

STATE—TRIBAL COLLABORATION ACT

2025 AGENCY REPORT

Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD)



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I. Executive Summary

In alignment with the State-Tribal Collaboration Act (STCA) and grounded in the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and New Mexico's Indian Family Protection Act (IFPA), the New Mexico Children, Youth and Families Department (CYFD) continues to strengthen its government-to-government relationships with the state's Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes (NPTs). This 2025 report highlights major accomplishments, ongoing initiatives, and future goals designed to advance equity, cultural responsiveness, and service accessibility for Native children, youth, and families.

Key Highlights for FY25:

- The Office of Tribal Affairs (OTA) expanded its staffing and continued its leadership in state-tribal consultation, policy development, training, and technical assistance. OTA collaborated with NPTs on updating CYFD procedures, enhancing cultural support, and revising ICWA/IFPA practices.
- CYFD advanced the availability of Title IV-E and State General Funding accessibility for tribal partners through the negotiation of Joint Powers Agreements, aiming to increase tribal sovereignty in foster care services.
- OTA hosted the 5th Annual Indian Child Welfare (ICW) Summit with over 400 participants, featuring cultural leadership, youth voices, legal experts, and state and tribal partnership.
- OTA provided tiered ICWA/IFPA training for over 250 CYFD staff, including supervisors and managers, and piloted a quality assurance case review framework.
- CYFD is addressing the over-representation of Native children in child welfare investigations and placements through data-informed procedural reviews, targeted training, and revised screening and assessment tools.
- Challenges remain in the timely delivery of required legal notifications under IFPA, in meeting relative placement targets for Native children, and in updating STCA compliance policies. Corrective action plans, procedural revisions, and increased tribal input are underway.

Division-Specific Updates:

- Children's Behavioral Health Services (CBHS) provided Infant Mental Health and Child Parent Psychotherapy services in tribal communities and partnered with culturally responsive providers for trauma-informed care. CBHS also participated in tribal-focused workforce development and training efforts.
- Family Services Division (FSD) increased early outreach, launched in-home support programs statewide, and strengthened access through community hubs and housing-focused services like Keeping Families Together.
- Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) conducted cultural intake interviews and supported traditional healing practices for Native youth in custody. JJS is working to formalize contracts for weekly Indigenous cultural services.
- Protective Services Division (PSD) continues to face challenges around data reporting and procedural consistency for Native children. Continued support from OTA, along with procedure revisions, is expected to improve compliance.

Looking Ahead:

CYFD intends to revise its 2009 State-Tribal Collaboration policy, reduce substantiation and placement disparities, improve IFPA notice compliance, and increase relative placement rates for Native children. These efforts will be led by OTA in partnership with NPTs, supported by improved data systems, targeted training, and interdepartmental coordination.

CYFD reaffirms its commitment to tribal sovereignty, culturally responsive services, and equity in outcomes for Native American children, youth, and families across New Mexico.



II. 2025 CYFD Overview

New Mexico's Children Youth and Families Department (CYFD) provides an array of services to New Mexico children, youth, and families through various specialized divisions. These Divisions include the following: Family Services Division, Children's Behavioral Health Services (CBHS) Division, Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) Division, and Protective Services (PS) Division. The Division Directors and their staff collaborate with representatives from the child's Nation, Pueblo, and Tribe (NPTs) when a child, a youth, and a family are members of (or eligible for membership) with the NPT.

CYFD integrates support for the entire CYFD workforce and external stakeholders through several program support offices within the Office of the Secretary (OTS), which include: Office of Tribal Affairs (OTA), Office of General Counsel (OGC), Office of Child Advocacy, Office of the Inspector General, Office of Performance and Accountability (OPA), Office of Public Affairs, Administrative Services Division (ASD) and Office of Information & Technology.

CYFD's Mission, Vision, and Values

CYFD's mission is to nurture the strength and resilience of families; partner with children, families and communities based on trust and transparency; and serve by listening and learning from our unique diverse cultures to keep children, youth and families healthy, safe and thriving.

CYFD's vision is "a New Mexico" where all children, youth, and families are healthy, safe, thriving and strengthened by their culture and community.

CYFD's values include:

- Partnering with young people to strengthen their resilience and support them in moving beyond surviving to thriving.
- Eliminating racial and ethnic disparities and dismantling structural inequity experienced by young people involved in our systems.
- Believing that families, relatives, and communities matter – and allowing young people define their own family.
- Recognizing that young people know best, know what support they need and know what the system needs.
- Ensuring that all interactions with young people are trauma-informed and developmentally responsive.
- Engaging in authentic partnerships with young people and their families based on trust, humility and transparency.
- Recruiting, retaining, and training employees and volunteers whose expertise builds upon young people's strengths and development.
- Believing that young people in care have a right to normative adolescent experiences, including the right to safely fail and try again.
- Highlighting young people's personal assets and unique capabilities.
- Supporting young people as agents in their own learning and development and as powerful agents of change in their schools, communities, and society.

CYFD Office of Tribal Affairs

The Office of Tribal Affairs (OTA) was created within the Office of the Secretary in 2020 and was statutorily established with the passage of New Mexico's Indian Family Protection Act (IFPA) in 2022. OTA is dedicated to ensuring the department's compliance with and full implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), IFPA and the State-Tribal Collaboration Act (STCA). OTA develops and implements initiatives with the Nations, Pueblos, Tribes (NPTs); provides case consultation and technical assistance to the CYFD workforce and external child welfare stakeholders; provides training and on-going coaching opportunities for child welfare workers and external providers; and facilitates meetings with Tribal partners and community-based organizations to improve services for Tribal children, youth, and families.

OTA serves as the department's subject matter expert on Indian child welfare matters and actively supports the department in its efforts to establish and maintain relationships which honor tribal sovereignty through on-going *communication*, positive *collaboration*, and meaningful *consultation* through policy/procedural initiatives and execution of state-tribal agreements. OTA

is committed to maintaining government-to-government relationships and partners with NPTs throughout the country to support Native children, youth, and families receipt of culturally responsive care and services throughout their interaction with the department. OTA supports nurturing the strength and resilience of Native families within the context of the cultural and social standards of their respective communities.

