Urban Indian America

The Status of American Indian & Alaska Native Children & Families Today

A Report to the Annie E. Casey Foundation
By the National Urban Indian Family Coalition

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A discussion paper addressing the status of American Indian & Alaska Native children and families today

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This research was funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. We thank them for their support but acknowledge that the findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of the author(s) alone, and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the Foundation.

Introduction[1]

Native people face some of the most dire socio-economic conditions of any group in America. Within this population, urban Indians face unique challenges. Federal funding does not always directly address their needs and their location in America's cities mean that part of the safety net available to Native children and families living on reservations or tribal territories are unavailable to them. There is also a lack of sufficient data to determine whether and how well the "urban safety net" meets the needs of urban Indian families. The magnitude of this problem is significant, as urban Indians make up almost half of the Native population overall.[2]

Even so, there is a critical lack of research on the issues facing Native families residing in urban areas and virtually no research focused directly on understanding and alleviating the many social ills this population currently suffers, such as disparities in rates of poverty, disability status, educational attainment, employment, and single-parent status.[3] Certainly, a number of reports about urban Natives have been produced over the years, including a special edition of the *American Indian Culture and Research Journal* in 1998 addressing the status and wellbeing of urban Indian families.[4] While valuable, these reports tend to aggregate data nationally and/or statewide and, in so doing, ignore potentially important differences between Indian communities in different metropolitan areas and between urban Indians and Indians residing on tribal lands. As a result, there is a need for more data to address the unique and common concerns that Native people in America's cities share with each other and with their reservation-based relatives.

Prior to publication, this paper was vetted with a range of tribal audiences and in discussion with the board of the National Urban Indian Family Coalition (NUIFC). One of the strongest pieces of feedback we received is to make sure that the needs of reservation-based and urban Native people are not a cause for division but instead for united action to achieve a better future for all Native people. The following quotes from those discussions provide an insight into the sense of Indian Country about this research:

We must find a way to cross over from tribal issues into urban Indian issues so [together] they become American Indian and Alaskan Native issues.

Ben Sherman, Western American Indian Chamber
Comments to the General Assembly of the National Congress of American Indians, November 2007

You must not leave those [urban] young people out of the equation – they are your relatives!

David Gipp, United Tribes Technical College
Comments at the Honoring Nations Symposium, September 2007

Relations do not end at jurisdictional boundaries.

Moroni Benally, Diné Policy Institute
Comments at the Honoring Nations Symposium, September 2007

[2] Harvard Project 2007. The 2000 Census reported that 45 percent of those identifying as American Indian and Alaska Native alone reside in urbanized areas while a full 64 percent reside outside of Indian lands.

[3] Urban Indian Heath Institute 2004.

[4] See also American Indian Policy Center 2000, Willeto and Goodluck 2003, Besaw *et al.* 2004, Annie E. Casey Foundation 2005, and Huenemann 2005.

It is the hope and goal of the NUIFC that this paper will serve as a catalyst for collaboration between urban Indian organizations and those who share their interest in the health and well-being of urban Indians, including tribal governments and other interested agencies. The NUIFC seeks to better understand the opportunities, issues, and barriers facing urban Indian families and children through partnerships that focus on providing access to effective program models and best practices for strengthening Native families through its network of urban Indian organizations nationwide. The paper provides a summary of the historical factors that created a large urban population and the role that urban organizations have played in providing resources and services. Current demographics on urban Indians are presented and the implications of these numbers for the urban Indian population, tribal governments, and future research are explored.

[1] NUIFC wishes to thank the Annie E. Casey Foundation, without whose support this paper would not have been possible, and Monica Tsethlikai, Ph.D. and Peter Morris, who served as the primary authors of the paper.

"We are many. We are diverse. We represent our many cultures. We are a resource. We influence our people. We have roots and heritage. We live in two worlds. We feel unity when we gather. We have dual citizenships. We are the caretakers for many of our aging elders and children. We are the link to those who have left home. We are you."

Katherine Gottlieb (Aleut), President, South Central Foundation, Anchorage, Alaska

Definition: What is an Urban Indian?

With urban Indians representing a growing proportion of the Native population in the United States, the definition of a Native person (urban or non-urban) has grown in significance. Some federal laws require that a person have a certain level of Indian blood to receive federally-funded services.[5] Where blood quantum is not specifically used, Native descent and membership of a federally recognized tribe is a common definition.[6] The federal government's reliance on blood quantum as the defining factor of Indian identity is frequently rejected by urban Indians, particularly due to the fact that loosened tribal affiliation and intermarriage is a direct result of deliberate federal policy (outlined below).[7] According to researcher Susan Lobo, additional criterion used to define urban Indian identity include:

- ***Ancestry:*** *Does a person have Indian relatives and ancestors, and function as a member of an Indian extended family?*
- ***Appearance:*** *Does a person look "Indian"?*
- ***Cultural knowledge:*** *Is the person knowledgeable of the culture of their People and of those pan-Indian values and social expectations shared within the urban Indian community?*
- ***Indian community participation:*** *Does the person "come out" for Indian events and activities in the Indian community and contribute to the community well-being?*[8]

