

Unintended Consequences of Cultural Competence:

*How tailoring services to the needs of tribal children in Klamath County can
make the system better for everyone*

by

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Abstract:

In 2011, a study by Freeman and Wornell uncovered that social service providers in Klamath County believed Native American children experiencing maltreatment might be slipping through the cracks. In an effort to find out how to better serve these children and their families, the current study involved interviews with 11 social service providers chosen because of their knowledge about ways services could be more effectively be tailored to the needs of Native Americans in Klamath County. Respondents' insight informed a number of policy recommendations for the Klamath Tribes and their community partners addressing child maltreatment that are organized here into two concepts: cultural competence and standpoint theory. First, cultural competence calls service providers to learn about ways that some clients may have different needs than others and find ways to provide the tools each child and family needs to be successful. Second, standpoint theory is applied to show that understanding problems with services and the system as a whole from the point of view of the Klamath Tribes, as well as seeking solutions from the same, has the potential to improve outcomes not only for tribal children experiencing maltreatment and their families, but for all families receiving services.

I. Introduction

When minority and marginalized groups are not served well by conventional services, it makes sense to ask why. Students of social service delivery suggest that social services and the system in which they are situated are designed with the dominant group in mind, unaware of the needs of different cultural groups. But, embracing cultural competence, they argue, drives service providers to develop an understanding of the background, values, and challenges facing different groups they serve (Ecklund & Johnson, 2007; Weaver, 1997; Weaver, 1999). In the case of child maltreatment, some children and families are not served optimally by the child welfare system or the services developed with white, European-American clients in mind. Instead, modifying or redeveloping the system and services to meet the needs of those groups is necessary to ensure the clients' success.

This project seeks to determine what type of services would fulfill the needs of maltreated Native American children and their families in Klamath County, Oregon. Community partners who provide social services in the county have identified the Klamath Tribes and other Native Americans living in the county as a group that is probably underserved by conventional services and the system itself. The current study sought to discover what culturally competent services would look like with respect to Native American children and families by interviewing professionals working with tribal members about tailoring services and modifying the system to serve the needs of the group.

Drawing on standpoint theory, this paper illustrates how culturally competent services for Native American children and their families serve two purposes. First, by employing services tailored to the cultural background and needs of the group, children and families have more effective tools to heal themselves. Second, many of the culturally competent services advocated by Native Americans are changes that would improve services to all children and families, as well as improve the overall child welfare system.

II. Klamath County Provision of Social Services

In Klamath County, Oregon, child abuse and neglect, or child maltreatment, falls under the jurisdiction of the State Department of Human Services (DHS). When someone in the community is concerned about a child, they contact DHS directly, or they contact one of DHS' community partners, who will contact DHS. Likewise, if an incident occurs involving suspected child maltreatment, public officials such as law enforcement, school personnel, medical professionals, and others are mandated to contact DHS to report. Depending upon the circumstance, DHS may conduct an investigation or may refer to another organization whose services might be more appropriate.

When such a situation involves a Native American child, the federal Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) requires DHS to contact the child's tribe to involve them in the

process. In Klamath County, this typically means involvement with the Klamath Tribes, made up of the Klamath, Modoc, and Yahooskin people. The Klamath Tribes have trained social workers that make up Tribal Child Welfare Services to serve the child and family from a tribal perspective. The ICWA requirements are a formal guarantee of involvement; however, Freeman and Wornell (2011) found that in practice, informal networks in Klamath County assure that tribal representatives are brought in at the earliest stages, often taking part in the investigation.

Tribal social workers represent the tribal perspective before the judge when a case is taken to court, attesting to their understanding of the situation and weighing in on the best course of action for the child and family. A primary function of the ICWA rules is to ensure that tribal children are placed in a tribal foster home whenever possible. For the Klamath, a tribal social worker fulfills the role of investigating and certifying tribal foster homes in the area.

Tribal child welfare services notwithstanding, social services available in the county to serve children and families have been designed with the dominant group, that is, white, Euro-Americans, in mind, with few exceptions. This research seeks to understand how that issue might be corrected.

III. Theoretical Background

a. Cultural Competence

The idea behind cultural competence is that service providers, especially practitioners in such occupations as social work and mental health counseling, can be more effective by learning about the backgrounds of the various people in the geographic area they work, so that they can tailor services to meet the needs of those people. Initial calls for cultural competence were predicated on the idea that different groups of people had different needs, different values, and responded to various models of treatment in different ways. A treatment model based on the needs, values, and best practices for treatment for Euro-Americans resulted in outcomes for Euro-American children and families that were different than minority groups experiencing the same issues. Therefore, to ensure the success of all people served, or at least to give everyone a more equal chance of succeeding, cultural competence was introduced (Ecklund & Johnson, 2007; Jackson & Hodge, 2010; Johnson & Munch, 2009; Kumagai & Lybson, 2009; Sue, 1998; Weaver, 1999; Yan & Wong, 2005).

For example, a social worker in Fresno, California serving a Hmong family would take time to learn about the family's home country of Laos and how Hmong refugees came to live in the Fresno area. He may learn about typical Hmong traditions and beliefs, family and gender dynamics, and the Hmong language. In this way, the social worker would be better equipped to help the family in the best possible manner, to include providing services that make sense to the family's world view.

Scholars critiquing the use of cultural competence argue that service providers must exercise caution in assuming anything about clients. In this pragmatic argument, they argue that overgeneralization of people's culture can be harmful and lead to further marginalization, as well as creating barriers between the service provider and the client. Clients should always be able to define for themselves what they need and what values they ascribe to, without someone assuming that because they come from a particular background they want to be related to in a particular way (Johnson & Munch, 2009; Kumagai & Lypson, 2009; Yan & Wong, 2005).

Another argument against cultural competence challenges the essentializing of minority culture as an injustice to the client. In essentializing a culture, the majority culture says that everyone from a background feels the same way or acts in the same way, without acknowledging the amalgamation of people that make up a group. Essentializing does not respect minority members or marginalized groups within the group, such as women, the elderly, or people with mixed racial or ethnic background (Song, 2007). The intersection of characteristics such as race or ethnicity, gender, and age produce different understandings of culture and effects of marginalization (Amott and Matthaei, 1996).

Critics also argue that there is faulty logic in expecting that individuals providing services can somehow disconnect from their own culture to relate to the client without bringing biases and assumptions with them. This is especially problematic if they assume that a client cannot transcend their culture to relate to the service provider. Critics identify this logic as a paternalistic aspect of the cultural competence paradigm (Johnson & Munch, 2009; Kumagai & Lypson, 2009; Yan & Wong, 2005).

Advocates counter that cultural competence is the first step towards tailoring services to clients of all backgrounds. Stanley Sue writes that the goal for service providers ought to be to dispel the "myth of sameness," listening carefully to the culture that clients define for themselves, staying open to ideas they are not familiar with or that make them uncomfortable, and giving clients what they need, in their own context (Sue, 1998).

b. Standpoint Theory

Standpoint theory draws on the work of Hegel, Marx, and Lukacs, all of whom advanced the idea that power relationships are more clearly understood by the group that is oppressed than by the oppressor (Bowell, 2011; Lukacs, 1967; Redding, 2010; Wolff, 2010). Hegel initiated this approach, describing the relationship between a master and slave, and the power dynamic contained therein. The theory was developed further by Marx, and subsequently by Lukacs, to relate to class struggles between the bourgeois and the proletariat, where attention was given to the unique perspective of the oppressed proletariat in understanding the shortfalls of society.

By a number of feminist scholars (e.g. Hartsock, 1983 and Patricia Hill Collins, 1991), this theory took shape describing how women are uniquely located to understand problems and potential solutions facing society because they are most likely to experience restrictions and discomfort from the status quo.

Standpoint theory makes three important claims. First, that “knowledge is socially situated,” meaning that the way a situation or a system is understood depends upon the standpoint of the individual perceiving it. Second, “marginalized groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of things and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalized.” And three, “research, particularly that focused on power relations, should begin with the lives of the marginalized” (Bowell, 2011).

For the purposes of this research, standpoint theory is applied to Native Americans. Native Americans facing the family upheaval of child maltreatment and progressing through the system of a variety of social service-type organizations have a different experience than those of the dominant culture, that is, white, European-Americans. As a marginalized group, Native Americans offer a perspective for understanding problems and potential solutions, because the status quo, including the programs and processes of social service organizations, were not designed with them in mind.

Together, standpoint theory and cultural competence demonstrate that one-size-fits-all social services do not actually fit all. Cultural competence encourages stepping into the shoes and looking through the eyes of another. Standpoint theory asserts that this practice gives clues about what is wrong with the system overall. Marginalized groups like Native Americans can give suggestions from their perspective that shine light on barriers to success because they are more likely to run into them than those from the dominant group.

IV. Klamath County and Klamath Tribes Background

a. About Klamath County

Klamath County is a rural county located in central southern Oregon, along the California border. Jackson County lies to the west, Douglas and Lane Counties lie to the northwest, Deschutes County lies to the north, Lake County to the east, and Siskiyou and Modoc Counties, California to the south. Table 1 shows that 66,380 people live in Klamath County, and about 20,840 of those live in the city of Klamath Falls, the county seat and largest city (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; Oregon State University, 2010).

