

Instrument 1: Interview Protocol for Program Staff

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Study of Coordination of Tribal TANF and Child Welfare Services

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL for Program Staff

The purpose of the interview is to obtain information from the program staff regarding the implementation and progress of the Office of Family Assistance-funded Coordination of Tribal TANF and Child Welfare Services program at each Tribal community.

INTERVIEW INFORMATION:

TRIBE:
PROGRAM:
AGENCY:

INTERVIEW DATE/TIME:

RESPONDENT:

ADDITIONAL RESPONDENT:

TITLE:

TITLE:

STUDY ID:

STUDY ID:

INTERVIEWER(S):

Directions to interviewer – please inform the interviewee: An important part of this study is to gain a better understanding of the services that are available to children, youth, and families through [program name], as well as how TANF and CW coordinate to jointly provide these services. We would like to ask you some questions about the project’s coordination and service provision for [name of Tribe/Tribal organization] families. We anticipate that our discussion today will require at most 90 minutes. Your participation is voluntary. All information gathered will be kept private and will not be shared with other members of the Tribe [or Tribal Organization] or the program. Individual responses will not be reported and all information will be aggregated for analysis and reporting purposes. Would you like to proceed with the interview? Do you have any questions before we begin? First we would like to get some background information.

A. Background

1. What is the full name of the department where the [program name] is housed? _____
2. Could you describe the basic services and programs provided by the department?
3. Which of the department’s services are part of the [program name]?
4. Could you describe your role in the department? And in the [program name]? What are your responsibilities?
5. How long have you or your department operated the [program name]? Has your or the department’s role in [program name] changed in that time? Please explain.

6. In your opinion, what were the reasons for implementing [*program name*] in this community?
7. And what were the reasons for placing the program in [*department where program is housed – see A.I*]?
8. Is this the best departmental placement for the [*program name*]? If no, what department would have been better?

B. Planning

1. Were you involved in the planning for the [*program name*]?
 Yes → continue with the set of questions.
 No → skip to Section C.
2. Who else was involved in the planning process?
Probe: Tribal Council? TANF staff? Tribal Child Welfare staff? Service providers? Families? Youth? Program evaluators?
3. What issues were addressed during the planning phase?
4. What kinds of activities were conducted during the planning phase?
5. Were any new policies or procedures developed during the [*program name*] planning phase?
6. Could you describe any challenges encountered during the planning phase? What were the challenges and what strategies were used to try to resolve the challenges?
7. Were traditional Native values used/considered in the planning process? Please explain.

C. Relationships, Roles, and Responsibilities

To begin, we would like to ask you some questions about how the [*program name*] is organized and who you work with.

1. What departments within the Tribe [or Tribal organization] are involved in the project? *List the departments below and briefly describe what services are included under each department. [Probe: Social Services, Child and Family Services, Substance abuse/mental health, Juvenile justice and law enforcement, Tribal Court, Education (including early childhood education), Tribal Health Services, Housing, employment/ training, other.]*

Department(s):	Services included:
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2. Who are the community partners outside the Tribe [or Tribal organization]? Please explain each partner's role in the project. *[i.e., State, County, Local. List each partner and its role below.]*

Non-Tribal Community partner(s):	Role:
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D. Framework of Services to Families

Before we ask questions about the specific services provided, we would like to have a better understanding about the *[name of Tribe or Tribal organization]* approach to caring for families.

1. Can you describe the *[name of Tribe or Tribal organization]* approach to caring for families?

Would you also describe the approach in terms of one-stop services, wraparound services, system of care, all of the above, or perhaps something else?
2. Could you talk about how traditional Native values and cultural practices inform the *[program name]* and its approach to activities and/or services?
3. How does your community define a healthy child? *[Probe: definition of well-being, what constructs do they consider to be part of well-being.]*
4. How does your community define a healthy family?
Probe: What does a "healthy family" look like? What are some characteristics?