Native people who do not reside on their reservation or territorial land have many different residential and cultural experiences. Adequately describing those diverse experiences can prove difficult. This fact is partially explained by the fact that "'urban' is not a kind of Indian. It is an experience, one that most Indian people today have had."[9]

One way to capture these diverse experiences to is consider the reasons that Indians live in cities and the length of time they have done so, as suggested by the following four categories of urban Indians:

- **Long term residents:** Sometimes residents in cities for several generations. This category includes the Native people who traditionally owned the land on which the urban center is based.
- **Forced residents:** Those forced to relocate to urban centers by government policy or the need to access specialized health or other services.
- **Permanent residents:** Those who have permanently relocated from other areas in search of different or better opportunities.
- **Medium and short term visitors:** Those who may visit for specific purposes but do not intend to stay permanently (as in visits to family, relocation to pursue higher education, etc.)[10]

These categories raise the question of which factor/s most distinguish the urban experience from the non-urban. What combination of length of time, reason for residence, and other factors, is most distinctive?

[5] This amount has varied significantly over time, depending on the purpose of the definition in federal Indian law. See Clinton 2005:171-182
[6] Clinton 2005
[7] Gonzales in Lobo and Peters 2001: 178-80
[8] Lobo in Lobo and Peters 2001:81
[9] Straus and Valentino in Lobo and Peters 2001
[10] Adapted from Morris 2003

Another important question is: what differentiates an "urban" Indian from a Native person who does not reside on the reservation? The U.S. Census Bureau's definition of a "major metropolitan center" (a city of over 100,000 people) excludes many border towns. This creates difficulty in accurately distinguishing the "urban Indian population." Further, the label "urban Indian" is often used in a way that signifies more than the place of residence. Future research should assess the extent to which the term implies disconnectedness from Native culture (expressed either in their Native nation/s of origin or in the city) as well as non-residence on Native lands.

> ***"'urban' is not a kind of Indian. It is an experience, one that most Indian people today have had."***

The considerations above make it clear that there is no one definition of an "urban Indian." For the purposes of coalition participation, the NUIFC embraces the following population: individuals of American Indian and Alaska Native ancestry who may or may not have direct and/or active ties with a particular tribe, but who identify with and are at least somewhat active in the Native community in their urban area. The broad question with regard to this population is: how can urban Indian organizations, tribal governments and other partners work together to serve the needs of Native people residing in cities?

Data about Urban Indians: What we do know

A serious problem faced by urban Indian organizations, tribal governments and their partners, in addressing the needs of Native children and families is the lack of specific and reliable data to understand the resources and needs of urban and reservation-based Native people. While the NUIFC and its partners have embarked on a research project to more effectively meet this need, various existing data sources can provide limited information about the population distribution of and challenges faced by urban Indians.

The US Census gives the following information about urban Indian population, growth, and mobility:

- In 2000, there were 4.3 million people who identified as American Indian and Alaska Native alone or in combination. Sixty-one percent of these Native people did not reside on reservations or other Native lands, up from 38 percent in 1970. In spite of this trend, the number of Native people residing in metropolitan areas is still significantly lower than for other populations (see figure 1, below).

- Urban Indians exhibit higher rates of mobility than non-Natives, both within the same county and moving from one county to a different county. Thirty-seven percent moved to a different house within the same county from 1985 to 1990, while only 30 percent of non-Indian households moved during the same period. In addition, 22 percent of Indian households moved to a different county, while only 12 percent of non Indian households did.[11]

- Among America's ten largest metropolitan centers, those with the highest number of Native people include: New York, Los Angeles, Phoenix and Chicago. Figure 2 compares the Native population in these cities but it is important to note that this data has limitations.[12] In Chicago, for example, the urban Indian population for the greater metropolitan area is reported by the National Indian Child Welfare Association as over 50,000.[13] This illustrates the fact that Native populations in cities are growing and extend beyond the 'city limits' into the broader urban area.

- Figure 3 demonstrates the significant proportion of Native people in a diverse range of major metropolitan areas throughout the country.

