

# Guide to the AdoptUSKids Tribal Support Services Assessment Tool

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Instructions and Considerations

April 2022



**AdoptUSKids**

*Together we hold their future*

## Considering Title IV-E?

This tool can help you as you develop your programmatic strategy for service delivery, including improvements you may decide to make to streamline services and better support your foster, kinship, adoptive, and customary adoptive families.

## What is this tool and why should you use it?

Tribal child welfare programs are responsible for understanding and applying appropriate child welfare practices to support foster, kinship, adoptive, and customary adoptive families. To best meet the needs of these families, it's important for tribes to assess how well their support services assist resource families.

In 2019, AdoptUSKids published a Support Services Assessment Tool<sup>1</sup> designed to help child welfare systems assess their array of support services for resource families. Now, with this guide and an adapted tool, we are offering a tailored approach that focuses on the needs, practices, and priorities of tribes.

For support services to be truly valuable to your families—and to provide the benefits that tribal child welfare systems seek—they need to be accessible, high-quality, and culturally competent. This Tribal Support Services Assessment Tool can help you conduct a meaningful, robust assessment of your support service array while also having informative discussions on if your services are meeting families' support needs in culturally relevant and responsive ways.

This tool is not intended to serve as a compliance monitoring tool or replace any existing performance assessment approaches (such as Child and Family Services Reviews or contract management reviews).

## What are the steps to using this tool?

Whether you want to complete a full assessment of your system's support service array or assess a smaller portion of your services, you will likely follow these steps:

1. Plan your approach.
2. Define your purpose and gather information.
3. Identify and engage your stakeholders.
4. Get to work!
5. Assess your results.
6. Create an action plan.

At the end of this guide, you'll find some tips and suggestions to help you make the most of your assessment, as well as definitions of all terms used in the assessment tool.

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<sup>1</sup> You can find information about this tool in the AdoptUSKids resource guide, *Guide to the AdoptUSKids Support Services Assessment Tool: Instructions and Considerations*.

## Step 1: Plan your approach

We recommend the following to make your assessment meaningful and relevant to your system:

- Approach the tool as a resource that can prompt and shape conversations within your agency, not as something to be filled out by just one or a few people on their own. Value hearing from multiple perspectives and capturing meaningful input whether it be from frontline staff or tribal leaders. Involve foster, kinship, and adoptive caregivers since they are most affected. You are in control of this process and can craft your methods in a way that is culturally respectful and competent.
- Consider including stakeholders from the relevant state or local child welfare systems who are familiar with your services. They might have helpful insights for you to consider in your assessment, and they may learn about how to better support tribal families by participating in these conversations.
- Complete the full assessment process—including a review of the results—before deciding what services may need adjustments. Don't assume that because a particular service category gets a low rating you will take action right away. Your priorities may shift as you discuss your range of needs, strengths, and opportunities.
- Frame the use of this tool as part of your agency's overall efforts to improve outcomes for your tribe's children and families. Help participants and others see how this assessment connects to your overall priorities and other efforts so that it isn't seen as disconnected from your strategic direction.

## Step 2: Define your purpose and scope and gather information

**Define your purpose and scope**—Are you assessing only services provided by the tribal system or are you also including services provided by local and state partners? Do you want to assess the services available to a specific population, such as kinship caregivers, foster families, adoptive families, or non-tribal families caring for tribal children? Your process for completing this assessment may be different depending on your goals.

***Example:** Your tribe recently created new services to support kinship caregivers. You may choose to use the tool to assess only these services, rather than the full scope of services available to all resource families.*

**Define any additional measures or services to add to your assessment tool**—Your assessment should be tailored to your system. Add any services to the tool that you'd like to assess, as well as any additional measures<sup>2</sup> you think would make your assessment more meaningful. You don't have

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<sup>2</sup> For information about measures you may use to assess services, please see the appendix, beginning on page 11.

to use all of the measures for all services. If you'd like to assess one specific service in more detail, you could add specific accessibility measures just for that service. The tool is designed to be flexible and adaptable. You can modify the tool according to the practices and needs of your tribal agency and the populations you serve.

