



IMPROVING THE WELFARE OF NATIVE CHILDREN BY USING & MANAGING DATA

JOURNEY THROUGH THE RIVER OF DATA SERIES, FEBRUARY 2018

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Data is a river that flows through all aspects of child welfare work, as well as through the community -- a key resource but one that can sometimes be challenging to navigate.

Developing data capacity can be like traveling from downstream to upstream. You may need someone who is further upstream to give you guidance on how to avoid rough waters or undercurrents that may throw you off course.

DATA CAN HELP ADDRESS ISSUES LIKE...

- Cultural appropriateness (grounding services in unique tribal values and practices and relational worldview; considering generational difference and experiences; language preservation)
- Collaborative program development (integrating services between departments to best serve the community)
- Service provision (assessing what additional services the community needs; matching children and families with the right services for their needs)
- Locating and accessing resources (finding and applying for grants and tribal, state, or federal funding)
- Strategic planning (growing and strengthening the program over time)
- Program evaluation (improving services to children and families)

...BY ANSWERING QUESTIONS LIKE:

- Where are our children?
- Where are they placed in out of home care?
- How many are in kinship placements?
- How many are in Native vs. non-Native homes?
- Are families participating in preventative services?
- Are they participating in their culture and receiving culturally based services?
- How many of our children are in foster care under the jurisdiction of courts other than tribal court?
- How many are "aging out" of care?
- What happens to our kids who "age out"?
- What are the major areas of need for children and families?
- What strengths in the community contribute to the well-being of children and families?



WHEREVER A PROGRAM IS ON ITS JOURNEY, IT HELPS TO THINK THROUGH A FEW QUESTIONS:

- Who, from the community, should be involved in advising, guiding, and supporting our data planning decisions?
- What system or process are we using to collect data?
- What questions do we want to answer about our program, clients, and community?
- What data do we need to capture to answer those questions?
- What data do we currently collect and how do we collect it?
- What data do we want to capture that we currently aren't collecting?
- How do we best use our data once we have it?
- How are we protecting the privacy of our data?

HOW DATA CAN HELP OUR PROGRAMS THRIVE



Data can help answer many important questions about the families we serve, what types of services are provided, and how to serve them better.

Data can help us access and maintain resources and funding.



Data tells the stories of our families and community.

Data helps communicate our program's growth and progress to Tribal leadership and community.



Data comes from culture and community and can empower Tribal sovereignty.

Data supports our program with accountability and sustainability.



Data can help us identify and build on our strengths, as well as learn from our mistakes.

Data opens doors to innovation and helps us assign resources and evaluate results.



ABOUT "TOOLS FOR GROWTH" RESOURCES. The Capacity Building Center for Tribes' Tools for Growth resources are developed by a team of American Indian/Alaska Native/Indigenous child welfare professionals from across Indian Country who are dedicated to providing tribal communities with the tools they need to thrive and build their capacity to strengthen children, youth, families, and communities. The group works together to both establish a common vision of the resources needed and create content.