



National Center on Tribal  
Early Childhood Development



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State Capacity Building Center

# Language Revitalization Begins at Birth: Supporting Intergenerational Language Development in Early Childhood

ANA Language Summit  
November 16-18, 2020



National Center on Tribal  
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# Presenters



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Specialist,  
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National Center on Tribal Early  
Childhood Development



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**Schank**  
Technical Assistance Coordinator  
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Infant Toddler Specialist  
Network  
Child Care State Capacity  
Building Center

# Session Objectives

- ◆ Share research regarding language acquisition from birth to 2 years old
- ◆ Discuss strategies and resources for expanding language revitalization to include an intergenerational approach
- ◆ Explore partnerships to support language revitalization across early childhood and school-age programs



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# Research on Language Acquisition and the Benefits of Bilingualism



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## 6,909 world languages

Source: Lewis, M. P. (Ed.). (2009).

*Ethnologue: Languages of the World* (16th ed.) SIL International.

<http://www.ethnologue.com/16>



## 169 indigenous languages

Source: Siebens, J. & Julian, T. (2011) *Native North American Languages Spoken at Home in the United States and Puerto Rico: 2006-2010*. United States Census Bureau.

<https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2011/acs/acsbr10-10.pdf>



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# Brain Imaging Studies: Infant/Toddler Cross-Linguistic Speech Perception

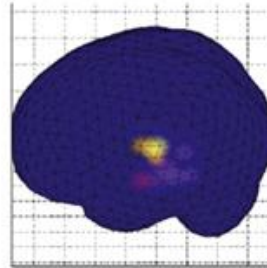
A



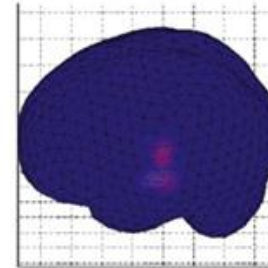
B

AUDITORY (Superior Temporal) WERNICKE'S AREA

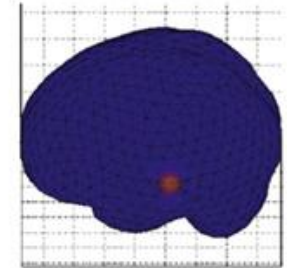
Newborns



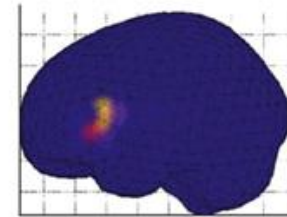
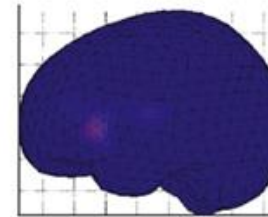
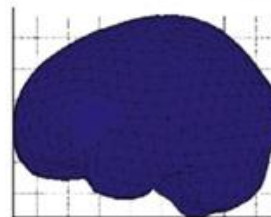
6-month-olds



12-month-olds



MOTOR (Inferior Frontal) BROCA'S AREA


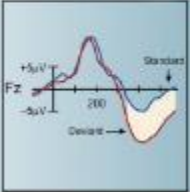

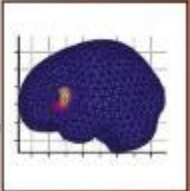

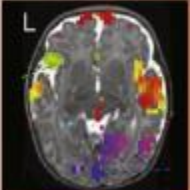

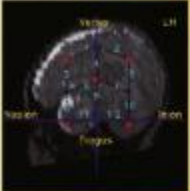


1 2 3 4 5 6 (Z score relative to 100 to 0 ms baseline)

Source: Imada, T., Zhang, Y., Cheour, M., Taula, S., Ahonen, A., & Kuhl, P. (2006). Infant speech perception activates Broca's area: A developmental magnetoencephalography study. *NeuroReport*, 17(10), 957–962.

