



Oregon Commission on Children & Families Government to Government Report 2008

**Prepared for the Oregon Commission on Indian Services
By the Oregon Commission on Children & Families**

Mickey Lansing, Executive Director
Iris Bell, Deputy Director

The Oregon Commission on Children & Families (Commission) is the largest umbrella advocacy group for children and families in Oregon. Created by legislation in 1993, and further defined by SB555 in 1999, the Commission promotes positive outcomes for children and families through a process driven by local decision-making. The Commission provides no direct services, but is responsible for statewide planning, standards setting and policy development, and provides communities with research-based best practices on which to base local programs for children and families. The Commission is working with tribal prevention coordinators and in partnership with other state agency tribal liaisons to address issues for native communities, families and children. In this work, the Commission's highest concern is respect of tribal ways and tribal sovereignty.

Tribal Planning Coordinator Position

The Commission is pleased to announce the hiring of a permanent part-time employee to serve as the Tribal Juvenile Crime Prevention Planning Coordinator. OCCF staff worked with Tribal representatives to develop this position, to interview candidates and to select the employee Jessie Ickes.

This Coordinator will perform a variety of duties, including but not limited to the following: assisting tribal social services and prevention staff in each of the Tribes to identify strategies to implement culturally appropriate prevention practices; assisting tribes in completing Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) reports; measuring performance and evaluating methodologies that are culturally appropriate; working in conjunction with the Commission's Resource Developer to assist tribes in obtaining grants and other resources for youth and family support programs; working with the Commission, the

Juvenile Crime Prevention Advisory Committee (JCPAC), and the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) members and staff to promote policies that are appropriate for tribal youth and families, and to assure access to juvenile justice programs and systems for tribal youth with delinquency and dependency issues.

Jessie Ickes is honored to be able to work with the tribes of Oregon, and to be back working with juvenile crime prevention efforts. Jessie completed her Bachelor of Arts in Psychology at Oregon State University. She is a graduate of the Hatfield School of Government at Portland State University, earning her Master's in Public Administration.

Quarterly Prevention Meetings

Commission staff has attended quarterly meetings held by the Department of Human Services (DHS) Alcohol and Drug Prevention Coordinator. Tribal coordinators have asked that the Commission continue this practice in 2009. In order to provide more time to work with the Commission and to cover information about all of its programs and initiatives (in addition to juvenile crime prevention), tribal representative have asked for the Commission to hold its meeting the morning following the DHS prevention meetings.

A series of meetings were held over four days in December, affording an opportunity for the Commission's recently hired Tribal Planning Coordinator to attend all of the meetings the week of December 8. Tribal representatives invited Jessie to travel and meet with them in their offices during the upcoming months.

Reconnecting Families

Melissa Sampson-Grier is the Reconnecting Families Coordinator for the Commission. This is a recent effort developed in partnership with the Casey Family Programs and the DHS Child Welfare staff. Her area of expertise is in Indian Child Welfare and the foster care system. She came to the Commission after 10 years with the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde where she worked as their Foster Care Program Coordinator. Melissa will be involved with the Oregon Casey Family Partnership where she will be focusing on relative placement and disproportionality of youth in the foster care system, and researching the crossover youth involved in both the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Community Comprehensive Planning

One of the Commission's statutory responsibilities is to convene and facilitate Comprehensive Community Planning for Children and Families every six years. The plans recognize the interdependence of communities to develop and maintain strong and caring communities that also support healthy children, youth and families. Recognizing this interdependence, the legislation directs state agencies and local communities to plan together and provide coordinated services that address issues facing all the children, youth and families in the county, including native children, youth and families.

Communities and counties are implementing strategies developed through their planning processes. The Commission members and staff expect Local Commissions to coordinate with tribal communities. The Tribal Planning Coordinator will assist tribes to provide and access information and increase communications with Local Commissions. The

Commission uses outcome data regarding native families and tribal communities as well as other minorities to develop and drive its state plan. Data described in the section below on the Cultural Competency Committee was gathered and incorporated into the State plan.

Local Commission on Children and Families (LCCF) Activities with Tribes

Specific examples include Klamath and Harney counties.

