



Tribal STAR Drumbeats

Volume V

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Tribal STAR – Independent Living Forum

November 16, 2005



Sonya St. Mary, California
Department of Social Services
(CDSS) ILP Manager

Tribal foster youth throughout America are eligible to receive Independent Living (IL) services, and yet, few are connected with this program. In an effort to increase collaborative efforts and provide culturally congruent Independent Living Services, Tribal STAR hosted an **Independent Living Forum** at Mission Trails Regional Park on November 16, 2005.

Twenty-eight Tribal and non-Tribal foster youth stakeholders participated in this Forum. When asked what they wanted to learn during the Forum, participants replied: "what does independent living mean to Tribal youth and what IL services can help Tribal youth", "how can IL services be brought to the reservation and rural areas to increase access to Tribal youth" and "how to increase interface with Urban Indian programs"?

The San Diego County Independent Living Services Contractors (YMCA Youth & Family Services, San Diego Youth and Community Services and South Bay Community Services) delivered a presentation to attendees on the Independent Living Program in San Diego County. Highlights of this presentation include the fact that any youth, ages 16-21, who are dependents of the foster

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Tribal STAR is a program of the *Academy for Professional Excellence* at
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care system and living in out of home placement are eligible to receive services. **The goal of Independent Living Services is to prepare youth for life beyond**



the foster care system. By providing case management, classes and special events around such topics as employment, education

and housing, foster youth gain skills necessary for life out of foster care.

Representatives from the local Tribal community shared about Tribal health services available to Tribal foster youth. Though not uniform in each region, there are two consortia health centers (Indian Health Council & Southern Indian Health Council), and two Tribal providers to single Tribes (Santa Ysabel Band of Diegueno, and Sycuan Medical/Dental Center). There is also an urban Indian health center: San Diego American Indian Health Center, located in downtown San Diego.

The clarification of available resources and services through the Independent Living Program and the local Tribal community allowed participants to gain an **improved understanding of ways in which to provide more culturally appropriate and effective services for Tribal foster youth.**

Special guests present at the Forum included Sonya St. Mary, California Department of Social Services (CDSS) ILP Manager, Marsha Tagawa, CDSS ILP Coordinator, and Michael Flaxman, Chafee ETV Bus. Sonya provided information about Statewide resources for Tribal foster youth and the need to document services provided to Tribal foster youth. The availability for Tribes to access Title IV-E funds was brought into question and discussed. This was a key point of interest and will be looked into further by the Tribal STAR Team and Sonya. Michael Flaxman, Project Coordinator

for the Chafee ETV Bus (http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/pdf/Chafee_Overview_Flyer.pdf) presented information on the Chafee ETV Bus as a resource for Tribal foster youth. The Chafee ETV bus is a mobile computer lab with the purpose of providing educational, financial and community resources to youth in a more personalized format. The Chafee ETV bus is available to travel to communities, urban and rural, around the State.

In addition to these presentations, a focused discussion was facilitated to address the following questions:

- What are the needs of Tribal Foster youth to prepare them to exit the foster care system?
Ideas included: more interactive classes, opportunities to connect with community resources and gain social support
- What will help IL program better reach and serve Tribal youth?
Ideas included: provide services on the reservations, collaborate with Tribal agencies, provide classes that strengthen a youths' connection to their culture and collaborate with Tribal business to cultivate opportunities for mentoring
- How can Tribal programs improve collaboration with IL programs to better serve youth?
Ideas included: schedule Chafee ETV bus to come to the reservation, consider how the IL structure can meet the needs of the Tribe's plans for youth as they turn 18 (ex., gaining financial management skills) - there may be a way to build on mutual goals and objectives.



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Sonya St. Mary, California Department of Social Services (CDSS) ILP Manager, Marsha Tagawa, CDSS ILP Coordinator participate in Forum

There are many complex issues facing Tribal and non-Tribal agencies as they work to bridge services and improve services in a culturally appropriate manner. By coming together to discuss these issues, the participants of the Independent Living Forum were able to identify contacts, resources and future opportunities for Tribal foster youth. This shift in knowledge, beliefs and practice will certainly lead to improved outcomes for Tribal foster youth.

The next Tribal STAR Forum will be held in May, 2005. The topic of the Forum has yet to be decided.

For Independent Living Program contact information within *California*, please visit: <http://www.childsworld.ca.gov/res/pdf/ILPCC03.pdf>

For Independent Living Program contact information within the *United States*, please visit: <http://www.nrcys.ou.edu/nrcyd/resources/ilcoords.shtml>

For further information on Tribal contacts, refer to the Tribal STAR website: <http://pcwta.sdsu.edu/TribalSTAR>.

