



## THE NAVAJO NATION

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT & VICE PRESIDENT

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# Navajo Nation signs IV-E Intergovernmental agreement with Arizona to receive foster care reimbursements

**FORT McDOWELL YAVAPAI NATION** – Navajo foster children will soon benefit from being raised and nurtured by their own relatives thanks to a new agreement signed between the Navajo Nation and the state of Arizona last week.



*Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., and Arizona Dept. of Economic Security Director Tracy Wareing sign the Title 1V-E intergovernmental agreement at the Fort McDowell Yavapai Nation that will allow the Navajo Nation to be reimbursed hundreds of thousands of dollars for the foster care of Navajo children by their own relatives.*

On Dec. 14, Navajo Nation President Joe Shirley, Jr., and the director of the Arizona Dept. of Economic Security, Tracy Wareing, signed the Title 1V-E intergovernmental agreement here that will allow the Navajo Nation to be reimbursed hundreds of thousands of dollars for the foster care of Navajo children.

More importantly, the agreement calls for the training and licensing of families who are relatives to these foster children so that they can be raised in a home environment with people related to them.

“We want to have relatives as foster parents catering to needs of relative children,” President Shirley said in remarks to the 22<sup>nd</sup> annual ITCA Indian Child & Family Conference here. “We’ve been doing it for ages as Navajo people. Grandparents are always taking care of grandchildren. In fact, I’m a product of that. Ever since I was a year old, I was raised by my late grandmother. I feel that’s she’s given me a lot of things, a lot of values, a lot of knowledge, a lot of wisdom, and I feel that she’s one of the reasons why I am where I am today.”

The Navajo Nation is the first Arizona tribe to have signed such an agreement with the state. It has had a similar agreement with the state of New Mexico since September 2002 which President Shirley said has proven effective because 99 percent of the children were placed with their relatives.

“Let’s continue to always be focused on family and our children, especially as native people. I feel that that’s one of the ways to save self in the days and years ahead,” President Shirley said.

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