# Infant/Toddler Brain Imaging Studies

NEUROSCIENCE TECHNIQUES USED WITH INFANTS

Inexpensive	 <p>EEG/ERP: Electrical field changes Excellent temporal resolution Studies cover the lifespan Sensitive to movement Noiseless</p>	
Expensive	 <p>MEG: Magnetic field changes Excellent temporal &amp; spatial resolution Studies on adults and young children Head tracking for movement calibration Noiseless</p>	
Expensive	 <p>fMRI: Hemodynamic changes Excellent spatial resolution Studies on adults &amp; a few on infants Extremely sensitive to movement Noise protectors needed</p>	
Moderate	 <p>NIRS: Hemodynamic changes Good spatial resolution Studies infants in the first 2 years Sensitive to movement Noiseless</p>	

## Brain imaging studies use the following:

- ◆ Positron Emission Tomography (PET) scans
- ◆ Magnetoencephalography (MEG)
- ◆ Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI)
- ◆ Near-infrared Spectroscopy (NIRS) (used to examine the infant/toddler brain activity responses to linguistic stimuli)

Figure 1: Four techniques now used extensively with infants and young children to examine their responses to linguistic signals. Source: Kuhl, P., & Rivera-Gaxiola, M. (2008). Neural substrates of language acquisition. *Neuroscience*, 31, 511–534.

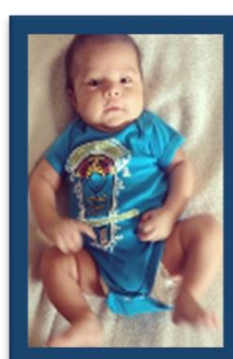
# Language Acquisition Birth to 2 years



Newborn



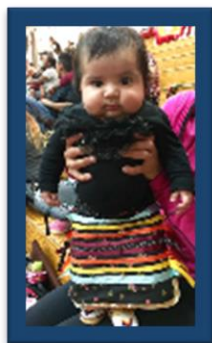
2 months



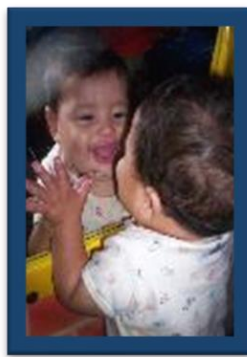
4 months



6 months



8 months



9-14 months



14-20 months



# Poll / Discussion Question

- ◆ What **age ranges** does your Tribe involve in language revitalization efforts?
- ◆ How does your Tribe or community strengthen or support language revitalization?



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# Strategies for an Intergenerational Approach



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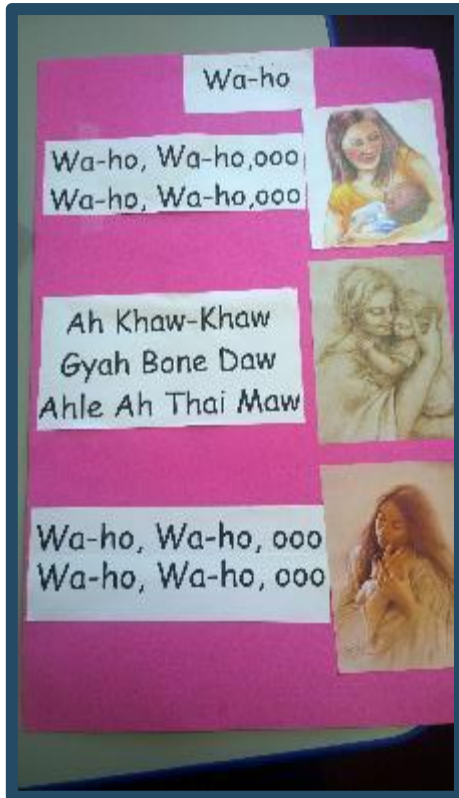
# An Intergenerational Approach

- ◆ “As sovereign nations, AI/AN communities have been addressing issues of Native language and culture revitalization for many years.”



