Recruitment of Native Americans to be foster or adoptive parents for Native American children involves careful planning, preparation, and work. In addition to making standard administrative decisions and maintaining required records, social workers must be sensitive to the attitudes, lifestyle, and culture of Native Americans recruited as adoptive or foster parents. Social workers can further recruitment in many ways, including distributing materials at Indian Center board meetings and pow wows, making and distributing posters of children, discussing needs on radio and television and in tribal newspapers, attending tribal meetings, distributing fact sheets on their programs, and visiting local agencies and public health offices to talk with staff and parents. Once parents have been recruited, social workers must respond quickly and sensitively. Statewide identification of Indian parents, computer data bank information on available children and parents, and photolisting of available families can facilitate adoption of Native American children by Native American parents. Included are a list of five resources to contact regarding Native American adoption and foster care, a sample recruitment form, recommendations regarding permanency planning, and a 40-item bibliography of books, articles, tapes, and cassettes available on loan from the Region VIII Child Welfare Training Center in Denver, Colorado. (SB)
RECRUITMENT OF NATIVE AMERICAN PARENTS

Ideas for Practice

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RECRUITMENT OF NATIVE AMERICAN PARENTS

A. Planning and preparation.
   1. Identification and description of Native children in care
   2. What tribe, what clan name
   3. Average length of stay
   4. Reunification efforts
   5. Relative availability
   6. Describe child's lifestyle and major significant relationships
   7. Child's identity with tribalness
   8. What will be needed for child to make a smooth, planned re-entry into tribe of family or other tribe of new family or other non-relative family

B. Make an administrative decision as to:
   1. General recruitment of families
   2. Child specific recruitment

C. Identification and recruitment and support of Native parents in your community.

There are numerous Indian people in each community. The resources are available for you to work with and for. The attitude you have as a worker can and will determine the success of your efforts in locating the parents. Native parents will need means of access to the "traditional" agencies. Of course, it is helpful to have, when possible, a staff person who is of the same tribe and can speak the language and know the lifestyle. As in any new area, parents should have education about the special circumstances of the particular child in care to make a wise and planned decision. These supports must be available to enhance the success of the forming of the relationship after placement. There are cultural-ethnic myths about handicap which will need identification and sensitive discussion with the worker and family.
D. Recruitment ideas:

1. Listing of Indian agencies and associations
2. Listing of Boards of Directors
3. Listing of Indian families in schools
4. Contact local Indian churches
5. Contact Indian legislators, BIA, IHS, etc.
6. Contact local Indian Center and request listing of adult education, headstart, employment programs for list of parents and contacts.
7. Attend Indian Center Board meetings and give materials to members.
8. Attend Pow Wows and set up booth to give out information
9. Make posters of children and distribute
10. Request T.V. time and discuss needs
11. Attend tribal meetings weekly and get word to persons
12. Request time on minority radio program
13. Develop a fact sheet on your program with your needs and how to contact you.
14. Contact Navajo Times or other tribal newspapers and write a weekly column on a particular child
15. Put posters in local post office, Seven/Eleven, FedMart, DNA, tribal-urban buildings
16. Put an ad for program in the weekly free paper distributed to homes and apartments
17. Give the information to tribal persons, (judges, chairman, etc.) and ask them to get names of potential families
18. Sit at the local public health waiting room and talk to parents who have children, give information to nurses, aides, clerical staff
19. Listen to grapevines
20. Go to the local agencies who work with special children with DD problems and ask them to give materials to their Native clients who may be interested
21. Go to the public welfare office and give information to their Native foster parents and talk at their foster care meeting.
22. Everywhere you go, have materials on the needs of children and how parents can cooperate, readily available to give out to parents.

23. No time to take a break until weekend!! Your energy and warm personality will bring families to you.

E. Retention

Immediate, effective success is critical! Outreach to the public must be complemented by thoughtful response by your staff. Family studies must be done with sensitive planning to lessen red tape and cost. These and administrative decisions which need pre-planning before the outreach so the families won't be "turned off" by poor agency response. Develop a parents' group so they can support and educate each other. Provide transportation, warm frybread, and a friendly, kind spirit and your families will be there.

