EB: Well, its recording. I'll set it right there. So, kind of just, jump right in here but. [getting organized with materials and questions]

H: I've never had that type of creamer before.

EB: I'm not gonna pass these out just so that people don't get distracted because we won't even necessarily ask all these questions, some of them are just ideas. Um, and I probably still will take notes while people are talking.

N: Do you want notepads?

EB: I have this big thing, and I was thinking I could use it, but um, I do have a notepad too. And I might just not, not do that.

H: You know, its so weird, but for some reason I thought they were blueprints. I don't know where my brain is today, I'm so…

EB: I just wanted to bring them you know like just in case it might be easier, but since it's a smaller group.

N: Yeah, we're crammed into the basement here, [laughing] my office is the size of a broom closet. That's why I said we'd have to meet down here if we were gonna--

H: Oh…aw… [sympathetically]

N: I'm not in there very often, so I guess I really don't need a big, space.

H: Mine is pretty cramped, but its my own fault. I swear to god, I'm trying to fill every blank space on my wall with the kids. Like I have pictures and posters and art from all the kids. And, yeah, its just, I was thinking I need to reorganize. Anyways.

EB: So yeah, so the first question is kind of what it seemed like we were starting to talk about before we got into the consent. But its, um, we wanted to start out if um, you all, whoever wants to, you know, share something about some of the experiences you've had, just basically some of

24 the experiences you've had with the state child welfare involvement, either with your work or in
25 your community.
26 EA: Stories.
27 EB: Yeah, stories that you have, basically. Kind of start with those.
28 H: So both like personal and work?
29 EB: Yeah, it could be either. Whatever, you know, whatever comes to mind, and you feel like,
30 sharing.
31 M: Want me to go first?
32 EB: Go ahead. [laughing]
33 M: Well my experience with the state was really good. I mean, I had an excellent caseworker.
34 Um, anytime, I needed question answered, she always would call me, or I'd ask Nicole and she'd
35 find out. You know, so I really didn't have a bad experience.
36 EB: Mmhmm.
37 M: As far as that goes.
38 EA: That's when you were a foster parent?
39 M: Yeah, I was. Yeah, for, how long was it? Almost two years?
40 N: Yeah.
41 M: So I mean, they were really good, you know.
42 EB: So what made it good -- what made it a good experience for you? What was it about…
43 M: The caseworker, for one. And Nicole, you know working with Nicole. You know, I could
44 always, you know, say something to her, and she could reassure me different things, you know.
45 And if she didn't have an answer for me, you know, I could always call the caseworker, and she
46 would explain to me why, stuff's doing, you know, getting done. You know, so, it was good.

N: Since I've been in this job back when Michelle became a foster parent, I hadn't been here very long. And it was kind of like a learning experience both Michelle and I. She would bring in something that she got in the mail and be like, "Do you know what this means?" And I would say, "You know, give it to me, I don't, but I'll find out" and I would call, and then they would let me know, and then I would explain it to her. And the ICWA attorney that I have could walk us through things also, so… And genuinely, I mean, the Houlton DHS office has been one of the better ones that I've worked with.

EB: Mmhmm

N: As far as trying to understand what it is they need to do and follow through on it. They try fairly, hard I think. They're open to… learning. It's been my experience anyway that's how its gone. And I think Caribou you know a lot of the workers I've worked with in Caribou they try really hard too, but, I think its because they're near two big tribes, I know Vicky Delong has been, doesn't hesitate to pick up the phone and talk to me. If I call her with a concern or just to call me sometimes and check in. So I think that kind of that kind of, ah, process is working.

EB: Mmhmm. So you feel like they're responsive, open.

N: Moreso. Honestly, though, and I don't know if Heather can speak to this, but… Since we've had a lot of budget cuts, and the caseworkers have been cut, and positions have been cut, it is harder now to get in touch with them because there's fewer of them and they're gone… a lot. And, when, and they're honest with me about it you know, they'll tell me, "Hey I left at 5:00 this morning and I got home at 8:00 tonight, I'm seeing kids from Houlton down to Lewiston." So I mean they're *honest* about why they're having a harder time contacting us. Is it fair? No, but at the same time, I understand that they're just humans and they' can't. But I have noticed that since these budget cuts and I don't know if you've noticed it [talking to H] but they've, the

decrease in caseworkers, its harder now to collaborate because they're just carrying a lot more than they were.

H: Um, I guess I could even give an example of that one of my cases I feel, and, [sigh] I know DHS is, is there for the kids and for their well-being, what I have a hard time with is them owning up to responsibility when things don't work

N: Right

H: They have a tendency to put it everywheres else but in their own door. And, I had a case where we, umm, you know a young teen that, very, diagnosis off the chart, I mean just finally found a stable environment, it was supposed to be temporary, DHS, like, we had no tribal homes, they didn't even look for a permanent place for this child because they felt he was in a good place, even though they said, we're not… considering, you know, permanency guardianship, but we need a place for this kid, and they kept him for so *long*, and then, finally they had enough, they couldn't do it anymore, so we're all just struggling, trying to find a place, and this kid went, in and out of foster care, finally got it so the child was back in, you know, one of the parents' homes, still under custody of DHS though, and the child *knew* this, so this parent *really* didn't have a say, because the child was so used to getting moved, "you can't tell me what to do, you know, this is, you know, yeah, you're my parent, but just, you're like another foster parent to me so why do I need to listen?" type thing, lost control, the resources were not put in, *the caseworker* was changed from, through, we went through the… original one had to step down because the, you know the

N: Mmhmm

H: You know the [task?] thing, then they had new one come in, that originally in Madawaska for a Presque Isle case, and then, another person came in and this person had been out of work for a

93 little while, so then this new person comes into case and by then Section 28 was finally coming
94 in and it just… blew up. We had to remove the child, the parent had had too much. Of course it,
95 at that time, "oh, the parent, you know, they did this, they did that" and I was like wait a minute
96 this parent was asking for help for… ever since that child stepped in the door. And… nobody
97 brought in those services, we were doing most of the active efforts almost every case we have
98 it's Indian Child Welfare doing the active efforts when its supposed to be the state to keep
99 those…
100 N: Or at least collaborate
101 H: Well, yeah, and collaboration would be nice and I understand that they don't completely
102 understand what active efforts are and I don't… and we get that crossed because their active
103 efforts are different from ours
104 N: Right
105 H: I just … I… I… I don't know… I… I do… work pretty good with some of them but I have a
106 hard time with the system as a whole and how it actually how… positive the outcome is for
107 N: Mmhmm
108 H: Families and them wanting to rush these kids into permanency guardianship. Rush to TPR,
109 rush to get them in--
110 N: Rush everything
111 H: Yeah, as Native people, we don't work like that. And when we have people that have drug
112 problems and, they're trying to rehabilitate and they relapse, and I mean that it's gotten to a point
113 where, like, come on, we can't just, they're gonna relapse, they need a safety plan, they need to
114 put these things in place so these people can have their kids, 'cause they're not gonna do any
115 better anywheres else. You know? Sorry, I am coming right… I been in court nonstop so I don't

116 know if I sound a little… [laughing] But it's, it's been very, umm, very tough this past, well you
117 said months, but I felt its just this past year its increased a lot, and I just had a major one, you
118 guys probably saw it, actually, on the news, so, I have a pretty big one right now that's just
119 opened up
120 EA: I wonder, though, if there's, the caseworkers are more overworked, why they wouldn't be
121 reaching out to collaborate *more*?
122 N: Exactly
123 EA: Because it helps… them. It helps their work.
124 N: And they're not always open to it neither, Esther.
125 EA: If you want because I mean, you can access services that they *can't*. It seems like… it
126 would be in their best interest to reach out more *now* that they don't have the time to do it.
127 N: It almost seems to, like they're not, what I feel, is that they're not even communicating within
128 one department and I can give an example of that. I had a, I have a case out of Portland DHS,
129 and the DHS caseworker, the intake worker, the one that just did the assessment process, was, he
130 was on board with doing everything that he needed to do, but once they decided to open the case,
131 and take the kids into DHS custody, they transferred it to a caseworker who *was rude on the*
132 *phone*, I mean outright rude to me, fought me tooth and nail about keeping me up to speed about
133 what was going on so I could help, you know, with the case, um, she didn't, they didn't do any
134 of the things they were supposed to do, and they never, they never, ah, notified the tribe, so when
135 they went to court one day, the judge is like, "where's the ICWA department?"
136 H: Oh no
137 N: And, we weren't there. And so that *whole, entire team* was removed off this kid's case: her
138 supervisor, the caseworker herself. The attorney general called me and called the ICWA

attorney apologizing profusely and I looked back through my documentation I had tried *numerous times* to educate that particular person about ICWA, I sent her all kinds of information, I gave her Greg's phone number to call, as a resource and ask questions. I did all that so then, this kid gets a new caseworker assigned, who is no better, and it's like… but at the same time, I've got another case out of the Portland office and that caseworker's completely different. That one's like, "I don't know what I'm supposed to be doing but can you help me?" "Yeah, sure, here's what we need to do…" and I told her to call Martha Proulx if she needed help getting answers because she said her supervisor was out. Ten minutes later she had faxed me all the, the information that she had, and I'm thinking, "Do you guys not talk in that office?" Because I've got one that's doing everything she can, to be in compliance with ICWA, and I've had two other teams in the same department that have been removed from the case for not being ICWA compliant. *All in one office*. It's like how can they not hear about this amongst themselves?

H: What about outside agencies, do you find that they, how do they work, like CHCS. Do you have to work with CHCS?

N: Yep.

H: How does that, work for you?

N: That works very well, they call me, I go to the team meetings, usually weekly there.

H: Right.

N: Umm, I haven't had any problems with them at all.

H: Hmm. [pause, then laughing]

N: Have you?

