

Yurok Tribe

Annual Program and Services Report (APSR)

Fiscal Year 2016

This report lists the goals of our five-year plan and accomplishments toward those goals over the past year. The Yurok Tribe believes the safety and healthy development of all Yurok children is critical to the continuing strength of the Tribe and the preservation of the culture. The belief is that strong, stable Yurok families are the best role model for development of our children. The Yurok Tribe is committed to providing programs and services, based in traditional cultural family values, which foster positive growth of our children and families.

I. Programs and Services

- A. *Target Population.* The target population to be served includes all children and families of the Yurok Tribe focusing on families at risk or in crisis.
- B. *Description of Programs and Services.* Services currently offered through the Yurok Tribe include but are not limited to:
- Family Preservation Services including reunification, services to maintain the safety of children in their homes, follow-up care, respite care, and parenting skills instruction.
 - Family Support Services which include transportation, parenting skills instruction, respite care, parent-child relationship building, and information and referral services to access other community services.
 - Time-Limited Family Reunification Services which include transportation to and from the following services: counseling, substance abuse treatment, DV counseling, and respite child care.
 - Pre-placement preventive services programs designed to help children at risk of placement to remain with their families.
 - Foster care maintenance.
 - Permanency Planning.
 - In-home visits.
 - Information and referral services.
 - The Yurok Tribal Court's Wellness Court Program which provides AOD Treatment referrals and support services.
 - Tribal Foster Parent Recruitment and home approval.
 - Tribal Foster Parent Support.

Additional programs within the Yurok Tribe that provide services to members include General Assistance, Vocational Education, Higher Education, Head Start, Housing, Environmental Education, Community Services Block Grant (CSBG), Low

Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP), Johnson O'Malley (JOM), Tribal TANF, DV/SA Program and the Tribal Youth Prevention Program.

C. *Children at Greatest Risk of Maltreatment.* Yurok Social Services in collaboration with Del Norte and Humboldt Counties have identified that Native American children are at greatest risk of maltreatment based on the disproportionate number of Native American children in foster care in both Counties. For example, though the Native population of both Counties does not exceed 9%, the rate of Native children in foster care has been as high as 40%. The Yurok Tribe is the largest tribe in California and represents the largest population of children in foster care within both Counties. Yurok Social Services continues to identify and target services to those children at most risk of maltreatment through a number of different avenues including:

1) By working in collaboration with Humboldt and Del Norte County Child Welfare Services from the time of referral on Yurok children, through participation in joint investigations and early intervention services to mitigate safety concerns and prevent the necessity for removal.

2) By collaborative case staffing with Yurok TANF and Yurok Domestic Violence Program to identify those families in need of early intervention to prevent future child welfare involvement. Additionally, the TANF program utilizes a structured child abuse risk assessment tool to assist in identifying those families in needs of a higher level of intervention.

3) By prioritizing services targeted to those children who are involved in voluntary or court-ordered in home services cases.

II. Assessment of Progress

A. *Stakeholder Input in Developing the APSR.* The Yurok Tribe Social Services Advisory Committee and the Justice Advisory Board contribute to the APSR. This input is vital to the planning in meeting the needs of the community. The members of the Justice Advisory Board represent different Departments within the Yurok Tribe. The Social Services Advisory Committee is appointed by the Yurok Tribal Council and each member represents one of our seven districts. Information for completing the APSR was collected from Social Services staff within our Social Services Department.

1. The Justice Advisory Board (JAB) membership includes Department Directors or their representative(s) from Planning, Education, Social Services, Office of Tribal Attorney, Public Safety, Tribal Court (including the Tribal Court Judge and self-help attorneys), Executive, Council, and Self Governance. The purpose of JAB is to plan and collaborate on community social justice/program development.

2. *Community Input.* Through community events held in each of the three office areas, such as the Annual Salmon Festival, Annual Fall Feast events, Annual

Spring Fling and well as community meetings, Social Services sought to determine the most prominent needs directly from the Tribal community. Those needs include the need of building a sense of community through community events, lack of employment and job training for adults and youth, substance abuse treatment, housing, transportation, child care for the more remote areas of the reservation, and more cultural activities for youth were among the needs brought forth and discussed at these meetings and events.

