



Commission on Native Children
Friday, September 16, 2022
11am-1pm AKT/ 1-3pm MT/ 2-4pm CT/ 3-5pm ET

Virtual Hearing: Overview of improvements to the child welfare system to reduce disproportionality, data trends and implications, and prevention/family preservation (including changes to IV-E)

This panel will address disproportionate involvement of Native children in child welfare matters, both on and off the reservation. During this panel, researchers and practitioners will present national and state data trends and implications about disproportionality, and improvements to child welfare systems to reduce disproportionality through prevention programs. For example, using an approach that is based on their traditional understanding and teachings of serving families, Red Lake has improved the quality of services, which has led to a significant decrease in children in out-of-home placement, and changing IV-E's focus to favor strengthening families and preventing removal of children from homes provides an important strategy to address disproportionate representation in the child welfare system. This panel is the third of four panels that will address various issues related to Indian child welfare, including jurisdictional tribal/state/federal collaboration, prevention, and building tribal capacity to address child welfare issues.

- Introductions and welcome (5 minutes) Co-Chair Tami DeCoteau
- Invocation (3 minutes)
- Review of Commission Norms (2 minutes) Co-Chair DeCoteau

The Commission will adhere to the following norms in all interactions:

- To incorporate ceremony and/or prayer to begin each meeting
- To recognize and celebrate what is working
- To respect all ideas
- To be mindful of each person's own behavior and reactions so as not to repeat trauma behaviors
- To promote healing
- To ensure there is a community-organized closing event at hearings
- To treat others as they want to be treated
- To not take offense and observe without judgment
- To pause before decision
- To have fearless, honest dialogue
- To be flexible
- To hear all voices
- To learn from story
- To be respectful of time

- Overview of Commission and goals of meeting (5 minutes) Co-Chair DeCoteau
- **Dr. Frank Edwards**, Assistant Professor, School of Criminal Justice, Rutgers University – Newark (15 minutes, 5 minutes for questions)
- **Cheri Goodwin**, Executive Director, Family and Children’s Services, Red Lake Nation (15 minutes, 5 minutes for questions)
- **Andrea Smith**, legal consultant and previous in-house counsel for the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe (15 minutes, 5 minutes for questions)
- Cross-Cutting Recommendations from Witnesses (20 minutes) Co-Chair DeCoteau
- Questions and discussion (22 minutes) Co-Chair DeCoteau
- Wrap up (3 minutes) Co-Chair DeCoteau

Frank Edwards



Frank Edwards is a sociologist broadly interested in social control, the welfare state, racism, and applied statistics. His research explores the causes and consequences of the social distribution of state violence. One set of projects draws attention to child protection systems as key sites of state violence and racial stratification. A second set of projects uses novel data and methods to provide analyses of the prevalence and distribution of police violence in the US. His research has been published in outlets including Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, American Sociological Review, and the American Journal of Public Health. He received his Ph.D. in Sociology from the University of Washington in 2017 and is an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice at Rutgers University - Newark.

Cheri Goodwin



Cheri Goodwin is a Red Lake Nation band member who has worked for Red Lake Nation since 1991. In 2015, she took the position as the Executive Director of Family and Children's Services and led the effort to shift their approach away from the Western model of child welfare and create a framework developed with an Anishinaabe understanding of family, cultural approaches to casework, and macro-level administration. Using the Anishinaabeg worldview to guide the child welfare practice required Red Lake to be intentional about the language used. Instead of being known as Family and Children's Services, child welfare is now named Ombimindwaa Gidinawemaaganinaadog, the English translation is 'uplifting all of our relatives,' which embodies the changes to professional development and delivery of services that has transformed results.

Andrea Smith



Andrea Smith is a legal consultant and previous in-house counsel for the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, and has worked on Title IV-E related issues for over a decade, including being team lead on the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe's waiver demonstration project, and the lead for negotiating the first federally approved Tribal Title IV-E plan in the nation. Publications include articles in the CBX, Children's Bureau Express and the Family Integrity & Justice Quarterly, and upcoming publication of chapters in the Washington State Bar Association Family Law Deskbook regarding the Indian Child Welfare Act and Practice of Family Law in Tribal Courts. Ms. Smith graduated from the Seattle University School of Law in 2004 and is licensed in Washington and Alaska.