- ◆ Source: Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation. (2020). *Home and Community Native Language and Cultural Experiences Among AI/AN Children in Region XI Head Start: Findings from the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/home-and-community-native-language-and-cultural-experiences-among-ai-an-children-in-region-xi-head-start>

# An Intergenerational Approach



“More recent understandings of the importance of supporting Native language development in the early years and the role of early childhood education in this process have led to a shift toward supporting early childhood programs as allies to Native language revitalization efforts.”

- ◆ Source: Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation. (2020). *Home and Community Native Language and Cultural Experiences Among AI/AN Children in Region XI Head Start: Findings from the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/home-and-community-native-language-and-cultural-experiences-among-ai-an-children-in-region-xi-head-start>

# An Intergenerational Approach

- ◆ “Research has found that AI/AN teen parents who have strong cultural connections are more likely to have positive parenting and family functioning and less likely to engage in substance use (Barlow et al., 2010).”



- ◆ Source: Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation. (2020). *Home and Community Native Language and Cultural Experiences Among AI/AN Children in Region XI Head Start: Findings from the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/home-and-community-native-language-and-cultural-experiences-among-ai-an-children-in-region-xi-head-start>

# An Intergenerational Approach



- ◆ “Home- and center-based early childhood education and care programs such as Home Visiting, Head Start, and Child Care can support the inclusion of Native language and culture in the programs’ home-to-school connection efforts. These programs are in a unique position to get to know families and build upon families’ specific cultural strengths (see Sarche et al., 2020).”

- ◆ Source: Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation. (2020). *Home and Community Native Language and Cultural Experiences Among AI/AN Children in Region XI Head Start: Findings from the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/home-and-community-native-language-and-cultural-experiences-among-ai-an-children-in-region-xi-head-start>

# An Intergenerational Approach

- ◆ “Focusing on cultural strengths has the potential to build trust and provide opportunities for collaboration between families and program staff to support young children’s engagement with Native language and cultural practices.”



- ◆ Source: Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation. (2020). *Home and Community Native Language and Cultural Experiences Among AI/AN Children in Region XI Head Start: Findings from the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/home-and-community-native-language-and-cultural-experiences-among-ai-an-children-in-region-xi-head-start>

# An Intergenerational Approach



- ◆ “Connecting AI/AN children and families with their Native language and cultural practices supports a world view that promotes cognitive, physical, and emotional well-being for children, their families, and the staff working in AI/AN communities.”

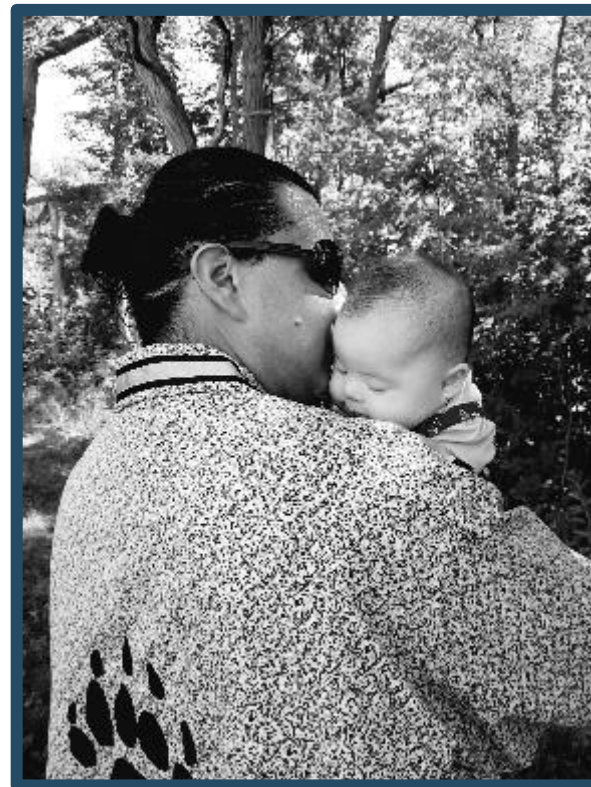
- ◆ Source: Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation. (2020). *Home and Community Native Language and Cultural Experiences Among AI/AN Children in Region XI Head Start: Findings from the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/home-and-community-native-language-and-cultural-experiences-among-ai-an-children-in-region-xi-head-start>



# An Intergenerational Approach

- ◆ “I believe that in our language and culture we find the strength and resiliency that have allowed our people to survive to now. And I think that through that, we will continue to thrive as Tribal Nations.”

