

## 2016 Tribal Consultation - Discussion Guide

### TOPIC ONE

#### High Quality Early Childhood Programs and Services

The ability to collect timely information from staff and families regarding their experiences implementing and accessing early childhood programs and services is key to the ability to ensure continuous quality improvement of those services. In many cases, this information gathering does not rise to the level of formal data collection and reporting on a specific population. Rather, it typically involves surveys, focus groups and other methods of gathering summary information from various stakeholders and reporting the collective experience to inform program development, implementation and improvement. The need to gather information may be routine – such as an annual survey of grant partners working with families and young children – or it may arise suddenly, such as an unexpected grant opportunity or clarification of a program component for tribal population. First Things First understands tribal perspectives are crucial to the development of high quality, culturally responsive early childhood services. Therefore, First Things First seeks consultation surrounding the following questions:

- How do tribes continuously inform and improve their tribally run programs to meet the needs of participants?
- What are best approaches to gather information from providers, staff and families who are recipients of FTF funded services to inform continuous quality improvement of services?
- Based on partnerships you have with other state agencies or private entities, could you provide some examples or approaches on how those entities gather information to help inform their work?
  - Do they request formal tribal approvals or are there other approaches in place?
- First Things First conducts surveys amongst grant partners annually who are providing services to young children and families to ensure continuous quality improvement. Additionally, to inform effective programmatic approaches, FTF would like to gather information via survey and/or focus groups with participants/recipients of our services:
  - If information is reported in the aggregate, not at individual level or related to a specific tribe, is a formal data collection agreement needed?
  - If data needs to be at a tribal regional level, what will be some time-efficient and effective approaches FTF can implement?
- In addition to informal surveys and focus groups what other approaches do you recommend to inform program development and implementation?

## TOPIC TWO

### Ongoing Early Childhood Systems Building – Maximizing Grant Opportunities

As policymakers, tribal leaders are aware of the scarcity of resources to meet all the needs of their communities. Early childhood is no exception. We must leverage every opportunity to bring additional funds in to our communities to support children birth to 5 and their families. Entities such as the Arizona Department of Health Services, the University of Arizona and Native Health have asked FTF to partner or support grant opportunities to leverage resources and support early childhood efforts. There may also be instances where individual tribes may want to apply for a grant to enhance/expand their early childhood partnerships with FTF. In many cases, the time to apply for these grants is very short – either because the grant cycle itself is limited and/or because the opportunity is unknown for a long period of time. As part of this consultation session, we invite your input on the following questions:

- What health, education or early childhood grant opportunities have you applied for or are interested in applying for to expand services for young children and families in your community?
  - Does your tribe have a department responsible for applying and managing grants? If not, do departments apply for specific grants?
  - If you do not have a department responsible for applying for grants, has this deterred you from applying for a grant? How can FTF or other partners support your tribes efforts to apply for early childhood grants?
  - What factors have contributed to your tribe successfully being awarded or not awarded for a grant?
- When a non-tribal entity (e.g. a state agency or private entity) is interested in working with tribal communities and 1) invites FTF to partner to apply for the grant, or 2) is requesting FTF to introduce the opportunity to tribal communities; what specific nuances should FTF consider in assessing those types of requests?
- When the timeframe to apply for a grant is short, what approach should FTF take to quickly engage with the tribe to meet the deadline?
- When several tribes or entities are applying for competitive federal grant dollars FTF has been asked to partner and/or provide a letter of support.
  - How can FTF best support tribes in the application process? Specifically, how do we best leverage funding opportunities when application processes place tribes and other entities in competition for those resources?
- What are some suggestions on how FTF could partner with tribes and other entities to maximize funding opportunities?
- What other entities should FTF engage with to apply for federal, state or private funding?