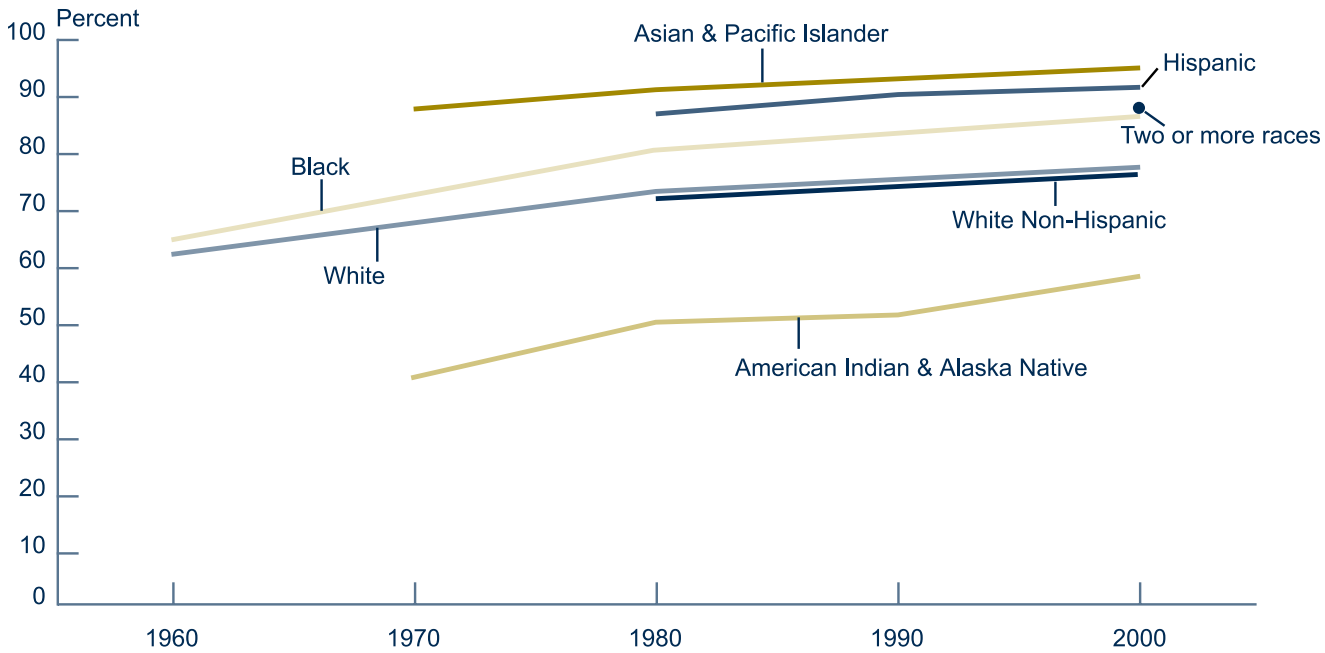
[11] Harvard Project 2007

[12] It is also important to note that Census figures are not universally accepted as reliable for quantifying the Native population. In testimony before the US Senate Committee on Indian Affairs in 1999, Census Bureau Director Prewitt reported that the 1990 Census undercounted American Indians and Alaska Natives by an estimated 12.1 percent. He also reported that there was no reason to expect the 2000 Census numbers would avoid this problem.

[13] National Indian Child Welfare Association 2005, State Fact Sheet: Illinois. For the most current figures related to the populations served by particular urban Indian organizations, see Appendix A.

Percent Metropolitan by Race and Hispanic Origin
1960 to 2000

Figure 1



Note: Data on Hispanic origin have been available on a 100-percent basis since 1980 only, and data on the population of two or more races are available from Cenus 2000 only.

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, decennial census of population, 1960 to 2000.

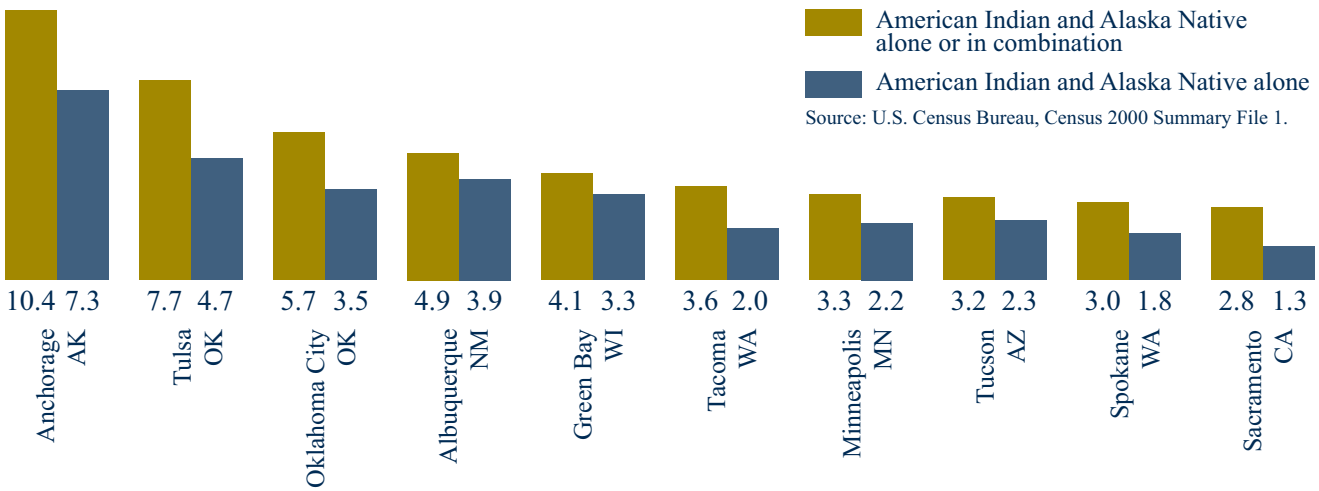
Ten Largest Place in Total Population & in American Indian & Alaska Native Population: 2000

