The Zuya Yuha O'mani Program

Evaluation Report

2023

OGLALA LAKOTA CHILDREN'S JUSTICE CENTER

Center for Native Child and Family Resilience

Children's Bureau

Acknowledgements

This report would not have been possible without the partnership and support of Arlana Bettelyoun, Larry Swalley, and Bobbi Amiotte at the Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center. The report commemorates their tireless efforts to improve the lives of children and families, today and in the generations to come.

With deep gratitude, the Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center (OLCJC) acknowledges that the *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program and OLCJC have benefitted from the generosity of the community's knowledge bearers, who have preserved and shared the community's traditions and knowledge. OLCJC wishes to honor the people for whom the *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program and OLCJC's work serve as living legacies of their contributions.

The Center for Native Child and Family Resilience (CNCFR) includes staff from JBS International, Inc. (JBS), the Tribal Law and Policy Institute (TLPI), Mathematica, and L&M Policy Research (L&M). The Center partnered with five project sites to design or refine, implement, and evaluate their child maltreatment prevention or intervention programs for AI/AN children and families. This document represents the work of:

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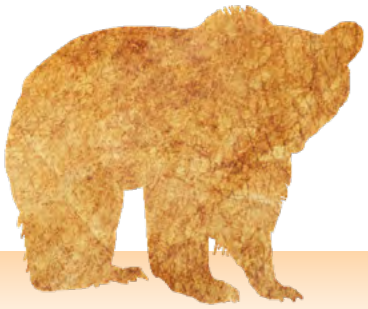

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Overview of Center for Native Child and Family Resilience Site Evaluations

The Children's Bureau (CB) funded the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience (the Center) to gather and disseminate information about Tribally relevant practice models, interventions, and services that contribute substantively to child maltreatment prevention efforts and family resilience developed by and for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations. The Center includes staff from JBS International, Inc., the Tribal Law and Policy Institute, Mathematica, and L&M Policy Research. The Center partnered with five project sites for four years (2019–2022) to design or refine, implement, and evaluate their child maltreatment prevention or intervention programs for AI/AN children and families.

This report is one of five descriptive evaluation reports presenting lessons and findings from the project-driven evaluations implemented by each project site. Each evaluation contributes to building evidence about how Tribally relevant practice models, interventions, and services contribute to child maltreatment prevention. Evaluations for four project sites included implementation, outcome, and cost components; one site implemented a developmental evaluation.

About the Center's Evaluation Work

> *Evaluators—and their close relatives, researchers—are not popular in Indian Country. The field of evaluation draws heavily on research methodologies that can be considered invasive when imposed by outside funding agencies. The close connection between research and evaluation is problematic to many American Indian and Alaskan Natives whose tribes and families have suffered from a long history of intrusive "studies" that, while building the reputations of anthropologists and other researchers, have brought little to Indian communities and have actually resulted many times in cultural exploitation and the loss of intellectual property rights. The unpopularity of research permeates Indigenous communities (LaFrance & Nichols, 2010, p. 14).*

A central challenge for the Center has been to make good on its charge to help expand evidence for practices in Tribal child welfare without falling prey to the problems described by LaFrance and Nichols, above. We approached this work of making evaluation culturally congruent, relevant, respectful, and mutually valuable by centering elements of Indigenous Ways of Knowing (IWOK) identified by our Tribal advisory committee as critical when engaging with Tribal nations and Tribal programs:

- Respect Tribal Sovereignty
- Practice Reciprocity
- Engage in Relationship Building
- Seek Tribal Permissions[1]

We designed an evaluation practice that balances numerous demands by weaving the best parts of Western-style evaluation, IWOK, and community-based participatory research together into a framework that enabled us to assist the projects, their Tribal participants, and community members to document processes, frame outcomes, and make sense of findings.

Our role in this process was to collaborate with the projects, their participants, and Tribal community members to tell their story and facilitate sharing it with others as appropriate. We approached the work with humility appropriate for outsiders offering technical expertise and support with a culture different than our own. Much of the work consisted of learning how to help Tribal communities through building relationships and trust.

Indigenous Ways of Knowing

In brief, IWOK refers to the epistemic norms, beliefs, and practices that Indigenous peoples have used since time immemorial. When entering an Indigenous community, evaluators must honor IWOK and learn about Tribal history, who the community knowledge keepers are, proper protocols about how and whom to engage in seeking permissions, and what knowledge can and

1 For a discussion of the elements of IWOK identified by the committee, see https://cncfr.jbsinternational.com/IWOK.

can't be shared; they must also demonstrate respect for local Tribal customs in ways that build upon and reinforce Indigenous notions of reciprocity, sovereignty, and relationship building among people and between people and the world.

An IWOK framework

> *recognizes the beautiful complexity and diversity of Indigenous ways of learning and teaching.... The intent of the phrase "Indigenous Ways of Knowing" is to help educate people about the vast variety of knowledge that exists within and across diverse Indigenous communities. It also signals that, as Indigenous Peoples, we don't just learn from human interaction and relationships. All elements of creation can teach us, from the plant and animal nations to the "objects" that many people consider to be inanimate.... Indigenous ways of knowing are incredibly sophisticated and complex. These ways relate to specific ecology in countless locations, so the practices, languages, and protocols of one Indigenous community may look very different from another. Yet, Indigenous ways of knowing are commonly steeped in a deep respect for the land, and the necessity of a reciprocal relationship with the land.*
>
> ***— "Ways of Knowing," Office of Indigenous Initiatives, Queens University.*** https://www.queensu.ca/indigenous/ways-knowing/about

For more information about IWOK and its role in AI/AN child welfare program development and evaluation, see CNCFR's Literature Review, Environmental Scan, and IWOK site.[2] Center staff, consultants, and Tribal project participants bring expertise and lived experience to project site programs implementation and evaluation. Each team's work was guided by IWOK to complement the wealth of knowledge, experience, and worldviews of each project team. In working with community partners, we navigated important philosophical, methodological, and cultural boundaries. We came to this work with an understanding of the complex and damaging history of colonial imposition that continues to impact Indigenous people today and that Native people have long been subjected to research and evaluation that misrepresents cultural traditions, focuses on deficits or pathology, and causes harm to communities. Even when the research itself does not reinforce the effects of settler colonialism, it all too often involves an extractive, one-way relationship with evaluators who mine the community for information and leave without offering anything to the community in return.

As a result, an important part of Center work was to counter the dominant narrative and approach through intentional IWOK practices. With the help of our Indigenous community partners, we sought to decolonize evaluation and uplift Indigenous research methods. Over time and through active listening, trust building, authentic collaboration, and constant reflection, we built important relationships with our Indigenous community partners and, in return, were gifted with the stories of their programs and the people they serve.

Bi-Directional Learning in Evaluation

IWOK recognizes that emotional and spiritual experiences are important wells from which to gather knowledge, restore balance, and find guidance about how to live. For example, when gathering medicine for a ceremony, the act of gathering (including one's frame of mind) and what each plant or item "represents" all have meaning. The same can be said of dreams, visions, or certain important events, all of which are regarded as important founts from which to draw knowledge. The emphasis is less on cause and effect and more on how certain elements, events, and people connect in an ever-unfolding spiral through time and one's life journey. This way of learning and being incorporates the heart and not just the head.

The Center team entered its work with humility and the understanding that we, too, are learners and were willing to allow ourselves to be touched and changed by the process. We approached this evaluation much in the same way as the earlier description of gathering medicine; with a good heart, with a

2 Full citations for these two documents are:

Literature Review: Center for Native Child and Family Resilience. "Center for Native Child and Family Resilience: Literature Review." Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. October 2018.

Environmental Scan: Center for Native Child and Family Resilience. "Center for Native Child and Family Resilience: Environmental Scan." Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. October 2019.

good mind, and with accountability and intention to honor the sacred stories that serve as the foundation of this report.

As you will see in the following narrative, the Center's relationship to the program was not limited to conducting an evaluation. We worked intentionally with the Indigenous community and Tribal program, co-creating tools and resources to document their program's model, a model which they owned and developed, and successes so that other AI/AN child welfare organizations could implement similar programs in their own Tribal communities, adapted for ceremony and tradition as appropriate.

An example of bi-directional learning during the *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program evaluation was the way it evolved to respond to reluctance among families to participate. The initial vision for gathering information from children and families for the evaluation included members of the CNCFR team; however, after engaging with our partners at OLCJC, we learned about their desire to build capacity around evaluation and their sense of the importance of having people from the community be the first points of contact when conducting evaluation work. As a result, we worked in partnership with OLCJC to identify a local social work student to support information gathering for the evaluation. The CNCFR team learned an important lesson about cultural congruence during information gathering and the OLCJC team learned how to develop and facilitate information gathering for the evaluation.

This report provides not only the outcomes but also the story of the evaluation process. It includes important first-person narrative to convey important moments, events, experiences, relationships, and processes that are essential to understanding the full context and weight of evaluation findings. It acknowledges how everyone who was a part of the experience was deeply touched and impacted by the experiences they shared with participants.

Prologue: Evaluation in the Time of COVID

An important prologue to this story is that all project sites implemented their evaluations during the COVID-19 pandemic. We cannot overstate the impact this has had on our community partners and Tribal communities, as well as on the CNCFR team members who engaged with the Tribal community. The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately impacted AI/AN children and families across a host of important metrics. Evidence spanning the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic through mid-2021 indicated the rate of COVID-19 cases in AI/AN communities was higher than that in other racial and ethnic groups (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2021; Webb Hooper et al. 2020; Tsethlikai et al. 2020). Members of AI/AN communities may be at particular risk of poor health outcomes (including death) from exposure to the disease due to both medical reasons and challenges relating to social determinants of health (Kakol et al. 2021; Rodriguez-Lonebear et al. 2020). Further, the pandemic compounded already difficult economic realities for Tribes. Many Tribes rely heavily on hospitality, gaming, service sectors, and the arts to generate revenue, all of which were particularly disrupted by the pandemic—with unemployment more than tripling by April 2020 (Feir and Golding, 2020).

During this time, children and families experienced additional struggles with food security and emotional well-being. Protective factors like connection to culture and community via participation in ceremony, traditional activities, community events, and extended family kinship networks were strained by social distancing and quarantine requirements. Beyond that, the ongoing loss of Elders, parents, grandparents, and extended family to COVID-19 continue to negatively impact Tribal communities.

As with many Tribal communities, the Pine Ridge Reservation community experienced tremendous challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic. It was the responsibility of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, which governs the Pine Ridge Reservation community, to protect their community members because of the high level of risk in South Dakota. State leadership did not choose to implement COVID-19 protective measures, such as mandating use of

masks in public spaces. The lack of protective measures put in place by the state government along with concerns that Native Americans were especially vulnerable to the coronavirus[3] led to heightened fears amidst high infection rates. To protect their community, the Tribe put measures in place for the Lakota people, including lockdowns that barred non-critical travel to and from the reservation, checkpoints to regulate travel on and off the reservations, restricting residents of Pine Ridge from re-entry to the reservation if they tested positive for the virus while off the reservation, providing monetary incentives for receiving vaccinations, and closing non-essential businesses and schools.

Throughout the pandemic we—OLCJC and the Center—scrambled to find ways to address the horrifying tragedy unfolding without allowing the work we had engaged in together to wither on the vine. Given the ongoing loss of friends and loved ones in the community, the Center placed work requirements aside and offered whatever support it could to help the people who had become our friends and colleagues. At times, the focus of our work was on creating spaces for processing their overwhelming grief, and as the pain of our friends and colleagues was so palpable, their loss became our loss as we grieved in solidarity.

> We're protecting our Elders, protecting our young people and this is a really important thing because you people under the age of 12 cannot get the vaccine so in a way, you're protecting your young people and your Elders by getting vaccinated.
>
> *—Tribal President*

3 In South Dakota, Native Americans had a 65 percent higher death rate from COVID-19 than whites (South Dakota Department of Health, 2021).

The *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program, in Brief

The *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program uses lessons from the history of the Oglala Lakota people and contemporary methods combined with traditional customs, language, and ceremonies to provide comprehensive and holistic advocacy for every **Wakanyeja** (sacred little ones) and their **Tiospaye** (family members). The program provides a range of services—including forensic interviews, counseling, culturally appropriate case management and advocacy, and cultural teachings—that heal and protect children who have been traumatized by physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. The *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program employs traditional Lakota customs, language, and ceremony to provide comprehensive and holistic advocacy for children. The goal is to create a better way of life for the Wakanyeja and **Tiwahe** (families) in crisis by helping them reclaim their heritage, identity, and self-esteem. The program includes teaching the children and youth where they came from, the importance of health, and where they fall within the circle of life. As written in the Tribal Child and Family Code, the ceremonies included for the youth are built from traditional stories, Lakota teachings, and based upon the Seven Traditional Laws. They provide all children with access to ceremonies in healing, build culture in the schools, and support the youth in being proud of their heritage through the development of community partnerships to support them and provide them with access to the services and supports they need to grow and flourish.

OLCJC was founded as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the OLCASA program, in 1997 as a part of Tribal Resolution 97-10, forming a nonprofit organization with the mission of protecting and advocating for the best interests of Lakota children who have experienced sexual and physical abuse while their cases were being adjudicated in court system. OLCJC's Executive Director,

> "Silence is a barrier here."

Arlana Bettelyoun, began her journey at OLCASA in 1998, as the organization began its development and implementation as a national CASA program. Arlana established OLCJC's nonprofit status in 1999. Lawrence Swalley, the Case Manager/Cultural Provider, joined OLCJC in 2010. Both Larry and Arlana are members of the Oglala Lakota Nation who carry special cultural and spiritual knowledge in addition to their well-established relationships with the people of the Oglala Lakota Tribe. Over the years, OLCJC has collaborated with many volunteers, wisdom keepers, social work professionals, and a board of directors to help the healing of their children. Most recently, OLCJC welcomed Bobbi Amiotte, a recent BSW graduate from Oglala Lakota College, to support the work of the program.

Exhibit 1. Arlana Bettelyoun and Lawrence (Larry) Swalley

Exhibit 2. Bobbi Amiotte

The support and assistance that Arlana, Larry, and Bobbi provide is more than a job; it's about who they are as Oglala Lakota, about their culture, traditions, and lifeways that have been passed down from generation to generation from grandparents, to parents, to children. It's a 24/7 lifestyle—one they feel blessed to be involved in.

> They don't want to talk about it. It's more of a... for sexual abuse and physical abuse, it's more of a, you stay silent, because if you say something, you're going to get them in trouble, or you're going to be viewed as a snitch, is what they call it, and so a lot of the abuse and stuff is swept under the rug, so all my life it's been a goal, how can I help these kids, especially on a reservation because the boarding school era really tore up the family units. They don't know how to raise their children. They don't know how to be parents. They just know what they were taught, which was drugs and alcohol, and a lot of the kids on the reservation have a really, really hard life, and no food, no water, no role model to look up to, and Arlana is a really good role model and she's been working with the children for a long, long time, so that's why I chose her program, was for the advocacy for the kids. I think, on the sexual abuse and physical abuse aspect it's something that needs to be talked about more and not so silenced….
>
> *—Bobbi*

Exhibit 3. OLCJC Office Sign

Advocating on behalf of children who have been traumatized by abuse and supporting healing and wellness through tradition and culture are core to OLCJC services. OLCJC staff believe in the importance of combining the lessons from the historical past, cultural traditions, and contemporary methods of treatment to bring healing to the children and people of the community. Cultural teachings and ceremony are critical components of the program and are used to support children and families in healing and building cultural resilience to prevent future abuse. The role of the program in the lives of families and the community includes increasing awareness and education on the issues of child abuse, providing a holistic approach to supporting children who have experienced abuse or neglect, and serving as advocates for children. The program receives referrals from organizations and the Court, but families often seek out the OLCJC team for assistance on their own accord.

Many children are "invisible" victims of child maltreatment due to the silence and normalization of violence, historical trauma, and continuing lateral oppression and mistrust. Many of these children do not receive the resources they need through traditional justice or social services. The Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center (OLCJC)'s *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program is a proactive, comprehensive program that provides culturally based healing of trauma as a component of child advocacy as well as skills to thrive through education and cultural identity development.

More than child welfare services and advocacy for families, OLCJC is a conduit to Lakota traditions that provide a compass for navigating the world in a good Lakota way. It is a place that fosters connection and community strengths while being a constant in an ever-shifting political and interpersonal landscape. OLCJC is reshaping the narrative on what child welfare and advocacy looks like from an Indigenous perspective—from something that tears families apart toward something that offers healing through Lakota ways.

My mom went to boarding school. She's a survivor of the boarding school. So is my grandma. I was fortunate I didn't ever have to go to boarding school, but during boarding school, they couldn't learn their culture. They couldn't pray. They couldn't speak their language. They couldn't do any of that, and with this program, or on Larry's program, they teach you. They take you into ceremony. They teach you the creation story. They show you things, the cooking, everything, the gender roles, and that's not something that we're taught in school. It's something that Native Americans were told, 'You can't do this. You cannot do this. It's wrong', and so, even my mom, growing, she never prayed. She never spoke her language. My grandma never spoke her language. They were always afraid they were going to get in trouble, and so for me, that cultural part of that program was really, really important because I didn't know a lot about it. The first time I went to ceremony, I was 15, and then, just this last year I finally went back into a ceremony with Larry, and he's teaching me a lot more about my culture than what I learned in college.

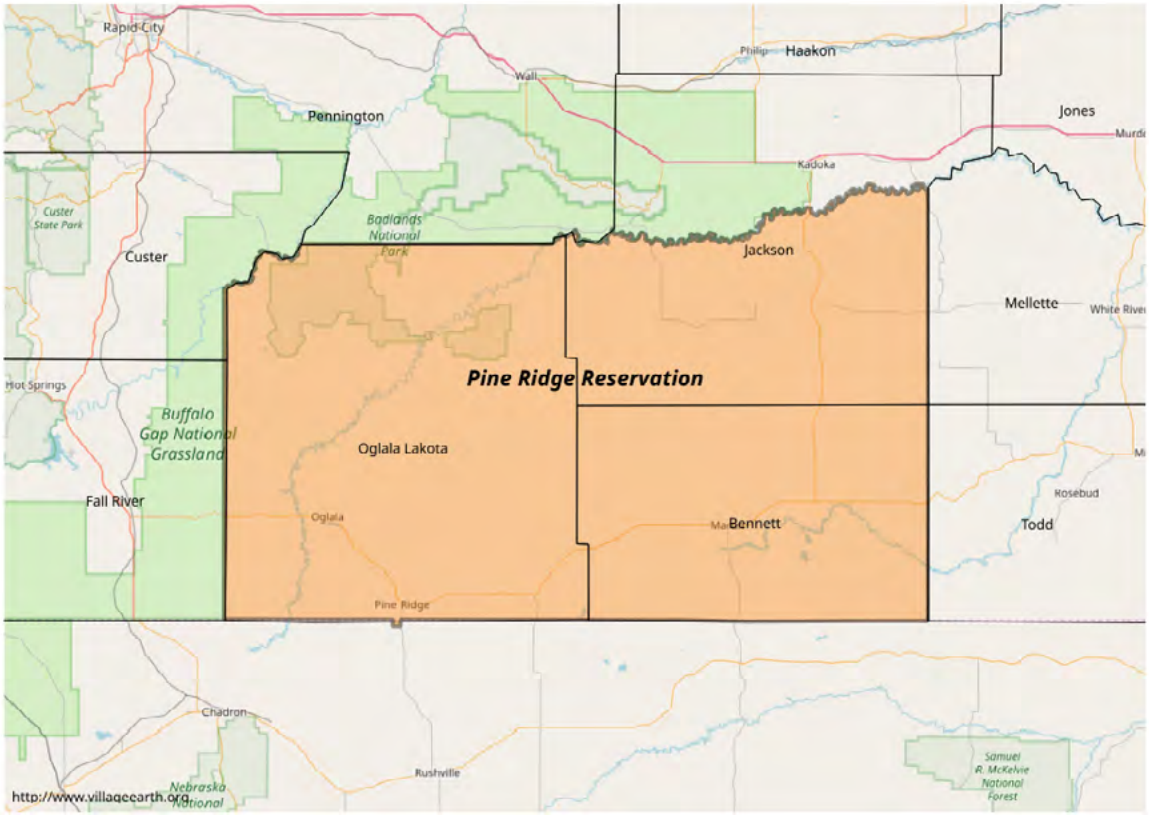
—Bobbi

Understanding the Context of the Oglala Lakota Sioux and the Pine Ridge Reservation

To understand the richness of the OLCJC program, the resilience of the people it serves, and the drive to return to traditional ways of healing, one must first understand at least some of the context and history of the Pine Ridge Reservation, which is an Oglala Lakota Sioux reservation located almost entirely in the southwest part of South Dakota. OLCJC staff report that they run into barriers in helping their people live according to traditional Lakota values and beliefs that support holistic wellness. In other words, the community suffers due to the incremental loss of the culture that maintained the health and wellness of the people for centuries. One primary barrier is the historical and intergenerational trauma that Oglala Lakota people face. The trauma is significant and enduring, which has led to difficult and well-documented disparities and challenges.

> History, whether it is told well or poorly, affects how we understand the present and suggests what tomorrow should look like. People usually consider the past while attempting to understand the present and develop policies and goals for the future. History is not the private domain of professional historians. Rather, perceptions and misperceptions of history inform the decisions and actions of politicians, business leaders, cultural figures and other influential members of society.
>
> *—A. Reinhardt, Welcome to the Oglala Nation (p. xxi)*

Exhibit 4. Pine Ridge Reservation County Map



The Pine Ridge Reservation

OLCJC is based in Pine Ridge, South Dakota, a town located on the Oglala Lakota Sioux reservation of Pine Ridge. The reservation includes ten communities, and its population of 35,000 people, 84 percent of whom are American Indian/Alaskan Native, is spread out over 3,468 square miles. The reservation is a young community: the median age is 25.4, with 42.4 percent of the population reported to be under 20 years old. Only 20 percent of Pine Ridge's population is older than 50 years old. Sadly, the life expectancy on Pine Ridge is among the lowest in the Western Hemisphere: approximately 47 years for men and 52 years for women.

