

# Tribal Sovereignty | IN PRACTICE

## The Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act

How does the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (ISDEAA) apply to child welfare social work practice with American Indian/Alaska Natives?



In 1975



the federal government passed ISDEAA emphasizing that federally recognized tribes have:

The right to administer social programs, very similar to states' rights

[Tribal sovereignty](#)

574 federally recognized tribes located in 35 states directly administer their social programs using federal money.



Federally funded tribal social services may include, but are not limited to:



### Indian self-determination

is based upon treaty rights with the federal government that speak to:

Commitment to social justice



Culturally relevant, strengths-based tribal services



Decolonization of previous failed social work practices



Disrupting racism



Resiliency of American Indian/Alaska Natives tribes



### Child welfare caseworkers/programs

can benefit from honoring and practicing Indian self-determination by:

1

Viewing the tribes as resources who can help meet the needs of children/families in care

2

Collaborating with the tribe of a child in care to access available social services

3

Creating a local/state tribal services directory



National Child Welfare Workforce Institute  
LEARNING, LEADING, CHANGING