Figure 2

Place	Total Population		American Indians & Alaska Native alone		American Indians & Alaska Native alone or in combination		Percent of total population	
	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	Rank	Number	American Indian & Alaska Native Alone	American Indian & Alaska Native alone or in combination
New York, NY	1	8,006,278	1	41,289	1	87,241	0.5	1.1
Los Angeles, CA	2	3,694,820	2	53,092	2	53,092	0.8	1.4
Chicago, IL	3	2,996,016	9	10,290	8	20,698	0.4	0.7
Houston, TX	4	1,953,631	11	8,568	10	15,743	0.4	0.8
Philadelphia, PA	5	1,517,550	24	4,073	21	10,635	0.8	0.7
Phoenix, AZ	6	1,321,045	3	26,696	3	35,093	2.0	2.7
San Diego, CA	7	1,223,400	13	7,543	9	16,178	0.6	1.3
Dallas, TX	8	1,188,580	18	6,472	18	11,664	0.5	1.0
San Antonio, TX	9	1,144,646	10	9,584	12	15,224	0.8	1.3
Detriot, MI	10	951,270	40	3,140	25	8,907	0.8	0.9
Oklahoma, OK	29	506,132	6	17,743	5	29,001	3.5	5.7
Tuscon, AZ	30	486,699	8	11,008	11	15,658	2.8	3.2
Albuqurque, NM	35	448,607	7	17,444	7	22,047	3.9	4.9
Tulsa, OK	43	393,049	5	18,551	4	30,227	4.7	7.7
Anchorage, AK	65	260,283	4	18,941	6	26,995	7.8	10.4

*Source U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary Flo 1

Figure 3



- Urban Indians exhibit higher rates of mobility than non-Natives, both within the same county and moving from one county to a different county. Thirty-seven percent moved to a different house within the same county from 1985 to 1990, while only 30 percent of non-Indian households moved during the same period. In addition, 22 percent of Indian households moved to a different county, while only 12 percent of non-Indian households did.[14]

Urban Indian health indicators underscore the shared challenges of urban Indians and their non-urban counterparts:

- Compared to the general population, urban Indians have:
  - 38 percent higher rates of accidental deaths
  - 54 percent higher rates of diabetes
  - 126 percent higher rates of liver disease and cirrhosis
  - 178 percent higher rates of alcohol-related deaths[15]
- Urban Indian women have considerably lower rates of prenatal care and higher rates of infant mortality than even their reservation counterparts within the same state.[16]

Indicators of economic stability (or lack thereof) are also particularly stark for urban Indians.

- The poverty rate of urban Indians is 20.3 percent compared to 12.7 percent for the general urban population.[17]
- The unemployment rate of urban Indians is 1.7 times higher than that of non-Indians in urban areas.[18]
- Urban Indians are 1.7 times less likely to have a high school diploma than their non-Indian counterparts.[19]
- Long-term economic stability is also undermined by the fact that:
  - Urban Indians are three times more likely to be homeless than non-Indians.[20]
  - Homeownership rates for urban Indians are less than 46 percent, compared to 62 percent for their non-Indian counterparts.[21]
  - Homes occupied by urban Indians (owned and rented) are significantly more likely to lack basic services like plumbing facilities (1.8 times the rate of non-Indian urban residents), kitchen facilities (twice the non-Indian rate) and telephone service (more than three times that of non-Indians).[22]
- Off-reservation Native children are involved in 5.7 child abuse and neglect cases per 1,000 children per year in comparison to a rate of 4.2 per 1,000 per year for the total U.S. population.[23]

[14] Harvard Project 2007
[15] Urban Indian Health Institute 2004
[16] Grossman, Krieger, Sugarman, & Forquera 1994
[17] US Census 2000
[18] Harvard Project 2007
[19] Harvard Project 2004
[20] Harvard Project 2004
[21] US Census 2000
[22] US Census 2000
[23] Earle 2000

Urban Indians and Urban Indian Organizations

Native people have resided in cities and similar settlements for hundreds of years (some before contact with Europeans), but the process of urbanization for many Native people was accelerated by the federal Indian termination and relocation policy in the 1950s and beyond.[24] This policy led to the termination of many Indian tribes and the relocation of almost 200,000 Native people from reservations to cities and was specifically designed to end the "Indian problem" and reduce the need for the federal government to fund services for reservation-based Native people.[25] The policy provided transportation for Native people who agreed to participate (often in the form of a one-way bus ticket) to a city that was generally a long way from their reservation. The stated goal of the relocation policy was to ensure that Native people who agreed to be relocated would build new lives in the cities. The result of the policy was that many Native people (and their descendants) never returned to their home reservation and their sense of specific tribal identity was significantly diminished.[26]

"the role of urban Indian organizations as a 'tribal embassy' is particularly powerful"

In 1976, the American Indian Policy Review Commission came to a number of conclusions about the status of urban and non-reservation Indians. These conclusions included the observation that Native people came to urban areas in substantial numbers because of a lack of employment and other social and economic problems existing on the reservation. Their transition to city life was often difficult due to a lack of necessary support (i.e. finding housing, accessing job training programs, finding employment, etc.) and a lack of understanding from the communities that they had relocated to.

The earliest Indian centers opened in the late 1940s and early 1950s (Phoenix Indian Center, 1947; Chicago Indian Center, 1953; and The Intertribal Friendship House in Oakland, California, 1954). Urban Indians gained influence during the American Indian Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, and in 1970, after protests organized by urban Indian centers, the federal government provided some funding for services at 58 urban Indian centers to an estimated off-reservation population of almost 150,000 American Indians.[27] Since then, the number of urban Indian organizations continued to grow.