***Example:** Your agency offers special cultural training for your foster and kinship parents about tribal naming practices for children. In addition to assessing your standard pre-service training, you may choose to add this as a service to assess.*

**Determine your methods of information gathering**—How will you gather information from your stakeholders? Depending on your community, methods may include focus groups, surveys, phone interviews, and group meetings. Talk to your stakeholders about how they think you can best gather information.

**Gather relevant data to inform your discussion**—To help frame your conversations, examine the tool and review the definitions at the end of this guide, and gather qualitative and quantitative data on the use and effectiveness of each service. This may include demographic information on the people served, a map of where the service is provided, survey results from service users, and outcome data. If data is not available, that fact can also be a useful part of your assessment as you consider system improvements. Also, don't forget to share the data you've gathered with everyone who will be participating in the discussion.

**Inform your team members**—Your staff should be aware of the plan to assess services and have the ability to provide input if they are directly involved in service provision or caregiver support. Keep in mind that some services may be provided by a member of your team. This could cause some staff to feel they are under the spotlight or being judged. Ensure they feel supported and communicate that this process is not only meant to find possible improvements but also to highlight successes and strengths.

**If appropriate, define your timeline**—Consider having a deadline by which to have your assessment completed. Some find it helpful to have deadlines to hold themselves and their teams accountable. However, the importance—or lack of importance—of timeliness is culturally defined. You may find that your tribe is better served in being driven by the conversations that arise, rather than by a timeline.

### Step 3: Identify and engage your stakeholders

Who can best answer the questions you have and best knows the communities you serve or hope to serve? Engaging a diverse group of stakeholders who have insights into your services is critical to conducting a meaningful, comprehensive assessment of your support service array. Their perspectives—especially those who have used the services themselves—will make your assessment more robust and accurate.

You will likely need groups of people who interact with your system in different ways. Invite stakeholders such as:

- Current and former foster, kinship, and adoptive parents, including tribal members and non-tribal members, if applicable
- Youth and young adults in, or formerly in, tribal or state foster care or kinship care, or who were adopted
- Tribal child welfare agency staff representing multiple areas of practice (such as child protective services, permanency, foster care, adoptions, and prevention)
- Partners from local county child welfare or foster care agencies and other non-tribal service providers

To capture the input of a diverse group of stakeholders, it's important to create an environment in which people from varied backgrounds and experiences feel safe engaging in honest dialogue and have equal access to the conversation.

Consider the following:

- **Start the meeting in a good way**—You may choose to open with a traditional blessing or smudging. If meeting participants include representatives from the local or state child welfare agency, consider giving time for one of them to speak about the positive benefits of tribal-state collaboration to set the tone for an open and inclusive dialogue. Ensure all participants know how their contributions will be honored and respected during the conversation and what you plan to do with the information you collect.
- **Reduce participation barriers**—If caregivers and youth have to miss work or school and provide their own transportation, food, and childcare to participate in these discussions, you will lose the crucial input of those whose budgets do not allow for these expenses. Consider offering stipends, travel reimbursement, lunch, and childcare during your meetings. You may also consider virtual meetings, phone calls, or individual interviews in homes to capture the input of stakeholders who cannot travel.
- **Consider the power and cultural dynamics in the room**—If you decide to have group meetings to conduct your assessment, consider stakeholders' relationships to each other and how those relationships—and other community dynamics—may affect their ability to speak openly and honestly. Is a worker being asked to share her concerns in front of her supervisor? Is a foster parent at the same table as the worker who is providing some of these services to his family or approving their placement? Does the tribal community have positive existing relationships with non-tribal stakeholders? These circumstances may prevent people from being honest about where they see challenges. For an assessment to be meaningful, you need honest input, so you need to be proactive in creating as safe a space as possible. Consider smaller groups or other avenues for giving input outside of the larger group meeting.

