

## **2004 TRIBAL LEADER'S SUMMIT ON CHILD PROTECTION**

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### **THE ROLE OF TRIBAL LEADERS IN PROTECTING TRIBAL CHILDREN**

Tribal Leaders can protect children by adopting a zero tolerance policy towards violence in the home, community and schools.

Tribal Leaders can protect children by taking an active role in educating themselves and other tribal leaders about the problems of child abuse and its impact on tribal communities.

Tribal Leaders can make child protection a number one priority by putting this issue at the top of the tribe's political agenda.

Tribal Leaders can support the dedicated individuals that serve on the frontlines of combating child abuse and advocate for full funding of child welfare programs.

Tribal Leaders can confront those institutions and systems that perpetuate neglect, abuse and racial and cultural against our families and children.

Tribal Leaders can stay informed and take positions on federal and state legislation that impact tribal children and families.

Tribal Leaders can protect children by legislating effective, responsible and culturally appropriate laws including customary and traditional laws and enactment of a tribal child's bill of rights and laws to address domestic violence, clarify membership and codify foster care licensing standards.

Tribal Leaders can support planning, development and operation of special courts to protect children and provide therapeutic justice and healing to families and youth.

Tribal Leaders themselves can model healthy parenting and family practices.

Tribal Leaders can protect children by being involved in the local school to ensure the educational rights of tribal children are protected and respected.

Tribal Leaders can ensure that our most vulnerable children are taken care of- those children with disabilities, those with special need, those in need of age appropriate mental health services and those in need of substance abuse treatment.

Tribal Leaders can work closely with tribal elders, healers and culture bearers to preserve and encourage traditional parenting and family practices to ensure that we raise culturally sound, strong and healthy children.

Tribal Leaders can volunteer to be foster parents, child advocates and mentors for troubled parents and youth.

Tribal Leaders can maximize government-to-government relationships with the state and federal government by relentlessly bringing the issues of ICWA compliance and child protection to the tribal, state and federal meeting tables.