

TRIBAL EARLY LEARNING INITIATIVE GRANTEE PROFILE

Grantee:	Cherokee Nation
Project Period:	<i>September 30, 2015 – September 29, 2017</i>

Tribal Early Learning Initiative (TELI) Collaborative Team:

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Program Goals and Activities

The overall goal of collaboration between Cherokee PARENTS, Head Start, Early Head Start and Child Care and Development is to remove any silos and develop a holistic approach to child development within the Cherokee Nation. The focus will shift from an Agency-Centered Model to a Family-Centered Model. Activities to be implemented in support of this goal include:

- Utilizing a data-driven approach, develop a holistic, comprehensive, coordinated tribal early childhood development program in line with tribal language, culture, life-ways and priorities;
- Establish common definitions and understanding (for child development activities);
- Identify and analyze existing service delivery systems, including needs assessments, funding sources, evaluations, screenings, etc.
- Identify barriers that prevent collaboration among the partners;
- Establish a process for resolving areas of conflict;
- Create a shared vision statement;
- Develop a common agenda;
- Develop appropriate interventions to identified barriers;
- Incorporate leadership and skill-building opportunities (for staff & parents);
- Design appropriate measurements and performance standards;
- Develop evaluation strategies and methods; and
- Design joint-training programs

Community Context

State	Oklahoma
Rural or Urban Reservation or Non-Reservation	Rural Non-Reservation/Oklahoma Tribal Jurisdiction Service Area (TJSA)
Geographic Area, Characteristics, Demographics	Cherokee Nation is located within the 14 counties (includes all of 9 counties and portions of 5 other counties) of northeastern Oklahoma. It has a TJSA,



which consists of 9,234 square miles. Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma has over 300,000 citizens making it the United States' largest tribal nation. The American Indians in the 14 Cherokee Nation counties account for roughly 30 percent of Oklahoma's total American Indian population; or 9 percent of the state's citizen population. Yet 51 percent of the Nation is rural. Out of the 14 counties the program will serve Adair, Cherokee, and Mayes Counties.

Description of Existing Early Childhood System

Cherokee Nation, located in Oklahoma, has a network of programs that support the Tribe's early childhood system. Cherokee Connections, which is funded from a federal CCDBG block grant assists child care providers using the Parents as Teachers (PAT) curriculum. Services are limited to 12 months per provider. The Cherokee Nation Public Health Nursing funds post-partum visits to high risk mothers. For the Early Head Start, 90 percent of slots are income-based, there is limited availability of home-based services. Periodic home visits are made to families, however are not intended as intensive intervention. Other programs such as PAT and Children First are also being implemented. In addition, Indian Child Welfare provides prevention and treatment services for families at risk for abuse and neglect. Referral cases are made through the court system.

The Cherokee Nation also has state pre-kindergarten programs which are voluntary programs through the Oklahoma Department of Education. The Cherokee Nation Child Development Centers serve children ages 6 weeks to 13 years. The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), state and tribal programs provide services in the area as well. Both federal and tribal-funded food and nutrition education programs serve pregnant or nursing women, children ages birth–5 and is income-based. As part of the public school system, there are 84 schools within the 14-county jurisdiction.

Key Federal and Technical Assistance (TA) Staff

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