



CALIFORNIA RURAL INDIAN HEALTH BOARD, INC.

# **Tribal Language Revitalization Efforts and Tribal Head Start**

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# Session Outcomes

1

Tribal Head Start Programs – Positive Results in Indian Country

2

Challenges Tribal Head Start Programs.

3

Addressing Challenges to Improve Results in Early Education



# Native Language Revitalization

- ▶ Imperative Work for Future of Tribes
- ▶ First Source – Early Education
- ▶ Head Starts and Child Care and Development Programs
- ▶ Early Access to Native Language



# Benefits of Culture-Rich Curriculum for Native Children



Cognitive Benefits



Creates Academic Success



Supports and Creates Health and Well-Being



Develops a Deeper Connection to Their Culture



# Supportive Efforts

- ▶ Tribes privately funding efforts
- ▶ Federal Rules and Regulations
- ▶ Federal Initiatives
- ▶ Limited Federal Funding Sources



# Native Language in Action

- ▶ Tribes in California – introduction of language at the pre-k levels.
- ▶ Partnerships developed among Tribal Head Start programs and Tribes
  - California Rural Indian Health Board's Head Start Program and Yurok Tribe.
    - Lesson plans developed, language and language supports developed by Native speakers.
- ▶ Humboldt State has many ties to Northern California's Native American communities. For the past several years, the university has hosted the Live Your Language Alliance (LYLA) conference, which supports indigenous language preservation efforts throughout the state





# Tribal Early Education and Care

# Snapshot of AIAN Children and Families in the US

Metric	AI/AN Population	National Average
Poverty rate for children from birth to five, 2017 <sup>10</sup>	36.2%	19.6%
Extreme poverty rate for youth under the age of 18, 2017 <sup>11</sup>	16.4%	8.0%
Unemployment rate, 2018 <sup>12</sup>	6.6%	3.9%
Infant mortality rate, 2017 <sup>13</sup>	9.2 deaths per 1,000 live births	5.8 deaths per 1,000 live births
Child abuse and neglect, 2018 <sup>14</sup>	15.2 per 1,000 children	9.2 per 1,000 children
Food insecurity in households with children, 2008 <sup>15</sup>	28%	16%
Children without health insurance, 2017 <sup>16</sup>	14.1%	5%
High school graduation rate, 2018 <sup>17</sup>	74%	85%
College enrollment rate, 2017 <sup>18</sup>	20%	40%
Teenage birth rate, 2017 <sup>19</sup>	3.3%	1.9%
Opioid death rate among women, 2010 <sup>20</sup>	7.3%	4.2%



# Funding Sources for Early Education for Tribes

## Governments Answer:

Head Start

Early Head Start

Child Care and Development Fund

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families

Parts of B and C of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act





# Positive Outcomes for AIAN Head Start Programs Nationally

Office of Head Start's Program Information  
Report 2020–21



## Office of Head Start - Services Snapshot

### American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) All Programs (2020-2021)

This AIAN Services Snapshot summarizes key data on demographics and services for children from birth to age five and pregnant women served by all American Indian and Alaska Native (AIAN) programs. The data in this Snapshot is a subset of the annual Program Information Report (PIR) submission to the Office of Head Start.

#### Funded enrollment

Number of enrollment slots the program is funded to serve.

	<i># of funded enrollment slots</i>	<i>% of funded enrollment slots</i>
Total Funded Enrollment	21,639	100%

#### Funded enrollment by program option

	<i># of funded enrollment slots</i>	<i>% of funded enrollment slots</i>
Center-based option	20,114	93.0%
Home-based option	1,189	5.5%
Family child care option	0	0%
Locally designed option	101	0.5%
Total funded pregnant women	235	1.1%

#### Detail - Center-based funded enrollment

	<i># of center-based funded enrollment slots</i>	<i>% of center-based funded enrollment slots</i>
Number of slots equal to or greater than 1,020 annual hours for Head Start preschool children or 1,380 annual hours for Early Head Start infants and toddlers	15,453	76.8%
Of these, the number that are available for the full-working-day and full-calendar-year	4,453	
Number of slots with fewer than 1,020 annual hours for Head Start preschool children or 1,380 annual hours for Early Head Start infants and toddlers	4,661	23.2%
Of these, the number that are available for 3.5 hours per day for 128 days	2,786	
Of these, the number that are available for a full working day	327	

#### Total cumulative enrollment

Actual number of children and pregnant women served by the program throughout the entire program year, inclusive of enrollees who left during the program year and the enrollees who filled those empty places. Due to turnover, more children and families may receive Head Start services cumulatively throughout the program year (all of whom are reported in the PIR) than indicated by the funded enrollment numbers.

