41st Annual
Protecting Our Children Conference
Healing Our Spirits: Nurturing and Restoring Hope • April 2–5, 2023
2023 Agenda
1. Registration (Tuscany Foyer)
2. Exhibitors
   - General Session
   - Banquet Dinner
   - Workshops (Tuscany Ballroom)
3. Presenter Orientation
   - Membership Meeting (Capri)
4. Workshops (Naples)
5. Workshops (Sorrento)
7. Lactation Rooms (Roma Rooms)
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Dear NICWA Members and Conference Attendees,

On behalf of the National Indian Child Welfare Association Board of Directors, I am pleased to welcome you to the 41st Annual Protecting Our Children Conference. I hope you enjoy your time with us.

Though the last several years have been difficult for many of us and for our communities, I am grateful that we are able to gather together in person once again in Reno, Nevada, for this year’s Protecting Our Children Conference. Throughout the plenary sessions, workshops, and opportunities for relationship-building during the conference, I hope you are able to learn from and connect with each other.

This year’s conference theme, “Healing Our Spirits: Nurturing and Restoring Hope,” speaks to the moment we are finding ourselves in together this spring. Our communities have faced many hardships and tragedies during the pandemic, but as Indigenous people, we know about healing. Our cultural teachings show us how to grieve, how to commemorate what we’ve lost, how to feel gratitude, and how to come together to restore our balance and heal. It is my hope that this conference will be a chance when you can come together with others doing important work in our communities and start to heal together.

It takes many months of work to organize an event like the Protecting Our Children Conference, and I am grateful for the opportunity to thank the many people who have worked hard to make this year’s conference a success as we return to gathering together in person: our presenters, sponsors, board members, staff, and especially all of you, our conference attendees. Your work is an important pathway to healing for our Native children and families, especially during times as challenging as the last few years have been. Together we can accept the challenge of living and embedding our cultures and values into our policies, practice models, service delivery, advocacy, and daily work to support healing for ourselves, our communities, and generations to come.

As I share each year, I am honored to serve this organization, and you, as NICWA’s board president. I sincerely hope you find our time together valuable, enjoyable, and beneficial to the vital work that you do, and I hope that you leave the Protecting Our Children Conference inspired to carry the healing work back to the children, families, and communities you serve.

Thank you,

Gil Vigil (Tesuque Pueblo)
President, Board of Directors
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Dear NICWA Members, Sponsors, Donors, and Friends,

Cama’i. On behalf of our board of directors, board of trustees, staff, partners, and the families we serve, welcome to the 41st Annual Protecting Our Children Conference. For 41 years, we have met in April, Child Abuse Prevention Month, to gather and share our collective wisdom about how to draw on our cultural traditions and teachings to strengthen American Indian/Alaska Native families and children. This year’s theme, “Healing Our Spirits: Nurturing and Restoring Hope,” is a celebration of our collective capacity to heal our families and communities.

As Indigenous peoples, we know a lot about healing. Healing is culturally specific and nonlinear. It happens collectively with our families and communities. It’s not all or nothing, but a life-long journey of reestablishing our balance. Healing starts with truth telling and feeling all of our feelings because we’re strong enough to feel them and survive. We have ways of commemorating loss, grieving, focusing on survival, and expressing gratitude for our ancestors. Our cultures guide us to heal ourselves, our families, and our communities. Through healing ourselves, we can stop the transmission of intergenerational trauma, help families heal together, and protect our children.

This conference gives us the opportunity to step back from our day-to-day work serving Native children and families to learn from one another. In plenary sessions and workshops, we’ll have the opportunity to hear about diverse models and practices across the United States and Canada that meet the needs of Indigenous communities and produce better outcomes for children and their families.

After meeting virtually since 2020, it is a gift to be back together in person. I know when I walk into the ballroom before our opening plenary session, I will be moved with gratitude to be together again, to see faces, hear stories, and give hugs to friends and relatives that I’ve dearly missed.

I’m grateful to the many presenters who will share their work with all of us. I hope the content we provide and the spirit of support in being together will inspire and sustain you for the work you do all year long.

Finally, I have the distinct honor of acknowledging our host sponsors. It is with heartfelt gratitude that I thank the Seminole Tribe of Florida for making the work we do at our annual conference possible. For 15 years, Seminole Tribe of Florida has provided generous support for this conference. I also warmly thank and acknowledge a first-time conference sponsor, Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians. Thank you for joining the NICWA community of support for child welfare, social services, and behavioral health workers on the frontlines of protecting children and the integrity of families. We heartily thank representatives from Seminole Tribe of Florida and Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians, along with our many other sponsors, for their unwavering support of our mission: strengthening the well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native children and families.