History of the Oglala Lakota

Exhibit 5. Entering Pine Ridge Reservation Sign

The Oglala Lakota people have a strong oral tradition where knowledge, history, and laws are passed down through generations via storytelling, songs, and ceremonies. The oral history of Dakota and Lakota speakers states that the Oglala Lakota were members of an alliance called **Očeti Šakowiŋ** (Seven Council Fires) made up of seven **oyates** (or "people") who regarded each other as relatives bound by a sacred connection to the life-giving force of the universe known as **wakhan'**. The oyates spoke different dialects and occupied distinct locales across a vast swath of central North America, from the pine forests of the upper Great Lakes to the prairies and grasslands of the Upper Mississippi and Missouri River valleys. The Seven Council Fires controlled what was the economic and political hinge of North America in the 17th and 18th centuries. Outsiders from France, Spain, Britain, and the U.S. vied for access to the bounty of their domain, which held resources and game that drove trade. The Seven Council Fires, and in particular the Lakota, were the dominant source of geopolitical power in the region, and by 1800 controlled the flow of technology and commerce in the interior of the continent. Put simply, the decentralized networks of oyates controlled most of the interior of the continent (Hamalainen, 2019). Social values and responsibilities of the Lakota revolved around the welfare of the **tiospaye**, or local bands, that stayed together year-round; each oyate consisted of several tiospayes, which acted as the center of kinship and social order. Tiospayes could include more than twenty households or families. Ties of kinship bound the oyates together. Children, especially, were considered sacred throughout the community due to being gifts from the creator and the future of the Oglala Lakota (i.e., through the passing down of traditions and cultural ways).

Exhibit 6. Massacre of Wounded Knee Marker

So much changed—was lost, stolen—in the devastation brought by the encounter with American settlers and their government, which was marked by deception, violence, and ethnic cleansing (Reinhardt, 2015). The Seven Council Fires' (and in particular the Lakota's) flourishing by living in harmony with the land and each other became something altogether different in the face of settler colonialism. The formal relationship, especially in the form of treaties, between the U.S. and the Oglala Lakota Nation was

a source of harm to the latter; actions by Americans (rather than their government) also involved degrees of violence against the Oglala Lakota Nation and its way of life.

The U.S. has left a trail of troubling and discarded treaties that have had devastating effects on the Oglala Lakota Nation. Most notably, the Fort Laramie Treaty established the Great Sioux Reservation (see Exhibit 7), including all of present-day South Dakota west of the Missouri River, and gave the Lakota the right to hunt north of the North Platte River—in Nebraska, in the territories of Wyoming and Montana, and on the Republican River in Kansas and Nebraska (Biolsi, 1992). After sustained violence and upheaval during the 19th century, the Fort Laramie Treaty consigned the Lakota to life on reservations with the promise of schools, housing, food stuffs—none of which was fully honored.

> The attempted transformation of the Indian by the white man and the chaos that has resulted are but the fruits of the white man's disobedience of a fundamental and spiritual law. The pressure that has been brought to bear upon the native people, since the cessation of armed conflict, in the attempt to force conformity of custom and habit has caused a reaction more destructive than war, and the injury has not only affected the Indian, but has extended to the white population as well. Tyranny, stupidity, and the lack of vision have brought about the situation now alluded to as the "Indian Problem."
>
> *—Luther Standing Bear*

Exhibit 7: Historical Map of Great Sioux Reservation[4]

Further, there was a more-or-less explicit push to ethnically cleanse Indigenous populations by undermining social structures and eradicating Indigenous cultures. Indian Affairs agents, brutal in their tactics, often failed to deliver on their obligations or provided insufficient or rotten provisions, leaving thousands of Native people without food or resources to survive. They also controlled (by force if needed) who came on and off the reservation, constraining Tribes' ability to hunt, gather, and practice horticulture as they had traditionally done and as guaranteed by treaty agreements.

Indigenous culture was as much a target of this violence. To take one example: the American boarding school era represented a distinct shift in federal Indian policy from one of outright war and genocidal violence to one that targeted Native hearts, spirits, and minds. It sought ethnocide, the wholesale destruction of culture, religion, language, and Native identity. For example, by 1891, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) mandated boarding school attendance for children aged 4–18 and enabled Indian agents to forcibly take Native children from their families and homelands. But even before compulsory attendance at boarding schools, the BIA banned the use of Native languages in boarding schools (1880), and a ban (1881) on the Sun Dance was extended into a general policy (1885) forbidding traditional Indian religious ceremonies and related customs (Reyhner and Eder, 2004)—remaining in place until passage of the Native American Religious Freedom Act of 1978.[5] The federal oppression of Lakota people endured beyond the 19th century, from the failed injection of Western boilerplate governments and economies that tore communities apart from the inside following the Indian New Deal of the 1930s, to the ill-fated termination and

4 Source: North Dakota Studies Program website, State Historical Society of North Dakota.

5 As we learned from OLCJC case manager and cultural specialist Larry Swalley, the Sun Dance is perhaps the most important annual ceremonial rite of the Lakota.

relocation policies of the 1940s to 1960s. The 20th Century saw its share of bloodshed as well, for example, when members of the American Indian Movement occupied Wounded Knee on Pine Ridge in protest of treaty violations.

This is a living history—Elders born in the 1930s are only one generation removed from many of the worst of these events and the colonial violence and ethnic cleansing reverberate to this day—though it is not *just* history. Today, some community members have internalized past traumas and fears associated with colonization, which has led to prevailing lateral oppression (or internalized colonialism), in which the oppressed repeat oppressions: "Lateral violence begins as deflected aggression; hostility is directed towards those who will not retaliate" (Fire Thunder, 2015). Secrecy and normalization in the community keep lateral violence intact, yet education, prevention, and healing can intervene upon lateral oppression and dismantle it.

The Pine Ridge Reservation community experiences overwhelming poverty and periods of crisis among youth. There are few opportunities for economic growth on the Pine Ridge Reservation; the unemployment rate is currently over 80 percent, with 54 percent of the population living below the poverty line.[6] Oglala Lakota County, contained within the Pine Ridge Reservation, is the poorest county in the nation, with a median household income of $31,423 and over half of working-aged community members unemployed.[7] Compounding these effects, the families and children of the Lakota people have been the focal point of oppression and genocide over the last two hundred years. Children on the Pine Ridge Reservation experience the intergenerational consequences of fear-based power, genocide, and forced acculturation. The result is a void where healing lifeways have given way to ongoing forms of trauma and dysfunction that over time have been woven into the cultural fabric of the community.

For example, the Tribe declared the reservation's devastating youth suicide crisis a State of Emergency in 2015 and again in the summer of 2020, shortly after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic.

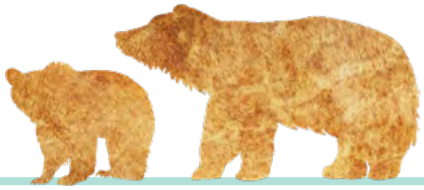
6 Source: Evaluability Assessment

7 Poverty and employment statistics were from the United States Census Bureau Quick Facts, Oglala Lakota County, South Dakota, July 2021. Available at https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/oglalalakotacountysouthdakota.

Documenting the Legacy of Trauma and Rebuilding With Resilience

Researchers across disciplines are increasingly linking trauma in all of its toxic permutations to increased risks for adverse physical, social, and behavioral health outcomes. Much of this interest stems from the landmark adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) study led by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Kaiser Permanente (Felitti et al., 1998), which found a strong relationship between the breadth of exposure to abuse or household dysfunction during childhood and multiple risk factors for several of the leading causes of death in adults. Subsequent and ongoing studies substantiate and build upon these findings and continue to explore the relationship between exposure to multiple forms of ACEs and an array of physical, social, and behavioral health outcomes (Brown, et al., 2009; Edwards et al., 2003; Gilbert et al., 2015; Koss et al., 2003; Liu et al., 2013). Research into the mechanisms through which trauma leads to these outcomes has shown that ongoing or extreme exposure to trauma and associated toxic levels of stress during childhood, especially during the first few years of life, can cause a cascade of physiological responses that impact the immune system and brain development. In turn, these changes can lead to problems with behavior and self-regulation and may ultimately endanger long term health (Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000). Toxic stress from trauma in early childhood predisposes individuals to increased risk of physical health problems such as heart disease; behavioral health problems such as depression, anxiety, and substance misuse; poor cognitive functioning; and compromised immune functioning (Hamoudi et al. 2015; Tyrka et al. 2015). For more information about historic and intergenerational trauma and its impacts see, CNCFR's Literature Review and Environmental Scan.

Research suggests that responses at the individual level fall within the context of individual mental and physical health and may include symptoms of PTSD and guilt, anxiety, grief, and depressive



symptomology (e.g., Barocas & Barocas, 1980). Responses at the familial level have received much less research attention; however, emerging work suggests that impacts may include impaired family communication (e.g., Wardi, 1992) and stress around parenting (Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998). Finally, at the community level, responses may include the breakdown of traditional culture and values, the loss of traditional rites of passage, high rates of alcoholism, high rates of physical illness (e.g., obesity), and internalized racism (e.g., Duran, Duran, Brave Heart, & Yellow Horse-Davis, 1998). Indeed, the recognition that events may have effects at the group or community levels is critical in emerging conceptions of historical trauma and implies the possibility of collective group impacts. That is, AI/AN individuals may not simply experience individual- and family-level responses, they may also live within the context of a traumatized community (Evans-Campbell, 2008).

> Through work with children, immediate and extended family, service providers, and the community, the program aims to reduce long-term negative consequences of child maltreatment among future generations by breaking the cycle of intergenerational child maltreatment. We dream of a day when we are no longer needed.
>
> *—OLCJC program staff*

This portrait of the community and its context is stark and does not capture the survivance of a vibrant culture and community that has hope for a better future. Lakota families are resilient in the face of the loss and violence perpetrated on their families for generations. Community members find strength in one another and in Lakota ways of living. We now explore this strength, which provides the foundation of OLCJC's program.

Portrait of the *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program

The Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center (OLCJC), formerly known as Oglala Lakota Court Appointed Special Advocate (OLCASA), leads the *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program, which focuses on supporting the healing of Lakota children who have experienced physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. *Zuya Yuha O'mani* means "Walking Everywhere in Spiritual Strength/Defense of the Children." The program serves **Wakanyeja** (sacred little ones[8]) and their **Tiospaye** (extended family) in the nine districts of the Pine Ridge Reservation.

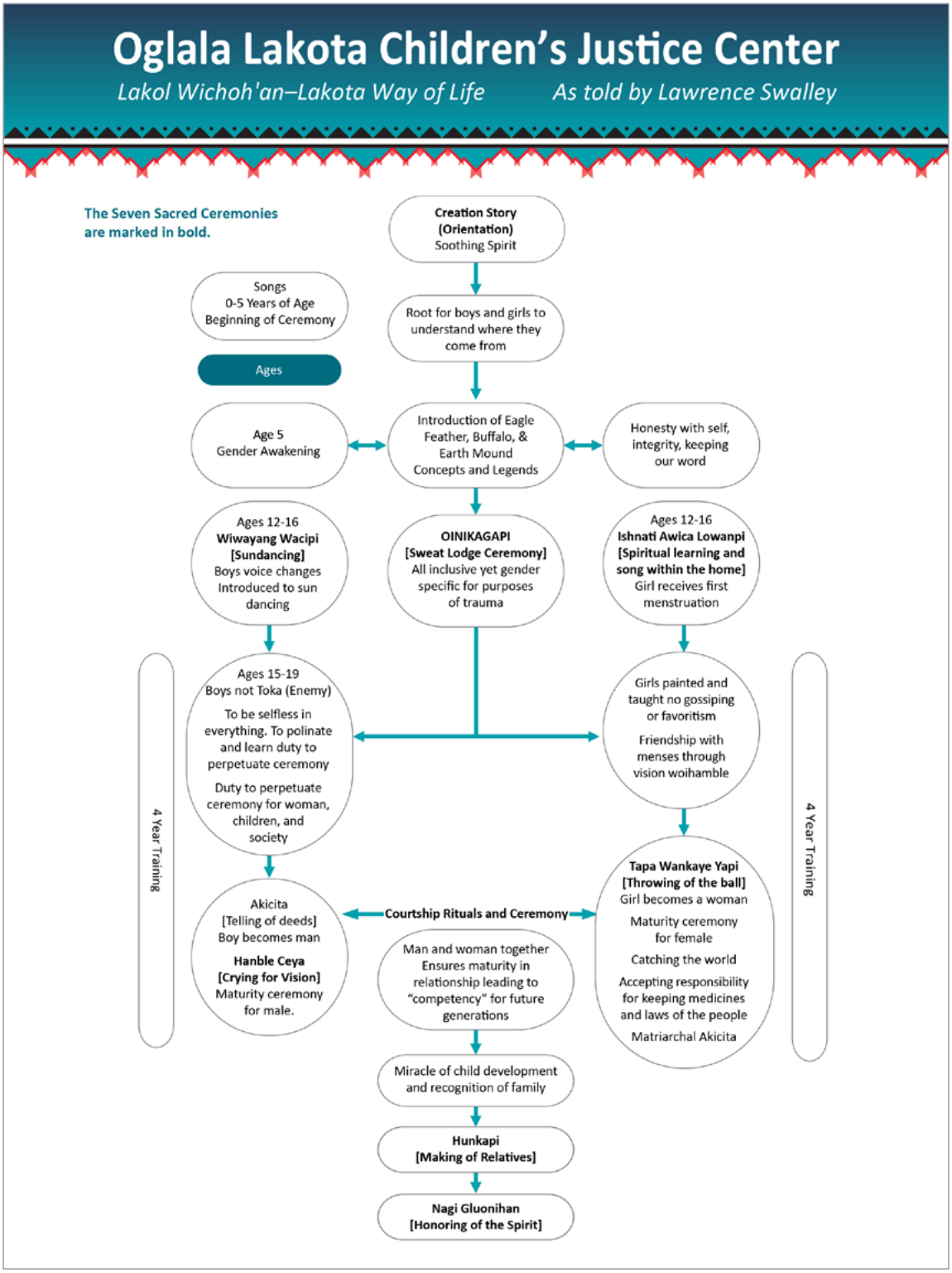
The *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program emphasizes the development of cultural competence and identity to promote child and family well-being. The program's cultural teachings are an antidote to forced assimilation and failed efforts to extinguish Lakota culture, using the medicine of the Lakota culture to heal injuries from forced assimilation and ongoing manifestations of trauma. One community knowledge bearer described how the Pine Ridge Reservation has undergone a cultural renaissance in the past four decades, such that ceremony and culture have gained positive recognition and schools have incorporated Lakota traditions, such as beginning the day with a prayer and song. This revival has generated hope for the promising role of culture in prevention and healing.

At the core of the *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program is the Lakota creation story (refer to Appendix A) and cosmology: In the beginning, the Creator gave the people assignments, rights, and ways for living on the land and with each other. People's primary responsibility was caring for the community, especially for the children and Elders. The community and the prayers of the Lakota develop relationships beyond the traditional Western nuclear family, including extended family and bringing in other teachers, helpers, and caregivers, as the child's needs dictate. The Lakota people believe that, in the spirit world, children choose parents that they see as a resource for them to grow.

8 For the Lakota people, children are sacred. "Children" or "sacred little ones" are common Western translations of Wakanyeja. The word is essentially two parts: **Wakan** (holy or sacred) and **yeja** (to mix one's blood to create the child). To be sacred is to be treated as a gift from spirit, as precious ones who are our future.

When a family is gifted with a child, the family is given the great responsibility of caring for them, helping the child to develop their special skills and blessings.

Exhibit 8. Creation Story Diagram



OLCJC is a living demonstration of the mission given to the people in the Creation Story (See Exhibit 8). With that mission in mind, the dedicated staff share Lakota healing—ceremony, language, and culture—with the children and youth they work with. The staff and many community members offer cultural support and engage with OLCJC across many roles in the child's life. Staff provide spiritual guidance to all involved in the center's work. OLCJC provides healing to the people who have been traumatized by re-centering the family and child through advocacy work and cultural services. OLCJC staff are committed to providing specifically *Lakota* cultural services and filling gaps in the needs of children; as a result, they have a unique place in the community's network of social and judicial services. Importantly, this approach does not fit neatly into a Western-oriented service array or categorical approach that strictly delineates the scope and reach of OLCJC during "normal office hours." Rather, access to OLCJC services reflects a "lifestyle approach" to service delivery with client access as needed without "off the clock" constraints. Instead, as the creation story teaches, OLCJC takes a holistic approach and goes to where the need is to provide whatever resources it can to the children and families of the community.

Child and Family Code of the Oglala Sioux Tribe/Lakota Nation

As an organization, OLCJC champions the 2007 Wakanyeja Na Tiwahe Ta Woope[9] (Child and Family Code of the Oglala Sioux Tribe/Lakota Nation, or "the Code").[10] The Code, which Arlana helped to write, is intended to represent the proper functioning of Lakota families and empower the Lakota people to better care for children. In support of the Nation's distinctive identity, culture, and values, the Code defines Lakota kinship and interaction as well as using Lakota ways to care for and protect children. Part of OLCJC's current mission is to provide education on the Code to people who operate within federal, state, and Tribal child welfare jurisdictions, describing the Code's history, development, and components. This continued education promotes increased understanding and compliance with the Tribal Code and the Seven Traditional Laws, as the community faces turnover among officials.

> For advocacy, we say that these children have the right to know their culture, language, customs, and ceremonies. And we're doing [this work] with the children, but we have non-offending parents who want to be involved.
>
> *—OLCJC staff*

The Code is comprehensive and, like the Lakota Creation Story, provides guiding principles for the work of OLCJC. For example, children removed from the home are placed in accordance with the Indian Child Welfare Act and Tribal law—that is, placed in Indian homes and with all possible efforts made to reunify children with their families.

The Code also provides guidance to the community with specific information on the traditional laws governing decisions affecting children (Oyate Ta Woope). The traditional laws are intended to support the retention of traditional practices, rooted in the history of the people, the language, and the belief in living harmoniously with the natural world.

9 "*Woope*" means "law," though it does not have the same connotations that the term "law" has in the Anglo-American tradition. "It represents that Women come from Wo Ope and as such are responsible for carrying the laws of Creation within the Universe, the World, their Nation, and most importantly in their homes. Without woman, there could be no life. So, women are instructed to uphold the laws without gossip or favoritism, and men are instructed to honor and provide protection to the family through diligence in prayer. Thus, men provide and initiate ceremony for their loved ones for the rest of their lives as a responsibility" (Larry Swalley, via email, November 2, 2023).

10 As with many federally recognized Tribes, the Oglala Sioux Tribe has developed its own Tribal Court, law, and code. Tribal codes help to legally maintain cultural practices and beliefs and "ensure the preservation of Tribal sovereignty and the right of Natives to be judged within their own systems, not subject to the biases and prejudices of Western thought" (Thurman 1995). As a part of law and code development, Tribes determine standards for rights based on beliefs and priorities, including rights of the individual and kin group. Research within Indigenous communities is improved when efforts are made to understand the nature and intent of Tribal codes.

Exhibit 9. Traditional Laws to Govern Decisions Affecting Children (Oyate Ta Woope)[11]

TRADITIONAL LAW	MEANING
Wocekiye ("faithfulness")	To believe in and pray to Tunkasila, or Wakan Tanka (the Great Spirit), as the supreme being and power and as the creator of all that is. Wakan Tanka gave the people seven sacred ceremonies as means of cleansing themselves and seeking guidance and direction from the Great Spirit.
Wowacinksape ("wisdom")	To be sound in mind and to acquire the knowledge necessary to make proper and effective decisions for the well-being of the people.
Wonagiksape ("spirituality")	To be sound in spirit and to live according to the laws, direction, and guidance of Tunkasila.
Wowacintanka ("fortitude")	To exercise self-control and discipline, and to have the strength of mind to endure pain and adversity.
Wowaunsila ("generosity")	To look after the well-being of others, and to share one's knowledge and materials so that others may prosper.
Wawoyuonihan ("respect")	To respect oneself and the rights, beliefs, and decisions of others.
Wowahokunkiye ("guidance and counseling")	To advise, counsel, and guide others in the proper ways and beliefs of the people, especially the youth.

11 Oglala Sioux Child and Family Code

Community Supports for Healing and Wellness Provided by the *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program in Alignment With the Seven Laws

The Code mandates that all social service entities working with children and families include cultural services in their work, and the Code describes the roles and responsibilities of each social service entity. As a leading social service entity in the community, OLCJC attempts to build partnerships with community stakeholders and social services organizations in support of that mandate. Working in alignment with Lakota values, the OLCJC team members use the Traditional Laws, as communicated in the Code, as the foundation of and guide for the services it provides. All services are individualized for each person and family based on their needs and existing trauma. OLCJC works closely with the community, collaborating with partners to locate relatives of the child and ensure that families receive culturally appropriate interventions. Reciprocally, community partners and agencies, such as Tribal child protective services, refer children to OLCJC for services.

1. Wocekiye – "Faithfulness"

Creation Story

The Creation Story describes how the Lakota were meant to be as a people, teaching about sacredness, the sacred powers, and the sacred path of the people. Teaching the Creation Story of the Lakota people to children helps them understand where they come from and how they carry that tradition within themselves—and therefore are sacred. It can be healing to know that the strengths of culture live within them and that it is a community responsibility to protect this cultural way.

