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Comments submitted via email on April 5, 2022 to OCCTribal@acf.hhs.gov in response to [ACF Request for Information: Technical Assistance Needs and Priorities on Implementation and Coordination of Early Childhood Development Programs in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities](#).

Re: Tribal TA RFI

On behalf of the [Tribal Early Childhood Research Center \(TRC\)](#) at the University of Colorado, please see our response below to the solicitation for public comment on Technical Assistance Needs and Priorities on Implementation and Coordination of Early Childhood Development Programs in American Indian and Alaska Native Communities. We provide comments in response to selected questions relevant to the [Pilot Exploration of Developmental Screening in Tribal Communities Study \(Tribal PEDS\)](#) conducted by the TRC.

Given existing challenges with recruiting, hiring, and retaining qualified tribal early childhood program staff, what TA would be helpful to support tribal communities in building, supporting, strengthening, and maintaining an effective early childhood workforce?

Train tribal early childhood program staff in best practices for conducting early childhood developmental screening in AIAN communities, including:

- strategies for building rapport and trust with parents so they are more comfortable engaging in conversations about the process of early childhood developmental screening as well as follow-up assessment and referral processes if those are necessary
- strategies to explain to parents the goals of screening, the value of screening, the sensitivity of screening instruments, how screening information will be used, and what to expect in the screening process before beginning the screening process with families
- strategies for learning about a tribe or cultural community, if necessary, so to better understand the cultural context of families from those communities, including the history of how screening information has been used/misused in those communities
- strategies for contextualizing scores on developmental screening tools in light of cultural, socioeconomic, and other considerations

- the importance of providing feedback to parents on the results of developmental screening regardless of whether results indicate a need for follow up with assessment and possibly intervention or instead confirm that a child is on track developmentally
- strategies for providing feedback to parents on the results of developmental screening in ways that are sensitive, non-alarmist, and engage parents as partners in supporting the development of their child
- strategies to assist parents in obtaining follow-up assessment and/or intervention services when resources are not available or difficult to access in the local community

What TA would be helpful to support tribal early childhood programs and communities in effectively engaging families, elders, and community members and promoting family leadership (i.e., empowering families to have a voice in program planning, implementation, and evaluation and advocate for their children)?

- Resources that tribal early childhood program staff can share with parents to empower them as partners in the early childhood developmental screening process, including:
 - Educational information/resources about early childhood developmental screening
 - Information and tips on how parents can play an active role in the screening process for their child (e.g., the [Tribal PEDS resource for parents](#) developed by the Tribal Early Childhood Research Center)

Are there any other key topic areas where TA would be helpful to support tribal communities in implementation and coordination of early childhood programs and systems?

- Early childhood developmental screening – see comments above

Thanks for the opportunity to provide input.

The Tribal PEDS team (Nancy Whitesell, Nancy Asdigian, Caitlin Howley, Carrie Clifford, Michelle Sarche)