Fundamentally, urban Indian organizations are an important support to Native families and individuals seeking to maintain their values and ties with each other and with their cultures. As they became established, urban Indian centers often provided a wide range of culturally sensitive programs to a diverse clientele. These programs became vital to the wellbeing of Native children and families, as they provide safe and welcoming places, meals, counseling services, educational services, economic development opportunities, hous-ing services, and sometimes simply a hot cup of coffee on a cold day. In discussions with tribal leaders and Native people from throughout the United States, the role of urban Indian organizations as a "tribal embassy" is particularly powerful. Urban Indian organizations offer services and support to Native citizens, many of whom are living outside the borders of their nation.

The fact that urban Indians view urban Indian organizations as cultural homes demonstrates that these individuals and families are seeking cultural connectedness. Long-term or permanent urban Indian residents may be "interested in claiming their Indian identity and learning more about their culture."[28] Short- and medium-term urban Indian residents may connect with urban Indian centers as a way of maintaining their culture in a context where returning home regularly is not an option.

[24] See Lobo and Peters 2001 and Harvard Project 2007
[25] Lobo and Peters 2001
[26] Fixico in Lobo and Peters 2001
[27] American Indian Policy Review Commission 1976
[28] Krouse 1999

The Indian Child Welfare Act programs: Services that benefit urban Indians and tribal governments

Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA) programs provide a critical example of services offered by many urban centers and the opportunities for tribes and urban Indian organizations to work together to better serve Native people in cities. ICWA was passed into law in 1978 in response to the disproportionate removal of Indian children from their biological families for placement with white families or in boarding schools, effectively detaching them from their cultural identities.[29]

Under ICWA, tribal governments have jurisdiction over court proceedings involving any enrolled or enrollable Indian child who is a ward of tribal courts, regardless of where the child lives. The statute also requires all courts to notify tribes of Indian child placement.[30] ICWA is poorly understood by many state courts, and so a number of states have lobbied Congress to issue standard criteria for what constitutes "Indianness," including a quantification of the level of cultural ties necessary to invoke the statute.[31] Currently, despite federal guidelines that defer to tribal enrollment criteria and resist subjective determinations of who is Indian, most states use relatively arbitrary, non-statutory guidelines in determining whether or not ICWA applies; thus, ICWA standards are routinely violated, ignored, and blatantly disregarded.[32] This leaves many tribes in a situation where they may not even know that some of their most vulnerable citizens are being removed from their homes and placed with non-Native families.

A number of urban Indian organizations work with tribal governments to protect urban Indian children by communicating with tribes when potential ICWA cases are being heard in urban courts. For example, the Minneapolis Indian Center has been advocating for Indian families in court since 1978.

Their Tribal Liaison Program assists out-of-state tribes by representing their interests in court cases that involve tribal members in Hennepin County's child protection system and those of other counties in Minnesota. Without the Tribal Liaison Program, many of these urban Indian children would be denied the protections ICWA offers them. Similarly, since 2000, the Denver Indian Family Resource Center has served as a liaison for tribal governments, advocating in court for Indian families from 48 different tribes. In Seattle, the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation works to provide the protection to Native children envisioned by ICWA through the licensing of Native foster homes. Its foster home program is one of the most successful urban licensing programs in the country, with over 40 licensed Native foster homes.

While the removal rates of Native children have decreased since the passage of ICWA, Native children continue to be disproportionately over-represented at all levels of the child welfare system. The 2000 Census indicates that more than 800,000 Native children reside in urban areas, so coordination around ICWA implementation and the provision of appropriate child welfare services to urban Indian families are vital.

[29] Earle 2000
[30] Earle 2000
[31] Rosales 1998
[32] See for example, McKee 2002 and New York Law Journal 2004

Recommendations and Considerations for Future Work

As many working in Indian Country know, the perception of tension between tribes and urban Indian organizations is high. Much of this perception hinges upon the idea that tribes and urban Indian organizations compete for federal resources. This is an unproven assertion and requires further analysis to determine the actual distribution of federal funding and whether tribes and urban Indian organizations are indeed competing for these scarce resources. It is the belief of the NUIFC that if Indian communities (on and off reservation) focus on working together to oppose harmful budget cuts or policy proposals, the whole Native community benefits. By working together, tribal governments and urban organizations have a better chance of increasing the level of support not only from the federal government but from foundations and other supporters of services that are consonant with cultural values and practices.

The discussion above has highlighted another possible explanation for this perceived tension: it is rooted in misunderstanding. Tribes and urban Indian organizations both lack adequate data to understand the needs and desires of urban Indians. To build a foundation for constructive dialogue, we need to know more. To serve some of Native America's most vulnerable members, more data are needed.

