

Tribal Consultation Action Plan

May 2019 to May 2020 (2022)

The Department of Children and Families and the Federally-recognized Indian Tribes headquartered in Wisconsin held a consultation meeting on May 8, 2019. This Action Plan is the result of that consultation meeting. The plan is a set of mutually agreeable short and long term strategies to address issues of interest to Tribes. The Department and the Tribes headquartered in Wisconsin agree to collaborate on these strategies and provide staff support as required to successfully achieve these outcomes by May 2020**.

**Due to the COVID 19 Pandemic, work on some items were delayed. Updates were provided at the Tribal Consultation Meeting held on May 10, 2022.

Item 1: Explore methods to share tribal success stories	<p>Responsible Party: DCF Tribal Liaison – Stephanie Lozano</p> <p>In collaboration with: DCF Communications Tribal Leaders</p>
<p>History:</p> <p>At the 2019 Consultation, Tribal Leaders and DCF Leaders discussed the desire to ensure that we are sharing success stories and innovative practices in tribal communities.</p>	
<p>Outcome/Update:</p> <p>The DCF Tribal Liaison and Communications Team collaborated to create a web-based form for tribes to submit information for DCF to share announcements, achievements, and projects. The form also includes permission to share the information on various social media platforms and the DCF intranet.</p> <p>REQUEST: The DCF Communications Team would like to develop a short video with animation highlighting the information sharing project</p>	
<p>Resources:</p> <p>DCF Webform: https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/form/tribal-spotlight</p>	
Item 2: Families First Prevention Act	<p>Responsible Party: Division of Safety and Permanence Tribal Affairs Specialist – Tania Cornelius DCF Tribal Liaison – Stephanie Lozano</p> <p>In collaboration with: ICW Committee</p>
<p>History:</p>	

The tribes would like to be included in the discussion and planning regarding the implementation of the Families First Prevention Act. The Tribes were most interested in the impact to the Tribal Title IV-E Pass-through Agreements and any proposed service expansions. At the Tribal Consultation meeting, the Department responded that they were still working to fully understand the impact of the Families First Prevention Act and agreed that they would include the tribes in discussions and planning.

Outcome/Update:

John Elliott, DSP Deputy Division Administrator, conducted a strategic planning meeting with the ICW Committee during their regularly scheduled meeting on May 23, 2019, in Odanah. Since that time, Putting Families First continues to be a regular agenda item for the ICW Committee meetings. Strategic planning and FFPSA topics have been on the agenda on thirteen occasions since 2019. Areas of focus have included serving families in-home, supporting relatives/like-kin providers, serving children with complex needs and Qualified Residential Treatment Centers. Regular updates are provided during meetings, stakeholder calls, and via email. The ICW Committee (or members of their staff) have been invited to serve on workgroups and project groups related to Families First and the Child Welfare Transformation efforts.

Specific Activities:

- Provided an overview of the strategic plan and regular updates.
- Engaged in discussion on efforts to serve more children in home.
- Engaged in discussion on how to effectively support relatives & like kin providers.
- Discussions held related to serving children with complex needs.
- Workshops were incorporated into standing ICW Committee meetings related to improving the state-wide safety assessment process. This safety assessment process that is required of county agencies per state standards. The aim of this work is to better support children and families in-home. The scope of this effort includes:
 - Refining the safety assessment process and danger threat language to be culturally responsive, equitable and just.
 - Refining and improving the safety assessment and planning framework that facilitates upfront safety decisions that are informed by engagement with families to guide the case process and keep more children and youth safely in their homes.

Planning and consultation around Putting Families First has continued since FFPSA initial implementation in fall of 2021. DSP will continue to engage the tribes through ICW Committee meetings, stakeholder calls and other forums.

Resources: N/A

Item 3: Shares New Worker Training and New Administrator Training

Responsible Party:
DCF Tribal Liaison – Stephanie Lozano
DECE Bureau of Operations and Planning
In collaboration with:
DMS Bureau of Regional Operations

History:

The tribes requested additional training for new workers and new administrators for the Shares program.

