Dismantling Racial Inequity Through Child Welfare Systems Change
Session 2: Community Collaboration and Grassroots Effort

Presenters

Pat Penning
Community Stakeholder and Facilitator

Frank LaMere
Social and Political Activist

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Supervisor, Iowa Department of Human Services in Sioux City

Facilitator

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Butler Institute, University of Denver
OVERVIEW

In 2000, agencies and the community came together to address the disproportionate and disparate number of Native American children in the Woodbury County child welfare system.

Seventeen years later, this effort is still an active part of the Native American Woodbury County Child Welfare System.
WHERE IN THE WORLD ARE WE?

The National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice
Training & Technical Assistance Across the United States

The National Resource Center for Family Centered Practice is a division of the University of Iowa School of Social Work

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CINCF Recognized in Places to Watch-2006

“In Sioux City, Iowa, the Community Initiative for Native Children and Families (CINCF) came together as a community-based coalition with the mission to ensure that Native Service Providers and public and private agencies work together to make a difference for Native American Families. CINCF is active in pursuing compliance with Indian Child Welfare Act. These representatives meet regularly, discuss Native issues and concerns and work with the Department of Human Services to develop strategies for resolving problems. The CINCF committee brought together representatives from Tribal council leaders, judges, community representatives, a Tribal domestic violence representative, The National Indian Child Welfare Association, Native Service Providers, The Human Rights Commission, Iowa Legislature, Woodbury County Department of Human Services, County Administration, Universities of Iowa and South Dakota and the Sioux City Police Department.”

Paper prepared for: Casey- CSSP Alliance for Racial Equity
Titled: Places to Watch- Promising Practices to Address Racial Disproportionality in Child Welfare
December 2006
GO TO THE PEOPLE

Go to the people,
Live with them,
Learn from them.

Start with what they know,
Build with what they have.

The mark of the best leaders is,
When the work is done,
The tasks completed,
The people will say,
“We have done this ourselves!”

Lau Lou - China, 700 BC
OUR BEGINNING

In 2000, the community began to organize and formed the Community Initiative for Native Children and Families (CINCF), which includes representation from:

- The Native urban community
- Tribal representatives
- The Department of Human Services
- A collaboration of agencies and individuals
- Recover Our Children (ROC) brought families who had experiences in “the system” together.
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Created the Minority Youth and Family Initiative (MYFI)

Evaluated current state of the Woodbury County Child Welfare Practice

1. In 2007, 64% of Iowa’s Native Children in foster care were from Sioux City

2. Native Americans made up 0.4% of Iowa’s population but represented 2.1% of the children in foster care: a 5 to 1 disparity rate
IOWA DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

Granted $150,000 to the Department of Human Services (DHS) for Woodbury County to begin to address overrepresentation

Planning goals and strategies with stakeholders began building upon the relationships developed through CINCF
CINCF COLLABORATIVE REPRESENTATION

Four Directions Community Center
Atlas of Winnebago
Boys Town
Briar Cliff University
City of Sioux City
Ponca Tribe
Goodwill Industries
Ho-Chunk Inc.
Iowa KidsNet
Iowa Department of Human Services
Iowa Workforce Development
Omaha Tribe
Jackson Recovery Centers
June E Nylen Cancer Center

Little Priest Tribal College
Mercy Child Advocacy Centers
Meskwaki Family Services
Native Youth Standing Strong
Nebraska Indian Community College
Woodbury County Sheriff’s Department
Santee Sioux Nation
Sioux City Housing Authority
Sioux City Human Rights Commission
Sioux City Police Department
Siouxland Human Investment Partnership
Third Judicial District
University of Iowa
Winnebago Tribe of Nebraska
THE HARD WORK BEGINS

The Community:

• Built public awareness by using the media
• Made known concerns through letter writing campaigns to government officials and visited the State Capital
• Held the first Annual Memorial March to Honor Lost Children in 2003
• Passed the Iowa Indian Child Welfare Act in 2003
• Minority Youth and Family Initiative funded in 2004
• DMC Resource Center began providing technical assistance
• 2005 Native Unit began work
• 2006 the (Casey) Alliance and Race Matters Consortium began providing technical assistance
• 2007 evaluation showed DHS involved Native families and community encouraged by new approaches to Native families
• 2008 Briar Cliff University receives a 5-year grant for Native students to receive BSWs
• 2008 Family Drug Court begins
• 2009 Iowa Commission on Native Affairs was formed
• 2013 Native Families for Native Children Grant – Native American Foster Care retention and recruitment
• 2017 Whiteclay suspends the sale of alcohol
MYFI GOAL STATEMENT

Native American children are safely raised in the Native community—as evidenced by:

Decreases in:
• Abuse/neglect rates
• Re-abuse/neglect rates
• Entry into foster care system
• Number of placements for Native children
• Termination of parental rights

Increases in:
• Reunification with parents
• Relative placements
• Native American foster homes
Memorial March to Honor Lost Children

