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## Assessment of Foundational Capacity

### Overview

The Assessment of Foundational Capacity is designed to measure the extent to which jurisdictions have key, foundational organizational capacities in place that are considered to be indicators of the health and functioning of child welfare systems. These capacities include organizational resources, infrastructure, knowledge and skills, culture and climate, and engagement and partnership. The data from this assessment will provide contextual information helpful to interpreting the effects of the services provided by the Capacity Building Collaborative.

### Administration

The assessment will be administered to all jurisdictions in conjunction with the assessment processes that the Centers undertake with jurisdictions, before a work plan is developed.

- In partnership with the cross-center team, the Center for Tribes will administer the Assessment of Foundational Capacity items to select Tribes as part of its on-site Needs and Fit Assessment. In the context of that in-person meeting, the items will be completed by the team of Tribal representatives involved in the discussion; participants will be asked to consider and discuss each assessment item and to come to consensus about the response. The Center for Tribes conducts the Needs and Fit assessment once, rather than annually, but the cross-center evaluation team is working with the Center evaluators to determine the best way to administer follow-up waves of the Assessment of Foundational Capacities, if the work continues beyond the year.

### Survey items

While similar constructs will be measured across Centers, the content and language of the assessment items below will be tailored to some extent to align with the approaches used by the three Centers in their assessment work with States, Tribes and CIPs. The items shown here are organized by the foundational capacity they are intended to measure.

Using a scale of 1 to 5, please tell us the extent to which you agree with the following statements about your tribal child welfare agency's or group responsible for child welfare services' capacities:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

In my opinion, in my tribal agency or group responsible for child welfare services, there is/are:

**Organizational Resources**

1. *A sufficient number of staff to perform the work of our tribal agency or group responsible for child welfare services effectively*
2. *An acceptable level of stability among leadership of our tribal agency or group responsible for child welfare services*
3. *An acceptable level of staff retention across the tribal agency or within the group responsible for child welfare services*
4. *Acceptable facilities to conduct the business of our tribal child welfare agency or the group responsible for child welfare services*
5. *Acceptable materials and technology to perform the work of our tribal child welfare agency or the group responsible for child welfare services*
6. *Direct and easy access to information, materials, and tools on best practices to guide tribal child welfare agency leadership or leadership of the group responsible for child welfare services*
7. *A data system that stores accurate and current information about the children and families we serve*

**Organizational Infrastructure**

*Competency*

8. *An effective process for training new tribal child welfare agency staff or new members of the tribal group responsible for child welfare services*
9. *A sufficient and accessible process for ongoing training and professional development of tribal child welfare agency staff or new members of the tribal group responsible for child welfare services*
10. *A system to provide feedback to staff to develop and improve their skills, through support, consultation, or coaching*

*Administration*

11. *Procedures that allow us to get useful data from our data systems in a timely manner*
12. *Processes by which we can internally review the performance of our work and make improvements in response to what we find*
13. *Written policies and protocols that guide the day-to-day functioning of our agency*
14. *A sufficient array of services available to meet the needs of children and families*
15. *Structured ways, such as workgroups, regular meetings, and anonymous surveys that allow families and youth to provide feedback on their experience in our work, which inform practice and decision making at the organizational level, not only with individual families*

**Knowledge and Skills**

*Workforce*

16. *A workforce with the professional educational preparation, such as an MSW, if required, needed for our tribal agency or child welfare group's work*
17. *Staff with the specialized training and skills needed for our child welfare work*
18. *Staff or workers with the knowledge and skills necessary for us to achieve selected improvements to outcome measures of safety, permanency, and well-being*

Using a scale of 1 to 5, please tell us the extent to which you agree with the following statements about your tribal child welfare agency's or group responsible for child welfare services' capacities:

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree

In my opinion, in my tribal agency or group responsible for child welfare services, there is/are:

*Analytic/evaluative*

- 19. *Internal expertise or ability to access external expertise readily in collecting and analyzing data to assess our child welfare work, and whether or not it is conducted as planned*
- 20. *Internal expertise, or ability to access external expertise readily, in collecting and analyzing the outcomes of our work, to determine whether our activities are leading to the results that we want*
- 21. *Leadership/management that is skilled at facilitating solutions to perceived barriers to the implementation process*
- 22. *A deep knowledge of and respect for the role of culture in the families we work with*

**Organizational Culture & Climate**

- 23. *A shared sense of mission and values toward the children and families we work with in our agency*
- 24. *An organizational environment in which staff feel valued and perform their job at their full potential*
- 25. *An organizational climate of inclusion in which diversity and culture of staff and viewpoints are valued*
- 26. *An organizational climate in which staff value and use multiple sources of formal and informal data to inform their work*
- 27. *A sense of mutual trust between staff and leadership/management*
- 28. *Tribal leadership open to and supportive of change*
- 29. *Tribal leadership understands and values the work of the children and families' department*
- 30. *Staff or workers are able to accomplish personally meaningful things in their work, remain personally involved in their work and treat clients in a personalized way*
- 31. *Staff or workers are able to manage stress, conflicting demands and high work volume*

**Organizational Engagement & Partnership**

- 32. *Effective collaborative partnerships with the children and families that we serve*
- 33. *Effective collaborative relationships with service providers in our community*
- 34. *Effective collaborative relationships with the tribal court system*
- 35. *Effective collaborative relationships with state/county courts*
- 36. *Effective collaborative relationships with state/county child welfare system*