— Contributed by Dana Allen, Tribal STAR Training Coordinator



Direct Tribal Access to Title IV-E Would Provide New Resource Opportunities for Indian Communities

April 2005

Legislation (S. 672) that would end the disparate treatment of Indian children under the Social Security Act's Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance programs by providing them with the same services as are currently provided to all other eligible children in the United States was introduced on March 17, 2005 by senator Gordon Smith (R-OR). Senator Smith is a member of the Senate Finance Committee, which has jurisdiction over the bill. He was joined as co-sponsors by Senators Baucus (D-MT), McCain (R-AZ), Bingaman (R-NM), Johnson (D-SD), Cantwell (D-WA), Cochran (R-MS) and Domenici (R-NM). The text of the legislation was also included in the senate Finance Committee's welfare reauthorization bill (S. 667, Section 403),



which the committee approved on March 9. The welfare bill is the most likely route for the tribal IV-E legislation to be approved by the Senate at this point. There's no word on when the Senate will schedule a vote on the welfare reauthorization legislation.

Under the current law, tribes are not eligible to directly apply for or operate the Title IV-E program without an agreement with their state. This means that over 4,000 Indian children who are eligible for this federal entitlement program go without services, simply because they live on tribal lands. While approximately 70 tribes have been able to negotiate Title IV-E agreements with their states, the agreements are not mandatory and many times do not provide tribes with all the funding or flexibility available under Title IV-E.

The legislation would correct an oversight in this...

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\$7 billion annual program to allow tribes to directly apply to the federal government to operate the program. The legislation would also allow tribes to define their service area, use their own foster care standards, provide discretion to the Secretary of Health and Human Services to modify program requirements and tribal match rates, allow tribal consortia to apply and develop new or continue existing tribal-state IV-E agreements. You can obtain a copy of the legislation and a description at <http://www.nicwa.org/policy/legislation/index.asp>.

Why Is This Important?

In 1980, Congress enacted the Foster Care and Adoption Assistance Act (Title IV-E), which provides entitlement funding for foster care and adoption assistance services for income-eligible children who are placed by state agencies or public agencies with which the state has an agreement. Funding is also provided to states to administer these programs and provide training. Children who are under the jurisdiction of their tribes and are placed by tribal courts and agencies were left out of consideration for access to these important funds. Having direct access to these funds would provide new resource

opportunities to tribes and improve outcomes for tribal children and families. With new funding under Title IV-E, tribal communities that are using their existing funding (tribal or federal) to support foster care and adoption assistance could redistribute these existing funds to other child welfare services where unmet needs exist. This could include prevention efforts aimed at reducing the overall number of children coming into tribal care and services to strengthen tribal families where children are at risk of being removed from their homes or could be reunified after placement. Without access to Title IV-E funds, tribes are forced to stretch already limited resources to cover some of the most expensive of all child welfare services—foster care and adoptive placements. In addition, having direct access to Title IV-E, as opposed to relying only on tribal/state agreements, would give tribes more authority and stability in their child welfare programming.

Overall, it will be important for tribal advocates to voice their support for the legislation to

their United States Senators and House of Representatives members if the legislation is to be passed this year. The bill provides tribal governments the opportunity to apply for the Title IV-E program and receive reimbursement for eligible foster care and adoption assistance services. This is one of the few open entitlement programs left among the federal government's sources of child welfare funding. The National Congress of American Indians, regional inter-tribal organizations across the United States, Child Welfare League of America, and the American Public Human Services Association all support tribes receiving direct Title IV-E funding.

(For more information on this topic, please contact Chey Clifford-Stoltenberg, NICWA senior government affairs associate, at (503) 222-4044 or chey@nicwa.org.)

Taken From: NICWA





Tribal STAR Training News

Tribal STAR will be conducting training in the following counties on the dates indicated. The **Summit** is for directors, managers and supervisors. The **Gathering** is for frontline workers.

March 29th	Summit—San Diego
April 25th	Summit—San Bernardino
May 10th	Summit—Imperial
May 31st-June 1st	Gathering—San Diego
June 21st-22nd	Gathering—San Bernardino
July 19th-20th	Gathering—Imperial

Tribal STAR Presentations

The Tribal STAR team will be conducting presentations at the following conference and institute. Our "team" includes our partners and other community members who support our efforts on behalf of Tribal youth.

