

- **Listen** to tribal child welfare program staff, families and community stakeholders talk about program strengths, gaps and challenges.
- **Gather** relevant information, which can then be distilled into an accurate profile of the tribal child welfare system.
- **Inform Decisions** about types of services, administrative functions, data and information collection, program management and reporting.
- **Provide Information** about the training and technical assistance available to tribes.

Needs Assessment Methods

General Online Survey

- 85-items; checklists, multiple choice, open-ended
- 262 surveys completed by representatives of more than 100 tribes

Tribal Director Telephone Interviews

- 31 tribal child welfare directors across 6 Children's Bureau regions (7 BIA regions)

Tribal Stakeholder On-site Interviews

- 20 IV-B funded tribes were invited; 16 accepted
- 149 in-person interviews were conducted

A stratified random sampling process based on geographic region and size was used to select tribes to participate in on-site and telephone interviews.

Needs Assessment Respondents

- 400+ individuals representing 127 federally-recognized tribes
- General Online Survey respondents: 42.8% involved with the tribal child welfare agency
- Interviewees:
 - 45.6% tribal child welfare staff
 - 17.4% foster parents and youth
 - 37% were other stakeholders

Tribal Child Welfare Program Strengths

- Approach to working with families

“I would say just our knowledge of the local people is a strength. That would be a prevention in itself. And being able to find relatives in a timely manner.”

- Characteristics of child welfare staff

“We have a well educated and well trained staff who interact very well with the target population.”



Tribal Child Welfare Program Strengths

- Available tribal services or resources

“We work collaboratively with state agencies and services agencies to ensure appropriate culturally based services.”

- Cultural understanding

“Obviously, child welfare is very important no matter what walk of life you are, but for the Native American folks, it’s about us re-establishing traditions and language and the family togetherness. It’s more about trying to stop genocide, if you will, and I think that’s the greatest strength of all the tribal programs, is what we’re actually trying to accomplish. That is what we fight for every day.”

Tribal Child Welfare Program Challenges

- **Lack of funding for operations and services**

“I think money is a downfall and staffing and resources. Those are all of our bad areas. Foster care payments are hard, and our funds are limited so we can’t offer a lot of things that we want to make this a better program.”

- **Lack of staff**

“You might hear a lot of times, ‘we’ve only got one person.’ You have no idea what that is like, the impact of what that is like. I think it’s a barrier toward a better communication and any child welfare procedure, whether it’s strengthening from the beginning and working on a prevention road or if it’s working with a family that has children in custody. If you don’t have the staff then you’re limited.”

Tribal Child Welfare Program Challenges

- Lack of prevention services
- Technology for data tracking and case management
- Collaborating with state or county child welfare departments

“Well, we try to work with the state but they seem to have their own agenda and it’s hard, it’s really hard to work with them because, I mean for various reasons, but it’s kind of a contentious relationship.”

- Accessing services and working with service providers

“We do live in a very rural area so I think that transportation is a huge barrier for us as far as our families having access to those services.”

Data Collection and Technology

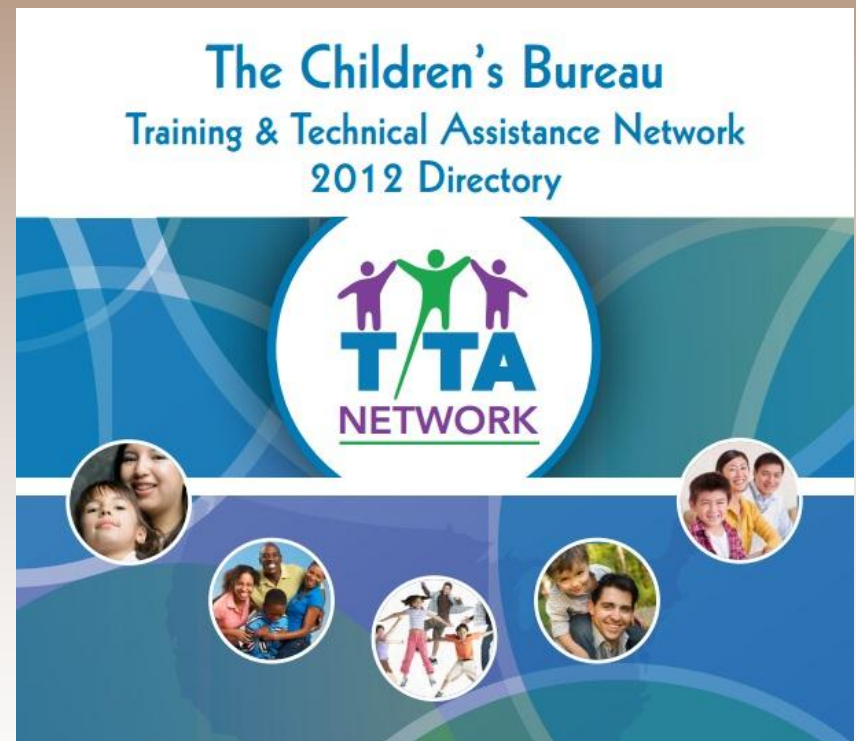
- Data and technology is a critical need area.
- At the time of data collection, most Tribes did not have access to an automated MIS.

