

## Introducing the National Resource Center for In-Home Services

A service of the Children's Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
A member of the Training/Technical Assistance Network

The National Resource Center for In-Home Services (NRCIHS) is a new service of the Children's Bureau national child welfare training and technical assistance network. The NRCIHS will be a national center of child welfare expertise on in-home services, services designed to ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth in their homes, prevent their initial placement or re-entry into foster care, and preserve, support and stabilize families. NRCIHS will provide technical assistance and training regarding effective and promising alternatives to out-of-home placement, working with state child welfare agencies and tribes to build their capacity to provide effective in-home services. NRCIHS is a cooperative agreement between University of Iowa and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, Children's Bureau, and part of the Children's Bureau Training and Technical Assistance Network. Our partnering organizations are ICF International and the National Indian Child Welfare Association.

The guiding principles of CFSR and the Systems of Care framework—family-centered and community-based practice, individualized service, culturally appropriate services, and strengthening parental capacity to assure child safety, permanency, and well-being – guide NRCIHS's work with States and Tribes in a parallel process of tailoring training and technical assistance (T/TA) to the needs and cultural attributes of the clients served. NRCIHS supports clients to think about their goals through a broad systemic lens in order to achieve sustainable change. Over the next five years NRCIHS will accomplish the following activities:

**Nationwide Assessment of In-Home Services:** In year 1, NRCIHS will conduct a comprehensive review of existing and emerging in-home practices and interventions, examining the research base underlying a variety of in-home service models, surveying the extent to which various models are currently being used in child welfare agencies, and documenting implementation strengths and challenges after consultation with stakeholders. The review will also include examining CFSR findings and other relevant data from CB research and demonstration grants. The nationwide assessment will provide critical data to inform the development of T/TA that is based on knowledge of effective and promising program models and the feasibility of implementing these models in State and Tribal child welfare agencies.

**National Advisory Board for In-Home Services:** NRCIHS will establish a national advisory board to provide input into the national assessment of in-home services, and to guide the development of T/TA capacity and offer recommendations to the center regarding strategies for effective in-home services. The board will include direct and indirect consumers of the center's T/TA, partners from other fields that affect the success of in-home services, and in-home services researchers.

**Annual meeting of Promoting Safe and Stable Families Program:** In collaboration with the Children's Bureau, NRCIHS will plan, organize, coordinate, and facilitate an annual meeting for PSSF program administrators and state in-home services program managers from each state.

**Training and Technical Assistance:** Beginning in the July, 2010, NRCIHS will begin to provide training and technical assistance to state child welfare agencies and tribes. T/TA will be proactive, integrated, culturally competent, collaborative, individualized, client-centered, and strength-based. T/TA activities will be based on comprehensive assessments of state and tribal in-home services systems, knowledge of the evidence base supporting different strategies for in-home services, focused on plans for sustainable systems change, and closely coordinated with the services and resources available to States and Tribes, including the services available from other members of the T/TA network. T/TA will be delivered by staff and highly qualified consultants, and coordinated through the T/TA contractor.

Training and technical assistance will target the “four legs” of system improvement:

1. Organizational/infrastructure improvement
2. Workforce/management development
3. Strengthening supervision
4. Training and supporting front line practice

**Product Development and Dissemination:**

NRCIHS will collect, organize, develop, and disseminate a variety of resources to assist States and Tribes in implementing effective in-home services. As part of this task we will design a publicly accessible website through which consumers can easily obtain information and products.

**Peer Networking:** In collaboration with the T/TA network, the Children's Bureau, States and Tribes, NRCIHS will develop creative and innovative ways to engage Tribes and States in networking activities that are integrated with the networking approaches of other T/TA network members. The focus of networking activities developed by NRCIHS will be topics that are most relevant to the needs of States and Tribes implementing in-home services.

**Evaluation:** NRCIHS will conduct a center-specific evaluation and participate in the cross-site evaluation. The center-specific evaluation uses both quantitative and qualitative methods and multiple measures, as appropriate. Evaluation findings will provide continuous feedback for program improvement.

**Collaboration:** Working closely with the T/TA network, the Children's Bureau, and related services systems beyond child welfare (e.g., domestic violence, substance abuse, mental health, child health) will be key to NRCIHS's success in providing States and Tribes with effective services that are integrated into their broader service systems and sustainable over time.

**For more information about the services of the NRC for In-Home Services, please contact:**

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