H: Well, I've, I've had a hard time with them giving me feedback from, like visits, and stuff like that where I, I usually have to go. They, they go to… the, if they have a problem with a parent,

162 they go to the worker, and then the worker calls me, and then they expect me to talk to the client.
163 And I'm like, "Has anybody talked to the client about this problem? No?" [laughing] "I'm like
164 well, can somebody talk to her?" Because by the time it gets to me and I have to talk to the
165 client, nobody's even talked to her yet, so I'm giving her information that should have been, you
166 know that's, so I have a little bit of a hard time with CHCS.
167 N: Yeah, I go every, we do weekly team meetings there and address everything on the spot.
168 H: See that's harder for me to get up here on a weekly basis, that probably would help if I was
169 able to.
170 N: Even if you called in.
171 H: Yes, if I was in. [laughing]
172 N: I know, I know.
173 H: And some of, you're right though, some workers, they, I mean as soon as they have an open
174 assessment, they call you right away, umm…
175 N: Others, they're in DHS custody before they think to tell you about it.
176 H: Well, we've, been lucky so far, but we, cause I'm surprised that they would, I mean, that
177 whole thing could get thrown out of court because they didn't notify the tribe. And that's
178 actually hurting the case so I mean how are they helping the?
179 N: It's hurting the, it's hurting the kids
180 H: Yeah, yep. Wow, we've at least gotten that and, they make sure to notify us in hand, the, our
181 petitions and stuff like that.
182 EB: Gail, I just wanted to give you a chance to jump in if you have anything?
183 H: [laughing] I know, Nicole and I are having way too much fun here, we don't get to talk to
184 anybody about this so.

N: No.

G: With me, um, my mother was a foster mother and she brought up, a lot of state children, and of course at that time, those times, our tribe says they were pulling all the kids and putting them out in the state and, you know, and ah, adopting them out and, um, you know, I, I did see that at times, but moreso after I come to work for the tribe, and DHS would come on in here and want to take some kids off the land and Brenda [Commander, the chief?] was…

N: [laughs]

G: arguing with them, um, but even working with the, state workers, I haven't had no problems with them. I mean, they been, good, going to the homes, you know, working with ya. I don't, I haven't had any problems with them.

H: And, are you, are you a foster parent now, or?

G: No, no.

H: Oh.

EA: So, when, I mean when, in experiences with caseworkers working with families here. Do you have a sense of what they believe about Indian people, I mean, from, like how they treat them? How do they relate to Indian families?

G: The caseworkers you mean?

EA: Yeah, the caseworkers. The state workers. Cause ICWA's a federal law, right, so there's, like you said, there's different things that they have to do. Um, how does that, when they're interacting with Indian families, do you see… what do you perceive their beliefs about Indians to be or about Wabanaki people or about ICWA cases, or?

G: I don't know if there's so much what they think, ah/

H: It differs.

G: Our people… are scared of them. I mean, they don't want 'em to come in their home, and, take their children, or harass or whatever, however they look at it, ah, you know, they'll call her on the phone just as quick as, [laughing] you know

H: While they're standing in the yard

N: Right, yeah, yeah.

G: "I've got the state in my yard, can you come?" But as far as the state workers themselves, I think some of them in the past have been scared but I think with trainings and everything that the state workers have had, regarding ICWA, its not as bad as it used to be.

H: You think its improving?

G: Yeah I think its improving somewhat.

H: I could agree with that cause its been almost three years now, um, next month, it'll be three years that I've been in this position, and ah, I remember talking about the one I had in Madawaska that just, I'm in a meeting and she's like "why are you here? How are you going to make anything any different?" I mean, just right, blunt, out, mean and rude and, now, she will call me and we will actually drive together to the home, and I mean, she's so much more sympathetic, I… I just, such a turnaround, in this person, and, now, like in my harder cases, I'm actually hoping to get her because I know she's not gonna, take any, basically you know, BS from the clients and she's gonna, even though you know she can only do so much, that's the hard part too with DHS, you know these certain cases and there's stuff going on and they, they have to walk away if they tell you to. But anyways, I just, complete turnaround with this one worker that um, I was sure, had to be, like prejudiced or something to be treating a person this way to now, driving with her, talking with her, learning about her family. I find that traveling with the

workers to go to these home visits, to go to the first home assessments has made a big difference um, some of them are really great to work with, and ah,

G: I think they appreciate that too.

H: They do, cause it gives them, that also you're able to talk to them about ICWA, about our people, um, they, they learn a little bit, because and maybe a big part of that gap is ignorance, you know not knowing um, what, some of the attorneys, I think that it matters on different levels that workers are here, you've got the attorneys, the guardian ad litums, and they're all, they all have a different perception because when I've…

G: And the judges

H: And the judges, because ah Heidi Silver at first, she was kind of like very smug and well, "what are your active efforts" type thing, "what do you call active efforts, where's the book, where's the law, where does it say this" [in a snappy, clipped voice] and I'm like, oh my goodness oh boy [laughing] but now and even, even that whole thing with the, the policy that's coming out, she let me know that Jenny Mariner's got the policy draft and I'm looking at her like, "I know this," [laughs] you know, she's all kind of smug about it, and I'm like, "Yeah, as much as I could I was involved in that" [laughs] kind of actin like she's gonna have a foot up on me or something in a way, that was, I don't know if she meant it but its just sometimes the, what comes off, you know the way people act, they get so used to being a certain way that, they don't realize that its, um, rude and disrespectful.

N: Yeah

H: But, ah, yeah, I agree there's definitely some, some changes, some positives as people learn a little bit more about, you know, what we're doing, even as we're learning, I think its hard sometimes to even understand what our grounding is, because I don't know if you know but I

253 don't, I don't do, umm, the Indian Child Expert because I'm so meshed in with these families
254 that um, it's almost, it becomes a conflict, so that have to contract out you know to get like Angie
255 or Margaret, and, um, and it works better that way because then I still have the fam-, they still
256 come to me, the families will still come to me and work with me but so far I have not, I almost
257 had to one day because there was just nobody and I was going to have to write up a statement but
258 um, as far as that point, like so far I haven't had to do the Indian Child Expert.
259 G: It's funny too because how many workers, I mean, that you've gone [talking to N] through,
260 you know, from the state in different areas, more or less--
261 N: Mmhmm
262 G: That don't understand ICWA
263 N: Mmhmm
264 G: As well as Nicole, ah, it just, I mean, their turnover must be/
265 N: Well, like yesterday--
266 G: still crazy.
267 H: It is, they've lost one.
268 N: I got Orlando Florida, I got a caseworker from Orlando, Florida DHS calling me, ask me
269 about ICWA efforts and I can't even get people in this state to do that, you know, and like, I
270 hung up and I was like I can't I just had a caseworker, DHS caseworker from Florida call me
271 worrying about complying with ICWA, I, you know, down the street [laughs] I gotta argue and
272 fight for every little thing that, you know, we get.
273 H: We actually pushed a ca-, we, we won a case in Missouri we now have the little one in
274 Massachusetts staying with the Native grandfather.
275 N: Mmmhmm

H: But I mean, really, we had no right, because our lawyer doesn't practice in Missouri and but that child had, you know, was able to be registered with our tribe so if need be, we would've had to figure out something if they weren't gonna listen but thank god that they did you know and that, and the child is, doing really well and umm, it was heartbreaking, you know the whole story and everything but just the fact that they, we got them to work with us was, yeah, it was my, I think my first out of state. I think its hard with Canada we have a lot of, you know,

N: Yeah, that, that/

H: Micmac families that we can't help because they're Canadian and not registered, not eligible, yep.

N: I get that too, I get people that call up and think that they're part of the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians and they're really part of the Canadian tribe, so…

H: And a lot of times they won't do anything if they're out of, off the reserve

N: Right

H: Mmhmm

G: Or if they're from over here and they cross the border ain't nothing we can do neither

N: Right

G: You know, most of the time they're runnin from the state

[laughing]

H: I know I forgot what I was thinking now, too, I had something that I was gonna share and I can't remember, oh well, oh, the Indian Child Expert piece did you, because, DHS has to contract out for that so anytime that we do it, it's a free service for them, they, they have to pay/

N: Yep

H: And they pay good money for it

N: See I do my own, because I, I work with the families and I have all that information and so, if the, if they start asking questions about what, what we did two years ago, or like, I had a case yesterday, "When did visits first, well when were visits first offered to the mother? What happened with that?" Well that was over, over two years ago so I would be *uncomfortable* having someone step in for me as the expert witness because/

H: Mmm

N: They don't know that case inside and out like I do.

H: Yeah.

N: And, my thought is, I need to report this information accurately because in the end its gotta be about the wellbeing of these kids.

H: Mmhmm

N: And I'm just not comfortable, having somebody else, give that kind of report on the stand other than me.

H: I see what you're saying though too, because that has been an issue for me talking to some of the Indian experts that come in and do the research and all they can do is go with/

N: Go with your notes

H: But, but, we're, our, and… see I'd like to start but we're, we're just too entwined, families are too small, I, it, that's where the conflict comes in is that, you know that, I mean, I have cases where I'm related to these people--

N: Yeah

H: I have cases where, you know, that if, ah, I mean they're just so, they're so conflicting that they could probably almost have their own lawsuit if I do that, if I get up on that stand that's how close they are

EA: Now is the testimony from the caseworker separate from the testimony from and Indian child/

H: Yes

EA: Expert witness?

H & N: Yep, yes.

EA: So couldn't you have both? You know, couldn't you still be able to provide that detailed kind of testimony about the case in addition to, someone being an expert witness about the cultural, kind of, aspects of ICWA or?

N: I usually do both…

EA: Yeah?

H: Remember, they should be paying you for that [laughing]

EB: I do want to go back, to umm, just to this person you were talking about--

[Someone comes to the door]

EB: [talking to H] so I'm thinking of this person who you were talking about who you worked with who you've seen change quite a bit, um, and you said just kind of spending more time with her?

