

Training **MATTERS**



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- N.C. Division of Social Services
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- Independent Living Resources, Inc.
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- N.C. State University Department of Social Work
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- UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work (Jordan Institute for Families)
- UNC-Chapel Hill School of Medicine
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We Want To Hear from You!

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Go to www.trainingmatters-nc.org.

This issue of *Training Matters* was produced by John McMahon of the UNC-Chapel Hill School of Social Work.

References for this issue can be found at www.trainingmatters-nc.org

Working with American Indian Families: Learning Resources

As the current issue of *Practice Notes* suggests, child welfare practice with American Indian families can be complicated by the cultural gap that sometimes exists between mainstream child welfare workers and Indian families, and by unfamiliarity with the Indian Child Welfare Act. This issue of *Training Matters* points you to resources for learning in these two areas so you can serve American Indian families better.

Cultural Competence

The first thing to keep in mind is that cultural competence is really a journey, not a destination. It is about gradually advancing on a continuum, moving away from ignorance of how values (our own and others') shape our perceptions and interactions and toward the point when we know and understand enough to adapt our

practice to fit with the cultural context of a particular family (Cross, et al., 1989).

Many of the training courses North Carolina provides to child welfare workers address the issue of cultural competence to some degree. In addition, practitioners and agencies may appreciate the following resources:

Cultural Issues. This free online training module is part of the University of Michigan's online course for child welfare supervisors. Using streaming audio and slide presentations, it discusses diversity and its meaning, MEPA-IEAP, and cultural competence. It also includes an 8-minute lecture on ICWA www.ssw.umich.edu/tpews/culturalIssues *continued* →



Learn about cultural competency and ICWA.

Culturally Competent Workers . . .

- Invite those who are different from themselves to be their "cultural guides," where the guide is the teacher and the social worker is the student
- Learn as much as they can about an individual's or family's culture
- Recognize how their own background influences how they view others
- Work within each person's family structure, which may include grandparents, other relatives, and friends
- Recognize, accept, and, when appropriate, include the assistance of natural helpers, such as *curanderos* or shamans
- Respect traditions where gender and age may play an important role; for example, in many racial and ethnic groups, elders are highly respected
- Include cultural leaders in neighborhood outreach efforts

Source: Cross, et al., 1989

Working with American Indian Families: Learning Resources from p. 1

Culturally Competent Practice: A Series from Children's Voice Magazine, CWLA 1998. Investigates the unique cultural values that practitioners should keep in mind when working with families of different ethnic backgrounds. Includes an issue on the relational world view of Native American culture. <www.cwla.org>

Historical Timeline and Context for Indian Child Welfare Practice Issues. An overview that contrasts traditional European and Native American values and sketches out centuries of destructive US policies against American Indians. This site also contains general information about cultural competency. <www.casnet.org/library/culture/native-american-historical-context.htm>

A Look at Cultural Competency, in *Children's Services Practice Notes*, v4n1. <www.practicenotes.org>

ICWA

In North Carolina, child welfare workers learn about ICWA in several training courses, including the mandatory preservice curriculum, *Legal Aspects of Child Welfare in North Carolina*, which is required for all child welfare workers, and the course on child placement. To register for one of these courses, consult the NC Division of Social Services' child welfare training calendar <www.dhhs.state.nc.us/dss/training/childwelfare.htm>.

You can also learn about ICWA using the following resources:

ICWA Outline (2005). Jane Thompson, an Assistant Attorney General for Child Welfare in North Carolina, has developed an outline of the numerous steps an agency must take to comply with ICWA; it can be found in the online version of this article at <www.practicenotes.org/vol11_no2/thompson.pdf>

National Indian Child Welfare Association Course on ICWA. This online course provides an explanation of the key provisions of the Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978 (ICWA) in plain language, as well as recommended performance steps for state, county, and tribal child welfare workers. In addition, the course gives general information about Native American and Alaskan Native cultures. Cost: \$50. <www.nicwa.org/services/icwa>

Collaboration with Native American Tribes: ICWA

and ASFA (2003). Part of a training series developed by the Institute for Child and Family Policy at the Edmund S. Muskie School of Public Service in Maine, this free trainer's guide will help you lead a 1.5 hour class that focuses on successful approaches to collaboration, the requirements of ICWA and ASFA, and on working with American Indian children and families. <muskie.usm.maine.edu/asfa/pdf/Tribes.pdf>

Understanding the Indian Child Welfare Act (1995). This straightforward 17-minute video by Spaulding for Children highlights the provisions of ICWA. Cost: \$95. <www.spaulding.org>

Indian Families and Child Welfare (2000). Developed and made available through the State of California, this module provides information on engaging Indian families appropriately, ICWA, and much more. Available for \$47 on disk. Include pre-printed transparencies and the cost is \$106. <www.esulb.edu/projects/ccwrl/catalog.htm#currieps>

ICWA the Law. The full text of the ICWA itself can be found in NC Division of Social Services' policy manual as an appendix to the section on adoption <<http://149.168.11.112/olm/manuals/dss/csm-50/man/appendixd.htm>>

NICWA

The National Indian Child Welfare Association is a good source of information on American Indian child welfare. The Association works on behalf of Indian children and families by providing public policy, research, advocacy, information, training, and community development services. <www.nicwa.org>

Cross, T., Dennis, K., Isaacs, M., & Bazron, B. (1989). Toward a culturally competent system of care [monograph]. *National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health*.

Learn about the Boarding Schools

The boarding schools are a dark but important part of the relationship between the U.S. mainstream and Indian people. Use the following resources to learn more about this topic.

- **Brainwashing and Boarding Schools: Undoing the Shameful Legacy**. This site provides an overview and links to many other sites. <www.kporterfield.com/aicwtw/articles/boardingschool.html>
- **Let All That Is Indian within You Die! The Reservation Boarding School System in the United States, 1870 - 1928**. By Sonia Keohane <www.twofrog.com/rezsch.html>