Thank you for joining us to work together to make the structural changes that will enable us to transform our helping systems and services to better support and heal Indigenous children and families.

Quyanaa for participating in the NICWA annual conference!

Sincerely,

Sarah L. Kastelic (Alutiiq), PhD, MSW
Executive Director
National Indian Child Welfare Association
# Conference Schedule

## Sunday, April 2

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>3:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Tuscany Grand Hall Foyer</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30 p.m.–6:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Presenter Orientation</td>
<td>Capri Ballroom</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00 p.m.–8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Membership Reception and Annual Meeting</td>
<td>Capri Ballroom</td>
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## Monday, April 3

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<td>7:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Tuscany Grand Hall Foyer</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Opening General Session</td>
<td>Tuscany Ballroom</td>
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**Yēil Koowú Shaawát (“Raven Tail Woman”) Program**
A Women's Group Addressing Root Causes of Child Maltreatment through Traditional Healing

**Supporting Relative Caregivers:**
What We Can learn From Tribal Kinship Navigator Programs

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<tr>
<td>1:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Workshops A</td>
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<td>3:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.</td>
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## Tuesday, April 4

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<td>7:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Registration</td>
<td>Tuscany Grand Hall Foyer</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:30 a.m.–8:15 a.m.</td>
<td>National Day of Prayer for Native Children</td>
<td>Poolside Terrace Gazebo</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>General Session</td>
<td>Tuscany Ballroom</td>
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**All of the Pieces:**
Cultural Identity for Indigenous Children in Care

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<td>10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Workshops C</td>
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<td>1:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Workshops D</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Workshops E</td>
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<tr>
<td>6:30 p.m.–8:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Banquet Dinner</td>
<td>Tuscany Ballroom</td>
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## Wednesday, April 5

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<td>8:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m.</td>
<td>Workshops F</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.</td>
<td>Closing General Session</td>
<td>Tuscany Ballroom</td>
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**Federal Agency Efforts to Support Native Children and Families**
**General Sessions**

**Monday, April 3**

8:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

This plenary session consists of two panels.

**Yéíl Koowú Shaawát (“Raven Tail Woman”) Program: A Women’s Group Addressing Root Causes of Child Maltreatment through Traditional Healing**

Panelists will describe the origin, development, and evolution of the Yéíl Koowú Shaawát program, a family-focused, culturally based model created to address the complex issues of layered domestic violence, substance abuse, and child maltreatment through the Tlingit and Haida Tribal Family and Youth Services Department (TFYS), based in Juneau, Alaska. The purpose of the curriculum is to build and enhance culturally based programs designed to strengthen community and family resilience. The curriculum developer and master trainer, a former program participant, an elder/advisor, and an evaluator will share about the program model, examples of curriculum modules and activities, an evaluation grounded in Indigenous Ways of Knowing, and program outcomes that support the program in becoming a promising, evidence-based curriculum.

**Amalia Monreal**, MSW, LCSW, has spent the last 30 years living and working in Juneau, the state capital of Alaska. She is Lingít (Tlingit) L’eeneidí Áak’w Kwáan [Raven, Dog Salmon], from the Big Dipper House. The clan gave her the name, X’aa aan Tlaa [other of the land in this area]. In addition to providing counseling services to children, youth, adults, and families, Amalia developed a psychoeducational group for women, Yéíl Koowú Shaawát [Raven Tail Woman].

**Leona Santiago**, Elder/Advisor, was born in Juneau, Alaska, and raised in Juneau and Haines. Her Tlingit name, Kaax-kwei, was given by her Auntie Agnes Bellinger. Leona is a citizen of the Tlingit Tribe, Eagle Moiety, Kaagwaantaan clan, from the Gooch Hit (Wolf House) in Haines. Leona learned culture as a child and was inspired by her relatives who were many generations Tlingit. She became a historian of her family of origin. Leona serves on the Healing Village, a community-based group that supports and advises the Yéíl Koowú Shaawát Program.

**Mary Rivera** was born in Hoonah, Alaska, but raised in Juneau. She is Tlingit and Cupik from the Eagle Moiety, Killerwhale Clan. She is also the grandmother of two grandchildren and describes them as her pride and joy! In October 2019, she completed all three phases of the Yéíl Koowú Shaawát program twice and met the requirements to co-facilitate.