Table 1: Population and Land Area Measures in Oregon and Klamath County

	Oregon	Klamath County	Klamath Falls	Chiloquin
Population, 2010	3,831,074	66,380	20,840	3,800
Land area, 2010	95,988 sq. mi.	5,941 sq. mi.	20 sq. mi.	540 sq. mi.
Persons per sq. mi., 2010	39.9	11.2	1052.2	7.0

About seven hundred people live in Chiloquin, a small city north of Klamath Falls. Roughly 3,800 live in the Chiloquin area. Chiloquin is home to the Klamath Tribal Administration, and tribal members make up nearly half of the inhabitants of the area (The Klamath Tribes, 2012; Oregon Secretary of State, 2011; City of Chiloquin, 2010). This is a contrast to Klamath Falls, with a tribal population of about 4%, similar to the Klamath County figure. The percentage rises to about 7% when taking into account people of more than one race/ethnicity who include American Indian (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). In sheer numbers, there are more tribal people living in Klamath Falls than Chiloquin, but Chiloquin serves as a type of center for the tribes, who do not have a reservation or lands of their own. Tribal people also live in very rural areas such as Sprague River, Bonanza, Beatty, Bly, and other locations around the county.

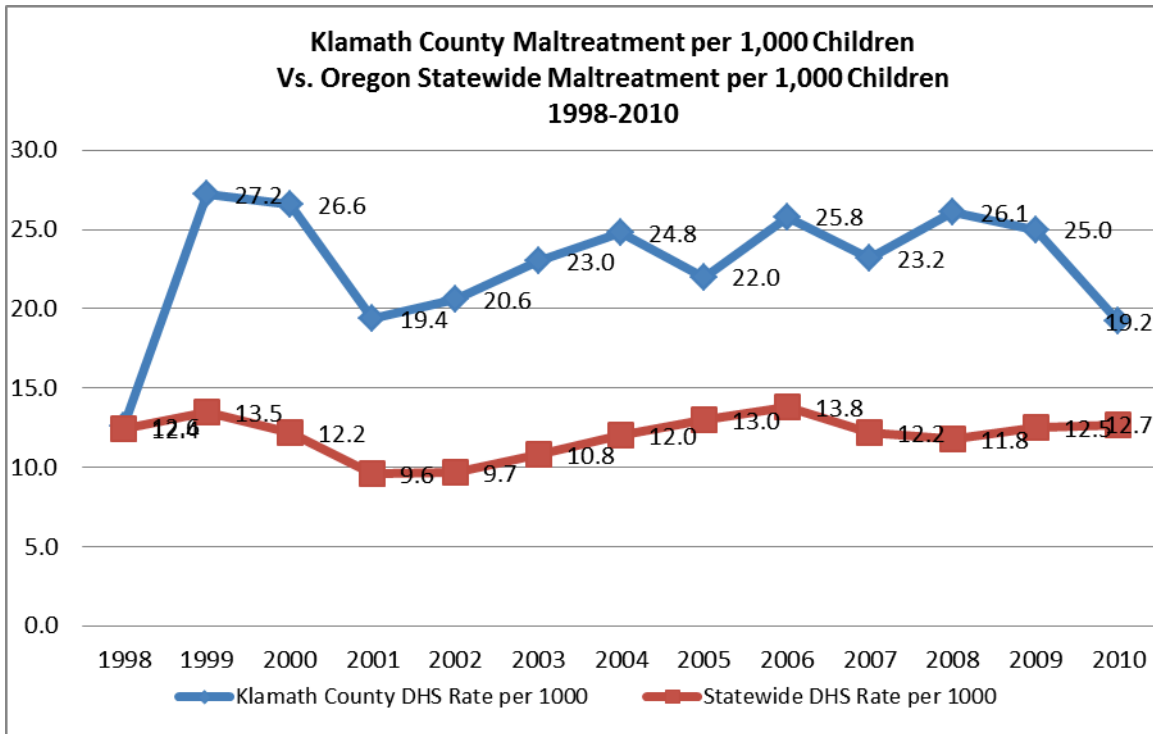
Table 2 shows that between 2006 and 2010 Klamath County had a median income 80% of the Oregon state average (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). During the same period, the median income in Chiloquin was even less, just over half of the state average. The median income for Klamath County increased by almost \$19,000 between 1990 and 2006-10 but Chiloquin’s median income rose only \$8,500 for the same period. The Oregon state average median income rose \$22,000 during that time (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; Oregon State University, 2010).

Table 2: Income Measures in Oregon and Klamath County

	Oregon	Klamath County	Klamath Falls	Chiloquin
Population, 2010	3,831,074	66,380	20,840	3,800
Median Household Income, 2006-10	\$49,260	\$41,818	\$33,203	\$25,417
Percent below poverty level, 2006-10	14.0%	16.6%	20.6%	40.7%
Percent of individuals with income \leq 185% of poverty level	30.5%	36.1%	43.8%	61.4%
Percent of individuals in extreme poverty (50% or less of poverty level)	6.2%	6.7%	9.6%	16.3%

Figure 1 illustrates that Klamath County has a higher than average rate of child maltreatment when compared to other counties in Oregon (Freeman & Wornell, 2011). However, the rate of child maltreatment in Klamath County, according to Oregon Department of Human Services data, has been in decline for the last several years (Children First of Oregon, 2000-2010). A number of community partners in Klamath County are working to address these issues, and the Klamath County Multidisciplinary Team, with the leadership of Klamath-Lake Child Abuse Response and Evaluation Services (CARES) have been instrumental in organizing the investigation and prosecution of the most serious of child maltreatment cases. Other community partners are actively engaged in prevention activities such as a multimedia campaign to draw attention to the problem of child maltreatment, a campaign to link the plight of animal abuse with child abuse, and a campaign to reframe what it means to be “a man,” so that it does not include abusive behavior (Freeman & Wornell, 2011).

Figure 1: Child Maltreatment Measure in Oregon and Klamath County



b. About the Klamath Tribes

Community partners working on issues of child maltreatment in Klamath County identified the Klamath Tribes and other Native Americans living in the county underserved (Freeman & Wornell, 2011). Specifically, while the Klamath Tribes provide a number of services for children experiencing maltreatment and their families, community partners saw themselves as not supporting the Tribes in this effort to the extent they could. However, the difference between community partners’ culture and that of local Native Americans poses a barrier to correcting the identified lack of support. A brief history of the tribes illustrates this point.

The Klamath Basin was home to tribal people for a very long time before European American people came here. Tribal history and archaeological record show that for thousands of years, tribes lived in the area, seasonally migrating according to the best locations to live during each time of year (James, 2008; The Klamath Tribes, 2012). The original residents of Klamath County included several bands of Klamath and Modoc. A band of Paiute, or Snake Indians, called the Yahooskin used traditional migration routes that came through the area as well. A small number of tribal people from other backgrounds also occupied the area. Before the introduction of Euro-Americans, tribal people lived in small groups, often comprised of families, and governed at the family or band level. The Klamath, for example, were not one tribe governed by a Chief, but “Klamath” described a number of smaller groupings of families, called bands, that were sovereign. Occasionally, when

a threat, war, or need arose, bands would come together temporarily to address an issue. However, this took place on an as needed basis only, and no unified government was permanently in place or in use (James, 2008; The Klamath Tribes, 2012; Oregon Secretary of State, 2011). This differs from the Euro-American tradition of governance that involves all people united under a single government, imbued with authority to make decisions concerning the many.

Each band, and each family within a band, had their own beliefs and values, including spiritual and cultural practices. What the Euro-Americans saw as a single race or group was not singular at all. From the type of food they ate to their religious ceremonies to the authority structure of their families, the tribes, bands, and families were separate peoples (James, 2008). Hence, to regard the Klamath Tribes as one group and homogeneous in culture would be naïve.

Since the first white people came to the Klamath Basin, violence and trauma have been a part of the experience of the Klamath Tribes and are now part of the heritage and culture of the Tribes. From the fur trappers to the explorers to the homesteading settlers, communication and values clashed. Ownership of land and use of resources has been contentious between the groups ever since. Liberty to live as they wanted and access to resources needed to do so have been denied many times and in many ways to the Klamath Tribes.

Although originally a collection of disparate groups, the Klamath Tribes were conquered and treated as one. This has become part of current culture and contributes to tribal members' understanding of themselves as united, while differences in traditional clothing, food, and spiritual practices persist.

V. Cultural Competence and Trauma Experienced by the Klamath Tribes

A number of Klamath County community partners claim that some level of cultural competence is needed for Native American children and families to receive the services they need to heal (Freeman & Wornell, 2011). Specifically, there is one aspect of understanding that is crucial to working with tribal people, especially the Klamath Tribes: trauma. When a group experiences traumatic events of a large enough magnitude or often enough, lasting consequences will arise. Trauma such as the holocaust of the Jews during World War II, or the Armenian genocide are examples of horrific events in the collective memory of those peoples which shape their lives (Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998). In the case of the Klamath Tribes, Cheewa James (2008) argues that the trauma of the Tribes at the hands of Euro-Americans began before they ever saw a white person. Diseases such as smallpox were spread as a result of trade with groups that had come into contact with Euro-Americans, and these illnesses killed many Native Americans in the Klamath Basin and throughout the Northwest. Alarming death rates became the norm for the Klamath Tribes as they began to interact with white explorers and settlers in particular. Violence against the Tribes, overtly, and through relocating them against their will to a small segment of land they did not normally occupy

influenced the death rate. Intertribal skirmishes, the Modoc War, and the failure of the federal government to supply promised food and supplies, including medical treatment, to the Tribes on the Klamath Reservation contributed to high death rates during this period (James, 2008).

The Boarding School period, which lasted from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, represented a new kind of violence perpetrated upon the Klamath Tribes. Specifically, children were removed from their homes and taken to live at boarding schools, where they were taught how to live as Euro-Americans. During this time, assimilation was the goal. Children were taught that their culture was savage and backward. Speaking in a Native American tongue was a punishable offense. Corporal punishment was regularly employed, and children growing up in a boarding school were not part of the loving and nurturing environment of a family. These young people were detached from family and from the culture into which they had been born. The result was a lack of bonding and support, as well as lack of knowledge about cultural practices, religion, and how to raise a family. Corporal punishment and child abuse, including sexual abuse, made their way into the Tribes as a result of the abuse suffered by children in boarding schools (Bear, 2008; Paul; Subways, 2008; Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998).