~ Tribal early childhood education program administrator



- ◆ Source: Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation. (2020). *Home and Community Native Language and Cultural Experiences Among AI/AN Children in Region XI Head Start: Findings from the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/home-and-community-native-language-and-cultural-experiences-among-ai-an-children-in-region-xi-head-start>

# An Intergenerational Approach

- ◆ Source: Office of Planning, Research & Evaluation. (2020). *Home and Community Native Language and Cultural Experiences Among AI/AN Children in Region XI Head Start: Findings from the American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey 2015*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/resource/home-and-community-native-language-and-cultural-experiences-among-ai-an-children-in-region-xi-head-start>



# Resource: *Language for Life: Nourishing Indigenous Languages in the Home*



Source: First Peoples' Cultural Council. (2019). *Language for Life: Nourishing Indigenous Languages in the Home*. <https://fpcc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/FPCC-LanguageforLife-190318-WEB.pdf>

# Community Events as a Strategy

- ◆ Introduce adults and children to the Tribal language in a fun, enjoyable way
- ◆ Participants control their own level of participation
- ◆ Share knowledge



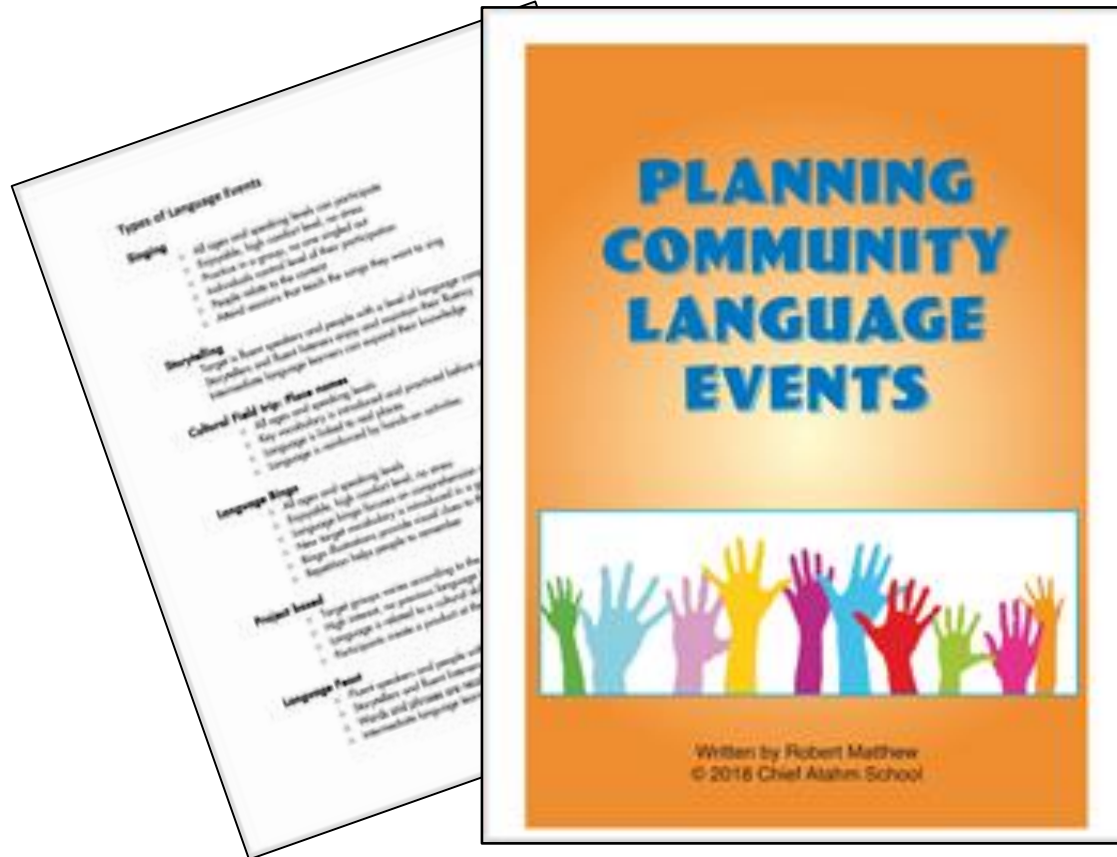
# Community Events as a Strategy

- ◆ Creates a safe space to practice and use the language
- ◆ Helps maintain motivation to learn
- ◆ Provides a multi-generational setting



# Resource:

## *Planning Community Language Events*



Source: Chief Atahm School. (2018). *Planning Community Language Events*. Adams Lake Indian Band, First Peoples' Cultural Council. <https://fpcc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/FPCC-LanguageforLife-190318-WEB.pdf>