> The work I provide is to help children create a friendship within themselves, leading to healing and happiness through ceremony.
>
> —*Larry*

The cultural teachings provided to families address the value of Lakota cultural ceremonies and the necessity to re-acculturate to traditional ways and to knowing and practicing the Lakota culture throughout one's life. As part of this process, Larry helps children to understand the meaning behind Lakota stories and the importance and journey of youth as a male and as a female, to learn the responsibilities of each gender, and to grow in understanding their roles and responsibilities as they enter womanhood and manhood. As illustrated in Exhibit 8, cultural teachings encompass gender- and age-specific lessons, spiritual ceremonies, teachings in the Lakota language, and Lakota songs.

Cultural Ceremonies

The OLCJC program is guided by the knowledge that Lakota culture helps to overcome trauma by strengthening and healing the child's spirit through the wisdom of the Lakota ways. Through storytelling and song, OLCJC offers cultural education and ceremony for families. For children, cultural services develop and strengthen their knowledge of Lakota heritage and identity, build their resiliency, improve their outlook on life, and set them on a healing journey. Cultural services strengthen children by teaching about child development according to Lakota ways of life. These teachings guide family members to conduct themselves in culturally appropriate ways, which strengthen families and provides a way to address issues from a spiritual context. These teachings help individuals to see how they are meant to be and what roles they are meant to play as well as provide a foundation and guidance system for moving forward in a positive way.

> Under the Oglala Lakota Culture Matriarchal Social Construct, Elders, Women, and Children are at the Center (Sacred Hoop). They come first and foremost, above everything and all else. For this reason, the Culture is all inclusive. There is no room for discrimination or exclusion.
>
> —*OLCJC Program Brochure*

Upon receiving a referral (from the community, another organization, or via self-referral), OLCJC assesses the child's needs and provides an immediate intervention with the caretaker's permission—an orientation and Lakota Song (**Lowanpi**) to calm the spirit. The "calm the spirit" orientation recognizes past and current trauma experienced by the children and family. The ceremony includes an orientation to Lakota culture and singing a traditional Lakota song that begins the healing journey. This orientation, occurring at the beginning of the relationship between OLCJC and the child, is intended to replenish cultural strength to deal with traumatic feelings. In essence, it calms the child's spirit and begins a relationship building process between the child and staff.

As illustrated in Exhibit 8, cultural teachings encompass gender- and age-specific lessons, spiritual ceremonies, teachings in the Lakota language, and Lakota songs.

> When [Lakota children] go to ceremony or hear the drum, it awakens something. It feels good. When they come home and hear that welcoming, they think, "this is where I belong." …They have a strong and honorable heritage that was not explained before, or they missed out on. Knowing who you are strengthens children going forward.
>
> *—Tribal child welfare services leader*

2. Wowacinksape – "Wisdom"

Advocacy

OLCJC advocates holistically for the needs of the children and families, which includes activities ranging from making referrals to community resources to providing children with donated items such as school supplies, clothes, or toiletries. Administratively, OLCJC screens the child's case to determine whether to develop a service plan, assign a case number, and initiate advocacy or cultural services.

> When Lakota children are abused, a little bit of our culture, spirit, and soul dies. That's because children (along with women and Elders) are at the center of the Oglala Lakota social construct. And no one is more vulnerable than a child. That's why OLCJC exists. We provide advocacy to children who have been traumatized by sexual, emotional, and physical abuse. We are committed to advocating for the best interests of our Lakota children with recommendations for their physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.
>
> *—OLCJC*

The program's child-centered and nurturing advocacy focuses on uplifting the well-being of children. In the Lakota way, advocacy means being a "good relative" in the child's life by protecting the child. As members of the Oglala Lakota Nation, OLCJC staff stand for children and reinstate a community sense of Lakota children as sacred. Through action, OLCJC staff respond to important and often unasked questions, "Are our Lakota children safe and secure?" and "Where were they when the first responders arrived?"

> Those are not so and so's kids. They are our kids. We should treat all our kids like they are our own, and not treat them lesser because they are in the system or foster care. We have to be accountable. OLCJC is part of repair and strengthening. They recognize and build on strengths.
>
> *—Tribal child welfare services leader*

OLCJC staff are versatile, drawing on diverse and extensive professional experience with serving children and families, including but not limited to roles in child protective services, court-appointed special advocacy, law enforcement, and home visiting and parent education. OLCJC advocacy duties sometimes mirror responsibilities of special advocates, which is unsurprising given

that OLCJC was formerly a CASA agency. Some OLCJC services support Tribal child protective services, for example, by assisting in investigations of child abuse allegations. OLCJC staff's experience and versatility contributes to their ability to tailor their advocacy and cultural services for children and families to best support the changing needs of families over time. OLCJC staff adapt advocacy services to fluctuating circumstances based on community needs and advocate for children and caregivers. Advocacy support includes making reports to the public child welfare system, as needed, attending court hearings, and making court appearances on behalf of the child if needed. OLCJC team members partner in investigations of child abuse and neglect with state and federal partners as appropriate and provide referrals and access to trauma-informed counseling (Lakota and Western) and life skills training for caregivers and children.

> We must help children from the point of trauma throughout healing and restoring – so they are living, not simply surviving.
>
> —*Arlana*

The team members also serve as a vital connection with local public child welfare systems to identify and support extended family and relatives of children where they can be safe and begin their healing. Through their advocacy, the OLCJC team recognizes the importance in relationships and family. Team members also provide support to caregivers, including parenting education.

Child Protection Team

To meet the needs of children holistically, OLCJC staff collaborate with social services partners in the community, including the child protection team, sexual assault response teams, multi-disciplinary teams,[12] the Attorney General's office, the court, Department of Public Safety, the child protection agency, the domestic violence program, the Indian Health Service, the juvenile detention facility, and schools. With these partners, OLCJC uses a fact-finding process to understand the child's background, experiences, and circumstances. OLCJC is authorized to view and share case-specific information and exchange case information with the Child Protection Team (CPT) to discuss service referrals, news, progress, lessons learned, and successes. During the CPT meetings, the multi-disciplinary team members review the data regarding the number of offenders who are arrested for child abuse or neglect. Many offenders have generational histories of abuse. The community has also experienced spiritual abuse, where children or youth are attempting to find a spiritual connection and will be abused, under the guise of spirituality. This can have debilitating effects on a young person who has been violated at the spiritual level.

> A lot of it is kids don't want to be taken from their parents. Because, at the end of the day, no matter what their parent does, they still love them.
>
> —*Bobbi*

3. Wonagiksape – "Spirituality"

Safe Space

OLCJC staff begin engaging with a child by acknowledging the trauma that a child has experienced or witnessed and creating a safe space for the child. *Calming the Spirit* is a special greeting and introduction time when OLCJC staff ceremonially smudge (cleanse) the child with a traditional medicine, sage. Lakota prayers are offered for them, including to the spirit in the water for the children to experience healing. When developmentally appropriate, staff may engage the child in conversation and support the child's experience to assure the child that he or she has done nothing wrong.

Forensic Interviewing

The OLCJC serves as a Child Advocacy Center (CAC). CACs are safe, child-focused environments where children can tell their story and experience of trauma in the presence of a trained interviewer. The interview can be recorded and preserved, recognizing the importance of children not being re-traumatized by

12 A multi-disciplinary team is a group of different agencies that work together to help victims or survivors of a crime through their criminal justice journeys.

repeatedly telling the story of abuse.[13] Sometimes, OLCJC staff may apply their forensic interview training to listen to the child's account of the abuse. OLCJC staff are very careful not to re-traumatize the child, so they don't force children to talk about the abuse they experienced or witnessed. To support this work, the OLCJC has recently purchased an RV, which will be used to travel across the reservation and offer a mobile private space for interviews with victims of abuse and neglect. Prior to the grant-funded purchasing of the RV, children and families would need to travel to OLCJC from across the reservation to support a forensic interview when needed. Arlana has given national presentations on child and family codes and preparing children for court, and both Arlana and Larry are trained in forensic interviewing.

> We don't bring [the traumatic event] up. We don't talk about what happened to them. We don't pry. Instead, when we get them, we just let them talk.
>
> —*Larry*

4. Wowacintanka – "Fortitude"

Case Management

As case managers, the OLCJC team members work with the community providers to identify services to address the needs of the children. The services offered include traditional and non-traditional services intended to support and strengthen children and youth, both physically and mentally. One of the services provided during the COVID-19 pandemic included an online youth yoga class. Additional services and programs include summer art camps and other community events throughout the year that focus on harvesting and sustaining traditional foods, which includes gathering traditional plant medicines and managing the local buffalo herd.

OLCJC team members further network and develop new partnerships, generate donations, and locate volunteers, all with the intention of supporting the children and families they serve.

13 A forensic interview is a "single session, recorded interview designed to elicit a child's unique information when there are concerns of possible abuse or when the child has witnessed violence against another person" ("Forensic Interview Services," 2021).

5. Wowaunsila – "Generosity"

Community Education and Outreach

The *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program provides community education to promote learning and understanding of Lakota culture, child maltreatment, and child welfare issues using formal and informal methods. This educational content supports prevention efforts for caregivers and families and describes and demonstrates the services offered by the program to meet the needs and demands of children and families at risk.

OLCJC has conducted assessments to better understand the impact of education and outreach on the community, subsequently developing targeted strategies that meet the community's information needs using the best methods and channels for reaching the community.

> [W]e get to do the gift bags for them, the backpacks, once they're done doing their interview. The interview process is really hard because that's their trauma. Afterwards I ask them, "What do you like? What do you like to do? What do you like for fun?" They tell me and so we go pick out stuff from the donations and give them a little care package to take home.
>
> —*Bobbi*

The OLCJC team members facilitate community conversations that are topic-driven and focused on the needs of children and families, including explorations into what the community looked like at its best and what it looks like at the present time. This phase of the dialogue supports the exploration of future possibilities to support the community moving forward.

OLCJC promotes community and public awareness about child abuse and how OLCJC works to address it through ongoing outreach and education. These efforts serve as a primary level of prevention for child maltreatment and important strategies to sustain OLCJC as an organization. OLCJC outreach activities include community conversations and discussions with local elected officials. One community leader expressed appreciation for being part of a community conversation that raised questions about the welfare of children who had been sheltering in place in unsafe homes due to the pandemic.

> I liked being a part of the February conversation. It was good to be part of that effort. The center of our work is children. What is happening right now with children as they shelter in place at home? Schools are a safe place. What will the state of children be when they return this fall? This time is showing we need to provide a safe place [for children] throughout the year. How are we providing that safe space for our children?
>
> *—Lakota community leader*

OLCJC also leads education and awareness events, trainings, and presentations on local radio stations and at regional and national conferences. Larry has provided formal group trainings to social workers from Tribal child protective services and invests time to teach the social workers about the Lakota culture, helping social workers to become comfortable with Lakota culture and embrace the meaning it brings to the lives of children that they serve. Social workers with this learning and appreciation go on to attend Lakota ceremonies for children and families and recognize the lifechanging importance of ceremony in the lives of the children they serve.

OLCJC also hosted an awareness event to commemorate April as Child Abuse Awareness Month and address rising concerns about child maltreatment during the pandemic. At the event, staff and community members gathered with signs and planted 750 pinwheels in the ground to represent each child in protective services in the community.

Program staff have also led an awareness walk in support of Child Abuse Awareness Month. The goal of the event was to increase awareness regarding the protection of the Lakota Children against all forms of depredation, recommend judicial structure reform, demand an end to violence, and elevate the presence of the health and healing capacities present in the Oglala Lakota Nation.

Exhibit 10. Peace Circles Event Flyer

Exhibit 10 is an announcement for a training that OLCJC led with community partners to discuss the role of Peace Circles, a historic way of dealing with disputes in Tribal communities. To spread the word and the hope of the program and its message, OLCJC marketing involves disseminating lliterature, videos, and a program brochure on a publicly available website and through social media.

> This is who you are. And we're helping that by yes, this healing, from the point of trauma throughout healing. We're also helping this by having these discoveries of us people as who we are. We're helping you by forming this women's society, this women's circle to provide that nurturing, safe environment and bring you to this healing so you don't have to go through some of those things that we went through. And so, that's how we're doing it.
>
> —*Arlana*

The OLCJC team further supports the community with fundraising and events focused on school supplies, locating and sharing food and resources, and, if they receive funding, creating gift bags for children and families for various holidays.

6. Wawoyuonihan – "Respect"

Women's Circle

The OLCJC team believe in the important role of storytelling in sharing and educating one another on the history and traditions of the Lakota people. During the winter season, storytelling is critical to embracing and pulling in Elders and generations of grandmothers who have historically not had a voice.

> The Elders are the backbone of our nation, and we're supposed to keep the children safe and protected.
>
> —*Bobbi*

7. Wowahokunkiye – "Guidance and Counseling"

Community Wellness

OLCJC team members support and organize community wellness activities and partner with community services for children. To do this, they have conducted interagency meetings to focus on renewing working relationships to ensure their common goal of supporting children and families is the primary focus. To this end, the community has also developed a form of restorative justice, called "sentencing circles," in hopes of making community members more accountable to each other and reduce the number of people who are committing crimes.[14]

> I always remember this, *Let our people not just survive…We're going to live.* And I just put that in myself. I put that in myself. *We are going to live.* And that's what I thought, *I've got to live here.*
>
> —*Arlana*

For the Lakota, all relationships on earth are symbolic of our connection, all parts within the whole of creation are related and sacred. For example, every aspect of the sweat lodge reflects Lakota cosmology and the universe. As described by noted Lakota Holy Man Black Elk in *The Sacred Pipe: Black Elk's Account of the Seven Rites of the Oglala*, the rite of the sweat lodge uses all the powers of the universe, earth, and the things which grow from the earth, water, fire, and air. The sweat lodge purifies body and mind and brings people closer to Wakan Tanka. For example, the sweat lodge's frame is set up to reflect the sacred directions, with the door to the East (the direction from which the light of wisdom comes). The rocks represent the Grandmother Earth, and the fire used to heat the rocks reflects the power of Wakan Tanka, which, like the sun, gives things life; the place at the center of

14 For more information, see "Oglala Sioux Tribe in SD Trying Sentencing Circles," https://www.iirp.edu/news/oglala-sioux-tribe-in-sd-trying-sentencing-circles.

the lodge is the center of the universe. Black Elk further describes how the sweat lodge exemplifies the powers of the universe to purify:

> The water represents the Thunder-beings who come fearfully but bring goodness, for the steam which comes from the rocks, within which is the fire, is frightening, but it purifies us so that we may live as Wakan Tanka wills, and He may even send to us a vision if we become very pure.
>
> When we use the water in the sweat lodge, we should think of Wanka Tanka, who is always flowing, giving His power and life to everything; we should even be as water which is lower than all things, yet stronger than even rocks. (Black Elk and Brown, 1953)

[W]ith the use of the sweat lodge, when we take them in there, it's pitch black. So there's nobody looking at them like a psychologist taking notes. That's more intimidating than it is healing. So when it's pitch black, there's nobody staring at them and expecting them to answer. And we go in and we soothe the spirit, calm the spirit down from the trauma, by using songs and stories. And the atmospheric effect of the sweat lodge also helps to calm them down. So we're using the number one ceremony, which is the sweat lodge, to calm the spirit initially… they understand that perhaps their mother and father were not taught these things, and so this is why they continue to do harmful things to their children, like abandonment or abuse or neglect.

And so once they have that understanding, then they realize that, "Okay, well, I can change that in my life. I can release it in a way where I'm not holding onto it and that's the only thing I think about every day, from the moment I wake up to the time I go to bed." So we put it in their hands to say, and in a cultural way, that you have a responsibility to create your own destiny. And once they realize that they have their own control over the issue, then they're able to not let everything go as if it didn't happen, but to evaluate that and realize that that trauma and what they experienced, doesn't make them who they are.

—Larry

CNCFR Project Activities

The composition of the "project team" for the OLCJC project changed over the course of the work, and ultimately included 2 OLCJC lead staff and 1 intern (who later became staff); 10 community knowledge bearers and advisors from Pine Ridge; and several team members and expert consultants from the Center (the Center team).

Between summer 2019 and fall 2022, project team meetings included several onsite meetings and regular Zoom calls, which occurred at least weekly as the project progressed. The Center team facilitated multi-day virtual site visits in 2020 and 2021, which were held via Zoom due to the pandemic. In early 2023, Center team members returned to Pine Ridge for an onsite visit to gain additional information and context around the initial information gathered to tell the story of the program.

In honor of the Lakota ways of communication, culture, and knowledge passed down through generations, project meetings facilitated by the Center were grounded in the principles of IWOK. The project involved engaging with the community; seeking the wisdom of Elders; incorporating oral tradition, storytelling, and ceremony; and keeping community values and context at the center of the work. OLCJC opened meetings with a prayer and a song, as is customary to give thanks to the Creator and ask for his guidance in the work. OLCJC opened meetings in this way as a gift to meeting members and all who contributed to the work that OLCJC was doing. Opening in prayer helped group members spiritually and mindfully engage with the work and its greater purpose. Meeting environments were relaxed, with a virtual meeting "open door" for community members and knowledge bearers to listen and participate in discussion if they wished. Sharing often involved a personal experience or reflection.

> Context grounds all aspects of Indigenous evaluation. From an Indigenous evaluation framework, programs are understood within their relationship to place, setting, and community, and evaluations are planned, undertaken, and validated in relation to cultural context. (LaFrance, Nichols, and Kirkhart, 2012).

Readiness and Evaluability

Planning and implementing evaluation of the OLCJC program involved a collaborative and participatory process that was governed by OLCJC leadership and key members of the community, with support of the Center team. Planning for an evaluation included the development of culturally grounded and Tribally driven research questions, methodologies, and instruments. All processes of the work of the Center included grounding in IWOK and sought to honor Indigenous ways of communication, incorporate cultural values, and integrate traditional knowledge gathering passed down through generations.

Collaboration and relationship building with the community and leadership of the OLCJC project began in May 2019 with the community readiness and evaluability assessment. The Center team provided training and orientation to the project sites on the use of the Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research's Community Readiness Assessment.[15] The model provides the community an opportunity to assess the level of community readiness for success when implementing interventions.

> Traditional knowledge is not in the past as an artifact, it's a blueprint for the future.
>
> —*Larry*

15 Manual materials are adapted by JBS International, Inc. based on materials from the Tri Ethnic Center for Prevention Research's Community Readiness Assessment (Colorado State University) and SAMSHA Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Center, Community Readiness Manual on Suicide Prevention in Native Communities.

To complete the readiness assessment, OLCJC staff initiated a community meeting process to begin conversations on the importance of the project and gauge the communities' readiness to move forward with refinement, expansion, and implementation efforts. As needed, Center staff provided guidance, materials, and support to the project site team and they moved forward to complete their readiness assessment. The results of the readiness assessment suggested the community supported the effort, and activities of the project were underway with supportive staff who are trained and experienced. The results demonstrated a solid level of community support across the dimensions of readiness.

Examples of information learned during the assessment focused on the accessibility of the cultural program for all children. As OLCJC has provided ceremonies to support the healing of victims of abuse or neglect, they recognize that not every child or youth has access to the ceremonies as a part of their own healing or growth. Working with schools, the OLCJC program has influenced the teaching of cultural traditions, but further acknowledges more work needs to be done to build the cultural component of the education for all children and youth. The community members believe demonstration of strong cultural ties could be as simple as providing nutritious food for children in the schools.

> Our families are disconnected because of the alcohol abuse, and it has rolled over to multiple generations. We need to break the cycle on youth.
>
> *– Arlana*

1. Understanding Evaluability

Using the Guided Storytelling Framework, the Center team traveled to the Pine Ridge Reservation in May 2019 to continue building the relationship with the OLCJC program. Traveling from Rapid City, the drive to the community of Pine Ridge was one of vast beauty of the surrounding landscape, with frequent historical markers serving as reminders of both the tragic events that continue to impact the community as well as a powerful illustration of the Lakota connection to their homeland. Being invited into the community was an honor that was not taken lightly, and one that was approached with much humility and respect for the people that opened the door to the invitation.

The Center team members met with the project site team to listen and learn. Over a period of two days, the team heard about cultural, traditional, and ceremonial values of the people of Pine Ridge. The stories spanned the topic areas of family and community wellness, traditional parenting and kinship practices, cultural history, and the vision for the OLCJC in supporting the restoration of cultural resilience in the community. The visit informed the priorities for information gathering to be able to share the journey of the OLCJC program and better understand how OLCJC and cultural connections supports the prevention and intervention of child maltreatment.

2. Teaming Agreement

Following the onsite meeting, the Center team members worked with OLCJC leadership to collaborate on a teaming agreement.[16]

16 See Appendix B for a copy of the teaming agreement.

The teaming agreement was founded on a mutual understanding and trust. The agreement stated the Center's commitment to honor the principles of data sovereignty and Tribally-driven participatory research and evaluation.

3. Pathway to Change and Project Workplan

The project team collaborated with the community on the development of a Pathway to Change (PTC), an Indigenous approach to creating logic models. The initial meeting commenced on August 1, 2019, at the OLCJC office in Pine Ridge, South Dakota. As with all CNCFR meetings with Tribal projects, pre-meeting protocol included prayer and a less formal discussion designed to break the ice and ensure everyone was comfortable with each other in order to facilitate the free flowing of conversation. Meeting participants sat around a conference table and discussed the various activities associated with the PTC and next steps regarding continued PTC and work plan development. Participants included Arlana and Larry from OLCJC and several CNCFR staff (Anthony Ernst (JBS), Project Lead; Liz Clary (Mathematica), Evaluation Lead; and Joe Walker (JBS), Indigenous Projects Program Lead). Discussion centered on the PTC's seven activities designed to gather sufficient information to get a clear understanding of the program, which subsequently enabled the development of the project's workplan. Completion of the PTC occurred through multiple calls and emails shortly after the August 1, 2019, site visit.