In the mid-twentieth century, a new policy of Termination was employed by the federal government in an effort to assimilate Native American tribes. After nearly 100 years of working to become a united group under the title of the Klamath Tribes, the Klamath, Modoc, and Yahooskin faced the challenge of this new policy. The collective identity of the Klamath Tribes was put to the test when, in 1954, the federal government terminated recognition of their status as a sovereign tribe (James, 2008; The Klamath Tribes, 2012). This was devastating to a group whose identity was, and continues today to be associated with the tribal collective. Different from Euro-American values of independence and individualism, the Tribes prized interdependence upon family, band, and tribe; people looked out for one another's welfare, because tribal members were considered family, whether or not they were related by blood. This separation created by Termination was met with bewilderment, depression, and self-medication in the form of alcoholism and drug dependence. The death rate for members of the Tribes continued to increase as a result of poor physical health, caused at least in part by poor mental health (James, 2008).

The Klamath Tribes were reinstated as a recognized tribe by the federal government in 1986, but much damage had already been done (James, 2008; The Klamath Tribes, 2012; Oregon Secretary of State, 2011). Unhealthy lifestyles such as substance abuse had already made their way into tribal culture. High death rates and low life expectancy persisted (James, 2008). The Klamath Tribal people continue to experience the effects of unresolved grief and anger from generations of trauma upon trauma, and are working to address that. Every individual is affected differently by the trauma experienced by the Klamath Tribes. Today, racism and discrimination continue to affect tribal people, and the futures of tribal children

continue to be bleak. Work by practitioners to understand the background of the Tribes can help explain why tribal people may react in certain ways to authority figures and Euro-Americans, and may give a frame of reference for what solutions someone from the Tribes might prefer. This, of course, with the recognition that each client must be given the opportunity to define for themselves what their identity as a Native American and the trauma experienced by the Klamath (or other tribal ancestors) means to them.

VI. Application of Theoretical Background to Klamath

In order to organize the information received in the interviews with Klamath County community partners working with Native American children and families on issues of maltreatment, an adaptation of standpoint theory was used to describe how Native Americans, as a marginalized group, are more deeply affected by systemic problems. Their experiences are fertile ground for researching the ill effects, often unintended, of policies; and solutions developed to address the problems identified through Native Americans have the potential to improve outcomes not only for Native American children and families, but for all children and families in Klamath County.

a. Standpoint Theory Adapted for Native Americans

Standpoint theory can be applied to understand how the unique position of Native Americans gives rise to a better understanding of the flaws of the current system and the shortcomings of services in addressing the needs of children and families. While standpoint theory originated to describe power-related interactions between a master and a slave, or later, between the bourgeoisie and the proletariat, and further to the experience of women in society, this research applies standpoint theory to the Klamath Tribes as representative of a marginalized group, in place of women or another oppressed group. There are three main tenets of standpoint theory that can be applied here. First, knowledge is socially situated (Bowell, 2011). This was a common theme of the literature about the history of the Klamath Tribes, the literature on cultural competence in social work, and the literature on the operation of historical and current traumas on groups of people. In addition, several of the interviewees in this project mentioned the need to understand the context in which the Klamath Tribes came to be confederated, how they interact with non-Native society, historically and today, and what barriers exist for children and families.

Second, marginalized groups are socially situated in ways that make it more possible for them to be aware of things and ask questions than it is for the non-marginalize (Bowell, 2011). Native American children experiencing maltreatment encounter problems with the system and suffer consequences more acutely than non-Native children. Understanding that there are barriers preventing a whole group of people from reaching success is important. The issues facing them can shed light on what is wrong with the way the system works in a way that a non-

Native person facing issues may be discounted as simply flawed on a personal level when they do not succeed.

Third, research, particularly that focused on power relations, should begin with the lives of the marginalized (Bowell, 2011). The idea here is that problems experienced by marginalized groups are likely experienced by others as well; however, groups like Native Americans have a particular vantage point to understand how power dynamics between those in positions of authority and civilians contributes to unequal outcomes. In the case of social services, understanding how the system advantages or disadvantages certain groups based on culture, values, or behaviors, according to their similarity or difference from the Euro-American ideal is instructive in helping create a model that is less rigid and more geared toward the success of families coming from myriad backgrounds.

Native American children and families are more likely to experience difficulties resulting from problematic policies, especially systemic problems. Research like this project, which seeks to understand barriers to success for Native American children and families, is an important starting point. This is because solutions that come from Native American children and families, as well as those that work closely with them, can help Native American children experiencing maltreatment overcome barriers.

b. Cultural competence

The positioning of Native American children experiencing maltreatment in a standpoint separate from other children experiencing maltreatment suggests that a single model for treatment may not be appropriate to address the specific needs of that group. In this way, cultural competence, that is, understanding the circumstances, culture, beliefs, and values of the Klamath Tribes and other tribal people in Klamath County, would help to develop services and modify the overall system in a way that would give Native American children and families tools they need to be successful in the healing process. Additionally, standpoint theory suggests that a marginalized group such as the Native Americans of Klamath County have the answers to understanding roadblocks to success in social services and the system as a whole that currently create barriers to success for Native American children and families. These insights have the potential to remove barriers for not only that group, but all children and families in the system.

VII. Methods

In 2011, Freeman and Wornell interviewed more than thirty community partners working with families and children experiencing maltreatment in Klamath County, Oregon to get a bird's eye view of service provision. Respondents included social service providers from government agencies, law enforcement, legal representatives, and a variety of non-governmental social service provision organizations. One of the themes that surfaced in that research was that partners

felt more could be done by community partners to support the Klamath Tribes in serving Native American children and families (Freeman & Wornell, 2011).

The current project sought to identify what needs the Native American population in Klamath County has for services and how community partners, in partnership with the Klamath Tribes can go about providing those in a way that is culturally appropriate and supports the Tribes.

For this project, a purposive sample of 11 individuals was selected for semi-structured qualitative interviews. Interviewees were chosen based on their knowledge about ways services could be more effectively tailored to the needs of Native Americans in Klamath County.

The respondents were professionals working in the field of social services or in an organization that performs child maltreatment prevention or intervention activities for children and families. Four of the respondents work directly for the Klamath Tribes, five work for an organization that regularly partners with the Tribes, and two work for an organization that wishes to partner with the Tribes. Four of the respondents were tribal members themselves.

Six of the interviews were conducted in person; three were one on one and three were with two respondents. Four interviews took place in Klamath Falls, two in Chiloquin, and two over the phone. The interviews averaged about an hour, and ranged from twenty minutes to two and a half hours in length.

VIII. Findings

The following are the main suggestions from interviewees regarding the provision of social services to Native American children experiencing maltreatment and their families in Klamath County.

a. Services for Native American Families

1) *A Tribal Model for Social Service Delivery*

Respondents argued for a social service model that was developed specifically with the Klamath Tribes in mind. Particularly, respondents described a model that would take into account the historical and current traumas experienced by members of the Klamath, Modoc, and Yahooskin, as well as being sensitive to the needs of other tribal people living in the Klamath Basin.

First, the model would incorporate services to address issues such as substance abuse, domestic violence, and child abuse and neglect. A major component of this model would be focusing on providing services in an effort to heal individuals and families, instead of processing them through “the system.” To make clients successful, respondents asserted that a model would need to link mental health

services and alcohol and drug treatment. Respondents stressed that substance abuse typically occurs in response to an unhealed mental health issue, which needs to be addressed before treatment can be wholly effective. Similarly, mental health treatment is unlikely to be effective if the substance abuse is not addressed as a contributing and sometimes confounding factor.

In addition to the above, there appear to be two main sections within the model: changes in relating to clients and culturally based services. Another aspect to the model would be educational, which would include teaching non-Native service providers and community partners, as well as Native people in Klamath County about the Tribes.

2) Changes in Relating to Clients

Regarding changes in relating to clients, respondents talked about the importance of offering clients respect throughout the process. They discussed a renewed emphasis on service providers returning calls to clients, even when they are busy or they feel like the question could be answered through another channel, would help. Likewise, seeing clients when they drop into the office or ensuring that clients do not have excessive wait times to see a service provider are important. Some respondents talked about what a difference it makes when service providers address clients in a respectful manner, without “talking down” to them, or treating them with contempt. Two respondents talked about the difference between dominant culture and tribal culture in the way those who have maltreated a child are treated. There is a tribal idea that regardless of what people have done, their socio-economic status, or personal failures, they deserve to be treated the same as anyone else. As one respondent put it:

Society wants to label people, categorize them. And I guess if I was going to speak to someone about how to work effectively with Native people, you have to take that into account. They're not going to say, "those people," or because of "that person did this," or because "that person didn't do this." It's equal. Everybody's treated the same (102).

Respondents also mentioned that having an awareness of the way we are treating people when they are not represented by an advocate or a lawyer is important, too. Some respondents were concerned that when not represented by a professional, clients might be more likely to be told “no” or to have requests for help denied without cause. This is particularly important because of the power dynamic of the practitioner/client relationship. In a situation where the service provider holds the keys to getting a client’s children back, respondents stressed that often the reason a client is in the situation is because they lack the tools to make other choices. Clients are not in a position to disagree or stand up for themselves against those who have the authority to keep their family apart, and so, respondents suggested that service providers making arbitrary decisions, not explaining decisions, or not giving clients

options to be able to change the decision place added barriers before that individual and the family.