We must pray for our children’s safe return. We must remember those who have died in foster care. This will be the most important struggle that we as Native people will ever be confronted with. When our children grow old, they must know that we fought for them. We have begun; let us continue.
FOUR DIRECTIONS COMMUNITY CENTER

“Where People Come Together”

Mission Statement
The Four Directions Community Center was created to make the Siouxland Indian community well, to keep native families whole and intact, and to socially, culturally, and spiritually empower the community where necessary and where desired. To do these things, strong advocacy is required and ownership of the problems that beset the Native and greater Sioux City communities must be placed and accepted.
Mission Statement (cont’d)
Four Directions will provide strong advocacy and will ensure that ownership and responsibility for recognizing and acting on the matters that trouble our community will be clearly established. Partnerships will be built in this regard and greater collaboration among Native people will be encouraged to address the issues faced by our families, extended families and community. Change is needed among the people. We have resolve that things will change.
FOUR DIRECTIONS
COMMUNITY CENTER

“Where People Come Together”

Four Directions – Advocacy & Navigating the System Classes

Frank LaMere – Four Directions Parent Program Facilitator/Advocate

Access to Recovery Program

Native Youth Standing Strong

Will Meier – Facilitator

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FOUR DIRECTIONS
COMMUNITY CENTER
“Where People Come Together”

Transportation
Winnebago Indian Health Services provide transportation to and from the hospital and center 3 times per day

Tribal Arts & Crafts
Women’s Wellbriety
Motherhood Is Sacred
COMMITMENT TO BEST PRACTICE

- IDHS Native Unit
- Use family team meetings
- Increase Native children placed with relatives
- Increase Tribal involvement and transfer
- Increase placement of Native children placed in Native foster homes
BUILDING BRIDGES

• Initiate contact with Tribal representatives early to begin communication and joint planning
• Provide cross-system education about differences in State and Tribal court processes
• Increase kinship placements for children in care by early identification of extended family
• Increase knowledge of children’s eligibility for enrollment
• Help develop informal support system for families in need
THE BRIDGES LEAD TO . . .

• Increase in Tribal interventions into State court proceedings and increase in transfer of cases to Tribal Courts

• Increase in State courts acceptance of Tribal orders of guardianship and adoption as permanency options
BRIDGES MAKE CONNECTIONS TO . . .

- Family
- Foster Parents
- Adoption Workers
- Protective Service Workers
- Juvenile Court Services Officers
- Community
- Schools
- Collaborative Agencies with CINCF
DISPROPORTIONALITY INDEX

The percentage of a race group at a decision point divided by the percentage of the same race group in the general population.

\[
\text{DI} = \frac{\% \text{ of race group at decision point}}{\% \text{ of same race group in the general population}}
\]
DISPARITY RATIO

The disproportionality index of one race group divided by the disproportionality index of a base race group. Typically the white racial group is used as a base group.

\[
DR = \frac{\% \text{ disproportionality index of one race group}}{\% \text{ disproportionality index of the base race group}}
\]

**Note:** Starting in January of 2014 the department implemented a differential response system for child abuse and neglect reports. The data for the January to June 2014 time period may not be directly comparable to prior time periods. Caution should be exercised when interpreting the new results.
WOODBURY COUNTY WELFARE DECISION POINTS BY POPULATION PROPORTIONS
JULY–DEC 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>General Population</th>
<th>Accepted Referrals</th>
<th>Victims of Abuse</th>
<th>Entered Foster Care</th>
<th>In Foster Care</th>
<th>Exited Foster Care</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian and Alaska Native</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
 ROM REPORTS IOWA

Site Discharge reason (of those discharged)

Report Time Period: August 1, 2016 - July 31, 2017
DETOURS THAT LENGTHEN THE JOURNEY

- Integrating new legislation into practice (Iowa ICWA)
- Locating expert witnesses for court in ICWA applicable State proceedings
- Building cultural links for Native children when ICWA is not applicable
- Building effective approaches to serve both urban and reservation community members
DETOURS THAT LENGTHEN THE JOURNEY (cont’d)

• Increasing availability of Native foster homes and providers
• Traversing through ideological differences amongst court parties
• Broadening cross-cultural education within the community and system
• Moving forward when cultures collide
THE VISION FOR OUR FUTURE

Increasing resources for prevention

Building cultural awareness

Expanding the partnerships

Building sustainability
Dismantling Racial Inequity Through Child Welfare Systems Change

Questions?
Join Us!

Learning Exchange
Wednesday, September 13, 2017
3:00-4:00 pm EDT

Register here:
• http://bit.ly/REquityLEx2
Dismantling Racial Inequity through Child Welfare Systems Change

Webinar topics:

1. Institutional Analysis
2. Cross-Systems & Tribal Partnerships
3. Data Collection & Analysis
4. Reframing & Training
5. Social Work Education
6. Sustainability
Webinar 3: A Data-Driven Approach to Improving Outcomes for Black Girls in Child Welfare

Thursday, December 7, 2017

Learning Exchange: December 12, 2017
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PRESENTERS

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Thank You!