# Types of Events

- ◆ Singing
- ◆ Storytelling
- ◆ Cultural field trips
- ◆ Place names
- ◆ Language games
- ◆ Language projects
- ◆ Community meal or feast



# Resource: *Virtual and At Home Language Revitalization Program Ideas*



Source: First Peoples' Cultural Council. (2019). *Virtual and At Home Language Revitalization Program Ideas*.  
<https://fpcc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/FPCC-LanguageforLife-190318-WEB.pdf>



# Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) as a Strategy

All Tribal grantees are required to spend a percentage of their total CCDF expenditures on **“activities designed to improve the quality of child care services and increase parental options for, and access to high-quality child care.”**

Language Revitalization efforts would be considered as a way to improve the quality of child care services for children up to age 13.

Source: Child Care and Development Fund, 45 C.F.R. § 98.83(g)(1) (2016).



# Implementing Language Revitalization Using CCDF Funds



Source: National Center on Tribal Early Childhood Development & State Capacity Building Center. (2019). *Planning to Action: Implementing Management Systems and Strategic Planning in CCDF Tribal Lead Agencies* [PowerPoint slides].

[https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/from\\_planning\\_to\\_action\\_-\\_implementing\\_management\\_systems\\_and\\_strategic\\_planning\\_in\\_ccdf\\_tribal\\_lead\\_agencies.pdf](https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/public/from_planning_to_action_-_implementing_management_systems_and_strategic_planning_in_ccdf_tribal_lead_agencies.pdf)