Another change respondents suggested for a Klamath Tribal model would be to measure agency success by client success. Specifically, they describe that finding ways to facilitate healing and better outcomes for families, rather than setting down “the rules” and waiting to see if clients measure up would be a beneficial focus of a tribal model. This change in thinking, and the ensuing change in relating to clients, would entail a complete turnaround from the current set up of the child welfare system on a larger scale, perhaps at the state or even national level. Currently, the system is based on an occurrence, usually a referral or an incident, which uncovers inadequate parenting. The next step may be to remove the children from the home to ensure the children’s safety. From the perspective of the client, they are punished with the removal of the children from their care. A non-optional case plan is developed with limited input from the client, and typically includes a list of things they must do.

To change the way this process is conducted so as to encourage the success of the client, respondents argued, service providers can begin by giving clients options. For example, a choice to work with a Native or non-Native service provider, depending upon the needs and preference of the client is a good place to start. Providing a client the option of working with someone they connect with, based on shared background and unspoken understanding of what it is like to be Native American in a Euro-American-dominated society can help clients navigate the barriers facing them.

However, not all tribal members wish to be seen by a Native service provider. In some cases, the client may feel disconnected from the Tribes, or they may feel that working with a Native service provider would compromise their privacy because, “everybody’s related to everybody,” as one respondent put it (I01). Another said:

...sometimes it’s just a conflict of interest...this is a small community and a lot of people are related to a lot of people, either by blood or contact, and [Native service providers] could be just a little too close to home (I09).

There may be other reasons that tribal clients wish to be seen by non-Native service providers, and each person needs to be offered the choice to define their own needs, including their own relationship to their culture.

In addition, giving clients choices for how to go about healing and making things right for their children was emphasized by respondents. This does not mean, “If you do this, we will work towards reunification. But if you choose not to, we will work towards guardianship.” More than one respondent described this type of ultimatum as regularly offered to clients. One respondent noted that for a group of people that has been faced with ultimatums and a poor range of choices since Euro-Americans arrived in the mid-nineteenth century, this does not foster a good attitude about

interacting with service providers. The respondent went on to say that giving clients real choices about their path to healing can be a tool to emphasize the power of one's own choices, not only in this case, but in life as a whole.

With respect to the requirements to achieve reunification, respondents suggested that it would help to be cautious of overwhelming clients with unrealistic expectations, instead working to be realistic about what requirements are needed to ensure the safety of the child, and achieve reunification. Then, with the child in the home, clients could continue to be involved with service providers to achieve other objectives to work towards being a healthy family. One respondent said:

[We need to ask]...what are the TWO most important things that we would look at before we return [the children] to the home while they work on the other stuff. I think that would be better, because that would make [parents] more motivated to work through those other things. (101)

Similarly, if a particular benchmark is required, respondents stressed that the client needs the tools to complete tasks or achieve the benchmark. This may mean making sure they have transportation to get to parenting classes, or that they have funding to take a DUI course, or that they can get in for an appointment with a mental health counselor without being put on a wait list. Some clients may not have the wherewithal to complete required tasks, perhaps because they have limited mental or intellectual capacity, limited financial resources, or they are experiencing a debilitating illness such as depression. In such a situation, telling a client that they must do this "or else" seems not only futile, but unkind. As one respondent phrased it:

...we need to give them the skills to make sure they can do the things they're going to be held accountable for. If you don't have any boots, how are you going to pull yourself up by your bootstraps? (104).

Another related issue respondents identified was a need to be reasonable about when issues can be addressed with the child in the home. Respondents cautioned that judicious use of removal from the home because additional trauma occurs for parents and children alike when a child is removed from the home. This is especially true for children who are placed in the care of a non-Native foster parent or institution. In such a case, one respondent said, children have that much more to overcome to find healing.

Where possible, respondents suggested providing preventative services to children and families to help them keep the family together, or providing intervention services in the home, would reduce the short term and long term costs associated with removing children from the home. This cannot be measured solely on economic costs two respondents argued; instead, taking into account the increase in well being that children and families experience from having a potentially

catastrophic issue in the family addressed and diverted before it reaches crisis level would prove very valuable indeed.

Respondents felt there is a need for service providers to understand that “compliance” looks different for different people. For example, compliance with parenting class requirements includes an aspect of participation in the class. For some tribal people who have experienced trauma, or have been raised with a different set of values, they have grown up not wanting to stand out. There is a feeling that in a crowded room, they would rather not speak out or even be seen. In a situation like this, the idea of participation looks different for them than other clients. They may passively participate, listening in and thinking about the topics presented without publicly speaking or giving input during class, and then they may debrief later with a trusted friend in a setting that is safe for them. This does not mean that they have not participated in the class; they very well may have absorbed the content and be considering how to integrate that into their lives. However, the idea of participation does not look like what non-Native service providers might be looking for.

In a teaching atmosphere, there are two other ideas that surfaced in the interviews. First, there is a tradition within the Klamath Tribes to pass down instruction in the form of stories to illustrate one’s point. Instead of teaching concepts abstractly, associating them with a story of a person or an animal and including how the concept might be integrated in one’s own situation is a valuable teaching tool. Also, top-down or normative approaches to teaching are often less accepted by tribal clients. Respondents suggested that instead, using a discussion-style model, perhaps like a Socratic method, to allow the client to come to their own conclusion could be effective. Likewise, with respect to parenting, acknowledging that there is no one right way to parent, but that there are perhaps tools that are more or less effective goes a long way to empower the client to practice making decisions that will achieve the result they want. Three respondents argued that remembering that in most cases, clients want to have a healthy, happy family, but they are just not able at that time to reach it, is invaluable, and such an attitude is likely to come across in service provision.

3) Culturally Based Services

Respondents pointed out a number of ways that community partners could provide culturally based services tailored specifically to the Klamath Tribes. The theme that came up the most often is that service providers focus on healing, not on censure for bad behavior. In this way, finding ways to incentivize good behavior may be more effective than punishing bad behavior.

Interviewees talked about the need to include aspects of finding one’s purpose in life as a way to help clients get back on the right track. Empowering clients to take an active role in their own lives, planning and executing for success, is a huge part of that.

With regard to how services should be administered, a combination of one on one services and group services was suggested. People have different preferences as to how they wish to interact with service providers, related to the previously mentioned issue of allowing some flexibility in case planning that incorporates the needs and preferences—options—for the client. The benefit for one on one service is threefold. First, clients become known to their service providers through intimate discussions of their situation and needs in a face to face and one on one interaction. The second is that, as described before, some people may not have the confidence, may feel uncomfortable, or may not find it in line with the way they were raised to speak up and engage in a group regarding their personal lives and the deficiencies that led them to become part of the group. Therefore, having the opportunity to work with a single person they can grow to trust is important. Third, interacting with a group that is made up of people the client feels no connection with, perhaps because of cultural, racial, or ethnic differences, can be a barrier to speaking up.

Regarding group services, respondents suggested multiple ways that such services can meet the needs of clients. Interacting with people who have had similar experiences, especially those that come from similar background as the client, can be a beneficial way to get clients to work through problems and find solutions that make sense together. Such a setting also moves away from a top-down, singular “right way” model that is often used in conventional service provision. Allowing clients to work together to determine which practices are beneficial or harmful to their families engages them as an active part of their own healing.

Finding ways to make services culturally relevant to clients can involve a number of things. To begin with, respondents said that developing a model that includes service provision in unconventional locations or environments would be helpful. Such locations might be outdoors, at a client’s home, at a client’s school, or in a familiar, comfortable, or informal setting. Respondents told me that this appears to be taking place to some degree in Klamath County but that there are restrictions in place that make home service delivery unacceptable. If the home is not an option, respondents suggested is still worth considering that for tribal families experiencing upheaval in their lives, engaging with service providers in a cold, unfamiliar office may be less helpful than finding alternative locations.

Respondents discussed that a tribal model might include service provision designed to engage with clients where clients are at, instead of expecting clients to meet the confines of service provision. This is based on the idea that children and families going through a traumatic time may not be able to function in exactly the way they ought to—or the way that the conventional system would like them to. The result is that they may need help getting to a place where they can be successful within a traditional model. Finding ways to help them navigate the system, according to respondents, would be incredibly helpful. They suggested that engaging mentors, especially those with Native American heritage or experience working with Native

Americans to help clients navigate the child welfare system and get back on track would be useful.

Next, there were a number of ceremonial practices that respondents mentioned as ways to improve service delivery for tribal clients. These included sweats (spending time in a sweat lodge), smudging, talking circles, drum circles, basket making, berry picking, root digging, bead making and beading. In the case of services provided through such practices, respondents felt that service providers ought to be Native American, because they are directly related to Klamath Tribal culture, and in some cases, religious practices. As one respondent put it:

[It's] just like any religion, you know. If I'm not Catholic, I shouldn't go be preaching to Catholics, right? Like teaching it...but I think it should be open to everybody (103).

Under the leadership of a tribal member, non-tribal helpers could be appropriate. An example of this is the involvement of non-tribal staff in talking circles held in the Positive Indian Parenting class. The talking circles, which involve prayer and the passing of an eagle feather, which symbolizes authority to speak, are a sacred time for tribal people. While a tribal member ought to be initiating or overseeing a talking circle, this does not mean that non-tribal people, whether staff or clients, cannot participate.

An example of the application of ceremonial practices was described by one respondent talking about root digging. In this case, the individual has to dig deep into the ground, which can be a difficult and painful process, to free the root. The next step is to clean off the root, and then it is peeled, cooked and eaten. Throughout this labor, participants talk to each other about issues relating to mental health and trauma. Although the process is very involved, hard work that takes a long time to accomplish, the end result takes something that was hidden and dirty and makes it into something that is good and brings health. Likewise, the difficult work of delving into one's psyche to unlock hurts is painful, and the process of working through that to a place where one is stronger for the experience is time consuming and hard. The result is a new understanding of one's self and the ability to move forward without dragging the hurts of the past in our wake.