- **Accommodate all communication styles**—While some people are very open during group discussions, others are not comfortable talking in groups. Consider the culture of your community when planning. You can provide ways for people to comment anonymously or after meetings. Find a strong facilitator who is great at engaging diverse participants. Have them read the room and make necessary adjustments to ensure everyone is feeling comfortable and to redirect those who may be talking too much. Also, if the conversation has lots of agency jargon and acronyms, those who do not understand those terms may fall silent during discussion. Be mindful of the language you use and encourage other staff to do the same. Have the facilitator define terms as they come up.
- **Think carefully about where you meet**—If you’re holding an in-person meeting, think about how the location may affect your stakeholders. If it’s held at the tribal or public child welfare agency office, for example, youth and young adults who experienced foster care may have negative reactions. In addition, consider the travel time participants will have. If you are hosting a virtual meeting or using surveys, consider whether everyone has reliable internet access. Some stakeholders may have less experience with virtual meetings or may prefer connecting in person. When first engaging with your participants, ask them their preferences and level of comfort with the meeting options you are planning to offer.

***Example:** A resource parent is willing to participate in a virtual meeting as part of your assessment process, but his internet access is poor. You can offer ideas for a nearby location with better internet connectivity or a quiet space at your tribal headquarters.*

## Step 4: Get to work!

Now it’s time to use the tool. You will be assessing the quality, accessibility, and tribal cultural competence of your services. During your assessment, you will answer the following:

**Is the service provided?**—Start by going through the list of services and answer “yes” or “no” about whether the service is provided. Only assess those services that are provided. If a service is not relevant, you may decide to delete it. If you provide a service that isn’t listed, add it. The tool is designed to be edited to best serve your tribe’s needs.

**Note:** A service doesn’t have to be provided by the tribal child welfare system as long as the service is available to tribal foster, kinship, or adoptive families. Its quality, accessibility, and tribal cultural competence may, however, be affected by being an external service. This may be exactly why you want to assess it.

**How does the service rate?**—For each provided service, rate that service on the given metric on the following scale:

- 1 = poor
- 2 = fair
- 3 = good
- 4 = excellent

Ratings do not have to be whole numbers. For example, if you feel a service is between “fair” and “good,” you may rate it as 2.3 or 2.7. Decimal ratings can lead to a more nuanced assessment and give you a better picture of how services are truly perceived.

Remember, the discussions—and differing opinions—that happen among stakeholders are an incredibly valuable part of your process. The goal is not necessarily to have everyone agree on a number, but to consider the discussion itself.

Some options for how to decide on a rating as a group are:

- Discuss each service as a full group and agree on a rating together.
- Divide into smaller groups and complete separate assessments. Average the subgroups’ rating in each category, with each group reporting about their rating. Have a full group discussion about any areas where there was great variation or where you feel that averaging may have distorted the results.
- Divide into groups based on role and complete separate assessments. For example, frontline staff may complete an assessment, agency leaders another, and resource parents still another. Compare the differences in the assessments to each other, considering where groups have differing opinions about how well services are functioning. If you choose this approach, remember that those who receive the services—resource parents, caregivers, and youth—are best positioned to assess if the support services they receive are meeting their needs in the way they expect.

**Rate on quality, accessibility, and tribal cultural competence metrics**—To get the clearest picture of how well your support services work, it’s important to consider the quality, accessibility, and tribal cultural competence of each service. Use the first sheet in the tool to assess quality. You will be considering areas such as whether the service is family-focused, trauma-informed, and more. Use the second sheet to assess accessibility. For this metric, you will be looking at financial accessibility, location, and sustainability. The third metric looks at tribal cultural competence. How you consider each category and service is unique to your agency, but these may include assessing if it is a service created for tribal populations and if the staff providing the service are culturally knowledgeable.

**Take notes**—You likely want designated notetakers to capture the details of the conversation itself, in addition to the numerical ratings. If you record meeting audio or video, ensure all stakeholders agree to that. Providing a release form that describes how data will be used can help participants feel more comfortable sharing their experiences.

## A lighter lift

If you don’t have the resources to complete a full assessment, consider a less intensive assessment. You could rate each service category instead of rating every individual service. For example, instead of rating pre-service training, child-specific training, and other training individually, rate all training generally. You can use the blank row provided in each service category to take this approach.