The recommendations of the NUIFC are to:

1. Engage in dialogue with tribal governments: It is clear that more could be done to connect urban Indians with reservation and other non-urban Native communities. By engaging their citizens who do not reside on the reservation, tribal leaders are offered the opportunity to:

- **Enhance Native political influence:** This is expressed through increased numerical voting power at the municipality, county, state, and federal levels and a more diverse constituency that can engage a broader range of policymakers.
- **Revitalize and protect culture:** Some research indicates that urban Indians would prefer to move back to the reservation if adequate socioeconomic conditions and opportunities existed. By engaging citizens that do not reside on the reservation, tribal leaders can enhance connections to urban Indians and, as citizens desire, prepare them for a potential return home.
- **Access valuable human capital:** Urban Indians include very accomplished professionals, many of whom would like to contribute to their community and some of whom would like to return to live in the community permanently. Structures that encourage regular visits or permanent relocation to the reservation will significantly increase the human capital available to the tribe.

2. Conduct Research: Engage in a multi-year comprehensive research project aimed at providing a snapshot of urban Indians' socio-economic status, well being, and overall experiences as members of urban Native communities. Primary tasks should include gathering and analyzing existing quantitative data and generating and evaluating new qualitative data that together will speak to the needs, diversity, social organization, and tribal connections of urban Indians (among other issues). In terms of outcomes and products, we are particularly interested in creating a communication platform through which Indian Country as a whole can examine and discuss issues facing urban Indian America.

Some of the research questions that warrant further exploration are listed below.

- Where are urban Indians (which cities and where in those cities)?
- Who are urban Indians (tribal member, single race identifiers, multiple race identifiers, recent immigrants, etc.)?
- When and why do Native migrants to urban areas leave their reservation/tribal homelands?
- How many generations of Indians are now living in cities?
- How do individuals who identify as American Indian/Alaska Native in combination with another race (or races) define their identity within the urban Native community? Are there important issues that surround these individuals' inclusion in the urban Native community?
- How does income "match up" with quality of life for urban Natives?
- What services are offered specifically to urban Native populations, and how do these vary across cities?
- How does the trust responsibility apply outside of reservation borders? What are the implications politically and programmatically?
- What constitutes wellbeing for urban Indian families?
- What factors are driving the changing demographics between 1990 and 2000?
- What are the needs of the various urban Indian populations? Are they different from the needs of reservation-based populations? If so, how?
- What formal mechanisms/organizations exist for meeting these needs? What informal mechanisms/social structures exist for meeting these needs? What other key supports do urban Native families rely on?
- What organizations or government agencies are providing services to these populations?
- How are those organizations and agencies being funded? What is the level of that funding, and how has it been changing in recent years?

The NUIFC looks forward to ongoing discussions to determine the best way to understand and serve urban Indians for the benefit of children, families and Native nations throughout the United States. Please visit the NUIFC website (www.nuifc.org) to learn more about our work and join the conversation.

Appendix A: About the National Urban Indian Family Coalition

Our Mission

The National Urban Indian Family Coalition is a national network of urban Indian organizations that strengthen urban Native families by reinforcing cultural identity and respectfully working in harmony with tribal governments and other institutions to bring positive change, increase access and provide a strong voice.

Our Goals:

- To build a movement that promotes advocacy and mobilizes systems to integrate Urban Indian issues in policy discussions and implementation.
- To build positive and mutually supportive relationships with tribal governments and other institutions for the betterment of our children and families who live in urban communities.
- To create, through dialogue, a shared understanding of the barriers issues and unique opportunities facing urban Indian families.
- To collectively develop and share strategies to address the issues facing AI/AN families in cities.
- To increase awareness and share sustainable service and best practice models for Native American children and families.
- To sustain indigenous values and culture within urban communities.

Guiding principle: Movement Building

The National Urban Indian Family Coalition (NUIFC) advocates for American Indian families living in urban areas by creating partnerships with tribes, as well as other American Indian organizations, and by conducting research to better understand the barriers, issues, and opportunities facing urban American Indian families. Program models, policy critiques, and best practices will be developed through sharing data with participating organizations. We envision building a network of urban American Indian organizations to strengthen urban American Indian families by reinforcing cultural identity, education, and healthy families while respectfully working to harmoniously bridge the gap between tribal governments and other American Indian institutions. Ultimately, we seek to strengthen the voices of urban American Indian peoples and their access to resources.

By including NUIFC members in these critical conversations and including urban Indian issues in national dialogue regarding Native America, we ensure that the concerns of our families are addressed and that urban issues are included in national policy work.

Our History

The NUIFC was created in 2003 in Seattle, Washington with funding provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, Seattle, Washington, convened a forum to discuss issues facing urban Indian families nationwide. The group consisted of communities including, philanthropy, national organizations, the federal government and the Executive Directors of 12 urban Indian organizations. As a result of this convening, the National Urban Indian Family Coalition was born. In 2005 and 2006, the NUIFC added 10 more organizations to the coalition and built partnerships with numerous other organizations and tribes from across the nation.

Since that convening, the NUIFC has made significant strides in achieving our goal of movement building. Namely, we have successfully built upon our first two summits in 2005 and 2006 to produce this paper, move towards creating a national online "toolkit" to develop urban Indian child welfare infrastructure for urban Indian organizations in need of it and continue to build a learning platform for urban Indian America.