The work of OTA involves the following key elements:

- Working collaboratively with the NPTs, including off-reservation Native American populations, to identify and help resolve barriers to service delivery. OTA works with tribes and off-reservation entities to develop services that respond to the unique needs of Native American children, youth, families and communities in New Mexico.
- Representing the Office of the Secretary (OTS) at state, regional and national meetings on issues that impact State-Tribal relations.
- Serving as the Department contact and lead for policy issues concerning the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) of 1978.
- Working to ensure CYFD compliance with ICWA and to the department's policy and IGA changes as a result of the December 16, 2016, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Indian Child Welfare Act Regulations.
- Work to ensure CYFD's full implementation and compliance with NM's Indian Family Protection Act (IFPA) of 2022.
- Assisting the department and NPTs with ICWA and Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) Intergovernmental Agreements and other CYFD-Tribal Title XX and Title IV-E intergovernmental agreements.
- Developing partnerships between the State of New Mexico, NPTs; off-reservation entities; and Federal agencies that mutually affect positive policy and practice outcomes for all Native children and families.
- Advising CYFD on pending legislation impacting Native American children, youth, families, and Tribal communities; and providing guidance on program implementation of any enacted legislation.



Children's Behavioral Health Services (CBHS)

CYFD is the behavioral health authority for all children in New Mexico. CYFD's CBHS division is the lead on children's behavioral health policy in collaboration with other state agencies, which include the Health Care Authority (HCA), Department of Health, Public Education Department (PED), and Early Childhood Education and Care Department (ECECD). CBHS staff provide technical assistance and consultation with providers and other CYFD colleagues serving children and youth who are: at risk of CYFD custody; involved with CYFD JJS or PSD; post-CYFD involvement; and never involved with CYFD. CYFD CBHS funds non-Medicaid, publicly funded children's behavioral health services for Native American youth who meet eligibility criteria.

Family Services

CYFD Family Services Division helps connect families to resources in their communities and provides direct services to support families as they work toward increasing their well-being. The goal is to support families before a crisis or before a situation creates an unsafe environment for children. The Family Services Division is designed to strengthen protective and preventive factors within the family dynamic.

Juvenile Justice Services Division (JJS)

Juvenile Justice Services focuses on prevention and early intervention for young people at risk or involved with the juvenile justice system. Rehabilitation within Juvenile Correctional Facilities is driven by a therapeutic approach utilizing research and evidence-based best practices. The multi-disciplinary teams (MDTs) prepare justice-involved youth to maximize opportunities for their successful transition to the community and adulthood. This is achieved through either reintegration or linkages to community-based resources/services which support the diverse needs of our clients and their families. JJS has established data standards and quality assurance measures to monitor compliance and ensure youth are receiving the highest quality of services for their specific needs.

Protective Services Division (PSD)

The Protective Services Division (PSD) is charged with investigating all reports of child abuse or neglect involving a child's parent, guardian, or custodian, in accordance with New Mexico's Children's Code. PSD's mission is for children and youth in NM to live in a family environment free from abuse and neglect. PSD is committed to providing for the safety and well-being of children, securing permanent solutions for children in a timely manner, which may be accomplished through relative placement, resource foster care placement, and/or reunification.

III. Accomplishments & Future Goals/Objectives

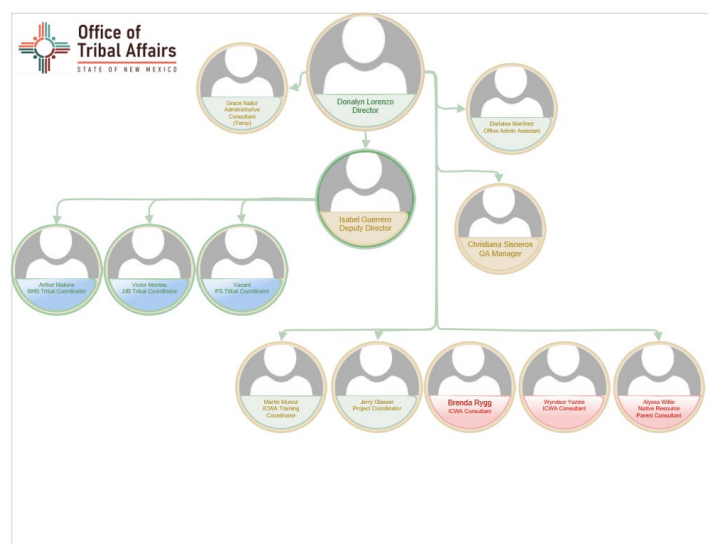
CYFD continues to prioritize its commitment to the State-Tribal Collaboration Act (STCA) and to strengthening compliance and practice with both the federal Indian Child Welfare Act

(ICWA) and New Mexico’s Indian Family Protection Act (IFPA), by embracing the spirit and letter of the laws governing Indian child welfare. CYFD is making strides in re-building and securing our government-to-government relationships with the Nations, Pueblos and Tribes (NPTs). The CYFD divisions overseeing the services most directly related to Native children, youth, families, and tribal communities are identified below, as well as the accomplishments identified during fiscal year 2025 and future goals/objectives as they relate to on-going *communication*, positive *collaboration*, and meaningful *consultation* with the NPTs.