E. Relationship to the Tribal TANF and/or CW program

Interviewer: If the program is housed in TANF unit, ask questions regarding relationships with CW. If housed in CW unit, ask regarding relationship with TANF unit. If outside these units, ask regarding relationships with both TANF and CW units.

Since Tribal TANF and Child Welfare coordination is a key objective of this grant, we would like to know more about how the TANF and CW units work together or how they work with you in your capacity as *[Position title]*.

1. Please describe your relationship to the TANF [or CW] program?
2. Do you to maintain a structured working relationship with TANF [or CW] staff, or is this relationship something that you initiate on your own? Please explain. *Probe: How often do you communicate together? How often do you meet?*
3. How closely do you work with TANF (or CW) staff? Please explain the nature of your coordination with TANF and CW.
4. Does your department share resources with TANF (or CW)? Please explain.

5. Could you describe any challenges you have encountered in serving families that are involved with both TANF and CW?
6. How have you worked with TANF and CW to address these challenges? Please describe.
7. What are some examples of successful coordination and/or cooperation between Tribal TANF and child welfare?

F. Recruitment and Participation in [program name]

Next we would like to learn more about how the needs of children, youth, and families are brought to the attention of [program name] in your community and how they engage with the program and its services.

1. How are at-risk children, youth or families identified as needing the program services? [*Probe: Screening? Assessments? Referrals?*]
2. What are the most frequent issues or problems?
3. Could you describe the process of how the children, youth, or families come to the program [*Probe: Referrals? Come on their own?*]
4. Could you describe the recruitment or outreach efforts that [program name] conducts?

5. What kinds of (needs) assessments or screenings occur?

a. How are adults assessed?

List assessments below

b. How are children/youth assessed?

List assessments below

6. Who do you share the assessment information with? [*Probe: Family? TANF? CW? Other Tribal partners? Members of a multidisciplinary team?*]
7. What procedures are in place to maintain confidentiality when information is shared?
8. What concerns do staff have about sharing information?
9. What concerns do families have about sharing information? (e.g., staff roles in relation to family relationships)
10. How are the results of the assessments used? Is this a change from previous practice? If so, please describe.
11. How consistently do the children/youth/families participate in program services? [*Probe: What do you do to keep them engaged? For those children/youth/families that discontinue services or drop-out, what are the reasons for doing so?*]

12. Do children/youth/families participate in case planning or decision-making meetings with staff and providers? Please describe the meetings. *[Probe: Do children/youth/families have a voice?]*
13. How do you determine whether participants are making progress? *[Probe: Do staff conduct ongoing assessments of progress and the needs of participants? Program evaluation?]*
14. When do activities or services end?
15. What happens at the end of the program? Please describe. *[Probe: After-care, mentoring opportunities, referrals]*
16. What are the intended outcomes for children/youth/families?
17. Are the intended outcomes measurable? How? By whom? How often?

G. TANF and CW Coordination

The TANF program focuses on helping families with children to achieve self-sufficiency. The CW programs focus on safety, permanency, and well-being and provide a range of services from initial assessment and investigation, child protective services, court-ordered child welfare services or prevention services to families at risk of child abuse and neglect and for children placed in out-of-home care. We are interested in learning how the TANF and child welfare programs work together to address the needs of vulnerable families.

1. Could you describe how the coordination of services works? *[i.e., what does the program do?]*
2. What exactly do you do when you work with families? With children? With Courts? Other?
3. How does the coordination of services that you just described address the needs of the families? How do you help the families?
4. Please describe the process for referring Tribal TANF families to CW if there is a risk of child abuse or neglect? Please describe.
5. Do TANF and CW have a common approach to conducting comprehensive family assessments? Please describe. *[Probe: Implementing the Differential Response approach? What instruments are used?]*
6. How is the disposition of child protection cases communicated to Tribal TANF? Please describe.
7. Please describe any data-sharing protocols that are in place between Tribal TANF and CW (if applicable)?
8. What is your assessment of the level of coordination and/or cooperation between TANF and CW?
9. How could the coordination/cooperation be improved?

