



Partnering with Tribes and Tribal Organizations

Tuesday, September 1, 2026

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National Tribal Child Welfare Center for Innovation and Advancement

Emily Dwyer & Christie Tabisola: Cook Inlet Tribal Council, Inc., Alaska

Wendy Rich: Peoria Tribe of Indians in Oklahoma

WHY IT MATTERS

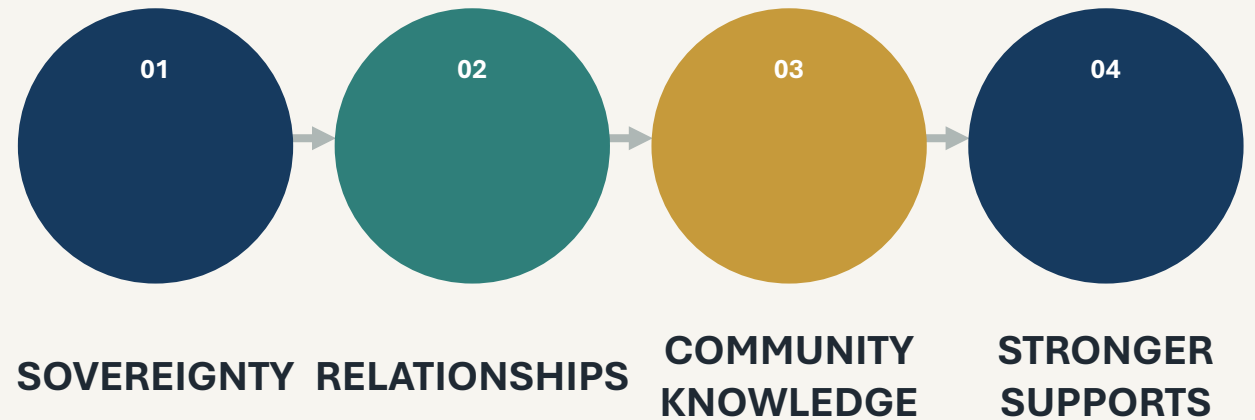
Tribal-State collaboration is relationship work

Strong partnerships support stronger systems for Native children and families.

Tribes are sovereign governments — not simply another stakeholder.

History matters because trust cannot be assumed. It is built through consistency, transparency, respect, and follow-through.

The goal is not simply to get Tribal input into a state-designed initiative — it is to create conditions for Tribal priorities, expertise, and authority to meaningfully shape the work.



A useful starting question:

“How can we shape this work together?”

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE

Move Tribal involvement upstream

Meaningful collaboration begins early enough for Tribal partners to influence the work.



LATE = TRANSACTIONAL

**“Here is what we’re doing.
What do you think?”**

Input is requested after the direction is largely set.

EARLY = COLLABORATIVE

**“What should we work on
together — and how?”**

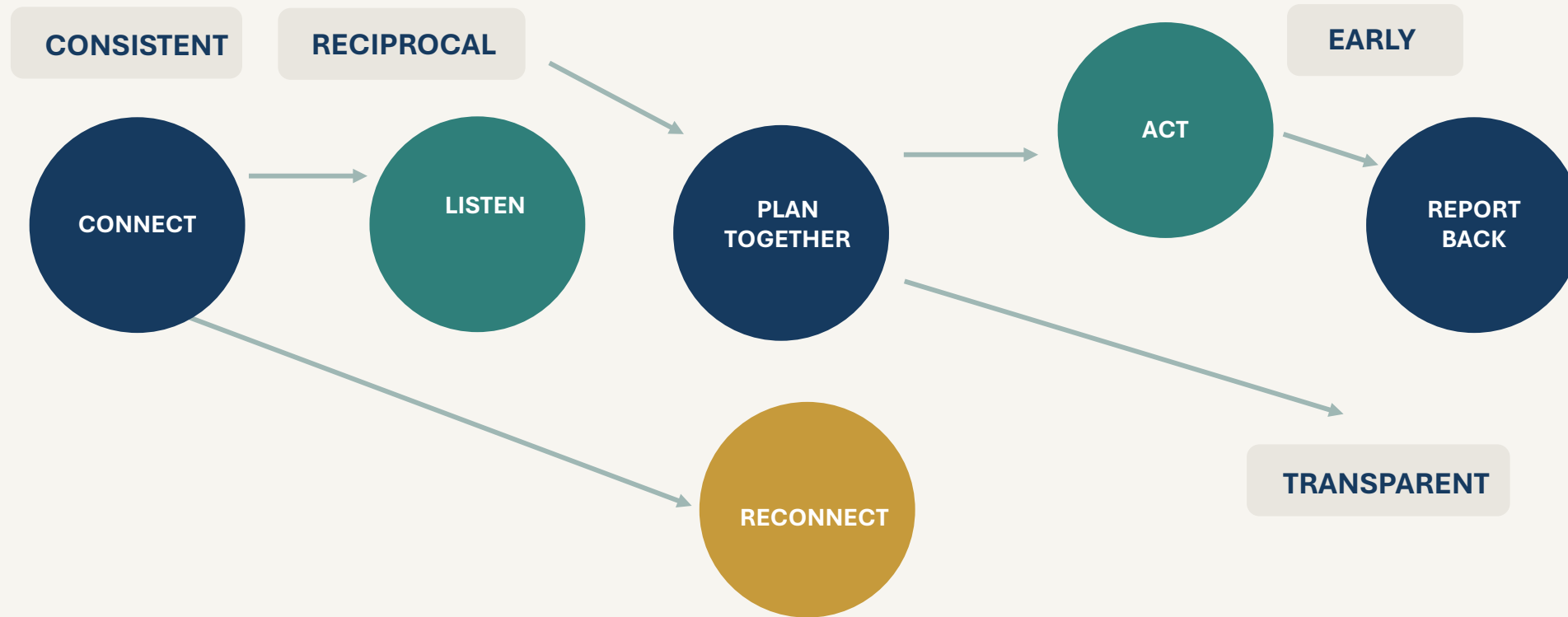
Priorities and approaches are shaped together.