H: Yep.

EB: What do you feel like, because we're interested in beliefs or attitudes, what do you feel like her belief or attitudes are now that are different than maybe before? What is the change just from your perspective? Your perception of that.

H: I'm just trying to think, we're, I haven't had to have, like a family team meeting with her in awhile its been more -- and I don't know if its just different being in the team meeting as to it is being out on the road sometimes, you know being able to just sit with somebody and realize why

they're not here to just take over, um, they're here to help me, to be a part of this, make the best decision for the children because I've had some people they'll say well, "You're just there to, you know, for the parents, making sure they get their kids no matter what" and I'm like, "*No* [emphasized] *that's not it at all"*

EB: Mhmm

H: Um, but ah, it could just be that, just um having that chance to sit with her and, you know, it, sometimes people get a perception. I mean, really, I've never had anybody that rude before that came right out and was like, basically, "What are you doing here?" Like I didn't belong there or something, um, and maybe it took them a little while because some people are maybe a little territorial when it comes to certain things and are like, wow, here's these people just coming in and taking over the show, you know, it was hard to tell if it was, you know a prejudiced type thing or if it was just a bad day for her, or, she, like I said, she's more of the harder, she's one of the harder people to work with like she-- tough, has like a tough attitude,

N: Mmhmm

H: But I think after they've been in it for so long--

N: I think that too.

H: Yeah, they, they harden, they really do.

N: Yeah.

H: They get a different, ah, its almost like they can't help it because they, they've seen so many different cases, so, they've been put through the ringer in a sense, you know just as much as all these children that are going through the system, they have to, they're responsible for all those children, ah it could be, I mean spiritually, even, to think about that, you know and not to

367 understand that, if they don't understand what they're doing and what's happening to them, that
368 could be, pretty heavy stuff. [pause] Sorry I'm all over the place.
369 EB: No, that's fine, I just wanted, I did want to come back to that because its interesting.
370 H: Um, I did too, I was, I don't know if she just warmed up to me um, some people like it, um,
371 when I'm involved because they feel like the workers do, like they warm up to, they like it when
372 I'm there even with the families, they're like you guys, you know they feel *calmer,* they feel
373 *safer*, they feel like okay, DHS isn't just going to come in and take my kids because I've got you
374 know Heather or Kim here, um, to help me through this and, so I think the workers realize it
375 actually helps them to do their job better.
376 N: And see, *here,* a lot of the families here are just as mistrustful and scared of ICWA as they are
377 DHS. I'm not sure why that is/
378 H: We, we/
379 N: But I, I'm constantly trying to work through that barrier with people and earn their trust.
380 H: Mmhm, I find that happens when it doesn't go the parents' way, as long as it works for the
381 parents it works for ICWA too and like for us to come back again, but once it doesn't go good,
382 they, then I have the… I mean, I've it's, it is so, bothersome that my kids are not, I don't allow
383 my kids in other peoples' houses anyway, but the parents have been adamant about telling their
384 kids, "I don't want you over to this person's house," they don't want their kids over to my house,
385 because I'm the ICWA worker and they don't want, their kids to come over and tell me stuff that
386 I'm gonna have to report.
387 G: I still hear that here.
388 N: Mmhmm, yeah. [general sounds of agreement]

H: Yeah, they, I don't even think they, people want me to visit them [laughs]. "Uh oh!" They don't want me to visit them because they're gonna, they're worried that people are going to look and say, "oh, look Heather is visiting such and such" unless they know that's like, my best friend, you know

EA: So does, do the state caseworkers understand those dual relationships that people have here between the workers and the communities?

H: I think they're starting too because, there's one case I have that I, they wanted me to go do, they invited me to go do a home study today, and ah, that per-, like, its so close that it involves my fiancé and his child and I'm like I'm sorry but I can't, I said it, you know she was nice enough to let me in once, um, and you know, as nice as she was and as professional as I was, it wasn't good, I mean this is something that, I thought about later, this is *her* privacy and I just, I said, not only that, this could throw this, like if this, you know in court this could change everything, if you're gonna want me in this house to participate in this home study and I see something that I'm like, "Oh my gosh" you know, what am I gonna think when my, you know, almost stepson comes to see us and I see something, that's how close, it's *really close*. Um, so ah, I have to be care-, I -- they, they have to understand, that's what I explain to them and they're like, "Oh, its okay its fine" I'm like, no, and I'm almost like, are they doing this because they're trying to, set this up? Because that doesn't make any sense to me that they're like, "Oh this is fine," when I have my lawyer saying you know, back off, let Kim do this piece.

N: Mmm

H: I still stay involved with the case but when it comes to the, where the children are placed, somebody else has to go in my stead. So I mean, sometimes, it is a little weird when they want

me, you know, involved when I shouldn't be. Which is hard, again, there's that, the Indian child expert piece there that's why I don't because of how close--

N: Mmhmm

H: The cases are and there's almost always, there's only a few families that are almost always involved.

N: Yep

G: It makes it hard, too, with the tribal, tribe, I'm saying the chief, I don't know, gets involved with ICWA cases.

N: Tribal politics

G: Yeah, pretty much, politics

H: Yeah, our chief does not get involved with our tribal team meetings or anything.

G: That's good

H: Yeah, because that I think even in our policies… I didn't bring it in, I was going to um, like for our child family team, part of what makes up that team, um, I think if need be the chief was in there, an elder, and I'm thinking, "Chief -- *no*, not a good idea" [laughs] especially now. But its not a good idea, um an elder…

G: Yeah the chief was on ours, too, at one time.

N: Yeah.

G: But because of all her duties and whatnot, she chose not to, and the, political and all that, so she took herself out of that.

H: Because what happens if she has, or he, has somebody involved family-wise, all of sudden, then what's their view? You know?

G: Yeah, yeah.

H: Its so easy to push that power.

G: Sure, its ah, but you need to put yourself.

EA: Well, I mean, like all of that -- this is probably totally off topic -- [H laughs] but um, you know, I, I hear, so many discussions about, you know, nepotism and favoritism, but really when you think about it, *those are the ways that, that we survived*, is taking care of our families first, right, I mean didn't we always take care of our families? And now, its, because of this, political system that we're trying to fit into that traditional value of taking care of your family you have to like, not only not take care of them but you have to make it appear like you're not doing anything at all, so sometimes you don't even give your families what they would, you would normally give a regular citizen that you weren't related to if you're in that political position. And that's just my little editorial.

H: No, I'm glad you said that because my/

EA: On our values because like some of that has been changed, and within the, looking at through the lens of this big system called democracy that *wasn't even ours* to begin with

G: But there's a difference between trying to advocate somebody/

EA: Right

G: That's doing right and somebody that you're trying to advocate and they're still doing wrong.

EA: Right, I mean and that, the whole and that's why those issues of integrity and all that come into play but its, you know, even that whole concept, its almost like there's no happy ground, its like/

N: Right

EA: Either they help them all the time, or, they back off and say I'm sorry I can't help you at all because I don't want it to look like I'm favoring you so, and, and that person might not get the

457 same advocacy that they would get if they weren't related. So sometimes, it can work both
458 ways.
459 N: Yeah, yes.
460 H: Well it, it's interesting that you say that because I was thinking like my sister and my brother
461 and my cousins if they're ever to get DHS you know, sitting at their door, they would want me
462 there.
463 EA: Mmhmm
464 H: Because they know that I'm gonna make sure that everything that needs to get done is get
465 done but I don't know if they realize how hard I would probably be on them as well.
466 EA: Right
467 H: You know what I mean, but I, it just it's funny that you said that, because I'm like yeah, they,
468 not because they think I'm gonna let them you know, get away with everything but they know
469 that I'm gonna do it right and, make sure that everythings taken care of
470 EA: That's why its just so difficult…
471 H: It is.
472 EA: Having those dual relationships and, you know I, maybe… helping the state to maybe
473 recognize those because they don't have to, they, they're not doing their job maybe once in
474 awhile they might come into some conflict with their family members, but by and large these
475 caseworkers aren't living in the community that they're taking the children from.
476 H: No, there's so many workers that if they're, you know, even having past schooling with one
477 of these people, they can ask somebody else to go in their stead.
478 N: Right, and that's the other thing that they don't seem to get I don't think a lot of caseworkers
479 understand everything that we do.

H: Yep.

N: Because especially now that I lost my caseworker, I'm here by myself, there's only one person in the ICWA department and that's me.

H: Mmhmm

N: And so, if I can't make it to every little thing, sometimes they'll get little snide comments in and, like you know I had one lady say, "Well," and she was a supervisor of another person who will remain nameless but she said, "Well I had her call you to see if you wanted to go out on that assessment even though you never go." Like getting a dig in? And I had to bite my tongue, and, because I was so mad because I can't *be* in a hundred different places/

H: Right

N: at once, I'm one person I'm responsible for three grants doing the TRC and the ICWA workgroup, trying to do assessments, trying to license foster homes, trying to go to family team meetings, doing everything

H: Yep (35:51)

N: In one week. And *they have help*.

H: Yep

N: At DHS, they have other people they can say you know what that's my cousin, do you mind picking up this case and I'll pick up one of yours or something. We don't have that option. Or, you know I gotta go, you know they just do case management with these kids, we do a lot more than that.