3. Information for completing the APSR was also collected from management staff within our Social Services Department.
 4. The plan has been reviewed by and reflects the input of staff and community members.
- B. *Accomplishments and Progress.* Yurok Tribe's accomplishments and progress achieved in fiscal year 2016 to improve outcomes for children and families, and to provide a more comprehensive, coordinated, and effective child and family services continuum is described below.
- a. Goal 1: Completion and Implementation of direct and/or state Title IV-E Child Welfare agreement and program.

A Program manager was hired in July 2015 to oversee the progress and implementation of the Title IV-E program. Since that time, Social Services has made incredible strides towards implementation of the California/Yurok IV-E Agreement. The following activities towards implementation have been completed:

- Child welfare services plan was negotiated with California and submitted to Region 9 for review. The plan includes, a revised Children's Ordinance and Policies and Procedures that bring Yurok regulations in compliance with California's Title IV-E Plan. The completion and approval of this plan is expected to occur by June 30, 2016.
- Final receipt of the ORI number required to allow Social Services to conduct criminal background checks on foster care placements.
- Staff trained in Structured Decision Making (standardized safety and risk assessment tools).
- California granted access to, and all staff have been trained in the use of, the CWS/CMS database. This database will fulfill the required submission of AFCARS data.
- Curriculum developed and staff trained in the Yurok Children's Ordinance and the Policies and Procedures.
- Intake and referral forms finalized.
- Staff trained in determining IV-E eligibility, time studies and fiscal claiming by the California Department of Social Services.

b. Goal 2: Foster Care Recruitment and Retention.

The Tribe will actively and diligently seek to recruit new foster care homes and to retain the homes already approved to provide the highest quality foster care to the Yurok children and families receiving assistance. This goal includes annual recruitment and maintenance of 10 tribally specified homes and three new county licensed, culturally appropriate homes in the Tribe's service area. The Tribe currently maintains a simple excel database which allows for monitoring of progress.

Currently, Yurok Social Services collaborates with the counties to approve homes that Yurok Children are placed in when removed from their parents. This collaboration includes identification and recommendation of family placements and conducting the home assessments, while the counties conduct the necessary background checks. During this fiscal year, Yurok Social Services, has recruited and maintained 59 tribally approved homes. Unfortunately, during this fiscal year no Yurok homes became county licensed homes. Yurok Social Services expanded in the last part of this fiscal year to recruitment of tribally licensed homes in anticipation of IV-E implementation, this became possible with the receipt of the ORI number allowing for the appropriate background checks. Social Services currently has three applicants who wish to become tribally licensed.

To achieve these goals, Social Services conducted the following events during the 2015-2016 year to recruit and retain foster homes:

- Recruitment was conducted at three reservation and town based community locations during the Tribe's Annual Fall Feast dinners.
- Recruitment was conducted at the Tribe's Annual Salmon Festival event.
- Recruitment was conducted at three reservation and town based community locations during the Tribe's Annual Spring Fling events. At the Klamath area event, Social Services collaborated with Del Norte County CWS to hold a one stop shop event where individuals could receive orientation, fingerprinting and assistance in completing a foster home application. Six families participated in orientation and application to become licensed homes.
- Collaboration with Del Norte County to identify and hire a tribally focused foster parent mentor to assist in supporting and maintaining tribal foster homes.
- Adaptation is currently underway of a tribal foster parent training that was created by tribes in Oklahoma State. Yurok Social Services hopes to implement this training in the next two months in order to fully license tribal foster homes.

- Foster parent luncheon held in one area in order to further recruit tribally licensed foster homes. Yurok Social Services anticipates holding two other luncheons in order to serve all tribal areas.
- Individual interviews conducted with current foster parents by a Master of Social Work Student to identify foster parent needs. These interviews identified a number of areas of need that will allow for further recruitment and retention of foster homes. It is Yurok Social Services intention to utilize this information in the implementation of recruitment and retention in the next fiscal year.

c. Goal 3: To assist 20 families annually who are at risk of referral, from having their children involuntarily removed.

82 families have been assisted in order to prevent involuntary removal of children. The Yurok Tribe Social Services staff have provided assistance to family members applying for and receiving guardianship in tribal court; have provided referrals to services including, domestic violence counseling, financial assistance, batterers intervention programs, family counseling, and AOD services; have co investigated reports of child abuse and neglect and provided home visits, wrap services, parenting classes, AOD assessments, creation of temporary safety plans, behavior observations and guidance, food, household supplies, clothing, counseling and family mediation to prevent having children removed from their home. Collaboration with the Yurok Tribe TANF program allowed for families to receive additional services that tied to their specific family empowerment plan as well as collaboration with our new substance abuse counselor has provided additional substance abuse services for families. This continued collaboration has allowed for additional advocates and services for each of these families.

d. Goal 4: To maintain at least a 75% success rate for reunification, long term guardianship or Tribal Customary Adoption for Yurok children in foster care that are co-case managed with Humboldt and Del Norte Counties.