Office of Tribal Affairs (OTA) Accomplishments & Goals/Objectives

During fiscal year 2025, OTA remained committed to working collaboratively with Tribal representatives and serving as the subject matter expert to strengthen the relationships with the Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes (NPTs). In being able to do so, positions within OTA have been newly created (*) and vacant positions filled (^) during this reporting period. OTA staff included:

- Donalyn Lorenzo, Director
- Grace Nailor, Administrative Consultant
- Isabel Guerrero, Deputy Director*
- Arthur Malone, Tribal Coordinator
- Dr. Christiana Sisneros, Quality Assurance Manager
- Brenda Rygg, Indian Child Welfare Consultant
- Alyssa Willie, Native American Resource Parent Consultant
- Martin Munoz, Indian Child Welfare Training Coordinator^
- Victor Montes, Tribal Coordinator^
- Darlalea Martinez, Administrative Assistant*
- Wyndor Yazzie, Indian Child Welfare Consultant*
- Jerry Glaser, Project Coordinator*
- Vacant (due to promotion to Deputy Director), Tribal Coordinator



The top OTA accomplishments during this reporting period include the following:

Title IV-E & State General Funding

CYFD continues to create more opportunities for NPTs in New Mexico to leverage Title IV-E federal funding and State general funding for children and youth at risk or in foster care. OTA and the Office of General Counsel (OGC), and Office of Performance and Accountability (OPA) continue to prioritize continued dialogue, technical assistance and training, and Title IV-E information sharing so NPTs can make an informed decision to and enter into a joint power agreement (JPAs) with CYFD to access IV-E and State general funds for children and youth in tribal foster care systems. OTA, OGC, and OPA's Title IV-E unit were involved in on-going negotiations with six NPTs, one of which was fully executed in January 2025, and two others which are pending full execution at the end of this reporting period. CYFD is committed to continued conversations on the federal level that advocates for preventive services, and eligibility for Title IV-E funding under the Families First Services Prevention Act (FFSPA), to be more inclusive of traditional Native American services that do not meet the federal criteria regarding well-supported or supported under the current FFSPA clearinghouse guidelines.

Procedure Development

The State-Tribal Collaboration Act mandates state agencies to “make a reasonable effort to collaborate with Indian nations, tribes, or pueblos in the development and implementation of policies, agreements, and programs of the state agency that directly affect American Indians or Alaska Natives”. Since 2022, the Office of Tribal Affairs meets weekly with tribal representatives to create, review, and revise CYFD procedures and make recommendations for practice improvement when working with Native American children and families. During the CYFD Procedural Discussion and Reviews with Tribal Partners for this reporting period, the following were discussed:

- JPA-IGA Meeting reminders
- Data Requests from OTA by Tribes
- Financial Requests (Cultural activities)
- Resource Parent Recruitment and Retention
- Cultural Activities and Traditional Healing Services procedure
- Review and revision of Protective Services Investigations procedures



CYFD in collaboration with New Mexico NPTs continue to work to ensure cultural connectedness for Native American children in state custody. The Office of Tribal Affairs has worked closely with the Office of Performance and Accountability and CYFD Administrative Services to identify a mechanism to assist with traditional healing and cultural activities. CYFD works directly with the child/youth's respective tribal representative to ensure a child can engage and participate in traditional healing practices and cultural activities. The final draft procedure, which was developed with Tribal representatives over the course of the past two years, was provided to Tribal leaders to provide additional written comment/input; recommendations were incorporated; and the procedure awaits union review and Cabinet Secretary approval.

Indian Child Welfare Summit

The Office of Tribal Affairs hosted the 5th Annual ICW Summit in Albuquerque, NM on November 8, 2024. The summit was done in partnership with the Pueblo of Sandia, the Pueblo of Isleta, Navajo Nation, Bernalillo County ICWA Court, New Mexico State University's Center of Innovation, the Office of Family Representation and Advocacy, and the Kellogg Foundation. There were 415 registrants, including participants from tribal social services/Indian Child Welfare programs, state and tribal judges and attorneys, Tribal leaders, state case workers, behavioral health service providers, lived experts, and state legislators. Topics and presentations during the 5th Annual ICW Summit included:

- Welcome Address Howie Morales, NM Lt. Governor.
- Building Capacity for Meaningful Engagement presented by Rebecca Jones Gaston, former ACF Commissioner, US Department of Health and Human Services Getting Our Culture Back presented by Dr. Lyla June Johnson, Indigenous Musician, Author, and Community Organizer.
- Enhancing Cultural Intelligence: Perspectives on Supporting the Family Unit presented by Dr. Pearl Yellowman, Vice President College Operations, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute Youth Leading the Way: Preserving Our Indigeneity presented by lived experts Veronica Krupnick, Alejandra Gomes, Isabel Coronado, Roxy Sprowl, and Destiny Ray.
- Indian Child Welfare: Multi-Disciplinary Legal Approach and Representation presented by Jacqueline Yalch, Pueblo of Isleta Social Services Director; Judge Catherine Begaye; Judge Anita Fineday; Esteli Juarez, J.D.; and Lashaina Hoskie, Navajo Nation ICWA Supervisor. Cultural Engagement: Youth of the Sky City Buffalo Ram Dance Group from the Pueblo of Acoma.



Indian Child Welfare Training

In August 2024, the Office of Tribal Affairs filled the vacant Indian Child Welfare Coordinator position, which had been vacant for approximately six (6) months prior. The Office of Tribal Affairs has created the following training course for CYFD staff, in collaboration with CYFD's Workforce Development Bureau and tribal representatives. OTA's ICW Training Coordinator and the ICW Consultants host weekly "OTA Open Door" as a drop-in for CYFD staff and creates an opportunity for discussion and presentation of information which supports compliance with ICWA/IFPA. The ICW Coordinator and ICW Consultants continuously refine the curriculum based on the needs of the organization, using data to inform any revisions. The training curriculum is broken into two (2) tiers and includes the following topics and data for this reporting period:

Tier 1: All CYFD employees

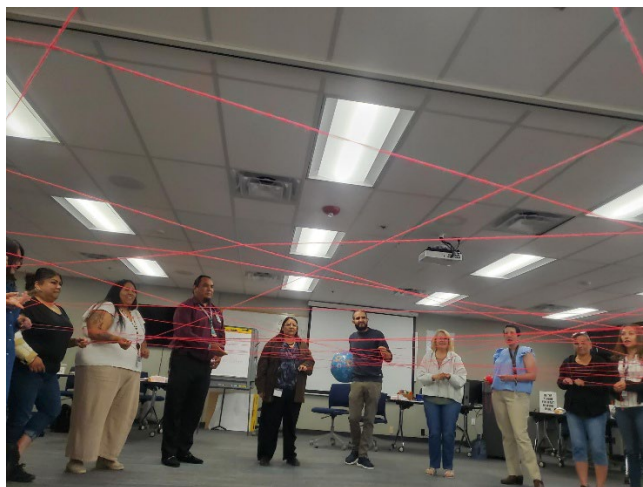
Cultural Humility – 212 Total employees trained	ICWA/IFPA Best Practices – 263 total employees trained	ICWA Overview: Best Practices for Best Outcomes (e-learning)	The Nations, Pueblos, and Tribes of New Mexico (e-learning) – 16 total employees trained
July 11, 2024	July 18, 2024	Part I: 293 employees trained	
July 25, 2024	August 22, 2024	Part 2: 201 employees trained	
August 22, 2024	September 26, 2024	Part 3: 288 employees trained	
September 19, 2024	October 31, 2024	Part 4: 282 employees trained	
November 14, 2024	November 21, 2024		
December 12, 2024	February 18, 2025		
March 4, 2025	March 6, 2025		
March 7, 2025	April 8, 2025		
March 10, 2025	April 15, 2025		
March 28, 2025	May 27, 2025		
April 21, 2025	June 23, 2025		
May 20, 2025			
June 10, 2025			

Tier 2: CYFD Supervisors & Managers

Supervising ICWA/IFPA Cases – 37 total employees trained	Government to Government Relations – 39 total employees trained (e-learning)
December 10, 2024	
June 16, 2025	

Other Strengths & Celebrations

- OTA is well-staffed to support the initiatives aimed to improve outcomes for Native children, youth, and families.
- OTA piloted Tier 2 Training for Protective Services supervisors and managers so they are better able to support their staff and ensure consistent practices for ICWA/IFPA compliance. This “Supervising IFPA Cases” training will be offered to CYFD supervisors and managers on a quarterly basis.
- Quality assurance IFPA case review was created and will be piloted during the next year.
- Data dashboard created and provided CYFD leadership for data-informed practice implementation.

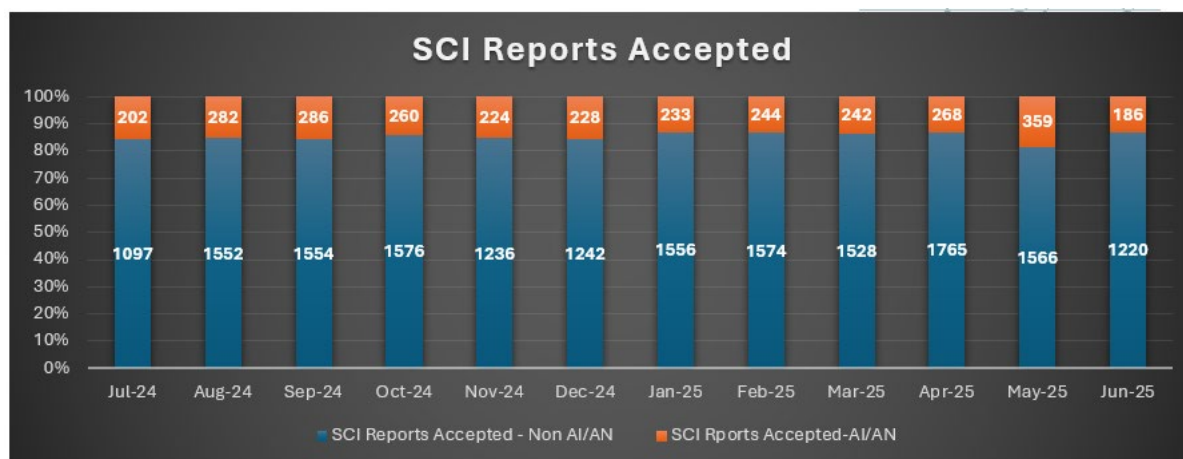


Future OTA goals/objectives include the following:

Address Disproportionality & Disparities for Native Children and Families:

Native American children currently make up approximately 12.4% (AI/AN only) and approximately 15.7% (AI/AN alone or in combination with another ethnicity or race) of the child population in New Mexico. When a report of abuse or neglect is made, the report is either screened out or screened in for abuse and neglect investigation or screened out by CYFD’s Statewide Central Intake. If the report is screened in, it is then sent to PSD for investigation; and investigation staff have 45 days to complete an investigation where they either substantiate or unsubstantiate the allegations of abuse or neglect. Often, a substantiated case may result in families being referred for services to address the concerns of abuse or neglect; may be closed with no further action; or may result in the removal of the child from the home.

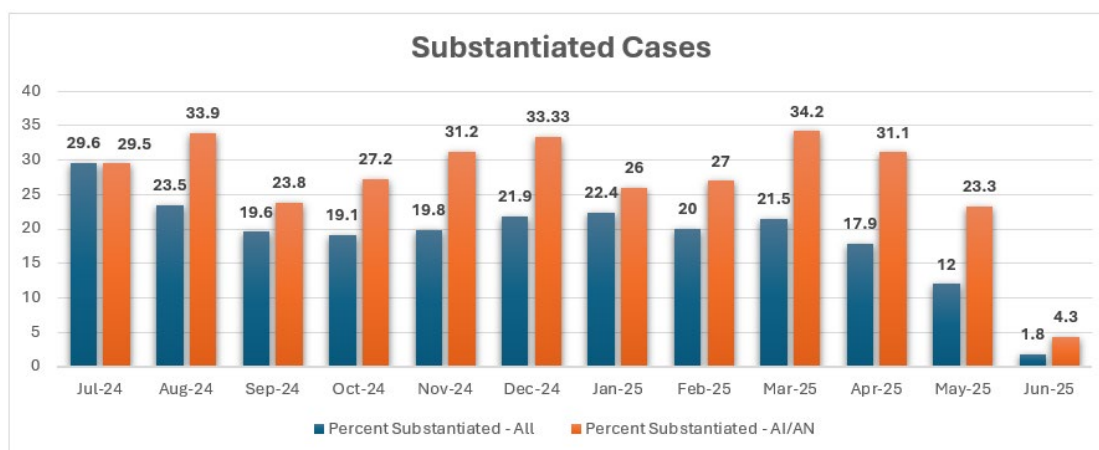
The figure below illustrates there were a total of 17,466 reports of abuse or neglect screened in by CYFD’s Statewide Central Intake (SCI). Of those screened-in reports, 3,036 involved Native children (or 17.38%), which continues to be a disproportionate over-representation of Native children who are being screened in for abuse and neglect investigations.