Data Collection and Technology	N	Mean	Critical need area for T/TA	Moderate need area for T/TA	Strength area (little or no need for T/TA)	Don't know
Automated case management and data system	211	1.41	59.4% (139)	24.4% (57)	6.4% (15)	9.8% (23)
Computer equipment (hardware and software)	213	1.72	44.4% (104)	27.4% (64)	19.2% (45)	9.0% (21)
Improved service monitoring and outcomes tracking system	209	1.39	60.1% (140)	24.0% (56)	5.6% (13)	10.3% (24)
Data analysis	206	1.43	58.3% (133)	25.0% (57)	7.0% (16)	9.6% (22)
Cross-systems data sharing	205	1.40	59.4% (136)	24.0% (55)	6.1% (14)	10.5% (24)
Selecting data systems and/or data system vendors	198	1.45	54.6% (125)	24.5% (56)	7.4% (17)	13.5% (31)

Accessing T/TA Through the T/TA Network

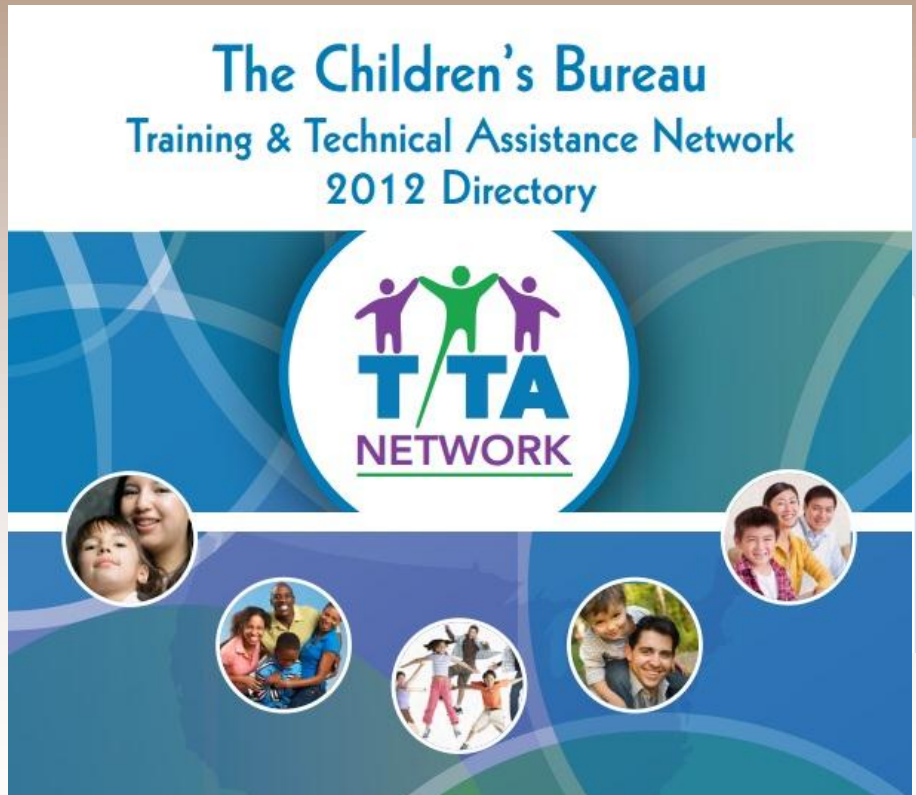
Accessing T/TA

- No wrong door!
- Contact information is available online at:
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/tta/>
- The Directory can also be downloaded at the web address above.



Accessing T/TA

- Call or email **any** of the contact numbers found in the Directory
- Go to www.ttaccportal.org and download the On-site T/TA Network Standard Request Initiation form - **you only have to complete the first 3 pages -**



On-Site T/TA Network Standard Request Initiation Form

On-site T/TA Network Standard Request Initiation

Instructions

This form begins with a State, Tribe, Territory or Court articulating their need for technical assistance. The information collected in this tool is intended to help the Training and Technical Assistance (T/TA) Network members understand the Technical Assistance (TA) need and determine how best to proceed.