H: Yep

N: So…

H: It really is. I don't think its anything that you can, I mean we can compare it to case management but its really so much more and you, you don't learn it in school, you don't, there's nothing that you learn that gives you "This is how its gonna be. This is what's gonna help you," you know it, you just don't and ah

N: You can't be everywhere at once and you can't be, responsible for every little thing that goes on because you're, you're one person

H: Right. That's it, I feel like that too and they actually get after Kim because they're like "well you've got Tan-", because they don't want to give her another person, they're like "you've got Heather", and she's like "I don't have Heather. Heather's like, here, there, Heather can't be sitting behind her desk when she's gotta be everywheres" and we actually have to tag team and technically she shouldn't be out on the field, you know, she doesn't have the training to, the, you know, she does a great job, don't get me wrong, she's excellent, but there's some things I know that are hard for her because she's been doing it so long and I worry because you really need to have a good, strong. You need to be… what's the word I'm looking for? Hardy. You have to be hardy to be able to do it and go home -- I've had tears because I remember learning in school they said that, ah, you know, who was it Tompkins there, Frank Tompkins, was talking about when he was in school and he had a person that, you know, he was working with and she burned out and he knew when she had burned out she was like crying and this and that and I'm thinking, "Wow I mean, how many times do we have to burn out?" [laughs a little] because that's, you know that's, there's no way you can't be involved personally.

N: Right.

EB: When you think about, like, you know, a person who makes this comment, like even though you never you know like, what you said, like, even though you never got all that kind of um, do you feel like there's, do you feel like there's something underneath that at all, that's like kind of?

N: I think, I think that they resent .

EB: What do you think that's about?

N: It's resentment. I think because you, like Heather mentioned, because they have to make those active efforts, and I think it irritates them, especially now.

H: Yeah.

N: With all the cutbacks. And if they call you and ask you to go -- okay, let me give a good example. This is great.

[H laughs]

N: I have a, I have a client that I'm off and on at their house a lot and a case never gets opened because we never see what people are talking about what we're gonna see when we go in the home. I guess over the weekend, the police were at this person's house quite a bit. But its Monday morning, I'm just walking in the door, I don't know why the police have been there all weekend long. How would I know that? So I'm sitting there and I'm trying to get my expert witness report ready for court on Tuesday morning and the phone rings and it's a supervisor from the Caribou office who's in a panic and I felt like I was using my skills to calm her down. [as if supervisor is speaking] "I heard that the police were at this person's house because she was suicidal and she's not supposed to be in the home and she's not supposed to have her kid but yet she's walking down the street with her kid, could you go check on this?" And I'm sitting there and I'm like A, I'm not a police officer so even if I go find her on the side of the road walking with her kid what am I gonna do about it? Tackle her and take the child? You know, I'm not

546 law enforcement. B, I have no information about what happened at the house over the weekend.
547 I don't know if any of that stuff she's reporting is true because I know that this client's fiancé is
548 famous for getting mad at her and calling people and saying things about her and making it
549 sound like its true when its not.
550 H: Mmhmm
551 N: So I said, "well I don't know, do, is there a court order? That there's a protection order…. Is
552 there?" And she's like, "Well I don't know" and I said, "Then I don't mean to be rude to you,
553 but why aren't you calling the police, why are you calling me? What do you expect me to do
554 about this?" And she was mad. She's like, "Well I'll just call, you know, so and so at DHS in
555 Houlton and get her to do it." I said, "You do whatever you need to do." And I hung up because
556 I wasn't gonna argue with her about it. She calls that caseworker, and that caseworker calls me
557 and goes, "I don't know what her deal is" she goes, "she called me and she's freakin' out and I
558 told her to calm down, I, I'm on the phone with the police right now, you know can I put you on
559 the call, we're going to have a little speaker phone meeting." I said, "Sure." Come to find out,
560 *none of that stuff was true*, he called and tried to start problems for the mom, and the police told
561 him we're not getting involved in your relationship difficulties, and you guys need to stop doing
562 this. There was no protection order, there was no order that said she couldn't go into the home,
563 no order that said she couldn't take her daughter out of the house. Can you imagine what an ass
564 I would've looked like if I'd a tracked her down and said "What are you doin with your kid, you
565 can't have your kid" [belligerently] with absolutely no legal verification that I'm doing that?
566 H: Mmhmm (40:58)
567 N: And then later on if there's another call and I need to go to the home, how receptive is she
568 gonna be to me coming into the home and saying, "I got a call today with some concerns about

whatever." I mean, that relationship that I have with that client is tenuous at best and she tolerates me more than anyone else. If I chase her down on the side of the road, and accuse her of kidnapping her daughter. I mean, but, that woman, that supervisor at DHS, was perturbed because I would not go do that. So those are some examples of things that happen to me regularly.

EA: So there, there, underlying that maybe there's some, she's got some kind of idea of what your role is?

N: I, I guess. But I would think after the four years that I've been working with her that she would know better than that by now. I, I don't know what/

EA: So she does understand your role.

N: I would think so. She works pretty closely with Martha, and her and I have talked many times on the phone about cases.

EA: So my, my first reaction. Can I say what I think?

EB: Yes.

EA: My reaction is that she might understand your role but she has a belief that you are there to *serve them*. To help them. That, that's my first thought. You know.

N: Yeah.

EA: You know like maybe you don't have anything else.

H: Almost like, we are the "active effort" [laughing around the table] I feel like that a lot.

N: And not even the "active effort" but that would be something that you would get a law enforcement officer to do.

EA: Mmhm. My first reaction was "What do you think I am? I ain't your bitch!" [laughing all around]

N: That's what I said, I really had to bite my tongue!/

EA: What do you think? I'm here to do what you want me to do, when, you know/

N: I'm just gonna jump up and go accuse this mom that *barely, barely trusts me* as it is.

G: She thinks she's on their payroll.

EA: Right, right

N: But my, and my issue is not only that but I, I have worked very hard to earn the very little bit of trust that I have.

EA: Mmhmm

N: And if I pulled up beside her on the side of the road accusing her of kidnapping her child, every ounce of work that I have put into working with this family would have gone down the tubes in ten seconds or less.

EA: And then I'm wondering if that's anything the state caseworkers understand/

N: Right

EA: If they even realize the depth of the relationship that you have with people here

Mmhmm

EA: Not only socially because you, you know you're part of the community but professionally your job is that.

N: Yeah

EA: And what, what is there and to me, what is the belief behind that like, what, what value is pushing that for them? You know maybe its ignorance but you said four years, she knows what your role is/

N: Right/

EA: Maybe its just superiority.

615 EA: And then she called the caseworker, the DHS caseworker in Houlton and tried to get her to
616 do it and that caseworker's response was the same as mine: "I'll tell you what I will do. I'll call
617 the police and find out what's going on. But I'm not gonna go chase her down on the side of the
618 road." And I'm glad she did that because this is a woman I've worked with off and on since I
619 been here and I was just there maybe a month ago and she was very escalated and the caseworker
620 that went with me kept the fiancé in the kitchen because he was calmer and I went and tried to
621 meet with her and de-escalate her and it worked.
622 EA: Mmhmm
623 N: But had I chased her down on the road, bet she'd never let me in her house again -- ever.
624 EA: Mmhmm
625 N: And I don't want that because then any help that I may be able to offer her is gonna be gone.
626 EA: Mmhmm
627 H: That has hurt me when I've had to report and tell the parent that I did have to make a report
628 and what hurts, like I said, is the people that actually witness what's going on and they come to
629 you and they, they tell you this stuff and its that extreme that okay, we've gotta report this, and
630 trying to explain that to a parent that you're trying to do your job. Knowing, you know, and that,
631 you're only what's reported, and you're a mandated reporter and they just throw you right out
632 the window and I don't blame them.
633 N: I have a big poster on my door that tells people that I'm gonna report. And I tell, I give
634 people an out when they call me I'm like, just so you know, before you even start talking, if
635 you're gonna tell me anything that could be any, any form of danger to the child or harm or
636 neglect, any kind of emotional threat or anything I'm gonna have to report this information, so

you need to know that I'm gonna do that. And then you can choose whether you want to move forward with this information or not. So they *know* before they tell me.

H: And what hurts when I give that information though is that they're not the ones making the report, nothing happens. There's no findings.

N: True.

H: So/

N: Or if they're like, the fourth hand information

H: Mmhmm

N: That happens to me all the time too

H: And it just, it hurts the -- it hurts because they can't even get through the door. You might have something terrible going on but if the kids are already trained to say "No, nothing's going on," the mom's like, "Nothings going on" and you've got a, you know, grandmother that's frantic because she sees this stuff on a regular basis she needs to be the one that reports it [unintelligible]

H: Exactly and then, yeah, they say, "Oh yeah I'm gonna, I'm gonna come out with this and I'm gonna say this and I'm gonna stand by this" and then you're all up there in the room and you know, looking at gram, waiting -- nothing. Because she doesn't want to lose that. Because she doesn't want to lose her daughter, you know, her son, or whatever. And it just, its heartbreaking but/

G: That ain't me, the kids are number one/

H: Exactly

G: I'm a grandma, and I got my granddaughter living with me. [laughs]

N: Yeah.

G: Yeah, you know, so…

H: It's hard we've got no tribal placements -- we got tribal placements but they're just not enough, you know, there's not enough tribal placements. And we need them, we need permanent tribal homes. [takes a deep breath, exhales.] Its very frustrating.

M: And its hard to do.

H: I know, and its not easy to do/

M: No, it isn't.

H: Because our, when our kids go into placement um we've actually lost one of those placements because the, the foster parents didn't have the training they needed because the children were so needy because of the *trauma* that had happened to them. And um, they just, they couldn't hold onto them you know they just couldn't, they didn't have it. That's why I was gonna get ahold of CHCS I heard they have free training to help um, foster parents become therapeutic foster homes

G: Yeah, they do.

H: And that it might be free. I gotta talk to Peter.

G: I'm pretty sure its free. Nicole would know more about it.

EB: Any, anything you want to add in? [talking to M] As you've been listening, or responses?