Close the loop: What did we hear? • What changed? • What happens next?

A PRACTICAL TAKEAWAY

Build a cadence, not a contact list

Establish the rhythm of engagement with Tribal partners — not for them.



The reciprocity question:

“What would make this relationship useful to you?”

ASK

What matters most?

Who should be involved?

How and when should we engage?

How will we report back?



COOK INLET TRIBAL COUNCIL
Family Wellness

**PARENTS JOURNEY & HEALTHY
RELATIONSHIPS CLASSES**



Our Mission

To work in partnership with Our People to develop opportunities that fulfill our endless potential.

Our Values

Interdependence

Resilience

Accountability

Respect

Humor



Family Wellness Guiding Principles

- We partner with families to **develop new skills** that help them stay together.
- We **promote healthy early childhood development** to avoid foster-care placement.
- We **help families recover from and prevent** abuse, neglect, and domestic violence through education, mentoring, and community resource connections.



Parenting and Healthy Relationship Classes

- Empowering parents to strengthen their roles and provide for their families' needs and well-being through
 - ✓ Teaching social and life skills
 - ✓ Facilitating parenting & healthy relationship education



Strengthening Our Partnership with OCS



- **Building relationships through connection:** Quarterly visits for new OCS staff
- **Increasing awareness of services:** Presentations on programs, resources, and referral pathways
- **Creating stronger communication:** Face to face connection has improved communication and collaboration
- **Improving referrals and coordination:** Better understanding of services, making it easier to connect to the right supports

When we know each other, we communicate better and when we communicate better, families receive better services.



Cultural Activities

- Cultural & Spiritual Wellness is discovered through connections to each other, traditions, and connection to the land.
- Family Wellness coordinates, partners and hosts cultural activities & community events throughout its program offerings.



Thank You

Chin'an

Taikuu

Tsiin'aen

Quyanaqpak

Qağaasakuq

Haw'aa

Quyana

Gunalchéesh



Contact Information

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— PEORIA TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA —
FAMILY CONNECT
—
SUPPORTING FAMILIES. STRENGTHENING OUR FUTURE.
PREGNANCY THROUGH AGE 5

Peoria Tribe

Family Connect
Program

Funded by
CBCAP

Community-Based Child Abuse Prevention (CBCAP) and Peoria Family Connect Purposes



- **Support community-based efforts to develop, operate, expand, enhance, and coordinate initiatives, programs, and activities to prevent child abuse and neglect.**
- **Coordinate resources and activities to strengthen and support families, reducing the likelihood of abuse and neglect.**
- **Foster understanding, appreciation, and knowledge of diverse populations to effectively prevent and respond to child abuse and neglect.**



Advisory Group

- We chose community partners who are working with families who fit the same criteria as those who would have eligibility for our program
- We wanted a variety of organizations represented so we would be able to collaborate and have good referral rates
- Many of the partners would invite or talk about the group and would say others have asked them if they could join us
- Since we formed the advisory group, we have more invites to collaborate in activities for our community, more referrals to our program, a much larger outreach than we would have with the 2 full-time THV employees
- Our advisory group offers advice and has been very active in helping us shape all aspects of our program



Educating and Training Frontline and Community



Peoria Tribe, with the funding and support through the CBCAP grant has provided various training opportunities for Frontline Staff as well as the Community.



This past year we hosted two trainings that were both aimed at learning more, prevention and resources.



We have successfully trained 159 frontline staff in 5 years. Our goal was 120. 70 of which were with the last two trainings we have offered.



PEORIA TRIBE
OF INDIANS OF OKLAHOMA
"Family Connect Program"

BRAIN TALK TRAINING

for Frontline Staff Working w/ Children



Understand how human behavior is linked to brain development by exploring what factors shape our brain.

