Target population were Winnebago children and youth in foster care who: 1) could not reunify with their biological parents and had a non-permanency reunification plan, and 2) did not have a permanency placement identified or did have an identified placement.

**Research Question**
Will Winnebago tribal children and youth, ages 5-18 years, who cannot reunify with their biological parents, have a non-permanency reunification plan, and have yet to identify a permanency placement or a permanency placement has been identified, experience increased placement stability, improved child and family wellbeing, improved behavioral and health, decreased time to finalization/time in care, and increased permanency outcomes if they are provided Family Group Decision Making?

**Findings**
Given that the sample size includes only seven families, a quantitative analysis was not possible. But here is what the core staff had to say about working with the families who did participate:

**Increased Knowledge of Permanency Options**
I feel our families understand more and better comprehend what the courts are asking for or what the options are.

**Increased Protective Factors**
The project increased protective factors by involving the larger extended family and support network in the child welfare case.

**Increased Knowledge of Winnebago Specific Pathways**
I think this project shed light on our community’s trauma and conflicted relationships with ‘systems.’ We have a long way to go to really engage and empower our families. It is going to take time and patience to get there.

**Increased Connectedness**
The children who have had conferences have felt cared about and included. For some of them, it was the first time they felt listened to.

**Lessons Learned**
A significant accomplishment stemming from this project was the changes to strengthen and clarify the Tribal Code. This change in Tribal Code strengthened customary adoption and guardianship as permanency plan options for Winnebago families in Nebraska. Engaging in a “By the Tribe, for the Tribe” process by actively including Tribe Elders and community members in the project is highly recommended.
This research summary was designed by staff at the Texas Institute for Child & Family Wellbeing at The University of Texas at Austin, Steve Hicks School of Social Work, in conjunction with the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences at Case Western Reserve University.

**Evaluation questions?** Please contact Nancy Rolock at nancy.rolock@case.edu or Rowena Fong at rfong@austin.utexas.edu.

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