	<i># of participants</i>	<i>% of participants</i>
Total cumulative enrollment	18,315	100%
Children total cumulative enrollment	17,929	97.9%
Pregnant women total cumulative enrollment	386	2.1%

## Health services

<i>Services to All Children at Beginning of Enrollment Year Compared to End of Enrollment Year (based on Cumulative Enrollment)</i>	<i># at Beginning of Enrollment Year</i>	<i>% at Beginning of Enrollment Year</i>	<i># at End of Enrollment Year</i>	<i>% at End of Enrollment Year</i>
Children with health insurance	14,810	82.6%	14,590	81.4%
Children with accessible health care	15,481	86.3%	15,387	85.8%
Children with up-to-date immunizations or all possible immunizations to date, or exempt	15,179	84.7%	15,110	84.3%
Children with accessible dental care	13,870	77.4%	14,111	78.7%

## Disabilities services

	<i># of children</i>	<i>% of children</i>
Children with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) or an Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP), indicating they were determined eligible to receive special education, early intervention, and related services	1,817	10.1%

## Family services

	<i># of families</i>	<i>% of families</i>
Total Number of Families	16,282	100%
Families Who Received at Least One Family Service	11,238	69.0%

## Specific services

	<i># of families</i>	<i>% of families</i>
Emergency/crisis Intervention	4,644	28.5%
Housing assistance	996	6.1%
Asset building services	766	4.7%
Mental health services	1,508	9.3%
Substance misuse prevention	380	2.3%
Substance misuse treatment	132	0.8%
English as a Second Language (ESL) training	143	0.9%
Assistance in enrolling into an education or job training program	716	4.4%
Research-based parenting curriculum	4,454	27.4%
Involvement in discussing their child's screening and assessment results and their child's progress	7,199	44.2%
Supporting transitions between programs	5,489	33.7%
Education on preventive medical and oral health	5,169	31.7%



# Challenges Impacting Tribal Programs

Federal Funding Streams – Not Equitable and Limiting

Data Gaps Impacting Creating Funding Gaps

Lack of AIAN Specific Research in Early Education

Teacher Requirements

Tribal Head Start Facilities

Office of Head Start Training Materials

Federal Monitoring – Cultural Competencies for Reviewers



# Large Scale Challenges for Tribes

## **Funding Allocations for Early Education and Child Care program:**

- Tribes not funded at the same levels as States
- Allocations for Tribes limit access to full resources from funding streams
- Tribal earmarked funds substantially low

## **Lack of Data Gaps for Tribes**

- Lackluster effort to systematically collect and track Tribal programs



# Data Gaps Affecting Funding

- ▶ Tribes have been at a disadvantage since 1965.
- ▶ Federal Government for years did not develop data gathering instruments to represent Tribal needs in early education and care.
- ▶ In 2016 ACF finally initiated the American Indian and Alaska Native Early Childhood Needs Assessment. (41 –year gap in data)
- ▶ No culturally relevant data
- ▶ Use of outdated data for funding allocations



# Development and Observational Tools Not Conducive for AIAN

- ▶ Child Development Observational Tools
- ▶ Teacher Observational Tool
  - Promoted as “evidence-based”, but the developers of these tools did not test with the AIAN population
  - Tools are highly suspect as their reliability and validity relevant to education activities and student performance does not take into account cultural and behavioral norms for AIAN populations
- ▶ Tools historically have constructively hurt Tribes and risked refunding for the Tribes.



# Teacher Requirements

- ▶ Office of Head Start teaching requirements create barriers for AIAN candidates.
- ▶ No recognition of Tribal language
- ▶ Lack of funding for Head Start forces staff to leave the industry.



# Tribal Facilities

Tribal Head Start grantees have reported the need for facility improvements that include both major and minor renovations as well as the need for new construction. Often there is a lack of alternate facilities in rural and remote areas, forcing grantees to spend significant portions of their budget to maintain environmentally safe facilities. Tribes, especially those located in remote, isolated areas are unable to afford costs associated with the upkeep for structures used for Head Start purposes.



