

# STRATEGIC PLAN

*Created By*

# Denver Indian Family Resource Center

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DIFRC Office  
Lakewood, CO

## *Strategic Plan Executive Summary*

*Facilitated and documented for First Nations Development Inc. by  
Indigenous Collaboration, Inc.*



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**SEVEN STARS COLLABORATIVE 2015**





## **Current Environment Scan**

### ***DIFRC Client Data Show Serious Challenges to Family Stability***

- *74% at or below poverty level*
- *3.9 average family size*
- *20% of intensive case management clients experience homelessness*
- *89% of adults report traumatic experience*
- *80% of adult females experienced domestic violence with most recent partner*
- *100% of adults were victims of crime within the last 10 years*
- *97% of families have been impacted by substance abuse*

### ***Environmental Scan: Positive Trends in Indian Child Welfare Practice***

- *2015 ICWA BIA guidelines have clarified legal requirements for states*
- *Public agencies are more aware of ICWA; referrals of parents with very young children allow more opportunities for early intervention*
- *Trauma-informed, evidence-based care models are culturally-relevant and highly effective with American Indian clients*
- *DIFRC reunification rates for Indian families involved in child welfare system exceed state and national averages*
- *Increased availability of collaborative grant opportunities*

### ***Environmental Scan: Negative Trends that Impact Indian Child Welfare Practice***

- *Supreme Court recent decisions have failed to clearly uphold ICWA & tribal sovereignty*
- *Colorado state and county child welfare professionals are not consistently assessing for Native ancestry and applying ICWA standards*
- *Lack of affordable housing, increased substance abuse, and limited access to transportation continue to challenge families*

- *Funding challenges exist for DIFRC*
  - *DIFRC large federal grants are coming to a close; funding streams are inadequate*
  - *There appears to be increasing competition among community agencies for funding and service areas*
  - *Reimbursement-based funding is limited; counties not yet fully identifying and referring eligible families to fulfill fee-for-service contracts*
  - *Most current DIFRC board members have limited experience in fundraising*

### ***Environmental Scan: Advantages that Support DIFRC's Success***

- *Colorado has a state ICWA Law that expands and strengthens federal requirements*
- *DIFRC has strong local, tribal and national reputation for unique expertise in Indian Child Welfare services and training*
- *DIFRC Executive Director and leadership team have significant experience with ICWA*
- *DIFRC has an all-Native board with strong and relevant legal, government, and practice expertise*
- *Staff and board have integrity, diverse strengths, and are passionate about agency mission that empowers families*
- *Staff have a strong, caring team spirit that is rooted in community and traditional cultural ways of being*
- *DIFRC service is inclusive to all self-identified Native clients regardless of enrollment status*
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- *DIFRC has an increasing data-based evidence of success*

### ***Environmental Scan: Recent Accomplishments (Past 24 Months)***

- *DIFRC moved to a more welcoming environment in 2014; new location is accessible to public transportation*
- *DIFRC has found champions among key public decision-makers*
- *DIFRC Executive Director was selected to serve as ICWA expert on the Colorado State Human Services Board*
- *DIFRC reorganization clarified roles, streamlined internal procedures, and improved climate and morale*

- *All clinical staff has up-to-date training in current prevention and treatment models*
- *Intern program has been revitalized and increased organizational capacity*
- *Strong new funder and community relationships, county contracts, and tribal partnerships have increased revenue, training requests, and services referrals*
- *The Seven Stars Collaborative monthly meetings grew to include 42 community partners*
- *Clients self-referrals have increased, programs are at capacity and feedback is positive; in 2015, DIFRC served more than 400 people and 67 Native families*
- *2015 Colorado Gives Day donations totaled \$10,400 – surpassing previous years*
- *DIFRC has new marketing tools that show organizational pride*
- *Volunteer service and other in-kind donations have increased*
- *More qualified Native community members have expressed interest in Board service*
- *Child Welfare Executive Leadership Council board membership*