Native Voices: 2018 Listening Sessions
Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Coalition, Inc.

All Children

deserve to be raised...

by **loving Families**,

in **supportive Communities**,

surrounded by the

Culture & Heritage

they know best.

NICWC
NEBRASKA INDIAN CHILD WELFARE COALITION

Respecting ICWA

In Native American cultures, family is defined very broadly. Everyone plays an active role in raising a child and is ready to help in times of crisis.

But when the U.S. child welfare system was created, it was biased against raising a child in this way—as a community. As a result, the U.S. government removed Native children from their families—not because of abuse or neglect—but because of this communal way of being. The Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) was passed in 1978 to prevent Native American children from being unjustly taken away and adopted outside their culture.

Today, however, ICWA is not being respected. Native American children in Nebraska are 2.5 to 3x more likely than other kids to be placed in foster care. They are also more likely to be separated from their siblings than any other Nebraska children.

American Indian girls are 20x and American Indian boys 10x more likely to be ordered into placement at the state's juvenile justice facilities (Youth Rehabilitation & Treatment Centers) than the White youth population of Nebraska.

We need to uphold and improve the law to make sure we are doing what is best for Native American children. That's why the Nebraska Indian Child Welfare Coalition, Inc. exists.

Adapted from https://www.reclaimingnativetruth.com/

About NICWC, Inc.

We Educate
About Native American cultures, cultural compassion in action, and the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA).

We Advocate
For ICWA to be respected, children's rights to be protected, and for policies & practices that honor Native families.

We Bring People Together
To (re)connect Native children with their families, communities, culture & heritage; to listen to Native & allies voices.

NATIVE VOICES
2018 NICWC, Inc. Listening Sessions

Community Sessions

Scottsbluff: 56 participants
Omaha: 35 participants

Partners: Nebraska Appleseed, Edison RedNest, Lakota Lutheran Center

Funder: Sherwood Foundation

Local Native American Families Voice Concerns About Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice by *Brian Sherrod* | Posted Oct 25, 2018 at: https://www.1011now.com/content/news/Local-Native-American-families-voice-concerns-about-child-welfare-and-juvenile-justice-498584211.html

Photo credit: www.1011now.com

What is your experience like with Nebraska's child welfare and juvenile justice systems?

Key Themes

1. **Our children are not being placed with Native families and relatives even when Natives express desire to help.**

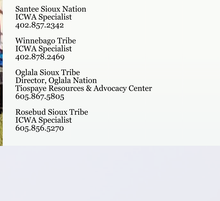
2. **No one is consistently sharing information about ICWA and Natives' legal rights.**

3. **There's a big difference in communication styles between Natives and non-natives– Native parents are not being heard.**

4. **We fear and distrust the non-Native systems and their personnel–we're experiencing further trauma.**

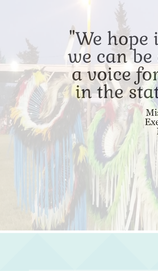
5. **Tribal Courts are slow to intervene.**

- **Four Tribes** have government headquarters within Nebraska's borders: the **Omaha Tribe**, the **Ponca Tribe**, the **Santee Sioux Nation**, and the **Winnebago Tribe**.
- The **Omaha and Winnebago** Tribes have reservation land in **Thurston County**. The **Santee Sioux Nation** has reservation land in **Knox County**. The **Ponca Tribe** has 12 counties that are designated as service areas by federal law.
- The **Oglala Sioux Tribe**'s **Pine Ridge Reservation** extends into **Sheridan County** and the **Sac and Fox Nation** and the **Iowa Tribe**'s reservation lands each extend into **Richardson County**.



Tribal Presence:
Members of **200 Tribes** reside in Nebraska.

ICWA Resources in Nebraska



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"We hope in the future that we can be an advocate and a voice for Native children in the state of Nebraska."

Misty Frazier, MA
Executive Director
NICWC, Inc.

NICWC
NEBRASKA INDIAN CHILD WELFARE COALITION

Photos Credit: Misty Frazier
Santee Pow Wow,
Nebraska; Sioux Valley Pow Wow, Canada; Dakota Culture Camp, Nebraska.

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