

# Red Lake Tribal Nation Report to the Legislature on Tribal Child Welfare FY 2021

The image below reflects traditional Anishinaabeg clans and teachings that guide our work.



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- Research Evidence that Supports Ombimindwaa Practice

## **Report Highlights from FY 2021**

The Red Lake Nation officially began as an American Indian Child Welfare Initiative Tribe in 2021, assuming full child welfare responsibility over our nation's children. In preparation and during 2021, Red Lake Nation had to significantly increase its staffing and infrastructure, including the use of SSIS (DHS data system for child welfare) and other internal systems for data collection. Through this work, agency leadership and staff began re-envisioning how to shift practice from a county-based model to an indigenous based model. This work emerged as the Ombimindwaa Gidanawemaaganidog (Uplifting our Relatives) model.

Year one of the implementation phase of the American Indian Child Welfare Initiative had many accomplishments and promising practices. One of our primary goals was to reduce out of home placement and associated costs by keeping children safely at home with their parents. For example, an indicator of success was that the total, non-duplicated number of children in placement decreased by 9% from 2021 to 2022. In addition, Pre-Initiative, in 2018, out of home care costs were over 4.6 million dollars. In 2021, our placement costs went down to \$3.9 million. Our goal is for placement costs to continue to decrease substantially as we focus on prevention and reunification. When compared to the peak out of home placement in 2017, our annual number of children experiencing out of home placement has been reduced by 50%.

Other work included significant organizational and practice capacity building such as:

- Development of the Ombimindwaa practice model.
- Infrastructure and program development including new buildings and programs, new funding streams, staff hires and training.
- Expansion of culturally based services and practices.
- Development of, or strengthening relationships with, collaborating agencies/programs both internal to Red Lake Nation and external in surrounding counties.
- Data system implementation and ongoing development.
- Focus on family preservation, not out of home care with a goal of 100% family preservation through prevention of out of home placement or reunification.

All this work was made possible because of the support of the Red Lake Tribal Council leadership and the collaboration of DHS, as well as the many staff and other supporters who believed in this vision of tribal sovereignty in child welfare practice.

### **Reason for this Report**

Red Lake Tribal Nation believes it is important to document the effectiveness of its American Indian Child Welfare Initiative efforts, Ombimindwaa Gidanawemaaganidog, to understand what is happening to our tribal citizens who are served. This is best done by looking at data and understanding the decolonization of past practices through a new practice model based on indigenous values. The practice of annual reports will continue to aid program development based changes and outcomes when using a model that is culturally centered. This report will help us continue to identify strengths and gaps in practice so we may effectively target

interventions to restore our communities to wellbeing and health. Finally, this and future reports, will provide documentation and accountability to our leaders, staff, community, and funders including the Minnesota Legislature and Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS).

DHS produces annual reports on child welfare statistics to document and understand Minnesota's child welfare trends. Historically, DHS included American Indian children in their reports using county data from SSIS, Minnesota's child welfare data system. When the White Earth Nation and the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe assumed sovereignty over their child welfare system as Initiative Tribes, DHS began including their data in annual reports.

Red Lake Nation officially began as an American Indian Child Welfare Initiative Tribe in 2021. As part of the agreement, Red Lake retained sovereignty over data about their tribal children and families, including limiting what data are entered in SSIS, how the data are reported (see Section 2.10-2.13 below) and oversight for how tribal child welfare information is shared. Below is some of the agreement language specific to data.

*12.03 The State agrees not to collect information on Red Lake families without notice and permission of the Red Lake Nation.*

*12.04 The State agrees not to present information publicly on Red Lake families without notice and permission of the Red Lake Nation.*

*12.05 Red Lake Nation agrees to provide summary data of child maltreatment intake, response, and outcomes; number of family preservation cases; number of family group decision making cases; number of family reunification cases; number of children in placement and number of children reunified.*

Historically, DHS publishes reports that look two years back on data. This year, 2023, when DHS was prepared to publish their 2021 reports, they engaged in consultation with Red Lake Nation about how Ombimindwaa wanted data reported. Because Red Lake chose only to enter select data into the SSIS system (see 12.05 above), it is not possible for DHS to accurately report or analyze Red Lake information. For these reasons it was mutually agreed that DHS would redact Red Lake's data from their annual reports and Red Lake would develop and publish their own data report to the State Legislature. The goal of this report is to meet our reporting obligation, provide additional context to Red Lake Nation's data, to inform readers of the complexities of tribal child welfare practice which differs greatly from county practice, and to document progress toward the goal of 100% family preservation and intergenerational family wellness.

As Red Lake Nation assumed full jurisdiction of the child welfare system, we built a new narrative through relationship development and shifting practice to a relative approach - Ombimindwaa Gidanawemaaganidog "Uplifting Our Relatives". Using a collaborative and inclusive process, we had to develop institutional capacity through infrastructure development, data collection, adding and realigning staff, practice model development, and training for staff and relative care providers. Because Red Lake Nation's child welfare practice is so different from county-based practice, this report must look different to reflect the paradigm shift centered on family preservation, not child removal. The report reflects the inherent interconnectedness

between the child and their family, extended family, culture, community, and tribal nation.

## Data Sovereignty

The Red Lake Tribal Nation is committed to track the effectiveness of its Initiative work with our tribal citizens. This is best done through looking at data in our community context and through the lens of our indigenous values and practices. This annual review, starting in the first year of the Initiative (2021), will assist in program development and outcomes based on changes and using our culturally centered practices. Annual reports will help us to continue to identify strengths and gaps in practice so that we may effectively target interventions to restore our communities to wellbeing and health.

As stated, Minnesota DHS produces an annual report (two year look back) on overall child welfare statistics to document and understand trends over time in child welfare in Minnesota. Red Lake Nation has chosen to do its own annual data report. Here are some important definitions related to this report:

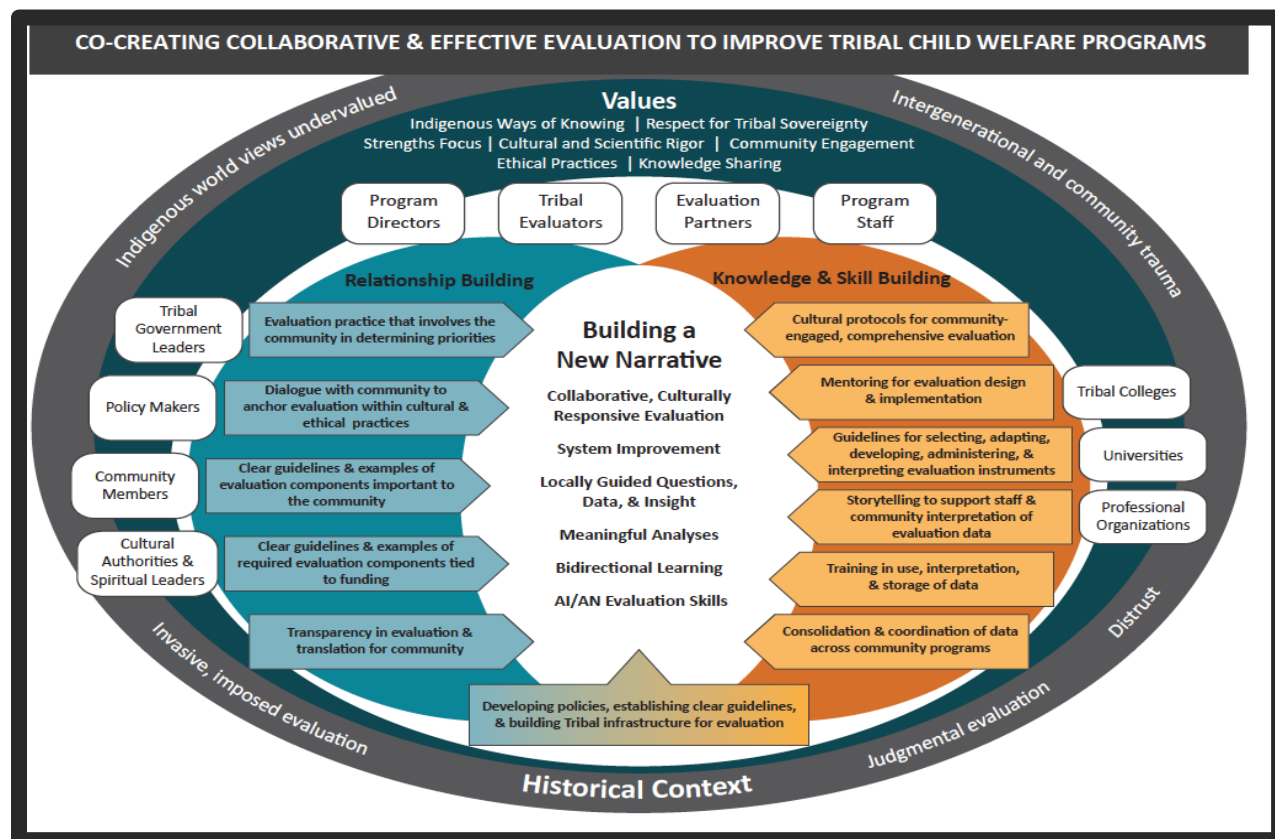
- Tribal Sovereignty-retained rights of Indian tribes in the US outlined in treaties.
- Data Sovereignty-right of tribes to oversee and manage any data related to their citizens. This includes design of data collection, methods used to gather information, actual collection of data, any review and interpretation of data, access and storage of data, ownership of data, and dissemination.
- Data-any information that helps to understand what is happening. It can be qualitative-observable or described in some way (interviews, focused groups, observation) or quantitative data-numbers, graphs, or other methods that can be collected (quantitative surveys, numbers, measurement).