# Tribal Facilities – Figures

- ▶ 36% of facilities had documented concerns including worn interiors, cracked ceilings, poor insulation and overall deterioration due to the impact of adverse weather conditions.
- ▶ 37% of facilities had concerns related to building materials and conditions, such as mold, leaks, flooding, and gas or sewage odors.
- ▶ 15% of centers have HVAC systems that are improperly ventilated and experience difficulty in regulating temperature. Some centers attempt to augment systems with window AC units and space heaters, which add energy costs and can pose fire safety risks.
- ▶ 14% of the restrooms are not age-appropriate (sized for adults, not children), or the ratio of restrooms to children is too low.

*Y2015 the Office of Head Start submitted their Report to Congress on American Indian Alaska Native Head Start Facilities*



# Office of Head Start Training Materials

Materials often created by the National Centers do not take into consideration the different requirements for Native Head Start programs.

The materials are often revised as an afterthought. This can result in confusion and misinformation to programs, especially those new or struggling directors who rely on these materials to support their programs.



# Federal Monitoring – Cultural Competency for Reviewers

There needs to be a continued effort to assure cultural competence for federal reviews and monitoring activities. Since the inception of the Federal On-Site Review Process, Tribal grantees have consistently voiced concerns over the lack of knowledgeable and skilled federal on-site teams, the lack of professionalism of team leaders and reviewers, and the lack of cultural sensitivity of teams. Many reviewers lack an understanding of Tribal governments and the unique relationship they have with the federal government, let alone have the expertise inclusive of cultural awareness and responsiveness of diverse cultures. More effort should be made to recruit culturally competent reviewers from the Native community.





# Addressing the Challenges



# Equity in Funding

Remove the federal rule that limits funding for Tribes. Allow for Tribes to be funding for their enrollment numbers versus Tribal residency allocation.

# Data Gaps and AIAN Research

Develop other tools to capture Tribal data. A research status report be developed by OHS and distributed widely to Tribal grantees, Tribally Controlled Colleges/Institutions, National Indian Head Start Directors Association and the National Indian Collaboration Office.

Sufficient research dollars be allocated by OHS for actualizing its required charge to conduct specific research affecting Tribal Grantees prior to other areas in the Act or OHS internal priorities. For example:

**Funding allocations** and distribution formulas, including cost of providing services with the rural, isolated and remote locations of American Indian and Alaska Native populations

Determine the **eligible Indian population** throughout the United States including populations served by current Indian Head Start Agencies including the need for services

**Identification of culturally appropriate and relevant curricula, assessment, and screening tools** and provide guidance on selecting curricula based upon price, adaptability and their research grounding

**Overall study of Indian Head Start, Sec. 649(k).** The Act requires a study or studies, undertaken in collaboration with Tribes, the collaboration director and the National Indian Head Start Directors Association, addressing a wide range of issues.

**Delivery Study. Sec. 650(a)(14).** The Act also requires a study of the delivery of Head Start programs to Indian children living on and near Indian reservations and to children of Alaska Natives.

# Teacher Requirements

Since the teacher qualification requirements are a nationwide target, OHS should consider waiving the teacher qualifications for teaching staff so that Tribes can employ qualified (as determined by Tribes), and sometimes certified, language speakers and/or cultural transmitters in their Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

If Tribes and states have established a program for certifying American Indian and Alaska Native speakers as qualified teachers, OHS should accept such individuals as meeting the teacher qualification requirements (Arizona, California, Oregon and Washington).



# Tribal Facilities

Create

Create opportunities for grantees to apply for funding for renovation or construction of facilities.

Inform

Inform grantees of other funding sources for facility improvements or construction such as private foundations or other federal or state programs.

Provide

Provide a separate space for facility topics regarding construction and renovation requirements, resources including how to prepare an application for facilities funding, training and funding opportunities on the ECLKC





# Training Materials

To address this issue, we propose that the National Centers employee staff who have knowledge and experience with Tribal programs to develop appropriate materials for Native Head Start programs. At best, create a workgroup of Tribal Head Start Directors to give input into the design of training materials.

# Federal Monitoring – Cultural Competencies for Reviewers.

Ensure the federal monitoring contractor provides cultural competence training regarding the uniqueness of Tribal governments and cultures

Increase recruitment from the Native community.





# Questions