



OJJDP FACT SHEET

Shay Bilchik, Administrator

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Training and Technical Assistance for Indian Nation Juvenile Justice Systems

by Ada Pecos Melton and Elizabeth Bird

Background

Due to the unique government-to-government relationship the United States has with Indian Nations, the Federal government and its agencies have an important role to play in assisting Indian Nations to address youth crime, violence, and victimization in their communities. In response to the rise in American Indian juvenile crime, violence, and victimization, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) funded four Indian Nations between fiscal years (FY's) 1992 and 1995 to develop culturally relevant community-based programs to address the needs of young Indian offenders and their families. Additionally, OJJDP funded a technical assistance program to assist Indian Nations in the design, development, and implementation of such programs. The experience of this initiative has provided OJJDP with insight into the needs and problems that Indian governments and communities face in dealing with juvenile delinquency, violence, and victimization.

Purpose

The success of this initiative resulted in an expansion of technical assistance by OJJDP in FY 1996. As a result, OJJDP funded a 3-year training and technical assistance program seeking to increase the capacity of Indian Nations to provide adequate and appropriate juvenile justice responses to youth crime, violence, and victimization. The goal of this ongoing technical assistance program is to help equip Indian Nation governments with the necessary information and tools to develop or enhance comprehensive, systemwide approaches to reduce juvenile delinquency, violence, and victimization and increase the safety of their communities.

American Indian Development Associates

In FY 1997, American Indian Development Associates (AIDA) was awarded a 3-year cooperative agreement to provide training and technical assistance to American Indian and Alaskan Native governments to develop or enhance their juvenile justice systems. Under the cooperative agreement, AIDA is working to

develop a more comprehensive approach to address juvenile delinquency, violence, and victimization in Indian communities. AIDA delivers training and technical assistance in the context of the complex and varying relationships that Indian Nations have with local and State governments and the Federal government. Equipped with this understanding, AIDA provides training and technical assistance that supports a cooperative and collaborative approach by each of these levels of government to address the needs of Indian youth and their families.

AIDA provides assistance at the request of Indian Nation governments and agencies that serve Indian Nations and Indian youth and families. Once technical assistance requests are categorized, reviewed, and approved, AIDA develops a comprehensive training and technical assistance delivery plan. A primary goal of all training and technical assistance is to aid communities in developing culturally appropriate and effective ways of dealing with problems faced by Indian youth and their families. Technical assistance is delivered through onsite visits, telephone consultations, and regional training seminars. Technical assistance has included:

- ◆ Juvenile justice and detention needs assessments and program reviews.
- ◆ Seminars on comprehensive juvenile justice planning.
- ◆ Policy and procedure development for coordinated service delivery and referral systems.
- ◆ Development of community-based alternatives to incarceration.
- ◆ Training on indigenous justice approaches and processes to handle juvenile delinquency cases.
- ◆ Training on qualitative data collection and analysis to obtain community perspectives on juvenile delinquency, violence, and victimization.
- ◆ Training and competency development of juvenile justice practitioners, administrators, and tribal leaders in juvenile justice management and probation systems.

For Further Information

For further information regarding available technical assistance, contact Bob Hubbard, OJJDP Program Manager, 202-616-3567; or Ada Pecos Melton, President, American Indian Development Associates, 2401 12th Street NW., Suite 212, Albuquerque, NM 87104, 505-842-1122 (phone); 505-842-9652 (fax); aidainc@flash.net (e-mail).

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The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

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