**Evaluator:** Mike Cavanaugh, senior researcher at L&M, is an expert in community based participatory research, ethnography, working with tribal communities, and qualitative research methods. He has conducted hundreds of interviews and focus groups with hard-to-reach populations on a range of sensitive issues, including food security, intergenerational trauma, substance use, mental health, early childhood education, and child welfare.

**Moderator:** Priscilla Day (Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe), MSW, EdD, is a social work professor emeritus at the University of Minnesota Duluth (UMD). Dr. Day serves as the national consultant for the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience, as project coordinator for the Red Lake Nation Parent Mentors Program, and tribal FFPWA coordinator for UMD. Dr. Day develops and trains ICWA and other tribal curricula in Minnesota and nationally.
Supporting Relative Caregivers: What We Can Learn from Tribal Kinship Navigator Programs

Panelists will provide an overview of kinship navigator programs, including service structure, funding, outreach to families, and successes and challenges in developing these valuable resources for kinship and relative care providers. One tribe will describe their specific program. A multi-site evaluation model and early findings will be shared. Finally, conference participants will learn about the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center, NICWA’s role in the Network, and opportunities and resources for tribal service providers to access free technical assistance.

**Angelique Day** (Ho-Chunk descent), PhD, MSW, is an associate professor, School of Social Work and faculty affiliate of the Indigenous Wellness Research Institute and the Evan School of Public Policy and Governance, University of Washington in Seattle. Dr. Day has broad training and experience in the field of child welfare policy and practice, with particular emphasis on youth who are placed out of home, youth in kinship care, and the Indian Child Welfare Act.

**Cheryl Miller** is an enrolled member of the Assiniboine Sioux Tribe. She holds a master’s degree from the University of Oklahoma College of Law and has worked in the social services field, primarily Indian Child Welfare, since 1987. Ms. Miller has worked for tribes in the state of Washington and has been in the director position for the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe since 2012. In addition, she has also worked for Department of Children, Youth, and Families as an Indian Child Welfare compliance program manager.

**Joylina Gonzalez** is an enrolled member of the Quechan Indian Tribe from Yuma, Arizona. Ms. Gonzalez currently lives in the state of Washington and has worked for the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe for the past seven years as program manager for the Child Welfare Department. Ms. Gonzalez currently supervises a family care coordinator, child welfare investigator, and kinship navigator coordinator. Ms. Gonzalez has worked as a social worker for over 20 years.

**Ana Beltran** is an attorney and the director of the Grandfamilies & Kinship Support Network: A National Technical Assistance Center at Generations United. Ana is a national expert on Grandfamilies, authoring several Generations United publications on the subject and publishing articles in various publications and academic journals. As someone who was raised in part by her grandmother, Ana has a personal commitment to the families.

**Moderator:** **Tara Reyon (Puyallup),** MSW, NICWA child welfare director, is a member of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians and has served tribal communities for over 24 years. As a passionate advocate of Indian Child Welfare, she has dedicated her career to serving tribal children and families. She served as the tribal community wellness division manager at the Puyallup Tribe where she oversaw 15 social service programs.
General Sessions cont’d

Tuesday, April 4
8:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

All of the Pieces: Cultural Identity for Indigenous Children in Care

Presenters from Nezul Be Hunuyeh Child and Family Services, an Indigenous Child and Family Services Agency in British Columbia, Canada, will share about “All of the Pieces,” an experiential learning demonstration showcasing the importance of cultural identity for Indigenous children entering foster care. A giant Jenga block game is a metaphor for all of the pieces of a child’s cultural identity and centers around four key concepts: a strong foundation, resilience, a breaking point, and support. The presenters will discuss the important role practitioners play in ensuring a high level of relational practice, that includes family, friends, and community members, that maintains and continues to develop each child’s unique cultural identity. The Jenga pieces are an illustration of the resilience of Indigenous children and what a difference the right supports and services and access to culture, family, and community can make.

Cindy Ghostkeeper is the executive director of Nezul Be Hunuyeh Child & Family Services Society (NBHCFS). Cindy is a member of the Driftpile Cree First Nation under Treaty Eight Territory in Alberta, Canada. Cindy started with NBHCFS in 2010 as the child and family services manager in Prince George. From 2015–2022, Cindy worked as a director within British Columbia’s Ministry of Children and Family Development Provincial Office transforming child welfare policy and practice.

