

Tribal Child Welfare Leadership Academy

Implementation Guide



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Tribal Child Welfare Leadership Academy

Acknowledgments

This curriculum is the collaborative effort of many individuals and agencies working together to create the Tribal Child Welfare Leadership Academy (TCWLA) training, an adaptation of the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute (NCWWI) Leadership Academy for Middle Managers. We acknowledge the many tribal leaders, formal-informal-and-hereditary, who provided input and guidance to the process and outcome.

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Introduction

About the Tribal Child Welfare Leadership Academy

This training is an adaptation of an existing training called the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers. It was developed by the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute to support professionals in child welfare in achieving successful outcomes. Across the country, the goals of child welfare are safety, permanency, and well-being.

In creating the Tribal Child Welfare Leadership Academy (TCWLA), we determined that in order to improve outcomes for Tribal children, we needed to define child welfare success from a Tribal perspective. This also led the development of the Tribal Child Welfare Leadership Model, which you see throughout the training.

The leadership model and definition of success were informed and developed by a team of Tribal child welfare professionals committed to improving outcomes for Tribal children and families and included Tribal leaders, elders, and community members.

Tribal Child Welfare Success

Tribal child welfare success is best achieved when Tribal child welfare leaders, Tribal leaders, and the community work together to protect Native children with a vision of community and family well-being. Success is working together to fulfill this vision and honoring the rights of Indigenous children for the next seven generations.

When youth and families are supported to maintain positive connections to their Tribal identity, they can:

- Feel empowered and able to voice their needs;
- Work through their issues with community, Tribal, and non-Tribal networks of support;

- Understand how they contribute to the tribe and community well-being, including being able to participate at local Tribal gatherings;
- Experience resilience through their Tribal identity;
- Practice cultural preservation;
- Understand that all children are sacred gifts from the Creator;
- Be surrounded by positive and mutually supportive relationships;
- Feel they have a rightful place and are accepted within the community; and
- Become productive contributing community members that protect the sacredness of the next generation.

Leadership Academy Implementation Considerations

Tribes should engage in an implementation and sustainability process for the TCWLA that is right for them, knowing that efforts may change over time and the plan may need adjusted to accommodate new realities. Whatever implementation process your agency uses, make sure it is thorough, strategic, and flexible for long-term sustainability. Visit [NCWWI's Change Implementation Resource Category](#) for more information about various approaches to implementation.

1. **Tribal Council or leadership-level support.** Initial and ongoing support, involvement, and resources from the council level provide a critical foundation. Without this support, portions of the academy will be hard to execute successfully, which will limit the academy's effectiveness. The greater the commitment, the more engagement and motivation for change across the agency.
2. **Vision and goals.** Incorporate all stakeholders to develop a shared vision to ground the work and improve the potential for sustainability.

3. **Infrastructure.** Dedicated time and resources will contribute to the successful completion of the leadership academy.
4. **Generate commitment and buy-in.** Engage staff, leadership, and community stakeholders from the very beginning. The importance of this first critical step cannot be overemphasized as it will impact the increase the impact of the leadership training.
5. **Use coaching.** Early implementation experiences and participant feedback indicated that an additional component, coaching, can result in improved program effectiveness. If possible, building coaching into the academy provides training participants with the needed support to apply the skills they learned during the training.



Tribal Child Welfare Leadership Academy

Goals

The overall goal of the TCWLA is to enhance Tribal child welfare leadership abilities and improve outcomes for all our children for the next seven generations. The academy will help participants lead toward Tribal child welfare success, which is best achieved when Tribal child welfare leaders, Tribal leaders, and the community work together to protect Native children with a vision of community and family well-being. Look for a complete list of the course objectives in the curriculum.

Learning Components

The TCWLA consists of a variety of learning components that work together to prepare tribal leaders to effectively lead in tribal child welfare. These supports ensure participant readiness; promote critical thinking and reflection; support the transfer of learning; and facilitate the successful implementation of participants' Change Projects. We recommend implementing all learning components for the best results.

Readiness Coaching

Readiness coaching initiates the relationship between coaches and TCWLA participants before the training begins. This phase of TCWLA coaching prepares participants and their tribal agencies for the work ahead.

