REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP GRANTS ROUND 4
KANSAS SERVES NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILIES – KSNAF

LEAD AGENCY: University of Kansas Center for Research, Inc.
LOCATION: Kansas
TOTAL PROGRAM FUNDING: $2,986,808

GEOGRAPHIC AREA: Kansas
ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES REGION: Region 7
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT SERVED: KS-ALL

BRIEF PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Kansas Serves Native American Families (KSNAF), is a statewide public-private collaborative partnership between the University of Kansas School of Social Welfare (KUSSW), and social services at Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation, Sac and Fox Nation, and Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, and Haskell Indian Nations University, KVC Kansas, (KVC), Kansas Department for Children and Families, Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services, Kansas Native American Affairs Office, and Administration for Children and Families Region VII Tribal Liaison. KSNAF seeks to improve the well-being, safety, and permanency outcomes for Native American children affected by parental substance abuse (PSA).

The purpose of Kansas Serves Native American Families (KSNAF) is to scale up and evaluate a culturally adapted version of the Strengthening Families Program (SFP) among Native American families of children ages 0-18, in out-of-home placement because of PSA, to achieve the goal of improved child safety, permanency, and well-being. Haskell Indian Nations University students, KU students, and KVC staff will participate in SFP training, implementation, and evaluation, providing much needed services to Native families living on reservations and urban settings. Additionally, this project seeks to enhance culturally sensitive cross-collaboration and disseminate knowledge about evidence-based programs (EBP).

TARGET POPULATION AND PROJECTED NUMBERS SERVED

The primary target population for this project is Native American children, ages 0 to 18 who are in out-of-home care placement for any reason related to PSA, whose case plan goal is reunification or guardianship. Secondary target populations include Native American children, ages 0 to 18, who are at risk of out-of-home placement due to PSA, including children receiving aftercare services (reunified after removal), family preservation services (at-risk for removal), family services or community services for any reason related to PSA. Tertiary target population is Native American children, 0 to 18, who are in out-of-home placement for any reason and whose case plan goal is reunification or guardianship.

The project proposes to serve 40-60 families per project year. Every year, KSNAF staff and partners will deliver five SFP groups, with 8 to 12 families each, at different sites across Kansas, including Native American reservations.
MAJOR PROGRAM GOALS

GOAL 1: To improve safety, permanency, and wellbeing of Native American children, ages 0-18, in or at-risk of out-of-home placement for reasons associated with PSA by scaling up and evaluating a cultural adaptation of the Strengthening Families Program (B-3, 3-5, and 6-17 age versions) in Kansas.

GOAL 2: To enhance the collaborative cross-systems infrastructure throughout Kansas to build culturally sensitive and trauma-informed capacity of agencies who provide services to Native American families who are affected by substance abuse and involved with the child welfare system.

GOAL 3: To build and disseminate knowledge about collaborative, culturally responsive, and effective implementation and evaluation of parenting skills training programs among Native American children and families affected by PSA who are involved in the child welfare system.

KEY MAJOR PROGRAM SERVICES

• Parenting/Family Strengthening
  – Strengthening Families Program – ages 0-18

• Cross-Systems/Interagency Collaboration
  – Development of formalized cross-systems policies and procedures that are designed to improve communication, identification, referrals and service delivery
  – Staff training on collaboration, admission criteria, referral protocols, information and data sharing, and other RPG program policies and procedures
  – Cross-systems information sharing and data analysis
  – Building tribal child welfare staff’s knowledge and skills around evaluation and data-informed decision-making
  – Regular regional partnership meetings to discuss program, policy and management issues

• Evidence Based Practices
  – Strengthening Families Program

PARTNER AGENCIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

• The University of Kansas, School of Social Welfare (KUSSW)
• Social Services at:
  – Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation
  – Sac and Fox Nation
  – Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska
• KVC Kansas
• Haskell Indian Nations University
• Kansas Department for Children and Families (DCF)
• Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services (KDADS)
• Kansas Native American Affairs Office
• Administration for Children and Families (ACF) Region VII Tribal Liaison
• Ahearn Greene Associates (AGA)