H. Service Coordination and Decision-Making

We would like to learn about how everyone works together to serve children, youth, and families.

1. How does the [program name] coordinate the services or activities (described above) across the Tribe's [or Tribal organization's] programs and/or with other providers?
2. Who is involved in decision-making as it relates to families who participate in the [program name]? Please describe. [*Probe: Who makes decisions? Shared decision making? Who participates?*]

I. Tribal TANF and CW Coordination Outcomes

Interviewer: Provide each respondent a copy of the Coordination Outcomes table; go over each item. Probe for more clarification if information provided is not consistent with information from other respondents.

We are interested in learning what changes have been made to help increase coordination between Tribal TANF and CW staff. Please tell us whether any of the following have been established as a result of the Tribal TANF and Child Welfare Services Coordination grant?

	Yes	No	Working on it	NA	Comment
Communication					
Have more informal communication					
Have more formal communication					
Have regularly scheduled meetings with staff from both departments (e.g., weekly, monthly, quarterly)					
Other:					
Information Sharing					
Share ideas					
Have privacy/confidentiality agreements and releases in place to share information					
Have routine procedures in place to share information between TANF and Tribal CW departments					
Share case plans or treatment plans across departments					
TANF and Tribal CW staff cross-trained on:					
• Data sharing procedures					
• Confidentiality procedures					
• Assessment tools					
• Child abuse [maltreatment]					
• Parenting					
• Other:					
Implemented cross-referral procedure					
Have co-located TANF & CW staff at the same location					
Developed a Central Intake Center					
Have a liaison to report to heads of TANF and Tribal CW departments					
Use a common curriculum					
Other:					
Screening and Assessments					
Use a common assessment tool (to assess and address safety, self-sufficiency, risk and protective factors)					
Review and share information from comprehensive family assessments or other assessment tools					
Coordinated screening and response for substance abuse and mental health issues					
Other:					
Case Planning and Management					
Joint staffing of cases or case planning by TANF and Tribal CW staff					
Established a single case or treatment plan					
Case plans accessible through linked databases					

	Yes	No	Working on it	NA	Comment
Streamlined or coordinated plan for referral to partner agencies					
Coordinated service planning and case management with Tribal agency staff and/or external service providers for dual-involved families					
Support for mutual efforts for family engagement or involvement					
Serve on a Multidisciplinary Team (MDT)					
Other:					
Delivery of Services					
Onsite supportive services provided					
Formal and informal linkages to community support networks used by TANF and CW					
Develop targeted prevention activities					
Other:					
Policy					
Created or revised agency protocol or policy. <i>Describe.</i>					
Documented coordinated TANF and CW policies in revised policy manuals (to institutionalize practice).					
Best practice guidelines used or established for coordination across TANF and CW staff					
Other:					
Information systems					
Developed a clearinghouse or central repository for sharing forms and information (e.g., client data) between TANF and CW departments					
Use a common data collection system (e.g., linked databases, etc.)					
Electronic referral system established					
Other:					
Organizational/Systemic					
Interagency agreement to facilitate referral process or service delivery					
Merged resources (e.g., funds, space, staff, items for clients, food for workshops, etc.). <i>Describe.</i>					
Engage in strategic planning or visioning initiatives					
Other:					

1. In your opinion, are these changes that we just discussed beneficial?
2. Is there a sense of commitment from the TANF and CW staff to work together to coordinate services? Please describe.
3. In your opinion, how well are the TANF and CW services coordinated now, compared to before this coordination grant started?