Michelle Morris is the child and family services manager at Nezul Be Hunuyeh Child and Family Services in Prince George. Michelle started as a practicum student with the agency in 2009 in Fort St. James and became passionate about working with children and families from Nak’azdli Whut’en, Bīnche Whut’en, and Tl’azt’en Nation. When she isn’t at work, Michelle stays busy chasing her two boys around, baking, and spends a lot of time being active in the great outdoors.

Michelle Chase has 25 years of experience as a social worker with the Carrier peoples in North Central British Columbia. She has worked as a family support worker, a team leader, and for the last 18 years as the executive director of Nezul Be Hunuyeh Child and Family Services. Michelle has recently stepped down and accepted a position as a roots practitioner. As an adoptee herself, she is passionate about ensuring every child from the nations she serves knows who they are and where they come from.

Wednesday, April 5
10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Federal Agency Efforts to Support Native Children and Families

Under the Biden and Obama Administrations, interagency collaboration between the U.S. Departments of Justice, the Interior, and Health and Human Services have been central to efforts to protect the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) and strengthen its implementation. This panel will feature key federal agency officials to present their agency priorities to support the well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native children and families as well as share how they are working together to strengthen ICWA implementation and support better outcomes for Native children and families.

January Contreras
JD, Assistant Secretary, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Aysha E. Schomburg
Associate Commissioner, Children’s Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Tracy Canard Goodluck
Senior Advisor to the Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Indian Affairs, U.S. Department of Interior
# Workshops by Session

## Monday, April 3, 2023

### Session A: 1:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

- **Fixing a Fundamental Inequity in Courtrooms - Legal Counsel for Tribes**
  Michelle Castagne, *Naples 1*

- **Working Together in Child Welfare: Tribal and State MOUs for Cross Jurisdictional Placement of Children**
  Fran Maldonado, *Naples 2*

- **Learning the Basics of ICWA**
  David Simmons, MSW; Mariah Meyerholz, MSW, *Naples 3-4*

- **Authentic Youth Engagement to Promote Multi-Level Changes in Child Welfare to Support Connectedness**
  Jessica Urlich, PhD; Amanda Metivier, MSW, *Naples 5*

- **The Yéil Koowú Shaawát (“Raven Tail Woman”) Program**
  Priscilla A. Day, MSW, EdD; Amalia Monreal, MSW, LCSW; Mary Rivera, *Naples 6*

- **Self-Care and Self-Nurturing Related to Secondary Traumatic Stress**
  Kimee Wind-Hummingbird, *Naples 7*

- **Protecting ICWA through Data and Research**
  Puneet Sahota, MD, PhD; Alexis Contreras, *Sorrento 2*

- **Buffalo Circle: Using Traditional Concepts of Kinship in a Western Mentoring Model**
  Tasha R. Fridia, JD; Valeriah Big Eagle, EdD, *Sorrento 3*

- **Reducing Child Welfare Cases: The Power of Community Involvement**
  Cheryl Miller, MLS; Joylina Gonzalez, *Sorrento 4*

- **Restoring Hope Through Calricaraq, A Tradition-Based Wellness Program**
  Katrina Domnick; Anda Saylor; Rose Domnick, *Tuscany 5*

- **Tuscarora Cultural Adaptations to Positive Indian Parenting Curriculum**
  Kateri Serpas, ALPP CLC; Patti Fischer, *Tuscany 6*

### Session B: 3:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

- **Decolonizing the History of the Gender Binary**
  Arc Telos Saint Amour, *Naples 1*

- **A Social Service Approach to Tribal Court Judicial Leadership**
  Adrea Korthase, JD; Kami Hart, MPA, *Naples 3-4*

- **Strengthening Families**
  Renee Henry, *Naples 5*

- **A Woodbury County, Iowa Child Welfare Community Collaboration**
  Erin Binneboese, BA; Valerie Uken; Diane Murphy Smith, JD, *Naples 6*

- **Engaging Indigenous Communities with Prevention Practices, Building Strong and Resilient Tribal Families**
  Wileen Whipple, MSW, *Naples 7*

- **Maintaining Cultural Identity for Youth in Foster Care**
  Lori Nichols, Nina Powell, *Sorrento 2*

- **First Nations Fostered/Adopted Relatives: Research Findings**
  Ashley Landers, PhD, LMFT; Sandy White Hawk, *Sorrento 3*

