



Early Intervention Tribal Needs Assessment

Online Surveys

- 211 surveys emailed
- 144 surveys returned

Paper Surveys

- 100 surveys given out
- 32 surveys returned including some completed in a group setting

13 Events Attended (including):

- Outreach events in Farmington, Shiprock, Santa Clara, Acoma, Isleta, Zia, and Jemez
- Early Childhood Tribal Advisory Coalition
- American Indian Chamber of Commerce
- Government to Government and Indian Education Meeting

Barriers to Early Intervention Provision:

1. Lack of funding for early intervention programming including for staffing and infrastructure
2. Challenges recruiting and retraining staff who are qualified to provide the services. Some tribes use staff available even though they might not be qualified. Many say even Target or Walmart pay higher wages and they lose employees to retail stores.
3. Lack of internet access
4. Tribal Leadership changes every January; many tribal early childhood offices feel they have to start all over requesting for funds to provide early intervention services.
5. Lack of technical assistance from the State Early Intervention programs.
6. Many addressed concerns on the feedback and reports that need to be communicated back with the Tribes.

Recommendations:

- Tribal Leaders need to be educated on the contents of early intervention, FIT, the process of EI, and how to advocate.
- Language and culture should be part of early intervention.
- Extend the age to 5 years old as many Native American communities lack the FIT services. The pandemic put their child behind 2+ years.

The purpose of the Needs Assessment:

Assess the needs for early intervention services in tribal communities.

Main Questions to be Answered:

1. How have FIT services been experienced by Indigenous families who were recently enrolled?
2. What would Tribal leaders need to begin to implement their own Early Intervention services?

Methodology:

Information was gathered via surveys, conversations, Q&A sessions with parents, telephone interviews, and attending events around the state.

Specific Feedback from Parents:

Parents who utilized the FIT program said:

- Experience was good, had a lot of support and resources.
- Families are thankful for understanding of what needs to be done to help their child.
- FIT services helped to support their child's development

Summary:

In summary, the FIT Program and services are highly recommended and needed in the Tribal Nations in New Mexico. Many individuals expressed that early intervention programs that have Native American personnel understand their culture, language, and home environment/experience. Tribes that have a FIT program say they need technical assistance, periodic trainings, and increased funding.

Contact:

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Early Intervention (EI) Family Infant Toddler (FIT)

Feedback was received from at least one community member from all 23 Tribes, Pueblos, and Nations

Visit nmeccd.org to learn about FIT.