M: I was gonna say something at one point and now I forgot. [laughing]

H: Sorry, we, Nicole and I, I think we're venting more than anything [laughing] it's like, Yes, yes!" I'm gonna feel really good tonight. [laughing continues]

M: Yeah like some of these clients, the state they go to their house, you know ICWA has to be there *before they will let them in the door*. Now when I was dealing with the caseworker and all that, Nicole didn't have to be, she didn't even have to know about it and the state could come, but that was, you know I felt comfortable enough with the state there without Nicole. You know

683 I didn't have to worry about what they were gonna do or you know what was gonna happen.

684 You know, so I, I guess it all depends on the situation.

685 H: Yep.

686 G: It would be different if it was a report called in about you.

687 M: Yeah.

688 H: Or the clients. We have a lot of mixed families too, and a lot of the non-Native parents don't

689 want us involved and we kind of have to step back and, you know, let the non-Native parents

690 know that we're still gonna be involved when it comes to FHs or but if, you know, if they don't

691 want us in their home that's their decision. Um, actually I did have a question on that as far as --

692 well, I guess that we'd become, we'd become more involved afterward like if the PPO is done,

693 then we become more involved.

694 EA: If the child welfare, Indian child welfare person can be involved with the assessment.

695 N: That's what I'm doing today./

696 EA: They don't have a say in that.

697 H: Even when they're non-Native?

698 N: Yeah because the kids are still Native.

699 H: OK.

700 EA: Right, it's a ICWA eligible case. If the child is enrolled or they're eligible with the tribe.

701 Its not the parents' choice whether or not to have you there. It's the law.

702 N: There was a meeting I had today where the mother has custody of the children, she's non-

703 Native, the father's Native he does not have custody of the children but he has supervised visits.

704 And she was mad that I was coming because she doesn't want ICWA there. And I said, "Well

705 I'm sorry she feels that way but I need to go because those are Native children and I need to see
706 if there's anything I can help out with, assist with"
707 EA: The tribe is the third parent.
708 N: You know, or, or they're in a family placement, which is a non-Native placement currently
709 you know while the mom works on her issues. But I want to know how the kids are doing. Is
710 there, is there something I can do? Is there some sort of service I can help them get? I have
711 some grant moneys in case they need certain things for school or I don't know, whatever. And
712 I'm not gonna know that if I'm not part of it, so. [pause] That was one of those cases, Heather,
713 where the caseworker was like, "Why do you gotta be there?" So when you said that I kind of
714 chuckled because that's what this caseworker's like that I have to deal with.
715 H: And, most of our families are mixed and a lot of times they do ask, and, ah, and that's how it
716 is too sometimes if the parents are comfortable with DHS going there, I've got another case I've
717 got to do. If they're okay with it, then, let them go. But um, I guess I didn't realize, I know I
718 realized at the *beginning* of everything, its just, now that I've gotten into the swing of things it
719 tends to move more towards the non-Native parents don't really want involvement with you as
720 long as they know that you're still involved with the kids and whatnot.
721 N: Right, some of them, and I know what you mean about the assessment part too like, as long as
722 the family's okay, because right now, me being the only one here there's no way in hell I'm
723 gonna be able to make it to all the assessments or the meetings. There isn't a day that doesn't go
724 by that there's not two or three things happening throughout the day and I can only be at one.
725 You know, per, so.
726 H: Well yeah, when I first started one opened, one open case where the custody was taken and I
727 think I had a couple of assessments open whereas now, I probably have [pausing, inhaling] I

728 think I have at least ten cases with like three or four assessments going at the same time and it's
729 just, it's gotten harder to keep track.
730 G: And its gonna get worse with the drugs too and the [? 51:50]
731 H: The drugs, yeah, they have increased
732 N: See that's what I've noticed. When I started there was 17 cases that were DHS custody and
733 that's not kids, that's families, and I don't know how many kids per family.
734 H: Right.
735 N: Plus I had a bunch of open assessments or services cases and I, I'm always up around 25 now
736 and then, with numerous assessments going on. And different, all over the place, like yesterday
737 court was in Portland, you know, this meeting today is out of Portland and I have to participate
738 H: Conference
739 N: Yeah.
740 H: Which is hard when there's a voice and they can't see the face, and there's not much we can
741 do to--
742 N: And I try, I'll alternate, like if I know that meeting is gonna be again and I know far off in
743 advance I'll put in for travel and then, so I don't go to every one but I go to enough so they know
744 who I am, but yeah it's hard to spread yourself that thin.
745 H: See and that's where it becomes ridiculous where its- I'm sorry I'm going back to funding
746 again but where you're doing Indian child expert reporting and DHS has, gets money for that,
747 they get money to pay for those, those where we could be bringing in more people. You know,
748 they're getting funding that should be going to Native people.
749 N: Right.

750 H: I don't know how much but I know Danielle Johnson did a lot of research on that. She would
751 have been somebody good to have here. Um, she's down -- they wouldn't even get her for an
752 expert anymore because they don't like the fact that she knows what she's talking about and
753 [laughs]. You know it, that I find is hard sometimes when they get the experts and they don't
754 say what they want them to say they move onto somebody else.
755 N: Yeah, yep.
756 H: And I don't like that at all, I don't see why they would discredit Danielle like that she did an
757 excellent job. Her report was -- and they want it within a certain timeframe
758 N: I know. [laughs]
759 H: But people don't even have enough time to do the research.
760 N: Yep, I have my ICWA attorney let me know way in advance when they're gonna be looking
761 for a report. And that also gives me a time to go back through and refresh my memory on dates
762 and times and all that stuff so that I ready for my testimony when…
763 H: You know, because I, I clearly told them if you're gonna, if you want to contract me to do this
764 and to do the extra hours to do, you know, the typing I gotta do off hours of my job that I already
765 have, then I'll talk to my supervisor. But that's, how we've, I don't know it's just not right. You
766 know?
767 N: Mmhmm
768 G: Is that Danielle Smith? Is that the same Danielle?
769 H: Yes
770 EB: I kind of I wish we could keep talking about some of these things that came up/
771 H: Sure

EB: But we have other things. But I think it will fit in, hopefully it will fit into what… So we, what we're gonna, the next thing we're gonna do is, um, we kind of put together a list of a lot of different statements from different sources, you know about, kind of, Wabanaki families, child welfare from different sources and perspectives, and we

H: mmhmm

EB: And we sort of chose, ended up choosing four that we wanted to share with you all to get just sort of your responses to it. And I think some of these things have come up in what we've already been talking about, some of them might not have. So we just kind of wanted general reactions and responses to this but thinking about, you know, have heard things, have you in your experience does a statement like this, ring true, and who is that might believe a statement like this and who wouldn't? So we're gonna pass them out, there's four of them. One at a time.

H: Yay! I got a funny feeling that we're playing a game now [laughing].

EB: And now we're gonna pin them up on the wall… [joking, Esther passes them out.] Just take one.

EA: We'll do one at -- so when, when you're reading this statement think about the question "does this statement relate to your own experiences with state child welfare involvement?" So as you read that, think about how it relates to your, in your experience how it relates to state child welfare involvement in your community.

[Quiet while everyone is reading first statement, about 15 seconds] 56:28

G: Are we just writing it down?

EB: Oh, no.

EA: You can talk.

EB: Talk, yeah.

H: So do we read -- are they all the same?

EB: Everyone's got the same one.

H: Oh, okay okay.

EB: Everyone's got the same one. It's just a -- just talk about your thoughts.

H: OK.

G: I think that the whole community is hurt, especially if, like say, it's a community like this. And your neighbor next to you has kids, and they're -- the other kids are like looking around and knowing he's gone, you know I mean it hurts the kids, you know the elders that used to watch them play outside, or I mean,

M: Everybody knows everybody's business

G: Yeah!

M: So yeah, they notice when something's different.

G: I would say it does anyway.

[5 second pause]

H: I think depending on how its done. Because if we, I mean sometimes its absolutely necessary that the children be removed but if they're put into you know like, kin's care, with a family member, they're still within the tribe, so I guess that the statement itself like if it was "removed from the tribes" it would be different than saying, you know, "removed from their homes," because sometimes you know,these houses are only a couple houses down so they're really not that far away from mom and dad, there's not that much of a change because the kids are used to being with gram, or you know so, I think it depends.

N: Yeah it does, it depends on the situation.

H: Yeah.

N: Yeah, because sometimes they might already be living with gram, [laughing] and then, it just becomes official. [laughing]

H: I think it hurts too if you have a family that's been involved, um, over and over again, even the extended family has just this, you know that, it seems like there's always a family that's, within my experience, that is always involved with the system, and how do we help this family break this chain?

N: Right, right.

H: And its actually hurting the community that this family is not changing, not doing what they have to do, you know to--

N: Because they see that child being mistreated, and it goes back to what you said earlier, you have everybody and their brother calling you and saying this isn't right what's happening but they don't want to call and make that report. So then you call and make that report, nothing happens because you know, when the state shows up everybody becomes the Cosby family.

H: Yep.

N: And then they have to continue to watch that child being mistreated, you know?

H: [laughing with understanding] It's true.

N: And then, that's harm, that's harmful, not only to the child but to the community because people do worry about what's happening to that child, and that… And its hard on us as ICWA workers because *we know* something's not right in there. But you can't get them to take services, and you can't, you don't have enough to do, do more action. And you just, there's been cases I've lost sleep over before, *please* let this kid be okay. Let somebody do something.

H: And there's no way to not have them in your thoughts because those are our people that's our family. Back to the dual relationship piece.

841 N: Yep

842 H: But yeah, again, if it were to say "tribe" when they're removed from the tribe, I think that
843 does hurt. It hurts the child because they're continuously looking for *something*, you know
844 something to belong, they're looking for their identity, they've got a big hole there that just, you
845 know and then you being the, like what we're supposed to do, go out and we do these activities
846 with the kids, we help them feel connected, set up, um, we try to set up, if they're close enough,
847 we'll be able to go to our youth and participate and still be connected to the tribe. But when they
848 far, get further out, almost outside of Aroostook County, it's a lot harder, harder to connect with
849 kids, harder to get the gas to go and visit these kids to do these activities. Ah, we have people,
850 ah, that have been adopted out, actually might have been, might be good people to talk to, that
851 they're tribal, but they don't feel that they belong. You know they weren't brought up, they were
852 brought up and adopted into a foster placement, that sort of thing. And they have a hard time
853 connecting.