Outcome/Update:

DCF's Tribal Liaison, DECE-Bureau of Operations and Planning (DECE-BOP), and the Bureau of Regional Operations' (BRO) Child Care Coordinator collaborated to create a resource series is designed to walk child care program administrators and workers through the processes for certification, subsidy, and program administration. The resource series was published in both a PDF format and through an interactive webpage. The BRO Child Care Coordinator has met with each tribe individually to share the PDF and online resource. Part of the outreach also consisted of gathering feedback and ideas for future iterations. Based upon the feedback we have received, work on version 2.0 of the resource series is anticipated to begin during the summer of 2022.

Since our last Tribal Consultation Meeting, the required new worker training modules have moved to a virtual platform.

Resources:

Administrator e-Resource: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/tribalaffairs/worker-resources/admin>

Subsidy e-Resource: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/tribalaffairs/worker-resources/subsidy>

Certification e-Resource: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/tribalaffairs/worker-resources/certification>



Tribal Worker
Resource - Administ



Tribal Worker
Resource - Subsidy



Tribal Worker
Resource - Certificat

Item 4: Tribal eWiSACWIS Access

Responsible Party:

Division of Safety and Permanence Tribal Affairs
Specialist – Tania Cornelius

In collaboration with:

ICW Committee

History:

The tribes requested an update on full eWiSACWIS access for tribes.

Outcome/Update:

Tribal workers currently have “read only” access which provides the capability to review the case work being done by county workers as well as, enter case notes. DSP has concurrently worked on two options for broadening tribal access to eWiSACWIS that will provide tribal child welfare staff the ability to create work in the system.

Option 1: This option would grant write access to the current eWiSACWIS system. DSP met with the Lac Courte Oreilles (LCO) and Sawyer County to map current local practice. DSP is now working on a list of MOU considerations that will be presented to LCO and Sawyer County. Once the two agencies complete the MOU process, LCO will pilot this access.

Option 2: The second option will incorporate tribal case management needs into a portal which will integrate with the new federal CCWIS requirements as it is being developed. The CCWIS requirements will guide the transition of the current eWiSACWIS system. This has been discussed with the ICW Committee and a small workgroup is being created to begin working on defining the details of access around key issues, including data sovereignty, IV-E maintenance claiming, and how to address eWiSACWIS requirements which reflect state statutes and standards that don't apply to tribal case practice. It should be noted that this option

presupposes an interest in a tribal case management system that could share and receive information with eWiSACWIS. At this time due to varying levels of interest, DSP will continue to explore with the ICW Committee and workgroup if a portal would be useful to tribal child welfare agencies.

Resources:

Item 5: Update on Progress and Implementation of Protective Plan Policy

Responsible Party:

DSP Tribal Affairs Specialist – Tania Cornelius
 DSP Bureau of Safety and Well-Being – Michelle Rawlings and Lisa Hanks

In collaboration with:

ICW Directors
 DCF Tribal Liaison – Stephanie Lozano

History:

Tribal Leaders and the ICW Committee raised concerns regarding the current practice surrounding protective plans. Concerns regarding ICWA compliance, county worker follow through, and coercive tactics being used with families were highlighted at the Tribal Consultation Meeting. DCF Tribal Liaison agreed to partner with the Tribes and department staff to create a plan to address the concerns.

Outcome/Update:

The DCF Tribal Liaison and members from the DSP leadership were able to begin work on this at the May 23, 2019, ICW Committee Meeting. The ICW Committee reiterated their concerns and several provided examples for DSP to review. DSP identified variations in protective planning across the state.

Since that time, DSP reviewed all existing written guidance and worked to streamline the information that counties received regarding Protective Plans. Previously guidance was located in several places such as numbered policy memos and state standards. Since that time, DSP and Tribal Affairs worked to merge all guidance into one place (CPS Safety Intervention Standards) while also updating the guidance to clearly address the ICWA compliance concerns that were raised by the ICW Committee. DSP worked to include clear information as to when and how to collaborate with tribal agencies, the importance of placement preferences, as well as active efforts to ensure that families have access to the services that are required in their Protective Plan.

DSP continues to monitor and analyze protective planning data on a regular basis. DSP will continue to consult with the tribal child welfare agencies in these initiatives, including any work done around protective planning and the use of separation.



Excerpts Safety
 Intervention Standa

Resources:

Item 6: Update on Tailored Child Welfare Court Orders Project

Responsible Party:

DSP Tribal Affairs Specialist – Tania Cornelius
 DSP Division Administrator – Wendy Henderson

History:

DSP Division of Safety and Permanence Division Administrator, Wendy Henderson, shared that they will be working on a Tailored Court Orders Project that is aimed at reducing lengthy child welfare dispositional orders and ensuring that the orders are right-sized for each family. The Tribal Leaders requested an update on this project at the 2020 Tribal Consultation Meeting.