This report is grounded in key concepts articulated in the *Roadmap for Co-Creating Collaborative & Effective Evaluation in Tribal Communities*. Tribal Evaluation Workgroup, Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, US Department of Health and Human Services. September 2013. The key concepts include:

- Indigenous knowledge is valid and valued.
- Culture is a part of data and thus data is not culturally neutral.
- Responsible stewardship includes how to interpret and understand data.
- Tribes must exercise sovereignty when conducting evaluation and managing data.
- Appropriate use of data should benefit Native people.

The Red Lake Nation Data report is guided by the visual roadmap, components and inter-relationships shown in the Graphic A below to fully understand tribal child welfare practice. *Tribal Evaluation Workgroup. "A Roadmap for Collaborative and Effective Evaluation in Tribal Communities." Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. September 2013.*

## Graphic A: Co-Creating Collaborative & Effective Evaluation to Improve Tribal Child Welfare Programs



This model reflects, *the importance of the “process of becoming,” of creating an ongoing, iterative process in which invested individuals work together to create and continually improve the way Tribal child welfare programs are built, evaluated, and improved reflected in the visual Roadmap:*

- *The circular form represents the continuous cycle of program improvement through evaluation. The goal is to use evaluation results to inform child welfare practice and service delivery systems, which ultimately improve the well-being of children and families in Tribal communities.*
- *The overlap and linkages across Relationship Building and Knowledge & Skill Building reflect the interdependence of these priorities and the importance of attending to both sets of priorities.*
- *The centrality of Building a New Narrative within the Roadmap emphasizes the goal of creating a new way of doing evaluation in Tribal child welfare.*
- *The outer circle of Historical Context shows how history has shaped current practice and how lessons learned can improve practice.*
- *Values are at the top of the figure to show their influence on all items in the graphic and their importance in charting a course for the future. Values play a central role in shaping priorities and practice in building the new narrative.*

- *The Roadmap priorities show the importance of engaging interconnected individuals and groups that are committed to ensuring the well-being of children and families in Tribal communities. These invested individuals represent the diverse perspectives, priorities, and skill sets being brought to bear on evaluation in Tribal child welfare contexts.*

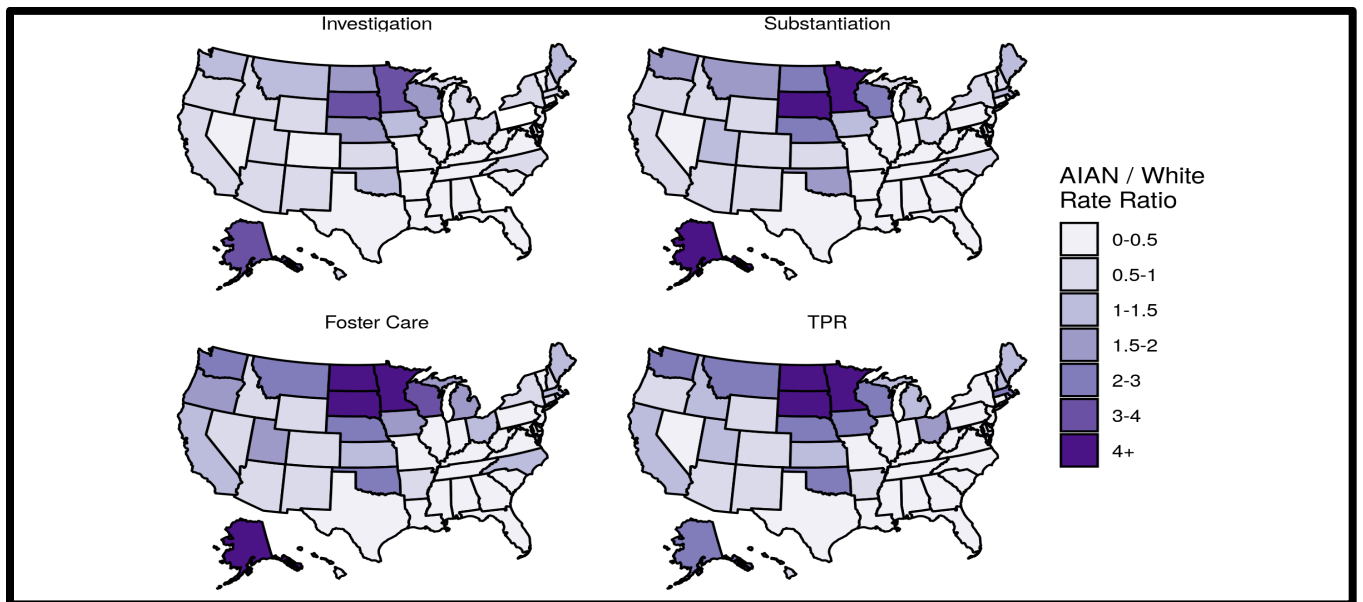
## Introduction

### Disproportionate American Indian Representation in the Child Welfare System

One of the primary reasons the Red Lake Nation chose to become an Initiative Tribe is because Minnesota leads the nation in out of home care for American Indian/Alaska Native children. After several years of discussion with DHS and surrounding counties, Red Lake Nation decided to assume jurisdiction over its child welfare cases.

The following graphics, B-D, will clearly show this disproportionality. Graphic B below, developed by Edwards and Beardahl (2020), shows that across the life of an Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) case, Minnesota leads or is among the top states with the highest disproportionality across all aspects of child welfare. The deep purple color represents the states with the highest disproportionality. This same pattern existed with Red Lake children prior to the Red Lake Nation assuming jurisdiction over child welfare cases.

### Graphic B: Minnesota American Indian Child Welfare Compared to Other States

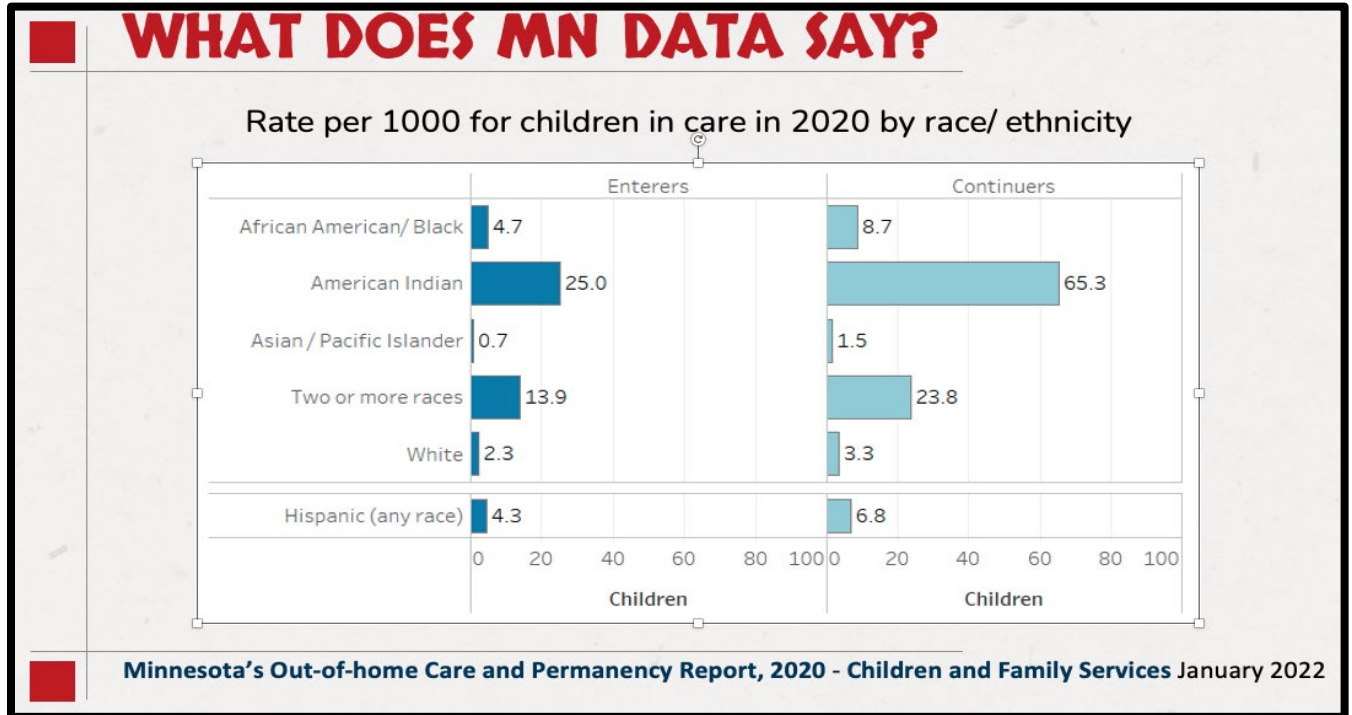


Inequity in cumulative risk in child welfare system events for AI/AN children by age 18 at 2014-2018 risk levels. Edwards and Beardall, 2020.