The Klamath County LCCF director highlighted these activities with the Klamath Tribe: The Klamath Tribe received a large anti-meth federal grant, "Don't Meth with Us." The tribe included the LCCF in their celebration and continually invites LCCF to graduations for youth graduating from the program and other activities held by the tribe. Tribal members serve on the Early Childhood Partnership and on the Advisory Board.

The Harney County LCCF director highlighted these activities with the Burns-Paiute Tribe: The county and tribe view each other as community partners. A tribal representative serves on the LCCF. The LCCF invited tribal representatives to participate in using the Drug Free Community Grant. The LCCF involves the tribe in all that the commission does -- whether it's comprehensive planning or other activities. One example is the summer food grant site at the Burn-Paiute Tribe. The county and tribe are active with the Harney Partnership and have worked with each on their Prevention Coalition.

Multi-Agency Cultural Competency and Gender Specific Services (CCGS) Committee

Cultural Competency and Gender Specific Services Committee serves as an advisory body to several state agencies regarding issues faced by minority children, youth and families. The Cultural Competency and Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC) Coordinator represents the CCGS Committee at the Quarterly Tribal Prevention meetings. Several members of the CCGS Committee serve as tribal liaisons within their State agencies, including: Caroline Cruz and Richard Acevedo (DHS) and Jack Lawson (Oregon Youth Authority).

The Committee requested Partners for Children and Families (Multiple State agencies working together to implement SB 555) to facilitate access to data collected by each of their agencies through service delivery systems (aggregated by race, ethnicity and gender).

The Committee analyzed the data and identified Oregon's benchmark data to reflect outcomes for minority children, youth and families. The Committee organized the findings according to the Commission's Wellness Dashboard Indicators by age and domains to determine areas of special concern or relative stability. The information reviewed and discussed by the Committee members included:

- ✓ 2007 Benchmarks Report - Oregon Progress Board

- ✓ 2006 Oregon's Benchmarks: A Report on the Progress of Oregon's Racially and Ethnically Diverse Populations – Oregon Progress Board and Office of Multicultural Health, DHS
- ✓ 2006 Poverty Report – Department of Housing and Community Services
- ✓ Intimate Partner Violence: 2004 Oregon Women's Health and Safety Survey
- ✓ 2006 Oregon Healthy Teens Survey
- ✓ 2005-06 and 2006-07 Oregon Department of Education Dropout Reports
- ✓ 2005 Health Statistics Data: Oregon Department of Human Services, Center for Health Statistics
- ✓ 2006 Oregon Kindergarten Readiness Survey Report, Readiness to Learn, Oregon Department of Education
- ✓ 2005-2006 Statewide Report Card – Oregon Department of Education
- ✓ 2005-06 Suspensions, Expulsion, Removal, and Truancy Extension Collection (SET) - Oregon Department of Education
- ✓ Eliminating the Achievement gap: Reducing minority overrepresentation in school discipline – Juvenile Rights Project
- ✓ 2006 Foster Care Report - Children, Adults and Families, DHS
- ✓ 2007 Runaway and Homeless Youth Initiative Report - OCCF
- ✓ 2006-2007 Healthy Start of Oregon Status Report - OCCF
- ✓ July 1, 2006 - June 30, 2007 Children's Mental Health Utilization Report – DHS
- ✓ 2005-2006 Evaluation of Oregon's Relief Nursery Program - OCCF
- ✓ 2005 Recidivism Charts and Trends – Juvenile Justice Information System (JJIS)
- ✓ 2006 Recidivism Report – JJIS
- ✓ January 2008 Quick Facts – Oregon Youth Authority (OYA)
- ✓ 2006, 2007 Youth and Referrals Reports – JJIS
- ✓ 2006, 2007 Disposition Reports - JJIS
- ✓ 2006, 2007 Detention Admission Reasons and Length of Stay Reports – JJIS
- ✓ 2005 Statewide Arrest Information – Unified Arrest Report – State Police

Summary of Findings:

Minority children, youth and families are overrepresented in the following benchmarks' domains and related areas:

- ✓ Poverty (BM 54)
- ✓ Homelessness (BM 56)
- ✓ Child Abuse and Neglect, Substantiated (BM 51A)
- ✓ Oregonians without Health Insurance, Except Asian (BM 54)
- ✓ Infant Mortality, significant for African American and Native American (BM 41)
- ✓ Teen Pregnancy, Hispanic in particular (BM 39)
- ✓ High School Dropout (BM 22)
- ✓ Juvenile Recidivism (BM 66)
- ✓ Juvenile Arrests, African American at 2.9 Relative Rate Index (BM 63)
- ✓ Relief Nurseries, especially for Hispanic
- ✓ Foster Care Placements
- ✓ Domestic Violence, especially for Native American women
- ✓ Runaway and homeless youth population
- ✓ Suspensions and expulsions

- ✓ Referrals to Juvenile Court, especially for African American and Hispanic
- ✓ Secure Detention, especially for African American, Hispanic and Native American
- ✓ Confinement in Secure Juvenile Correctional Facilities, especially for African American and Hispanic
- ✓ Cases Transferred to Adult Court, especially for African American, Hispanic, and Asian

Minority children, youth and families are underrepresented in the following benchmarks' domains and service delivery areas:

- ✓ Home ownership (BM 73)
- ✓ Prenatal Care (BM 40)
- ✓ Alcohol and Tobacco Abstinence During Pregnancy, especially for Native American (BM 53)
- ✓ Eighth-Grade Reading and Math (BM 20)
- ✓ Certificate of Initial Mastery or CIM (BM 21)
- ✓ High School Completion (BM 23)
- ✓ Adults with a Bachelors Degree (BM 26)
- ✓ Adoptions

No information by race and ethnicity was found in the areas of:

- ✓ BM 51 B - Threat of Harm
- ✓ BM 54 - Affordable Childcare
- ✓ BM 42 - Immunizations
- ✓ Children's mental health services

Additional concerns were raised regarding the Oregon's Healthy Teen Survey data. Although all survey results are available by race and ethnicity, given the scope of the related benchmarks, multitude of questions, and complexity of the information, the CCGS Committee recommended that an epidemiological analysis be conducted to compare the answers of minority youth to their White Non-Hispanic counterparts.

Evidence-Based and Culturally Specific Practices Initiative

The Commission allocates Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP) funds to the nine federally recognized tribes of Oregon. The goal of JCP is to reduce juvenile arrests, juvenile recidivism and the need for beds in facilities operated by the Oregon Youth Authority. ORS 417.855 requires county and tribal recipients to use JCP funds for services and activities for youth who: (a) Have more than one of the following risk factors: Antisocial behavior; Poor family functioning or poor family support; School failure; Substance abuse; or Negative peer association; and (b) "Are clearly demonstrating at-risk behaviors that have come to the attention of government or community agencies, schools or law enforcement and will lead to imminent or increased involvement in the juvenile justice system."

Summary of data collected by the nine tribes indicates that they are effective in service to youth with multiple high risks, by reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors.

The Commission recognizes the importance of policies that assure equal access and opportunities for all children, youth and families, and created an Evidence-Based Practices Action Team (Action Team) of Commission staff and several scholars. The Action Team engaged in research to evaluate the availability of culturally specific evidence-based programs and the cultural relevance of existing evidence-based programs for minority youth. Native American cultural practices were given special attention. The Evidence-Based Action Team drew the following conclusions:

- Broadening the definition of evidence similar to the Department of Human Services approach utilizing Practice-Based Evidence with tribal communities to include evidence-based practice, evidence-based management, and practice-based evidence will afford the Commission the capacity to identify a range of suitable programs consistent with the aim of SB 267. SB 267 requires the Commission to invest 50 percent of JCP funding in “Evidence-Based Practices” during the 2007-09 biennium and 75 percent in the 2009-11 biennium.
- Process and outcome evaluations should be developed and conducted in order to identify how the Commission’s prevention programs have adapted or plan to adapt to the four EBP approaches defined in this policy brief.
- The blending of science with local perspectives may improve a program’s integration within diverse communities and consequent effectiveness.

On January 31, 2008, the Commission adopted these four evidence-based approaches as a foundation for assessing the feasibility of relevant evidence-based perspectives for use in its JCP programs for the purpose of implementation of SB 267.