- **Spirit of the Oregon Indian Child Welfare Act Transforming How Tribal Children & Families Are Served in the State of Oregon**
  Emily Hawkins; Ashley K. Harding; Adam Becenti, *Sorrento 4*

- **Tribal, State, & Private Partnership-Working Together to Maintain Cultural Connectedness to Transform Alaska’s Child Welfare System**
  Nicole Borromeo, JD; Francine Jones, *Tuscany 5*

- **Building Indigenous STAR Knowledge for Workforce Excellence**
  Rita Hart; Emily “June” Adams, MSW, *Tuscany 6*
Workshops by Session cont’d

Tuesday, April 4, 2023

Session C: 10:30 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

California’s Tribal Dependency Representation Program
Stephanie Weldon, MSW; Tamara Honrado, JD; Laila DeRouen, BA, Naples 1

Case Transfers: Partnering with Families, Strengthening Communities-A Best Practice Model
Nishah Dupuis; Amelia LeGarde, Naples 2

Active Efforts: What Tribes Need to Know about What ICWA Requires
Robert Ludgate, Naples 3-4

Foster Care Recruitment and Retention
Stephanie Benally, Naples 5

Engaging the Whole Community to Break the Cycle of Abuse
Polly Andrews; Austen Rogers, Naples 6

The Tipi Model: Decolonizing Child Welfare through Tribal, State, and Federal Relationships
Amanda Docter; DeAnna Parker; Joe Fleming, Naples 7

Creating Healing Spaces for Native Boys Experiencing Sexual Violence
Lenny Hayes; Greg Grey Cloud; Whirlwind Bull Yellow Bear, Sorrento 2

Tribal Wrap Around for the Whole Family
Shannel Squally-Janzen, Sorrento 3

We R Native, Paths (Re)-Membered and Healthy Native Youth: Promoting Inclusivity in Adolescent Health and Well-Being
Jane Manthei, Sorrento 4

Living in the Red Circle: Keeping Native American Youth Connected to Indigenous Culture
Damon Polk; Lane Shepherd, MEd, LCMHC; Breeanna Good Bear, Tuscany 5

Empowering Community Capacity
Victoria Fisher, MSW; Rhonda Kelly, BSW, Tuscany 6

Session D: 1:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.

The Link Between Cultural Resilience and the Prevention of Child Maltreatment in Tribal Communities
Sonja Ulrich, DSW; Michael Cavanaugh, Naples 1

Supporting Kinship Care and Grandfamilies
Tara Reynon, MSW; Alexis Contreras; Ana Beltran, JD; Robyn Wind, Naples 2

Pathway to Title IV-E Direct: Bridging the Gap from CAM Development to Your First Title IV-E Direct Claim
Trista Gannon-Hunt; Stephanie Taylor Marshall, MSW, Naples 3-4

CB’s Tribal IV-B Guide: Navigating CB Funding
Tabitha Carver-Roberts; Nanette Bishop, MBS, Naples 5

My Two Aunties: A Different Path for Child Welfare in Indian Country
Karan Kolb, MA; Jeremy Braithwaite, PhD; Art Martinez, PhD, Naples 6

A Legal Advocacy Model with Families and Children at Its Center
Shana King; Ann Haines Holy Eagle; Marlee Torrence, Naples 7

Tribal Foster Kids and Healing with Horses
John Spence, Sorrento 2

Creating a Circle of Support for Native Youth Survivors of Human Trafficking
Tayesha Wood, Jana Pfeiffer, Sorrento 3

Niijaansinaanik - Orange Standard Service Model “Moving Forward through Nationhood”
Joanne Koehler; Isadore Day, Sorrento 4

Reclaiming Child Protection Decision Making to Create Change in Australia
Candice Butler, Tuscany 6

Chehalis Basketry as a Healing Art
Yvonne Peterson; Sage Jackson; Haniah Welch, Tuscany 5
Workshops by Session cont’d

Session E: 3:30 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

Serving Families Affected by Substance Use Disorder: Lesson from Family Healing to Wellness Courts
Kris Pacheco; Will Blakeley; Ashay Shah, MSW, Naples 1

Positive Indian Parenting: A Review of PIP and Introduction to 4th Edition Updates
Alexis Contreras; Tara Reynon, MSW, Naples 2

Working with Substance Abusing Families
Terry Cross, PhD, MSW, Naples 3-4

Coaching as a Path to Worker Development
Sommer Purdom, MSW; Christa Doty, MSW; Kavitha Kailasam, MA, Naples 5