The following two Graphics C and D, are from Minnesota’s 2020 Out of Home Care and Permanency Report, show the disproportionality of American Indian children in MN in out of home care.



**Graphic C: Rate per 1000 Children in Care in 2020 by Race/Ethnicity**



This graphic shows that American Indian children are the most highly represented in out of home care for both new entries (25 per 1000) and for those that remain in care (65.3 per 1000). It should be noted that two or more races also include American Indian children (about 60% of cases) making the total numbers even higher.

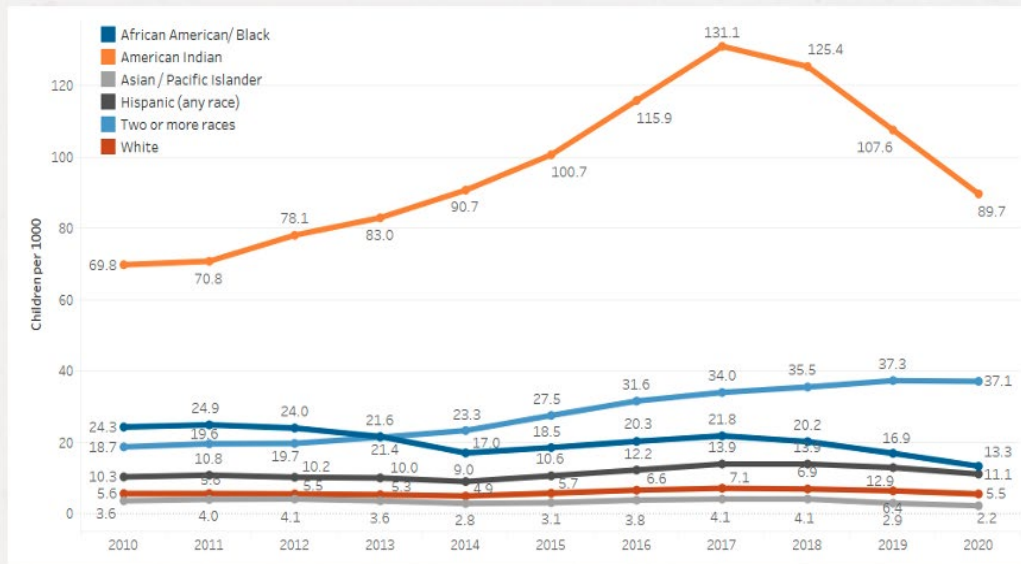
Half (50%) of American Indian children in Minnesota will have their families investigated by child welfare before they are 18 years old. American Indian children are 4 times more likely to have a case substantiated, 30% more likely to experience out of home care and American Indian families are 25% more likely to have their parental rights terminated (TPR). (Beardahl & Edwards, 2020; MN DHS Out of Home Care and Permanency Report, 2020).

Graphic D below shows that this trend has been in place for many years. While it has dipped starting in 2017, it remains unacceptably high.

**Graphic D: Rate per 1,000 Children in Out of Home Care by Race/Ethnicity, 2010-2020**

# WHAT DOES MN DATA SAY?

Rate per 1,000 children in out-of-home care by race/ethnicity, 2010-2020



Minnesota's Out-of-home Care and Permanency Report, 2020 - Children and Family Services January 2022

In 2010, American Indian children in Minnesota were **69.8 per 1,000** children in out of home placement, compared to 24.3 per 1000 African American children, 18.7 per 1,000 children of two or more races, 10.3 per 1,000 Hispanic children and 5.6 per 1,000 White children. Asian children were the lowest of any group with 3.6 per 1,000 children in care.

Ten years later in 2020, American Indian children in Minnesota were **89.7 per 1,000** children in out of home placement, compared to 13.3 per 1000 African American children, 37.1 per 1,000 children of two or more races, 11.1 per 1,000 Hispanic children and 5.5 per 1,000 White children. Asian children were the lowest of any group with 2.2 per 1,000 children in care. Note that every racial group went down except for American Indians and two or more races (includes American Indians) categories. In 2017, American Indian children in out of home care was at its highest at 131.1 per 1,000 children in care.

These statistics are a driving force for the Red Lake Nation to assume jurisdiction over child welfare for its families. Red Lake Nation restructured the old child welfare system to a new way of practice starting with renaming the agency to Ombimindwaa Gidanawemaaganidog “Uplifting Our Relatives.” Our agency is focused on decolonizing from a county way of practice to an indigenous way through development of a culturally driven practice model, shifting staff to upfront prevention efforts, active efforts for family preservation, developing resources and programs to assist families in need with culturally supportive ways to restore family and community wellbeing across the lifespan. Ombimindwaa has engaged in strengthening internal and external partnerships that support our practice model. This has meant training and retraining staff to think in decolonized ways using customs and traditions that have been passed on through

many generations to ‘uplift relatives’ without judgment, fear of punishment and loss of their children. This restorative way of practice has been highly successful as you will see in this report.

## **Background**

Red Lake child welfare began exploring the need for a family preservation program in 2019 and started to outline the program in 2020 to empower and maintain families rather than remove children. The model includes utilizing traditional family circles to address and mitigate emergency concerns for families that would otherwise lead to potential involvement with child protection. Increasing natural support to family members promotes a return to Indigenous community practice and successful Indigenous models of family preservation. Our practice model had to re-define many of the colonized terms we inherited from county practice and reframed them in cultural ways consistent with treating those we serve as our relatives because culturally they are our relatives.

We are committed to uplift our relatives in our community and renamed our agency from “Family and Children's Services” to Ombimindwaa Gidinawemaaganinaadog, which means “Uplifting all of our Relatives”. This name symbolizes our organization’s worldview that we are interconnected to all life and to our cultural relatives. Our ways tell us that everyone and everything has a purpose and deserves respect and care. We commit to truly assist those we serve, through transformation in service modalities, policies and procedures, and emphasizing practices that uplift our relatives. To further reinforce this shift, we also changed program names including shifting the terms client to relative, staff to community service providers, foster parents to relative care providers, investigation to response, and child protection case managers to reunification service providers. These changes reflect our goal of 100% prevention and reunification. Red Lake Nation does not use Termination of Parental rights, and Ombimindwaa does not participate in adoptions.

Ombimindwaa<sup>1</sup> (formerly Family and Children Services) provides a variety of intergenerational services within child welfare including both voluntary and involuntary services as well as a variety of mental health services certified by Minnesota Department of Human Services, such as Mobile Crisis Services, Children’s Therapeutic Services & Supports (CTSS) and Adult Rehabilitative Mental Health Services (ARMHS) as well as Outpatient Mental Health Services. Ombimindwaa began providing public health nursing services during FY 2021, as well as crisis response services. In addition to integrating traditional practices in all our operations, we offer cultural services on an ongoing basis.

During 2021, Ombimindwaa updated our vision statement to reflect our new practice model.

*Our vision is to return to our healthy and harmonious way of life, living within our clans, within our communities, in traditional family structures where everyone between our youth and elders are reconnected. Ombimindwaa Gidinawemaaganinaadog restores wellness and healing*

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<sup>1</sup> Ombimindwaa is the shortened version of Ombimindwaa Gidinawemaaganinaadog

*through traditional Anishinaabe family preservation where we build and strengthen family connections while overcoming barriers.*

Red Lake's Ombimindwaa worked hard in its first year to build its infrastructure and staffing. Currently Ombimindwaa has over 100 staff under its umbrella of services. For child protection, Ombimindwaa has about 40 staff working in various capacities, such as case aides, case managers, intake and response, and administration. The relative (client) to community service providers (direct staff) ratio is currently 19:1. New staff and positions continue to be added. Ombimindwaa also partners with several local universities and offers internships to promising students (many native) to continually develop our workforce.

Starting in 2021, Red Lake Nation contracted to become part of Minnesota's American Indian Child Welfare Initiative and receives state funding for various child welfare efforts, including placement costs, staffing, and supplies. The budgeted monthly foster care costs aren't sufficient to cover all expenditures, so tribal Self-Governance funds help pay for costs. Because the Red Lake Nation is committed to family preservation, Self-Governance funding will continue to be a critical piece of our child welfare operations. Our goal is for placement costs to continue to decrease substantially as we focus on reunification and prevention. With this approach, we have experienced more successful outcomes and fewer removals. We continue to require increased funding in prevention-based and supportive services, to strengthen family systems and prevent removals.

## **Ombimindwaa Gidinawemaaganinaadog Practice Model**

### **Systemic Integration of Culture**

We believe that 'culture is the cure' and that when families are connected to culture many risk factors are minimized or mitigated. We accomplish this through the systemic integration of culture throughout agency structures, policies, and practices.

Our intergenerational services are rooted in Anishinaabe worldview, language, knowledge, history, teachings, and technology. Each one of our Community Service Providers are equipped with a unique set of skills and qualifications that emphasize an Anishinaabe way of life. When working with families we embrace the seven (7) Anishinaabe grandfather teachings - Zaagi'idiwin (love); Manaaji'idiwin (respect); Debwewin (truth); Gwayakwaadiziwin (honesty); Inendizowin (humility); Nibwaakaawin (wisdom); and Zoongide'ewin (bravery). Our value system helps us live Bimadiiziwin (a good life).