J. Facilitators and Challenges to Implementing Services

1. In terms of implementing the key activities for the [program name], what has gone well? *Probe for facilitators.*
2. What have been the challenges in implementing the activities of the [program name]? Please describe.
Probe:

<i>Severity of family needs</i>	<i>Expectations</i>	<i>Service gaps</i>
<i>Historical trauma</i>	<i>Interpersonal relationships</i>	<i>Budget</i>
<i>Confidentiality (rules)</i>	<i>Inter-agency relationships</i>	<i>Quality assurance capacity</i>
<i>Language</i>	<i>Turf</i>	<i>Evaluation capacity</i>
<i>Policies</i>	<i>Coordination</i>	<i>Common intake forms</i>
<i>Professional jargon</i>	<i>Staffing (tenure or turnover)</i>	<i>Data sharing</i>
		<i>Other</i>
3. Could you describe any challenges you may have encountered in collaborating with the [community partners] OR [Tribal agencies/departments] to implement [program name]? [*Probe: Stakeholder involvement and commitment? Access to services? Coordination of services? Utilization of services? Payment for assessments? Monitoring?*]
 - a. How did these challenges impact the progress of children, youth, or families that participate in the [program name]?
 - b. How did these concerns impact your work?
 - c. How did you address these challenges?
4. What successes have you observed in the implementation of collaborative services between TANF and CW?

K. Training and/or Technical Assistance

1. Have you been involved in any training related to the [program name]?
 Yes → ask the following questions. *No* → skip to question 6 below.
 - a. On what topics?
 - b. Did you find the training(s) beneficial?
 - c. Were any of these cross-training with TANF or CW staff? Or other Tribal staff? If so which ones?
2. Has the knowledge you gained from these trainings changed your practice? If so, how? Can you give us an example?
3. Have you experienced any challenges in applying the new information that you learned in the training(s)?
If so, how? Can you give us an example?
4. Has the Tribe [or Tribal organization] received any technical assistance for [program name] implementation? Please describe.
5. Has the technical assistance helped the Tribe [or Tribal organization] to implement [program name]? Please describe.

6. Is there any other training or technical assistance that you think would be helpful in implementing the [program name]? *[Interviewer: Some grantees have budgeted for TA under the grant. If so, probe: Are there additional areas of TA, not included in your budget, that would be important for the program?]*
7. Do you seek advice from or confer with other Tribes [or Tribal organizations] who are implementing Tribal TANF and CW coordination projects? If so, what kinds of topics are addressed?
8. Do you have suggestions for what types of cross-grantee sharing/ learning opportunities would be beneficial for your program?

L. Perceived Benefits and Future Goals

1. In your opinion, what have been some of the key benefits for children, youth, or families served through the [program name]?
2. What are the goals for the [program name] in the coming year?
3. Are there any planned changes to the [program name] in the next year?
4. How will the [program name] be sustained after the Federal funding ends? Please describe the plan for sustainability.
5. Is there anything else that you would like to add regarding the topics we have talked about?

M. Data Collection and Management

1. Please describe the data collection process for this project. For example, who is responsible for collecting data from participants, when does data collection take place (e.g., during an intake process, before program activities), and what happens to the data once it is collected (is it entered into an MIS, etc.)?
2. Please describe the data management system(s). *[Probe: Who has access to the system? Is there one integrated system or are multiple systems used to track service (participant) data or outcomes?]*
3. In your opinion, how accessible is the data management system? Is it easy to use? *[Probe: If not, probe for what improvements could be made.]*
4. What output and outcome data relevant to your evaluation does the data management system (or systems) track or manage?
5. What output and outcome data relevant to your project tracking does the data management system (or systems) NOT track or manage? What alternative methods or systems have you developed to collect, track, and manage these other data?

6. Is the [program name] collecting data regarding whether project activities and services are implemented as intended? *[Probe: collecting data regarding whether the project's partners are implementing activities as intended?]*
7. Are the outcomes of [program name] being measured? Please describe what are the key outcomes being measured regarding the activities?
8. Based on the data available data, do you feel this project is implementing promising practices for coordinating Tribal TANF and CW services? *[Probe: If so, what are these practices? What has the data revealed about the benefits of these practices?]*
9. What key challenges have you encountered in collecting data that are useful for the program? What strategies have you used to address these challenges?
10. Does the project have an evaluator? In house evaluator? External evaluator? Native evaluator?
11. Are there any areas where you think [program name]'s data collection capacity could be improved in order to help you obtain data that are more relevant to the program?

THANK YOU!