Coaches schedule one individual call with each learner before the in-person training to familiarize participants with the training schedule and content; set a tone for the training that emphasizes reflection and critical thinking; and communicates the importance of the



leadership agenda. Review the TCWLA Coaching Manual for additional details on the content discussed during each call.

Pre-Work

Pre-work assignments take approximately 3–4 hours to complete. These expectations include:

- 360° self-assessment
- Online introductory module

Training Days

There are two 2-day in-person trainings, for a total of 4 days of curriculum.

Interim and Post-Training

Interim and post-training coaching focuses on supporting the transfer of learning to the workplace and facilitates the successful implementation of sustainable change. The participant establishes coaching goals and negotiates a schedule for calls with the coach. Typically, coaching includes a one-hour check-in call in between the two training sessions and a one hour a month by phone over a period of six months after the training concludes. Review the TCWLA Coaching Manual for additional details.

Workplace and peer support help to encourage supervisors of participants to support, coach, and provide feedback to participants on executing their Change Project.

Evaluation of the Tribal Child Welfare Leadership Academy

Evaluation of the Tribal Child Welfare Leadership Academy (TCWLA) allows agencies to understand the participants' experience and the impact and effectiveness of the leadership learning opportunity. Development of this training included evaluation as part of the process. The model and strategies described within this section are suggestions for a tribal agency's use or adaptation.

Evaluation of the TCWLA can include pre-training, post-training, and follow-up surveys that are administered on paper or through an online survey platform to measure:

- Training competencies (content covered in the training measured pre- and post-training)

- Leadership competencies (this is the 360° self-assessment, see below, measured at pre- and follow-up timepoints)
- Thoughts about the extent to which participants' change project would have a positive impact (measured whenever relevant)
- Participant satisfaction with training (administered post-training only)

This evaluation assesses the extent to which the training met its training goals and participants enjoyed the training. The 360° Feedback process and report developed for the TCWLA provided participants with an individualized opportunity to focus their training efforts.

360° Feedback

Overview

360° Feedback provides leaders with the rare opportunity to self-reflect on their strengths and growth areas and also to receive honest and behaviorally-based feedback from supervisors, colleagues, and staff whom they supervise. As part of the National Child Welfare Workforce Initiative (NCWWI), a 360° Leadership Assessment and feedback process were developed to enhance child welfare middle managers' self-awareness as they progressed through a leadership development program. Areas of focus for the tool were guided by the program model and content, which was based on NCWWI's research-driven Leadership Competency Framework [that outlines the skills and competencies that make for a strong leader.](#)

Description of 360° Assessment and Report

TCWLA participants received an email with a link to the survey that asks about their leadership behaviors at work. They were also asked to identify others who may be able to provide feedback about their leadership behavior (typically other work colleagues). Once data were collected and analyzed, participants received a 360° Tribal Leadership Assessment Feedback Report where their self-reported scores were displayed alongside the combined scores of colleagues who provided feedback. The report highlights participants' leadership strengths and areas for potential growth along five domains that include a total of 34 leadership competency items rated on a 5-point scale to reflect how often the participant engages in each activity (from Almost Never to Almost Always):

- **Leading Change** (e.g., Encourages new ideas and innovations)
- **Leading in Context** (e.g., Engages and communicates with tribal leadership about ICW program goals and efforts)
- **Leading People** (e.g., Fosters an environment that values all types of diversity and opinion)

- **Leading for Results** (e.g., Ensures the delivery of high-quality programs and services for children and families)
- **Leadership Fundamentals** (e.g., Communicates effectively with staff)

The 360° Tribal Leadership Assessment contains a few open-ended questions, and responses to those questions are synthesized into the report along with the quantitative data.

Coaching Support

The 360° Tribal Leadership Assessment process was supported by individualized leadership coaching. Participants reviewed the 360° Tribal Leadership Assessment Feedback Report with their leadership coach to understand the results and develop a plan for building on strengths and addressing any areas of concern. To create a safe environment for participants to grow their leadership skills, results were kept confidential and not tied to a performance evaluation (only the participant and coach saw the results).