We offer person-centered cultural approaches, resources, and services. Cultural services that demonstrate the agency is committed to cultural competence and culturally based practices. We have regular sweat lodges, seasonal ceremonies and feasts, access to cultural advisors and mentors, connection to the Anishinaabe community and the Ojibwe language.

This statement, taken from the Ombimindwaa Children's Mental Health Respite grant provides a description of this way of practice. *In Anishinaabe ways of being, we understand that we are created equal, must help support and uplift one another, and our original teachings guide how*

*we are to live. They provide that framework of how to do that work, in a way that is natural and traditional to our worldview, and therefore healthiest for our community. We know that we need to ensure our children are safe and being cared for. We also know that we have an equal responsibility to the parents to make sure they have the help and support needed to raise their children. If we only focus on the children then we lean toward judging the parents. If we focus on both, have compassion and empathy for both as we are instructed by our teachings, then the dynamics change and our approach changes. Not only does our approach change, but then our decision points change, because parents become engaged in the process. They make decisions on what is best for their families, what they need, support and services they want. When our decision points change, our outcomes begin to change, from placing children in care to maintaining them at home with services. The CMH respite program creates additional resources for families and helps discover pathways to community support. (p.1)*

Culturally integrative accomplishments include:

- Development and use of an Indigenous way of practice that enables workers to successfully connect with families.
- Staff training to instill knowledge and relay an expectation that staff will practice in a culturally based manner.
- A commitment at Intake to divert cases to family preservation, provide emergency resources to families, focus on crisis stabilization, and develop ongoing support.
- Focus on intensive family engagement, assessing maltreatment risk and resiliency, providing services and resources to address issues that place families at risk of entering the child protection system.
- Active efforts link relatives to spiritual services such as ceremonies that strengthen, heal, and stabilize families in crisis and restore natural helping systems.
- Increasing the numbers of voluntary cases and self-referrals to meet family needs and prevent involuntary cases.
- Services include ongoing case management, financial and programmatic resources that keep families from entering the child system and address factors that can lead to a report.
- Access to services to build protective factors within the family for wellness and long term stability.

### **Culture as a Protective Factor**

Research studies show that culture is a protective factor and can ameliorate trauma when it does occur ([https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/diverse\\_populations/americanindian/resilience/](https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/diverse_populations/americanindian/resilience/)). Cultural interventions show positive outcomes including “personal wellness, positive self-image, self-efficacy, familial and non-familial connectedness, positive opportunities, positive social norms, and cultural connectedness” (SAMHSA, <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/nc-oy1-task-3-culture-is-prevention-final-2018-05-31.pdf>).

### **Goals and Achievements for Ombimindwaa Gidinawemaaganinaadog**

The first year (2021) required substantial investment in building, development, and training. Some of those efforts are reflected in the goals listed below as well as many of the accomplishments.

1. Change the way in which workers view and respond to intakes with a focus on decolonizing the process. Community Service Providers (Staff) engage Relatives (Families) with support and cultural humility to assist relatives in an Anishinaabe (culturally based) way.

Achievements toward this goal include:

- Development of an Ombimindwaa Practice Model that outlines Anishinaabe values in family wellness and provides a contextual framework for Ombimindwaa Community Service Providers (formerly known as case workers).
- Completed Ombimindwaa Policy and Procedure Manual that reflects our Anishinaabe values.
- Hired additional cultural providers to assist Ombimindwaa Community Service Providers with family conferences at Intake.
- Revamped HR policies to hire, train, and offer competitive wages for staff recruitment and retention.
- Created an Intake and Response Unit that meets the goals of the Initiative.
- Conducted a feasibility study about Intake and Response to determine how to accomplish desired outcomes.
- Provided training to Ombimindwaa Community Service Providers and Managers on cultural humility, soul wounding, and restorative practices; family engagement and motivational interviewing; Anishinaabeg values; family preservation; strengths-based engagement.
- Sought technical assistance and quality assurance reviews with consultants knowledgeable about Tribal communities, indigenous family wellness, and preventative services.
- Created our own Indigenous assessment tools.

2. Provide safeguards for children and reduce barriers for caregivers that allow children to safely remain in the home rather than removing them.

Achievements toward this goal include:

- Hired and trained an Intake and Response Unit Program Manager to support the goals of the Initiative.
- Hired and trained additional family preservation Ombimindwaa Community Service Providers.
- Provided training to Intake and Response Providers to learn how to seek out relatives of children, identify significant people and relationships for the family, and include community safeguards in safety plans.
- Provided training to Ombimindwaa Community Service Providers to do safety planning in a Tribal context.
- Provided consistent, daily supervision of Intake and Response Unit including field-based support to safely shift from removal to family preservation.

- Created and maintained a Family Preservation and Support Unit to which the Intake and Response Unit refers cases.
- Provided quality assurance reviews of Intake and Response Unit documentation, supervision feedback, and guidance to meet desired outcomes.
- Revised the organizational chart to include a Family Support and Preservation Unit and new staff and managers. See Chart 1.

3. Reduce out of home placements of Red Lake children from 2018-2019 baseline placement numbers.

Accomplishments toward this goal include:

- Changed practice during Intake and Response decision points to encourage family preservation.
- Provided consistent quality assurance reviews of out of home placements to examine relative search efforts and relative placement efforts with assistance from consultant(s) with an Anishinaabe worldview.
- Changed case management tracks from “child protection” to “family preservation” sought reunification whenever safely possible.
- Worked with external Native consultants to assist with review of existing cases to determine which cases could be transferred to Family Preservation and Support, which children could be reunified under monitoring plans, and which children could be in an alternative relative permanent living situation.
- Built and maintained partner relationships with other agencies internal and external to Red Lake.

4. Engage Relatives (families) in a strengths-based approach to create plans that are personalized for the family’s needs and inclusive of their ideas with a focus on issues that brought the Relative (family) to Ombimindwaa.

Accomplishments toward this goal include:

- Trained Ombimindwaa Community Service Providers to be inclusive of parents, other relatives, and children when creating family plans, safety plans, and out of home placement plans.
- Avoided using cookie cutter case plans by listening to the family talk about their individual needs so plans and services can be tailored to meet their specific needs.
- Use of cultural consultants and those with lived experience to guide our staff practice.
- Trained case managers and other managers in motivational interviewing and family engagement, strengths-based approaches to develop plans, active and reflective listening skills, use of active efforts, supports and services that can be provided by Ombimindwaa.
- Encouraged and supported ongoing professional development and education.
- Encouraged supervision, review, and feedback on case plans by program managers.

**Link to Ombimindwaa Brochure**

## **Awards and Related External Projects**

The accomplishments of Ombimindwaa were recognized by external partners including the following awards.

- 2021 Commissioner of Excellence Award
- 2021 Area/Regional Impact Award in recognition of outstanding services to advance American Indian and Alaska Native Health

## **External Consultants and Contracts**

Red Lake continues to seek partnerships with and funding from agencies that can support our indigenous way of practice. Participation in external projects helped improve the capacity of Ombimindwaa to increase understanding and implementation of practices, adapt practice as needed, and to function more effectively.

- In 2021, Ombimindwaa Gidinawemaaganinaadog Mental Health Program was awarded grant funds by the state of Minnesota for a Children’s Mental Health Respite Program to demonstrate Red Lake Nation’s knowledge about traditional and non-traditional respite services, act as a guideline for providers, and reference point for staff. Ombimindwaa Gidinawemaaganinaadog Children’s Mental Health Respite Care Program goals are to reduce family stress and reduce likelihood of out of home placement. Preventing out-of-home placement and keeping families together on Red Lake Nation’s homeland is our desired outcome. To get this accomplished, staff are expected to follow the procedures below and activities within our Anishinaabeg practice model.
- Ombimindwaa staff worked with James Bell Associates over several years to better understand and document our work with mothers who use substances and come to the attention of our agency. This project was called: Prenatal Substance Exposure Project resulting in the publication of Red Lake Case Study on tribal child welfare prenatal substance exposure practices.
  - Day, P., Geary, E., Ingoldsby, E. M., & Ahonen, P. (2021). *Tribal child welfare systems’ experiences with prenatal exposure to alcohol and other drugs: A case study*. Children’s Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. This project was funded by an Inter-Agency Agreement between the Administration for Children and Families and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (IAA# 19FED1916928DDB).  
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/tribal-cw-systems-paode.pdf>
- Ombimindwaa sought and was granted a QIC for Reunification but ultimately chose to focus specifically on developing an indigenous Parent Mentor model that will be rolled out in subsequent years.



- Our primary focus on equity issues is with our tribal-state relationship. We often seek policy changes and funding that aligns with our Anishinaabe values and protects our data. This has been an ongoing process for us, and we continue to push our state partners to be more inclusive.

Shown below is a revised Ombimindwaa Organizational Chart. The graphic shows how services are provided across the lifespan to support intergenerational needs and is consistent with Anishinaabe teachings about the circle of life. This work was supported with assistance from the Children’s Bureau Capacity Building Center for Tribes.