**EVALUATION DESIGN**

**Outcome Study Design: Quasi-Experimental Design (QED)**

**Evaluability Assessment**

The local evaluation of Kansas Serves Native American Families (KSNAF) includes an impact and outcome study, a process study, a collaboration study, and a cost study. The grantee is also participating in the RPG cross-site evaluation studies of family and child outcomes, program implementation, and collaboration among RPG grantees and partners.

**Impact Study Design**

The grantee will use two approaches to examine the impact of their RPG services. They will examine the impact of services for families that participate in services outside of tribal lands using a quasi-experimental design with administrative data. They will examine the impact of services for families that participate in services on tribal lands using a regression discontinuity design (RDD) with primary data collection. Members of the program group in both approaches will receive a culturally adapted version of Strengthening Families Program (SFP), a program designed for high-risk families that combines parent training, social skills training for children, and opportunities for families to practice the skills they are learning. SFP will include two-hour group training sessions once per week for 15 weeks. For the QED, the comparison group will be drawn from the statewide child welfare database, and comparison group members will receive business-as-usual services. The QED will include approximately 450 families, with 225 in the program group and a similar number in the comparison group. The grantee will examine impacts in the following domains: permanency, safety, and recovery. For the RDD, the grantee is working with partners to determine the sample size and the domains in which impacts will be assessed. The grantee will also examine how outcomes change for families in the program groups for the RDD and the QED over the course of their time in the RPG program in three additional domains: child wellbeing, family functioning, and parent wellbeing.

Data sources include administrative data and information collected by data collectors using standardized instruments. For the program group in the QED and the RDD, evaluation staff will collect standardized instruments. Data will be collected two times for each family: (1) when families begin SFP (baseline);¹ and (2) at the end of SFP for the program group, approximately 15 weeks after the first SFP session (initial baseline data collection). No primary data collection

¹ The first SFP session will be split into two parts and implemented during two sessions to accommodate data collection.
is planned for the QED comparison group. The RDD will involve primary data collection for the comparison group, but the approach is still being developed.

**Process study design**

In the process study, the grantee will examine capacity building, implementation, staff turnover, program fidelity, revisions and adaptations to the model based on challenges and successes, dosage, enrollment, and engagement. Data sources include program administrative data, training evaluations, site visits, group leader checklists, site information surveys, parent satisfaction surveys, implementation staff surveys, and technical assistance call documentation.

**Collaboration study design**

The grantee will also assess the level of inter-agency collaboration in the partnership. Specifically, they will assess the quality of the collaboration; characteristics of members of the partnership; communication among partners; and the development of shared purpose, processes, and resources; and how partnership members and collaborative efforts change over time. They will also assess critical aspects of cultural responsiveness. Data sources will include program documentation, surveys, and information on training participation across partners. The grantee plans to use the Wilder Collaborative Factors Inventory to evaluate their collaboration.

**Cost study design**

The grantee will also assess SFP costs as implemented. The cost study involves a longitudinal mixed-methods design that will begin collecting costs information in Year 4. Combining different cost study frameworks, cost analyses will examine costs for the overall implementation and maintenance, costs for specific activities, and costs per participant, which can be used for cost-benefit comparisons.

**SUSTAINABILITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIVITIES**

For RPG 4 sustainability purposes, KSNAF proposes to start building strong local partnerships early on, including Indian centers, churches, after school programs, and other community partners who support program implementation and are interested in sustaining it after the life of the grant. The project team will invite volunteers from these partner organizations to SFP training toward future sustainability.

To identify potential local partners, KSNAF will involve all their implementation team and Steering Committee in a discussion about sustainability in Year 3. KSNAF will also strengthen regional and state collaborative partnerships to enhance sustainability.

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