The goal/objective is to decrease this over-representation by at least 5% over the next fiscal year. This could be accomplished through a review of the SCI screening tool by PSD, OTA, and Tribal representative. The objectives would be:

1. OTA and Tribal representatives made aware of what questions are asked by SCI workers to reporters who report alleged child abuse or neglect.
2. OTA and Tribal representatives made aware of how responses provided to SCI workers by reporters are being interpreted by SCI workers.
3. Develop additional training and job aids to reduce bias, which leads to over-representation of cases being screened in for abuse and neglect investigation.
4. Develop a process with SCI and Family Services to determine and identify which reports are being referred to FSD. The process should include input from OTA and Tribal representatives.

The figure below illustrates the number of substantiated abuse and neglect cases for all children and the number of substantiated abuse and neglect cases for Native American children. There continues to be disproportionate over-representation in abuse/neglect substantiations for cases involving Native children. Approximately 27.10% of all abuse or neglect allegations are substantiated, whereas 20.44% of all cases are substantiated.

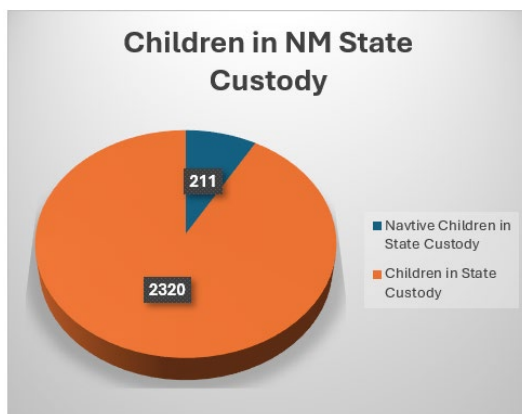


The goal/objective is to decrease this over-representation by at least 10% over the course of the next fiscal year. This could be accomplished through a review of the risk and safety assessment used by PSD investigators with PSD, OTA, and Tribal representatives. The objectives would be:

1. OTA and Tribal representatives are aware of what questions are asked by investigators to ensure cultural considerations.
2. OTA and Tribal representatives are aware of how responses provided by interviewees are being interpreted by investigators.
3. Develop additional training and job aids to reduce bias, which leads to over-representation of cases being substantiated for abuse and neglect by investigators.
4. Develop a process with PSD Investigations to ensure a review process takes place prior to final disposition to ensure worker bias is limited and/or eliminated in the decision making. This review process should include input from OTA and Tribal representatives.

When an investigation is substantiated for abuse or neglect, and there is immediate and imminent danger to the safety of the child, a removal by PSD is warranted, a petition is filed to remove physical custody of the child from the child's parent/guardian/custodian, the child enters foster care, and the child is placed into a licensed resource home. The state is the licensing authority for resource homes in New Mexico. but does accept the child's NPT as the licensing authority. When the child's NPT is the licensing authority, CYFD must honor the NPT's licensure in accordance with the federal ICWA and NM's IFPA.

The figure below shows that at the end of this reporting period, there were 2320 children in the custody of CYFD's child protective services, and 211 of those children (or 9.40%) are Native American children (this includes children that are still pending a response from the child's NPT confirming membership or eligibility for membership). Native children in CYFD custody remain in foster care for an average of 27.64 months.