# Timelines

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3



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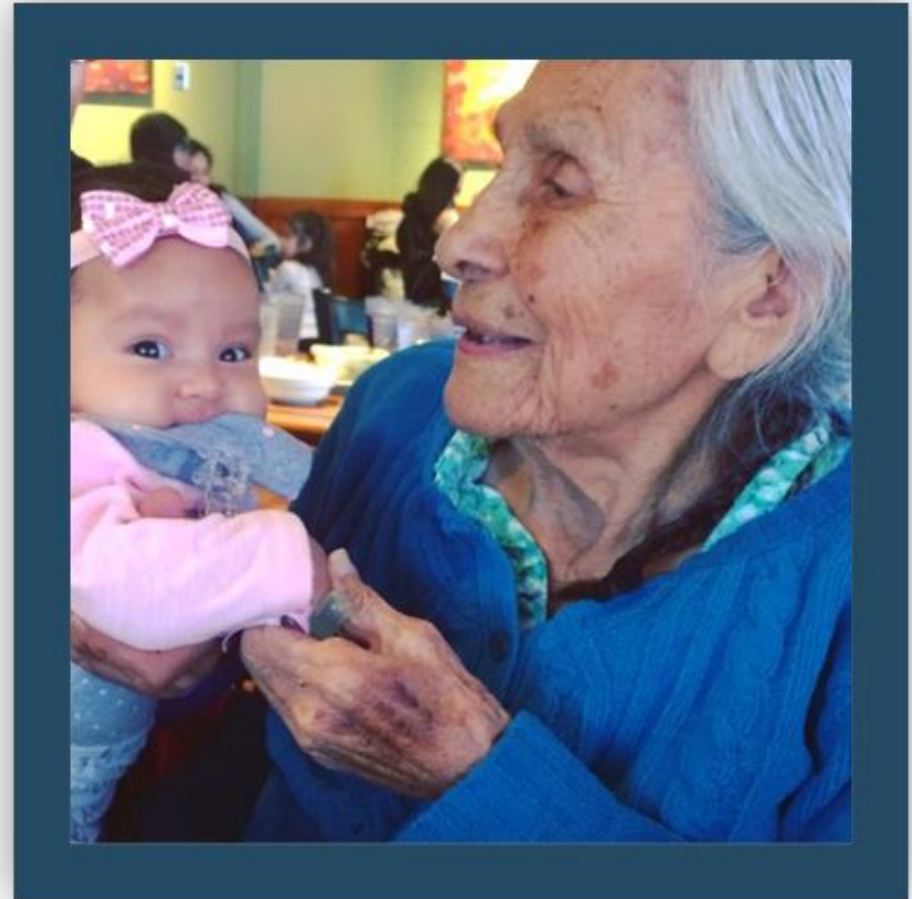
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# Partnership Considerations



# Considerations

- ◆ Partner with families
- ◆ Consult with elders and knowledge keepers
- ◆ Collaborate with language and culture programs
- ◆ Coordinate across age groups
- ◆ Connect with child care providers, especially relative care providers



# Partnership Considerations

- ◆ When developing partnerships, include the local Tribal Lead Agency that can support both Native and non-Native providers caring for Native children via
  - Language and Culture resources
  - Elders in Classrooms
  - Language Coordinator
  - Other quality supports



# Additional Considerations



- ◆ Tribal CCDF Programs
- ◆ Tribal Head Start or Early Head Start Programs
- ◆ Tribal Museums
- ◆ Boys & Girls Clubs
- ◆ K-12 Schools
- ◆ Tribal Pow Wow Organizations

# Resource: *A Report on Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start*



Source: National Center on Cultural and Linguistic Responsiveness. (2015). *A Report on Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start*. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Head Start. <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/report-tribal-language-revitalization.pdf>



# Poll / Discussion Question

- ◆ **B-5:** If working with Birth to 5, in what ways are you partnering with K-12?
- ◆ **K-12:** If working with K-12, in what ways are you partnering with Birth to 5?
- ◆ **Connecting:** What strategies could you use to connect Birth-5 and K-12?

# Next Steps





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# Resources



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**NATIONAL CENTER ON Tribal Early Childhood Development**

Overview

## What Is the National Center on Tribal Early Childhood Development?


The National Center on Tribal Early Childhood Development (NCTECD) provides training and technical assistance (T&TA) to support American Native and Alaska Native (AIAN) Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) grantees. We assist with implementation of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 2014 and adoption and implementation of early childhood program best practices, systems, and infrastructure in tribal communities.

As part of the Administration for Children and Families' Early Childhood Training and Technical Assistance System (ECTTAS), NCTECD provides and coordinates T&TA to support AIAN CCDF grantees and their partners in creating early childhood systems that are coordinated, collaborative, and comprehensive in their approach to improving child outcomes and school readiness.

NCTECD T&TA team members are highly qualified native professionals, and the majority are enrolled members of federally recognized Tribes. Our team has experience providing culturally responsive and appropriate resources and materials tailored to the unique needs of tribal communities. We promote high-quality child care for AIAN children and their families.



