



41ST ANNUAL

Protecting Our Children Conference

Healing Our Spirits: Nurturing and Restoring Hope • April 2-5, 2023

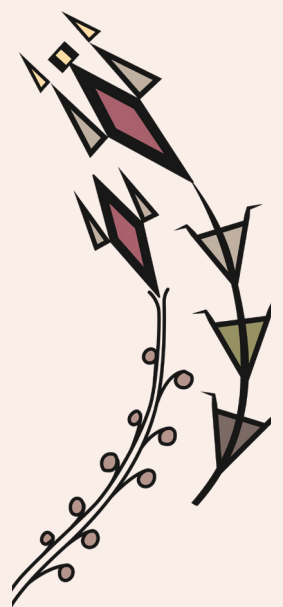
Sponsor Report

“...That empowering and humbling feeling of being in a room with almost 2,000 like-minded Indigenous people who care about the Indian Child Welfare Act and are trying to make positive changes in their community.”

“I will be re-evaluating the approaches I’m taking when working with families and be more mindful about using the techniques I’ve learned and working on finding ways that I can help support myself and my work in decolonizing how we do the work we do.”

“I really appreciate all the hard work and effort that goes into putting on such a huge and important event and just want to thank everyone that helped to make this possible because it really does help to support the work we do for the Native families we work with.”

Conference Participant Evaluation Responses



[WATCH THE VIDEO HERE](#)

Conference by the Numbers

1,802 Attendees
46 States and provinces
380 Tribal and First Nations
40 Sponsors
73 Workshops
131 Presenters
315 International attendees
976 New members
\$211,496 Sponsorship dollars
and in-kind support raised



Dear Sponsors of the Protecting Our Children Conference,

Thank you for your partnership in the 41st Annual Protecting Our Children Conference. Your vital support enabled us to host our largest conference yet with over 1,800 participants!

With our first in-person conference since 2019, the theme “Healing Our Spirits: Nurturing and Restoring Hope” resonated across conversations, workshops, and plenary presentations. A cross section of service providers, community members, and advocates gathered for four days of networking and learning together, and to further NICWA’s mission of strengthening the well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native children and families. The Protecting Our Children Conference has become the premiere national event addressing tribal child welfare and well-being with participants that represent a wide range of fields and interests, including child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice service providers; legal professionals; students; advocates for children; and tribal, state, and federal leaders. Keynote speakers included top federal officials, service providers in the U.S and Canada, and a grandparent with lived experience navigating the child welfare system while caring for their relative children.

While we wait for a decision from the United States Supreme Court in *Haaland v. Brackeen*, it was an honor to create space to gather with new and old friends, share burdens and joys, and remember we are

healing for ourselves, for the seven generations behind us, and for the seven generations to come. We are grateful for your support at this critical juncture.

We invite you to join us next year in Seattle, Washington, for the 42nd Annual Protecting Our Children Conference to be held at Doubletree by Hilton at Seattle Airport on April 6-10, 2024. For more information, please send me an email at skastelic@nicwa.org or call (503) 222-4044 x128.

Quyanaa,

Sarah Kastelic (*Alutiiq*)
Executive Director, NICWA



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