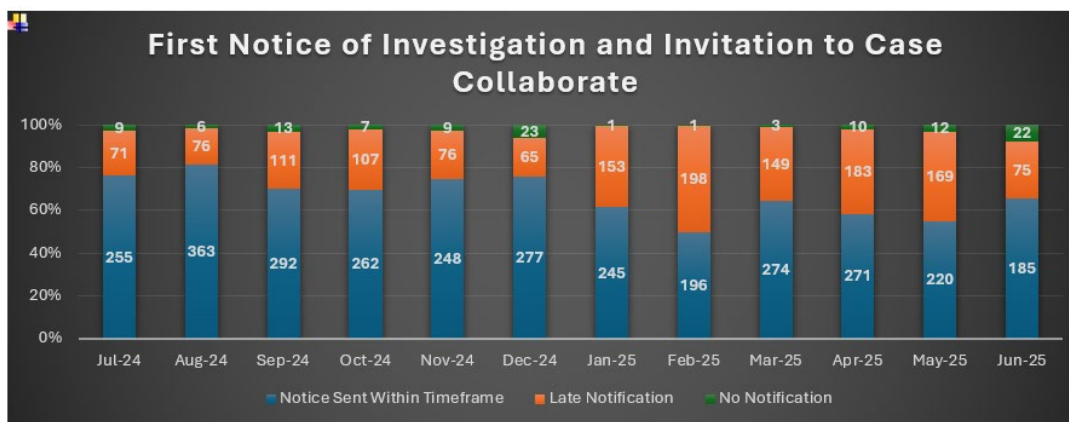


IFPA Notice to NPTs Compliance

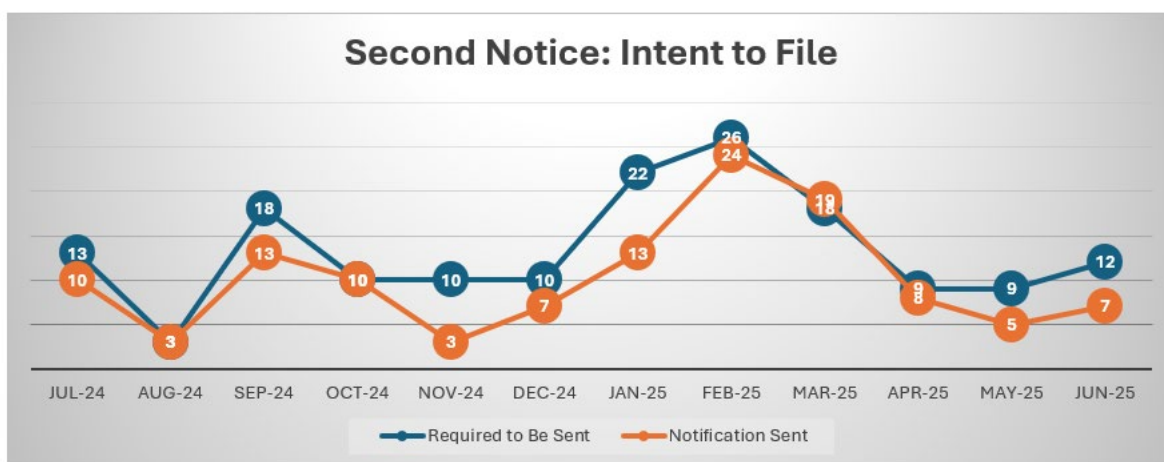
A challenge that continues to exist for CYFD is the timeliness of notifications to collaborate sent to tribes when a child is involved in an abuse and neglect investigation. OTA's Quality Assurance Manager tracks all three required notices sent to NPTs under IFPA mandates. The first required notice must be sent within 24 hours of the initiation of an investigation; the second required notice must be sent when CYFD determines they intend to file an abuse and

neglect petition; and the third required notice must be sent when CYFD files the petition for custody with the courts.

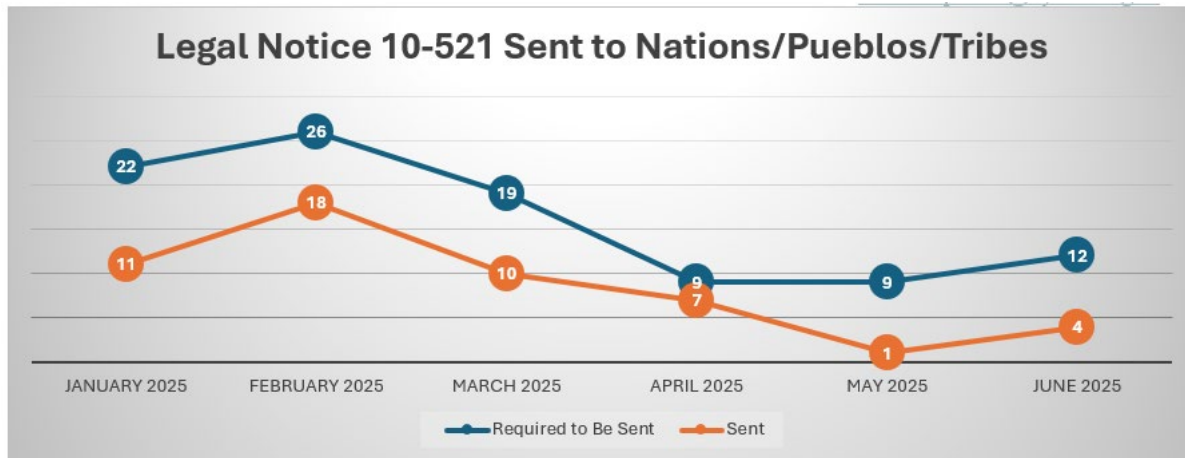
The figure below illustrates there were 4,637 required first Notices of Investigation sent to the child's NPT. Of those required first notices: only 4,521 notices were sent (or 97.50%); of those first notices sent, 1,433 were sent outside of the required 24-hour time frame (46.41%); leaving 116 required first notices that were never sent (or 2.57%) to the child's NPT.



The figure below illustrates there were 282 required second Notices indicating CYFD's Intent to File with only 121 sent to the child's NPT (or 43%). Currently, there is not a process or mechanism in place for OTA to be able to track the timeliness of when these notices should be sent, without being made aware by PSD staff that they intend to file a petition. OTA staff are not usually made aware of the legal staffing which occurs, prior to the filing of the petition for custody.



The figure below illustrates the third required legal notice sent via a NM Supreme Court approved form also known as the 10-521 form, which was required by law to be sent in 97 cases, but only sent in 51 cases, which is approximately 53% of the time.



The goal/objective is for the first required notice (Notice of Investigation) to be sent with 20% improved timeliness; to increase the sending of the second required notice (Intent to File) by at least 25%; and to increase the sending of the third required notice (legal 10-521 form) by at least 30%. The objectives would be:

1. Investigation supervisors must provide- staff supervision during the pre-/post-initiation process. This process was created in 2023 under a corrective action plan pursuant to the Kevin S. legal settlement agreement.
2. Develop additional training and job aids to reduce bias, which leads to over-representation of substantiated abuse and neglect cases by investigators.
3. The OTA QA manager will continue to provide CYFD staff and leadership with data results and OTA will continue to provide on-going in-service training through OTA's "Open Door" setting.