Outcome/Update:

The Tailored Dispositional Orders Project is a joint effort led by the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and the Children's Court Improvement Program (CCIP). This project seeks to improve Conditions for Return so that they are tailored to meet the needs of the individual parents and written in a sequence of priority to address the most significant issues and the behavioral changes that are needed to promote timely permanence. The SMART goals framework was utilized to define tailored Conditions for Return.

The project is being piloted in three counties (Barron, Manitowoc, and Waukesha) to assess the effectiveness of the project and identify any modifications that may be needed before the project is rolled out statewide. The pilot counties participated in multi-disciplinary training on Child Safety Decision-Making and Tailored Dispositional Orders, Engaging Families in Child Welfare, and a webinar on a Parent's Perspective.

Each county met with stakeholders to decide what to implement within their county practice. The pilot counties have made changes within the county agency's case transfer process from Initial Assessment to Ongoing by assigning an ongoing worker earlier and including the ongoing worker in safety staffings. The pilots changed child/parent language in the Conditions for Return to personal names and would like to incorporate family voice to improve practice. Additional discussions about Conditions for Return are occurring at pre-trial conferences/hearings and amongst stakeholders – judges, attorneys, and child welfare professionals. Finally, the pilot counties decreased the total number of Conditions for Return for each parent.

Resources:

- Additional project information can be found in the Mid-Implementation Report (attached). A final evaluation of the project is being completed by the UW Institute for Research on Poverty and a final report will be available this Summer.
- Resources that were created for the pilot counties are available online at: www.wiccuptraining.com under the Resources tab.
- Please contact Kristen.Wetzel@wicourts.gov for additional information.



Mid-Implementatio
n Report for Tailore

Item 7: Training Opportunities to Support Child Welfare Case Workers

Responsible Party:

Division of Safety and Permanence Tribal Affairs
Specialist – Tania Cornelius

DCF Tribal Liaison – Stephanie Lozano

In collaboration with:

WCW-PDS Intertribal Child Welfare Specialist -
Heather Halonie

ICW Directors

History:

Tribal Leaders shared concerns regarding the strain that their case workers are feeling as a result of higher caseload sizes and vicarious trauma. Tribal Leaders asked for additional training to support their child welfare workers and prevent burnout.

Outcome/Update:

As members of the Wisconsin Child Welfare Professional Development System (WCW-PDS), all tribes are able to participate in trainings that are offered through WCW-PDS. The ICW Committee also comprise the WCW-PDS Intertribal Child Welfare Training Partnership Steering Committee that outlines training priorities each year.

At the May 22, 2019, Intertribal Child Welfare Training Partnership Steering Committee Meeting, the Committee discussed plans to offer trainings throughout the year to address worker burnout and vicarious trauma in addition to the trainings that are currently offered on the topics. At their meeting, the Committee added worker burnout and response to community criticism as topic areas.

The following trainings were added to the 2020 training plan based on prior conversations:

- Wellness in the Workplace
- Secondary Traumatic Stress for Supervisors
- Secondary Traumatic Stress for Workers
- Ethics and Boundaries with a focus on vicarious trauma or worker burnout

Due to the global pandemic, the 2020 sessions were not offered because the trainers determined that they would not be effective in a virtual environment. Trainings were on hold to be rescheduled until they could be held in-person. These in-person trainings have not been able to be rescheduled due to some tribes having travel bans in place. WCW-PDS has considered offering these virtually based on increased knowledge on how to effectively train in a virtual environment. At this time, feedback from the Intertribal Child Welfare Training Partnership Steering Committee indicated they would like the sessions to be conducted in person to allow tribal child welfare staff the opportunity unplug from the day-to-day stress of their positions and fully participate in the learning opportunity. WCW-PDS is hoping to be able to offer one or more of these sessions in-person later in 2022. Given the world has learned so much about how to effectively administer web-based trainings, WCW-PDS may also look for virtual opportunities to ensure effective information delivery, should the Intertribal Child Welfare Training Partnership Steering Committee want to pursue this option.