NUIFC Steering Committee and participant organizations

The steering committee consists of the following seven members:

Joe Podlasek, Executive Director, American Indian Center of Chicago*

Phyllis Bigpond, Executive Director, Denver Indian Family Resource Center*

Ramon Vasquez, Executive Director, American Indians in Texas, San Antonio*

Patti Hibbeler, Executive Director, Phoenix Indian Center Inc.*

Janeen Comenote, United Indians of All Tribes Foundation, Seattle / Coalition Coordinator, NUIFC

Sheri Reimers, Indian Child Welfare Manager, Minneapolis American Indian Center

Nichole Maher, Executive Director, Native American Youth And Family Center, Portland, OR

**Designates founding members serving as the Executive Committee*

Our participant organizations and corresponding demographics data[1] are as follows:

South Central Foundation†
4501 Diplomacy Drive, Anchorage, AK 99508
Ph: (907) 729-4955 Fx: (907) 729-5009
www.southcentralfoundation.com

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 119,331
Urban Indian Population: 27,613

Affiliation of Arizona Indian Centers
609 N. 2nd Ave., Suite 90, Phoenix, AZ 85003
Ph: (602) 266-6245

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 294,636
Urban Indian Population: 126,725
(Combined Phoenix/Tucson)

Phoenix Indian Center Inc.†
2601 North 3rd St. #100, Phoenix, AZ 85004
Ph: (602) 263-1017
www.phxindcenter.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 294,636
Urban Indian Population: 91,877

Tucson Indian Center
97 East Congress, Suite 101, Tucson, AZ 85702
Ph: (520) 884-7131, ext. 212

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 294,636
Urban Indian Population: 34,848

Southern Calif. Indian Center, Inc.†
10175 Slater Ave., Fountain Valley, CA 92708
Ph: (714) 962-6673
www.indiancenter.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 634,802
Urban Indian Population: 138,696

Native American Health Center†
1411 Fruitvale Ave., Oakland, CA 94601
Ph: (510) 535-4499
www.nativehealth.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 634,802
Urban Indian Population: 57,262

Denver Indian Family Resource Center†
393 S. Harlan, Ste 100, Lakewood, CO 80226
Ph: (303) 871-8035
www.difrc.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 84,802
Urban Indian Population: 45,116

American Indian Center of Chicago
1630 W. Wilson Ave, Chicago, IL 60640
Ph: (773) 275-5871
www.aic-chicago.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 80,129
Urban Indian Population: 52,778

Baltimore American Indian Center
113 South Broadway, Baltimore, MD 21231
Ph: (410) 675-3535
www.baic.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 43,458
Urban Indian Population: 19,891

American Indian OIC
1845 East Franklin, Minneapolis, MN 55404
Ph: (612) 341-3358
www.aioic.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 84,319
Urban Indian Population: 42,017
(Minneapolis/St. Paul Combined MSA)

Juel Fairbanks Chemical Dependency Services
806 North Albert Street, St. Paul, MN 55104
Ph: (651) 644-6204

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 84,319
Urban Indian Population: 42,017
(Minneapolis/St. Paul Combined MSA)

Minneapolis American Indian Center†
1530 E. Franklin Ave., Minneapolis, MN 55404
Ph: (612) 879-1700
www.maicnet.org

Midwest Council on American Indians
Dana Klar, Interim Director
Kathryn M. Buder Center for American Indian Studies,
Washington University, St. Louis, MO
Email: dklar@wustl.edu

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 67,204
Urban Indian Population: 19,373

Albuquerque Indian Center CDC†
105 Texas SE, Albuquerque, NM 87108
Ph: (505) 268-4418
www.abqndn.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 191,504
Urban Indian Population: 48,000

Native American Community Services of Erie and Niagara Falls
1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207
Ph: (716) 874-4460
www.nacswny.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 176,348
Urban Indian Population: 12,017

Indian Health Care Resource Center†
550 South Peoria, Tulsa, OK 74120
Ph: (918) 588-1900
www.ihcrc.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 408,526
Urban Indian Population: 86,118

Oklahoma City Indian Clinic
4913 W. Reno, Oklahoma City, OK, 73127
Ph: (405) 948-4900
www.okcic.com

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 408,526
Urban Indian Population: 71,926

Native American Youth and Family Center
5135 NE Columbia, Portland, OR 97218
Ph: (503) 288-8177
www.nayapdx.org

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 89,616
Urban Indian Population: 55,000

Native American Community Partnership Of Tennessee/Seventh Generation Fund
Ph: (615) 313-7003
Email: nacpot@webtv.net

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 39,188
Urban Indian Population: 39,188

American Indians in Texas†
1426 El Paso St., San Antonio, TX 78207
Ph: (210) 227-4940
www.texasmissionindians.com

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 225,360
Urban Indian Population: 15,244

United Indians of All Tribes Foundation†
P.O. Box 99100 Discovery Park, Seattle, WA 98199
Ph: (206) 285-4425
www.unitedindians.com

Demographic Info
Total Indian population for the state: 164,481
Urban Indian Population: 86,649

† Founding members of NUIFC

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Acknowledgements

Dozens of people contributed their insights and experience to this report, and helped to make it possible. Without their contributions, we could not have embarked on this effort. The publication was originally authored by Monica Tsethlikai who worked tirelessly to make this first report a reality and cheerfully incorporated many rounds of revisions. The final revision was a collaborative effort between the National Congress American Indians' Policy Research Center (NCAI PRC) and the National Urban Indian Family Coalition (NUIFC). We would like to extend a special thank you to Peter Morris (NCAI PRC) for leading the final revision process and to Sarah Hicks (NCAI PRC) and Miriam Jorgenson (Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development) who offered substantial feedback on the content of the report. Lucille Echohawk and Ana Marie Argilagos offered comments throughout the process. A number of other experts reviewed this guide, and we are particularly grateful to Yael Flusberg and Connie Dykstra for their thoughtful suggestions and editing.