- Evidence-Based Programming (with Cultural Adaptation)
- Evidence-Based Practice (with emphasis on Cultural Adaptation)
- Evidence-Based Management (with emphasis on Cultural Adaptation)
- Practice-Based Evidence

The Commission continues to collaborate and support the initiative of the Addictions and Mental Health Division to affirm that Tribal Practices Based on Evidence fall within the scope of SB 267 requirement.

Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)

The Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (JDDP) Act of 2002 requires states to address specific delinquency prevention and system improvement efforts designed to reduce the disproportionate number of minority juveniles who come into contact with the juvenile justice system. Disproportionate minority contact exists if the rate of contact with juvenile justice system of a specific minority group is significantly different than the rate of contact for non-Hispanic whites or for other minority groups. The purpose of this requirement is to ensure equal and fair treatment for every youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

Oregon 2006 and 2007 DMC data analysis revealed that Native American youth are disproportionately represented at the following points of contact in the juvenile justice system: referrals to juvenile court, diversion, secure detention, cases petitioned, and confinement in secure juvenile correctional facilities.

In 2008, the Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) continued to support the Governor's Summit on Eliminating Disproportionate Minority Contact in the Juvenile Justice System held November 17 and 18 in Portland. The purpose of the event is reflected in its theme "Building Momentum for the Next Decade; Strengthening Collaborations; Affirming Milestones." The Summit was made possible by collaborative efforts and support of multiple governmental agencies and public organizations. Partnership with the national Coalition for Juvenile Justice encouraged nationwide participation. Among the 650 participants were representatives from 15 states.

The Summit opened with the color guard ceremony performed by the Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde. The Summit offered workshops on best practices nationwide and provided the participants with an opportunity to learn more about how we can all promote strategies to reduce and eliminate overrepresentation of minority youth in the juvenile justice and child welfare systems while improving school attendance and academic success for minority students. Several workshops were specifically designed to address the issues and needs of Native American youth.

These are descriptions from the Summit program:

"Working Together for Our Kids: The Chehalis Tribe and Oakville School District Care Team" (Washington) Presenters: Tracy Bray, Penny Reinitz, John Shortman, Jr.

In 2005, the Chehalis Tribe approached the Oakville School District to collaboratively address issues that were prohibiting our Tribal youth from academic success. We believe that the creation of a TAG team (Truancy, Attitude, and Grades) has assisted us in increasing positive educational outcomes for our tribal students. After many lessons learned, there has been a reduction in excessive absences from school and an increase in high school to college transitions for our Tribal youth. The presentation shared the journey of the creation of a TAG Team: how they started the team, who is involved and what they learned along the way that can assist participants in creating a collaborative education model that will work for their community.

"A Tangled Web of Justice: Understanding and Meeting the Needs of Native American Youth in the Juvenile Justice System" (Washington, D.C.)

Presenters: Neelum Arya, Addie C. Rolnick, Michael Guilfoyle

The presentation identifies and synthesizes the current knowledge of American Indian and Alaska Native youth involved in juvenile justice systems through a review of available statistics, including Federal, State and Tribal level data, and a review of academic and policy literature. The research presents a picture of the needs of American Indian and Alaska Native youth in juvenile justice systems, identifies specific areas for further research, and makes policy recommendations to support Tribes in the development of Tribal juvenile justice systems or collaborations with Federal and State governments to ensure that Native youth are treated fairly and provided appropriate services to meet their needs.

"Tribal Peacegiving: Living Proof That Law and Peace Do Mix" (Oregon) Presenter:

Don Owen Costello

The objective of this presentation was to share the philosophy and practice of the Peacegiving Court, with focus on actual cases. Participants were given the opportunity to enact portions of case in order to demonstrate how the process works. Peacegiving Court is a cooperative effort of the Coquille Indian Tribe and the Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians that "heals conflict and restores balance among our people and our communities."

For more information please contact

Anya Sekino, Cultural Competency and DMC Coordinator, OCCF, by phone at (503)378-5115 or by e-mail anya.sekino@state.or.us

Healthy Start

Healthy Start Family Support is a voluntary home-visitation and family support program offering services to all new families during the prenatal period and at the time of birth. OCCF supports local Healthy Start programs as they implement best practice standards. In 2007, Healthy Start became accredited by Healthy Families America, a best practice home-visiting program model. One of the essential elements of the Healthy Families model is cultural competency. Each local Healthy Start program is required to develop an annual Cultural Competency Review that examines all aspects of service delivery with the goal of ensuring that the program is culturally competent. The Cultural Competency Review is approved by the local Healthy Start Advisory Board, which recommends steps to address any issues discovered through the review.