Strengthening our Families to Care for Our Children: Foster Parent Education Programs
Misty Frazier, MA; Jill Holt, MSW; Chiara Cournoyer, BSW, Naples 6

Connecting History of Self Through Traditions and Story Telling
Ed Yerxa; Gary Smith; Jeremy Jordan, Naples 7

ICWA in Illinois
Ryann Unabia, Sorrento 3

Beyond Recruitment: Support Strategies to Help you Meet your Resource, Family Recruitment, and Retention Goals
Kendra Lowden; Britt Cloudsdale, MSW, Sorrento 4

Amory Zschach; David Simmons, MSW, Tuscany 6

An Outcome Evaluation of the Implementation of the Tribally Adapted National Training and Development Curriculum
Angelique Day, PhD; Norma Hernandez, MSW; Becky Main, Sorrento 2

Coyote Cast of Characters
Yvonne Peterson; James DeLa Cruz, BA, Tuscany 5

Wednesday, April 5, 2023

Session F: 8:30 a.m.–10:00 a.m.

Braiding Cultural Connection and Kinship Ties to Create Safety
Stacia Jones; Terri Brunelle; Teressa Galis, Naples 1

Our Children are Sacred: Addressing FASD
Kip Perkins, Naples 2

Hope and Healing for Children and Families: Experience of Incarceration Using Traditional Ways and Gentle Action Theory
Carma Corcoran, Naples 3-4

Families SOAR to Recovery: Increasing Access to Income, Housing, and Treatment through SSI Benefits
Amanda Starkey, MA; Rose David, Naples 5

Minnesota Guardian ad Litem Program: Addressing Disparities and Creating Systems Change
Lynn Brave Heart, MSW; Jody Alholinna, JD, Naples 6

Protecting Native Children in Foster Care
Katherine Katcher, JD; Michelle Castagne; Councilman Philip Williams, Naples 7

A Holistic Approach to Strengthening QEW Testimony
Crescentia Tso, Sorrento 2

The National Center for Missing & Exploited Children’s Free Resources and Assistance for Native Families and Child Welfare
Dave Chewiwie, Sorrento 3

Policy Issues and Guidance: Kinship Services in Tribal Child Welfare
Terry Cross, PhD, MSW; Mariah Meyerholz, MSW, Sorrento 4

Our Calricaraq Community Story
Rose Domnick; Josephine Augustine-Edmund, Tuscany 5

A River of Culture: From Sacred, Scared, Scarred, to Healing
Gary Peterson, MSW, Tuscany 6
Welcome from Host Sponsor, Seminole Tribe of Florida

The Seminole Tribe of Florida supports NICWA in partnering to progress in our fight to protect our children. The Seminole Tribe of Florida Advocacy Program’s goal is to promote and support the well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native children and families.
Additional Programming

Gathering for Adoptees, Former Foster Children, and Their Birth Relatives
Anyone who has been touched by adoption or foster care

**Monday, April 3, 2023**
6:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.
*Tuscany Ballroom 5-6*

On the evening of Monday, April 3, First Nations Repatriation Institute Founder and Director Sandy White Hawk will facilitate a special meeting intended for American Indian and Alaska Native adoptee, former foster children, and their birth parents. Birth parents are those parents whose children were adopted out. Birth relatives are those relatives who have a sibling, cousin, or other relative who is adopted out or in foster care. All are welcome and dinner will be provided.

National Day of Prayer for Native Children
Tuesday, April 4, 2023
7:30 a.m.–8:15 a.m.
*Poolside Terrace Gazebo*

As advocates for Native children gather for NICWA’s 41st Annual Protecting Our Children Conference, we call upon Native communities and our partners nationwide to join together in a National Day of Prayer for Native Children. Please join us in person for this respectful gathering or host an event in your community to demonstrate support for all Native children.

Chehalis Basketry as a Healing Art
(There is a $50 fee, payable on site.)
Tuesday, April 4, 2023
1:30 p.m.–3:00 p.m.
*Tuscany 5*

Join master weaver, educator, and founding member of the Hazel Peete Institute of Chehalis Basketry Yvonne Peterson, Sage Jackson, and Haniah Welch for this exciting workshop. Chehalis basketry is a sit-beside art—cultural sharing is a healing aspect of weaving. Participants have an opportunity to work with cedar and sweet grass to weave a basketry pouch. Traditional teachings are incorporated into the workshop and an honoring of ancestors who worked to reclaim Indigenous basketry gathering, processing, storage of weaving materials, and teachings are highlighted. There is a $50 fee in addition to registration payable on site. Checks may be made out to the National Indian Child Welfare Association. Funds from this workshop are used to support the adoptee gathering sponsored by Sandy White Hawk.
Additional Programming

We’re here for you!