The Yurok Tribe Social Services Department has successfully reached a 79% success rate for reunification, long term guardianship or Tribal Customary Adoption for Yurok children in foster care in Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. According to our simple excel database, out of 120 children exiting foster care since the last reporting period, 56 children entered guardianship, 24 children reunified with their parents, and 15 children entered into a Tribal Customary Adoption.

III. Collaboration

- A. *Foster Care Programs and Services.* The Yurok Tribe does not operate a foster care program, the Yurok Tribe Social services program collaborates with Del Norte County and Humboldt County to address the needs of young Yurok children in foster care. The state of California (through Del Norte and Humboldt counties) is responsible for the following with respect to Yurok children in care:
- i. developing the Health Care Oversight and Coordination Plan;
 - ii. providing independent living services;
 - iii. providing CFCIP services; and
 - iv. providing health care information as part of the transition plan development process.
- B. *Diligent Recruitment.* Please see accomplishments listed above in regard to recruitment of foster families. The Tribe's success rates in preventing child removal, reunification or finding a culturally appropriate permanent placement for children when removed is due in large part to collaborative efforts allowing for co-investigation and case management of all Yurok children that have been referred to the County's child welfare services. This collaboration is critical to the achievement of the goals discussed in this annual report.
- C. *Services for Children under the Age of 5: 1) To reduce the length of time in care 2) address development needs:*

1) During the course of this year Social Services continued to work towards reducing the length of time children under the age of 5 remain in foster care. Yurok Social Workers work collaboratively with County Social Workers to ensure case plans include providing age appropriate parent instruction where needed in order to allow children under the age of 5 to return home more quickly. Yurok Social Workers also collaborate with the County on concurrent planning so that accelerated permanency time frames for children under the age of 5 are met. Additionally, Social Services collaborate with County partners to find and certify ICWA compliant placements so that children under the age of 5 can be placed with relatives quickly.

In the next year, Social Services will continue to provide placement activities and concurrent planning so that children under the age of 5 achieve permanency within required timeframes. Social Services will also be providing Incredible Years parenting instruction that is specific to families with children under the age of 5 in hopes that reunification can occur more quickly for these children.

2) During the course of this year, to ensure that children under the age of 5 have their developmental needs addressed, Social Services has continued to work with Yurok based head starts and County Social Workers to get Yurok children in foster care under the age of 5 into Yurok head starts where appropriate. Yurok Head Start programs offers home based and center based programming as well as developmental and mental health screenings.

Additionally, Yurok Social Workers in collaboration with County Social Workers and Public Health Nurses, to conduct developmental screenings in joint visits with families that have children under the age of 5 to ensure that the children receive appropriate referrals. Referrals include but are not limited to: referrals for further developmental assessments (when screening indicates a need), referrals for Safe Care parenting instruction (in home parenting instruction for families with children under the age of 5), referrals for medical care and referrals for lactation consulting.

In the next fiscal year, Social Services anticipates providing Incredible Years parenting instruction which offers parents instruction in how to improve their child's social-emotional skills and how to handling challenging behaviors. Additionally, Social Services will be partnering with the Yurok Head Start Programs to provide Incredible Years Teacher Child Care Curriculum Training to all head start teachers. This training is specifically for teachers and child care providers who work with children ages 1-5 on developing the child's social emotional skills.

D. *Streamlining the Provision of Services.*

Yurok Social Services has been in ongoing consultation with the California Department of Social Services in the implementation of the Yurok/California State IV-E Agreement. These negotiations, it is hoped will result in greater service provision to Yurok children directly through the Yurok Social Services Program.

Currently, Yurok Social Services collaborates with Del Norte and Humboldt counties to conduct co-investigations on referrals of abuse and neglect; approve homes that Yurok Children are placed in when removed from their parents; and identify culturally appropriate services for case planning and prevention. These collaborations afford Yurok children under state jurisdiction, greater protections to maintain their cultural, familial and tribal connections as intended by the Indian Child Welfare Act.

