

Culture, Connection and Identity for Indigenous Families in non-Indigenous Systems




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Culture, Connection
and Identity for
Indigenous Families
in non-Indigenous
Systems

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Casey Family
Programs – Indian
Child Welfare
Programs

casey family programs

SAFE
STRONG
SUPPORTIVE

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safe children | strong families | supportive communities

BOOZHOO

- Intros and review plan of today's learning
- Breathe. Feel. Learn. Share.

Devastating News

- Old stories we as tribal people know
- <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/remains-215-children-found-former-indigenous-school-site-canada-2021-05-28/>

Genocide and Assimilation

- Colonel Pratt to Congress in 1892- “A great general has said that the only good Indian is a dead one, and that high sanction of his destruction has been an enormous factor in promoting Indian massacres. In a sense, I agree with the sentiment, but only in this: that all the Indian there is in the race should be dead. Kill the Indian in him, and save the man.”

Canadian Version

- “We instill in them a pronounced distaste for the (Indigenous) life so that they will be humiliated when reminded of their origin,” Grandin was quoted as saying. “When they graduate from our institutions, the children have lost everything (Indigenous) except their blood.”

So the children would see...



Impact on Indian Families



Wajapa
(Ezra Freemont)

"I look to the future. I will sleep easy if I die if my children are prepared to meet the struggle that is coming when they must cope with the white settlers."

Wajapa (Omaha, 1881)

One familial story line

My children – 2009

Me - 1974

My Dad – 1954

My Grandfather- 1918

My G Grandfather

1882

Wajapa (Ezra) 1845



My Great Grandfather's School Record

Carlisle 1879-1918

Francis Freeman 916

APPLICATION FOR ENROLLMENT IN A NONRESERVATION SCHOOL.

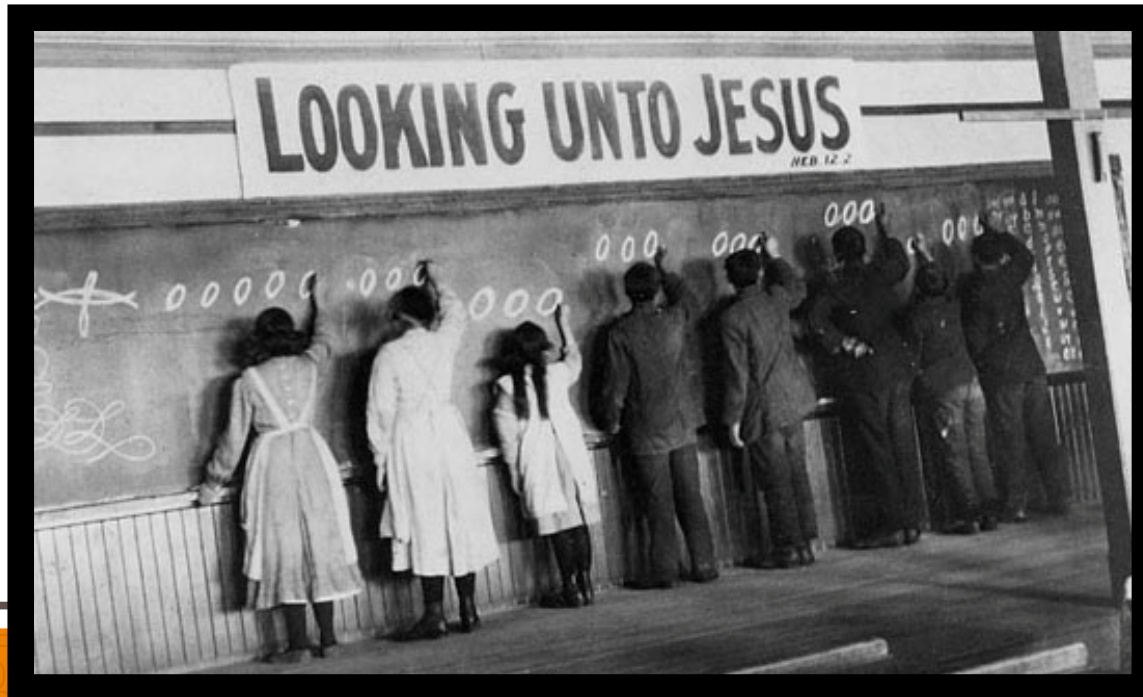
Full name of child Francis Freeman Indian name is
He la ga la Name of father Ezra Freeman
Name of mother, _____ Tribe Omaha
Reservation, Omaha Degree of Indian blood of child, full
Is either parent white, if so, which? no Are either or both allotted? yes
On what reservation? Omaha Age of child, 22 What
reservation school attended? Omaha How long? 1 year
If ever enrolled in a nonreservation school, name of school,
When? _____ How long? _____ If ever
dismissed from a school, where, Carlisle Pa; when, April 1st 1905
and for what reason? time out
(Signed.) Francis Freeman