The 360° Tribal Leadership Assessment



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The Center for Tribes adapted the NCWWI 360° assessment for tribal child welfare leaders. The *360° Tribal Leadership Assessment Feedback Report* shows participants' leadership strengths and areas for potential growth and can be used to develop a learning plan prior to attending a leadership training.

The Process:

The *360° Tribal Leadership Assessment process* is supported by individualized leadership coaching. Participants review the *360° Feedback Report* with their leadership coach prior to the training to develop a plan for building on strengths and addressing any areas of concern. The results are confidential and not tied to a performance evaluation, so this process creates a safe environment for participants to grow their leadership skills.

The Measure:

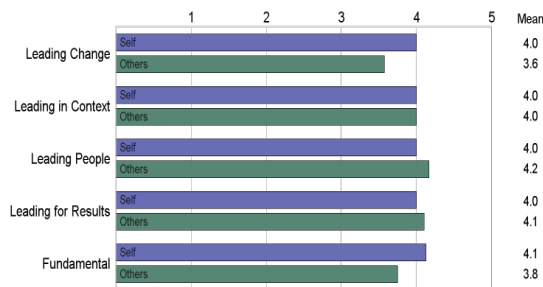
The *360° Tribal Leadership Assessment* contains a few open-ended questions and 34 leadership competency items across domains such as:

- *Leading in Context* (e.g., Builds consensus with partners)
- *Leading People* (e.g., Manages/resolves conflicts constructively)
- *Leading for Results* (e.g., Takes calculated risks to accomplish objectives)
- *Leadership Fundamentals* (e.g., Sets high standards of performance)

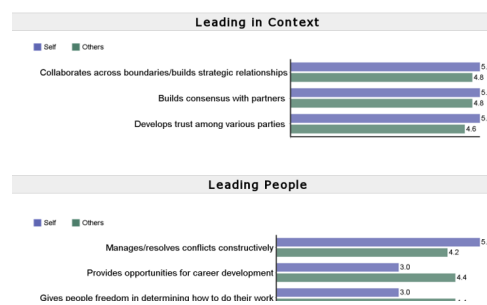


360° Feedback Report:

Summary of Domain Means:



Item-Level Mean Score Comparisons:



Gap assessment:

Domain	Item	Others	Self	Gap
Leading Change	Designs and implements new and cutting edge programs and/or processes	5.0	3.0	2.0
	Encourages new ideas and innovations	4.8	3.0	1.8

Tables highlighting high/low scores:

Highest Scores - Self-Assessment			
Rank	Domain	Item	Score
1	Leading People	Manages and resolves conflicts and disagreements in a constructive manner	5.0
2	Leading for Results	Makes well-informed and timely decisions	5.0
3	Fundamental	Sets high standards of performance and strives to achieve them	5.0

Lowest Scores - Self-Assessment			
Rank	Domain	Item	Score
1	Leading Change	Builds consensus with staff around proposed system or practice changes	3.0
2	Leading People	Provides opportunities for career development including staff	3.0

Why Implement TCWLA?

The need for strong, competent, and bold Tribal child welfare leadership is more important than ever! The Capacity Building Center for Tribes responded to this need by developing a leadership learning opportunity to meet the unique leadership strengths and challenges of Tribal child welfare organizations. The training is an adaptation of an existing training from the National Child Welfare Workforce Institute, the Leadership Academy for Middle Managers, which was designed to support professionals to achieve successful child welfare outcomes. Tribal developers with leadership and practice experience were informed by a group of Indigenous and non-Tribal child welfare professionals. The training was piloted in 2018 with tribal leaders in Oklahoma and New Mexico and further adapted.

The interaction, engagement and sharing of leadership knowledge and experiences was really insightful.

—Participant

This was an amazing 4 days. The knowledge, encouragement, direction, leadership and cohesiveness were phenomenal.