<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/centers/national-center-tribal-early-childhood-development>



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## Infant/Toddler Specialist Network

**What Is the Infant/Toddler Specialist Network?**

One of three SCBC networks, the Infant/Toddler Specialist Network supports State, Territory, and Tribal leaders in using CCDF funds to ensure effective and meaningful improvements in infant/toddler child care quality. The Network also identifies and shares innovative, research-based best practices in programs serving infants, toddlers, and their families.

**Infant/Toddler Specialist Network**  
Infant/Toddler Specialists work with OCC Regional Program Managers, State Systems Specialists, CCDF Lead Agencies, Tribes, and local state system representatives to support infant/toddler quality improvement and supply-building activities.

**Intensive Capacity Building Network**  
Up to 10 states receive intensive, longer-term EC systems building TA through a solicitation, review, and selection process.


**State Systems Specialist Network**  
State Systems Specialists work with CCDF State, Territory, and Tribal administrators to support the development and implementation of State and Territory work plans, deploying TTA resources/services in support of the plan.

**How Are Infant/Toddler Services Identified and Rolled Out?**

Infant/Toddler Specialists work with the SCBC's other networks—State Systems and Intensive Capacity Building—to prioritize approved CCDF technical assistance goals. They assess readiness to implement solutions, recommend specific technical assistance resources and activities, and determine strategies for measuring results. All activities are planned and delivered collaboratively with their early childhood TA system partners to ensure the best possible outcome for the infants/toddlers in States, Territories, and Tribes.

**What Framework Will Anchor State Efforts to Support the Healthy Development of Infants and Toddlers?**

The Infant/Toddler Specialist Network will use the Program for Infant/Toddler Care's (PITC) Six Essential Policies to anchor conversations related to high-quality care for infants, toddlers, and their families. These guiding principles for family-centered and care can provide States, Territories, and Tribes with a foundation for policies, procedures, and professional development that respects this critical period of life.



The Infant/Toddler Specialist Network works with States to:


- Support implementation of high-quality professional pathways for teachers and child care providers working with infants and toddlers in child care centers and family child care homes.
- Improve the coordination of services across EC professional development programs.
- Support continuity of care and teacher/child relationships by encouraging the implementation of licensing policies that promote healthy development of infants and toddlers, including children with special needs.
- Improve education of infants, toddlers, and their care providers.
- Create a cadre of infant/toddler specialists, coaches, and master teachers within each State and contribute to their professional development.
- Provide States with targeted technical assistance, as requested, to improve programs serving infants, toddlers, and their families.

**Contact Us Today**

Learn more about the network and how we can support you.



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Website: <https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/>  
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[http://www.occ-ome.org/occannouncements\\_sign-up/](http://www.occ-ome.org/occannouncements_sign-up/)

The SCBC is funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Office of Child Care and is operated by ICF International in partnership with WestEd.


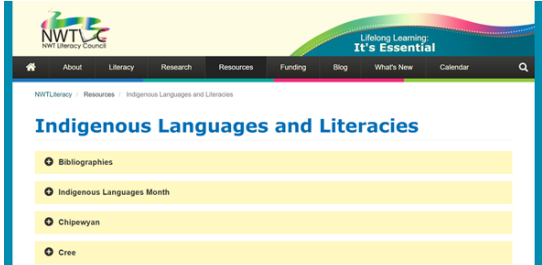


<https://childcareta.acf.hhs.gov/infant-toddler-resource-guide/topic-overview-0>


# Resources

Resource	Source	Image
<p>Culture and Language</p>	<p>Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center (ECLKC),  <a href="https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language">https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/culture-language</a></p>	
<p><i>Language Documentation, Revitalization, and Reclamation: Supporting Young Learners and Their Communities</i></p>	<p>Child Language Research and Revitalization Working Group. (2017).  <a href="https://www.edc.org/sites/default/files/uploads/RouvierWhitePaperFinal.pdf">https://www.edc.org/sites/default/files/uploads/RouvierWhitePaperFinal.pdf</a></p>	