IFPA Relative Placement Compliance

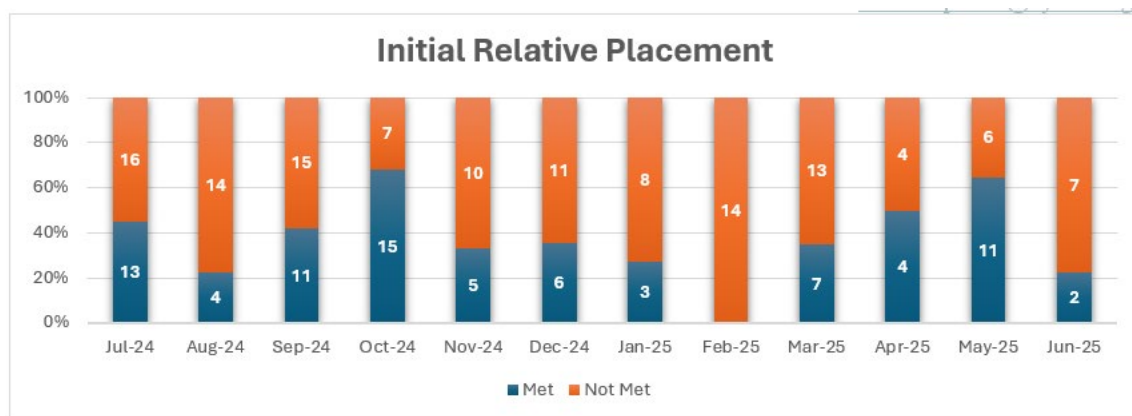
Although CYFD is committed to relative placement, in the past two years the department experienced its lowest rate of relative placement for Native children. If a Native child in foster care is not placed in a preferred placement, CYFD's Protective Services Division implements active efforts to place the Native child in the highest order of preferred placement as identified by the Native child's NPT or in accordance with the Indian Family Protection Act (IFPA).

If a Native child is not placed in the highest order of preferred placement, the OTA facilitates an Out of Preferred Placement (OOPP) Team Meeting to specifically focus on identifying steps needed to move the Native child to the highest order of preferred placement. An initial OOPP Team meeting is held within 45 days of the day a child is placed in a non-relative placement. Subsequent OOPP Team Meetings take place every 30 days until relative placement is achieved for the Native child, the child is reunited with parents/guardian/custodian (p/g/c), or the court determines there is good cause to deviate from the preferred placement preference as mandated by law.

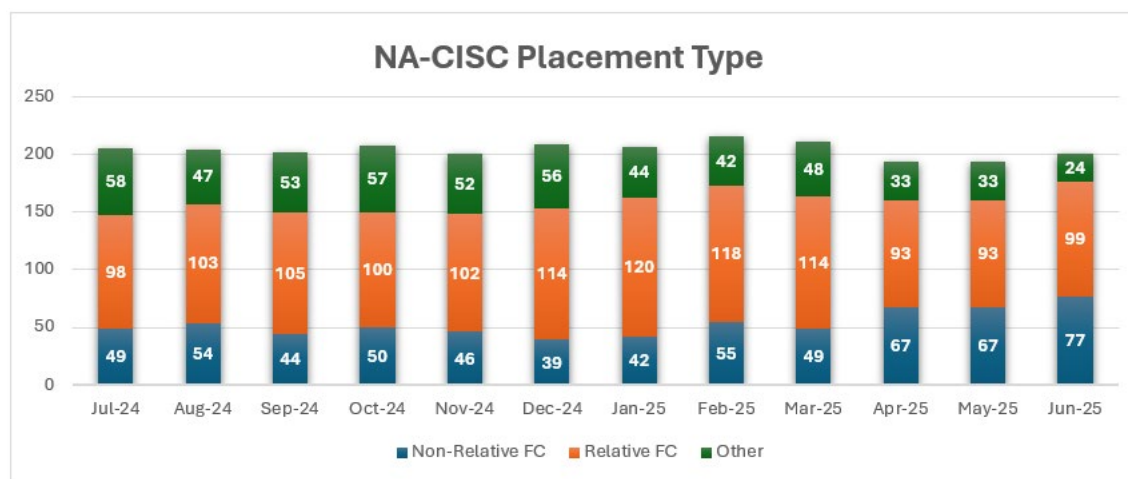
If Native child remains in an out of preferred placement that is not the first order preference, after two (2) consecutive OOPP Team Meetings, the OTA facilitator schedules an OOPP Up-Staffing with the PSD Director, PSD Investigations, Permanency, and Placement Deputy

Director(s), the OTA Director, and the OTA Deputy Director or OIC, if the OTA Deputy Director is not available.

The figure below illustrates the number of Native children placed with a relative when CYFD removed the child from their parent/guardian/custodian(s) and initially placed the child into foster care. During FY 25, there were 206 Native children placed into foster care and of those 206 children, 81 were initially placed with a relative (approximately 39.32%).



At the end of the fiscal year 25, there were 211 Native children in CYFD custody and approximately 47.67% of those children were in relative placement (see figure below).



The goal/objective is to increase the number of children placed into relative placement at the time of removal and during the foster care episode by at least 30% during the next fiscal year. The objectives would be:

1. PSD to work with OTA to help ensure compliance with the current CYFD procedure regarding relative placement at the time of removal. This current procedure directs staff to seek approval of a PSD manager each time a child is placed with non-relatives, and includes recurring 30-day staffing at the county level until the child is placed with a relative.

2. PSD to work with OTA to ensure adherence to the out-of-preferred-placement (OOPP) team meeting process, and timely follow-through with recommended next steps developed during the OOPP team meeting.

Revise CYFD's State-Tribal Collaboration Act Policy and Procedure

CYFD adopted a State-Tribal Consultation, Collaboration, and Communication Policy in 2009, following the passage of the State-Tribal Collaboration Act (STCA). This policy has not been revised since that time. It is the goal/objective that CYFD will review the policy; this will be accomplished through the following objectives:

1. OTA will meet with Tribal representatives during the weekly procedure review meetings to gather input in the development of the revision process that includes tribal representative participation in drafting proposed policies.
2. OTA will provide a final draft of proposed policies to Tribal leaders to elicit their input and feedback.
3. OTA will work with CYFD's Policy Office to get the policy revisions incorporated utilizing the proper channels for approval (i.e., Union and Cabinet Secretary).

Children's Behavioral Health Services Accomplishments & Goals/Objectives

The Children's Behavioral Health Services (CBHS) Infant Mental Health (IMH) Child Parent Psychotherapy (CPP) Program continues to partner with Tribal Communities throughout New Mexico. We have trained and worked with Kewa Pueblo, San Felipe Pueblo, Eight Northern Pueblos, and Taos Pueblo. Through our partnership with these Pueblo, we have trained a total of 7 licensed mental health clinicians in the practice of Infant Mental Health and have successfully rostered them in Child Parent Psychotherapy through the University of California, San Francisco. These clinicians served a total of 10 different Pueblos as well as the Native American community members in other surrounding areas such as Albuquerque, Santa Fe, and Taos. Unfortunately, due to high staff turnover, we are currently contracted to provide IMH CPP services only to the Pueblo of Taos. However, we maintain good standing relationships with the other Pueblos and look forward to re-engaging and training new staff soon once those positions are filled. It is also important to note that many of these trained clinicians continue serving these communities even though they are no longer contracted with CYFD, as a result of our training. The IMH CPP Program continues to reach out to Native American communities during recruitment for new CPP Training Cohorts, aiming to train and serve this community.