Another example is using basket making for healing. Participants start out with a pile of tule, which is the long thin leaf of a plant found in the Klamath Basin, used to weave baskets. As a metaphor for life, this pile is a mess of seemingly useless strips going every direction. However, throughout this painstaking process, order is restored. The tules are woven little by little into a frame, and then into the basket, with all of its details and decoration. This becomes a visual representation for their lives. As participants sit with one another for hours, developing this basket, they talk, and work through hurts, and shed tears. All of this goes into the basket, and eventually, the basket is finished. Its finished form is useful and beautiful, and the

participant is too, having worked through the difficult hurt and come out on the other side with something truly worthwhile.

The Tribal Court system is considered by respondents to be another important part of a culturally based service model. At this time, the Klamath Tribal Court is functioning, and is growing in the number of cases that it may hear. Two suggestions were made for improving the integration of Tribal Court into the social service model: recognizing the authority of Tribal Court and giving Tribal Court jurisdiction over more cases. With respect to child welfare cases, the Oregon State Department of Human Services, and its local branch in Klamath County, has jurisdiction over all cases of child abuse and neglect. In the eyes of at least one respondent, a difficulty here is that to represent the needs and wishes of Native American children and families through the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) provisions, a representative from the Tribes speaks before the County Circuit Judge to make a recommendation based on tribal values and understanding of the situation and the family. Another possible arrangement would be to strengthen the authority of Tribal Court, and give families the option of having their case heard before Tribal Court instead of County Court. In this way, the cultural needs and values of the family could be further incorporated.

In providing culturally based services to tribal children and families, recognizing a cultural value of community is important. American society is largely based on Euro-American values such as independence and individualism, as opposed to the Tribes, which value collective identity and working together. Dependence upon one another is something that is traditional in the Klamath Tribes, and such practices, from sharing food and provisions to taking care of extended family and fictive kin, are not seen to be evidence of failings of any tribal member. With this in mind, developing solutions that are not limited to the independent success of an individual could be helpful. Instead, focusing on strengthening relationships, networks, and ties with family and friends may be a more appropriate measure of success.

In addition to culturally based services, respondents suggested that services that keep in mind the needs that families have to be able to meet requirements is crucial to their success. For example, the Positive Indian Parenting program does something innovative that could be copied by other service providers. The program, which provides culturally based parenting classes, also includes child care and a family meal. Not only is the sharing of a meal considered traditional for Klamath Tribal people, the fact that parents do not have to find child care or get dinner fixed for the family before coming to the parenting class makes it far more likely that they will attend and be successful in the program. This is an example of a service that could be taken and emulated by non-Native service providers.

4) Education for Tribal Members and Non-Native Service Providers

Respondents believe that a great deal of the barriers facing Native clients pivot on the historical and current trauma of the Tribes. Specifically, issues of racism and

violence, the aftermath of Termination and the Boarding School Era are just a few of the major causes of trauma within the community. Interviewees were clear that tribal members and non-Native service providers needed more information about this background to better understand the obstacles facing the Klamath Tribes.

Respondents spoke at length about the historical makeup of the Klamath Tribes, which is made up primarily of three tribes, the Klamath, the Modoc, and the Yahooskin. From there, each tribe is made up of bands, which can be broken down further by family. Each group has different customs, from the food they eat, to religious practices, to the way they raise their children. The languages of each tribe differ, and the Yahooskin, a Paiute people who migrated from the east, have a traditional language that is very different from the somewhat similar languages of the Klamath and Modoc. Historically, the governance of the tribes was not made up of a central government, as recognized and encouraged by Euro-American tradition. Instead, tribal people governed themselves in small groups at the band or family level, coming together in ad hoc alliances on a temporary basis to tackle issues facing them as a group. Examples would be an alliance to address a food shortage or a war. Instead, the tribes relied on a consensus model for developing and deciding on policies. No single person made a decision for the group, and rarely were all of the tribal people in the Klamath area under the same authority (James, 2008; The Klamath Tribes, 2012).

When the tribes were lumped together on the Klamath Reservation during the mid-nineteenth century, none of this was taken into account, and they were treated as though of one background, with one set of values. After a century of working this out, the federal government terminated their tribal status, and ceased recognition of the tribes as a group (James, 2008; The Klamath Tribes, 2012). The ensuing thirty years of Termination were marked by alienation of individual members of the group, resulting in depression, substance abuse, and violence. The Klamath Tribes were reinstated by the federal government in 1986 (James, 2008; The Klamath Tribes, 2012; Oregon Secretary of State, 2011), and have been working to build a united tribal government and service model ever since.

Understanding that reinstatement of the Tribes took place less than 30 years ago for a tribe made up of people from a number of different backgrounds, values, and visions, it makes sense that the process has encountered some challenges. There have been disagreements and family or tribal feuds that have created barriers to developing a tribal policy. Additionally, understanding the function of acculturation, that is, how interaction with the dominant culture morphs and changes tribal culture (and vice versa) is crucial to understanding current manifestations of tribal culture. The museums in Klamath County represent tribal culture as something historical, in the past, and not extending into the present. However, according to one respondent, “We are the culture” (I02), meaning that as long as the Tribes exist in Klamath as a collective group, they bring forward the culture of the tribes. Political theorist Sarah Song points out that one error in examining minority cultures is to essentialize them, as though they never change, and as though culture

is the same for all the individuals in the group (2007). Instead, it is more accurate to see that individuals and families are an amalgamation of tribal culture and other cultures, such as Euro-American culture, with which they interact on a daily, weekly, monthly, yearly basis. Each person and each family has their own definition of what it means to be part of the Tribes, and is affected differently by the history and the current culture of the Tribes. In addition to educating non-Native service providers on this dynamic, respondents suggested that a greater understanding of tribal history and current culture could be advantageous for Native people as well.

b. Services for Native American Children

1) *Identity and Connection to Family*

Respondents talked about the difficulties of tribal youth developing their identity, figuring out, “who am I?” in the midst of a county where they are in the minority. This means that the experiences they have at home may be different than their classmates. Or, their home life might be very similar to their non-Native classmates’, and they might feel disconnected from tribal identity because of that. One respondent talked about the difficulty of fitting in nowhere, coming from a mixed race household where he was “raised white.” His experience was one of being “too Indian” to fit in with his white classmates, but being “too white” to fit in with his Indian classmates. He grew up wondering, “what is a real Indian?”

Another respondent talked about the difficulty of telling young people to “be yourself,” while they respond in a bewildered tone, “who am I?” This underscores the need to teach young people with tribal heritage about their family background. Included here is the need to discuss where their family came from, geographically, as well as what their traditional occupations were, as both geography and traditional occupation are considered by many tribal members to be a part of a person’s being, passed down from one generation to another. One respondent told about how young people she knows go out hunting every year, and bring back meat, which they share with their family and people they know who are in need. She says:

They’re hunters, and they will go and provide for other families, not just...their own family...because you go back a hundred years, that’s what that family did...And that’s one of the really important things that [service providers] need to be aware of...so they can use them therapeutically to help guide that individual through their healing process to become a whole person again (101).

Similarly, a person’s purpose is tied to the history of the family, where they lived and what kinds of values they had. Understanding where they came from can give young people a feel for who they are, or who they might choose to be.

This emphasis on background and family connection is the basis for one of the Indian Child Welfare Act’s (ICWA) primary functions, requiring the Department of Human Services to seek out placements that keep children in Native American

homes whenever possible. Respondents tied this to another related matter, the effort to keep Native children within the home if at all possible, respecting the need to reduce trauma to children. When children are removed, placements with kin or fictive kin are greatly preferred. The concept of fictive kin is very important for the Klamath Tribes, where friends with no blood relation may be considered as close as or closer than family. These placements allow children to continue to take part in tribal activities, more connected to family than just being taken to the annual Pow Wow by non-Native foster parents. One respondent says:

...a pow wow is just a social event. It's not specific to their tribe. It's not specific to their family. It's not specific...I think it's really important that they stay within their family and learn the family stories, the family culture, the family traditions, and be able to carry those on (I01).

An important point one respondent discussed is that typically, Native families do not become certified foster parents unless they are doing so to care for a specific individual, most likely a family member. In some circumstances, a family may become certified and later agree to take in another child, but this is somewhat rare. The respondent went on to say that this poses a difficulty in the form of children having to be placed initially with a non-Native family while a family or fictive kin placement is located and vetted. Because the ICWA mandate has the goal of keeping Native children in Native placements, thereby reducing the traumatic impact of out of home placement, it seems logical that finding a Native placement from the start would be preferable. If there was one family that was certified as a receiving home, this issue could be mitigated. The initial placement could be made in the Native receiving home, and the child could stay there until a family or fictive kin placement was located.

2) Trauma, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse

Respondents talked about how important the acknowledgement of trauma is for the healing of clients. In the case of children, respondents asserted that an understanding of how historical and current trauma acts upon children's psyche is important to helping them heal.

One respondent described that historical trauma is acted upon children through a number of ways, two of which are listed here. First, the histories of the Tribes are traditionally related from generation to generation through story telling. In this way, although a young person was not a part of the Modoc War, for instance, they may feel the effects of injustices perpetrated against their ancestors through the retelling of the story. Time after time they hear the story about the hanging of Modoc leader Captain Jack, and they begin to identify with the way he was treated at the hands of Euro-Americans, and bring that forward to the present. Second, observing the aftermath of the ill treatment in the form of disparate outcomes for Native American youth, in comparison to non-Native counterparts is a form of trauma. For example, when a young person looks around and sees others from the

Tribes having difficulty in school, few successfully navigating college, and a limited array of choices for work, there is a continued trauma of unclear purpose and restricted possibilities for the future.