## Step 5: Assess your results

It's important to take the time to understand your results:

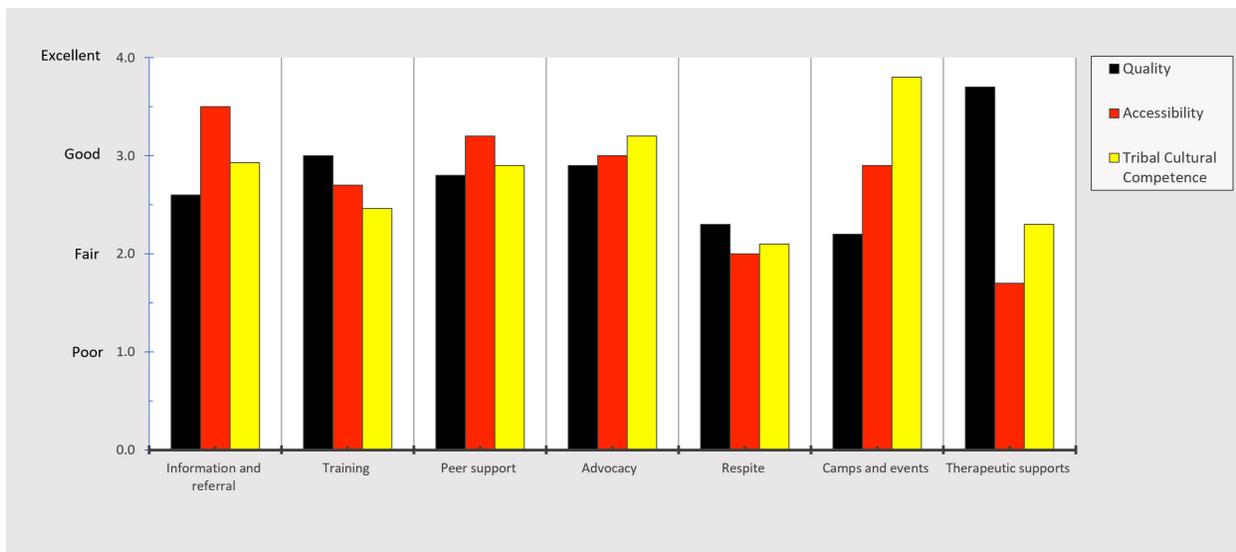
**Reviewing your results**—As you start to review services, you will see that the tool automatically color-codes each cell based on the rating you've given. A rating between 1.0 and 1.99 will be red, a rating between 2.0 and 2.99 will be yellow, and a rating between 3.0 and 4.0 will be green. The tool also automatically provides average ratings in service categories, as well as an average of how well a particular service performed across all quality, accessibility, or tribal cultural competence metrics.

After rating all services across quality, accessibility, and tribal cultural competence, you will begin to see how well your team believes support services are meeting the needs of your resource families.

Service	Provided by the tribe? (yes/no)	Designed for tribal populations	Designed with input from elders or other cultural leaders	Provided by staff that is personally connected to the tribe	Provided by staff that is knowledgeable in the cultural practices of the tribe	Available to all families caring for tribal children	Provided in effective partnership with state/county (if applicable)	Culturally welcoming space and location	[Other items identified by the tribe]
Scale: 1=Poor; 2=Fair; 3=Good; 4=Excellent									
<b>Information and referral</b>									
Information (newsletters, websites, etc.)	Yes	3.5	3.0	3.0	2.5	4.0	4.0	2.0	
Navigation and referral	Yes	3.0	2.0	2.0	2.5	4.0	2.5	3.0	
Warmline for prospective foster/adoptive parents	No								
<b>Average information and referral</b>		3.3	2.5	2.5	2.5	4.0	3.3	2.5	0.0
<b>Training</b>									
Pre-service training	Yes	3.0	1.5	2.0	2.8	3.0			
Child-specific training									
Other training									
<b>Average training</b>		3.0	1.5	2.0	2.8	3.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

**Note:** Avoid judging your results as the assessment is taking shape. If you see a row or column full of red cells, it may be tempting to decide right then that you need to devote attention to a particular service or metric. Remember that the discussion that is informing your ratings is just as valuable—if not more valuable—than the numeric results of the assessment. Wait until your full assessment is complete, and take additional steps to understand your results, before making an action plan.

**Understanding your results**—The tool automatically calculates the average quality, accessibility, and tribal cultural competence ratings of each service and generates a bar graph on the “Your Results Charted” sheet.