NOTE—The above blank to be signed by the child, if old enough to understand its import; if not, by the parent.

Attack on the Indian Family

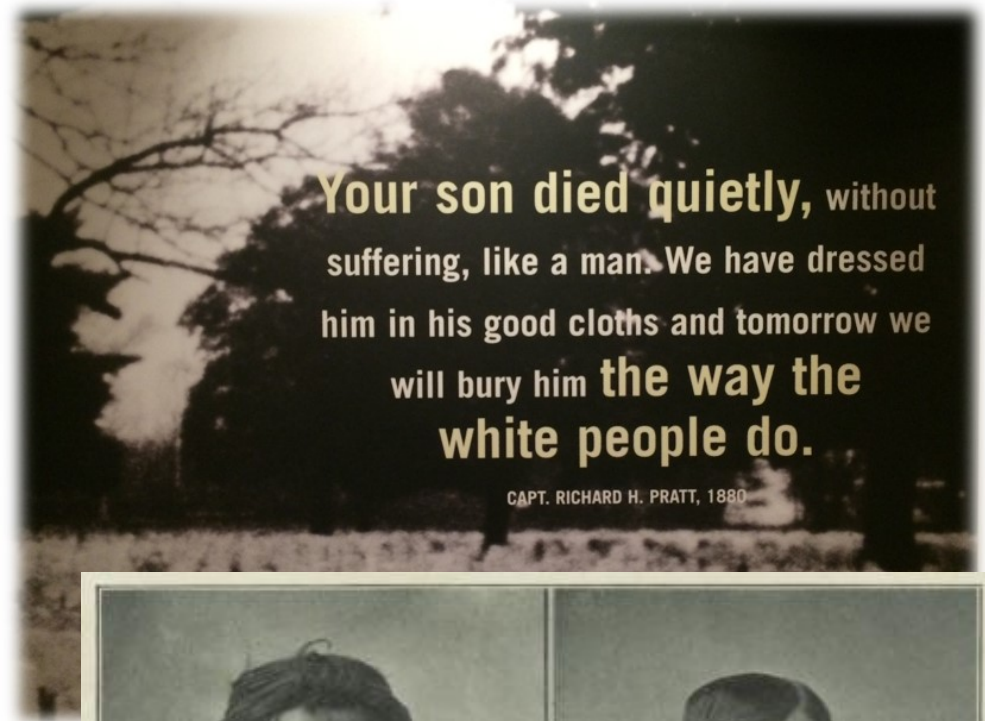
The Civilization Act of 1819

- Act intended to civilize and Christianize Indians
- Funding directed to missionary schools to provide for “moral education”



Boarding Schools

- Era is 1860 –present
- 357 known Indian boarding schools



Indian Adoption Project, 1950s-1960s

"No matter how well intentioned and how squarely in the mainstream this was at the time, it was wrong; it was hurtful; and it reflected a kind of bias that surfaces feelings of shame, as we look back with the 20/20 vision of hindsight."