**Chart 1: Red Lake Organizational Chart**



## Training

During 2021, Ombimindwaa staff and relative care providers received extensive training to prepare for full jurisdiction of child welfare cases. Many new culturally tailored trainings relevant to our way of life as Red Lake Anishinaabe were provided to staff in addition to the ones in the table below. We have worked closely with the Tribal Training Certification

Partnership (TTCP)<sup>2</sup> University of Minnesota Duluth to provide training to shift the lens to a more traditionally appropriate way of working with our relatives. These trainings included all staff, from administrative to clinical to case managers.

Other training was offered by MN DHS such as the CORE series by the Child Welfare Training Academy composed of a series of sequential classes covering the child welfare system from the “legal aspects of child protection” through to permanency and includes a 2-day training by TTCP on ICWA. Currently all Ombimindwaa staff involved in child welfare are expected to take the DHS CORE training which includes intake, assessment, case management, and home based, ICWA advocates, and foster care workers. These trainings are offered at no cost and are on-going.

The table below shows other training topics staff and relative care providers received.

<b>Staff Training</b>	<b>Relative Care Provider (foster parent) Training</b>
IV-E Training with Courts	Ombimindwaa Practice Model Training
Signs of Safety	Cultural Teachings
Case Planning	Trauma Informed Care
Supporting Reunification of American Indian Families	Safetalk, suicide awareness
Clan Teachings	Safe Harbor, Sexually Exploited Youth
Domestic Violence to Elders	Blood Borne Pathogens
Grief Loss Trauma	CPR
NICWA Supporting Substance Abusing Parents	Supporting Reunification of American Indian Families
Drum Teachings & Feasting Sacred Items	Car Seat
Sexually Exploited Youth	SUID, Compassionately Caring Children
CPR	Substance Impacted Infants
Data Privacy	Conflict Resolution
North Star Kinship	
Ombimindwaa Policy and Procedures	

## Data

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<sup>2</sup> The Tribal Training Certification Partnership program is the tribally based alternative to the Child Welfare Training Academy. Both are funded with IV-E training dollars and legislative funding.

When Ombimindwaa joined the American Indian Child Welfare Initiative the out of home placement numbers were very high. We inherited a lot of cases that had lingered without being closed so that became a priority for Ombimindwaa to identify and close them when safely possible. We were able to successfully close many cases when imminent harm had ceased to be a concern.

Ombimindwaa agreed to provide the following data elements provided in the table below. Most of the data are from SSIS supplemented with some data from other Ombimindwaa data tracking systems.

### Ombimindwaa Data FY 2021 on Required Elements

1. # of child maltreatment reports received	Total	Screened Out Reports	Screened In Reports																				
2. # of alleged child victims screened in by maltreatment type	713  *200 (this number is higher than 156 because they are counted more than once if screened in in multiple maltreatment type)  **umbrella of neglect can include abandonment, endangerment, neglect, welfare, and safety (68.5%)	557	156* (some already in placement)  <table border="0" data-bbox="1057 905 1419 1583"> <tr> <td>Drug</td> <td>40 (20%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Abandonment</td> <td>11 (5.5%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Physical Abuse</td> <td>10 (5%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Sexual abuse</td> <td>6 (3%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Endangerment</td> <td>26 (13%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Neglect</td> <td>20 (10%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Welfare</td> <td>70 (35%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Safety</td> <td>10 (5%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Domestic Violence</td> <td>7 (3.5%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td><b>Total</b></td> <td><b>200 (100%)</b></td> </tr> </table>	Drug	40 (20%)	Abandonment	11 (5.5%)	Physical Abuse	10 (5%)	Sexual abuse	6 (3%)	Endangerment	26 (13%)	Neglect	20 (10%)	Welfare	70 (35%)	Safety	10 (5%)	Domestic Violence	7 (3.5%)	<b>Total</b>	<b>200 (100%)</b>
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<b>Total</b>	<b>200 (100%)</b>																						
3. # of completed family assessments/ investigations documented	91 total (58.3%)  N=156 screened in																						
4. Timeliness to initial face to face contact for alleged victims	137 (88%) met goal for timeliness N=156 screened in																						

<b>5. # of new substantiated child victims</b>	142 (91%) N=156 screened in		
<b>6. # of alleged child victims where safety plan was warranted/completed</b>	Unknown-while it is best practice to complete a safety plan during response visits, this was not documented in SSIS		

**Discussion of Data**

The data above only reflects the six data elements agreed upon in the Red Lake contract with DHS and mostly represents data found in SSIS. Red Lake also uses Procentive to track child welfare data. These data provide a limited snapshot of Ombimindwaa outcomes for 2021, but clearly this doesn’t tell the whole story. Nonetheless, they are useful in seeing an overall trajectory of improvement.

**Data element 1: Number of child maltreatment reports received.**

As with most child welfare programs Ombimindwaa receives a high number of maltreatment reports annually. Reports come from a variety of sources including law enforcement, schools, early childhood programs, community members, medical providers, and other system providers. Red Lake is not covered under MN PL-280, meaning that there is federal law enforcement (no state law enforcement) within reservation boundaries. Sometimes the FBI is involved in bringing child welfare charges against Red Lake citizens.

According to the Children’s Bureau Maltreatment Report for 2021, nationally, 48.5% of all child welfare reports are screened out. Overall in 2021, Minnesota screened out 58.7%, Beltrami county (closest to Red Lake) screened out 49.7% and Red Lake screened out 78% of reports. To understand this more fully, many of the cases had multiple children in the family, some families have multiple reports for the same concern, sometimes situations did not meet the definition of child maltreatment and many more were able to be addressed through the provision of voluntary, family preservation services rather than enter the child welfare system. Providing voluntary services is consistent with the Ombimindwaa practice model. All screened out reports are offered voluntary services and/or referred to alternative services. This is reflected in data element 5 - number of new substantiated child victims – since Ombimindwaa only screens in child welfare cases that require a child welfare response and refers a higher percentage of cases to family preservation and voluntary services the number of new substantiated cases is higher than national data. (see data element 5)

**Data element 2: Number of alleged child victims screened in by maltreatment type.**

The 156 reports screened in by Intake and Response fall into a variety of maltreatment types. Consistent with national data, most of Ombimindwaa reports fall under the umbrella\*\* of neglect at 68.5% (welfare, endangerment, abandonment, and safety). This percentage is slightly more than Minnesota (61.8%) and below National (76%) levels. It does make sense since Red Lake is one of the poorest areas in Minnesota that most of the child abuse cases fall under neglect.

Parental drug abuse accounts for 20% of screened in reports and can fall under other maltreatment types or may require voluntary services and/or referral to chemical health and treatment. Physical abuse accounts for 5% of the screened in reports and sexual abuse accounts for 3%. These maltreatment types are lower in Red Lake than nationally. National data shows 16 % are victims of physical abuse and in Minnesota 23.2% are victims of physical abuse; Nationally 10% are victims of sexual abuse and in Minnesota 14.7% are victims of sexual abuse. (Children’s Bureau Maltreatment Report for 2021; Minnesota DHS Legislature Report on Maltreatment, 2021). The differences are likely due to several factors including how abuse categories are defined, how data are tracked, and the Ombimindwaa practice of offering voluntary services rather than standard child welfare tracks. These numbers are an indication that Ombimindwaa practice is working in reducing trauma to families, reducing out of home placements, and seeing positive outcomes by shifting resources to early intervention.

**Data element 3: Number of completed family assessments and completed investigations (Red Lake does not use investigations).**

Best practice for any screened in report to Ombimindwaa is to complete a family assessment. Ombimindwaa refers any cases in need of investigations to law enforcement to complete. Family assessment is consistent with the Ombimindwaa practice model and looks at both needs and strengths. The data shows that Ombimindwaa staff completed face to face assessments slightly over 58%. This number likely reflects a tracking issue rather than a completion issue. Ombimindwaa response workers were still being trained and systems were still being developed which may have led to inconsistent documentation of assessment completion or staff may have documented assessments but not in SSIS. Red Lake continues to develop its Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) capacity to improve and track data more effectively in the future. Staff are receiving ongoing training and supervision to improve documentation.

**Data element 4: Timeliness to initial face to face contact for alleged victims.**

The data table shows that 88% of Ombimindwaa staff met the goal for timeliness for face-to-face contact. Minnesota’s 2021 Maltreatment report indicates that overall 84.1% victims were seen in a timely way. Ombimindwaa would likely be higher but 2021 was the heart of the COVID pandemic and Red Lake Nation closed the reservation borders for a period of time. Many staff worked virtually but several core workers continued to do face to face and have in-person contact. This data is also based on the level of response to needs; therefore, the definition of timeliness is dependent on the threat level and is somewhat fluid. Ombimindwaa has three levels of response depending on the level of threat and if imminent harm exists.

Level 1: If the report indicates imminent harm or danger is present, then the agency must send out a Response Worker immediately. If it is after hours, then the agency may request that tribal police investigate and discuss potential follow up by phone with Ombimindwaa staff.

Level 2: If the report indicates concerns for safety of the child, but not imminent danger, the response timeline is within 24 hours. Ombimindwaa will send out Response Workers to engage with a strengths-based response.

Level 3: If the report indicates concerns screened in for follow up, but does not rise to

the level of immediate concerns, the response timeline is 7 days. Ombimindwaa will send out Family Assessment/Response workers to offer a strengths-based response.

A child(ren) may be on a 72 hour hold for levels 1 and 2.