Our annual conference is a time where participants experience respite from the demands of their usual daily lives. To make your experience great, we have set aside space in our host hotel where attendees can rest, visit, or jump on the computer for a bit.

Healing Room

Visit Registration for Information

NICWA encourages you to take care of yourself. Our staff and board are available to you for confidential emotional and spiritual support if you are activated by any of the presentations or discussions throughout the conference. If you would like to receive support, please find a staff or board member, or go to the registration table for assistance.

Computer Lounge

Near Tuscany Ballroom

Thanks to Eaglesun Systems Products for hosting a computer lounge for conference guests to use. Check your email, print your boarding pass, prepare handouts, follow the Protect ICWA campaign on social media, or connect with friends. Be sure to stop by on the way to workshops or any time during conference hours.

Lactation Rooms

Roma 1 and 2

We are happy to offer two cozy rooms for nursing mothers during our conference hours. Roma 1 and Roma 2 will be equipped with a refrigerator for nursing needs. Ask any NICWA staff or board members for more information or go to the registration table for assistance.

Airport Hotel Shuttle

Main Entrance of the Peppermill Hotel

The free shuttle departs from the Reno-Tahoe airport every half hour from 4:15a.m.–11:45pm. Pick up is at the North exit of the baggage claim area.
Champions for Native Children

2023 Champion for Native Children (Individual): Karan Kolb (Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians)

Karan Kolb is a member of the Rincon Band of Luiseño Indians and has over 35 years of experience working with tribal governments and families in the areas of family preservation, court advocacy, reunification services, parenting and child welfare. Karan was the director of tribal family services at the Indian Health Council, Inc. (IHC), which is a consortium of seven small tribes in northeastern San Diego County, California. Fifteen years ago, those seven tribes had 487 children in foster care, mostly in non-Native settings. Under Karan’s leadership, at the end of 2022, there were fewer than five children in foster care. This was accomplished through Karan’s tribal-centered values and a commitment to helping as early in the process as possible. Karan was the inspiration and visionary guide for the development of the My Two Aunties (M2A) program, a prevention model that has become a beacon of hope for Native children and families in restoring and reclaiming cultural family lifeways for sustainable family wellness.

“Karan Kolb is the paradigm case of a (young) elder who models Indigenous excellence in her decades of service to our communities. Karan’s professionalism is infused with Indigenous values like integrity, humility, and a commitment to intergenerational flourishing and sovereignty. Our communities are stronger and healthier because of Karan’s important work.”

–Dr. Shelbi Nahwilet Meissner (Luiseño/Cupeno), My Two Aunties trainer/collaborator

2023 Champion for Native Children (Organizational): Pueblo of Pojoaque Family and Children Services

The Mission of Pueblo of Pojoaque Family and Children Services is to provide comprehensive social services in a respectful and culturally sensitive manner and to promote individual, family, and community awareness while maintaining a safe and healthy environment. Through collaboration and relationship building across systems, the Pueblo of Pojoaque Family and Children Services has established wrap-around services that promote well-being for children, biological parents, and foster parents within the tribal community. Collaboration is key in protecting children from abuse and neglect and human trafficking. Family and Children Services provides advocacy services, medical assistance, transportation, food vouchers, emergency financial assistance to pay medical bills or utilities and connects families and individuals to mental health services, medical care, and housing. This small team of five staff members responds to child welfare needs across the entire system and believes that collaboration is key to meeting all the social and health needs of the families they serve. The staff prioritize and promote compliance with the Indian Child Welfare Act and contributed to the development of New Mexico’s state ICWA law, which passed in March 2022.
Meet the Local Planning Committee & NICWA Board of Directors

Thank you, Local Planning Committee! This year, we are proud to present our local planning committee who volunteered time out of their busy schedules to help bring our event together. It is only with their help and direction that we had the ability to connect with members of local tribes and organizations, ensuring a diverse and well-represented conference.