The respondent went on to describe that current trauma is acted upon children as they experience issues related directly to being Indian. For example, a different respondent told the story of a young man who got to meet his white girlfriend's grandmother, who was visiting from out of town. Later that day, grandmother told girlfriend, "I can't believe you're dating an Indian! Don't you know they beat their wives?" The young man was devastated and confused, and in this way, historical trauma meets the present to create continued trauma based on status as a Native American. Another example of current trauma is the high death rate among the Klamath Tribes that continues today. One respondent voiced that it is not out of the ordinary for a young person to attend five or six funerals a year, commemorating the deaths of people close to them and their family.

Because of this persistent trauma, respondents described how young people develop a thick skin and distance themselves from the hurt they are feeling. There is a certain amount of stigma relating to mental health treatment within the tribal community, above and beyond the stigma that the general public has for such treatment. Two respondents described traumas as manifesting in either internalized trauma, resulting in self abuse, or lateral trauma, resulting in the abuse of others. Self abuse often appears as depression; abuse of others might be violence toward strangers, but more often manifests on those closest to them.

Substance abuse becomes a self medication for the pain of self abuse or the guilt of abusing others. Alcohol and drug abuse, often beginning at a startlingly young age—one respondent talked about a nine year old alcoholic—can result in poor daily function and/or eventual failed health. A number of the deaths of tribal members over the years have been a result of health problems related to substance abuse, violent acts, or suicide.

Service providers' understanding of how historical and current trauma can affect Native American children can help them find ways to heal, and could be a good application of cultural competence with respect to the Klamath Tribes.

3) Activities

Interviewees stressed the need for additional activities for Native American youth. These include groups and clubs for young people that are open to tribal and non-tribal youth. They talked about the need for free or low cost activities that would take advantage of the outdoors and the natural terrain of Klamath County. They suggested activities that incorporated cultural practices, like berry picking, basket making, root digging, sweats, hunting, fishing, and drum circles. These would be low cost ways for kids to interact with one another and to have a place to go, while learning about their background. Opening up such activities to non-Native youth

would have the added benefit of teaching non-Native kids about Native culture. Respondents also suggested making activities, groups, or clubs that appealed to young people with a variety of interests, including different sports, music, art, and other hobbies. Three respondents talked about the need for family activities, such as a low cost YMCA type of club that could bring together Native and non-Native families for recreation and a safe place to hang out. They also suggested getting mentors involved with young people, including Native American mentors and men, in addition to non-Native women that respondents described as typically making up the bulk of mentors and volunteers in Klamath County.

4) Education

Regarding education, respondents discussed the need for school personnel to get involved in addressing outcomes for Native American children. A major way they suggested for involving schools is to provide teachers and other personnel with a greater understanding of low self esteem resulting from trauma. One respondent told his own story about the difficulties he had fitting into a primarily white class, where the last thing he wanted was to stand out. He learned quietly, but did not want to draw attention to himself by raising his hand or speaking in class. He experienced a low self-esteem based on his perception of being different from the other kids, and he did not want anyone to point this out or notice.

The above story illustrates how many of the respondents described the experience of Native Americans students in typical classrooms. Participation, for some, takes a different look than the expected engagement with class discussions, answering questions for the teacher, and interacting with classmates. Instead, the young person might, as the respondent said, “learn quietly,” while trying not to draw attention to themselves. The respondent went on:

...I learned those techniques of survival of low self-esteem...how to stay hidden (103).

When this is the case—and the critics of cultural competence would caution here that a teacher ought not make this assumption because someone who looks like they fit this bill acts this way—finding ways to appreciate the type of participation the student is able and willing to engage in, perhaps as substitutes for non-Native definitions of participation.

Another issue discussed by respondents is the competitive atmosphere of the classroom. In Euro-American culture, a value is placed on independence and achievement. In the Klamath Tribes, a value is placed on working with others, appreciating what each brings to the group, and depending upon one another. A student raised with a collective perspective may not feel comfortable vying for a grade or a position in a class the way that a student raised in a non-Native home may.

With respect to the school system overall, respondents talked about the need to get kids the tools they require to be successful. In part, they argued, this means not punishing kids for the shortfalls of their education, including not penalizing them for not being able to read, but working with them to learn what they need to learn. For students that present with learning disabilities, getting them Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) early is crucial, according to two respondents. Interventions and staff to work with the student right away can ensure the problem does not become compounded over the intervening time. At the same time, two respondents were concerned that passing children to the next grade or level without making sure they have the skills they were supposed to acquire in the grade creates barriers for the child to succeed later. Similarly, respondents argued that ensuring that students are placed in an environment that they can be successful in, and providing access to tutoring are important.

Two respondents voiced concern over the alternative school and modified diploma programs currently used in Klamath County. These interviewees were concerned that Native youth are being placed in such programs because it is easier than dealing with the underlying issues facing the students, which creates additional barriers to their success. Modified diplomas, in particular, are not sufficient for students to get into college or the armed forces; passing the General Educational Development (GED) test would be required in this case. As one respondent put it, modified diploma programs tell future employers that a student, “attended high school, not that you passed anything” (I04). Two respondents argued that shunting students into these programs perpetuates poverty issues, making it difficult for young people to get into post-secondary programs or find a good paying job.

Another respondent was concerned about the lack of supports for Native American kids going off to college. The respondent said:

It's really sad, they graduate, go to college, you know Lane, or OSU or somewhere, and within a year, they're all back here. And drinking, and drugging, and having kids, and—it's like, okay, it looked like the cycle was going to be broke for a minute, but we're back in the row (I01).

This respondent speaks to a desire to give young people more preparation and support to go to schools like Oregon State University or University of Oregon. This might be a mentorship program to connect them to other tribal people who have been successful in college, or perhaps financial resources to ensure they have what they need to be successful, like a car and enough money to keep their gas tanks full, to enable them to come home and visit at regular intervals.

IX. Policy Recommendations

a. Recommendations for the Tribes

1) Consider Relationships with Non-Native Authorities

One respondent described how Euro-Americans have been abusive toward the native peoples of the Klamath Basin since the earliest fur trappers and explorers arrived. This understanding from the tribal perspective explains why there may be contentious relationships between non-Native authorities and the Klamath Tribes. Additionally, a divergence of values and goals for children and families explains why service providers on both sides of the fence have a difficult time agreeing on some things.

There are several suggestions that came out of this research that may help. First, respondents suggested that the Klamath Tribes engage with law enforcement agencies to find ways to create less contentious relationships between law enforcement and tribal members. For children, it was suggested that budgets for school resource officers be restored so that an officer can be devoted exclusively to one school. Freeman and Wornell, 2011, uncovered concern from Klamath County service providers that cutting funding for school resource officers spread officers too thin, and reduced the preventative impact of having officers on site to interact and develop trust with students of all backgrounds. Likewise, respondents in this research felt that relationships between youth and school resource officers can reduce the fear and mistrust of law enforcement later in life. A respondent in the 2011 research suggested that events like community picnics that included social interaction with law enforcement have the ability to transform Native youth's perception of officers to one of a person they can relate to, rather than an authority figure to be hated or feared (Freeman & Wornell, 2011).

With regards to adults, including parents, community events like the picnic mentioned above would also give adults a chance to interact with officers as regular people, and not simply as their title and authority. Another idea mentioned by respondents in this research was that bringing in law enforcement to work with the Positive Indian Parenting (PIP) group would be beneficial. One interviewee suggested that if an officer of tribal background or an officer who has experience relating to tribal people could come and lead a session of the PIP, it would provide an opportunity for establishing a greater level of trust and understanding for both sides.

There is also a need for education. Specifically, non-Native service providers and authorities do not know what they do not know. One respondent talked about how sometimes in educating non-Native partners, it's almost difficult to describe some of the values or the culture that tribal people take as given. The respondent explained:

How do you tell someone to write your name? [laughs] How do you write your name? Show me how to write my name. I mean, just write it. I mean, it's difficult to explain to them how to do that (102).

But even if something seems obvious from the point of view of someone who was raised in the tribal community, it may not be obvious to non-Native people. For example, from a non-Native perspective, sending an email to contact someone may seem the most respectful mode of making a connection, since it allows the contact to read at their leisure, with the least imposition upon that person's time. However, from the tribal perspective, the lack of face to face or personal contact involved in an email may make it a less than desirable or even offensive way to communicate. The individual will not understand this idea unless someone takes the time to tell them about the difference in values and preferred communication style.

Along the same lines, interviewees felt there is a need for the Tribes to communicate with non-Native authorities or service providers about ways those organizations could help reduce the fear and resentment of tribal people.

Respondents working for tribal agencies also spoke about the difficulties of having tribal people misunderstand what they do and why. For example, a tribal investigation of child abuse or neglect may appear to have complicity with non-Native authorities, who are not trusted. One interviewee said they did not want tribal child welfare to have the reputation of being "baby snatchers." Instead, it would help if the Tribes could find a way to educate tribal members on the ways that social service and medical agencies within the Tribes are working to better the tribal community. Finding ways to get the word out that the goals of tribal child welfare are to maintain family connections while ensuring the safety of children would be beneficial.

2) Communicate with Community Partners Who Want to Help

Tribal agencies such as Tribal Child Welfare Services, Tribal Mental Health, and Tribal Alcohol and Drug Services already partner with some non-Native organizations to provide services to native youth. However, within Klamath County, there are more than 70 groups working on issues of child abuse and neglect with whom the Tribes could potentially partner (Freeman & Wornell, 2011). Perhaps the Tribes will not need or want to partner with all of them, but there is benefit in understanding that through a partnership, community partners would learn about the Tribes from the mouth of the Tribes, and begin to tailor services to the specific needs of native children and families.

Representatives from non-Native organizations represented in this study said they are very interested in working with the Tribes. One respondent said:

We just want to have the opportunity to be able to possibly form a partnership and see what their needs are, and where we fit in with those needs, so that we

can maybe dovetail into something that they have, like a program they have (I10).

The respondent went on to say that they would be interested in assisting with prevention or intervention efforts, wherever they could be of help.

