

**Tribal Consultation Summary Report
September 11, 2018
Phoenix, Arizona**

Pursuant to the First Things First (FTF) Tribal Consultation Policy and Arizona Revised Statutes section 41-2051, FTF convened a formal consultation session on Tuesday, September 11, 2018. The purpose of the consultation was to receive feedback on supporting young children's healthy development.

First Things First is committed to meaningful consultation with tribes through which elected officials and other authorized representatives of the tribal governments have the opportunity to provide meaningful and timely input regarding the development of policies or procedures that affect Arizona's tribes, Native American children and their families.

The following summary reflects comments and questions raised by Arizona's tribal leaders and their authorized representatives/designees.

Participants

Tribal Leaders and Tribal Representatives:

Gabriel Lopez, Vice Chairman, Ak-Chin Indian Community

Deal Begay Jr., Vice Chairman, Cocopah Tribe

Keith Moses, Vice Chairman, Colorado River Indian Tribes

Dr. Bill Myhr, Education Director, Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation

Shan Lewis, Vice Chairman, Fort Mojave Indian Tribe

Muriel Coochwyte, Chairwoman, Havasupai Tribe

Carletta Tilousi, Councilwoman, Havasupai Tribe

Tim Uqualla, Councilman, Havasupai Tribe

Malinda Andrews, Executive Advisor for Chairman, Hopi Tribe

Dr. Damon Clarke, Chairman, Hualapai Tribe

Carmen Bradley, Vice Chairwoman, Kaibab Band of Paiute Indians

Nathaniel Brown, Council Delegate, Navajo Nation

Dr. James Davis, Executive Assistant, Office of the President and Vice President, Navajo Nation

Yvonne Kee-Billison, Executive Assistant, Office of the President and Vice President, Navajo Nation

Mario Molina, Education Director, Pascua Yaqui Tribe

Martin Harvier, Vice President, Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community

David Reede, Health Director, San Carlos Apache Tribe

Frances Benevidez, Education Liaison, Tohono O'odham Nation

Edward Manuel, Chairman, Tohono O'odham Nation

Calvin Johnson, Vice Chairman, Tonto Apache Tribe

Verlon Jose, Vice Chairman, Tohono O'odham Nation

Jane Russell-Winiecki, Chairwoman, Yavapai-Apache Nation

Winifred Begay, Director of Education, Tohono O'odham Nation

Ophelia Tewawina, Child Care Manager, Yavapai-Apache Nation

First Things First:

Nadine Mathis Basha, First Things First Board Member

Michelle Katona, First Things First Chief Program Officer

Amelia Flores, First Things First Board Member, Colorado River Indian Tribes

Kim VanPelt, First Things First Chief Regional Officer

Marilee Dal Pra, First Things First CEO

Candida Hunter, First Things First Senior Director of Tribal Affairs

In addition, First Things First Board and staff members, representatives from tribal departments, state agencies, the Inter Tribal Council of Arizona, the Arizona Advisory Council on Indian Health Care and Northern Arizona University were in attendance to observe the consultation.

Summary

First Things First and state agency partners are working together to ensure timely, quality developmental screening is available for young children, and that risk-appropriate referrals are being provided in cases where concerns may exist and further evaluation or assessment is needed, including information with which families can actively support their child in reaching developmental milestones. This includes a focus on ensuring that all of this work is done with profound respect and understanding for tribal values, cultures and practices. Tribal leaders and representatives were asked for their insight on a variety of questions related to supporting the healthy development of young children in tribal communities. Tribal leaders and representatives stated that they celebrate a child's development through ceremonies and that caring for a child begins before birth. They also provided information about programs and coordination of programs to support the development of young children. Tribal leaders expressed their concerns regarding the challenges parents experience in learning about their child's development and accessing services. Tribal leaders also stressed the importance of teaching youth about child development and the responsibilities of parenting. In addition, tribal leaders suggested nontribal partners learn more about tribal communities by attending trainings offered in tribal communities, and/or being introduced to and shadowing community members or employees in tribal communities.