As you look at your results, ask your team:

- What themes are emerging?
- What surprises you?
- What do you want to communicate to your tribal leaders, staff, and other partners about what this exercise revealed?
- What services can be enhanced, modified, or replaced to improve quality, accessibility, and tribal cultural competence?
- Are there details from stakeholder discussions that are not well-represented?

**Reporting on your results**—After you’ve analyzed your data, it will be important to report your results to tribal leadership and those who participated in the assessment. Here are some tips to complete a compelling report:

- Keep it short and focused on the main conclusions you want readers to draw. You can include more detailed information, including the raw data, in an appendix.
- Include a brief explanation of your process so those who were not involved can understand how you gathered information. The themes and takeaways in your report will be easier to trust if it’s clear that you engaged in a collaborative process to get these results.
- Include visuals—such as the charts that are generated by the tool—that helped you understand your results. Be clear and concise in your explanation of what those visuals show and what they mean.
- Discuss areas of strength along with areas of need. Take the opportunity to highlight what your system is doing well.

***Example:** Your assessment finds that your foster parent newsletter rates highly across all metrics. Your stakeholders found it to be accessible and high-quality, and they feel that the consistent information about tribal cultural events and resources is beneficial to caregivers and children. Consider if you can use this successful example to inform potential changes for other services that may have scored lower.*

- Avoid drawing conclusions that are not supported by your data. You should focus on what you know for sure and perhaps make a plan for future data-gathering. It's okay if this assessment left you with unanswered questions. Focus on what you learned as you analyzed your results.

## Step 6: Create an action plan

Now that you understand the results of your assessment, it's time to take action to improve your tribal support services for foster, kinship, and adoptive families. Your unique results should guide your next steps. Here are some suggestions:

**Identify a limited number of goals**—This assessment may have identified many areas where your system could be improved. Focus on a handful of top goals, rather than on every area of need. If you're not sure which areas to focus on, survey your stakeholders to identify priorities. Make sure your goals are SMART—specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound.

***Example:** Peer support for caregivers in your agency involves a private Facebook group, moderated by a staff member, that is widely used by foster, kinship, and adoptive caregivers. This service ranked high in accessibility and quality but low in tribal cultural competence. To improve this service, your team may choose to review which staff manage the Facebook group and learn if they need more training on tribal culture or support in developing culturally competent content for the group.*

**Convene workgroups to address your goals**—Each goal could have a workgroup assigned to it, helping drive the work forward. Just like the assessment, the workgroups should include those who use the services you are seeking to improve.

**Make budget decisions based on your results**—Now that you know what areas need improvement, you can focus on some of these needs when working on your next budget. For example, if your assessment showed that the pre-service training curriculum used is not culturally competent for your tribe's families, consider budgeting for the development or implementation of a new curriculum that better meets cultural needs.

**Make the case to tribal leadership for additional resources**—Coming to the table with reliable data is the best way to make the case to your leadership that you need additional resources. In the past, you may have had an increased budget to hire staff based on data you shared around investigation numbers or permanency caseloads. Consider how you can use these specific assessment findings to successfully advocate for more financial support or increased staff.

**Share findings with your local agency partners**—Your tribal agency may work closely with a specific county or regional state child welfare office. Sharing the findings of your assessment, whether by written report or presentation, provides you the opportunity to discuss ways to work together to increase quality, accessibility, and tribal cultural competence in particular services. Think about using existing partnerships such as tribal-state workgroups or child protection teams.

**Improve your service evaluation processes**—It may be that your assessment revealed that you don't know a lot about the quality of the services provided in your jurisdiction because you don't have evaluation data. This may be the most important area of need in your system. A portion or all of your action plan could include evaluating your services so that you can conduct a more informed assessment in the future. Look at outcomes—such as family preservation, child well-being, or placement stability over time—as well as satisfaction surveys to inform you more deeply about the quality of your services. Consider partnering with a university or state child welfare program's quality improvement and assurance department.

**Act on areas of strength, not only areas of need**—As you decide what actions to take, look for areas of strength as well as areas of need. You might choose to dig deeper into what's working well for families and propose bringing those strengths to other areas of your system.