CBHS has a contract with Gallup Community Health to enhance trauma-informed and culturally responsive behavioral health services for children and families. This contract allows for community-based services to be provided and improves access to timely care in McKinley County. It also facilitates the implementation of evidence-based practices such as Play Therapy, Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (TF-CBT), and Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) for children and adolescents. In addition, they offer family therapy models tailored for the Native American community, specifically the "Honoring the Family, Mending the Circle" approach.

The CBHS Provider Development Unit supports tribal communities by offering training and workforce development opportunities that tribal partners and Native American-serving agencies can take part in. They work with tribal communities and office of tribal affairs to make sure our training is culturally respectful and responsive. They also provide professional development for tribal child welfare staff and community providers, helping build skills that support Native American children and youth.

The shelter continuum unit provides support to the tribal and Native American children and youth of New Mexico by implementing and upholding necessary training related to trauma-responsive care. This training consists of up to 6 hours of continuing education, which aids our providers in comprehending the various aspects of transgenerational trauma and its impact on children and youth. Furthermore, contracted providers engage directly in delivering services to tribal and Native American children and youth, including activity therapy, which is facilitated by our Santa Fe Mountain Center located in Tesuque. Another instance is a contracted provider, the New Mexico Black Leadership Council in Albuquerque, which executes resiliency programs not only for Black and African American children and youth but also for tribal and Native American individuals. As the shelter continuum unit, all our contracted shelters are equipped and ready to continue serving the tribal and Native American population. In fact, shelters that primarily focus on serving this demographic, such as Childhaven in Farmington, NM. Overall, contracted providers maintain direct connections to tribal affiliations and organizations, and they consistently track data to ensure that tribal and Native American children and youth are represented in our reports, facilitating the continuity of quality improvement and the development and growth of services.

CBHS Programs also have representatives on the Behavioral Health Planning Council that attend and participate in the Native American Administrative Subcommittee.



Family Services Accomplishments & Goals/Objectives

The Family Services Division has worked diligently in FY25 to expand access to support services and resources to families and communities throughout the state. The division's focus has included relationship building with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that families are able to access the services offered with reduced barriers. Some of the FY25 accomplishments include:

- Family Outreach (FO) has increased engagement with families during FY 25 through improved outreach strategies that have shortened wait times for families and reduced barriers to accessing services. By reaching out to families sooner in the process and allowing for community referrals, the acceptance of referrals to FO services has increased.
- Multi-level Response program has been in the planning stage in FY25 and will be rolling out in the 1st quarter of FY26 in San Juan and McKinley counties.

- In-home Services are services that are offered to families throughout the state utilizing an evidence-based curriculum that seeks to support families in learning the skills needed to increase overall family stability, well-being and safety. These services are offered in the home and the community setting with team members working with families for approximately 6 months.
- Community-based prevention, intervention, and reunification (CBPIR) is a community-based program that works with families in their homes and in their communities by providing case management services, parenting education and other services that are tailored to meet the needs of the individual family.
- Family resources centers are community-based resource hubs which are designed to provide families with access to services and support that promote their health and well-being.
- The Keeping Families Together program will provide a comprehensive array of services to families who are unsheltered or lack a stable nighttime residence and are involved with Child Protective Services, or at risk of becoming involved with Child Protect Services; or who are reunifying with children who are in CYFD custody. This program is currently available in Bernalillo County, Sandoval County, and Valencia County.
- The Family Support Services program is designed to support families in connecting with services and resources in the community that support overall family stability and well-being.
- Domestic Violence Services program provides technical assistance and training for Survivor Services Providers and for domestic violence Offender Services Providers.

Juvenile Justice Services Accomplishments & Goals/Objectives

Juvenile Justice Services (JJS) in the facilities currently houses five female and five male Native American clients from NPTs within the state of New Mexico. Every client who is Native American is interviewed after intake at the facility to ensure that each client's cultural and traditional needs are met and in accordance with New Mexico Statutes § 32A-18-4 and § 32A-2-19C. Currently, JJS Director's office is working on a contract with an individual to provide Native American services on a weekly basis to Native American clients by introducing a curriculum aimed at strengthening cultural and traditional bonds and cultural activities.

Clients are interviewed to gain knowledge of their cultural and traditional backgrounds to continue to support their needs and promote cultural sensitivity and traditional well-being which have been practiced with parents and extended family. JJS staff strongly supports the connection clients have to their culture and traditional needs and continues to support the family and client to keep the traditional and cultural bond intact.

JJS provides wellness needs for clients who identify specifics traditional spiritual needs according to their tribal/pueblo affiliation. JJS has built rapport with outside sources who are able to provide traditional and spiritual wellness needs by providing facility clients with sacred medicinal packets that are accepted in the facility. Facility staff and JJS leadership arranged times and support clients to have sacred healing with family and personal time to engage in spiritual/traditional needs.

JJS continues to work with tribes, nations, and pueblos within the state to encourage engagement and accountability with their youth during the commitment providing support, cultural/traditional bonds, and sharing services with facility staff that clients may have available to them upon their release. We, at JJS, encourage clients to maintain a bond with their families to keep traditional and cultural needs alive and well while promoting their cultural and traditional connection.

Protective Services Division Accomplishments & Goals/Objectives

No information provided by Protective Services.

IV. Key Names and Contact Information

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Statewide Central Intake (SCI) to report

Child Abuse/Neglect 24/7 Hotline 1-855-333-7233

#SAFE from a mobile phone