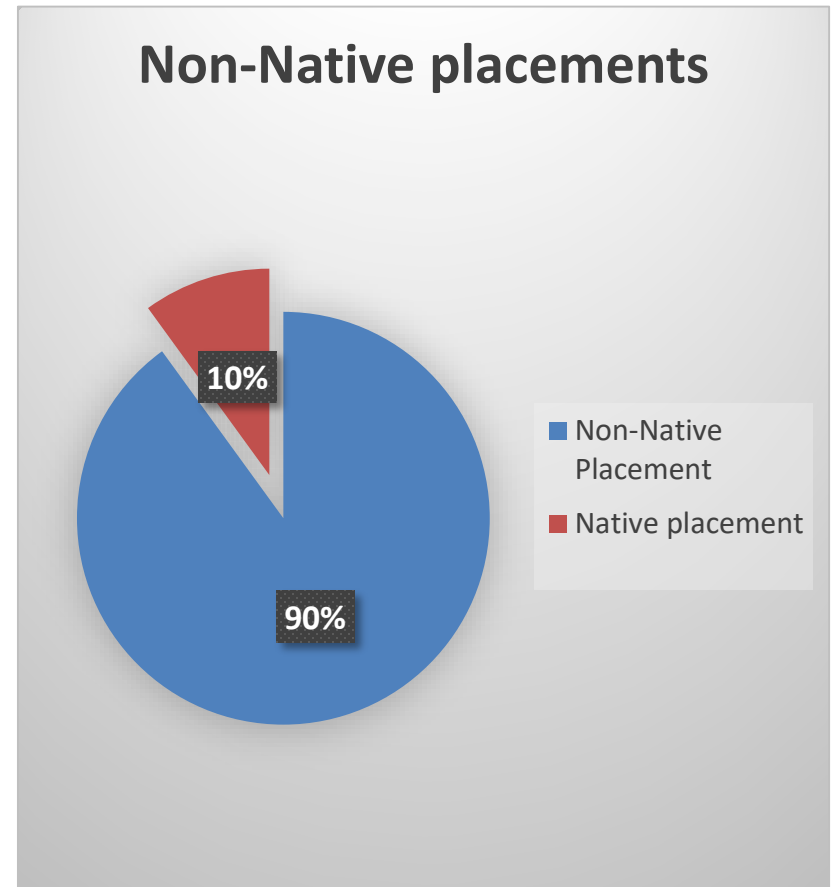
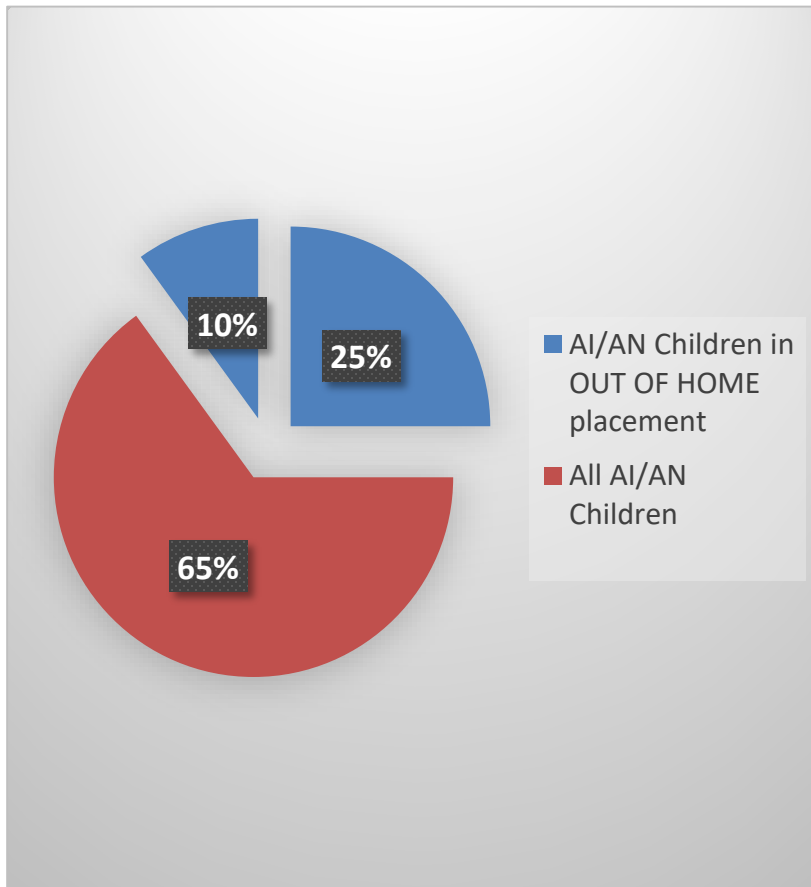
Shay Bilchik, Executive Director of Child Welfare League of America, NICWA Conference 2001