For more information about the T/TA Network, please see: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/tta/>.

Certain persons are eligible and authorized to request T/TA in a State, Tribe, Territory, or Court. If the request is from a County, Region (within a State), Court, or other source not directly authorized to make such a request, this form should be submitted to your State's or Tribe's administrative/central child welfare office or Court Improvement Project for approval prior to submission. If you have any questions or need assistance completing this tool, please feel free to contact your ACF Regional Office directly. For more information on your Regional Office, please see: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/oro/index.html>.

Part A – Standard Request Initiation Information

Date of Request:		
Organization Requesting Assistance:		
Requestor's Contact Information	Name:	
	Title:	
	Address:	

- Where a Tribe, State, Territory or Court describes their need for technical assistance.
- You can download then complete it or we can walk you through it.

4 Concrete and Actionable Steps to Take When TA is Needed

1. Understand the need you have
 - Needs assessment or other
2. Contact the T/TA Network
3. Submit a T/TA Network Standard Request Initiation Form
4. Follow-through with process



National Child Welfare Resource Center for Tribes

NRC4Tribes

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NRC4Tribes Webinar Series: Supporting the Development of Information Systems

Cheryl Montoya, NRC-CWDT
August, 2012

AGENDA

- Identify what the NRC-CWDT & Childrens Bureau have done already to address this identified need and recommendation.
- Some basic information to provide assistance on things to think about when thinking and planning a "system"
- How can NRC-CWDT & CB assist you?



NRC-CWDT & CB so far...



- Peer-to-Peer Monthly calls
- Off-site and onsite technical assistance
- Peer-to-Peer facilitation between Tribes
- ACF Regional meetings
- Implementation Center forums with Tribes
- Pathways to Title IV-E presentation
- Semi-annual AFCARS meetings for Title IV-E grantees

What data collection system is best for you?



What is your data set?



- Reports
 - IV-B
 - BIA
 - Quarterly reports for executive branch.
- Justification of current staffing/resources or the need for more
- Specific area of data needed (e.g. kinship care)
- Notice a particular issue (like domestic violence) and need data to support other programs or monies



You know what data you need/want to collect, what system should you use?



Options to Document/Collect Data

Forms



Tracking System

*Case
Management
System*

Enterprise System

Points to Consider

- Feasibility Studies
- Political Climate
- Change Management
- Training
- Policy Development and Consistent Application of Policy
- System of Record



Benefits



- Information possibilities!!
 - More, new, better, timely, and consistent.
 - Readily available to those who need it.
 - Can actually be more secure (than paper), and limited to those with a need to know.
- New Abilities!!
 - To measure/improve outcomes for children and families.
 - Ability to manage effectively by using all the information.
 - Ability to meet Federal, State, BIA, or Tribal reporting requirements.

Costs

- Initial equipment purchase
- Initial software purchase
- Software customization
- Software license and maintenance
- Training, training, and more training
- Data conversion from old system (automated or paper)
- Requirements development
- Policy development



Political Climate



- Is funding available for initial purchase, and all future maintenance needs?
- Do you have, or are you willing to develop policy that supports the business rules in the system?
- Are you willing to make decisions based on what the information in your system tells you?
- How willing are your staff to conform to using a system?

Change Management



- “It's easiest to ride a horse in the direction it is going.” In other words, don't struggle against change; learn to use it to your advantage.
- Change management, or the lack of, is always the most overlooked aspect of system implementation.
- “Managing change” refers to *making changes in a planned and managed or systematic fashion.*

Change Management—What's important?

- Strong team w/ support of top management
- Start small.
- Internal communication to staff and other stakeholders critical.
- Understand how new systems will affect the end users.
- Focus on business process (not the underlying technology)
- Get users involved early in the process.
- Train, train, and then retrain.
- Be realistic!!!



Policy Development/Consistent Application

- Every system has built in “rules.” These rules generally monitor, prompt, or require a user to perform a function, enter information, or prohibit the same.
- Likewise, Agencies generally have written policy that dictates a certain “practice model.”
- In order for a “system” to work there must be developed policy (standards), and the system rules must be consistent with policy.



System of Record

- A continuation of policy and its consistent application.
- If it isn't in the system, it didn't happen.
- Opportunity to guide, monitor, require, and enforce certain actions that reflect written policy.



Is your Tribe ready?

- Is there Tribal code that will support adding a system of documentation?
- Is there policy in place?
- Does your agency have a practice model in place?
- Do you want to change?