The PTC provided a platform for creating an action plan and steps for the project. The action plan included the building blocks of the work plan, with specific objectives, activities, roles, and responsibilities for team members to implement and support the workplan goals of developing, implementing, evaluating, and sustaining the program. The workplan included an in-depth description of the OLCJC program and goals for child maltreatment prevention. It also laid out central goals of the collaboration between OLCJC and CNCFR, as follows:

1. Complete a teaming agreement, create a PTC, and complete a project workplan, legacy plan, and evaluation plan.
2. Create a practice map of OLCJC services that displays the service array and flow.
3. Document OLCJC services and activities in a program manual and explore how peacemaking can be instituted in program services.
4. Identify program reporting data elements and develop or select a program data reporting tool or system.
5. Explore issues and challenges with program referrals, such as gatekeeping, and increase referrals.

The project team completed the first three goals and developed all associated documentation. The project team completed the fourth goal by identifying and selecting a data system, but OLCJC did not adopt the data system during the project. The project team made progress towards the fifth goal by identifying key issues and challenges with program referrals and developing a referral and intake form. However, referrals did not increase during the project period.

4. Ongoing Project Meetings

The project team embraced regularly scheduled calls as the primary mechanism for information sharing, meeting at least weekly throughout the project. OLCJC staff and community members were unfaltering in their commitment to the CNCFR project. OLCJC staff steadily engaged in project meetings, and community members attended meetings selectively based on relevance of the meetings to areas of expertise or to simply touch base with the progress of the project.

5. Site Visits

The site visits were learning opportunities to further understand the program, its goals, and how community members invested in OLCJC's work. The visits (both virtual and in person) were an opportunity for OLCJC community members to come together to discuss the role of OLCJC in the community and value to community partners.

Planning the *Zuya Yuha O'mani* Program Evaluation

> The evaluation was a little bit daunting…. I know that that's a lot of work, a lot of gathering…. However, having the [CNCFR] team… who I over the years have been mentored by, I knew that we really looked at that world relational view, that Lakota practice model…. So that's when it started coming into a concept like, "Oh, this is what we do. This is how we do it. We're going to tell them what we need to look at."
>
> *– Arlana*

The Center team used the Project Driven Evaluation Planning Tool (see Appendix C) to collect information and resources to be used for the purposes of evaluation. The Center team gathered information during recurring project team meetings and facilitated dedicated discussions with OLCJC leaders, community members, and evaluation advisors. At the same time, the Center team worked with Arlana and Larry to develop a proposed evaluation plan that was shared with OLCJC and community members to ensure that the information accurately represented the approach to information gathering, and who would be responsible. OLCJC staff and community members guided the Center's development of the tools used for information gathering, Tribal Research Review Board applications, trainings, tracking tools, analysis files, and reports. The process that emerged was deeply collaborative.

Evaluation planning culminated in culturally sensitive, project-driven research questions, methods, procedures, and instruments designed to demonstrate program effectiveness. Appendix D presents a timeline of key collaborative milestones that took place between April 2019 and February 2023. Milestones and activities included the completion of a readiness and evaluability assessment, regular team meetings, PTC, project work plan, work with the Oglala Sioux Tribe Research Review Board (OST RRB), and gaining the wisdom and insight from expert consultants in IWOK.

Research Question and Methods Development

Research questions. The research questions focused on gathering information that would help tell the story of the program and its strengths. Research question development was an iterative process that began to unfold after the first virtual site visit. The research questions drew upon key themes distilled from the site visit and the background that had been gathered through previous engagement. While the process of drafting research questions helped the Center team better understand the program and information discussed at the site visit, the initial set of proposed questions failed to resonate with OLCJC and seemed disconnected from OLCJC's holistic approach. This was one of many opportunities to venture further into cross cultural understanding and engage in deep listening and collaboration to understand Lakota notions of effectiveness and wellness.

The Center team's initial failures provided space for more bi-directional learning. For example, we learned community and individual notions of health and wellness stand in stark contrast to Western biomedical notions of health and wellness. Indigenous notions of wellness are often viewed as harmony or balance of the heart, body, mind, and spirit. The Lakota, like most Tribal communities, have their own systems of health knowledge. Before colonization, these systems were rooted in diverse local sociocultural ecosystems. The Lakota are increasingly focusing on decolonization of health and health systems. For example, within Tribal contexts, the impacts of trauma, like substance abuse, are often viewed as spiritual diseases or imbalances. Every Native community has distinct notions of and words that convey well-being, living in a good way, and living in balance with all things. The Lakota phrase, "Mitákuye Owás'į", which translates to "all of my relatives—I am related to all", is usually uttered at the closure of ceremony or prayer to recognize participants' place and relationship to all things.

The team worked together to construct research questions that would honor Lakota notions of health and wellness while being attentive to the work OLCJC does to restore balance among the children and families it works with. Using the CNCFR Project Driven Evaluation Planning Tool (see Appendix C), the Center team supported the community conversations and guided the evaluation planning in a manner aligned with the community values and interests in understanding the program and the cultural indications of success.

The final research questions reflected the OLCJC team's priorities in telling their story. The questions echoed program goals that had been expressed by community members. Inspired by the Indigenous Medicine Wheel, the first research question focused on child's balanced well-being along four interconnected realms that represent emotional, physical, spiritual, and cultural wellness.

The two primary questions of interest identified by the team were:

1. Do OLCJC program services lead to holistic wellness among children (including emotional, physical, spiritual, and cultural wellness)?
2. How does OLCJC contribute to a child's cultural journey of healing?

Information gathering tools. In the interest of reducing burden and increasing efficiency, before developing new instruments that were based in the community and program framework, the project team embarked on an iterative process of searching for existing instruments that might align with the evaluation's goals. For each proposed instrument and method, the team considered the utility, cultural appropriateness and sensitivity, feasibility, and burdens of each potential instrument or method. Exhibit 5 provides an overview of the final tools used to collect information on the program, descriptions of key data collection activities, and descriptions of program services for the child and family. Appendices E–M includes the final instruments.

Exhibit 11. Information Gathering Question 1

QUESTIONS OF INTEREST	Do OLCJC program services lead to holistic wellness among children?		
Activities	Interview with child	Interview with caretaker	Observation of child during child interview or OLCJC yoga class[17]
Instrument	Unstructured interview guided by broad topics and follow-up prompts (Zoom or phone)	Unstructured interview guided by broad topics and prompts (Zoom or phone)	Brief observation tool (Zoom)
Objectives	Understand children's experiences and OLCJC's contribution to emotional, physical, cultural, and spiritual wellness	Understand (from caretaker's perspective) children's experiences and OLCJC's contribution to emotional, physical, cultural, and spiritual wellness	Observe attributes in children's demeanor as indicators of wellness
Interval	Once	Once	Twice
Outreach and data collection lead	OLCJC	OLCJC	OLCJC

Individual interviews with the child and caretaker. OLCJC community members highlighted the importance of taking a phenomenological approach that centers the child's point of view when collecting and interpreting information about the child's lived experiences.

To support this effort, the Center team and OLCJC leadership developed a child interview guide with three broad topic areas that drew upon the emotional, physical, cultural, and spiritual wellness domains of the Medicine Wheel and included wellness indicators that have been used in previous Indigenous survey measures of well-being (Dirks, 2017). The interview topics included (1) things the children liked to do and the siblings and friends the children liked to spend time with, (2) Lakota teachings learned from OLCJC staff, and (3) children's experiences interacting with OLCJC staff. Interview topics were also organized to make children comfortable and develop rapport. Initial questions about positive outlets, relationships, and indicators of wellness aimed to help children take the lead in the conversation. OLCJC staff highlighted that the interviews would focus on indicators of healing and wellness.

The team also decided to add interviews with caretakers to provide a more holistic perspective on the child's wellness. The caretaker interview questions mirrored those in the child interview guide.

> The goal was to have a conversation full of light.
>
> —*Arlana*

Exhibit 12. Information Gathering Question 2

QUESTIONS OF INTEREST	How does OLCJC contribute to a child's cultural journey of healing?
Activities	Description of program services for the child and family
Instrument	Short services checklist and informal discussion to gather information from OLCJC staff
Objectives	Describe Lakota cultural services and/or advocacy services that the child and caretaker have received from OLCJC
Interval	Once
Outreach and data collection lead	OLCJC

17 The team intended to observe children during in-person Lakota ceremonies and one-on-one counseling. However, the pandemic limited observation opportunities, and so the interviewer observed children when other opportunities arose, including during child interviews and OLCJC's virtual group yoga class offerings.

> I just want to know what makes them happy.
>
> —*Bobbi*

Observation of the child. Larry and Arlana suggested that the evaluation include child observations as one means of gathering information, leading towards the development of the child observation tool. Larry's deep experience as a culture bearer and case manager provided insight into how the child's demeanor was an effective indicator of the child's holistic wellness. With Larry's guidance, the project team explored attributes of demeanor that indicated wellness across different domains and once identified, classified these attributes along emotional, physical, cultural, and spiritual wellness domains. For more information about the tool, see Appendices H–J.

Description of services for the child and family. A key goal of the project was to identify program reporting data and develop (or select) a data reporting tool or system that would be useful for OLCJC's program needs. The project team discussed several options, including a number of different data elements on referrals, intake, case management, services, and family outcomes, as well as a case management system that was successfully used by another CNCFR project site. OLCJC showed interest in being trained on the National Children's Alliance's Outcome Measurement System (OMS), which collects data from families and multidisciplinary team members on satisfaction and other child advocacy center outcomes.[18] Ultimately, OLCJC's adoption of a program data reporting tool/system never came to fruition during the time of the project due to the cost of the systems they were interested in obtaining. However, in early 2023, the OLCJC team began training on the OMS information system, which they intend to use to track information for cases moving forward.

One of OLCJC's tasks is to support the community education and understanding of the Lakota Rights as noted in the Tribe's Child and Family Code. As the Rights are such an integral part of the program and healing, OLCJC leadership expressed interest in capturing the program's integration of the children's Lakota rights through the story of the services provided to the children, families, and community. Measures included children's rights to identify with the traditional way of life (**Lakol wicoh'an**), the right to learn and speak his or her language (**Lakol lyapi**), and the right to know the traditional laws, customs, and ceremonies of the people.

Exhibit 13. Program Costs

QUESTION OF INTEREST	What are the costs of implementing and refining the OLCJC program?
Activity	Track and analyze OLCJC personnel costs
Instrument	Self-administered time use log
Objectives	Describe OLCJC staff activities and hours in a 24-hour period over 7 days
Interval	Two logs in two different months
Outreach and data collection lead	Center team

A. Research Review Board

The Oglala Sioux Tribe Research Review Board (OST RRB) has a long history of assessing program evaluation applications and approved all final instruments, procedures, and consent forms for data collection with children and families (see final instruments in Appendices E–M). The Board's review is an important part of the process of conducting ethical research and ensuring accountability for researchers given the long history of unethical research, research that does not benefit the community, and mistreatment by outside researchers. The OST RRB review empowers the Tribe in being a community partner in the research and not just a participant or subject.

The Center team presented the proposed questions of interest to the OST RRB at a daylong videoconference meeting. At the meeting, team members responded to several questions posed by OST RRB members that focused on risks and protections for children that participate in the evaluation. The OST RRB members expressed the importance of excluding children younger than seven years old from interviews, requiring a consent signature from a

18 A description of the National Children's Alliance's Outcome Measurement System (OMS) is available at https://learn.nationalchildrensalliance.org/oms.

parent or legal guardian for all child participants, and confirming that all de-identified data collected on evaluation participants, as property of the Oglala Sioux Tribe, would be delivered to the OST RRB.

B. Evaluation Staff and Procedures

It was important to OLCJC that the evaluation approach was feasible and did not place undue burden on staff or families. Additionally, the OLCJC leadership wanted to build the capacity of community members to support evaluation efforts in the future. To support this effort, the CNCFR provided fiscal support to the project site team to hire an intern from Oglala Lakota College. Bobbi agreed to support the efforts of the project and was identified as the person who would serve as the onsite interviewer to assist with gathering information for the report. Bobbi grew up on the Pine Ridge reservation and, at the time, was completing her BSW. As a previous volunteer for OLCJC, Bobbi had been attending CNCFR meetings throughout the evaluation planning period and was familiar with OLCJC and the evaluation plans, leading to a seamless onboarding process. The OLCJC leadership and staff expressed how beneficial the intern was to the program, to the intern's professional growth, and to the children and families in the community. Arlana further reflected on the opportunity that the project had created to build community capacity in evaluation methods and the way that working with OLCJC more broadly had taught the interviewer about the importance of child advocacy services and cultural teaching in helping children to heal.

> I think that it's just really good to be able to bring [Bobbi] in, as a Tribal member, community member, and college student, and for her to get that firsthand experience in working with a culturally relevant program, such as ours.
>
> —*Arlana*

Bobbi was critical to the success of the work, taking the lead for gathering participant consent, scheduling interviews, supporting the collection of information, and providing documentation and observations to share with the Center team and OLCJC staff. Center team members supported Bobbi in learning about evaluation, including obtaining consent, how to use the instruments employed for information gathering, storing of information and data, and tracking outreach and completed activities.

> 'Growing our own' has become a priority in many Tribal communities, with a focus on the training and career development of Tribal members who are becoming evaluators and researchers. (Tribal Evaluation Workgroup 2013).

C. Outreach/Recruitment

To leverage their existing relationships with families, OLCJC staff led evaluation outreach. Outreach involved identifying prospective families and visiting them in person to introduce the evaluation, gauge interest, and introduce families to Bobbi. OLCJC staff gently introduced the concepts of the evaluation with families, first explaining what the evaluation involved and later inviting families to participate. This careful approach by OLCJC staff, over multiple encounters and conversations, aimed to increase a trusting relationship with team members and helped families to become more comfortable with the process.

> We built that rapport before we did the actual interview so that [caretakers] could see it was really going to be safe.
>
> —*Arlana*

OLCJC also provided caretakers with outreach materials that clearly described the activities involved in the information gathering phase and explained that the topics for the interviews were the positive aspects of children's lives. It was critical for the OLCJC team to ensure that the collection of information did not include a request to relive or recite traumatic events.

Once families agreed to participate in the evaluation, Bobbi followed up by phone with the caretaker to collect consent and schedule interviews and observations.

D. Data Management and File Preparation

The Center team established and hosted a shared, secure data transfer site to allow for the safe storage and transfer of confidential information regarding participants and other project information between project site staff and Center team members. In this process, the OLCJC staff and Center team members had total and continuous access to evaluation data, ensuring and supporting the project site's ownership of the information. To ensure continuous access and data confidentiality protections, Center team members worked exclusively from the shared site and did not copy data files to corporate servers or personal computers.

Limitations and Lessons Learned

One of the important lessons the Center team learned through the course of the evaluation was the need to take a more holistic and flexible view of both the program and the evaluation. Just as the program takes its instruction from the Lakota creation story and seven sacred laws in serving children and families, the Center team learned that the evaluation should also focus on tracing the power and potential of *Zuya Yuha O'mani* to intervene upon and heal trauma not with a particular 'outcome' in mind but rather as a reflection of and manifestation of Lakota lifeways in practice.

> We intercepted some of that Western thought. But I don't think we really went far enough until just recently. They have wonderful stories. It's qualitative; they lack quantitative because that's not been as important. It's not about the numbers served; it's about how the service performed and whether the individual was well. This is defined by relationships.
>
> *—AJ Ernst*

It took the Center team the better part of 6 years to fully grasp the work of OLCJC. More importantly, it took that long for the team to gain even a topical understanding of the depth, breadth, and nuance of Lakota ways of knowing. In retrospect, the Center team recognized, long after the evaluation period ended, that the power of the program is in its constant evolution and is perhaps best understood when seen; when put into practice; when tied to experience; when grounded in meaningful places rich with spirit and history; and through everyday actions with a community of people. As Larry and Arlana follow their calling to decolonize and heal their community, the impact of their work resists Western measurement and is more akin to watching the ripples in a still pond when a rock is thrown in its center: the effects from the work they do with each individual and family ripple outward throughout the community.

The complexity of attempting to 'measure' these ripples in the Center's short timeframe exemplifies cultural dissonance and a collision of worldview that is a prime example of what can happen when working across cultures and lived experiences in an evaluation. It isn't just that there are analytical and methodological challenges in identifying discrete indicators of 'healing'; rather, the use of these kinds of indicators does not align with Lakota lifeways, which in turn means that gathering the kind of data used for those indicators is more than challenging—it represents a mismatch between what the community understands as meaningful and informative and what Western evaluators understand as meaningful and informative.

In the case of the Center's work with OLCJC, the nexus of these challenges was embodied in the role of formal record keeping in OLCJC's work. While Western-style child welfare organizations operate on an ethos of "if it isn't documented, it didn't happen"—in part because of the West's privileging the written word over the oral tradition, and in part because of the imperative to store data for evaluation—OLCJC's formal documentary record

is sparse. This is not because such information is unknowable or inaccessible. It is simply approached, documented, and shared differently. Because of the way Larry and Arlana embody Lakota lifeways, they do not bracket off their "work" from "non-work"; they are embedded in their community and remain in contact with the children and youth they serve well beyond the period they provide formal services. They also are in contact with the knowledge bearers in the community, who can share information about how things are with people, families, and communities. Put simply, they can see how things are going because they are immersed in their community all the time. Given the arbitrariness of the boundary between work and non-work and their access to the community, "write everything down" is an imperative that has little practical purchase.

The initial attempts to pursue a static 'data set' of children and families who participate in the program for a prescribed period and receive a particular service or 'dosage' in order to illuminate particular 'outcomes' were a complete departure from how Larry and Arlana approach their work. In essence, the evaluation leads attempted to shoehorn the program into something categorical, chronological, and linear, and as a result, the pursuit of those 'data' proved daunting, disconnected, and fruitless.

> [People] really don't understand how you would measure it. That's really [an] impossible thing to measure—their healing from their trauma through the spiritual teachings.
>
> —*Bobbi*

The Center team recognizes its place and agency in shaping the evaluation, especially in the formative evaluation planning stages, and did not fully recognize the importance of these facts at the time. To address this gap and foster a deeper understanding of the program, the Center team visited OLCJC after the evaluation period was over to acknowledge our mistake and work with them to reshape the evaluation into something that better reflects the story of the program.

With that in mind, as this report shifts toward telling the story of the evaluation and what it revealed about the work, we will shine a light on the nature of healing through the eyes of Larry, Arlana, Bobbi, and, to the extent possible, the children and families served by the OLCJC team. We also include our own experiences as a Center team in interacting on site, taking part in ceremony, hearing stories, and engaging with Elders and other people around the power of the program. We recognize this is a departure from Western notions of evaluation and that relying on testimony and accounts from people outside the parameters of the formal evaluation may be viewed as a limitation. However, we further recognize that stories and experiences, whether a part of a "formal" evaluation or not, more aptly reflect the program and the experiences of its participants. We attempt to make visible the signs of spiritual reconnection and reclamation of sacred Lakota family lifeways experienced by the people who work with OLCJC. At the heart of the program, OLCJC staff believe that by bringing ceremonies, language, and tradition to the children they serve, they will provide healing to the entire community by promoting resilience and cultural pride in a community that came together and collaborated for the sake of the children and youth.

Story of *Zuya Yuha O'mani*—Walking the Red Road

> Grown men can learn from very little children for the hearts of little children are pure. Therefore, the Great Spirit may show to them many things which older people miss.
>
> —*Black Elk*

Walking the Red Road is a sacred and profound concept deeply rooted in the spiritual and cultural traditions of the Lakota people. This spiritual path is a way of life that guides individuals towards balance, harmony, and connectedness with all living beings and the natural world. The term "Red Road" originates from the Lakota's use of the color red to symbolize the Earth and the human journey. It signifies the path of righteousness, honor, and spiritual enlightenment. For the Lakota, Walking the Red Road is not a religious doctrine, but a holistic way of living that encompasses spirituality, morality, and community values (Deloria, 1997). The concept of Walking the Red Road represents a framework for individuals to discover harmony within themselves and with the natural world while emphasizing the importance of respecting all forms of life. In the face of contemporary challenges, Walking the Red Road remains a guiding force that keeps the Lakota connected to their cultural roots, offering a path toward spiritual enlightenment and communal well-being.

The Red Road for the Lakota runs north and south and is the good way; the north represents purity while the south is the source of life. In contrast, the "Black Road" runs east and west and is considered the path of error and destruction (Black Elk and Brown, 1953). In many ways, the *Zuya Yuha O'Mani* Program purpose is to help children and families chart their course along the Red Road. It meets children, families, and the community wherever they might be in mind, body, spirit, and emotion and utilizes the seven rites as signposts to guide them toward the Red Road and their journey through life. It is indeed a lifelong commitment that is nonlinear and cyclical in nature. Some do not come to their ways easily or without suffering. Some do not come to their ways early and consistently in life.

To share the journey of the OLCJC program, the evaluation findings are plotted along the Red Road and demonstrate how program services contribute to emotional, physical, spiritual, and cultural wellness and healing among the children and families served by the program. The findings will reflect how OLCJC imparts the wisdom of the seven laws in intervening upon, healing, and preventing child maltreatment. We will draw upon the lived experience of children and families served by the program as well as the testimony of Larry, Arlana, Bobbi, and Elders associated with the program. Finally, we will describe our own experiences as Center team members who bore witness to sacred rites and stories of healing.