The first thing that needs to occur is the Tribes, or agencies working for the Tribes, need to decide if they want help from community partners. There are a number of ways this can happen, from programs community partners could put on that are designed with Native youth in mind, to adding cultural considerations to existing services, to allocating resources for Native-run programs, and more. It is important to let community partners know if they can help and how they can be most helpful. A part of this involves designating a person or persons that community partners can contact to offer assistance or pitch an idea for partnering. Important here is that the Tribes, represented by a given individual or individuals, pay attention when community partners reach out, and respond to phone calls and emails. This is true even when the response is, “No, we are not interested at this time,” or, “I need more time and will contact you later.” A lack of response or taking a long time to respond may be taken as an affront to many non-Native individuals who may then give up on trying to partner with the Tribes and put resources elsewhere.

b. Recommendations for Community Partners

1) Learn about the Trauma of the Tribes

Nearly all of the respondents talked about the importance of taking the Klamath Tribes and current issues they are facing in the proper context, which is a crucial application of the concept of cultural competence. This context involves years of oppression, social ills, and death, beginning at the time Euro-Americans first came to the Klamath Basin, and extending to the present day. Each respondent that spoke about the trauma of the Tribes took care to note that they do not wish to discount the suffering and circumstances of other groups. There are abuses and pain experienced by all sorts of people in society; however, in order to serve these groups effectively, it is important to have a frame of reference for what these people have gone through.

Community partners can better serve the Native American population in Klamath County by taking time to learn about the history of the tribal people and the interactions that have taken place between white, Euro-American people and Native people. Additionally, understanding the interactions that have taken place between Native people and non-Native authorities is crucial to appreciating why a word or an action on behalf of a law enforcement official, social worker, or mental health clinician can elicit such seemingly uncalled for anger or refusal to engage.

There are a number of pivotal moments (or more accurately, periods of time) that define the nature of the relationship between the Klamath Tribes and non-Native

authorities, many of which are a part of a genogram of trauma created by a member of the Klamath Tribe, Dr. Tom Ball, of the University of Oregon. The genogram is on display in the auditorium of the Tribal Administration Building in Chiloquin, where the Tribal Council meets twice a month. Two milestones with particular relevance to the current difficulties faced by the Klamath Tribes are the Boarding School Era and Termination.

A number of ill effects came about as a result of the Boarding School Era and Termination. First and foremost are severed ties of family and community. The collective unit of the tribe, band or family is underscored as of paramount importance in tribal groups. Boarding schools and tribal termination taught the Euro-American values of individualism, and that tribal culture was not desirable (Bear, 2008; Paul; Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998).

These also created mistrust of the non-Native authorities. In the case of the Boarding School Era, Native Americans grew to associate non-Native authorities with the stealing of their children, who would be returned to them very different people, if they were ever returned at all. So today, when authorities come into the home to remove children to keep them safe, there is a fear that the stories of their parents and grandparents, of children being taken away never to return, or of children returning having been taught completely different values and culture, are being reenacted (Bear, 2008; Paul; Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998).

Discipline in boarding schools was harsh and based upon corporal punishment for rule-breaking. This style of discipline is quite different from the child rearing practiced in many tribal homes where love and desire to raise a child according to the values of the tribe were the main focus. Forms of child abuse such as excessive punishment or striking a child with the intent to cause harm were not a part of tribal culture pre-boarding school (Bear, 2008; Paul; Yellow Horse Brave Heart & DeBruyn, 1998).

2) Link Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services

Interviewees spoke at length about the need to link services for mental health and substance abuse. Freeman and Wornell (2011) uncovered that there are often significant waiting times for clients to receive either type of treatment because there are not enough counselors and therapists providing these services in Klamath County. However in this research, respondents zeroed in on a related topic: the need to link the two services.

Respondents talked about the need for mental health counseling to address issues relating to historical and current traumas, as they can manifest in violence towards oneself or others. Many times, this effect is compounded by the use of alcohol or drugs as a method of self-medicating. The result of substance abuse can take many forms, such as deterioration of health and relationships. Therefore, it is crucial to provide treatment to help clients overcome substance abuse.

The link between causes of mental health issues and substance abuse is clear, and for many clients, addressing one of the two does not fix the trouble. Instead, respondents suggest finding a way to combine the two services would be beneficial and help clients heal more effectively.

3) Get School Personnel Involved

Respondents suggested there is a need to find ways to get tribal youth the tools they need to succeed. Part of this involves making sure school personnel are educated about the historical and current trauma of the Tribes, including what difficult situations, such as six deaths in one family in one year, might be acting upon a young person. Making sure that teachers and staff understand how trauma works on a young person, including internalized and lateral oppression, will help explain reactions students exhibit. Similarly, exploring the link between cultural definitions of group interaction and participation, as well as low self esteem and participation are important.

Also, devoting resources to ensure that students get Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) when necessary, tutoring or special programs to make sure they are not punished for not having learned, but are given the tools to learn to read and other crucial skills. Not passing young people to the next grade or level without the skills they need to be successful there is vital.

Understanding the link between persistent poverty and educational outcomes for young people is a topic that is beyond the scope of this paper. However, respondents posit that alternative schools as a place to put young people who act out in frustration over a lack of success in school and life are a contributing factor. Likewise, sending graduates out into the world with a modified diploma that is insufficient to get into college or the armed forces limits students' options for the future.

Respondents suggested that Native youth could use assistance to be successful when going off to college. The Student Success Initiatives (SSI) through the Oregon University System is currently working to develop a plan to help Native American students across Oregon to have the tools they need to complete their schooling (Oregon University System, 2010). Engaging with SSI staff to incorporate the needs of the Klamath Tribes would open the possibility of tapping into resources for those young people heading to the University of Oregon, Oregon State University, or the Oregon Institute of Technology, to name a few.

4) Learn from the Positive Indian Parenting Group

The Positive Indian Parenting (PIP) group has been successful in developing a parenting program that gives parents the tools they need to succeed. Aspects of this include incorporating a collaborative approach for working through parenting

approaches that are beneficial or harmful to their families. This stands in contrast to top-down approaches and the presenting of one right way to parent that are characteristic of some non-Native parenting course curricula. This group incorporates cultural aspects, such as the sharing of a meal, prayer, and a talking circle. This group not only provides a meal, but also provides child care, eliminating these barriers that could prevent clients from being successful in the class.

One respondent praised PIP, saying:

I think [the parents] are more honest about what's going on in their life. And they're able to speak freely, and understand that...it's not a bad thing. And it's part of their healing (I01).

Another respondent said:

[Positive Indian Parenting], as far as I'm concerned, is one of the most successful groups ever run [in Klamath County]...what I think makes it really effective is that it's less formal than traditional mental health group counseling is. It always involves sharing a meal together. It has child care provided, so families can come, and the adults can enjoy each other with food and conversation, and kids can be taken care of...the group is there to share their experiences and support each other (I09).

Community partners can help the Tribes by supporting PIP and the efforts of this group to help tribal families succeed, either through financial support or through partnering to provide specialized training or insight for the group. Additionally, non-Native parenting groups could be fashioned around this same model, providing a meal and child care, to help clients to be successful. Other concerns could be offering the course in a centralized location, or in a place that is easily accessible by public transportation. Courses designed to engage clients in critically thinking about what types of parenting practices would be beneficial and harmful, rather than presenting specifically how parenting ought to be accomplished, were suggested by respondents as ways community partners could use this model to the benefit of all children and families.

5) Support Culturally Based Services

Community partners can help by learning about culturally based services, what they are, what need they serve, and how to get involved with this practice. Respondents suggested that such services ought to be implemented by Klamath Tribal representatives; however, engagement in a supportive capacity, through participation or financial support, could be acceptable to Native leaders. Requesting permission to take part, rather than assuming authority or insisting upon participation, would certainly be a respectful way for potential partners to proceed.

Multnomah County employs a system of service agreements in which culturally specific services are provided through contractors. These agreements came about as part of the In-Home Safety & Reunification Services (ISRS) initiative, which is working to reduce the number of youth in out of home care. A main focus of the program is to target the disproportionately high number of racial and ethnic minority children in out of home care by providing a specialized services through a variety of vendors, giving clients options for receiving the help they need to heal (Johnson, Ostergren, & Murphy, 2012). While Klamath County, as a rural county with fewer potential vendors may be limited in the use of such a model, community partners may review the services provided through the ISRS agreements and develop ideas for partnering with the Klamath Tribes to provide specialized services where needed.

6) Activities for Kids

Interviewees talked about the need for activities for kids, to give them a safe place to go, are a way to improve outcomes for young people. These, they suggest, ought to be free or low cost, and inclusive, so that Native and non-Native youth can take part. In order to be successful, such programs need to be frequent and consistent, and they should take advantage of the outdoor beauty of Klamath County.

Some activities respondents suggested involved cultural components, which ought to be spearheaded by tribal members. However, community partners can help with these by supporting financially, or taking part in a supporting role with labor or organizing help. Non-cultural specific activities designed to appeal to kids with a variety of interests could be carried out by community partners. These might include activities like sports clubs, music or art groups, or other activities. Finally, a low cost center like the YMCA for Native and non-Native people would allow families a place to recreate and hang out.

7) Applications for Non-Native Practice

Applications for non-Native practice include communicating with respect, giving clients the tools they need to meet requirements, and working to create requirements that ensure the safety of the child without being overwhelming to the client. Additionally, working with the client to give them options for service provision, from offering different types of services to accomplish the same objective, to offering services through Native and non-Native service providers, and allowing the client to make a choice. This is a type for making choices in their own lives, taking responsibility for choosing a path, and empowering them to affect change in their own lives. This also sets up clients to be more successful because they buy-in to the service plan, based on their own input and decisions, as opposed to being given a list of non-optional restrictions and a checklist to “process” them through the system.