—Participant

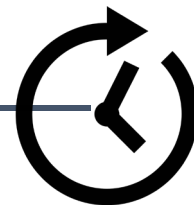
Tribal Child Welfare success is the cornerstone of a training that provides opportunity for self-assessment, reflection, classroom learning, and coaching. Each participant will have the opportunity to examine and define their own Tribal child welfare success from an “Eagle’s view.” Leadership requires not only understanding the individual tasks of staff and regulating their performance (management), but also needing to take a view from above the fray to see the patterns, relationships, context, and implications (leadership). Specific work plans are developed from within a Change Project as the foundation for leading child welfare for their tribal children and communities. The training is structured to support individual leadership learning

knowledge, skills, and styles and is designed to respect and honor a tribes' unique history and teachings.

This leadership resource includes guides, curriculum and materials for pre-work, training, coaching and evaluation. All materials can be adapted to meet your specific needs.

**This training has taught
me that I can do this!**

—Participant



TCWLA Logistics and Planning Guidelines

The following offers step-by-step guidelines for considering the logistics of planning a Leadership Academy for your tribal community.

1

GET BUY-IN

The first step is to get the commitment and full support of tribal leadership. Successful implementation also includes commitment and support from:

- Supervisors responsible for overseeing the leaders who will be attending the academy.
- Community stakeholders that would be impacted.

2

DECIDE THE OVERARCHING GOAL

Before communicating with participants, the tribal agency must decide if all the Change Projects will be related to an overarching tribal agency goal. If yes, this goal needs to be finalized by leadership and communicated to participants' supervisors. Supervisors would then guide the selection of the Change Project to ensure that it supports the implementation of this larger agency goal AND is within the participant's scope of responsibility. This process will create maximum impact as each participating leader will focus on a Change Project within their scope of responsibility that supports the agency's overarching goal. For additional information, we recommend reviewing the Change Project Worksheet.

3

DECIDE WHO WILL PARTICIPATE IN THE TRAINING

Successful implementation happens when those impacted by the training participate in planning. Consider including tribal leaders, directors, potential recipients of training, and any others who will be impacted. Who is appropriate in your tribe?

Possible Roles:

- Project Leader – Ensures effective implementation on time and within agency resources; provides oversight to trainers and coaches; regularly communicates to all involved stakeholders (critical role).
- Trainers – Determines how TCWLA fits into the overall training plans; customizes curriculum to ensure it reinforces / fits in with existing training and meets the agency's needs; effectively trains to the curriculum.
- Coaches – Prepares participants before, during and after training; regularly communicates and follows up with participants.
- Directors/Supervisors of Participants – Determines the application/recruitment process; communicates the value of TCWLA; ensures the supervisor of



- participants understands the overarching goal and can help their employee determine an appropriate Change Project prior to starting the academy.
- Administrative Support – Provides logistical support and technology; tracks participation (pre-work, training, coaching, etc.).
 - Evaluation Support (if possible) – Evaluates the extent to which participants learn critical training and leadership competencies and transfer learned skills to the job.

4 SELECT THE TRAINERS/COACHES

TCWLA provides a learning environment in which tribal child welfare leaders feel motivated and supported to take risks in building their leadership knowledge and skills. It is important to select experienced trainers who have:

- An understanding of tribal child welfare and tribal child welfare leadership.
- A working knowledge of the programs that address the needs of children, youth, and families, the workforce, partners, funding, and political dynamics.
- Been in tribal child welfare management or worked closely with other leaders.
- Been involved in systems change themselves and have an informed knowledge of the dynamics of systems change from a leadership lens.

The scripted curriculum helps trainers teach the content with consistency and to bring it alive with their own experiences. One to two trainers can teach TCWLA.

Coaching facilitates successful implementation and transfer of learning. While the trainers and coaches can be different individuals, we have found that trainers who provide coaching before, during, and after the in-person TCWLA training are often better able to provide continuity with the TCWLA content and build on existing relationships with TCWLA participants. Utilize the TCWLA Coaching Manual to determine how to best incorporate this pre- and post-training.

5 CUSTOMIZE THE CURRICULUM

Begin with a full review of the curriculum with the individuals who will have key roles in the implementation. The review process offers an opportunity to establish a shared vision on how this leadership academy fits with agency priorities and identify ways that it should be modified to meet the agency's resources and time frame. At this time, you'll also need to decide how to evaluate the academy to identify success, gaps, and any changes you may need to further your goals.