Children and Families—A Glimpse Along the Path

At the center of the story of this evaluation are the experiences of the children, families, and caregivers that embarked upon the path of healing with the help of OLCJC. As we sought advice from Arlana on how best to frame our findings and the indicators of healing experienced by children and families during the evaluation, she expressed they should be viewed with a strengths-based lens and used the phrase "positive possibilities" to describe how she viewed positive change in children that have experienced unimaginable traumas. These positive possibilities are snapshots

in time that highlight an ever-evolving journey toward healing. Arlana conveyed her goal of gifting the children the virtues of "bravery, fortitude, wisdom, and generosity" through their engagement with the program.

Exhibit 14. Interviews With Children and Families

Family	Interview with children *(2 children per family)*	Interview with caretaker *(1 caretaker per family)*	At least one observation of children	Staff description of program services
1	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
2	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
3	Yes	No	Yes	No

Note: Interviews were with siblings together for families 1 and 3 (a younger sibling between 7 and 9 years old and an older adolescent sibling). Interviews were completed for the younger and older sibling individually for family 2.

Ultimately, four families participated in the evaluation interviews, for a total of six child interviews, two caretaker interviews, and two observations. Families with two children were provided the opportunity for the siblings to be interviewed together. The ages of the children at the time of interviews ranged between 7 and 16. All interviews were conducted over Zoom due to COVID-19 precautions and community constraints on contact at the time the information was gathered. Bobbi, the assigned interviewer from OLCJC, asked the children to discuss topics that helped to explore their journey of healing and wellness. Children were asked to discuss activities they enjoy, people they like to spend time with, and their feelings about Lakota teachings and ceremonies. Children were also asked about their experiences with services provided by OLCJC team members. Caregivers were asked similar questions about their experiences with OLCJC services.

> [The children] were more antsy and I think Zoom had a lot to do with it, too, because it was during COVID and Pine Ridge was shut down. We had no gatherings. We weren't allowed to be in-person. Families didn't even want us to come in the homes and do the interview.... I think Zoom affected it a lot.
>
> —*Bobbi*

All of the children that participated in the evaluation experienced severe trauma, including emotional, spiritual, sexual, and physical abuse. Children were exposed to violence, including the murder of a parent by the other parent in one case; experienced neglect that was associated with parental substance use issues and poverty; and traumatized from being removed from their homes and parents. Children were most often referred to the program by local courts and associated victim services and child protection agencies. We do not elaborate on specific events or report findings by family to protect the anonymity of those involved. However, it is important to stress the damaging impact trauma and neglect have on every facet of child development and wellness and the very raw and emotionally fragile state that children are in when they come to OLCJC.

Despite very difficult circumstances and experiences, the children demonstrated **Wowacintanka** (fortitude) as they showed great strength of mind, body, and spirit in enduring great pain and adversity. Children reported they were involved in positive developmental activities, including sports, recreational outdoor activities like swimming and sledding, and video games. Similarly, caregivers sought to keep the children active in their educational work and sports. When children had free time, they played and connected with extended family and animals they cherished. One child reported they make bracelets for friends. While seemingly

mundane, connecting with a friend or engaging in educational or physical pursuits embodies Lakota traditions and demonstrates important healing after deep traumas. They show the presence of **Wowacinksape** (wisdom) and **Wowaunsila** (generosity) as they venture onto the path of healing. After working with a child and family, the presence of positive possibilities as termed by Arlana reflect children's ability to heal and she sees Lakota virtues in those possibilities:

> *I think it's like nurturance, being able to nurture their education. They're giving back, giving back, modeling those teachings… and then the virtues, like bravery, fortitude, wisdom, generosity.*

Larry and Arlana see these attributes in the emergence of children's interest in participating in everyday activities as strong indicators that exposure to the program and its focus on ceremony and Lakota tradition is working to heal acute and intergenerational wounds.

Living one's traditions and having the self-esteem to persist despite deep trauma exemplifies the promise of the program; going to school, engaging in kinship, being physically active, and showing interest in connecting to one's identity and community are powerful examples of positive change. Larry shared what he looks for in healing:

> *So, when you see them and they look like, or they speak as if they have a sense of self-esteem, that's a really good, good thing.*

Bobbi noted that the indicators of healing are properly viewed starting from the point of trauma, highlighting the transformation some children experienced. For some children, it was hard to speak or share their feelings in the aftermath of the trauma; nonetheless, she saw in the children she works with a return to them being happy and playing and interacting with each other.

> *And not… because a lot of kids, some you could tell they're sad. They don't want to talk, they don't… for me, for healing, just them being happy and being kids and playing together.*

For the children that participated, the mere ability to sit through an evaluation interview via zoom and confidently share the activities they enjoy, people they like to spend time with, and their feelings about Lakota teachings and ceremonies is a testament to a healing trajectory.

> Like I said, no matter what, at the end of the day, that child still loves their parent. Whether they have alcohol issues or drug issues or whatever going on, they're still going to love their parent and want to be with that parent. That's how I felt about the littles that were with the foster family, that they wanted to be with their parents. They were doing okay. They were doing good in school. They were in all kinds of events and stuff, but sometimes that still don't matter.
>
> *—Bobbi*

Moreover, child protective factors like cultural teachings emerged as important themes in the interviews with children after engaging with program services. Children learned the importance of **Wonagiksape** (spirituality) and the power of Lakota tradition in healing from trauma. Children enjoyed learning about their Lakota identity and traditions through song and ceremony. Some of the children interviewed had been in the process of grieving and healing for several years, while others had more recent experiences. For those that experienced trauma more recently, the COVID restrictions for OLCJC prevented the team from offering the ceremonies in the manner previously done.

Even so, children and families were exposed to some Lakota ceremony and song, and caregivers helped extend teachings about the Lakota ways at home. In talking about their children's exposure to Lakota lifeways, one caregiver noted that due to having learned

> *Lakota teachings, [the children] know how to smudge, and the youngest is in a half emergent program. Arlana introduced them to a sweat lodge, they're interested, and they want to do it, COVID has just stopped it.*

While COVID interrupted OLCJC's capacity to provide more encompassing in person exposure to language, culture, song, and ceremony, even in a limited capacity it resonated with children

and caretakers. One child exemplifies this important point and the promise of culture as healing medicine when speaking about their newfound ethnic pride and self-esteem,

> *I learned to love being Indigenous, like to love that part.*

While the community was in isolation, OLCJC provided cultural teachings by other means, including gifting to the children and families and providing online opportunities for interaction. Ceremonies held virtually or at a distance still had positive effects; one caregiver said that

> *it's the whole ceremony; I loved the singing, the dancing, the words [Larry] said, the wisdom—there was so much wisdom in that hour or two or whatever it was. The things he said it was really good. I really liked it and I talked about it a lot.*

To keep families connected during the pandemic, the OLCJC team also engaged in other activities through Zoom, including offering an option for online yoga classes—which, like Lakota traditions, seeks to foster the connection between mind, body, and spirit for children. Children and caregivers spoke highly of their experiences doing yoga online and the benefits of being exposed to yoga, including one child who said, "Yoga makes me feel good," and another child who said, "Yoga helped me release energy." One caregiver said the following of the yoga sessions:

> *I love the yoga sessions. They think it is the funniest thing I would have never thought that about them. [The kids] love it they laugh and giggle and when it's over we turn the zoom off they have to do it themselves and they giggle.… I was surprised. I didn't think they were going to like it.*

When the children were asked about changes in themselves since they started working with the OLCJC team, they often described the things they liked to do and the people they are connected to. For example, one child said, "I talk more with my caregiver." Children reported they were optimistic, happy, and enjoyed their grandparents' cooking—even just laughing with friends. The children consistently reported positive aspects of their life, including those focused on relationships with family, siblings, and animals.

Caregivers echoed the statements of the children, adding that as the children healed, they were more willing and better able to connect with friends and relatives as well. Caregivers described activities that children engaged in, which primarily centered around family being together and doing chores or working together as a family. They also described positive experiences with the children when they have friends over and when they can have one-on-one conversations. Caregiver responses, further demonstrate the promise of the program as kids learn and exemplify Lakota values like **Wawoyuonihan** (respect) by engaging in kinship and learning and acting upon their responsibilities within the context of their families and community. In speaking about the impact of the program on the siblings she cares for, one caregiver said, that the

> *one thing it did for the boys is Arlana coming into their life when their dad was taken from them and their mom was taken from them and there wasn't just a lot of happy going on in their life because they were having to talk to FBI Agents, trauma counselors, and they were having to adjust to a new home. Arlana had called me one day and she asked do the boys need backpacks, and I was like sure. She said bring them in and I said OK and took them in. She just made them feel like kids again. At that time, she made me realize that yeah these are kids, not that I didn't know we were just so like this with FBI trauma counselors, that I think we were slipping away from making sure they were ok. Arlana treated them like they were normal little kids coming in to get backpacks.*

Caregivers talked about Arlana's kind nature and what she brings to the community and program. Arlana and the program provide **Wawahokunkiye** (guidance and counseling) to children and families in need; she shows them through her actions proper Lakota ways and beliefs. They describe her as being patient, supportive and caring. Arlana provides a consistent reminder for caregivers to find patience in the children they care for, reminding

the caregivers that they are working with children who, at times, are facing overwhelming and adult situations like court appearances and law enforcement involvement. One caregiver said the following about Arlana's approach:

> *Pay attention to her [Arlana] and her teachings because she has a different way of teaching, she has a conversational way of teaching. That's important she puts people at ease, she puts me at ease. She was the first person I turned to during the tragedy without even a thought process, and I don't really trust anybody. I trust her and I trust what she tells me. I've had over 30 years of exposure with her and kids.*

While many factors beyond the control of OLCJC impacted the depth and breadth of this evaluation and its findings, the above discussions shows that even cursory contact with the program illustrates its promise in fostering holistic wellness among children and families. The children feel better after working with Arlana and Larry, but they also feel more connected to the people around them and to their culture—both of which are protective factors that can increase their resilience. Arlana and Larry's tireless advocacy, providing traditional services, and modeling Lakota lifeways helps demonstrate to the children they work with how to live in a good Lakota way and walk the Red Road—clearly contributing to the children's cultural journey of healing.

OLCJC shepherds along the path

In our many site visits, calls, and project gatherings, we learned about OLCJC, its services, and what it means to the community. We had countless informal opportunities to hear stories and engage with Elders and staff about the history of the program and its impact on children, families, and the community. We highlight some of these stories here, as an illustration of the program's legacy and standing in the community and to further show how they act as shepherds along the Red Road for intergenerational healing. This kind of healing takes time, more time than an evaluation could encapsulate; Larry and Arlana's work has stood the test of time and it is best demonstrated through their words and the words of their staff and the Elders that have shaped the program over the years.

As a nonprofit organization, OLCJC is not contracted by federal, state, or Tribal government; its mission of advocating for children is distinct and offers the program autonomy in responding to the needs of traumatized children. For example, local social service agency staff experience turnover, Tribal administrations transition, partners show reluctance to collaborate, and community circumstances otherwise evolve. Yet, OLCJC staff are in some ways the "glue" in the community and forge relationships with cultural competency, trust, and respect. For example, one family said that OLCJC staff had continued to work with them through eight different case workers from the child welfare system. In these situations, the OLCJC team serve as the steady presence and support who continuously advocate for the young person through the changes in staff from the child welfare system.

OLCJC works in Lakota ways, establishing a relational bond through ceremony that creates an ongoing responsibility. Once a case is opened, OLCJC supports the child and non-offending family members throughout their lives as needed. Often, the relationship between OLCJC staff and families evolves from a professional relationship into a personal relationship, and this seals a lifetime connection. By working this way, OLCJC's deep connection to the community strengthens networks of supports and community healing and maintains them over time.

> In our culture, we don't close cases, we see them through. In two weeks, I will tie the eagle feather for someone I work with, and I will in effect become her father. Child Protection Services won't be involved anymore. But I will be.
>
> —*Larry*

One Elder, Richard Iron Cloud, who is an active board member and has had a deep connection to the program since its inception, visited with the CNCFR team during a recent trip to Pine Ridge. We were fortunate enough to enjoy a meal together, and Richard spent several hours with us, sharing stories about the program, his family, his history, and the power of ceremony and

Lakota traditions. He said the following about the program:

> *I'm really glad that we have a place [like OLCJC] that provides for the children, looks out for children, and watches over them. And I think we need about 20 of these places on the reservation, 20 of these programs on the reservation, but we've only got this one. I try to provide at least what I can to assist in the development. It's really been a good journey.*

Richard continued by sharing what the vision was for the program and how Larry carries out that vision, helping to contribute to a child's journey of healing through ceremony:

> *I really like Larry being there because Larry knows how to do the ceremonies. That's kind of what we envisioned about this program is the way that a person can assist the family through ceremony…. It's something you can feel it. You go into different places like the sweat lodge and you go there to honor the people who were.... Especially whenever they call on the spirits in these calling songs, they come in and assist you and help you out with whatever issue that you have.*

Richard went on to tell a story about the power of spirituality as medicine and the ineffable nature of its effectiveness; this short excerpt from the story conveys the beautiful and transcendent mystery of faith and its healing properties:

> *There's still things we can't explain to other people. They're hard to believe ourselves too. They're spiritual things that they did that they were able to survive and to make it through. I think it's good to hear those things. There was a pipe he [his grandfather] had. It was a black pipe that he said he had. I guess he was one of the few people that had had a black pipe. I remember there's only a certain place between the Rosebud Reservation and Pine Ridge Reservation. There's a place called Black Pipe. That's where they got the black stone. I found some black stone, so I had a pipe maker make me a pipe with the black stone. I use that during my ceremonies in the summertime. Whenever we have our sundown ceremonies and our sweat lodge ceremonies and stuff like that, I usually use that. It really feels good to have that history... that connection. You can really feel them [ancestors] around you whenever you go into the ceremony.*

While Richard has seen the indispensable nature of tradition and ceremony in the program over the course of many years, Bobbi saw its promise as a social work student and was inspired to work for the program:

> *It was pretty awesome for me because, we had got to pick our practicum placements where we wanted to go. Of course, her [Arlana's] program wasn't on the list. It's all CSP, BSS. They aim more for CPS because they need the help. I just talked to my practicum site supervisor and asked her, I said, "I would really love to do this program, try out this program, because they teach the Lakota teachings, too, and help kids that way… that's just something I want to be a part of and would like to work with her."*

Bobbi's immersed herself in the work and has seen the impacts of the program firsthand:

> *It's been really awesome to watch. The kids have gone here a lot. They come in for forensic interviewing. They've been through traumatic things. Arlana just, Arlana and Larry just help them light up and smile and don't treat them as their trauma. They treat them like a little person.*

The program also helped Bobbi immerse herself in Lakota traditions that she had been reluctant to engage in because of previous negative experiences and her own parent's disconnection from tradition caused by deleterious impacts of the boarding schools. She said the following about her family and her experience with the sweat lodge ceremony:

> *It's been awesome. I haven't.... My mom's Lakota but she went to the boarding school. The boarding school era children don't speak about it. They were taught not to. They were taught they can't pray. They can't talk Lakota. They can't do anything. I went to a ceremony when I was probably about 15 and it scared the heck out of me because they threw a big thing of ties on me. To me that translated, they don't want you in here, don't do it. So I just stayed away from it for a long time. That's why it was helpful to come here because Larry did a sweat. That was my first time in 10, if not more years, going into a sweat. It felt good. It felt, it rejuvenated me, I guess. It made it not scary.*

The creation of a safe place to learn and engage in Lakota traditions is pivotal for children and families as well as staff. Bobbi has since graduated from her undergraduate program with a degree in social work and continues to play a vital role in the work of OLCJC—further demonstrating the promise of the program to heal trauma and create positive associations with Lakota identity and culture.

At almost every meeting we had with Larry over the years, in one way or another he almost always shared the importance of a strong cultural identity when healing and the importance of giving children a sense of their traditions through ceremony, language, song, material culture, and history. We were fortunate to hear numerous stories about some of the families he's worked with over the years. During our most recent visit to Pine Ridge, Larry shared a story that stands out as an important example of what the program does, how it is done, and the impact it has on the people it touches.

[The spiritual wipe down is] used when they're highly traumatized. So highly anxious and can't seem to get a grip. So, what I do is I go in and acknowledge what they're going through. Then if there's anything possible that I can use to help facilitate the wipe down such as ...

This girl that was at the Abbott House in Mitchell, highly suicidal. When I came in contact with her, she was very violent and insisted that no matter what we said, no matter what we did, she was going to kill herself. So, we found out what her family name was and come to find this lady named Carol[1] was her direct blood grandmother.

So, I took her with me on my next visit at Abbott House in Mitchell. So, we drove over there. And while we were visiting with her, she said that she'd never received a star quilt. She always wanted a star quilt, all her life since she was a little girl. So, I took a star quilt with me, and I took her grandmother with me.

And very highly suicidal. Not wanting to listen to anybody. So, once we get there, I bring the grandmother in and her grandmother just sits down right beside her. She says, "Give me your hands." She holds her hands…. So, she's holding onto her hand. She said, "I'm going to tell you a story."

She said, "At the end of Wounded Knee in 1890, no 1892." She said, "Your great ancestors, [name excluded for anonymity] the men were late getting back to the reservation. It was somewhere towards the Black Hills. And that massacre happened. And following the massacre,...and they weren't allowed to go there and to mourn their loved ones or have ceremonies for their loved ones."

"So because of that," she said, "they took to alcohol." All her ancestors, her whole family was highly steeped in alcoholism all these decades. She explained that to her. She said, "This is why your mom drinks continuously. This is why your grandma drinks continuously. Because they've never had this feeling." She said, "But I'm your direct blood grandmother and this is how I'm directly related to you through the [name excluded for anonymity]." She started to pray with her, and she started crying. Then I sang a song, a healing song, a couple of songs for them. Then we wrapped it. We explained the significance of the star quilt and then we wrapped the star quilt around her.

Then from that day forward, then... she had one relapse…. So I see her every now and again. We don't really have intense conversations. It's more of a passing now… she's doing okay. She was working back where she grew up.

1 Carol Iron Rope Herrera will be remembered for her legacy as a Lakota Elder, culture bearer, educator, and advocate for children and the Pine Ridge community.

This is the work of the program. One child and family at a time. OLCJC creates connection or as Arlana stated, "positive possibilities." They create opportunities for people to connect to their ways and addresses trauma in a way that is congruent with their traditions. Within the context of seemingly endless challenges, showing children and families a path forward provides hope, and their goal remains a steadfast commitment to creating a thriving community by using Lakota teachings to get upstream of trauma. Arlana supported this premise when she said:

> *We don't want to have to keep being resilient. We want to be thriving. We want to be thriving. We don't put this... we hope to teach and provide those teachings and stableness to the child victims that you don't carry that abuse with you. That abuse does not define who you are.... This is who you are. And we're helping that by yes, this healing, from the point of trauma throughout healing. We're also helping this by having these discoveries of us people as who we are... to provide that nurturing, safe environment and bring you to this healing so you don't have to go through some of those things that we went through. And so, that's how we're doing it.*

CNCFR Witnessing the Journey

The Center team hoped to hear more healing stories directly from children and families; to some extent we did. However, what we gathered formally and within the evaluation period is a mere slice of the deep work that OLCJC does to sustain and improve the fabric of the community. The program, like Lakota cosmology, honors the interconnection of all things; it does not stop when Larry and Arlana leave the OLCJC office at the end of the day. It is a way of life, not a job; Larry and Arlana go where the need is 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Center staff witnessed this type of attention to relationality and interconnection during our visits in person and virtually.

As the ceremony concluded, the young girl received her Lakota name, Kimimila Iyoyamya Win (The Pulsing Light of the Butterfly Woman). As the children and adults celebrated, a beautiful yellow Monarch butterfly serendipitously came into the space as if to honor and congratulate the child and validate her ceremony.

We saw the strong interconnection of the children and family members they work with to the community, to their neighbors, to their schools, through the child welfare workers, to everybody there because they know each other. There is a ripple effect, because of that interconnectedness. The ripple effect of what happens somewhere affects everybody else.

One naming ceremony we did, it was for a girl and her… Lakota name… was Butterfly. It was really awesome because we all did the ceremony and everything and she looked so happy and proud to get her Lakota name.

—*Bobbi*

The Center witnessed this interconnection and clearly saw the larger role that the program serves in the Community. We saw Larry get up early and go provide education to a school on the creation story. He invited us to watch as he shared. We witnessed Arlana spending a long weekend out in the fields harvesting medicine for ceremonies meant to heal children and families. We heard about Larry intervening among youth involved in an altercation, using Lakota ways to ease tensions and bring parents and children together in a loving way. We witnessed a Lakota naming ceremony, another sacred ceremony and tradition being revitalized by Larry and Arlana. These are the intangible, sometimes informal experiences that demonstrate the effectiveness of OLCJC's program. It's an effectiveness beyond intervening upon child maltreatment. It's the effectiveness of being role models to the community, of being advocates, champions, and caretakers of Lakota lifeways for the community. The positive effect ripples out to others, and moment by moment, experience by experience, Arlana and Larry are working to decolonize and empower children, families, and the community. It is the embodiment of resilience, of showing up for one's community in spite of difficult circumstances, histories, and experiences.

We shared in the power of this connection when we heard stories of healing or witnessed sacred Lakota rites. Larry invited Center staff Brian Jones and AJ Ernst to take part in a sweat lodge ceremony alongside community members and volunteers that were working on housing repairs on the reservation. Sharing a sweat lodge ceremony with Larry and people fixing hearth and home seemed a powerful metaphor for OLCJC's work, which is in part reminding the community of the sacredness of relationships and helping the community to build and sustain those relations.