**Learn from other tribal child welfare programs**—Research what other tribal child welfare programs are doing to support resource families. Use existing inter-tribal groups, such as your state's tribal child welfare association or a smaller consortium of tribes in your area. How have they addressed challenges similar to the ones you found? You could try those same approaches or partner with them to make plans for improvements.

**Plan for your next assessment**—Systems and services change over time. Your assessment results will become less meaningful over time, so it's important to have a plan for updating the assessment. Also, making service array assessment a routine part of your work will greatly improve service provision over time and will help foster trust with your community. Consider conducting smaller annual assessments with just tribal agency staff, and plan for a more robust assessment during the next three to five years.

**Train staff on available support services**—If your tribal agency's workers are knowledgeable about the available support services in the community they serve, families are more likely to know about and use those services. The information from this assessment can be used to develop training materials for staff who work with families in your area.

# Appendix: Definitions

To conduct your assessment, it's important to make sure that every participant is clear about the definitions of each term in the tool. Each service and metric is defined below. We recommend reviewing this with the tool as you plan your assessment process. Ensure that all participating stakeholders have these definitions so your assessment is consistent.

## Services

### Information and referral

- **Information**—websites, fact sheets, articles, newsletters, and other sources of written information on key issues in foster care, kinship care, and adoption.
- **Navigation and referral**—staff or volunteers help families access the information and services they need.
- **Warmline for prospective foster/adoptive parents**—knowledgeable staff or volunteers answer inquiries from prospective parents and assist with the next steps.

### Training

- **Pre-service training**—training that resource parents are required to receive before placement.
- **Child-specific training**—training that resource parents receive related to the specific needs of the child(ren) in their care. This may include training on managing specific conditions or diagnoses, navigating certain behavioral challenges, or more specific trauma training based on the child's experiences.
- **Other training**—ongoing training on topics such as child welfare issues, tribal history and cultural practice, challenging behaviors, specific diagnoses or conditions, sibling issues, trauma, accessing services, and any other training relevant to this population.

### Peer support and mentoring

- **For parents and caregivers**—parents receive support from current or former resource parents through in-person or online support groups, liaisons, buddy programs, and social activities.
- **For children and teens**—youth receive support from other youth or young adults with similar life experiences through in-person or online support groups, buddy programs, or social activities.
- **Mentoring for parents**—experienced parents and caregivers provide tips and insights, help other resource parents develop their skills, and provide support.

- **Mentoring for children and teens**—adults provide children or youth with connection, guidance, social activities, and support. Often mentors are adults who experienced foster care themselves.

## Advocacy

- **Advocacy for children’s or parents’ needs**—staff or volunteers help families advocate for needed services or benefits, such as medical or mental health care or access to material support.
- **Educational support and advocacy**—staff or volunteers help families advocate for educational services and provide additional educational support to the child, such as tutoring, specialized or alternative schooling, etc.

## Respite

- **Planned respite**—short-term childcare planned in advance to give caregivers and children a break from each other.
- **Emergency respite**—short-term childcare made available when families are in crisis and in immediate need of a break.

## Camps and events

- **For children and teens**—planned events where children or teens connect with peers, engage in therapeutic or educational activities, and have fun. These could be day camps or sleep-away camps.
- **For caregivers**—planned events offering peer support, therapeutic or educational activities, and fun.
- **For families**—planned events where both caregivers and children and teens engage in peer support, therapeutic or educational activities and family connection, and have fun.
- **Other social or community events**—picnics, day trips, and any other planned social event for families.

## Therapeutic supports

- **Counseling for children**—therapeutic counseling services for children, teens, and young adults.
- **Counseling for parents and caregivers**—therapeutic counseling services for resource parents.
- **Family counseling**—therapeutic counseling services for some or all of the entire foster, kinship, or adoptive family.
- **Mental health helpline**—knowledgeable staff or volunteers answer questions and provide navigation and referral for mental health services.

- **In-home therapeutic services**—children, teens, young adults, and their families receive mental health treatment and services at home.
- **Residential treatment**—children and teens receive treatment for more significant mental and behavioral health challenges while living outside the home for a limited period.

