



Adult Services Program: Poarch Band of Creek Indians

Listen to tribal members about what the tribe really needs, not what has always been comfortable.

The Adult Services Program promotes the health and social and emotional well-being of Poarch Band of Creek Indians tribal members, their families and members of other federally recognized tribes residing within the tribe’s designated service area.

Program Description

- The tribe’s Family Services Department houses the Adult Services Program.
- The program provides oversight, crisis intervention, and case management for all abuse or neglect issues involving adults 55 and older.
- The program provides:
 - Adult supportive funds
 - Crisis funding
 - Housing loans
 - Grants
 - A nutrition site with free lunches
 - Onsite health department
 - Transportation for medical appointments
 - In-home services such as housekeeping and grocery shopping
- The program investigates reports of abuse immediately by conducting interviews and then making referrals to appropriate services if needed.
- If abuse involves a tribal member on tribal lands, the program investigates and provides crisis and follow-up services.
- Should the abuse occur outside of tribal lands, the program contacts either the local or state department of human resources to accompany program staff on a home visit.
- The Adult Services Program coordinator manages the adult service caseload, which totals about 110 cases monthly.
- The program identified the most common types of abuse as:
 - Financial exploitation
 - Physical exploitation
 - Emotional neglect

Operated by: Poarch Band of Creek Indians

Location: Atmore, AL

Area served: Tribal members and their families who reside in the surrounding 5-county service area

Contact information:
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Website:
http://www.poarchcreekindians.org/westminster/family_services.html



Successful Strategies

- The tribe allows program staff to easily participate in professional development training.
- To promote public awareness on the topic of elder abuse, the program provides information to the tribal news booklet.
- The first response to any calls regarding abuse come from the tribal police department, who then work with the program on next steps.
- The Family Services Department received the 2012 Elder Abuse Prevention Interventions Grant through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration on Community Living to help fund the program's work.

Collaboration

- The program collaborates with the state on cases that occur outside of tribal lands. In these cases, the program advocates and provides financial support, if needed.
- To better monitor possible abuse, the program works closely with the Senior Activities for Independent Living Center, which delivers meals and transports seniors to the center for various services.

Cultural Considerations

- Because the tribe's elderly population resists sharing personal information, the Cultural Department created a "Night with the Elder" event. This event uses verbal recordings from the past as a forum for discussing abuse without revealing current abuse.

Funding

The tribal government funds the Family Services Department. The Family Services Department also received the federal 2012 Elder Abuse Prevention Interventions Grant, which provides funding specifically for addressing elder abuse.

Future Considerations

- The Adult Services Program would like to see an updated tribal code that allows for prosecution of those who abuse elders, placement into new settings for vulnerable adults, and the expansion of one of the community's transitional shelters to include elders and vulnerable adults.
- The Family Services Department wants to create more engaging educational materials on elder abuse to share within and beyond the community.
- To increase the monitoring of potentially abusive situations for elders, the Family Services Department needs more staffing for in-home services.

Lessons Learned

The department advises other programs to ensure a sufficient tribal code that supports elder abuse prevention is in place. Programs should also seek funding sources that provide safe and adequate support services and hire and train caring, culturally sensitive staff.