854 N: Mmhmm

855 H: So we've been, fighting harder about not TPRing and try to, you know, if its necessary to do
856 permanency guardianship trying to keep it within the tribe. Or come up with some type of
857 contract so that when foster homes can get involved with Native children that they agree, yes if
858 you place this child with me, I'm going to do everything that's possible

859 N: We have that, you guys don't/

860 H: I think I do, I think I do have that but we haven't been, it hasn't been getting enforced because
861 I've been trying to get, because they place and they place and they place without being involved
862 in that and that's something I wanted to see how far can I push that because we have foster
863 parents and they were great and they were needed but are gonna step out once they realize, "I'm

gonna be responsible for bringing this child here and here and here when I live way over here," you know, and are they gonna be willing to do that or are we gonna lose them. You know.

N: Yeah, its hard, especially now. Before I could buy gas cards and stuff for, not only for foster parents, but for non-, I mean for non-tribal parents. Like if the dad or mom lives here, and the mom lives, in Portland or wherever -- they want to come up and stay the night for the cultural day that we have here. I used to be able to give them gas cards but now with the budget the way it is, the granters won't allow us to do that anymore so now I can still get them a hotel for the night if I have money left and I can maybe reimburse them for gas if they save the receipt but sometimes people don't have the money to get here to begin with to reimburse them. You have to -- so you're right, that's, that's hard because they want to do it, but they might not have the funding, they might be, you know like for example, I have a foster woman who has two tribal children. She's a, a non-Native family member, she tries to bring them up here as much as she can for all kinds of stuff but she's, you know, a single mom, she's a social worker, and her job just got cut, the hours, so she only has 32 hours a week now, and, things are hard and I feel my hands are tied because I can only do, I'm only allowed to do certain things with my grant money now. So its harder. And she signed a cultural contract agreement, but even before she signed that she was still bringing the kids up here all the time.

H: I'm wondering what we'd be able to do to, bring these kids together, some of them that are out of the way, would it go against confidentiality, though, to bring you know, youth together that are in the foster care? Because I know we did the independent living I do get [Chaffee?] funding and, um, I don't know if there'd be something we could do. You know to bring, just something where we could get these kids and have them more involved, I don't know, so/

N: I get that too, I get that, that grant too, but you can't buy gas cards with them

H: No

N: We used to, the tribes, all the social services directors used to use that Chaffee funds to/

M: Do that care/

EA: Support the independent gath-, ah -- Independent living youth gathering that I used to facilitate

H: Yeah.

H: Which the Boys and Girls Club has kind of taken over of doing that a little a bit.

EA: No, not really.

H: No?

EA: No.

H: They don't do the same stuff.

EA: No they don't, they mostly do stuff around sports. But we organized it and then we had a per-child rate and then they would use the Chaffee funds to pay for that per-child rate and then we'd have the gathering.

H: I'm wondering if that's how, I mean, I grew up going to camp. Camp this, camp that, camp basket-making, this, drumming. I mean, I think that in the long run -- I wasn't in the system, maybe I should have been [laughs]. But um, having that/

M: They don't do that stuff anymore.

H: No

M: Because I used to when I was younger

H: Yeah.

M: Go to camp for a week and, you know/

H: I mean they're doing that, the thingy in Old Town this, what, next weekend? It's like a four-day thing.

EA: Oh yeah, the Boys and Girls Club.

H: But that's the Boys and Girls Club and they're gonna be doing basket-making, but yeah a lot of sports, dance, but yeah I remember going to camps when we were actually canoeing and doing everything outside/

EA: But the Independent Living gathering was specifically for kids in care that we put on, so/

N: And see I know, myself, speaking, I feel I've got my hands tied, in a way because I don't have the time

H: Right

N: To put that kind of stuff together/

H: I know

N: I simply *do not* have the time

H: I know and that's where I've kind of, with that, I've used the Boys and Girls Club, I've used Nikki & them to/

N: Yeah I have to

H: To incorporate here I will, I'll pay for all this if you let me have your workers [laughs] you know and it, gives them something to do either for the summer/

N: I've been working with the health director they're doing a cultural event for the week for children and I'm kinda trying to work with her on making sure that it gets offered to my kids that are in care so they can come and then I'll pay for certain parts of the camp

H: Mmhmm

N: But that's the best I can do at this point. I just don't have the resources I'm, I don't

932 H: What do you, we're, with helping the foster parents do you get Title IV funding? Is that
933 where you're getting it? See I don't get that funding.
934 N: The IV-B?
935 H: Yeah.
936 N: Well you should.
937 EA: You should.
938 H: I should?
939 EA: Yeah.
940 H: See I, that's what bothers me, I know more about my family/
941 EA: Bob Cavenaugh/
942 H: Family violence grant than I do about my ICWA grant. I've never had to handle it, it's
943 always been Kim.
944 N: Yep, Bob Cavenaugh does that Title IV-B and that covers foster care things. Like, ah, like if
945 a kid comes into care and they don't have any clothes when they come into care?
946 H: Mmhmm
947 N: You can buy like clothes and supplies that they need. You can pay for licensing and Bob also
948 told me that if somebody wants to adopt it pays for like the fingerprinting and you know, things
949 like that for, for that process.
950 H: Well see, and that's what's been a problem because DHS is like, "Okay if you're gonna
951 improve this home then you need to have the fingerprinting done you need to pay for it" and I'm
952 like, wow.
953 N: And that's what I use Bob's grant for, that's what I use that Title IV-B money for. Or if like
954 the home, um, needs a storm door or something in order to be licensed or a window

H: Windows have been/

N: I use that grant for that.

H: Okay

EA: This is getting…

N: Sorry.

H: Sorry, I know, I know, sorry, we're sorry.

EA: Alright so we have another comment [laughing around the room]

H: Okay.

EA: Another one to reflect on [passing out the slips of paper with statement 2].

EB: It's the same thing for everybody.

EA: Yep.

[About 20 seconds of silence as people are reading.]

H: I think they do need to be treated differently. Um, I mean yes everybody should be treated equally but to, to understand that we weren't treated equally. Native people were, um, that this was part of the process of, ah, genocide. And um, that, if the, if we're treated the same then it just shows that they're following that pattern of, of removing kids that should be finding ways, you know, to keep these kids in the home instead of removing them and putting in the necessary, you know, safety, ah, precautions that need to be, and that *its our survival*, this is part of our survival, we, we need this, ah, we need to keep our kids in our home and find a way for those kids to be safe and um, or within the tribe.

N: And not just our kids. I think non-Native kids, it should be the same way. I don-, I think tearing a kid out their home is harmful regardless of the culture.

EA: Mhmm

N: Um, and I think instead of just jumping right to, okay something happened let's remove them, I think it depends on what the abuse was, um, and what can we do to prevent them from being removed.

H: And I think even within the state it's harder now to even get involved for them.

N: Yeah

H: It's, it's gotten that the -- I don't know what stipulations or whatever for removal have changed/

N: Yeah they have

H: I don't know exactly what, but it's harder now for them to remove.

N: Mhmm

EB: Do you -- oh, I'm sorry

H: No, go ahead.

EB: Do you feel like you've heard a statement like this or at least this kind of sentiment before in your work from anyone?

N: I know when I was in graduate school, I had a girl actually say to me, which was kind of scary, because here we are all social work graduate students. We actually almost had a, quite a verbal [laughs a little] argument. Gail, do you remember this? [talking to G, who also laughed] Um, she actually said to me that she didn't understand ICWA and that Native kids shouldn't get special rights and I had to, like, breathe deeply a few times before I even responded because I could not believe she said that to me. I was like, it's not about special rights, it's about being treated equally and not having our children needlessly removed and scattered all over hell's creation away from their families and their tribes. And she did not get that, Heather.

H: Like that ignorance piece again.

N: Yes but she was/

H: Almost like it was drilled into her.

N: A *graduate social work* student said that, though?

H: Mhmm

N: I mean, hence the word "social work" [laughing]. I mean

H: Sometimes/

N: I couldn't believe it.

H: I think that's why they have such a high turnover rate because they're not, for some reason some of them have such a different understanding of the way they think things should be. And ah, well -- this ah, I don't know if this really falls into it but one of my foster families, therapeutic foster family, was beside herself because the kids didn't know who Jesus and the manger -- they didn't know what Christmas was about. And ah, and I told them I said, you know, the children don't need to go to church that's not part of, you know, our culture. And then she got worried, because she's like, "Oh, was that okay to bring them?" I said, "That's fine, but don't be appalled that they' didn't know about this, this and this"/

N: Mmhmm

H: Because that's not how, you know, a lot of our families are not baptizing their children because they don't believe, you know in that piece.

N: Mmhmm

H: And the, it's just really hard because some, I don't know if its just the way that they've grown up and people they think that things should be a certain way, you know? It just--

N: And you hit it when you said the ignorance part. You know it surprises me how many people don't understand how we ended up with so many churches on the reservations. I'm like, how do

you think those churches get there? And they just look at you like you're, like it's a trick question.

H: Mhmm

N: They don't understand even the history *there*. And so, I mean like for some Native people, and you know Catholic churches and Catholic people are like a trigger for their post-traumatic stress disorder.

H: Yep.

N: So I mean, you--

H: It's the whole reason I didn't finish high school.

N: It's the ignorance piece.

H: I left high school to get my GED, because I just. I think it was when I learned about, I started reacting different through my history class, because I started reading about, ah, the 1973, ah siege at Wounded Knee?

N: Mmhmm

H: And I think that's what, that's what I remember, I know there was more, but I was just like, here I am in a class and I'm looking around me because I was in a non-Native school by then/

N: Mhmm

H: And I'm like, what am I doing? What am I doing here, you know, it just and, and I went on some type of little strike or whatever and I did GED, college all that but um, it took me awhile because I just, I didn't know where to turn or what to do. You know as far as the way that, and I was brought up partially on a reserve, you know I knew, a little bit about you know what happened to Native people but I don't think I understand--stood the broad

N: Mhmm

H: You know, aspect of it.