## Other

- **Child and youth assessment**—a trauma-informed assessment identifies strengths and challenges, services their family may need, and any changes their family might make to support their ongoing development.
- **Case management**—a trained professional or team works with the family to identify strengths and challenges and helps them implement a family-specific plan to address their needs.
- **Financial or material supports**—in addition to any foster care maintenance payments, kinship care stipends, or adoption/guardianship assistance payments. These may be funds for specialized medical equipment, payments for youth activities, emergency funding for childcare or living expenses, etc. Material support could include school supplies, clothing, gas or bus cards, and holiday gifts.
- **Crisis intervention**—services available 24 hours a day to provide assistance to families experiencing a mental or behavioral health crisis. These may include crisis hotlines, emergency respite, or in-home crisis response teams.
- **Birth family mediation**—staff provides information, advice, and counseling to assist in navigating relationships with birth family members to facilitate connections that are in the best interest of the children or youth.
- **Adoption search**—staff assist in searching for the birth family.

## Quality metrics

- **Permanency-competent**—providers have specialized training in the core issues in foster care, kinship care, and adoption, and the impact on identity, development, and relationships. Program staff also have expertise on the higher incidence of disabilities, mental health issues, prenatal exposure to drugs and alcohol, and behavioral challenges in children and youth who are or who have been in foster care or who suffered early deprivation. Permanency-competent programs also examine clinical and ethical issues in preparing for and supporting permanency.
- **Trauma-informed**—treatment framework that involves understanding, recognizing, and responding to the effects of all types of trauma. Trauma-informed and trauma-responsive care acknowledges the effect trauma has on individuals and their families; modifies services to respond to those effects; emphasizes skill- and strength-building rather than symptom management; and avoids further traumatization by focusing on the physical and psychological safety of the child or youth and family.

- **Designed with family and youth input and feedback**—youth and young adults who have experienced foster care and resource parents shaped the design and implementation of the service and are continually involved in service provision and improvement. There are opportunities for those served to give feedback, and that feedback has the potential to result in changes to services. Family and youth continue to be involved in the assessment and improvement of the service over time.
- **Family-focused**—the service engages the entire family appropriately. Each child is seen as a unique individual who is an integral part of a family system, understanding that the actions of each family member affect the entire family. All children and youth in the family—whether birth, step, foster, or adopted—are affected by one another, and their individual and group relationships can shape the entire household. As a result, a family-focused program provides services to the whole family, not only the child or the parents.
- **Outcome-evaluated/evidence-based (with positive results)**—through rigorous evaluation practices, the service has been found to be effective, consistently yielding positive outcomes for children and their families. The service is regularly evaluated and claims of effectiveness are supported by evidence.

## Accessibility metrics

- **Broad eligibility**—the population eligible for the service is broad. An example of broad service eligibility would be counseling services that serve all foster or kinship families affiliated with the tribe even if they live somewhere else.
- **Financially accessible**—the service is offered at no or little cost to the family or on a reasonable sliding-fee scale.
- **Geographically accessible**—the service is offered widely in your tribe or region; families located in rural or remote areas can access the service.
- **Well-known/publicized**—families are aware that the service is available, that they are eligible for the service, and how to access it.
- **Rapid availability**—the service is offered soon after a referral is made; there is no waitlist.
- **Ongoing availability/sustainability**—the service is reliably funded; families can count on its availability in the future.

## Tribal cultural competence metrics

- **Designed for tribal populations**—the service was created specifically for tribal children and families; service is designed specifically to be culturally responsive to tribal members.

- **Designed with input from elders or other cultural leaders**—the service was created or modified with guidance from tribal elders or other leaders.
- **Provided by staff that is personally connected to the tribe**—the staff members facilitating the service have a meaningful connection to the tribal community; this may include tribal lineage or close relationships with members of the tribal community.
- **Provided by staff that is knowledgeable in the cultural practices of the tribe**—the staff members involved in providing the service are familiar with and can share expert knowledge of the tribal community’s ways of life and ceremonial practices.
- **Available to all families caring for tribal children**—the service is available to all caregivers of the children involved in the tribal child welfare system; this may include people with no affiliation with the tribal community before becoming a child’s caregiver.
- **Provided in effective partnership with the state/county (if applicable)**—the tribal child welfare system and county or state agencies work collaboratively to provide the service to eligible participants; this may include services such as foster parent training, support groups, and respite care.



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