Comments/Questions/Concerns/Recommendations on Supporting Young Children's Healthy Development

Tribal leaders and designees shared how their communities view typical development of young children.

- Yavapai-Apache Nation Chairwoman Jane Russell-Winiecki expressed that healthy development is different across tribes, it may look different amongst tribal and non-tribal communities. She was interested in knowing what types of tools are being used to assess development.
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Vice President Martin Harvier shared that many children live with extended family members. The tribe has early childhood programs to support healthy development and they are working to improve their schools through different efforts.
- Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Edward Manuel stated that children learn from their culture, traditions and from seeing and listening. The school system, including Head Start, supports development by identifying health needs. He also shared there is a special needs school on the nation. The family and community must support the well-being of a child. Tohono O'odham Nation Vice Chairman Verlon Jose stated education begins before birth and that it's important for the community to start caring for a child at conception.
- Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President Executive Assistant Yvonne Kee-Billison suggested connecting early childhood with adolescents because they will become parents as adults. Traditionally, ceremonies such as puberty ceremonies taught adolescents about what to do before having a child. In addition, Executive Assistant Dr. Jim Davis shared how the nation is working to better connect youth with elders so traditional knowledge is taught to younger generations to help them be successful in life.
- San Carlos Apache Tribe Health Director David Reede shared a story about his upbringing and expressed that tribes are always in a category of being less than or not given the fair opportunity. He stated the tribe is looking at their current system, what's in place and coordinating more among programs. He also shared how it's important to celebrate successes.
- Ak-Chin Indian Community Vice Chairman Gabriel Lopez shared how it's important to teach younger generations traditions so they'll carry them on and that it's important to acknowledge, teach and practice protocols that need to take place before and after a baby is conceived. He also shared the tribal government has a medicine man provide a ceremony for babies.

Many tribal leaders and designees shared how development is monitored and celebrated for children birth to 5 years old in their communities.

- Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President Executive Assistant Yvonne Kee-Billison stated this can be done culturally and tribally as well as through assessments and analysis. She stated that by understanding the culture, you can better connect children and families to appropriate programs. She also shared that milestones are celebrated through ceremonies and that children receive assessments in health care facilities from birth to 3 years old and early learning program on the nation once enrolled.
- Tohono O'odham Nation Chairman Edward Manuel shared the tribe has a field nurse to support pregnant women, a nutrition program for children and families and programs for elders. The tribe is having discussions now to determine how they connect elders and the Head Start program to provide ceremonies to young children. Additionally, Vice Chairman Verlon Jose also shared that

health screenings and outreach are provided to parents and children and Head Start provides daily checks and communicates concerns with the families.

- Cocopah Tribe Vice Chairman Deal Begay, Jr. shared that the Early Steps program monitors children, and there are monthly gatherings with families to discuss child development.
- Hopi Tribe's Chairman Executive Advisor Malinda Andrews shared that the tribe has many different programs to support young children and families.
- Navajo Nation Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown shared that many early childhood programs provide screenings and coordinate with other departments. He also stated that traditional ceremonies parallel to brain development research and more needs to be done to bridge traditions and research and to share that information with families. He also suggested a presentation be shared by Dr. Tammy Decoteau about brain development.
- Tohono O'odham Nation Vice Chairman Verlon Jose shared that in the region, they are working towards having certified teachers. There is a Head Start at the Baboquivari Unified School and the district is monitoring students beyond high school. He stressed that education systems may need to be different in tribal communities. He also expressed concerns about the San Lucy district not being funded.

Tribal leaders and representatives shared about how often the development of young children is screened.