Nearly all of the respondents pointed out that non-Native children and families could benefit from similar changes in conceptualizing services as well. Finding ways to support clients to success, rather than giving them a list of to-dos, or else, when clearly the family is experiencing difficulties in functioning properly, is not helpful. Instead, getting to the bottom of the issues facing the family, and developing a plan based on a goal of healing is both in accord with Klamath Tribal values and would be beneficial to non-Native clients.

X. Conclusion

The Klamath Tribes and Native Americans as a whole in Klamath County were the focus of this project as a result of the findings from the Freeman and Wornell study in 2011. Specifically, community partners were concerned that they were not doing enough to support the Klamath Tribes in providing tribal children and families with the services they need to be successful. Freeman and Wornell recommended that community partners reach out to the Klamath Tribes and work to develop services that were tailored to the needs and the desires of tribal people in the County (Freeman & Wornell, 2011).

In interviewing practitioners that work closely with Native American children experiencing maltreatment and their families, it became clear that the solutions offered on behalf of tribal members would not only improve outcomes for that group, but when applied broadly, would improve outcomes for non-Native children and families as well.

This concept fits with standpoint theory, which describes how marginalized populations like Native Americans are more likely to feel the ill effects of policies. Research starting with such a group can identify problems with the system, and solutions coming from that perspective are likely to improve the system, and therefore outcomes, for not only Native American children and families, but for all children and families.

Native American children experiencing maltreatment are faced with additional barriers, namely the trauma of the Tribes, which require attention. The following policy recommendations are proposed to address this issue.

First, policy recommendations that start with the experience of Native Americans, but which have the potential to improve outcomes for all children experiencing maltreatment:

Transform goals of the overall social service system, from a focus on processing families through the system to one of healing for families. Work on designing funding and agency mandates to reward proactive service provision, keeping children in the home safely, and delivering services without instigating further trauma for the family. Develop goals that center around success of the family, rather than on tests and punishments.

Changes in the way service providers relate to clients can transform outcomes. Speaking with respect, whether or not there is an advocate present, and offering options—true options—for case plan and service types is key. Also, taking calls and visiting with drop in clients, and providing a mentor or guide to help frightened, angry, and confused clients navigate the system.

Investing resources in school resource officers has the potential to transform relationships between children and law enforcement as they grow older. Current budget cuts have resulted in fewer school resource officers, who often share their time between two or even three campuses. Instead, finding funding to allow one officer to devote their time to a single campus and develop relationships with young people who will see them as a resource and not a threat would be of great benefit and a prudent investment over the long run.

Activities for young people that engage them with tribal culture and those that provide outlets for creative pursuits such as arts, music, and sports have the potential to improve outcomes for Native children and families. Such activities would be more successful if they were offered frequently and consistently, took advantage of natural surroundings of Klamath County, and incorporated Native and non-Native youth. Additionally, low cost activities for families, Native and non-Native, providing a safe place for families to spend time, would be beneficial.

Finally, tailoring services to take into account the daily constraints of the client would go far to encourage success. The Positive Indian Parenting class, which offers child care and a family meal with each class, takes huge barriers away from client attendance. Similarly, Klamath Youth Development Center and the Klamath Tribal Health and Family Services have representatives that spend time each week in Chiloquin, breaking down the barriers of transportation and travel time for children and families that need services. Similar travel and serve programs for other outlying areas, or more frequent visits to Chiloquin could be helpful. In the same vein, the shuttle bus which makes a weekly trip into Klamath Falls from places like Beatty and Bly seems to be effective; however, devoting resources to running the shuttle two or three times a week would be even better.

Regarding policies specifically designed to address the needs of Native American children and families, it is important to remember that these policies are culture driven, and such services ought to be initiated by a tribal member because of their significance to the Klamath Tribes, Native Americans as a whole, and often religious ceremony. Incorporating traditional activities of healing into counseling sessions, including root digging, berry picking, basket making, sweats and more, has the potential to help families heal in a way that makes more sense to them, and which is in line with the traditional beliefs and practices of the Klamath Tribes. Such practices can help overcome the barrier of stigma around mental health services and be a starting point for working through difficult personal traumas.

Finally, educating non-Native service providers about the effects of trauma on the tribal people in Klamath County could help give them a frame of reference for what Native clients have gone through and what barriers face them. Such understanding also provides service providers with a better idea of what clients may need to heal. This includes getting school personnel involved in understanding the difficulties faced by Native American youth, understanding the links between educational outcomes, like modified diploma and alternative school tracks to persistent poverty, in order to eliminate the unintended consequences of over using these policies. Instead, addressing the historical and current trauma in a way that acknowledges the difficulties faced and finds ways for young people to be successful.

Ultimately, through a combination of culturally specific services that address the needs of the Klamath Tribes and other Native children and families in Klamath County, as well as reorienting the overall system to help all clients to heal, existing efforts can be strengthened. Klamath County has a number of community partners, Native and non-Native, that are dedicated to improving the lives of children experiencing maltreatment and their families. This project hopes to shed light on possible improvements to help community partners with this valuable work.

Special thanks:

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I offer many thanks to the anonymous respondents of this project, for your willingness to share your expertise and experience and to spend your time talking with me. Your work is truly valuable, and I wish you abundant success in touching the lives of the children and adults you work with each day.

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Appendix:

1. Elements of Verbal Consent:

Follow Up Study on Services to Native American Children Experiencing Maltreatment in Klamath County

Community Partner and Community Leader Interviews

Ensure that potential participants understand each of the elements below:

Purpose. The goal of this study is to explore a theme that arose in community partner interviews in an earlier version of this research project. Specifically, the study seeks to identify ways that Native American children experiencing maltreatment in Klamath County may be underserved by the types of services available to them and their families.

Activities. The interviews will contain questions regarding:

- 1) What services are available in Klamath County for children experiencing maltreatment;
- 2) What services are needed/desired for Native American children experiencing maltreatment;
- 3) What barriers exist to providing those services; and,
- 4) What policy recommendations interviewees have for addressing the provision of services to Native American children experiencing maltreatment.

The student researcher requests permission to audio record the interviews, so that responses can be communicated accurately in the final report. If interviewee declines recording, notes will be taken during the interview. All audio recordings will be erased and transcripts/notes will be stored securely once the report has been completed. Only the researchers will have access to the transcripts/notes, with the possible exception of Federal Regulatory agencies or Institutional Review Board personnel, who may inspect and copy records pertaining to research.

Results from the community partner and community leader interviews will be reported in aggregate, meaning that themes, rather than individual responses, will be presented. Quotes may be used, but no quotes will be attributed to an individual.

Risks. The researchers will keep individual responses confidential; however, due to the public nature of the positions held by interviewees with respect to Klamath County and Klamath Tribal Health services provided to children, there is no guarantee of anonymity about participation in the project. The opinion questions have the potential to be uncomfortable for subjects; however the discomfort felt by subjects during the interview will not be greater than what they experience in the daily execution of their job as a community partner working on child maltreatment issues or a community leader in Klamath County or the Klamath Tribes.

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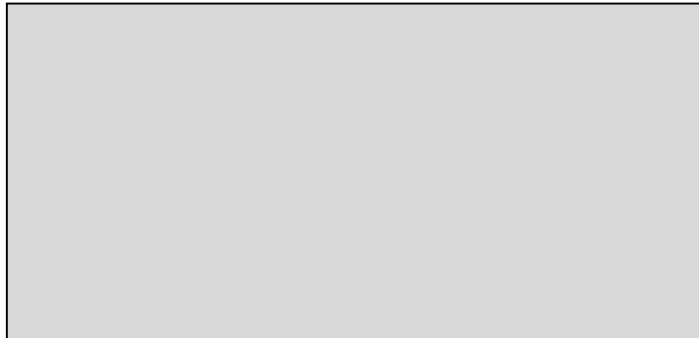
Benefits. No direct benefit will be given to participants. However, at the conclusion of the research, a report of the findings will be made available to Klamath County and the Klamath Tribes which will be designed to help set goals for improvement, drawing on the strengths and recommendations identified in the report.

Voluntariness. Consent to participate must be given freely. There is no penalty for choosing not to participate or for leaving the study at any time. The student researcher will use information gathered about participants only in the way for which express consent was given. The participants can request that any identifying information about them be destroyed. The participants will be told they do not have to answer any questions they are uncomfortable with.

Contact information. Participants should feel free to contact the Principal Investigator or the student researcher with any questions or concerns.

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2. Questionnaire:

Follow Up Study on Services to Native American Children Experiencing Maltreatment in Klamath County

Community Partner and Community Leader Qualitative Interview Guide

The community partner and community leader qualitative interview guide is designed to provide a template for the main areas the researcher will be addressing with interviewees. If appropriate, the interviewer will expand on the questions listed below as the interview evolves.

Introduction

- a. Oral consent process
- b. Explanation of previous study
- c. Explanation of current study

Questions

About the interviewee:

- What position do you hold with Klamath County, the Klamath Tribes, or in the community?
- How is your organization involved in addressing child abuse & neglect in Klamath County?

What kinds of services are available for children experiencing maltreatment?
How do the services available address the specific needs of Native American children and families?

- Do you feel that Native American children and their families would prefer certain types of treatment?
- What would those services look like?
- Who would provide them?

What barriers exist to providing services preferred for Native American children experiencing maltreatment?

- How have the County, Tribal Health, and other community partners addressed this issue in the past?
- What ways are the County, Tribal Health, and other community partners addressing this issue today?

What recommendations do you have for providing services to Native American children in the future?

- How could the way Klamath is working on these issues be improved?

Is there anything else you would like to share about providing services to Native American children experiencing maltreatment in Klamath County?

Do you have any questions for me at this time?

Thank you for your time and your willingness to contribute to this project.