6 SET THE TIMELINE

To ensure effective delivery, we recommend developing a logistics time line to manage the timing of the various components of the academy, which includes notifying participants, the completion of evaluation components and pre-work assignments and the timing of readiness coaching.

The TCWLA has lots of moving parts, so someone should be responsible for making sure the training components are on track.

7

RECRUIT AND SELECT PARTICIPANTS

You will want to identify tribal child welfare leaders who have the time and willingness to participate in this learning opportunity. If possible, you may want to select leaders who have experienced basic leadership development and demonstrated the desire and ability to grow and change. Make sure that participants have a clear understanding of the time that will need to be dedicated over the course of nine to twelve months to be able to fully engage in the learning opportunity.

8

PRE-WORK ASSIGNMENTS AND READINESS COACHING

- **Pre-work assignments** start 4 weeks out from in-person training and take approximately 3 hours to complete. These expectations include viewing the online Introductory Module before their first coaching call.
- **Readiness coaching** starts 4 weeks out from training. Review the TCWLA Coaching Manual for additional details on what should be discussed during each call.

9

IN-PERSON TRAINING

- **Training space:** The training space will need to include a break-out room for activities; various electrical outlets for participant laptops; adequate wall space to post flip charts; enough tables to provide room for participants and their laptops; and Wi-Fi. You'll also need a screen, projector, projector cart/table, small table under screen for trainers, presenter computer, flip chart paper, and stands.
- **Technology:** If possible, the training benefits from Wi-Fi access so that websites and videos can be used during the training.
- **Curriculum:** Only trainers receive the curriculum, which lays out a pathway for trainers to follow each day or portion of a day and includes information, scripts, and notes that support the training process.
- **PowerPoint:** Participants receive copies of the PowerPoint slides that trainers use in the classroom.
- **Participant workbook:** Participants also receive a participant workbook for both 2-day in-trainings.

10

INTERIM and POST-TRAINING COACHING

- **Interim coaching** occurs between the first and second training sessions. Post-training coaching starts shortly after training. Review the TCWLA Coaching Manual for additional details on what should be discussed during each call.



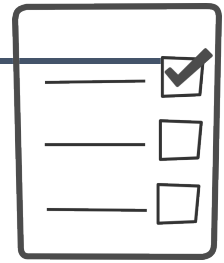
- Workplace and peer support encourage participant supervisors to support, coach, and provide feedback to participants on executing their Change Project. Also, consider setting up lunch & learns or learning circles to support implementation, communication, and peer support.



TCWLA Pre-Training Checklist

Item	Time Frame	Person Responsible	Date Completed
Get buy-in			
Select the dates			
Reserve the location			
Customize the curriculum			
Recruit/select trainers			
Assist trainers to develop a preparation plan			
Provide training materials			
Recruit/select coaches			
Assist coaches to develop a preparation plan			
Provide coaching materials			
Identify training participants			
Invite participants			
Confirm availability/participation			
Confirm pre-work expectations and timing			

TCWLA In-Person Training Checklist



Item	Time Frame	Person Responsible	Date Completed
Hotel/Meeting Space Logistics			
Determine room set-up for space			
Sitting arrangement for other staff			
Resource table			
Hotel logistics for lodging			
Transportation considerations			
Food for training			
Communication w/Participants & Trainer/Coach Team			
Gather contact info for participants			
Outreach to participants with training logistic information			
360° pre-work survey communication (if using 360°)			
Equipment, Supplies, and Materials			
Training Room Supplies			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - LCD projector - Laptop - Speakers - Internet connection - VGA / audio cable 			

<p>Trainer Folders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participant list - Communication plan - Participant sign-in sheet - On-site logistics (hotel information such as parking, restrooms, etc.) - Training follow-up note document 			
<p>Trainer Binders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Curriculum - PowerPoints - Participant Workbook 			
<p>Participant Binders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participant Workbook - PowerPoints 			
<p>Trainer Supplies</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Post-it flip chart paper - Stapler - Scissors - Markers; pens - Dry erase markers - Post-it notes - Tape to hang posters - Kleenex - Name tents - Name tags - Indigenous items for talking circles - Posters 			