



## **Decision: Is a Direct Title IV-E Program Right for Our Tribe?**

The option for Tribes to receive direct funding from the Federal government to operate title IV-E foster care, guardianship and adoption assistance programs presents important opportunities. But the decision to move forward in developing a title IV-E program requires careful consideration and preparation. Tribes that currently have a Tribal Title IV-E Plan Development Grant have shared thoughts about the importance of understanding what is needed to develop an approvable title IV-E plan before making a decision on the direction best for each Tribe. The following are some suggested steps Tribes considering title IV-E may wish to take to inform their decision:

- Do an assessment of Tribal programs, policies, Code, judicial processes and financial systems already in place to see how they align with title IV-E requirements. The *Considerations for Indian Tribes, Indian Tribal Organizations or Tribal Consortia Seeking to Operate a Tribal Title IV-E Program* is a technical assistance document prepared by the Children's Bureau that may be helpful in doing an assessment.
- Review the assessment in conjunction with the Title IV-E pre-print. The pre-print is an attachment to the Program Instruction, *ACYF-CB-PI-09-08, Title IV-E Plan Pre-Print*, with a few additional requirements included on the attachments to *ACYF-CB-PI-10-11, Guidance on Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008*.
- Talk to the current Tribal grantees about their experiences and suggestions.
- Carefully consider financial resources. Title IV-E requires a financial match. Does the Tribe have resources that can help with the match? Are there others who may contribute either financially or through in-kind services? Having these conversations early on is important to a decision on whether to apply for a Tribal Title IV-E Plan Development Grant and/or to directly submit a Title IV-E Plan.
- Involve the key decision makers such as Social Services, the Court, Tribal Council and/or the Committee that has responsibility for social service programs, Finance/Accounting, Cultural Committees. These key persons are critical to developing an approvable plan in a timely manner.

*A list of the Tribal Title IV-E Plan Development grantees and documents referenced above are posted on the Children's Bureau website at [www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb).*