Overall, considering this was the first year of Ombimindwaa, an 88% rate of timeliness is good. Our goal would be to reach 95-100%.

#### **Data element 5: Number of new substantiated child victims.**

In Red Lake in 2021, out of the 156 screened in cases, 146 new child victims were substantiated (91%). This percentage is similar to national data except that Ombimindwaa only serves native children. Minnesota reports screened in (46.6%) but does not indicate if these are new victims of abuse. Beltrami county screens in 50.3% of reports. National data, only reflected screened in numbers, not necessarily new cases (88.6%). These cases indicate that substantiated child victims range from 20% for White children; 19.6% for African American children; 22.5% for Hispanic children; to 26.5% for American Indian children.

As mentioned in data element 1, the high percentage of new substantiated child victims reflects the fact that Ombimindwaa only screens in child welfare cases that require a child welfare response and refers a higher percentage of cases to family preservation and voluntary services. This data strongly suggests that by providing family preservation early in the process, only those families that require non-voluntary court intervention are being served by child welfare response workers. Most cases in Red Lake are being served by family preservation. 2021 was also the first year of data reporting so many of the cases were technically new cases to the agency.

#### **Data element 6: Number of alleged child victims where safety plan was warranted/completed.**

Data element 6 was not reported in SSIS and therefore there is not a record on how many safety plans were completed. Similar to family assessments, data element 3, Ombimindwaa best practice is for response workers to complete safety plans, when needed, with families. Safety plans may be informal such as a conversation rather than a formal written plan that is documented in case files. Other times completed safety plans are hand written, or typed but not added to SSIS. This reflects the emergency response nature of the work. This is an area for staff improvement through training, supervision and data input.

### **Limitations**

The first year, 2021 was a start up year during a pandemic that resulted in Red Lake closing borders for a period of time, and most staff moved to virtual service provision. During 2021, the infrastructure was being built and staff were being onboarded. Ombimindwaa data was impacted by lack of adequate staffing and the need to develop, train, and implement data collection systems. Since most Ombimindwaa data is not entered into SSIS. Red Lake found another system to use until their own custom data system can be developed. Ombimindwaa chose Preventive, which is used primarily for mental health, but Red Lake expanded it to child welfare

and family preservation to have an integrated system. Our goal is to develop our own data system and we have been working towards developing that by exploring vendors and finding the right fit. In 2021, we had a steep learning curve and acknowledge that our data is limited and does not fully reflect the full scope of work that was done with families.

Data for this report was found in a variety of places, mostly SSIS, but some also in Procentive and case notes. As Ombimindwaa develops its own data system, tracking and reporting data will improve. Ombimindwaa continues to provide staff training and ongoing supervision to improve reporting.

## **Data Systems**

January 2021 our Intake, Response, Reunification Case Management and IV-E teams began utilizing SSIS. We launched SSIS training late 2020 and training continued through the beginning months of 2021. We upload 72 hour holds, intakes that lead to out of home placement, and all data relating to out of home placements including voluntary placements and voluntary mental health placements in SSIS. We utilize spreadsheets and agency internal drives to store other intake and response data that is not in SSIS. In addition, we utilize Procentive for Family Preservation and for Child Welfare Targeted Case Management (CWTCM) billing. We are actively identifying an alternative data system to meet all our child welfare data needs.

## **Challenges**

During 2021 we faced some challenges which included navigating through the COVID-19 Pandemic. This meant, like other agencies, we had to increase telecommuting, telehealth, phone contacts, and other non-physical modes of operation. Despite the challenges, services were provided on an ongoing basis and staff were successful in maintaining contact with our relatives and ensuring that they received quality services and resources throughout the pandemic. As soon as safely possible, in person practice resumed. Some other ways we were impacted were challenges related to posting positions and not getting applicants, provider stress from adapting to COVID practices and, most impactful, was the collective grief, loss, and trauma as a community who had disproportionate deaths and serious health issues from COVID.

## **Looking Forward**

The Red Lake Nation and Ombimindwaa began a historical journey by asserting sovereignty and full jurisdiction over its tribal child welfare cases in 2021. A great deal was accomplished, gaps were identified, and strategies were developed that will be continued in the years to come. As part of that, our agency will continue to develop and refine its services and reporting capacity to meet the contractual agreement in a way that provides an accurate picture of practice and outcomes. There are many opportunities that Ombimindwaa leadership and staff are ready to embrace as we move into the future.

## Appendices

The following Appendices provide supporting information about policies Ombimindwaa has developed as part of the Minnesota American Indian Child Welfare Initiative as well as research data that supports our work and model. Ombimindwaa practice is informed by Evidence Based Practice and research showing the positive outcomes of shifting to a family preservation model (appendix 3).

### Appendix 1: Tribal Code

- Maltreatment Definitions

### Appendix 2: ICWA Eligibility Determinations

### Appendix 3: Research Evidence to Support Ombimindwaa

- Graphic E: Movement from Trauma Inducing to Trauma Reducing Organizations
- Graphic F: Capacity Building Center for Tribes Indigenous Intergenerational Protective Circles of Care
- Graphic G: A Race Equity Strategy to Address Disparity & Disproportionality in Child Welfare with Economic and Concrete Supports
- Graphic H: Negative Social Return of Foster Care
- Graphic I: Family Protective Factors

## Appendix 1: Tribal Code and Maltreatment Definitions

### Tribal Code

Red Lake Nation revised Tribal Code in 2018 to prepare for assuming full jurisdiction of tribal child welfare cases in 2021 and to meet Ombimindwaa goals. Changes to the existing Code was needed to decolonize our practices and approaches to the framework of our Intergenerational Family Wellness Practice Model.

The following are excerpts from the Code.

*It is the fundamental belief of the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians that its children are the sacred responsibility of the Tribe.*

*The principles that shall guide decisions pursuant to this are: the protection of the child's safety, well-being, and welfare; the preservation of the child's identity as a tribal member and member of an extended family and clan; and the preservation of the culture, religion, language, values, clan system, and relationship to the Tribe.*

*To provide for the care, safety, and protection of children in an environment that fosters healthy social, emotional, intellectual, cultural, and physical development; to ensure secure and safe custody for children; to promote the health and well-being of all children under the Tribe's care; and to prevent the occurrence of child abuse, abandonment, and neglect.*



*To provide a continuum of services for children and their families from prevention to residential treatment, with emphasis on prevention, early intervention, and community-based alternatives to encourage parents to act with love, to acknowledge their personal weaknesses and develop the strength to combat them for the welfare of their children.*

*To promote the belief that the Tribe's children deserve a sense of respect, love, permanency, and belonging throughout their lives and are entitled to knowledge about their unique cultural heritage, tribal customs, history, language, religion, and values.*

### **Tribal Code Maltreatment Definitions**

*Abandon, Abandoned, Abandonment means a situation in which the parent or legal custodian of a child, while being able, makes no provision for the child's support and has failed to establish or maintain a substantial and positive relationship with the child.*

- a) A substantial and positive relationship should include frequent and regular contact with the child through frequent and regular visitation or communication and the exercise of parental rights and responsibilities.*
- b) Marginal efforts and incidental or token visits or communications are not sufficient to establish or maintain a substantial and positive relationship with a child.*
- c) The incarceration of a parent, legal custodian, or caregiver may support a finding of abandonment. The service of a parent, legal custodian, or caregiver in the U.S. Armed Forces will not support a finding of abandonment. Custody with extended family members or a voluntary consent to placement does not constitute abandonment.*
- d) Failure to maintain a substantial and positive parental relationship with the child, without just cause, for six months shall constitute prima facie evidence of abandonment. Failure of a parent or legal custodian of a child to respond to a child detained in juvenile detention for more than five (5) days shall constitute prima facie evidence of abandonment.*

*Abuse means any willful or threatened act that results in any physical, mental, or sexual injury or harm that is likely to cause the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired.*

- a) Abuse of a child includes acts or omissions and failing to maintain reasonable care and treatment.*
- b) Corporal discipline of a child by a parent or legal custodian for disciplinary purposes does not in itself constitute abuse when it does not result in harm to the child.*
- c) Customary discipline of a child by a parent or customarily appropriate person does not in itself constitute abuse when it does not result in harm.*

*Active Efforts means those efforts made by any tribal social services department to provide social services or reunification services to any party participating in a case plan with the department. The term is further defined within other provisions of this Title.*

*Assessment means the gathering of information for the evaluation of a child's or adult's physical, psychiatric, psychological, or mental health, education, vocational, and social condition and family environment as it relates to the child's and adult's need for rehabilitation and treatment services.*

*Egregious harm means the infliction of bodily harm to a child or neglect of a child which demonstrates a grossly inadequate ability to provide minimally adequate parental care.*

*Facility Investigation means situations of known or suspected child abuse, abandonment, or neglect in which the person allegedly perpetrating the child abuse, abandonment, or neglect is an employee of a public or private school, public or private day care center, residential home, or child care institution, facility, or agency. The facilities must be located within the exterior boundaries of the Red Lake Indian Reservation or licensed by the Red Lake Band of Chippewa Indians.*

*Family Preservation Services means social services and other supportive and rehabilitative services provided to the parent or legal custodian of the child and to the child for the purpose of preventing the removal of the child from the home. Social services and other supportive and rehabilitative services shall promote the child's need for: physical, mental, and emotional health; a safe and stable living environment; family autonomy; and a strengthened family life.*