Site visits allowed us face to face interaction, to develop relationships, to witness the relationships that are Arlana and Larry and the program services they provided have in the community both with adults who are participants in our in our meetings that were formal and informally over a kitchen table in their office when children are running around the floor. It showed the value that they had in establishing some stability in these people's lives. In giving them a future and a connection to the Lakota way and provided some confidence… confidence that people are good that there's some good in the world…. And they shared and they spoke about where they came from…. We saw tears. We saw laughter, we saw a bunch of things when Brian and I were in the sweat and when I was in the sweat in the air previously, there were tears shed there. There were expressions of joy. There is sadness. And that level of comfort comes because of the safety that both Larry and Arlana set as role models in that environment… many of these children, I suspect, come from environments that have long term dysfunction and long-term potential abuse there. It's hard to come out of that setting and not carry that forward if that's all you know. [Larry and Arlana are] the difference, they're the stopgap, so they allow the transition from dysfunction and abuse to hope and a better way. And that's what we saw. That's what we witnessed.

—AJ Ernst

Commitment of the Program Leadership

The commitment of the OLCJC team to advocate fearlessly reflects a devotion to the children and families impacted by trauma and whose historical distrust of social services comes from generations of Indigenous children separated from their families and communities. OLCJC demonstrates that its commitment, action, and follow through establishes positive relationships and trust. The OLCJC team members safeguard children's confidentiality; provide positive experiences to help show that a positive future is possible; and build and strengthen relationships by being their genuine selves and showing appropriate attention and being compassionate in all their interactions. They help the children and the community by helping everyone remember a better future made possible by living well, together, in a Lakota way.

Arlana and Larry continue to move forward with humility and optimism. They call upon the lessons and wisdom of their ancestors as they work to build and sustain their program, their community, and the children they serve. It is their sincere hope that the legacy of the program is a reflection of Lakota lifeways and a community of supporters that includes countless knowledge bearers (past and present), community partners, and organizational partners who share a common vision of providing children and families a safe place to heal trauma and create positive associations with Lakota identity and culture. This evaluation does not aim to demonstrate programmatic impact through neat numerical values, nor does it seek to assess its utility or effectiveness based on Western conceptions of success; rather, it seeks to tell the story of a program that is actively working to decolonize and heal its people. In that way, this evaluation unequivocally demonstrates the healing potential of Lakota traditions through the work of all those who serve their community at OLCJC.

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A Message From Larry Swalley

With great respect and humility, OLCJC wishes to honor the Culture Bearers who have shared their knowledge, traditions, songs, and ceremonial processes over the years. As their wisdom is still being provided to children and families, these Culture Bearers continue to serve the community.

Carol Iron Rope Herrera

Cornell Conroy

Eileen New Holy Moves Camp

Sam Moves Camp

In the spirit of Indigenous cultural ways, the *Zuya Yuha O'mani* program initiates, perpetuates, and preserves these traditional teachings for our future generations as living legacies of their contributions. Wopila Tanka Iciciya Pelo. We are truly grateful to you all. —Larry

Appendix

- Appendix A: Creation Story
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- Appendix K: Caretaker Interview Protocol
- Appendix L: Program Services Description
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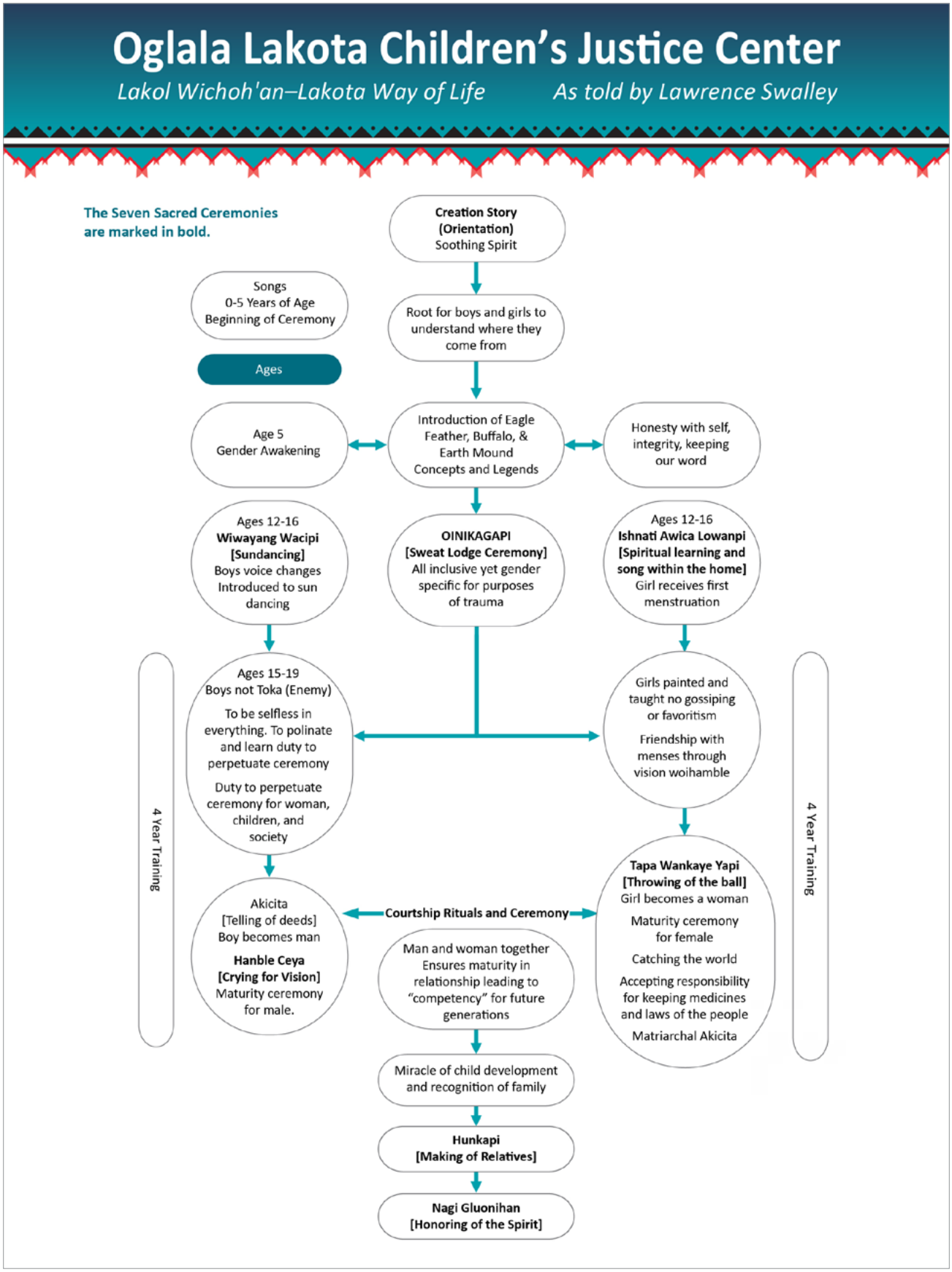
Appendix A: Creation Story


Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center
Lakol Wichoh'an–Lakota Way of Life
As told by Lawrence Swalley
The Seven Sacred Ceremonies are marked in bold.
Creation Story (Orientation) Soothing Spirit
Songs 0-5 Years of Age Beginning of Ceremony
Root for boys and girls to understand where they come from
Ages
Age 5 Gender Awakening
Introduction of Eagle Feather, Buffalo, & Earth Mound Concepts and Legends
Honesty with self, integrity, keeping our word
Ages 12-16 Wiwayang Wacipi [Sundancing] Boys voice changes Introduced to sun dancing
OINIKAGAPI [Sweat Lodge Ceremony] All inclusive yet gender specific for purposes of trauma
Ages 12-16 Ishnati Awica Lowanpi [Spiritual learning and song within the home] Girl receives first menstruation
4 Year Training
Ages 15-19 Boys not Toka (Enemy)
To be selfless in everything. To polinate and learn duty to perpetuate ceremony
Duty to perpetuate ceremony for woman, children, and society
Girls painted and taught no gossiping or favoritism
Friendship with menses through vision woihamble
4 Year Training
Akicita [Telling of deeds] Boy becomes man
Hanble Ceya [Crying for Vision] Maturity ceremony for male.
Courtship Rituals and Ceremony
Tapa Wankaye Yapi [Throwing of the ball] Girl becomes a woman
Maturity ceremony for female
Catching the world
Accepting responsibility for keeping medicines and laws of the people
Matriarchal Akicita
Man and woman together Ensures maturity in relationship leading to "competency" for future generations
Miracle of child development and recognition of family
Hunkapi [Making of Relatives]
Nagi Gluonihan [Honoring of the Spirit]

Appendix B: OLCJC CNCFR Teaming Agreement

Center for
Native Child
and Family Resilience

Teaming Agreement

Center for Native Child and Family Resilience

I. Parties

This Teaming Agreement is entered into between the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience and ___Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center; Zuya yuhan O'mani_____.

II. Background

As part of a Children's Bureau initiative to raise awareness of Tribally engaged prevention and intervention efforts, the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience (CNCFR) seeks to partner with Indian Tribes on the prevention and intervention of child abuse and neglect in American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities. The Center for Native Child and Family Resilience will gather, generate, and disseminate knowledge regarding effective practice models for strengths-based, culturally relevant, trauma-informed, and preventive services and interventions for all forms of child maltreatment.

The Center for Native Child and Family Resilience works in partnership with Tribal communities to:

- Honor effective Tribal community and practice-based models of prevention;
- Promote awareness and use of culturally relevant child maltreatment prevention services that are supported by practice-based evidence in Tribal child welfare systems;
- Improve holistic services for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children affected by child abuse and neglect;
- Develop models of cultural, community, and trauma resilience;
- Implement and assess practice models that show promise in preventing child abuse and neglect and that may be implemented or adapted in other tribal child welfare systems; and
- Contribute to the increased knowledge of cultural practice models across Indian Country, through information sharing of findings, processes, outputs and lessons learned by the Center through the development, implementation, and evaluation of the program models, to inform the field of child welfare.

III. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this Teaming Agreement is to list the responsibilities and deliverables of the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience and the ___Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center; Zuya Yuhan O'mani___to support and enhance resilience-related approaches to Tribal child welfare intervention and prevention toward developing evidence-supported strategies of care.

IV. Responsibilities under this Teaming Agreement

The Center for Native Child and Family Resilience

In the current project, the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience will:

- Work with the tribal community or organization where the project is occurring to identify the type of expertise and the resources needed that fit the specific needs of the Tribe to support the capacity building plan;
- Work collaboratively with and support the tribal community or organization in identifying and selecting subject matter experts and resources needed for the project and coordinate the access to the experts and resources as feasible;
- Provide support and assistance to the sites through intensive training, technical assistance and capacity building to strengthen the infrastructure required to implement and evaluate services or models at the selected sites;
- Work in partnership with the Tribal community to plan activities and interventions that will help achieve desired outcomes and timelines for the planned project;
- Stand with the Tribal community in an inclusive and participatory process to develop a Theory of Change, Impact model, and community driven project and evaluation plan;
- Provide on-site assistance, other support for project implementation and community-based evaluation;
- Participate in ongoing support and communication with the community on project progress and respond to changing project needs;
- Update project work plans a minimum of every six months;
- Assist in analyzing process and outcome evaluation data in collaboration with the tribal community; and
- Consult with the Tribal community or organizations in the compiling of any submissions for consideration of a tribally identified Institutional Review Board (IRB).

One of the purposes of the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience and subsequent projects is to raise awareness of and build upon the substantial history of Indian Tribes' and native communities' efforts promoting the resilience of Tribal families through culturally founded and community-implemented prevention strategies. As such, specific products created in support of this purpose, and knowledge gained from this work, will be made publicly available to provide other Tribes with resources to support their communities and positively impact the lives of their children and families. These products include but are not limited to interventions, processes, project reports, evaluation reports, presentations, and practices.

Project Site

During the project implementation, the selected project site will:

- Determine, implement and facilitate onsite activities to assess the project or model as proposed;
- Direct onsite planning sessions to develop or address community determined processes of implementing a model of resilience building which may include a community defined Theory of Change, Logic Model, and workplan design;
- Implement workplan activities with support from Center for Native Child and Family Resilience staff and consultants;
- Maintain regular contact and communication with Center for Native Child and Family Resilience staff and consultants and respond to changing project needs;

- Implement and govern activities to evaluate the project effectiveness, such as interviews, surveys, and focus groups. This may include retaining and gathering project specific data which may require the consideration of a tribally identified Institutional Review Board (IRB).
- Collaborate with the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience in developing documents or information to guide other projects across Indian Country who desire to replicate the model or practice of focus for this selected project.

V. Data Management

The success of this project depends on a close collaboration between The Center for Native Child and Family Resilience and tribal communities. The tribal community organization or Tribe will retain and respect the confidentiality of all materials specific to data management as outlined by a tribally identified Institutional Review Board (IRB). All research and evaluation processes will be reviewed and monitored through an IRB process to ensure the protection of data and sensitive information. The Center for Native Child and Family Resilience recognizes the right of the project to exercise authority over and ownership of any raw data files resulting from the project's evaluation. However, any evaluation reports resulting from the data will be publicly available. The Center for Native Child and Family Resilience will notify the project of any requests, during the life of the cooperative agreement, to use project data by outside parties. It will then be up to the project's leadership to authorize release of any data to that outside party. This Teaming Agreement is designed to achieve a community driven collaborative effort. Principles of data sovereignty (the right of a nation to collect and manage its own data) and data governance (the ownership, collection, control, analysis, and use of data) are a key part of this effort and include:

- **Ownership** refers to the relationship of an Indigenous community to its cultural knowledge, data, and information. The principle states that a community or group owns confidential information collectively in the same way that an individual owns his or her personal information.
- **Control** asserts that Indigenous communities and representative bodies are within their rights to control research and information management processes which affect them, including all stages of evaluation.
- **Access** refers to the right of Indigenous people to access information and data about themselves and their communities regardless of where these are held, and to make decisions regarding access to their collective information.
- **Possession** refers to the actual custody and holding of the data. It is distinguished from ownership for being more literal in its understanding.

Communities decide the content of data collected about them, and who has access to these data;

- Why is a given data set created? What stories is it used to tell? What stories should it tell? Who should be doing the telling and how?
- Data sovereignty for Indigenous peoples must reflect the interests and priorities of Indigenous peoples. For example, forming data and performance measures which furthers the vision, objectives, and cultural context community model.
- There will be different approaches to data sovereignty across Nations. Nations themselves need to define their data parameters, how it gets protected and how they wish to tell their story historically, today, and into the future.

The Center agrees to:	The [Tribal Community/Program] agrees to:
• Respect program participants, including but not limited to program staff, community leaders and members, children, and their families. - The Center will involve appropriate tribal project and community members at each phase of the project. - The goal is to create a partnership that benefits both parties and, most importantly, the children and families of the community.	• Work with the Center team to achieve the goals of the project site. - Work together to plan for and complete all data collection activities. - Provide guidance to the Center team in how to work effectively and respectfully with members of the tribal community, including its leaders, program staff, children, and families.
• Protect the privacy of all project participants, programs, and tribal communities. - All Center team staff working with the project site will sign confidentiality agreements. - Center team training will include the importance of protecting the privacy of every participant, program, and tribal community and the consequences of breaching the agreement, including dismissal from the Center team. - Not release any identifying information specific to the Tribe or individuals. All tribal and individual identifiers specific to the tribal organization, community or the reservation will be removed as needed and appropriate except as necessary to promote the work of the project. - Data on laptop computers will be secured through hard drive encryption as well as operation and survey system configuration and a password. Any computer files that contain this information also will be locked and password protected. If applicable, the Center team will remove from all completed questionnaires personal identifiers that could be used to link individuals with their responses. All hard copy questionnaires will be stored under lock and key. - The Center will assure ownership of data by the tribal community or agency therefore the Center efforts will assist only in the digesting and interpretation of data collected.	• Protect the privacy of all project participants, the program, and the tribal community. - Protect the identities of the children and families participating in the project. - Will not share information about project participants with anyone outside of the program, with the exception of the Center team staff working with the project site. - Recognize that confidential information relating to individual, program, and community-level data or findings will not be shared with anyone.
• Work with project site to obtain tribal or any indicated approval for the program's participation in the Center. - Work with the project site to identify the required steps for tribal review and approval. - Center team staff and members of the Workgroup will present the project in person or by phone at the request of tribal authorities and will provide an informational fact sheet for sharing with the community.	• Work with Center team staff to obtain tribal or any indicated approval for the program's participation in the Center. - Identify the tribal review and approval process and assist in presenting the project to tribal officials responsible for review and approval of the program's participation. - Share information about the Center and its goals with members of the tribal community.

The Center agrees to:	The [Tribal Community/Program] agrees to:
• Support data collection in a manner that is respectful of tribal customs and practices and is least disruptive to programs' daily routines. - Schedule data collection visits being cognizant of not disrupting any tribal community celebrations or events. - Be flexible in working with programs and their day-to-day activities. - Recognize that Center team staff are guests in the community.	• Work with the Center team to ensure that all data collection is respectful of program staff, children, and families and limits disruptions to day-to-day program activities and routines. Program staff, children, and families will be given enough advance notice of data collection activities to ensure all questions and concerns are addressed. - Provide information to Center team regarding appropriate verbal and nonverbal communications styles.
• Partner with the project leads to identify opportunities for dissemination of reports, briefs, and presentations of findings to program staff, families, and other tribal communities. Project sites will determine how best to share reports, briefs, etc. with participants and others in the community. - Partner with the project and collaboratively present any reports of findings or interpretation by the Center team. Communities agree that these presentations can be shared by the Center and the Children's Bureau. - Such presentations or reports be posted on the Center and Children's Bureau's websites to facilitate access by programs, tribal communities, and others. - Identify the desire for and assist with scheduling presentations to the field of services development and other tribal communities on results or findings in collaboration with the project and/or members of the Workgroup.	• Partner with the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience to identify opportunities to disseminate reports, briefs, and presentations of findings to program staff, families, and other tribal communities. Project sites will determine how best to share reports, briefs, etc. with participants and others in the community. - Partner with the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience and collaboratively present any reports of findings or interpretation by the Center team. Communities agree that these presentations can be shared by the Center and the Children's Bureau. - Such presentations or reports be posted on the Center and Children's Bureau's websites to facilitate access by programs, tribal communities, and others. - Identify the desire for and assist with scheduling presentations to the field of services development and other tribal communities on results or findings in collaboration with the Center team and/or members of the Workgroup.

VI. It is mutually understood and agreed by and between the parties that:

If for some unforeseen reason the Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center; Zuya Yuhan O mani is unable to complete the activities as outlined in the project workplan, the Project is asked to immediately notify the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience indicating the Project's desire to discontinue the work; there will be no penalty for discontinuing. However, when it appears that some circumstance may prevent the Project from completing the activities in the project workplan, the Project is encouraged to quickly begin discussions with its Center for Native Child and Family Resilience Project Lead to explore alternatives or remedies.

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VII. Effective Date and Signature

By signing below, the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience and OLCJC [Name of Project] signify their mutual commitment to work together to complete the agreed upon project.

[Tribal Program] Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center	Center for Native Child and Family Resilience
[Signature]	[Signature]
Director [Title]	Subject Matter Expert [Title]
July 12, 2019 [Date]	8/13/19 [Date]

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Appendix C: Community Driven Evaluation Planning Tool

Center for Native Child and Family Resilience

Community Driven Evaluation Planning Tool

Using the Community Driven Evaluation Planning Tool

Community driven evaluation is the process of identifying, articulating, and understanding a program's value or outcomes. If a project site's program or intervention is the story about how they build resilience among Native families, then evaluation is the journey between that vision, what they do (the work and activities), and the outcomes of that work. It is the story of how their vision leads to results for children and families.

Native people have a wealth of diverse languages, worldviews, teachings, and experiences. Long before western researchers took up the mantle of scientific inquiry, Native people pursued knowledge and balance through intense interaction and observation with every aspect of their social, spiritual, and natural worlds. Indigenous Ways of Knowing honor the interconnectedness of all things and encapsulate the power of the current moment as it is woven together with lessons learned and passed on through deep time. Despite periods of great upheaval caused by colonial impositions and federal Indian policy, Indigenous knowledge and Native nations persist and thrive.

Native nations are working to recover, preserve, and decolonize their communities. It is with this knowledge that the Center seeks to work with communities to build tribal capacity and bolster tribal self-determination through a community driven evaluation process.

The Community Driven Evaluation Planning Tool will help guide and empower project sites through the evaluation process. The Center team will use the tool to initiate and foster ongoing guided conversations with project sites to build stories of effectiveness. The Center team will work with project sites to take stock of where they are in their story, and where they want and need assistance in getting to where they hope to go. In your discussions with project sites, you should identify and consider the purpose evaluation might serve for each community.

Ultimately, The Center will use this tool to identify community values and inform the development of individualized community driven evaluation plans, which could include one or more of the following:

- Outcome evaluations, which could help project sites understand if the program is having the intended effects
- Implementation or process evaluations to identify the extent to which project sites are running their program as intended
- Cost evaluations, in which project sites figure out how much their program costs to operate
- Quality assurance plans to help the project site team implement the program in a way that aligns with what they want

Each evaluation plan will be shared with and ultimately approved by the Children's Bureau, as required by our cooperative agreement. However, this is intended to be an iterative and collaborative process between the Center team and project sites. This tool is meant to foster bidirectional learning and the creation of a community driven evaluation plan that accurately reflects and aligns with the needs of each project site.