- Fort Mojave Indian Tribe Vice Chairman Shan Lewis expressed that screenings are provided in the child care center, health clinic and through home visitation.
- Hualapai Tribe Chairman Dr. Damon Clarke stated screenings are provided by the home visitation program, Head Start, and child care center.
- Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President Executive Assistant Yvonne Kee-Billion suggested FTF and Head Start set up a booth so parents can bring their children to be assessed or that programs assess the child because there are many children who are not being assessed. She also stated parental responsibility is an ongoing issue and that there needs to be emphasis on communicating better with parents.
- Tohono O'odham Nation Education Director Winifred Begay shared there are several screening options at Head Start centers and through Child Find. In addition, Vice Chairman Verlon Jose stated Child Find screenings are conducted monthly in different communities. He also shared younger children are being diagnosed with diabetes and because this occurs beyond pre-K, screenings need to be continued.
- San Carlos Apache Tribe Health Director David Reede stated that Head Start works with the Maternal Child Health and Health Care Corporation to increase the ability to screen children. He also shared that the Apache cycle of life talks about the seasons and growth that happens in children. Additionally, their school district is looking into becoming trauma informed and the community is better coordinating efforts.
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Vice President Martin Harvier expressed that screenings are conducted by Child Find and at health fairs.

- Yavapai-Apache Nation Chairwoman Jane Russell-Winiecki shared screenings are conducted by the Child Care Program, Head Start and the Montessori School.

Tribal leaders and representatives shared about the status of young children’s healthy development among young children in their communities.

- Cocopah Tribe Vice Chairman Deal Begay Jr. stated the community has seen an increase in the number of children receiving honor roll, perfect attendance and more school involvement since 2008/2009. The tribe is working on helping children become more active to address diabetes and healthy eating, and there are efforts to expose elementary children to college.
- Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President Executive Assistant Yvonne Kee-Billison stated the Navajo Nation implemented a healthy Dine’ Nation tax and the tribe is determining whether the taxes used to implement wellness activities are impacting Type 2 diabetes and chronic diseases. Additionally, some chapters have focused on supporting women who were diagnosed with gestational diabetes and there maybe opportunities for FTF to partner with them to expand services.
- Tohono O’odham Nation Chairman Edward Manuel expressed the schools from early learning to high school are coordinating to better support students transitioning from schools so they will attend college. He also shared all the schools are working to hire certified teachers.
- Navajo Nation Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown expressed that in the Navajo culture, there are things you don’t talk about because they are seen as taboo and that there isn’t language to express issues such as suicide and sex trafficking. He also stated it would be helpful to have tribes come together and share about their best practices.
- Yavapai-Apache Chairwoman Jane Russell-Winiecki expressed the importance of having parenting classes for expectant mothers and classes for middle school students to learn about parenting and the effects of drugs. She also shared that WIC provides services to 61% of the 0-4 year olds enrolled in the Nation and is interested in learning how FTF partners with WIC.
- Hopi Tribe’s Chairman Executive Advisor Malinda Andrews shared that when she was at WIC, she began working with single fathers who were committed to raising their children. She stressed the need for programs to support fathers.
- Havasupai Councilwoman Carletta Tilousi stated her tribe has Head Start, Child Find, WIC and home visitation. She also expressed the need for culturally sensitive agreements to provide services and identify the service requirements because of the negative experiences tribes have encountered. Not knowing how data is used is a reason families do not participate in programs.
- Tohono O’odham Nation Vice Chairman Verlon Jose stated it’s important for children to not be misdiagnosed or diagnosed at an early age and that training be provided to screeners. He agreed that there is a need to support fathers.

Tribal leaders and representatives shared about the successes and challenges of identifying children who may need developmental support and working with families.

- San Carlos Apache Tribe Health Director David Reede shared that tribal departments and other entities are coordinating to support one another in the region and that the biggest frustration is funding to implement programs and initiatives.

- Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President Executive Assistant Yvonne Kee-Billison shared there is more focus on the mental health of the birth to 5 population and that collaboration between schools and IHS in some locations is helpful for families. She also stated a study was done on the nation about expectant mothers and their traumatic experiences. The challenge is having accessible resources for parents and children in need of services to address these issues because there is a lack of professionals to provide the services. She also stated telemedicine may help to address access to services.
- Navajo Nation Council Delegate Nathaniel Brown expressed that in the nation there are many screening tools utilized and there should only be one screening tool utilized by all programs. He added that there is a need for speech pathologists. In addition, the nation is working to providing internships for high school students to learn more about the health field; they are growing their own.
- Tohono O’odham Nation Education Director Winifred Begay expressed that speech delay is common and encouraging families to receive additional support can be challenging. She also stated teachers should talk with parents when they see a concern before a referral is sent. Additionally, she suggested hosting small community events where screenings and education about development are provided to support parents, as well as transportation and providing screenings at a time convenient for families.
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Vice President Martin Harvier stated that the process to seek support for a child with special needs is challenging, especially when families do not understand the process to access services.

Tribal leaders and representatives shared information about supports offered in their communities to assist with children’s healthy development.

- Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation Education Director Dr. Bill Myhr shared that community clubs like Kiwanis and Rotary support children, including non-tribal children.
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Vice President Martin Harvier shared that many times children with special needs receive services off the reservation. He also expressed concern for substance-exposed newborns, their access to services and prenatal check-ups.
- Pascua Yaqui Tribe Education Director Mario Molina stated a challenge is education about development and special needs. The tribe has hired special education advocates to work with the community, and they are trying to identify how to better serve their communities to educate about childhood development and parents’ rights.
- Navajo Nation Office of the President and Vice President Executive Assistant Yvonne Kee-Billison stated it would be helpful to have a website or an electronic resource providing information on nonprofits or consultants trained in behavioral health.
- Tohono O’odham Vice Chairman Verlon Jose stated the Health Service Advisory Committee meets bimonthly and advises on new treatments and techniques to support the healthy development of children and that trainings are provided to teachers and families from Quality First coaches and community practice coordinators.

Tribal leaders and representatives provided insight and advice about what non-tribal providers can do to help families feel open and comfortable having conversations about their children’s development.

- Tohono O’odham Vice Chairman Verlon Jose suggested connecting with tribal staff, developing culturally enriched brochures to share with families and attend cultural awareness training. He also suggested non-tribal providers be introduced [by community members or staff] to families including grandparents.
- Tonto Apache Vice Chairman Calvin Johnson stated nonnatives attend a cultural class about tribes and that new employees will shadow an existing employee to begin meeting and working in the community.
- Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community Vice President Martin Harvier stated the community offers a sensitivity class.
- Ak-Chin Indian Community Vice Chairman Gabriel Lopez shared the community provides cultural sensitivity training during employee orientation and to students and teachers in the Maricopa public schools. He also expressed that because of trauma experienced by communities, some do not want to share information with nonnatives working with the community.
- Pascua Yaqui Tribe Education Director Mario Molina stated the tribe provides training to staff and vendors and follows up with them to ask how they are becoming part of the community.

Additional insight and perspectives shared by tribal leaders and representatives.

- Pascua Yaqui Tribe Education Director Mario Molina stated more work needs to be done to understand the development of young Native children, because information and statistics are limited.
- Colorado River Indian Tribes Vice Chairman Keith Moses stated it is important to have an active regional director, know who serves on the regional council and for tribal leadership to interact with them to discuss how goals can be reached. He also shared that everything cannot be funded by FTF and there should be discussion to better coordinate efforts.
- Yavapai-Apache Nation Chairwoman Jane Russell-Winiecki stated she is interested in working with the National Kidney Foundation to address diabetes in early childhood and would like to know if other tribes are interested because of the high rates of diabetes in tribal communities.
- Tohono O’odham Nation Vice Chairman Verlon Jose shared challenges tribes have in their education systems and the need to work with others and hold them accountable. He also shared information about programs the nation is developing to support the education of their people and suggested following a cohort of young students to measure outcomes, including graduation rates.
- Tohono O’odham Nation Chairman Edward Manuel suggested a meeting between the nation and regional council to discuss education and policies.
- Tohono O’odham Nation Vice Chairman Verlon Jose requested the region reconsider assisting the San Lucy center and that budget amendments be reviewed in a timely manner when FTF staff are out of office.