

PROTECT ICWA

WHAT IS IT?

ICWA is the acronym for the Indian Child Welfare Act, passed into law in the US in 1978. It is a law made to protect Indigenous children and keep them close to their tribes and families.

WHAT DOES ICWA DO?

- ICWA was created to stop the systemic removal of Native children from their family and tribes.
- Ensures Native kids get through foster care and adoption safely.
- Requires child welfare agencies to make active efforts to reunify with their parents.
- If a child can't be reunified with their parents, ICWA sets up placement preferences for where the child should go next.
- Allows the Tribe to advocate for the child.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

- Prior to ICWA, post boarding schools, Indigenous children were still taken from their families and separated from their cultures at high rates due to adoptions and the foster care system
- From 1958-1967, the BIA (Bureau of Indian Affairs) encouraged this adoption of Native children by non-Native families through the Indian Adoption Project
- In 1978- 25%-35% of all Native children were removed from their homes
- As a result of this, activists and advocates pushed the federal government to pass ICWA in 1978

HOW TO PROTECT ICWA:

- Research ICWA
- Write to your legislators to ensure ICWA stays
- Listen to the stories of survivors and elders
- Text **PCCPGW** to **50409**