

# **CHILD AND FAMILY WELFARE PROGRAM**

**The Child and Family Welfare Program operates under the Bureau of Indian Affairs 638 Contract which provides funding to operate a child welfare program and some emergency assistance for food, shelter, cleaning supplies, etc.**

**The child welfare component is designed to assist children who are members of or are eligible for membership in a federally-recognized tribe during a family crisis created by abuse and/or neglectful issues. The Family Services Department has the responsibility to investigate abuse and neglect of children who are on the Poarch Creek Indian reservation. If it is necessary to provide them with a safe and secure placement, social services staff will arrange a boarding arrangement with extended family or in a licensed tribal foster home. The Department also recruits, trains and licenses tribal foster homes.**

**Under the BIA contract, funds are provided to assist the Tribe in responding to the law under the Indian Child Welfare Act. It gives authority to the Tribe to petition for jurisdiction with State Courts in child welfare cases involving Tribal Member children or children eligible for tribal membership.**

**When requested, the Tribe also intervenes in cases within our service area on behalf of the tribal children from other federally recognized tribes. Verification of tribal enrollment for social services agencies all over the country is also a function of the Child and Family Welfare Program.**

**Other services provided are for limited jurisdiction child enforcement petitions in Tribal Court to establish paternity, child support payments or modification of previous child support orders. Court ordered custody home studies are also provided by social services staff.**

**For more information please contact Synethia Thomas, Child and Family Welfare Coordinator  
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