National Indian Child Welfare Association
Conference—San Diego
April 2-5, 2006

Independent Living Institute
San Diego
April 18-20, 2006

Celebrations

Tribal Star will be conducting its 3rd annual community celebration. We come together with the Tribal and Non-Tribal community, who are our collaborative partners, to share in prayer, share a meal together, and honor those who support us in our work.

Tribal STAR 3rd Annual Community Celebration
September—Date TBA

Congratulations Justine!



The Tribal STAR Team and Partners offer congratulations to Justine Thing. Justine represents the Tribal youth of this area.

Justine has been on the Tribal STAR team since its inception, attending workgroup meetings, participating in training by being on the youth panel to talk about her experiences and her participation in youth programs.

Justine graduated from High School on January 20, 2006 and she celebrated her 18th birthday on January 21, 2006.

Continued Success, Justine!

Teach Us Love, Compassion, Honor

Grandfather,
 Look at our brokenness,
 We know that in all creation
 Only the human family
 Has strayed from the sacred way.
 We know that we are the ones
 Who are divided
 And we are the ones
 Who must come back together
 To walk in the sacred way.
 Grandfather,
 Sacred One,
 Teach us love, compassion, honor
 That we may heal the earth
 And heal each other.

— Ojibway Prayer



The Origin of Medicine

At one time, animals and people lived together peaceably and talked with each other. But when mankind began to multiply rapidly, the animals were crowded into forests and deserts.

Man began to destroy animals wholesale for their skins and furs, not just for needed food. Animals became angry at such treatment by their former friends, resolving they must punish mankind.

The bear tribe met in council, presided over by Old White Bear, their Chief. After several bears had spoken against mankind for their blood-thirsty ways, war was unanimously agreed upon. But what kinds of weapons should the bears use?

Chief Old White Bear suggested that man's weapon, the bow and arrow, should be turned against him. All of the council agreed. While the bears worked and made bows and arrows, they wondered what to do about bowstrings. One of the bears sacrificed himself to provide the strings, while the others searched for good arrow-wood.

When the first bow was completed and tried, the bear's claws could not release the strings to shoot the arrow. One bear offered to cut his claws, but Chief Old White Bear would not allow him to do that, because without claws he could not climb trees for food and safety. He might starve.

The deer tribe called together its council led by Chief Little Deer. They decided that any Indian hunters, who killed deer without asking pardon in a suitable manner, should be afflicted with painful rheumatism in their joints.

After this decision, Chief Little Deer sent a messenger to their nearest neighbors, the Cherokee Indians.

"From now on, your hunters must first offer a prayer to the deer before killing him," said the messenger. "You must ask his pardon, stating you are forced only by the hunger needs of your tribe to kill the deer. Otherwise, a terrible disease will come to the hunter."

When a deer is slain by an Indian hunter, Chief Little Deer will run to the spot and ask the slain deer's spirit, "Did you hear the hunter's prayer for pardon?"

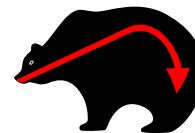
If the reply is yes, then all is well and Chief Little Deer returns to his cave. But if the answer is no, then the Chief tracks the hunter to his lodge and strikes him with the terrible disease of rheumatism, making him a helpless cripple unable to hunt again.

All the fishes and reptiles then held a council and decided they would haunt those Cherokee Indians, who tormented them, by telling them hideous dreams of serpents twining around them and eating them alive. These snake and fish dreams occurred often among the Cherokees. To get relief, the Cherokees pleaded with their Shaman to banish their frightening dreams if they no longer tormented the snakes and fish.

Now when the friendly plants heard what the animals had decided against mankind, they planned a countermove of their own. Each tree, shrub, herb, grass, and moss agreed to furnish a cure for one of the diseases named by the animals and insects.

Thereafter, when the Cherokee Indians visited their Shaman about their ailments and if the medicine man was in doubt, he communed with the spirits of the plants. They always suggested a proper remedy for mankind's diseases.

This was the beginning of plant medicine from nature among the Cherokee Indian nation a long, long time ago.



Tribal STAR invites you to submit dates, times and locations of events your Reservation or Agency is sponsoring and we will include that information in our "Grapevine" section of the newsletter. Please send the announcements for your events to: morrantia@projects.sdsu.edu. The newsletter is published quarterly, Spring, Summer, Fall and Winter. If you have questions call or e-mail the editor, Margaret Orrantia.



<http://pcwta.sdsu.edu/TribalSTAR>

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