N: I, I know my mom is traumatized by the Catholic church. And my grandmother, used to fight with my mother all the time because my father was White. "She looks White, let's let her be White." She did not want my mom teaching me anything about our culture because my grandmother had been so traumatized by that whole, you know "you guys will assimilate" thing. But she was like, mad at my mom because my mom was teaching us about smudging and all that. *She was mad*. They got -- I remember that clearly and I was little when that happened. They had a huge fight about that and my grandmother was like, "That kid looks White, let her be White. You don't want her to go through what you went through all through school, do you?" And they were fighting over it and it was, there was very little taught to us until we were teenagers because my mom was like, fine. (1:13:20)

H: No, it's, it's really true you know, my 12-year old is lighter than her two sisters and she's socially fine, she's got friends, she's got/

N: Mmhmm

H: And then my other two have got to put up with, you know

N: Mhmm

H: A lot more. But it just, I don't know, we're going -- are we going off track again? [laughing]

N: It's that ignorance piece, though, Heather, and I/

EA: Well, it's a good segue into the next um, question.

H: Alright -- see we know what we're doing.

EA: Actually.

[passing out the slips of paper with statement 3, a few seconds pause]

H: Do we need to return these? Or can we keep them?

EB: You can keep them.

H: Alright. I'm gonna keep mine. My game pieces. Just waiting to see what I'm gonna win!

N: This is what you just talked about.

H: Is it?

N: Yep.

[10 second pause]

EA: I'm gonna have to get Tim Horton's on the way home. I don't drink coffee, I only drink tea.

All around: Oh [sympathetically]

N: Oh you do?

EA: You know I wish I could just learn to like coffee, my life would be so much easier. [laughing around the room] Because there's coffee everywhere.

N: Well we got some, we got some sweet coffee mix stuff that actually isn't bad.

H: Look at me [pouring herself some more coffee] (1:14:39)

N: Throw your creamer right in the coffee pot and call it good! [laughing]

H: Well I used a lot of creamer, so it was pretty tasteful. I mean I usually use sugar but I was like, wow, this is good creamer so it didn't even need sugar, but I used a lot.

[about 15 second pause while people are reading]

H: Yeah I have, one of my youth are, you know, ended up in a non-Native foster-- with a non-Native foster home, and ah, they went to one of our, um, they started going to our youth functions and, ah, they got it in their head that they're, "I don't even need to be here. I'm gonna make a bow and arrow and I wanna go live on the land and you can't tell me what to do because

I'm gonna shoot my own deer and everything" I mean really just going off the wall with everything and I was like [laughs], oh my god, he seriously is all set, he's like "I'm all set"/

N: He's all set.

H: This is what I'm gonna do. [laughs]

N: All set.

M: This is like my son. [all laughing]

H: And that's, and they were concerned they're like, "He wants a bow and arrow," and I was like, you know I didn't see the problem there because I'm like no, this is good. This is good, and then we have some kids, "Oh no, they're starting fires." That's, that's part of what they're supposed to be doing, you know/

N: Here you go, there's a, here's a perfect example again of the culture.

H: Mhmm

N: You know, we had fires when I was a kid and that's normal.

H: All the time.

N: But you do that in a non-Native home and its like, "the kid is displaying fire-setting behavior," right? Right?

H: You're really concerned. [all laughing]

N: You know? It's an awareness of culture that they just lack.

H: Another thing too, I noticed that with kids that, because we're used, some of us are used to our kids being over at grams, our kids are over at aunties,

N: Uh-huh

H: You know they're, they're everywhere. And they're like, "Oh these kids, they're just, they don't have any sense of ah, consistency or this or that/

N: Oh, please.

H: “because they’re being here and then they’re there”

N: Yeah.

H: And the, its, and you try to explain it to them, I’ve tried.

N: Its normal.

H: In one case, they’re not getting the picture that that’s normal in this family setting and why mess it up? You know, why mess it up if that’s working for them, we need to help them with what’s working. You know, they’re…

N: We all do that. Michelle drops off her son here, and her daughter here, and her sisters will be like, okay can you take this kid and this kid? You know at home, my mom, when we were younger my mom and my aunt used to fight, they used to flip a coin over who would get stuck with all of us for the day.

[H laughs]

N: And my mother used to lose, which is why she says she has gray hair [H laughs], so you know, I mean, if that, can you imagine how would have been viewed?

H: We were just talking about it in our community the other day that a lot of us are starting to real-, to succumb to the nuclear setting because of the, the dynamics of our jobs and what we’re doing. And we get home and we just we’re home, we stay home, this person you know, I like rarely see my nephews and nieces now, like everybody’s just kind of going to their own spot because they’re worried about this or this and, it’s just slowly happening. I’m not sure what to think.

N: And I, and I do agree that, you know that there are lifelong impacts to the trauma of being taken, and the sense that you don’t belong as an adult. And I, I think you might remember this

Esther, like a year or two ago when this first started really getting into this TRC stuff I'd had a guy call me.

EA: Mmhmm, that's right. Yep, yep.

N: And I gave him your number and he expressed to me that was *totally* how he felt. He was adopted as a kid and it wasn't until he got older, that he, I think he was in his twenties before he could start finding out who he was. And he called me, and he was like, "I just feel like I never knew who I was, and I still don't really know and I'm looking for answers" and, I helped him out as much as I could but over, I don't know I talked to him numerous times. I let him know that we were doing this TRC and I thought that would be helpful for him at some point to be able to tell that story, so I gave him Esther's phone number. So I, I do think that that does, that does happen, there is a lifelong impact. And trauma, and maybe even, you know, a sense of loss. And not knowing who you are. What do you think, Gail?

G: Yeah because I mean I'm just trying to sit here and think about the ones that was taken out of the homes that I know, you know and *none of them* have a stable life right now. They've got problems, big problems.

N: Mmhmm

G: Alcohol, drugs, and I mean, they have lost their children. You know?

N: It's almost like you carved out something and made it empty. And you didn't fill it back up again I think.

H: Exactly. That's exactly it. We tried, Kim -- our lawyer, and we're in a meeting the other day we tried to bring up that we don't want another failed permanency guardianship, we don't want another failed adoption. One of the guardian ad litums was like, "What failed adoptions, what?" And we're looking at him like, "How can you say that?" You, you know, you've sat in on some

of these, you know this is happening. These kids are being put through the ringer. They started out, you know, toddlers some of them and now they're almost adults. They've got, you know, personality disorders up the yin-yang/

N: Cycle. The cycle.

H: Uh. And, to notice that and to think that they're doing a, a better job. Whatever, were, is going on its not working. You know, its not a happy-go-lucky thing after these kids get adopted or whatnot. I mean, you just never know how its gonna go. [Deep inhale] I forgot what I was thinking, shoot. [laughs] Because I was thinking of that. Oh, and sometimes I think too, the, the piece with um, our foster parents, when they, when they're outside of the culture and they think that they're helping to bring that child up in their culture, and, one of those kids would come to me all excited and happy because they had to do such and such chores and they were gonna get to order this Native necklace from this *catalog*. [laughs] Yes, I'm serious. And I of course didn't want to -- I'm just like, "Oh wow that's great, it's beautiful" and I'm thinking this thing probably wasn't even made by a Native person but this poor child is, like, *clinging to this*. Oh, thinking that "This is gonna make me a Native" this little, you know, necklace. And the -- so I didn't want to destroy that but I just, I felt so bad because I'm like, "wow, come on." You know? And these kids *want this*. Because, I've had kids where they're like, you're not gonna be able to get them for more than five minutes, they're gonna be off, they're gonna do this, they're gonna do that. And they sat there, I've done dreamcatchers, medicine bags. They -- they do these things, they actually pay attention and they do what they have to do and they're *so proud* of it, and they hold onto these things, you know? Just from these activities. It's been hurting me that I can't, I mean, its been not hurting me, it's been hurting the kids that I can't go out and do these things with them because of the increased load of everything.

[Background conversation -- someone coming in the door.]

N: It really does, and I just, it breaks my heart because I'm supposed to be seeing these kids at least twice a month. And that's pretty much impossible with court, doing assessments, FHs, the, the kids that are on probation. They want you involved and everything, you want to be involved. Then it takes away when you only have one person doing it.

EA: Should we do the last one?

N: I guess so, we got sidetracked.

H: I know we're, I think we're, yeah its 2:53. It's going pretty good though, huh?

EB: Yeah.

H: Especially with Heather who talks so much. Heather talks a lot. That's my new name.

[about 8 seconds pause while reading comment 4, then some light drumming on the table as if releasing tension in response to statement or statement struck a chord and exasperated or heightened mmhmms]

H: Seriously though I had somebody, a guardian ad litum the other day actually accused one of our contracted counselors of the fact that, "Oh, *that person*, oh they have all the Native people and they always say in every report that we ask for from this person" you know, behavioral assessments or whatnot, that "they're doing great, they're doing fine, they work for the tribe." So, one of the attorneys looks at this person, is like, "So am I to consider that AMHC works for DHS?" because they contract and, this, and we contract this, you know, this counselor. But I mean, they were coming down on this counselor and they're a really good, good counselor. But just because of their affiliation and the work that they do. I find it even happens with our ICWA attorney, who's a very good attorney.

N: Yeah, she's awesome.