*Forensic Interview means a structured investigative conversation with a child by a certified or trained individual, with the intention to elicit detailed information about possible events the child may have experienced or witnessed. The purpose of a forensic interview is to elicit information from a child that may assist in a criminal or child protection investigation.*

*Foster Care means the 24 hour-a-day care ordered by the Court and provided by a person or facility, other than the parent. Extended Foster Care may be available for individuals up to the age of twenty-one (21) if the requirements of Family & Children Services are met.*

*Guardian Ad Litem means a person appointed by the Court to represent the child's best interests before the Court.*

*Harm to a child's health or welfare occurs when any person inflicts, or allows to be inflicted, upon the child a physical, mental, or emotional injury. Harm may include but is not limited to: willful acts of physical, mental, or emotional injury; malicious punishment; leaving a child without appropriate supervision for his or her age and ability; inappropriate or excessively harsh disciplinary action; sexual assault, battery, or exploitation; abandonment; neglect; exposure to a controlled substance or alcohol, before or after birth; restraint or isolation; or withholding appropriate care, services, or treatments.*

*Juvenile Court means the Red Lake Court of Indian Offenses when in session regarding any proceeding concerning a child.*

*Legal Custody means a legal status created by a court that vests in a custodian of the person or guardian the right to have physical custody of the child, the right and duty to protect, nurture, guide, and discipline the child, and the duty to provide the child with food, shelter, education, and ordinary medical care.*

*Malicious Punishment means an intentional act or series of intentional acts with respect to a*

*child that evidences an unreasonable force or cruel discipline that is excessive under the circumstances.*

*Maltreatment means any non-accidental act or series of acts of commission or omission by a parent or other caregiver that results in harm, potential for harm, or threat of harm to a child. Maltreatment of a child includes, but is not limited to, physical, sexual and psychological abuse, and emotional, medical, or educational neglect.*

*Minor means any individual under eighteen (18) years of age.*

*Neglect means a situation in which a child is deprived, via acts or omissions, of necessary supervision, food, clothing, shelter, or medical treatment or the child's living environment causes the child's physical, mental, or emotional health to be significantly impaired. A neglectful situation caused primarily by financial inability will not be considered neglect, unless actual services for relief have been offered and rejected.*

*Parent means a biological or legal parent of a child, but not an individual whose parental rights have been suspended.*

*Permanency Goal means the living arrangement identified for the child as the permanent living arrangement of the child. Permanency goals, in order of preference, are:*

- a) reunification;*
- b) permanent placement with a relative;*
- c) permanent placement with a Red Lake Tribal Member;*
- d) customary adoption; and*
- e) placement in another planned and permanent living arrangement.*

*Permanency Plan means the plan that establishes the placement intended to serve as the child's permanent home.*

*Protective Supervision means a legal status in a CHIPS case that permits the child to remain safely in his or her own home or other placement while being under the direct supervision of the tribal social services department.*

*Red Lake Family & Children Services/Red Lake Social Services means the tribal social services agency of the tribal government charged with ensuring the protection of Indian children in accordance with the Indian Child Welfare Act and this Title.*

*Reunification Services means social services and other supportive and rehabilitative services provided to the parent of the child, to the child, and, where appropriate, to the relative placement, non-relative placement, or foster parents of the child for the purpose of enabling a child who has been placed in out-of-home care to safely return to his or her parent at the earliest possible time. The health and safety of the child shall be the paramount goal of social services and other supportive and rehabilitative services. The services shall promote the child's need for physical, mental, and emotional health and a safe, stable, living environment, shall promote family autonomy, and shall strengthen family life.*

*Runaway means an unemancipated child who absents him/herself from the home of his/her parent or other lawful guardian or custodian without the consent of his/her parent, lawful guardian or custodian.*

*Suspension of Parental Rights means the permanent suspension of the rights of biological or legal parents to provide for the care, custody, and control of their child.*

*Temporary Legal Custody means the relationship that a court creates between a child and an adult relative of the child, legal custodian, agency, or other person approved by the court until a more permanent arrangement is ordered. Temporary legal custody confers upon the custodian the right to have temporary physical custody of the child and the right and duty to protect, nurture, guide, and discipline the child. The temporary legal custodian is also required to provide the child with food, shelter, and education, and ordinary medical, dental, psychiatric, and psychological care, unless these rights and duties are otherwise enlarged or limited by the court order establishing the temporary legal custody relationship.*

*Transfer of Legal Custody means a transfer of legal status as custodian for a child from one adult to another.*

*Treatment Facility means a secure, acute care facility that provides, at minimum, detoxification and stabilization services; is operated 24 hours per day, seven days per week; and is designated to serve individuals found to be substance use impaired, or in need of psycho-medical care.*

*Truant means an individual under the age of 18 years absenting himself/herself from attendance at school without lawful excuse for seven (7) school days if the child is in elementary school or for the equivalent secondary class periods if the child is in middle school, junior high school or high school or for 19 hours or less in any week if the child is enrolled in the Alternative Learning Center.*

## **Appendix 2: ICWA Eligibility Determinations**

The Red Lake Family & Children Services Department shall be the agency responsible for determining whether a child is eligible for an applicable child custody proceeding in accordance with the Indian Child Welfare Act, 25 U.S.C. § 1901, et. seq. (2016).

## **Appendix 3: Research Evidence to Support Ombimindwaa**

Ombimindwaa practice model of shifting from child removal and family harm to family preservation and healing has been shown to be effective as demonstrated by the following research models.

### **Graphic E: Movement from Trauma Inducing to Trauma Reducing Organizations**

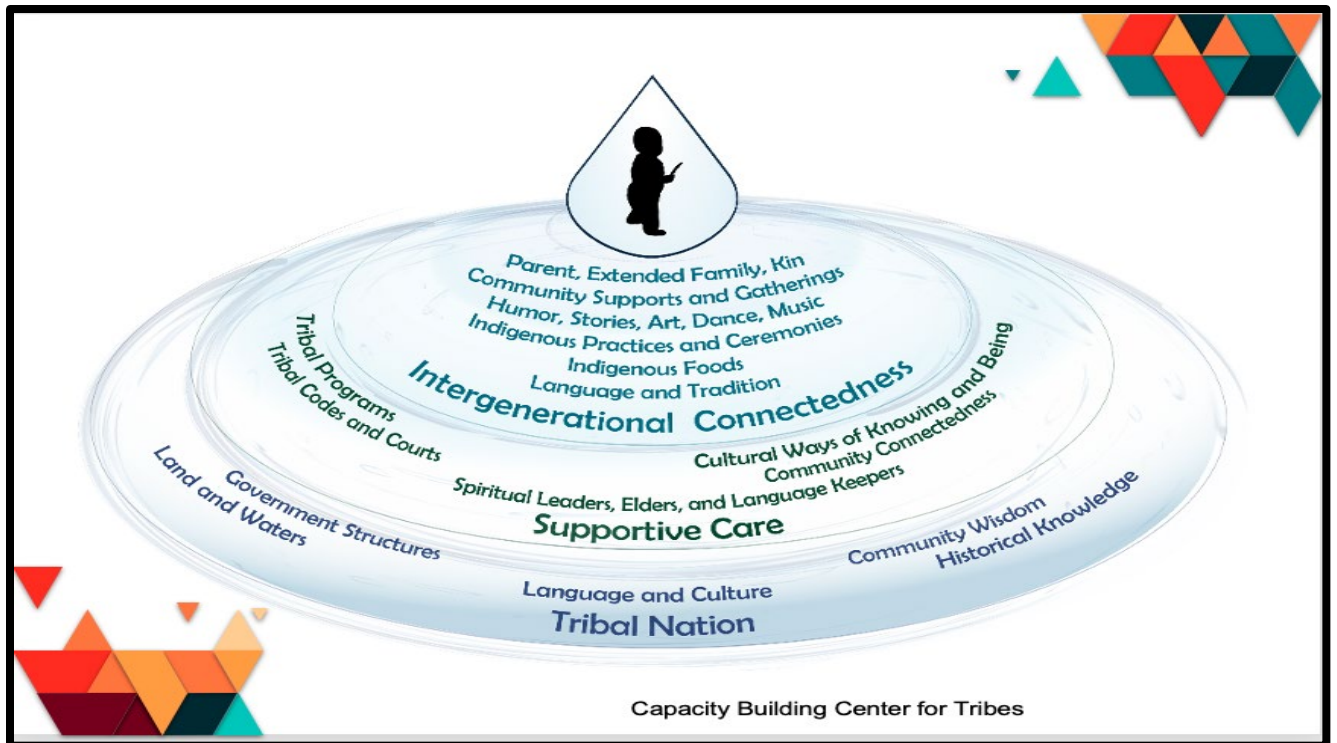
This model by Trauma Transformed shows the stages of organizational change needed to move to a trauma informed and trauma reducing organization. Ombimindwaa is engaged in similar transformational work using cultural restorative practices.



