

Call number of interview: 85-123

Series Title: Chinook Radio Programs

Episode Title: Karl Brimmer and Mike Erwin are interviewed by Paula Schuler about their roles in implementing the Indian Child Welfare Act and the Criminal Justice Grant awarded to the Fairbanks Native Association to set up and run a youth intervention services program in Fairbanks, Alaska.

Date of Interview: 1979?

Name of person writing summary: Michelle Sopoliga

Date of summary creation: 06/05/2014

Notes: None

Summary:

Paula Schuler of Chinook Radio interviewed Karl Brimmer of the Fairbanks Native Association (FNA) and Mike Erwin of the Tanana Chief's Conference (TCC) about their roles in the implementation of the Indian Child Welfare Act passed by the United States Congress in November, 1978. The Indian Child Welfare Act was scheduled to go into effect on May, 8, 1979. Mike and Carl testified at the hearings held in Juneau to give input on what the money could do for their villages. They had no time to go back to the villages for specific input and suggestions, so they ended up being the sole representatives of what the villages wanted to see happen with the regulations and money for potential programs. Mike talks about how he spent five days reading over the laws of the Indian Child Welfare Act multiple times to bring up any concerns, questions and suggestions at the hearings before implementation of the law took place. He and Carl comment on how, even though they read over the law many times, suggestions and gaps that they had not caught came up with each new person involved in the implementation process.

One of the main concerns that both Carl and Mike had about the laws within the Indian Child Welfare Act was the foster home licensing process that was currently in place. They believed that the process for getting suitable foster homes in the villages was too time consuming and they wanted to see villages having the right to develop their own set of standards for the foster home licensing procedures. The current process of becoming a licensed foster home include time-consuming requirements of putting together the paperwork showing that all members of the household have been TB tested and cleared, they must be interviewed, provide three letters of reference, include medical records, the household must have a fire extinguisher, a rear and front entrance, smoke detectors in every room, water testing clearance, and have enough bedrooms for each foster child of a different sex to have their own room.

The FNA was awarded a Criminal Justice Grant of approximately \$108,000 to set up and run a youth intervention services program. The money was earmarked for the Fairbanks area to basically set up a program to help juveniles who were otherwise put into the adult correctional facilities due to the lack of resources to help them. The money was used to set up a crisis intervention counseling system including assistance to set up foster care if necessary. This is mainly for juveniles who are picked up by troopers during the night hours that have run away from home or are picked up for underage drinking. If abuse is not suspected, juveniles are taken back to their homes. Abuse cases are treated through counseling and set up with an emergency foster home until a more stable foster home can be established.