Collaboration with the Yurok Tribal TANF program has allowed families to receive additional services tied to their specific family empowerment plan. These services include substance abuse group and individual counseling; parenting classes and case management. This continued collaboration has allowed for additional advocates and services for each of the families served.

Collaboration with Tribal Court and Public Safety has led to the initial planning stages of the development of a cross departmental child protection team. This collaboration will serve to eliminate gaps in services and allow the sharing of information in regards to mutually served children. YSS has also been working with our Tribal Court to develop a tribal CASA program as well as ensuring the appropriate findings and orders are in place in anticipation of IV-E implementation.

IV. Program Support

- A. *Training.* Yurok Social Services successfully engaged in the training plan submitted for FY2016. Yurok Social Services has made some changes to the proposed training plan for FY2017. Please see attached.
- B. *Systems.* Currently due to technical difficulties in having multiple site locations for services, the Child Welfare Staff has moved to a separate simple excel spreadsheet to track foster home recruitment and retention as well as tracking of case load. Currently Yurok Social Services maintains case file information in paper format in physical files. In anticipation of IV-E implementation, staff have been trained and now have access to California's SACWIS program, Child Welfare Services/Case Management System and will begin utilizing this upon implementation.
- C. *Training and Technical Assistance.* We don't anticipate a need for any training and technical assistance in FY2017.

V. Consultation Between States and Tribes

- A. *ICWA Consultation.* During the last fiscal year, California Department of Social Services conducted two sessions of direct consultation to Del Norte County area tribes in regards to concerns around ICWA compliance in Del Norte County. As a result of these sessions and other case review activities by CDSS, Del Norte County is now implementing a corrective action plan. Del Norte County has consulted the Yurok Tribe in regards to the corrective action plan and has incorporated tribal input into that plan. The Yurok Social Services Department participates in the quarterly California Statewide ICWA Workgroup as time permits. During these workgroup sessions California Tribes are consulted in regards to ICWA compliance. Of particular note in the last fiscal year, California has sought to amend its Child Welfare Services Manual to include the newly revised BIA Guidelines in regards to ICWA implementation. Participants of the ICWA Workgroup were invited to comment on the proposed regulations.
- B. *Jurisdiction:* At this time the State has jurisdiction over Child Welfare Cases and the Yurok Tribe participates in all services provided to Yurok children under the State's jurisdiction. The Yurok Tribe and the State have been meeting on an ongoing basis to discuss the transition of jurisdiction from Del Norte and Humboldt Counties to the Tribe with the implementation of the Tribe's State IV-E agreement. The Yurok Tribe has not been consulted directly by California in regards to how California will implement the new requirements instituted by PL-113-81.
- C. *Chaffee Foster Care Independence Program.* The Yurok Social Services Department participates in the quarterly California Statewide ICWA Workgroup as time permits. A concern regarding independent living services for Native American youth has been raised by numerous tribes in that forum. As a result of those concerns, the California Department of Social Services issued an All County Letter clarifying the eligibility of tribal youth for those services. What remains at issue in the two Counties in which the Yurok Tribe is located is the accessibility of the ILP services offered due to the remote nature of our some of our youth. Yurok Social Services has engaged in ongoing discussion with Humboldt County directly in regards to this concern and are hopeful that our youth will have greater access to these services.

D. *Sharing the APSR.*

- a. The APSR will be made available to all interested parties via our Tribal Website for the Yurok Tribe's Social Services Department. <http://yuroktribe.org/departments/socialservices/#>
- b. The APSR will also be shared directly with the State of California's Department of Health and Human Services to Dave McDowell (dave.mcdowell@dss.ca.gov) by email of the above mentioned link.

VI. FINANCIAL INFORMATION

In fiscal year 2014, no funds were spent on Child Welfare Services from Title IV-B subpart I. During that fiscal year the Yurok Tribe lost its Social Services Director as well as the Fiscal Director. This staff turnover led to funds not being expended on services. Since that time, staff has stabilized; we now have a Social Services Director and a new Fiscal Director, as well as a Program Manager in lead of the child welfare program. The Yurok Tribe anticipates utilizing all IV-B funding from Fiscal Year 2015 and 2016.

VII. No Changes to Report.

The items below have not changed since the submission of the CFSP.

- A. Programs and services provided under Title IV-B Subparts 1 and 2 have not changed since the development of the CFSP.
- B. There are no changes to report on the Disaster Plan.