How to use this tool

The Center team will facilitate discussions with project sites using questions from the first three sections as prompts to further expound on what communities want to know, what they already know, and further understand and capture community values. The first three sections of this tool will help evoke important information needed to complete the final "Community Driven Evaluation Plan" section. You should tailor these questions as appropriate to each project site. Instructions are included in italics. The final section includes tables that capture evaluation questions, information sources, responsibilities, and a timeline of evaluation activities. The Center team will summarize the information collected during discussions to populate this section. To support this effort, the Center team and project sites can consider using visioning exercises, small group discussions, focus groups, talking circles, or one-on-one conversations. When the Community Driven Evaluation Plan is ready, you should share it with the project sites to ensure that we all have a shared understanding of the work ahead, and who will be responsible for each component.

1. Defining Key Terms

When first engaging with the project site, take time to come to a common understanding of key terms that will be used throughout the evaluation. It is essential to honor Indigenous Ways of Knowing throughout this process. Indigenous people have distinct training, knowledge, cultural protocols, and experience that informs how they might approach evaluation. The communities are the experts on their history and program development. This is a community driven evaluation; care must be taken not to impose a western academic perspective onto the process of evaluation planning. The Center team might ask the following questions to understand and define key terms:

- How does the community understand evaluation?
- What evaluation terms are the community comfortable using?
- What approach is in keeping with your values as a community?
- How do you prefer to communicate?

If the project site discusses terms like "fidelity," "quality assurance plan or continuous program improvement," or "outcomes," please ask them to describe what these terms mean to them.

2. Developing Evaluation Questions

The following questions are intended to help the project site identify what they want to learn about their program. The Center team can work with project sites to identify what they are seeking to find and what information is needed to inform the process. As discussions unfold, it is important to engage all relevant partners or knowledge bearers throughout the process.

Remember to be purposeful in communication and check-in regularly with partners throughout the process to ensure everyone is aligned in understanding what is formulated.

Who should be involved in evaluation planning activities? How will each person be involved? (They may be advisors, or help conduct the evaluation plan, such as a program evaluator working in partnership with Center staff and advisors.)

Eligibility: What are the eligibility criteria for participating in the program? Who is the program designed for? For example, it might be at-risk Native youth from [project site community] between the ages of 10 and 19 or teen parents under the age of 21.

Consent: What is the planned consent process? Is informed consent needed? For example, you might plan to gather consent prior to the start of the program or participants will sign assent forms at the first program session. If you plan to work with youth, you might stipulate that participants must have both signed parental consent and youth assent forms in order to participate. You might note that not consenting to participate in the evaluation will not affect participation in the program.

Setting: Where will the program take place? Is the program designed to take place in a particular setting or service area? For example, a school, community center, or within the sovereign jurisdiction of particular tribes?

Administration/collection of information: Who will collect/gather information? At what points do they collect this information? For example, at program enrollment and exit or at program enrollment and 6 months after program exit? Who will analyze the information collected, and how? For example, X will enter it into an Excel spreadsheet, which they will use to automatically calculate numbers.

What outcomes do you want to achieve from your program? How do you see the story of effectiveness unfolding for your program? For example, what do you hope to see in families after they complete the program? What does success look like for you and your community? How will you know if the program is working? What are the local and cultural indications of success? What does achieving your outcomes look like? For example, you might ask– How many families reunify, are fewer families referred to child welfare, or how are community members engaging in cultural traditions?

If the answer is yes to any of the aforementioned questions, be sure to discuss and/or follow up with the project site leads to discuss possible information sources (such as enrollment, participation), when and how those data are collected, and who collects it.

What do you want to know about your program's implementation? Do you want to know if it is being delivered as intended? Do you want to document how your program should be implemented? Do you want to know how many hours of service people typically receive through your program? Do you want to document what services you are providing through your program? Do you want to document the challenges and successes of implementing this program? Do you want to know about the types of families you serve?

If the answer is yes to any of the aforementioned questions, be sure to discuss and/or follow up with the project site leads to discuss possible information sources (such as enrollment, participation), when and how those data are collected, and who collects it.

What do you want to know about the costs of delivering your program? What would you want to learn from a cost study? Do you have a process in mind? Do you want to understand cost per person served? Do you want to know how much each component of your program costs? Do you want to know how much it costs to start up this program? Do you want to know how much it costs to run the program, once it's set up? Do you want to know how much money you save families or your community by offering these services?

If the answer is yes to any of the aforementioned questions, be sure to discuss and/or follow up with the project site leads to discuss possible information sources, how and when data are collected, and who collects it (for example, do they track how much time each type of staff spends on the program? Do they have cost estimates for all partners' work on this program? Do they know or can they find out how much their fixed costs are—cost for space, equipment, overhead, information technology, and human resources, etc.?).

What evaluation study permissions are needed? A key part of the evaluation process is ensuring you follow local approval processes for working with and collecting information from children and families. Before you collect any information, it is essential that you engage local approval bodies to gain permission. Depending on your community you may be required to engage some combination of:

- Local IRB
- Tribal or regional IRB
- Local policy councils and/or tribal councils
- Local spiritual leaders, knowledge bearers, or Elders

What is the estimated timeline for approval/review? How often do relevant approval bodies meet? What documentation is needed? For example, do you need to get a tribal resolution passed? Do you need to establish an MOU or agreement of collaboration and participation from partners? Do you have a data ownership plan in place? Have you thought about data access and storage? Have you identified and established a plan to adhere to local mandatory reporting processes?

3. Information sources to inform the story

What do you already know about how your program is working, and how do you know? Do you have an indication of demand for the program? For example, is there a waitlist for the program? Do you have information sources that demonstrate program effectiveness? For example, are children returned to their families more quickly? Do you have information on participation? For example, do you collect enrollment forms or attendance records? Do Elders support or champion the program? Do you monitor referrals or have sources of information that show the community and Elders support the program? Do you have a process in place to monitor ongoing program activities (quality assurance plan or continuous program improvement plan)?

How do you measure the success of your program? What do you see as the benefits of this effort (what are the outcomes or values from your program)? How do you measure that outcome or value of interest? When do you use these measures? For example, if you want to see participants more connected to their spirituality and cultural identity, you might measure that with the Native American Spirituality Scale or through attendance at ceremony or enacting certain cultural or spiritual rites. You might employ a measure with eligible participants at the start and end of the program to observe changes in connection to spirituality and identity.

Be sure to also indicate if a project site wants to measure a particular value or outcome but does not know how to.

What other information sources exist that you are not currently using? What are the barriers to accessing this information? Do you have agreements in place with other agencies or partners to

access this information? If not, do you need an agreement to access the information?

4. Evaluation Plan

Instructions: *After ongoing discussions with project sites, use the information gathered from the first three sections to fill out the final Community Driven Evaluation Plan section. This section includes tables that capture evaluation questions, information sources, responsibilities, and a timeline of activities. Examples are provided in grey.*

Only fill out the tables relevant to the types of study that project sites are interested in conducting. Mark sections as N/A if sites are not interested in particular evaluation options.

Implementation or process evaluation: What you want to know about how your program works

Evaluation questions	Information sources	Who will collect this information?	When will this information be collected?	Who will analyze this information?
Is the program delivered as intended?	*1. Observation checklists* *2. Case review notes*	*1. [Name, Role]* *2. [Name, Role]*	*1. Weekly, from Sept 2019 through Aug 2020*	*1. [Name, Role]* *2. [Name, Role]*

Areas of assistance desired for implementation or process study:

Examples: Creating an observation tool to document fidelity, developing a QA process, analyzing qualitative data.

Outcome Evaluation: How you will know if your program is successful

Evaluation questions	Information sources	Who will collect this information?	When will this information be collected?	Who will analyze this information?
Does the program improve family wellness?	*Indian Family Wellness Assessment*	*[Name, Role]*	*At baseline, and at end of program*	*[Name, Role]*

If the project site is interested in outcome evaluation ensure you gather information on: the eligibility criteria for participating in the program, the planned consent process, the setting of the evaluation, who will administer the program, and who will collect/gather information and at what intervals.

Areas of assistance desired for outcome evaluation:

Examples: How can we measure family wellness? How can we show that children are returned to their families after participating in our program?

Cost evaluation: How you know how much it costs to operate your program

Evaluation questions	Information sources	Who will collect this information?	When will this information be collected?	Who will analyze this information?
What are the ongoing costs to running this intervention?	*Time-use study*	*[Name, Role]*	*Weekly, for one month*	*[Name, Role]*

Areas of assistance desired for cost study:

Examples: How do we find out how much it costs to run our program? How can we tell funders how much each component of our program costs?

Evaluation timeline

Add key dates here for what we learned above. For example: when to get IRB approval and how long it may take; when you plan to start the evaluation; when data collection activities will occur.

Appendix D: Timeline and Milestones

MILESTONE	TIMELINE
OLCJC team conducted the readiness assessment	April 2019
Onsite meeting with OLCJC to conduct an evaluability assessment	May 2019
Established a teaming agreement and began weekly videoconference meetings	August 2019
Development of the Pathway to Change	August 2019
Development of project work plan	August 2019 to February 2020
Virtual site visit focused on gathering information about the program and plan the evaluation	April 2020
Developed evaluation plan and sources of information to gather.	April 2020 to November 2020
Indigenous evaluation consultant identified and contracted to oversee and support indigenous evaluation approaches.	July 2020
Outreach to the Oglala Sioux Tribe Research Review Board (OST RRB)	October 2020 to January 2021
Development of information gathering tools.	October 2020 to March 2021
Development of OST RRB package and completed process to obtain RRB clearance	December 2020 to April 2021
Oglala Lakota College intern identified as onsite support in data collection.	May 2021
Supported onsite staff in preparation for the information gathering phase.	April to May 2021
Collected information.	May to November 2021
Reviewed information and drafted the evaluation report	December 2021 to May 2022
Final reporting to the OST RRB	June 2022
Follow-up site visit	February 2023

Appendix E: Evaluation Consent Form

Evaluation Consent Form

The Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center (OLCJC) serves children in need of care and coordinated services to work through crisis and overcome trauma. In an effort to find ways to improve our program even further, the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience (the Center) is conducting an evaluation with the OLCJC. The evaluation is funded by the Children's Bureau. The Children's Bureau will use the results of this evaluation to share knowledge about culturally relevant practice models that build child and family resilience and prevent child maltreatment. Mathematica, the Center's evaluation lead, will provide evaluation support to Arlana Bettelyoun.

This form is asking for your consent and your child's assent to participate in the evaluation.

Do I have to participate in the evaluation? No. Participation is voluntary. If you decide not to participate, you will still receive OLCJC services. Your decision about whether you participate will not affect any services you receive or your relationship with Arlana and Larry Swalley. You can change your mind about participating at any time, without penalty.

What is the purpose of the evaluation? The evaluation will study how well OLCJC services are working to help children heal from trauma. This involves collecting information from children and caretakers who are receiving OLCJC services. OLCJC may use feedback from the evaluation to demonstrate success and improve the quality of its services for children. The Children's Bureau will use findings to better understand how OLCJC helps to build resilience among families and children and prevent future child maltreatment.

What happens if I agree to be in the evaluation? Children will be observed during two meetings with Larry or Arlana and will be asked to participate in an interview that will last up to one hour. A parent or legal guardian will also be asked to participate in an interview that will last up to 45 minutes. During interviews, you be asked to answer questions and respond honestly and openly about your experiences.

Will interviews be recorded? Yes, but only if you give permission. Recordings are for evaluation purposes only. All recorded information in interviews will be regarded as very important and private and will be kept strictly confidential. OLCJC and evaluators will have access to the recordings. All recordings will be deleted at the end of the evaluation. The child will not be recorded on video or audio during the observations.

How will you keep my information private? We will keep evaluation data – including observation notes, interview notes, and interview recordings – in locked files and secure computer folders with restricted access. OLCJC, the interviewer, and the evaluation study team will have access to the records. Any information that could identify you will be kept private unless required otherwise by law. At the end of the evaluation, the study team will remove personally identifiable information from all notes and deliver the notes to the Oglala Sioux Tribe Research Review Board. The study team will deliver all evaluation data to OLCJC for deletion. Your personal information will never appear in any public report or presentation, and it will not be possible to identify any caretakers and children in evaluation reports or presentations.

What are the risks of participating in the evaluation? Interview questions do not intend to discuss difficult topics, but it is possible that participating in the interview will raise difficult memories and feelings related to past trauma or current feelings about safety. You do not have to answer questions unless you want to. You can skip questions or stop participation at any time.

What are the benefits of participating in the evaluation? You may not benefit directly, but your participation could help children and families with experiences like yours. OLCJC and other Tribal communities that support Native children will take lessons from the evaluation to better serve children and families as they heal from trauma.

Before you say yes or no to being in the evaluation, we can answer any questions you have. You can ask me or contact our partner evaluator, Charlotte Cabili, at ccabili@mathematica-mpr.com, or at 202.238.3322.

On the next page, please mark your responses and sign the form if you agree to participate in the evaluation. You may sign the form electronically by marking your responses and typing your name.

You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

SIGNATURE PAGE

PARENT OR LEGAL GUARDIAN:

1. I agree for my child to participate in the OLCJC evaluation.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. I agree for my child to be recorded during the evaluation interview discussion.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. I agree to be interviewed for the OLCJC evaluation.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. I agree to be recorded during the evaluation interview discussion.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

Parent/Legal Guardian Name	Parent/Legal Guardian Signature	Date

CHILD:

1. I agree to participate in the OLCJC evaluation.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

2. I agree to be observed in the OLCJC evaluation.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

3. I agree to be interviewed for the OLCJC evaluation.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. I agree to be recorded during the evaluation interview discussion.
   ☐ Yes ☐ No

Child Name	Child Signature	Date

Appendix F: Evaluation Description Handout

The Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center's Evaluation

Purpose of the evaluation. The Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center (OLCJC) serves children in need of care and coordinated services to work through crisis and overcome trauma. The evaluation will study how OLCJC services help children heal from trauma. In particular, the evaluation will explore how OLCJC has contributed to positive changes in children's holistic wellness. The evaluation seeks input from children and their caretakers who have firsthand experience with OLCJC services.

Evaluators. The Center for Native Child and Family Resilience has been funded by the Children's Bureau to conduct the evaluation in collaboration with OLCJC.

How evaluation results will be used. OLCJC may use feedback from the evaluation to demonstrate success and improve the quality of its services for children. The evaluation funder, the Children's Bureau, will also use findings to better understand how programs like OLCJC help to build resilience among families and children and prevent future child maltreatment. The Children's Bureau will share these lessons with other Tribal communities. No caretakers or children will ever be named or identified in reports or presentations.

Evaluation activities. Children and their caretakers will first be asked for permission to participate in the evaluation. If they agree, children will be observed on two occasions when they receive OLCJC services and will participate in one interview. Caretakers will participate in one interview.

- **Observations of children.** Larry Swalley or Arlana Bettelyoun will observe the child on two occasions, during a scheduled meeting or traditional service. Observations will focus on attributes that the child exhibits as signs of the child's wellness. Examples include a smile, a sense of humor, anger, or being withdrawn. Larry and Arlana will enter brief observation notes in the child's case file following the observation. Children will not be recorded on video or audio during the observations. The observation requires no additional time commitment from the child or caretaker.
- **Interview with children.** Bobbi Amiotte, the evaluation interviewer, will ask the child to discuss topics that help explore the child's wellness. Children will be asked to discuss activities they enjoy, people they like to spend time with, and feelings about Lakota teachings and ceremonies. Children will also be asked about their experiences with services provided by Larry and Arlana. The back of this page lists the types of interview questions that children will be asked. There is no need for children to prepare answers in advance. Caretakers may be present for this interview if they desire. The interview will take up to one hour.
- **Interview with caretakers.** This interview includes similar topics as the child interview. Bobbi will ask the child's caretaker to discuss the caretaker's perspective of the child. That is, the caretaker will be asked about activities the child enjoys, people the child likes to spend time with, and the child's feelings toward Lakota teachings and ceremonies. Caretakers will also be asked how they view their child's and their own experiences with services provided by Larry and Arlana. The child will not be present for the interview. The interview will take up to 45 minutes.

The Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center's Evaluation

Child interview questions:

1. How do you like to spend your free time?
2. What have you been doing to keep busy?
3. Are there any activities you do that involve working together with others?
4. Think of something that gave you a good laugh lately. Can you share what it was?
5. How would you describe your mood?
6. What kinds of things put you in a good mood?
7. Who do you spend your free time with?
8. What types of things do you do together?
9. Think about someone you feel safest with. What is it about them makes you feel safe?
10. How do conversations usually go with [Child's caretaker]?
11. Have you made changes in yourself or to the way you talk with [caretaker], since working with Arlana and Larry?
12. Think about the Lakota teachings and ceremonies you have experienced. Can you tell me what they were?
13. How did it make you feel?
14. What kinds of things did you learn?
15. Would you like to sing or hum a Lakota song you have learned, or tell me a Lakota legend?
16. Did something change in your life because of what you learned/experienced? How so?
17. What have you learned about yourself because of your time with Larry and Arlana?
18. Think about the last time you had a challenge in your life. How did Larry and Arlana help you?
19. What are some ways that Larry and Arlana could improve how they work with you?
20. Do you imagine your future to be different now that you have worked with Larry and Arlana? In what ways?

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Appendix G: Script for Evaluation Description Handout

Script for Evaluation Description Handout

Today I would like to tell you about an opportunity for families that work with OLCJC. We are asking children and their caretakers to participate in an evaluation. The evaluation will study how OLCJC services help children heal from trauma. In particular, the evaluation will explore how OLCJC has contributed to positive changes in children's holistic wellness. Your participation could help children and families with experiences like yours that live around here and in other Tribal communities. Lessons from the evaluation will be used to better serve children to help them thrive, not just survive. The evaluation relies on input from families who have firsthand experience with OLCJC services. We hope that this evaluation helps you and your child find your voice, so that you can tell us your story of healing.

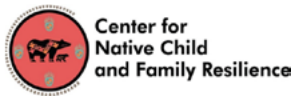
With this evaluation, OLCJC wants to use feedback from families to demonstrate successes and improve the quality of its services for children. Our evaluation funder, the Children's Bureau, will also use findings to better understand how programs like OLCJC help to build resilience among families and children and prevent future child maltreatment. The Children's Bureau will share these lessons with other Tribal communities. Caretakers and children will never be named or identified in reports or presentations.

If you and your child agree to participate in the evaluation, we will do a few activities.

- First, [Arlana Bettelyoun/Larry Swalley] or I will observe [CHILD NAME] on two occasions, during a scheduled meeting or traditional service. Observations will focus on attributes that the child exhibits as signs of the child's wellness, as a check-up on how [CHILD NAME] seems to be doing. The observation requires no additional time from you or [CHILD NAME]. After the observation is done, we will take notes for our records, to help us remember what we observed. Children will not be recorded on video or audio during the observations.

- Bobbi Amiotte, our evaluation interviewer, will ask [CHILD NAME] to discuss activities [CHILD NAME] enjoys, people [CHILD NAME] likes to spend time with, and feelings about Lakota teachings and ceremonies. [CHILD NAME] will also be asked about experiences with our services. We will not ask [CHILD NAME] to discuss difficult experiences. We provided a list of questions that may be asked during the interview. There is no need to study these questions in advance. The interview will be conversational. The interview will take up to 1 hour. We encourage an individual interview with the child, but caretakers can be present if preferred. You and your child must agree to your child participating in the interview to be included in the evaluation.

- This caretaker interview includes similar topics as the child interview, but Bobbi will ask you to discuss your perspective on [CHILD NAME]. [CHILD NAME] will not be present for the interview. The interview will take up to 45 minutes.



Script for Obtaining Consent

[Note to evaluator: Bolded text represents information that must be conveyed aloud to the caretaker and child during the consent process.]

In order to participate in the evaluation, I need to ask you and your child for permission. **I also need to make sure you understand some important information included in this Consent form.** I am going to walk you through that now.

First, you are not required to participate in the evaluation. Your participation and your child's participation are voluntary. If you decide not to participate, you will still receive OLCJC services. Your decision about whether you participate will not affect any services you receive or your relationship with Arlana and Larry. **You can change your mind about participating at any time, without penalty.**

As we just discussed, **if you and [CHILD NAME] agree to participate, then [CHILD NAME] will be observed on two occasions and will be asked to participate in the interview. You will also be asked to participate in an interview**. During interviews, you be asked to answer questions and respond honestly and openly about your experiences. **We will ask for your permission to record interviews.** Recordings are for evaluation purposes only. All recorded information in interviews will be regarded as very important and private and will be kept strictly confidential. The interviewer will use recordings to make sure her notes are correct. All recordings will be deleted at the end of the study. **The child will not be recorded on video or audio during the observations.**

We will keep all information that we collect private. This includes observation notes, interview notes, and interview recordings. Any hard copies will be in locked files, and electronic copies will be in secure computer folders with restricted access. Those with access to the information include OLCJC, our interviewer, and the study team supporting the evaluation. Any information that could identify you will be kept private unless required otherwise by law. **At the end of the evaluation, the study team will remove any names or other information that could personally identify you.** We will then deliver the notes to the Oglala Sioux Tribe Research Review Board. The study team will deliver the evaluation data to OLCJC for deletion. Your personal information will <u>never</u> appear in any public report or presentation, and **it will not be possible to identify any caretakers and children in evaluation reports or presentations.**

The risks for you to participate are minor. Interview questions do not intend to discuss difficult topics, but it is possible that participating in the interview will raise difficult memories and feelings related to past trauma or difficult feelings about current safety. You and [CHILD NAME] do not have to answer questions unless you want to. You can skip questions or stop participation at any time.