Presenters:

- ✓ Autum Cooper: THREAD Director at the OK State Dept. of Health
- ✓ Julie Williamson: Bridges Coordinator

NORTHEASTERN TRIBAL HEALTH SYSTEM: EDUCATION CENTER

Please park in the East lot behind the building and enter through the double doors.

- **OCTOBER 20, 2025**
- **8:30 AM – 4:15 PM**
- **Lunch will be provided**
- **CEU credit available**

Registration is **REQUIRED** and will close on October 14th at 4:30 PM

100 participant limit

Click below to sign up:
[Registration Link](#)

or use the QR code:



PEORIA TRIBE
OF INDIANS OF OKLAHOMA

Supporting Tribal Children & Families

COLLABORATIVE TRAINING FOR TRIBAL PROGRAMS, STATE
PARTNERS & COMMUNITY PROFESSIONALS

JULY 15-16, 2026

PEORIA SHOWPLACE | BUFFALO RUN CASINO & RESORT
100 G ST. NW, MIAMI, OK 74354

Training Content:

This interactive two-day training will bring together Tribal programs, state partners, educators, behavioral health professionals, foster care providers, first responders, community organizations, and other professionals who serve Tribal children, youth, and families. Training topics will include:

- ICWA & OICWA Foundations
- Active Efforts in Practice
- Protective Factors & Case Management
- Risk, Safety Thresholds & Decision-Making
- Cultural Assessments & Cultural Connection Planning
- Keeping Children Connected to Family, Tribe, Culture & Community
- Tribal-State & Community Collaboration
- Child Welfare Court Process & Qualified Expert Witness Role
- Interactive Case Scenarios, Activities, and Mock Trial Exercise
- Community Resource Networking

Meet Your Trainers:

The training will be led by **Kelly Tannehill, MSW, owner of KT Full Circle Training, LLC**. Kelly has more than 20 years of experience in Tribal and state child welfare and social services and has provided training, technical assistance, consultation, and curriculum development for Tribal Nations, state agencies, universities, and community organizations across the country. Her training approach emphasizes practical application, collaboration, cultural responsiveness, and interactive learning experiences that participants can immediately apply in their work with children, youth, and families.

Joining Kelly as co-trainer is **Nethia Wallace, a citizen of the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma and an experienced Indian Child Welfare professional** with more than 15 years of service to Tribal children and families. Nethia has held leadership positions with both the Kickapoo Tribe of Oklahoma and Sac and Fox Nation, bringing extensive experience in ICWA implementation, foster care, family preservation, and Tribal child welfare practice. Together, Kelly and Nethia provide a combination of policy knowledge, practical child welfare experience, and culturally responsive approaches to supporting Tribal children, families, and communities.

LODGING: A discounted room block has been reserved at Buffalo Run Casino & Resort for participants needing overnight accommodations. Lodging information is included in the registration materials. Participants are responsible for their own lodging expenses. Lunch will be provided both days.

Continuing Education Units (CEUs) will be available for eligible professionals.

Registration Link: <https://forms.office.com/r/PyfG8TZhLY?origin=lprLink>
or scan the QR code!



Outreach



 **PEORIA TRIBE**
OF INDIANS OF OKLAHOMA

FAMILY CONNECT PRESENTS: THE ANGRY CHILD

Peoria Care in partnership
with Legacy Combat
Sports-kickboxing
demostration-for students
as the parents attend the
workshop.



ACTIVITIES :

- Door Prizes
- Fun & Informative
- Dinner
- Activities for Students

CALL NOW 918-542-8419

Call or email to make your
reservations! Participants
limited to 20.

Date: Tuesday
28th
Time: 6-8 PM
Location: Wilbur
Early Childhood
Center



Working together- Tribes and State Agencies

Trust

Mutual Goals

Knowledge

Resources

Collaboration

Respect

Understanding

Strength

Prevention

Shared Costs

Better Outcomes

Communication

Shared Responsibility



— PEORIA TRIBE OF OKLAHOMA —
FAMILY CONNECT

SUPPORTING FAMILIES. STRENGTHENING OUR FUTURE.

PREGNANCY THROUGH AGE 5

*• Thank you CBCAP
for all you have
helped us to do in
our community*



NATIONAL TRIBAL 
CHILD WELFARE CENTER
FOR INNOVATION AND ADVANCEMENT



NTCWCIA.ORG



ntcwcia.org



info@ntcwcia.org



1-855-780-4047

Contact Us

Connect with the Center

The National Tribal Child Welfare Center for Innovation and Advancement welcomes inquiries from Tribal child welfare programs, partners, and collaborators. Whether a program is ready to request technical assistance or simply wants to stay connected, the Center is here to help.

Request Technical Assistance

Eligible title IV-B Tribal child welfare programs interested in receiving technical assistance can submit a request using the form below. A member of the Center's team will respond within **two business days** to schedule an initial meeting and begin the partnership process.



Contact Form





NATIONAL TRIBAL 
CHILD WELFARE CENTER
FOR INNOVATION AND ADVANCEMENT

Questions?
melissa.mcgee@maine.edu



Questions?

Thanks so much for attending!