Resources: N/A

Item 8: TEACH Scholarship Information

Responsible Party:

DECE Administrator – Erin Arango-Escalante
DCF Tribal Liaison – Stephanie Lozano

History:

The Tribal Leaders shared concerns regarding recruitment, retention, and training for child care providers.

Outcome/Update:

T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood Wisconsin provides higher education scholarships to professionals who work in regulated early childhood and school age care settings. The Scholarship Program operates in partnership with individual students and their child care program. T.E.A.C.H. will cover 75% of tuition costs for group center staff and 90% for family child care providers. In group programs, the sponsoring center's share is 15%. The student's share is always 10%. T.E.A.C.H. scholarships also include:

- Reimbursement for 75% of book expenses
- A \$75 travel stipend per semester
- 15 hours of paid release time per semester
- Access to a scholarship counselor for support and encouragement
- A financial bonus upon completion

In addition to early childhood coursework, the First Nations Pathway Scholarship allows students to take culturally relevant courses at a variety of tribal and public schools, including the University of Minnesota-Duluth.

Since the start of the pandemic, child care resources have been (re)developed to continue to meet the demand for child care services. As such, the T.E.A.C.H. and R.E.W.A.R.D programs have received extra funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

In terms of recruitment and retention, DCF continues to offer the Child Care Counts programs which are time-limited payment programs designed to provide assistance to child care providers in response to the COVID-19 public health emergency. There are two payment programs:

Payment Program A – Increasing Access to High-Quality Care

This payment program is intended to ensure high-quality care is available across the state by supporting the costs to remain in regulatory compliance, enhance health and safety practices, and promote continuous quality improvement with engagement in the YoungStar Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Payment Program B – Funding Workforce Recruitment and Retention

This payment program is intended to support the costs associated with recruiting and retaining high-quality early care and education staff through funding to increase compensation and provide professional development opportunities.

Resources:

A flyer for First Nations Pathway and T.E.A.C.H. can be found here: <https://wisconsinearlychildhood.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/FirstNation-Flyer.pdf>

For further information contact:

Jeanette Paulson

jpaulson@wisconsinearlychildhood.org

608-729-1025

Information regarding the Child Care Counts programs can be found here: <https://dcf.wisconsin.gov/covid-19/childcare/payments>

Item 9: Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)

Responsible Party:
DCF Tribal Liaison – Stephanie Lozano

History:

A short discussion regarding the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) was held. DCF offered to provide the tribes with information regarding ESSA as well as the point of contact that is listed for child welfare agencies and local education agencies.

Outcome/Update:

The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) foster care provisions:

- Apply to all children in out-of-home care enrolled in public schools, including public preschools.
- Effective on December 10, 2016.
- Are based on comprehensive collaboration between LEAs and CWAs.
- Are predicated on the default position that a child should remain in his or her school of origin.

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and child welfare agencies (CWAs) are required to collaborate in order to facilitate the educational stability of children placed in out-of-home care. The resources below are provided on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and Department of Children and Families (DCF) websites.

Resources:

[DPI website for Out-of-Home-Care & Educational Stability](#)

[Local Education Agency Point of Contact Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[School District Foster Care Points of Contact in Wisconsin](#)

[DCF website for Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)

[Child Welfare Agency Education Point of Contact Roles and Responsibilities](#)

[County and Tribal Child Welfare Agency Contacts](#)

Item 10: Rehabilitation Review Process for child care and foster care providers

Responsible Party:
DCF Tribal Liaison – Stephanie Lozano
In collaboration with:
DCF Office of Legal Counsel

History:

During a discussion regarding the lack of foster care and child care providers, tribal leaders stated that there were people in their community who would be excellent providers; however, due to previous struggles that have since been remedied, background check issues were preventing them from serving as a foster home or child care provider.

DCF agreed to provide the tribes with information regarding Rehabilitation Review Processes for child care and foster care.

Outcome/Update:

Under Wisconsin statute 48.685(5d), tribes may adopt the state process and forms or they may create their own process, that process is subject to approval by DCF. Once approved, the tribe may begin using the state rehabilitation review process.

DCF Tribal Affairs was unable to locate existing federal guidance/resources for tribes to establish their own rehabilitation review process outside or separate from the DCF process and process outlined in state statute. (*This might be a question for HHS-ACF.)

Resources: [https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/statutes/48.685\(5d\)](https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/document/statutes/48.685(5d))