Indian Relocation Act of 1956

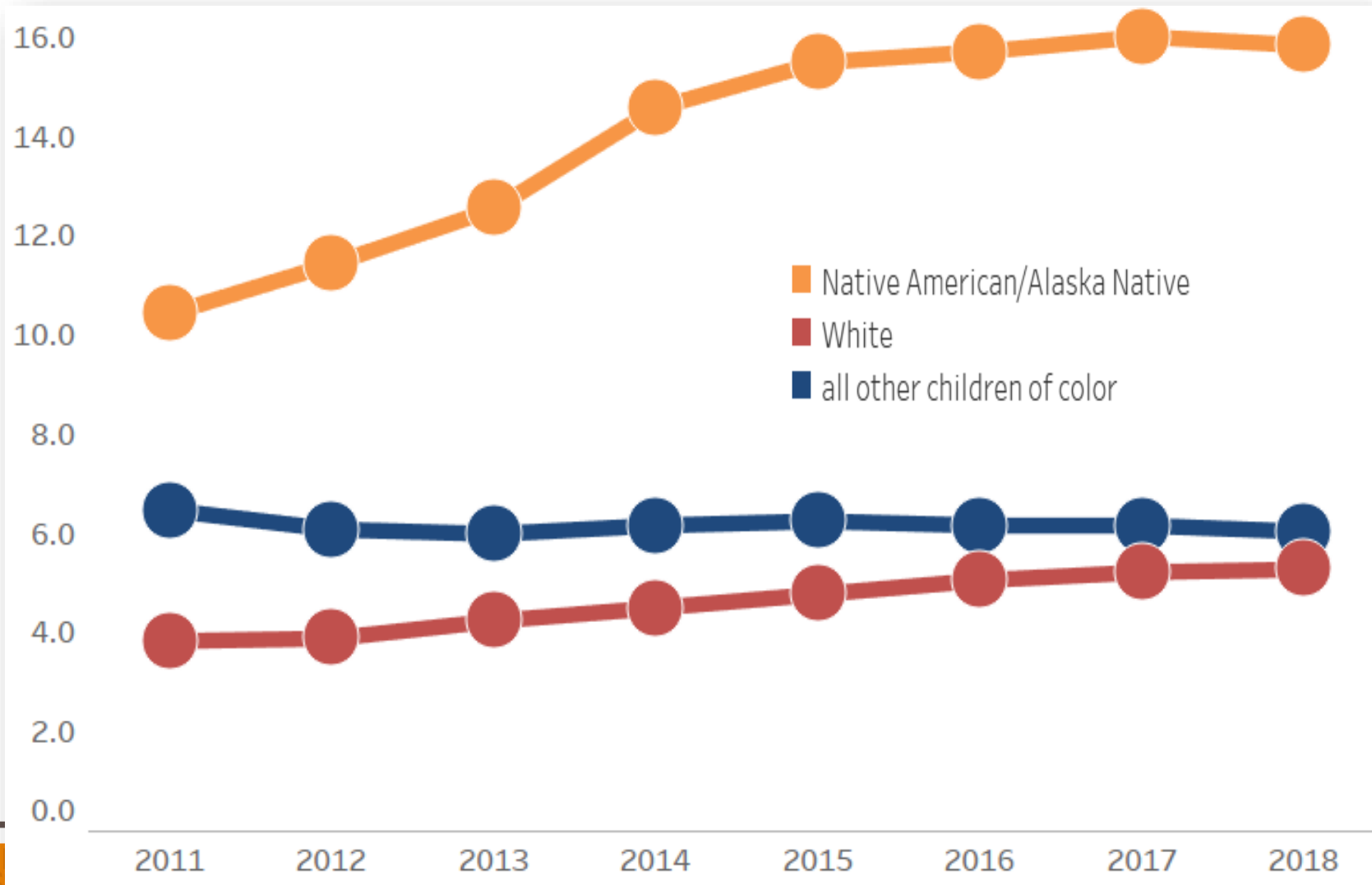


Association on American Indian Affairs

1960-70s found:



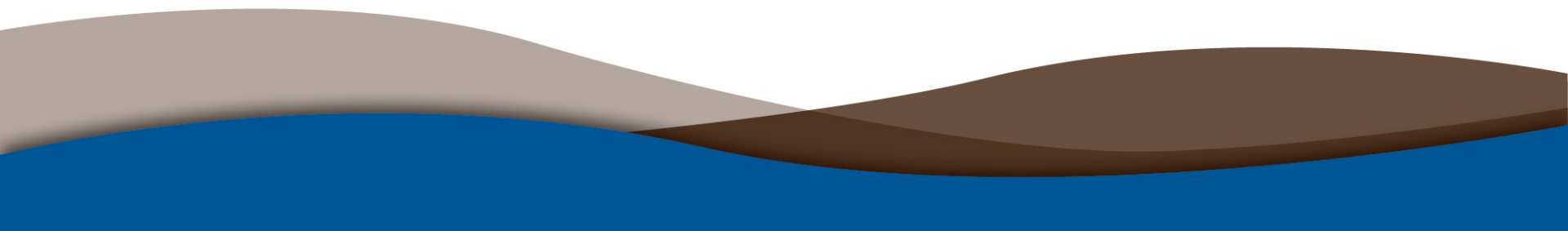
Disparity continues for American Indian/Alaska Native children in care (per 1,000 children) (**over 50% placed with non-Native families**)



Deeper Data Dive

- Data differs greatly by state. These are examples of some of the states with the highest placement and termination rates:
 - 1 in 3 children AI/AN children in Minnesota can expect to enter foster care by age 18; 1 in 4 in Montana, 1 in 5 in North Dakota, South Dakota and Alaska (there is nowhere in the country where white children have a risk as high as 1 and 5)
 - 4% of parents of AI/AN children in Minnesota will have their parental rights terminated and 3% in Oklahoma, Montana, North Dakota, Iowa and Alaska (a 3% termination rate for the parents of white children can be found only in West Virginia and Arizona)

Source: Edwards and Beardall, “Mechanisms of AIAN inequality in child welfare systems across US States” to be published in Columbia Journal of Race and Law [data is from AFCARS and NCANDS]



Colonization

- Genocide and War Practices
- Voting/Military Service
- Federal Plenary Power
- Termination Era (adoption and land)
- Assimilation/Segregation
- Multiculturalism
- Trauma

American exceptionalism- Assimilation as value

- Americans remain firm in their belief that American culture and the American way of life are superior to others. More than half (53 percent) of Americans say that the world would be much better off if more countries adopted American values and the American way of life. Approximately four in 10 (42 percent) disagree with this statement.
- There is even greater agreement among the public that the US has always been a force for good in the world. Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of Americans agree, while about one in four (24 percent) reject the idea that the US has been consistently virtuous in its actions abroad.
- Fewer Americans believe the US has a special relationship with God. Nearly half (45 percent) the public believe that God has granted the country a special role in human history. Roughly half (49 percent) of Americans disagree.