# Resources

Resource	Source	Image
Language Revitalization Strategies	<p>The First Peoples' Cultural Council has many resources related to various language revitalization strategies such as immersion, language nests, culture camps, language documentation, etc.</p> <p><a href="https://fpcc.ca/resource/language-revitalization-strategies/">https://fpcc.ca/resource/language-revitalization-strategies/</a></p>	
Indigenous Languages and Literacies	<p>Northwest Territories Literacy Council has various language revitalization strategies in their resource page for families, communities, and program staff.</p> <p><a href="https://www.nwtliteracy.ca/index.php/resources/indigenous-languages-and-literacies">https://www.nwtliteracy.ca/index.php/resources/indigenous-languages-and-literacies</a></p>	

# Featured Resources

Resource	Source	Image
<p><i>Language Nest Handbook</i> from the First People's Cultural Council</p>	<p>This handbook has been developed for First Nations communities who are currently running a language nest program, as well as for communities who wish to start up a language nest.</p> <p><a href="https://fpcc.ca/resource/language-nest-handbook/">https://fpcc.ca/resource/language-nest-handbook/</a></p>	

ACF OPRE American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Family and Child Experiences Survey Data

The ACF Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) maintains research on Tribal language and culture use in American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) Head Start and Early Head Start programs.

<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/opre/research/project/american-indian-and-alaska-native-head-start-family-and-child-experiences-survey-faces>


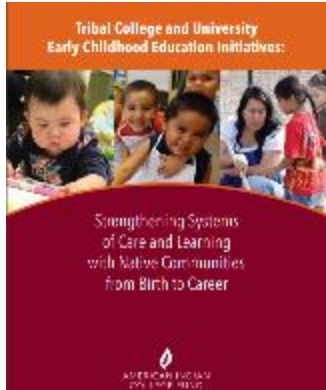


# Featured Resources

Resource	Source	Image
<i>Making It Work: Implementing Cultural Learning Experiences in American Indian and Alaska Native Early Learning Settings for Children Ages Birth to 5</i>	National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning, retrieved from <a href="https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/making-it-work-2017.pdf">https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/no-search/making-it-work-2017.pdf</a>	 The cover of the report 'Making It Work' features a central photograph of a woman holding a young child. The title 'Making It Work' is prominently displayed at the top in a large, white, sans-serif font. Below the title, the subtitle 'Implementing Cultural Learning Experiences in American Indian and Alaska Native Early Learning Settings for Children Ages Birth to 5' is written in a smaller font. The background of the cover is a vibrant, abstract pattern of colorful geometric shapes.
<i>Report on Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start</i>	Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Office of Head Start and Early Head Start. (2015). <a href="https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/report-tribal-language-revitalization.pdf">https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/report-tribal-language-revitalization.pdf</a>	 The cover of the report 'A Report on Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start' features a photograph of a woman and a young child sitting at a table, engaged in an activity. The title 'A Report on Tribal Language Revitalization in Head Start and Early Head Start' is written in a white font at the top. The background is a solid light blue color. At the bottom, there is a logo for 'CHILDREN & FAMILIES' and a small icon of a person.



# Featured Resources

Resource	Source	Image
Restorative Teachings in Early Childhood Education Initiatives	American Indian College Fund <a href="https://collegefund.org/research-and-programs/early-childhood-education/restorative-teachings-early-childhood-education-initiative/">https://collegefund.org/research-and-programs/early-childhood-education/restorative-teachings-early-childhood-education-initiative/</a>	
<i>Tribal College and University Early Childhood Education Initiatives: Strengthening Systems of Care and Learning with Native Communities from Birth to Career</i>	American Indian College Fund Tribal College and University Early Childhood Education Initiatives <a href="http://collegefund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Early-Childhood-Education-Initiatives_B.pdf">http://collegefund.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Early-Childhood-Education-Initiatives_B.pdf</a>	

# Ah-hoh! Thank you!



*“Let us put our minds together and see what life we can make for our children.”*

Sitting Bull,  
Dakota Sioux

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## Thank you!



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