Healthy Start has a tribal member on its statewide Advisory Committee. This group provides direction for program planning and implementation throughout the state, and reviews the cultural sensitivity analyses of local programs, making suggestions for improvement. Each local program has an Advisory Board, made up of diverse community members. Some local Boards include tribal members.

Strategies for outreach to engage tribal communities in Healthy Start include:

- Hiring tribal home visitors and assigning them to Native American families whenever possible.
- Staff training on tribal cultures is required. Through enhanced knowledge of tribal people, staff is enabled to effectively engage and retain Native American families.
- Outreach to tribal leaders for participation in program planning and implementation, including membership in local advisory bodies.
- Encouraging tribal participation in special events sponsored by the program.
- Shared training with staff of tribal organizations, related to common areas of interest and practice.
- Encouraging Healthy Start staff to participate in tribal coalitions with other service providers.

Court Appointed Special Advocates

Federal and state laws mandate that the court shall appoint a CASA for every abused and neglected child involved in a dependency case. In 1987, the Oregon Legislative Assembly enacted what is now ORS 419A.170, mandating appointment of a CASA for each of these children and defining their role in advocating for the child's best interests.

CASA volunteers work to connect children with their tribes throughout Oregon and across North America. During 2007 in Oregon, 4.8 percent of the victims of child abuse and neglect and 9.9 percent of children in foster care were Native American.*

- Three percent of the children with CASAs were Native American.
- In each case, the CASA endeavors to determine if the child is a member of a tribe and to engage that tribe in determining the child's best interest.
- All CASA volunteers are required to complete training in cultural competency and training specific to the Indian Child Welfare Act.
- Cultural competency and increasing the diversity of CASA volunteers, program staff and governing boards is integrated into the National Standards for Local CASA Programs.
- The Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde have started a CASA program and are participating in the CASA Directors' Network and taking advantage of local and state training opportunities.
- CASA programs throughout the state work to engage local Tribes to help recruit, train and work with volunteers and to cooperate on fundraising and public relations events.
- The Commission is developing a new CASA database system with the intent to improve data collection and reporting on the experience of Native American (and other) children in dependency cases who have CASAs.
- **The Status of Children 2007*, Oregon Department of Human Services

Juvenile Crime Prevention (JCP)

The Commission administers state and federal money dedicated to reducing juvenile delinquency and improving the juvenile justice system. Each of the nine federally recognized tribes in Oregon received a minimum grant award for the 2007-09 biennium. The grants help pay for activities identified in the tribes' juvenile crime prevention plans. Tribal JCP plans are reviewed and approved by the Juvenile Crime Prevention Advisory Committee (JCPAC). Dave Fullerton serves as a tribal representative, appointed by Governor Kulongoski on the JCPAC. State law requires the plans to focus on youth who are at high risk of becoming involved, or further involved, in the juvenile justice system. The Juvenile Justice Advisory Committee (JJAC) distributes funds that serve eligible applicants, including tribal governments, on a competitive basis.

Title IV-B (2) Promoting Safe and Stable Families

The 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act approved by Congress, amends title IV (B) to add additional components for time-limited family reunification services along with adoption promotion and support provisions. The amendment increased funding and also changes the name from Family Preservation and Support to Promoting Safe and Stable

Families. The 1997 Act was reauthorized in 2001 for a period of five years and again increased funding.

The Oregon Commission on Children & Families allocated a total of \$8,600 to each of the nine tribes who have elected to participate in the grant program for the 2007-08 fiscal years. Participating tribes submitted plans to OCCF for funding. Tribal plans continued much of the work from 2006-07 which included activities and services: to support families at risk of children being placed in foster care; to assist families in the process of reuniting with children who have been in foster care; and to assist families who have adopted, or plan to adopt, children out of foster care. This funding has been a key piece for tribes to continue family preservation and support programs that meet the cultural needs of their members.