1207 H: Yeah, and I, I sometimes feel that, you know they're looking at her that way. And she don't
1208 care, I'm sure, she's, she's, you know, extremely excellent, but, and people, just people that are,
1209 not even Native people that are affiliated with working with us or working for us, become galty
1210 [laughs] -- galty, guilty by association, you know? Yeah this one, I would say, this is just
1211 something that we have to deal with.
1212 N: Yeah.
1213 H: Because I get that look and its not like they're willing to say it out right to our face either, but
1214 you know as soon as we're behind -- they're behind closed doors they're gonna be like, "Oh we
1215 better be careful what we say to her because she's gonna go back to her client, she's gonna say
1216 this and, she's gonna say that," and sometimes that keeps me from getting the whole story that I
1217 need.
1218 N: Mmhmm
1219 H: And I don'tfind out until later/
1220 N: Or they don't want you to know what's going on, they keep it from you. And then, they
1221 invite you to a family team meeting and then the bomb hits and you're sitting there going, "I
1222 didn't know that was going on." You know like, so you're totally caught off guard by that and
1223 then, "Oh, I didn't tell you?" "*No*. You didn't tell me."
1224 H: I would say that that, you know how they say, like, a person who's a certain way will say
1225 certain things about another person because that's how they are themselves?
1226 EA: Projection?
1227 H: Yeah, and I hate to say it but with, you know, the state, DHS and, the way that they're trained
1228 and the way that they have to do things. Even looking at a court document today it's like they
1229 were trying to, there was a, um, a safety assessment done for, you know, a family. And they

1230 tried to put in there that a certain person was involved in that safety plan when she wasn't even
1231 there. Because they, they weren't letting the children go to this place because they said that that
1232 person didn't follow the safety plan. And they didn't, you know let -- she was never told what
1233 was going on and what her responsibilities were and then, there they were still trying to put it
1234 *right into the court documents*, and I was like, "That needs to be taken out or reworded" and they
1235 were looking at me like, "Wow, that's it? That, doesn't even matter" type-thing, you know that's
1236 just, that, that's not really a big deal and I'm like, "It is a big deal" especially because they made
1237 it that that person wasn't to have over to their house because they didn't/
1238 N: Or you'll see yourself quoted in, in documentation that you didn't say, you were on the, you
1239 were there, but you didn't say that.
1240 H: Mhmm
1241 N: You know/
1242 EB: Really?
1243 N: Yeah, that happens to me all, I read everything carefully.
1244 H: Mmhmm
1245 N: Even if I get stacked with a discovery that thick, I'll read it/
1246 H: Especially the court documents/
1247 N: Because I can't tell you how many times, it's been, "I called Nicole Marshall at the Band, and
1248 she said 'blah blah blah.'" And I'm like, I never said that. [H laughing] I'll look at stuff and,
1249 you know, people that know me know that I don't even talk like that, you know. So I'm like,
1250 this isn't, I know I didn't say this, I don't even talk like that. You know and I'll, its like
1251 *unbelievable*.

H: That happened, that actually happened to me the other day just in a meeting where the client is, is you know our lawyer is like, "Where's the active efforts? Our client is saying that she needs these things and they're not happening" and then one of the workers -- and I have a good relationship with this worker -- "Well Heather said that she was gonna do the parenting." And I'm like, "Whoa, wait a minute. That's not what I said. I said that my supervisor might allow me to do a couple visits with the parent, with the kids and do some cultural activities that also include parenting. That was what I said, its in my…" You know I'm in there quick to just [makes chopping noise and gesture with hands to indicate cutting off misconception right away]

N: Yeah, yep

H: So something like that you know, said about Native people, I just find that we see it all the time when we're dealing with the state

N: mhmm, mhmm.

H: Even in the court documents, you know having to sit, look at them thoroughly, and make sure that it says exactly, you know, what's been done and what hasn't been done because they're gonna make themselves look like gold. [laughs] They really do they make it look like they've done everything necessary/

N: They want to make it look like they've done everything and if anything fell through its someone else's fault.

EA: So if, all, you found all of these things in the discovery so what do you think their belief is behind doing that?

H: They gotta protect their butts for their job. I don't know. I think, I think it happens/

EA: They think you all aren't gonna read the discovery.

H: I think it happens/

EA: They think you're not, you're just gonna, right?

N: Yeah.

EA: I mean, they believe that you're not gonna do your job.

N: Right.

H: And I think it happens to non-Native people all the time.

N: Mmhmm

H: I think, and I, and, and in a way, its almost like having the, the ICWA workers and the ICWA lawyer is a big plus for our Native families because we're there, you know, to help protect their, their rights.

N: Because they treat everybody like that.

H: Yeah, I don't think that/

N: They do.

H: I don't know if we could say its just a Native thing in that case because we actually, its actually better for, for our people that we're, read over those statements and whatnot.

N: I know that there was one case that I had where a little girl had reported that a man had sexually touched her and I had a feeling that the, the caseworker had it in her head, cut and dry: it's this guy that did it, I know it is and I'm taking the, I'm taking his kid. It was, there were two kids, his child and then his girlfriend's child that were living at home at the time. Well they had since broke up and he was living on his own and had custody of their child. And she still had her child. And this child reported that a man with the same name as him had sexually touched her. Well I had observed him with those kids quite a few times before that, and I just wasn't seeing that kind of reaction. And, this caseworker had it in her mind, she had him tarred and feathered. It didn't matter, he offered to take a polygraph, she didn't want anything to do with that, "he's

1298 guilty and I want custody of this child." And I said, I'm sorry I don't agree with that and we
1299 pushed it and a forensic evaluator came, and come to find out, the woman, the girlfriend he broke
1300 up with her because she had a heavy drug habit and when he was at work, he would hear stories
1301 from their neighbors about different guys coming in and out of the house while she was there
1302 with the kids.
1303 H: Oh my god.
1304 N: Come to find out that the little girl was talking about a man with the same name, but it wasn't
1305 him. And it was actually a guy that had been, just gotten out of jail for, some kind of a crime, he
1306 was a registered sex offender. And this, I kept thinking to myself this is one of the times I cried
1307 on the way home from court. What would have happened if ICWA wasn't involved because it
1308 EA: Because that kid would be with the mom, and the sex offender was there.
1309 H: And it would have just kept happening.
1310 N: And if that was, you know, if/
1311 H: Its really hard because it, and it is, its true they say that they can't do anything but sometimes
1312 they're jus-, the workers are adamant about certain things and they push things and they're able
1313 to get something done, whereas in other cases I had a, a young person, a little one say that this,
1314 you know, "this person hit me with this," they got hit and because neither parent said it happened
1315 and because she had two different stories about the way she got hit, they threw it out. And I'm
1316 like, something happened to this little girl, and they didn't even interview the father who was
1317 Native. The father is Native, the mother is non-Native. And that, now I just found out that DHS
1318 worker has just resigned, so I'm wondering if she was getting burned out because each case she
1319 was closing like this [snapping fingers]. And I was like, "What is going on here? There's
1320 something happening."

N: And because we *rely on them* to, to pay for the services and supports for our families

H: Yep.

N: When they just want to shut the door on a case and get it closed, and I'm fighting to keep it open.

H: Yeah.

N: You know the mother needs this, the service and you know what about this and what about that? And they don't want to leave it open but we need them to because they're the ones that fund the services.

H: And we have no right to just go to their door and I think its the, I think, well you guys have your own police, right?

N: We have one police officer, so. [laughs]

H: Oh, it's a little, so we're almost kind of on the same boat a little bit because [laughing around the room] I know that with Passamaquoddy and Penobscot, they have their own

EA: They have their court.

H: Yeah, and their own reservation sets spots and we have, I think, like when Janet was doing it, she had more of a right to be able to go and talk to*, trying to not get the DHS involved* whereas we're the opposite, we're, we've

N: We have to get them involved if/

H: To be able to do anything/

N: Because we need them to pay for services

H: Mhmm

N: We need them to, pay for transportation and, you know, therapy and play therapy and whatever services we need them to pay for so when they're trying to open and shut a case, you

1344 know in a month's time, like you're saying, they just wanna slam the door. And I think some of

1345 that is *because of the budget cuts* [whispered]. Every time I say that it irritates somebody.

1346 H: They're looking for something more extreme.

1347 N: Yep.

1348 H: Yep.

1349 G: Does CHCS pay for therapeutic, for foster care?

1350 N: Yep.

1351 H: That's awesome. I know, I, and I need to call Peter, and talk -- would he be the one that I talk

1352 to or would it be Chuck? Ah, Chuck does the therapeutic foster home cases.

1353 G: He does.

1354 N: So I would call Chuck.

1355 H: Okay, I will. Because that's something I want to get put in place for, the ones that we have

1356 now. Because if we had that, then maybe our, you know the ones that we lost placement for

1357 wouldn't have happened. [Audible sigh] Well this has been nice. [laughing]

1358 EA: Yeah I know.

1359 H: I'm serious it's been nice to be able to have people that/

1360 EA: Well make sure you put a plug in we, because we got, the next one we have to do is Pleasant

1361 Point, Indian Township and Indian Island together. So.

1362 H: Are we the first ones?

1363 EA: Yeah, there's only two/

1364 EB: There's two, so.

1365 EA: Focus groups, this one and that one.

1366 N: This was a bad week for, as far as getting people, because a lot of people are at USET.

H: Yeah they are.

EA: So next week I'll be in Presque Isle/

H: Yeah, because I probably would've had like, well Michelle was here, I could have brought her with me today. Because, she, I think she got sick so I just saw her, and I'm like, "What are you doing here?" Because she's somebody like with the kids, and she'll also go to schools and um, it's a little bit different role. But, she's involved with us quite a bit.

N: I can't think of a, I don't know, there's not even a lot of people anyway that/

[People are putting their stuff away and getting read to leave.]

EA: This, this was a good size.

EB: It was actually.

H: Yeah would we have let them talk? Poor things… [laughing]

EA: So we're all set for the 22nd, right? The/

N: Yes

EA: The community event and the council meeting.

[More sounds of zipping and packing up.]

EA: Yep.

N: We still have TRC, right?

EA: Yep.

N: The 23rd, I'll be down for that.

END