Serving on our local planning committee this year are:

Fran Maldonaldo  
Alene Dave  
Stacy Stahl

NICWA’s board of directors and staff welcome you to the 41st Annual Protecting Our Children Conference

Gil Vigil  
(Tesuque Pueblo), President

Angela Connor  
(Choctaw), Vice President

W. Alex Wesaw  
(Pokagon Band of Potawatomi), Secretary

Aurene Martin  
(Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa), Treasurer

Teressa Baldwin  
(Inupiaq)

Justine Bautista  
(Northern Cheyenne)

Mikah Carlos  
(Salt River Pima-Maricopa Indian Community)

Patricia Carter-Goodheart  
(Nez Perce)

Rose Domnick  
(Orutsaramiut Native Council)

Brad Earl  
(Colville descent)

Rochelle Ettawageshik  
(Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians)

Debra Foxcroft  
(Tseshaht First Nation)

Robbie McGhee  
(Poarch Band of Creek Indians)

Gary Peterson  
(Skokomish)

Robin Sigo  
(Suquamish Tribe)

Mary Tenorio  
(Santo Domingo Pueblo)

Stephanie Weldon  
(Yurok Tribe)
The Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians is honored to host the 41st Annual Protecting Our Children Conference. This conference plays a crucial role in our collaborative efforts to support our children and families.

The Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians is deeply dedicated to ensuring that Indian children stay with Indian families. One way we do this is through our tribal court which manages children’s cases for our community and other tribes.

Our court ensures that the best interests of the child are upheld while preserving the child’s cultural identity which is deeply intertwined with family, community, a sense of belonging, pride, and tradition.

The Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians staunchly defends the rights of Indian children so they will never again have to endure the devastating consequences of generations of cultural genocide.
Mark Your Calendars for NICWA Training Institutes

June 6-8, 2023  
St. Paul, MN

Sept. 11-13, 2023  
Oklahoma City, OK

January 9-11, 2024  
Albuquerque, NM

April 10-12, 2024  
Seattle, WA

Visit www.nicwa.org/training-institutes for more information.
About the Conference Artwork

2024 Call for Artists

NICWA is excited to once again provide an opportunity for artists to showcase their talents in support of our 2024 Protecting Our Children Conference in Seattle, Washington. The selected artist will be awarded a cash prize of $1,500 for the use of their work in promotional materials for our 2024 conference.

Artwork and submission forms should be submitted no later than June 1, 2023. Visit [www.nicwa.org/call-for-artists](http://www.nicwa.org/call-for-artists) to apply.

Artist Bio

Shawna Fricke is a traditional contemporary artist based in North Dakota with an associate of fine arts degree in two- and three-dimensional art from the Institute of American Indian Arts. Shawna’s work reflects her Indigenous heritage from Paiute and Taos Pueblo. Shawna has been creating art ever since she could remember. She is a descendant from a long line of artists in her family, and her parents introduced her to art at a young age. Shawna uses acrylic and mixed media, and her artistic inspiration is influenced by many Native cultures and different art mediums. Painting is a way of reflecting on her culture, past and present through designs from beadwork, pottery, landscape, and historic pictures to get references on dress and powwow regalia. Shawna is a founding member of Native Artist United, a collaboration among Native artists in Mandan, North Dakota. She also volunteers with Native programs in the area where she lives, and she loves being connected to our Native community. Shawna currently resides and paints at her in-home studio in Driscoll, North Dakota, with her family.

Lifeway represents the nurturing of future generations. Culture is represented through the Northern baskets in the floral designs, the traditional dress, and the color scheme of the family. The various colors of brown tones on the woman represent Mother Earth because she is a creator of life. The color blue on the children represents water and lifeways. Our lifeways heal our spirits.
During your attendance at the 41st Annual Protecting Our Children Conference, please don’t forget to stop by and visit the conference exhibitors located in the Tuscany Ballroom. We have a range of exhibitors that consist of art and crafts, government and for-profit, as well as nonprofit. We look forward to seeing you there!

Customize Your Conference

Download the NICWA Annual Conference app now to personalize your conference experience for maximum professional development and networking!

Get Started:

1. Download the conference app by going to the App Store (iOS) or Play Store (Android) and searching for “Cvent Events.”

2. Search for the event titled 41st Annual Protecting Our Children Conference event.

3. Enjoy all the conference details. To customize your agenda login using your name and email address used to register for the event.

Full workshop descriptions, presenter bios, and the most current updates to the conference schedule can ONLY be found on the NICWA Annual Conference App!
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