The NUIFC would also like to extend a special thanks to Laura Harris at Americans for Indian Opportunity; Michelle Sanidad and Janeen Comenote at the United Tribes of All Indian Foundation; Ana Marie Argilagos at the Annie E. Casey Foundation; Luz Vega Marquez at the Marguerite Casey Foundation; Terry Cross at the National Indian Child Welfare Association, Don Coyhis at White Bison, Inc. and Andrew Lee, former Executive Director of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development for their contributions to this effort.

Finally, we would like to thank the NUIFC member centers and the initiatives that we profile in this report. In particular we would like to recognize the United Indians of All Tribes Foundation in Seattle, WA for providing the critical infrastructure to the NUIFC and to the NAYA Family Center in Portland, OR for provision of fiscal agency support.

The National Urban Indian Family Coalition would like to extend special thanks to following organizations for their contributions to this effort:

The Annie E. Casey Foundation
701 St. Paul St. Baltimore, MD 21202
Ph: (410) 547-6600 Fx: (410) 547-6624
www.aecf.org

Marguerite Casey Foundation
1300 Dexter Avenue N. Suite 115, Seattle, WA
Ph. (206) 691-3134
www.mcf.org

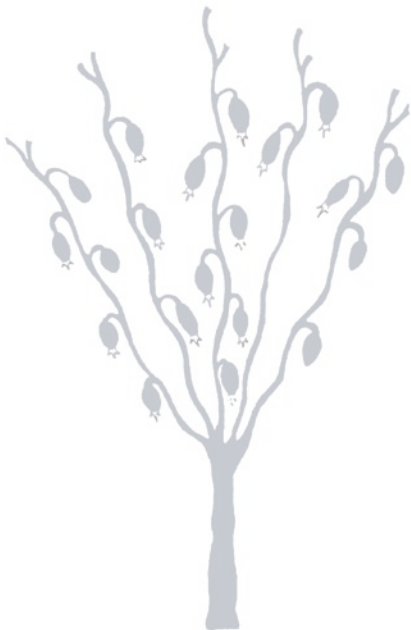
Americans for Indian Opportunity
681 Juniper Hill Rd. Santa Ana Pueblo NM 87004
Ph. (505) 867-0278 Fx: (505) 867-0441
www.aio.org

National Indian Child Welfare Association
5100 SW Macadam Avenue, Suite 300
Portland, OR 97239
Ph: (503) 222.4044
www.nicwa.org

White Bison, Inc.
6145 Lehman Drive, Suite 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80918

The NUIFC would like to acknowledge the participation of the following individuals and institutions in our meetings and other activities:

Administration for Native Americans, Department of Health and Human Services
American Indian Health Services Chicago
American Indian Science and Engineering Society (AISES)
Senator Dennis Bercier, North Dakota
Calgary Urban Aboriginal Initiative, Canada
Casey Family Programs, Indian Child Welfare Program
Cherokee Nation
Chicago Community Youth
First Nations Development Institute
Indian Country Today
Internal Revenue Service
Joseph P. Kalt, John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University
Susan Lobo, Urban Indian Researcher
Harlan McKosato (Sac and Fox), Native America Calling
Menominee Community Center of Chicago
Menominee Indian Tribe of Wisconsin
Motorola Foundation
NAES College
Nathan Cummings Foundation
National Association of Friendship Centres, Canada
National Conference of State Legislatures
National Council of Urban Indian Health
National Native American Families Together
National Science Foundation
Native American Development Corp. (NAIDC)
Native American Journalists Association
Native Americans in Philanthropy
Native Networking Policy Center
Julie Nielsen, Lead Researcher, NUIFC
Northwestern University
Office of Language and Cultural Education, Chicago Public Schools
Office of Native American Programs, Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians, Government of Canada
President Joe Shirley, Navajo Nation
Social Security Administration
The Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development
UNITY



The National Urban Indian Family Coalition is a network of nonprofit urban Indian community centers representing the largest and most comprehensive Urban Indian populations in the country. The organizations involved in the Coalition represent over 600,000 Indians nationwide. These organizations seek to meet many of the needs of urban Indians, including health, employment training, housing, culture and welfare. NUIFC serves as a collective voice for organizations serving Indian families and children in urban communities. Their intent is to be proactive in finding concrete pathways of cooperation for strengthening urban Native children and families by maintaining a strong sense of community borne from the extension of tribal values within the urban setting.

National Urban Indian Family Coalition

Coordinator: Janeen Comenote (Quinault/Hesquiaht/Kwakuitl/Oglala)

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