Another Familial Line

Me 1974
Mom 1956
Grandma 1936
G Grandma 1916
GG Grandma 1895

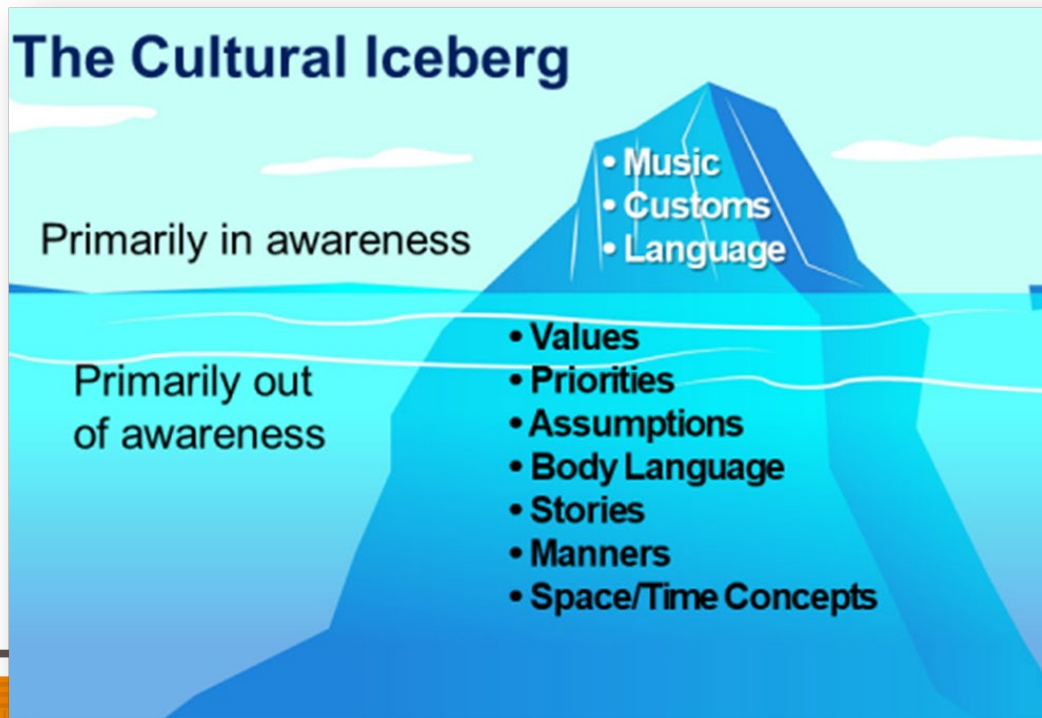


Values via two cultural lenses

- Paternal Line – Men based
- Maternal Line- Women seem to be advancing
- Umonhon/Ojibway (connection, be a good relative, take care of all, openness, touch)
- Western (hard worker, independence, self-reliance, reserved, not to burden)

Cultural Humility—

“Ability to maintain an interpersonal stance that is other-oriented (or open to the other) in relation to aspects of cultural identity that are most important to the person.”



Five “Ds” of observable Culture:

Dress
Diet
Dialect
Dance
Drums

Who decides a child's culture(s)?

- Not attorneys
- Not judges
- The families
- ***Cultural Humility*** is our greatest asset to serve in a trauma-informed, culturally respectfully and effective way.



Child Welfare

- Extended family, Clan, and grandparents
- Trauma and other factors led to need for more children and families to need safety
- Western-like governmental intrusion in tribes child-welfare is relatively new
- “Rights” are different, parents and all
- ICRA and sovereignty
- “best interest” “reasonable efforts” etc. come from federal influence and financial coercion

Contrast in hopes for children

- Be a good relative
- Not necessarily financial measurements, or Western status concepts
- Where would that be nurtured?

For Further Information

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Upcoming Webinars

Drug Endangered Children series:

- ***July 27, 2021***
 - ***Intersection of DEC and Human Trafficking***
- ***August 31, 2021***
 - ***Intersection of Substance Abuse and Domestic Violence***

ICWA series:

- ***August 3, 2021***
 - ***Understanding the Indian Child Welfare Act: Family, Community and Culture***
- ***August 26, 2021***
 - ***Children and Families of Tribal Nations - Effective Engagement with Tribes to Secure Best Outcomes***

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