

## Partnership Always

Partnerships with families, communities and Tribes are essential in the journey to improved outcomes for children and families. We must partner in real time – all the time – at both practice and system levels to keep children safe and meet the needs of families. Partnerships with families, communities and Tribes help us identify and address system barriers and create comprehensive culturally responsive supports and services for the children and families being served. Partnerships with families, communities and Tribes at the practice level ensure accountability and support for implementing engagement and teaming practices that are sensitive to the family’s culture and to the current and historical trauma they may have experienced. The active ingredients for true partnerships with families, communities and Tribes are Culture and Humility.

### Culture

Individuals thrive in the context of their home, culture and community. Each person’s evolving sense of identity and drive toward well-being is connected to the values, traditions and experiences of the “people” they are a part of or identify with – their family, communities and Tribes. Though culture is reflected in everyday relationships, behaviors and ways of being in the world, culture is deeply rooted in the experiences of each family, community and Tribe over time and across generations. It is a source of spiritual strength and resiliency, and offers a wellspring of creative solutions in problem-solving. By acknowledging the unique and dynamic nature of culture for each individual, family, community and Tribe, we begin to understand that we cannot know another’s culture or be competent in it. We are then more open to listening and learning from others about their culture and incorporating those cultural strengths and contributions in our work.

### Humility

Humility is an active practice in which we reflect on and address our own biases and assumptions, so that we can approach families, communities and Tribes with openness. Humility includes recognizing that as professionals and systems we do not have all the answers and cannot do it ourselves. As we become sensitive to how our institutions and systems have contributed to trauma and distrust of public services and as we acknowledge the impact of these experiences in the lives of families, we open the door to listening and learning from families, communities and Tribes about their perceptions, experiences, strengths, resources and needs. By practicing humility we begin to recognize and appreciate the incredible strengths, resiliency and protective factors inherent in cultural connections and supports, and we become truly able to partner with families, communities and Tribes at both practice and system levels to improve outcomes for children and families.

The Child and Family Practice Model was developed as part of a 5-year federally funded project to reduce long-term foster care. To learn more, visit [www.reducefostercarenow.org](http://www.reducefostercarenow.org) or contact [CFPMinfo@cfpic.org](mailto:CFPMinfo@cfpic.org). The contents of this document are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the Children's Bureau, which funded the CAPP/CFPM Project under Cooperative Agreement 90CT0153.