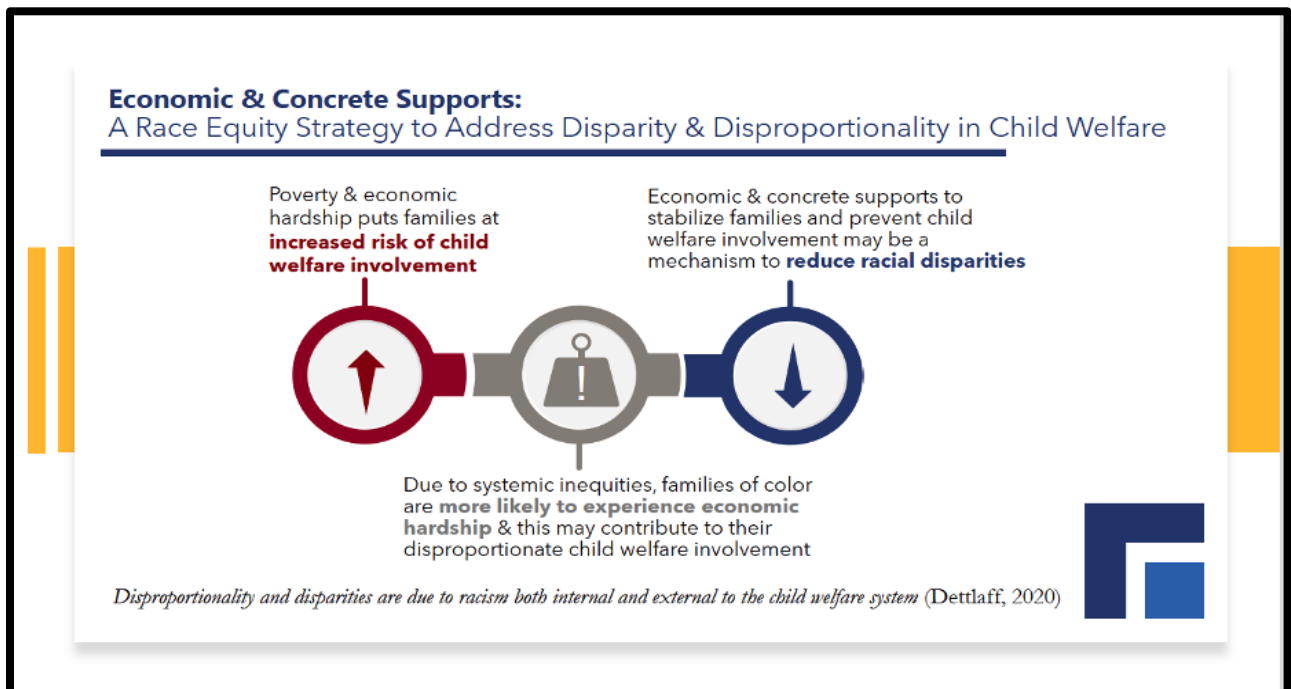
<https://traumatransformed.org/>

### Graphic F: Capacity Building Center for Tribes Indigenous Intergenerational Protective Circles of Care

This model, consistent with Ombimindwaa, was developed by indigenous researchers through the Children’s Bureau Capacity Building Center for Tribes shows how children are surrounded by intergenerational protective circles that protect them from harm and restore balance when harm occurs.



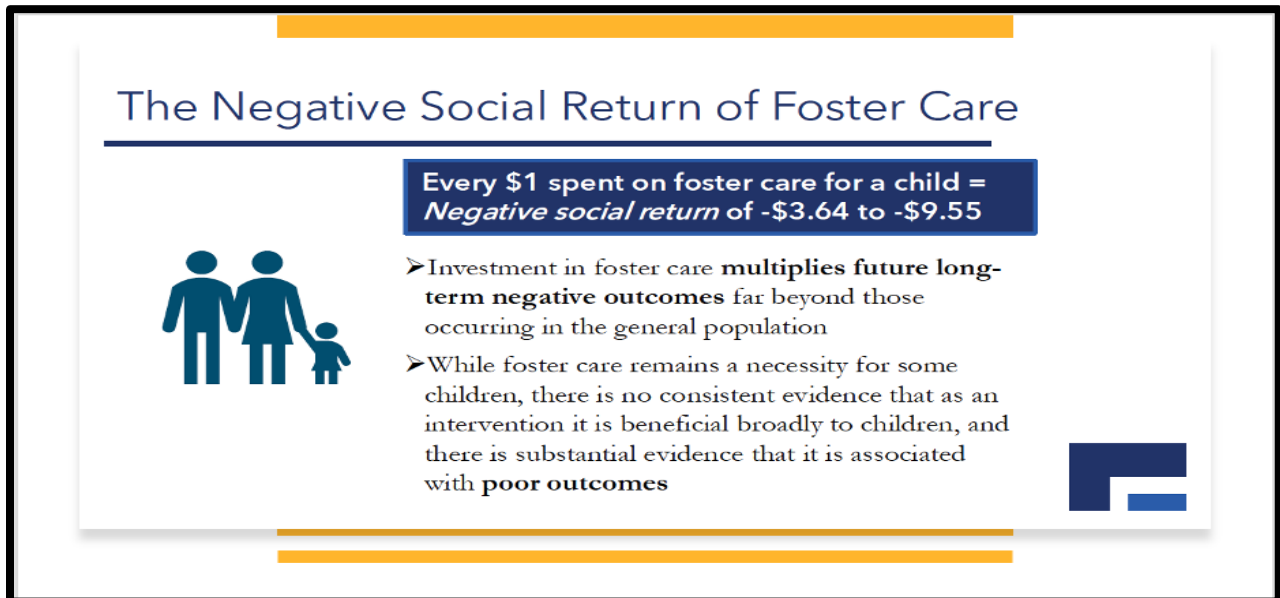
**Graphic G: A Race Equity Strategy to Address Disparity & Disproportionality in Child Welfare with Economic and Concrete Supports**



[https://www.chapinhall.org/impact\\_area/child-welfare/](https://www.chapinhall.org/impact_area/child-welfare/)

Graphic G demonstrates the approach used by Ombimindwaa is supported by research by Chapin Hall, University of Chicago, that shows that by addressing economic barriers through concrete supports reduces racial and ethnic disparities and disproportionality in child welfare.

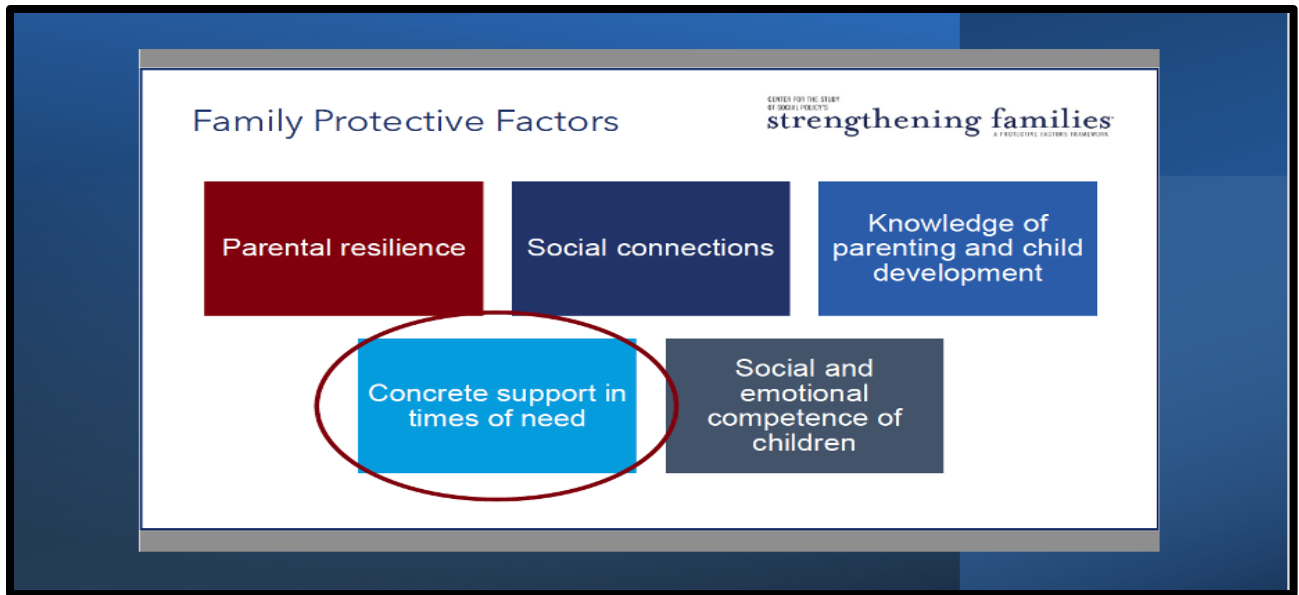
## Graphic H: Negative Social Return of Foster Care



[https://www.chapinhall.org/impact\\_area/child-welfare/](https://www.chapinhall.org/impact_area/child-welfare/)

Graphic H shows that placing children in foster care has a negative social return and results in long term negative outcomes for those children. It supports Ombimindwaa practice of family preservation and providing services to families in need over child welfare removal will result in more family and community wellbeing.

## Graphic I: Family Protective Factors



[https://www.chapinhall.org/impact\\_area/child-welfare/](https://www.chapinhall.org/impact_area/child-welfare/)

Ombimindwaa practice supports family protective factors resulting in less long-term harm through family preservation.