There are no direct benefits to you or [CHILD NAME] for participating in the evaluation. However, your participation could help children and families with experiences like yours. OLCJC and other

Tribal communities that support Native children will take lessons from the evaluation to better serve children and families as they heal from trauma.

Do you or [CHILD NAME] have any questions about the evaluation and what is involved with your participation?

Okay, now we can turn to the last page of the consent form asking you to respond to questions by marking yes or no, and then a request for you to provide a signature and date.

[If not in person] You may sign the form electronically by marking your responses and typing your name. I will be asking each of you for your individual permissions.

[Ask the caretaker]

1. Do you agree for your child to participate in the OLCJC evaluation?

[If the caretaker responds "no" to this question, then do not ask the remaining questions.]

2. Do you agree for [CHILD NAME] to be recorded during the evaluation interview discussion?
3. Do you agree to be interviewed for the OLCJC evaluation?
4. Do you agree to be recorded during the evaluation interview discussion?

[Ask the child]

1. Do you agree to participate in the OLCJC evaluation?
2. Do you agree to be recorded during the evaluation interview discussion?
3. Do you agree to be interviewed for the OLCJC evaluation?
4. Do you agree to be recorded during the evaluation interview discussion?

Appendix H: Child Observation Procedures

OLCJC EVALUATION CHILD OBSERVATION PROCEDURES

Objective: The observation will focus on the child's demeanor and how a child feels, rather than observing behaviors. Observations will be completed after evaluation enrollment and at the end of the evaluation period. Notes from each brief observation will provide a point-in-time snapshot of the child's demeanor.

Observers: Larry and Arlana

Length: 5 minutes to record

Setting: Observations may occur during the greeting and visits with Larry and Arlana as well as during traditional services. Observations may occur in person or virtually, for example, in the OLCJC office, the traditional ceremony location, or videoconference or phone.

Instructions: The observer will record the child's attributes related to child's emotional, physical, cultural, and spiritual attributes that were observed earlier that day. A list of example attributes is on the next page. Some listed attributes are not directly observable and require judgment. In these cases, the observer will justify observations with an explanatory note that includes the remark, behavior, or other signal that led to the observed attribute. For example, the observer would accompany "stressed" with a note, "child appeared tense and discussed a stressful situation they are dealing with".

Observation notes will be entered as case contact notes on OLCJC's current form. In addition to notes about attributes, the observer will record the following information in the observation record:

1. Child Evaluation ID number
2. Observation date
3. Observation number (1st OR 2nd).
4. Observation setting
5. Intensity of services overall, including traditional services and case management (lighter/infrequent versus very involved/frequent)
6. Context and experiences that are particularly influential on the child demeanor's (examples: severe traumatic event such as a caregiver relapse; having support of a mentor, auntie, or school counselor, or fit of child's placement)

Examples of Attributes

Positive Attributes	Negative Attributes
Emotional Wellness	
Smile	Stressed
Confident	Anxious
Self esteem	Nervous or tense
Sense of self	Feel unsafe
Vitality	Frown
Enjoyment	Angry
Sense of humor	Violent
Can rest and relax	Stare blankly
Appropriate affect	In a fog, zombie-like
Assertive	Confused
Can cope	Flat affect
Flexible	Unhappy
Positive attitude towards warmth and closeness	Sullen
Trusting	Irritable
Open, willing to communicate	Restless or hyperactive
Comment they are making friends	Withdrawn
Take pleasure in experiences	Refuse to talk
Positive interactions with parent or caretaker	Too shy or timid
Laugh at a joke	Hyperattention
	Attention deficit
Physical wellness	
Well-rested	Tired, flinching at communication or reactive to movement and talking
Hair braided or combed	Disheveled
Dressed appropriately	Hungry or asks for food
Consumes nutritious foods or drinks	Consumes unhealthy food or drinks
Healthy body weight	Unhealthy body weight
Cultural and spiritual wellness	
Engage in cultural teachings and gatherings (for example, hum or sing a traditional song, know the creation story, use Lakota language)	
Experience healing from cultural gatherings (for example, crying during the Sweat as a part of the healing journey)	
Gravitate toward sage	
Feel confident	
Feel validated	
Feel empowered	
Look forward to the future	

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Appendix I: Child Observation Notes Form

OLCJC EVALUATION CHILD OBSERVATION NOTES FORM

1. Child Evaluation ID number
2. Observation date
3. Observation number (1st OR 2nd)
4. Virtual or in person
5. Observed attributes from case contact notes
6. Observation event or setting
7. Intensity of OLCJC services
8. Influential context and child experiences

Appendix J: Child Interview Protocol

OLCJC EVALUATION CHILD INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Child evaluation ID:		
OLCJC services to date: (check all that apply)		Counseling and life skills training for children
		Cultural teachings with children
		Lakota language lessons with children
		Spiritual ceremonies with children/children and family
		Case management for CPS or court case
		Counseling and life skills training for parents/caregivers
		Services integrate the right to identify with the traditional way of life (*Lakol wicoh'an*) *[added 7/22/2021]*
		Services integrate the right to learn and speak his or her language (*Lakol lyapi*) *[added 7/22/2021]*
		Services integrate the right to know the traditional laws, customs, and ceremonies of the people *[added 7/22/2021]*
Interview Date:		
Interview Mode (Phone, video, in-person):		

A. INTRODUCTION

Thank you so much [CHILD NAME] for talking with me today. My name is Bobbi Amiotte, and I am helping Arlana and Larry from the Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center with a study that they are doing. A study is a way to learn about a program. For this study, we would like to learn more about how Arlana and Larry help kids and their families.

I am going to tell you more about our meeting and answer your questions in a minute. For now, I would like to begin with an opening prayer. *[Bobbi will offer to lead an opening prayer and will use smudge.]* Since we have not met before, I thought we could share a little something about ourselves to start….

…our favorite foods! My favorite food is… what is your favorite? I love the song….. What song do you like to listen to? *[Continue informal conversation with the child to establish rapport and put the child at ease.]*

Let me take a few minutes to talk about why we are meeting today, and so you know what to expect. An important part of the OLCJC study is hearing what kids have to say. This is because the work that Arlana and Larry do is focused on helping kids and their families. For our conversation today, I am going to ask you about yourself. I will also ask you how you have spent time with Arlana and Larry, and any ways you feel that your life has changed because of your

time with them. There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. It is your choice whether you would like to talk to me today. You do not have to answer any questions you don't want to. For example, you can simply tell me "pass" or "I don't want to talk about that" and we will move on. You can stop our discussion at any time. The way Arlana and Larry work with you will not change based on things you tell me or if you choose to skip questions or stop our discussion.

Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

I am going to take notes during our conversation to help me remember what you tell me today. I would also like to record this discussion to make sure my notes are accurate. I can pause or stop the recording at any time you tell me to. I will erase the recording after my notes are finalized. Do I have your permission to record our discussion? *[If permission is granted, begin recording the discussion.]*

B. INTERVIEW

Emotional wellness

Now I would like to talk about things you like to do and people you like to spend time with.

Activities that give children a positive outlet or purpose

1. How do you like to spend your free time?
   Probe: I know this year has been different with the coronavirus pandemic. It is okay if you would rather tell me how you used to like to spend your free time.
2. Think about this past month. What have you been doing to keep busy?
   Probe for activities besides school that are active, whether outdoor or with others:
   - Do you attend activities at school or in the community?
   - Do you have chores that you always have to do at home?
   - Do you do any sports, dance, running, or other physical activities?
   - Do you spend time outside to get fresh air and be in nature?
   - Do you help people out or do something nice for people?
3. Are there any activities you do that involve working together with others? *(if yes)* Tell me more about that.

The child's personal wellbeing

4. Think of something that gave you a good laugh lately. Can you share what it was?
   Probe: You can tell me about a joke, a story or something you heard, or something funny that happened.

Note: Before this question, present a flashcard with pictures of child faces (example below) to help a child articulate their mood.

5. Think about this past month. How would you describe your mood?
   Probe: Have you usually been in a good mood, or have you been having a rough time in some way?
6. What kinds of things put you in a good mood?

Positive relationships with people close to the child

7. Who do you spend your free time with?
   Probe: Is there a family member, relative, friend, or elder that comes to mind?
8. What types of things do you do together?
9. Think about someone you feel safest with. What is it about them makes you feel safe?
   Probe: is there a family member, relative, friend, or elder that comes to mind? Can you confide in them and tell them personal things that are going on with you? Do you relax or feel like yourself when you are around them? Do they support your goals and interests?
10. How do conversations usually go with your [mom/dad/name of person who takes care of you]?
    Probe: Are conversations normally easy or difficult? [If difficult] How does the conversation go when you try and tell them something important to you that may be hard for you to talk about? Are conversations calm or emotional? Are they respectful?
11. Have you made changes in yourself or to the way you talk with [caretaker], since working with Arlana and Larry? (*if yes*) Tell me a little about what changed.

Cultural wellness

I would like to talk for a few minutes about the Lakota ways that Larry and Arlana teach to guide our Lakota identity. They teach the creation story, Lakota language and songs, and they lead ceremonies. Prayer, the drum, and burning of sage are included in these teachings.

12. Think about the Lakota teachings and ceremonies you have experienced. Can you tell me what they were?

[Ask for each one that is named, or probe on teachings and ceremonies that Larry and Arlana reported using]

13. How did it make you feel?
14. What kinds of things did you learn?
15. Would you like to sing or hum a Lakota song you have learned, or tell me a Lakota legend?
16. Did something change in your life because of what you learned/experienced? How so?

Experience with OLCJC services

Now I would like to think across all of your time and experiences with Larry and Arlana.

17. What have you learned about yourself because of your time with Larry and Arlana?

18. Think about the last time you had a challenge in your life. How did Larry and Arlana help you?
    Probe: have they given you support? Have they given you skills or strategies to deal with hard things? Have they connected you with other people or resources to improve hard situations?
19. What are some ways that Larry and Arlana could improve how they work with you?
    Probe: Imagine Larry and Arlana were working with other kids. What should Larry and Arlana change to make it a better experience for them?
20. Do you imagine your future to be different now that you have worked with Larry and Arlana? In what ways?

Those are all my questions for today. Is there anything else you wanted to tell me about before we end our discussion? Thank you so much for talking with me. This was very helpful!

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Appendix K: Caretaker Interview Protocol

OLCJC EVALUATION CARETAKER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Caretaker evaluation ID:	
Child evaluation ID:	
Interview Date:	
Interview Mode (Phone, video, in-person):	

A. INTRODUCTION

Thank you so much [CARETAKER NAME] for talking with me today. My name is Bobbi Amiotte, and I am helping Arlana and Larry from the Oglala Lakota Children's Justice Center by helping to collect information for their evaluation. As you may remember, the evaluation will study how OLCJC services help children heal from trauma, with a special focus on their contributions to children's holistic wellness. The evaluation seeks input from families who have firsthand experience with OLCJC services. That is what brings us together to our meeting today.

Do I have it right that [CHILD NAME] is your [CLARIFY RELATIONSHIP TO CHILD]? *Note: adjust references to "your child" based on the caretaker's relationship to the child throughout the interview, as appropriate.*

I am going to ask you about your child, and your child's experiences working with Arlana and Larry. I am also going to touch on ways your lives may have changed through your time with them.

There are no right or wrong answers to my questions. It is your choice whether you would like to talk to me today. You do not have to answer any questions you don't want to. You can stop our discussion at any time. The services that Arlana and Larry provide to you and your family will not change based on things you tell me or if you choose to skip questions or stop our discussion.

Do you have any questions for me before we get started?

I am going to type notes during our conversation to help me remember what you tell me today. I would also like to record this discussion to make sure my notes are accurate. I can pause or stop the recording at any time you tell me to. I will erase the recording after my notes are finalized. Do I have your permission to record our discussion? *[If permission is granted, begin recording the discussion.]*

B. QUESTIONS

Emotional wellness

First, I would like to talk about things your child likes to do and people [HE/SHE] likes to spend time with.

1. How does your child like to spend their free time?
   Probe: I know this year has been different with the coronavirus pandemic. It is okay if you would rather tell me how they used to spend their free time.
2. Think about the past month. What keeps your child busy?
   Probe for activities besides school that are active, whether outdoor or with others:
   - *Activities at school or in the community*
   - *Chores to do at home*
   - *Sports, dance, running, or other physical activities*
   - *Time outside to get fresh air and be in nature*
   - *Help people out or do something nice for people*
3. Are there any activities your child does that involves working together with others? *(if yes)* Tell me more about that.
4. Think about the past month. How would you describe your child's mood?
5. What kinds of things put your child in a good mood?
6. Who does your child spend [HIS/HER] free time with?
   *Probe: I*s there a family member, relative, friend, or elder that comes to mind?
7. What types of things do they do together?
8. How do conversations usually go between you and your child?
   Probe: Are conversations normally easy or difficult? *[If difficult]* How does the conversation go when you try and tell them something important to you that may be hard for you to talk about? Are conversations calm or emotional? Are they respectful?
9. Have you or your child made changes to the way you talk with each other, since working with Arlana and Larry? (if yes) Tell me a little about what changed.

Cultural wellness

I would like to talk for a few minutes about the Lakota ways that Larry and Arlana teach to guide our Lakota identity.

10. My understanding from Arlana and Larry is that your child has been learning/involved in *[main teachings and ceremonies].* How would you say your child has responded overall to these teachings?
11. Now think about an activity that has really stood out to you. Can you tell me about it?
    Probe: when did this occur? What was the purpose of the activity?
12. How did it make your child feel? How did it make you/the child's family feel?
13. Did something change in your life because of what you learned/experienced? How so?

Experience with OLCJC services

Now I would like you think about your child's time and experiences with Larry and Arlana more generally.

14. Has your child's time with Larry and Arlana helped the child learn about him/herself? In what ways?
15. Has your child's time with Larry and Arlana helped your child overcome a challenge in his/her life? (if yes) How did Larry and Arlana help?
    Probe: have they given your child support? Have they given your child skills or strategies to deal with hard things? Have they connected you or your child with other people or resources to improve hard situations?
16. What are some ways that Larry and Arlana could improve how they work with your child?
17. For you personally, has your experience with Larry and Arlana helped you to learn something about your family or overcome a key challenge? *(if yes)* Can you tell me more about this?
18. Do you imagine your future to be different now that your child/you have worked with Larry and Arlana? In what ways?

Those are all my questions for today. Is there anything else you wanted to tell me about before we end our discussion?

Thank you so much for talking with me. This was very helpful!

Appendix L: Program Services Description

Program Services Descriptions

The grid at the top of the Child Interview saved on Box has been updated to include Traditional Children's Rights listed in the Evaluation Plan's research questions, see below. For each child that agrees to participate in the study, we need written documentation of the types of services received (check the boxes that apply) and a written description of the nature of those services. To achieve this, we agreed that it would be most straightforward for Bobbi to discuss these children with Arlana and Larry instead of using case records.

Child evaluation ID:		
OLCJC services to date: (check all that apply)		Counseling and life skills training for children
		Cultural teachings with children
		Lakota language lessons with children
		Spiritual ceremonies with children/children and family
		Case management for CPS or court case
		Counseling and life skills training for parents/caregivers
		Services integrate the right to identify with the traditional way of life (*Lakol wicoh'an*) *[added 7/22/2021]*
		Services integrate the right to learn and speak his or her language (*Lakol lyapi*) *[added 7/22/2021]*
		Services integrate the right to know the traditional laws, customs, and ceremonies of the people *[added 7/22/2021]*
Interview Date:		
Interview Mode (Phone, video, in-person):		

Describe the OLCJC services the two children have received. Building on the grid checkmarks at the top of each child interview, we would like you to write a description of the services received (this ties back to my July 22nd email). You can save a Word document with the child ID and description in the "Program Services data" folder on Box here. When describing the nature of the services, you might comment on the following:

- The timeframe for receiving each type of service including cultural teachings, ceremony, and case management. This would be the date of first service and date of most recently received service. This recognizes that case management and traditional services may not overlap.
- Descriptions of each type of service. What was involved for each?
- An indication of how frequent the services were. For example, multiple per week, weekly, monthly, etc.

Here are the kinds of things that would be interesting to document in your description of yoga services. Any promotional materials (website, brochure) may be helpful sources of information.

- Teacher. What is the background of the teacher (education, job title, etc.)?
- Goals. What does the yoga teacher hope to achieve for those who participate in the practice?
- Intended population. Who is invited to classes, and why? Does the class cater to certain ages, circumstances, or needs?
- Style/approach. What style of yoga is used? What guiding principles? What special adaptations? What is the class format?
- Mode/setting. Are classes in Zoom, in-person (where), YouTube, etc.?
- Dosage. How often are classes offered? How often are participants expected to attend?
- Duration. How long does each class last, typically?

It would also be interesting to understand:

- How and when OLCJC began partnering with the yoga teacher
- How OLCJC decides to recommend families to participate in the yoga sessions
- Goals and what the future holds for OLCJC and yoga classes

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Appendix M: Full Evaluation Questions With Sub-Questions

The two primary research questions are as follows:

1. **Do OLCJC program services lead to holistic wellness among children (including emotional, physical, spiritual, and cultural wellness)?**

2. **How does OLCJC contribute to a child's cultural journey of healing?**

- What types of advocacy and traditional services do children receive?
- To what extent does OLCJC integrate the Tribe's Child and Family Code to facilitate the following Traditional Children's Rights?
  - The right to identify with the traditional way of life (Lakol wicoh'an)
  - The right to learn and speak his or her language (Lakol Iyapi)
  - The right to know the traditional laws, customs, and ceremonies of the people
- How many service encounters do enrolled children receive, both overall and for advocacy and traditional services?

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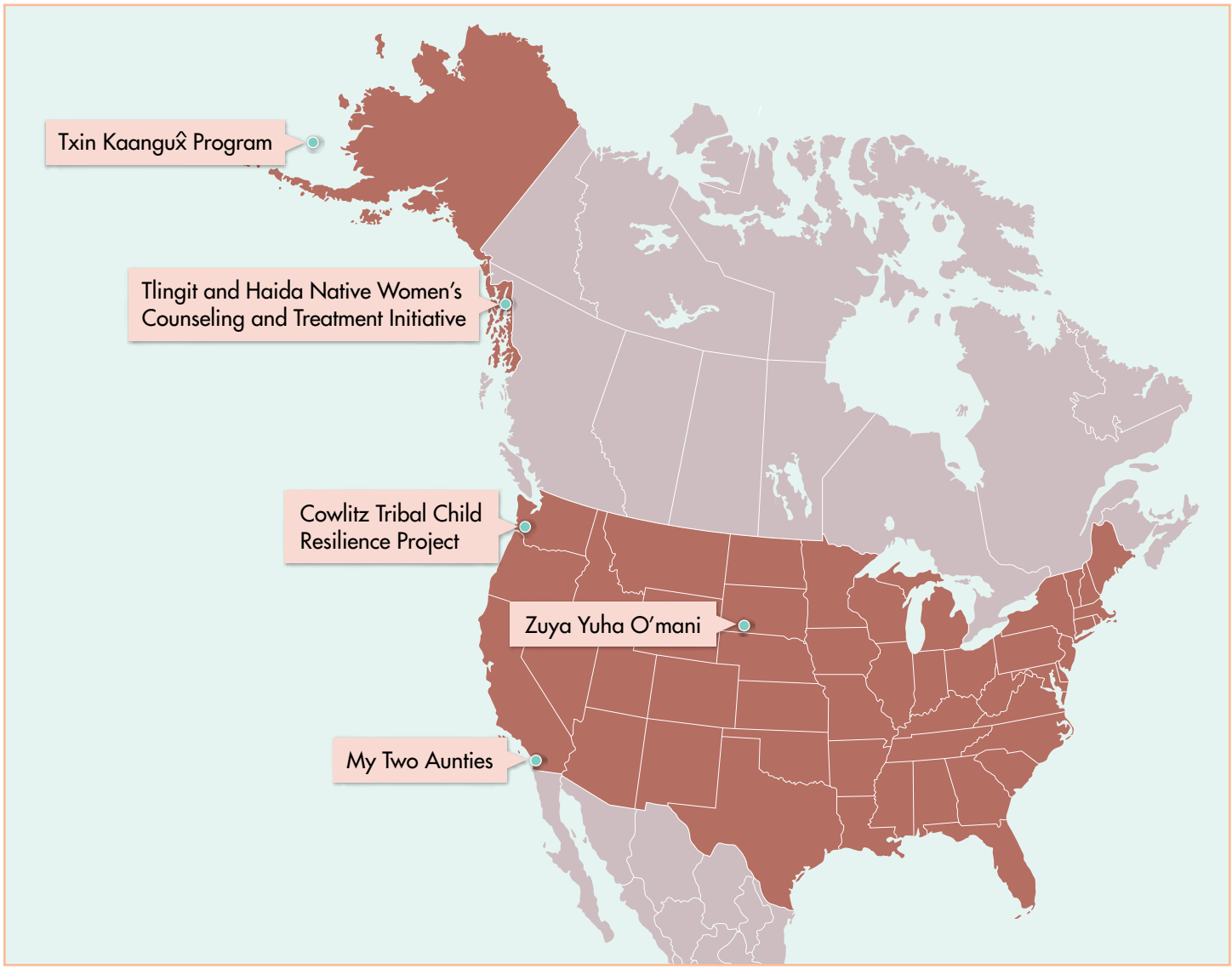

This document is part of a series that presents the results of collaboration between the Center for Native Child and Family Resilience and five Tribal partner organizations to formalize, implement, and evaluate the partners' Tribal child welfare prevention and intervention strategies. For more information about this or the other programs, please visit the Center website, https://cncfr.jbsinternational.com.

The Zuya Yuha O'mani Program
Evaluation Report
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