E. Bridges to Adoption by Native parents of Native children

1. Statewide identification of Indian parents (coordination with local tribal groups)

2. Indian staff at all levels

3. Networking and planning between all ICW grantees

4. Computer data bank information on available Indian children and families

5. Photolisting of Indian families available

6. Re-writing of adoption requirements to meet needs of families and children in minority communities

F. National conference on recruitment

1. Coordination of efforts between tribes, counties, and states to improve services for special needs Native children and potential adoptive parents.
PEopLS/RESOURCES TO CONTACT

1. Ann McCann, Adoption Specialist
   Native American Adoption Resource Exchange
   "Council Kids"
   Council of Three Rivers American Indian Center
   200 Charles Street
   Pittsburgh, PA 15238
   (412) 872-4457

2. Heidi Illanes
   New Mexico Social Services
   Box 2348
   Santa Fe, NM 87503
   (505) 827-4110

3. Minority Adoption Exchange
   Carol Williams
   Region IX Consolidated Resource Center for Children
   and Youth Services
   California State University
   5151 State University Drive
   Los Angeles, CA 90032
   (213) 224-3283

4. Lois Tuchler
   Jewish Family and Children's Services
   2033 N. 7th St.
   Phoenix, AZ 85020
   (602) 257-1904

5. National Adoption Exchange
   Adoption Center of the Delaware Valley
   1218 Chestnut Street
   Philadelphia, PA 10107
   (215) 925-0200
   Toni Oliver, Associate Director
SEATTLE INDIAN TASK FORCE RECOMMENDS SOME CAUTION REGARDING PERMANENCY PLANNING

1. Involve the extended family and/or tribe/clan as they have long term commitment to the child.

2. There may be one to three persons around child who have significant meaningful attachment to child and his future.

3. Mobility of the child within the extended family is normal, culturally appropriate behavior and not seen as instability.

4. Guardianship may be viable option for child and parent.

5. The concept of the "intent" of permanency planning puts focus of workers to legalize and terminate. Tribal legal system may not have same goals.

6. Time limitations and expectations of permanency planning must be flexible to meet specific needs of Indian family cultural dynamics. (Urban-rural relocation and problems ensued.)

7. Terminology and language of permanency planning may need to be redefined within cultural perspective and local needs of families impacted.

8. Value clarification and attitude may cause barriers which need attention prior to planning with tribes and states.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

NATIVE AMERICANS*


*These books, articles, cassettes, and tapes are available on loan from the Region VIII Child Welfare Training Center, University of Denver, Denver, Colorado 80208.


Xeroxed Copies


"Public Law 95-608 - Nov. 8, 1978"

"Summary of the Act"

"Tasks and Strategies for Implementation"

(these are from a publication by the American Indian Lawyer Training program entitled: Suggested Strategies for Successful Implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978, Oakland, CA: September, 1979. We do not have the book in the library.)

Audio Cassettes

"Child Welfare Resource Development in the Indian Community - tribal, private and public agencies' collaboration is making a difference"


2 tapes

Indian Child Welfare Act Foster Care Seminar
Includes: AFDC-FC/funding; funding resolutions; child abuse standards; child abuse and neglect.
Seminar presented June, 1980.
5 tapes

Indian Child Welfare Act Seminar
Includes: intervention-consent; roles in I.C.W.; family services; common family problems; mock hearings; critiques.
Seminar presented 1978.
4 tapes

Indian Child Welfare Legislation Conference
Includes: tribal courts' role and responsibility; tribal contact agency role and responsibility; social worker's role; overview and summary of ICWA legislation; summary of problems within legislation.
Presenters: Don Sosa, Chief Justice, New Mexico Supreme Court; Eric Eberhardt; Nancy Evans; Merwin Lynch.
Conference held at Albuquerque, June, 1980.
3 tapes

"Native Americans"
Office of Educational Services, University of Colorado Medical Center
1 tape

Self-Concept and the American Indian Foster Child Study Unit
"Growing Up Indian - One Girl's Experience" and "Tribal Chant"
2 tapes (with printed instructor's guide)
"The Social Network in Rural Communities; Knowing the System and How to Use it"

- Includes: American Indians, legislation, cultural factors.
- 1 tape

Audio Visual

"Existing Child Protection Services on Reservations"
3 - 3/4"
filmed at a conference in Aberdeen, South Dakota 1980.

"Indian Child Welfare Act"
9 reel-to-reel audio tapes
American Indian Lawyer Training Program
OUR CHILDREN STAND ALONE UNLESS WE CARE . . .

REACH OUT TO ONE OF OUR OWN.

Be a Native Foster or Adoptive Parent.

For further information, please contact:

Courtesy of Region X Northwest Center for Children, Youth, and Families