What is your Tribe's capacity to implement a new system?

- Appropriate staffing
- Other resources that you can pull from if needed
- Monies available to put into a new system (not just for purchase and implementation but also for maintenance costs)



NRC-CWDT can help you...



- Assist in building capacity of a tribal agency looking to develop a case management system
- Enhance the use of a current case management system
- Use data for program improvement
- Adapt the Reconnect Families database tool to meet basic data reporting requirements
- Review procurement plans for an IT system

NRC-CWDT can also...



- In collaboration with NRCOI, facilitate Tribal/State partnerships
- Make presentations tailored towards regional meetings or tribal association meetings about topics to consider when building a data system.
- Provide information and networking opportunities at scheduled meetings.

“Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children.” -Sitting Bull



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NRC4Tribes Webinar Series
August 2, 2012

PARADIGM SHIFT *DATA AND YOU*

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THAKIWAKI
SAC & FOX NATION OF OKLAHOMA

Information
Technology
Department



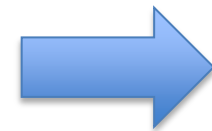
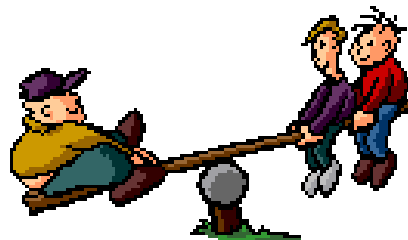
From I.T. to **Social Services**

- A whole new world
- New Acronyms
- New set of bureaucracies
- New set of priorities
- Creating buy in
- Collaboration



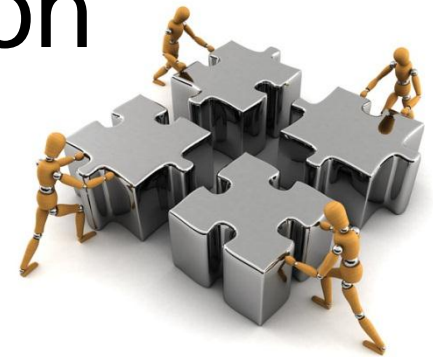
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Challenges Along the Way

- Education
- Tribal Buy In
- Changes in Administration
- Time



Data and Me



Paradigm Shift

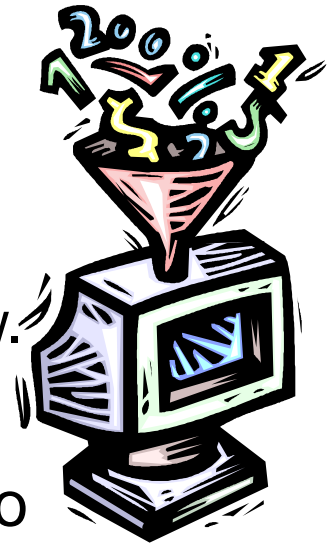
1. IT staff can personally see how what they do benefits children and families.
2. Social Services staff see how Accurate and comprehensive data will ultimately make their life easier.
3. Tribes can say we make decisions for our kids.



From **Data** to **Information**

With an IT system you can turn **DATA** into **INFORMATION** that is:

- Better, more timely, and consistent.
- Readily available to those who need it.
- More secure and limited to those with a need to know.



With information you can make the paradigm shift to managing with data to improve outcomes for children and families as well as meet any Federal, State, BIA, or Tribal reporting requirements.

In beginning the collection of AFCARS data, you may be collecting it just “for the FEDS”---but it is data that you need to know and use.

- There are also additional data that you may want to collect.



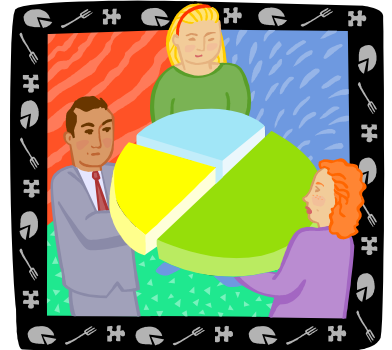
Developing a System and Collecting Data is an *ongoing partnership* between:

- Leadership
- Administration and Management
- IT Staff
- Field Staff



When thinking about WHAT data to collect...

- What do you really need to know?
- How will it be used?
- Who will use it?
 - Give workers data that help them do their job and manage their caseloads.
 - Give supervisors reports that will help them manage and monitor.
 - Give administrators data that will help them plan and evaluate.



(Someone has to gather, input, and update the data!)

When beginning to collect...

- Start small.
- Keep it Simple.
- Use it or Lose it.





Questions?

