



Kickapoo

Cohort 6, Funding Period 2014–2019

[Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas Project LAUNCH](#)

Grantee Overview

Kickapoo LAUNCH works to improve the delivery of services and build more prevention-focused and comprehensive systems of support for children ages birth to 8 years and their families. The Kickapoo Tribe in Kansas is located in Brown County, the most northeast corner of Kansas, with approximately 1600 enrolled members. While many tribal members today live on the reservation, members also live in the surrounding counties, in the Kansas City metro area, and across the country. The goals of Kickapoo LAUNCH are to ensure that children ages birth to 8 years receive appropriate developmental supports through the creation of a comprehensive services network, to provide culturally appropriate supports to families with young children to promote positive parenting and caregiving practices, and to integrate behavioral health into primary care and early childhood settings to promote optimal child growth and development for all Kickapoo children.

Project Milestones

All [Project LAUNCH](#) grantees implement five promotion and prevention strategies intended to increase access to preventative care and to raise the quality of prevention and promotion services available to children and families. In Kickapoo LAUNCH, these five strategies are implemented through the following activities:

- **Screening and Assessment:** Kickapoo Project LAUNCH supports community staff from a variety of settings using the [Ages & Stages Questionnaire®, Third Edition \(ASQ-3™\)](#) and [Ages & Stages Questionnaire®: Social-Emotional, Second Edition \(ASQ:SE-2™\)](#) and helps make necessary community-based referrals based on those screenings. Kickapoo Project LAUNCH Home Visiting staff have been trained to provide the screenings in homes and other community settings, and early childhood staff at the Kickapoo Nation Health Center and Head Start/Early Head Start (HS/EHS) program have joined the screening effort as well. This is part of Kickapoo Project LAUNCH's work toward a more comprehensive and collaborative effort among the Project LAUNCH's pediatric nurse, home visitors, and parent education coordinator in order to best serve the needs of the Kickapoo community. Two Kickapoo Project LAUNCH staff members have also been certified as [ASQ-3](#) and [ASQ:SE-2](#) trainers, supporting the ongoing implementation and sustainability of the community screening program.
- **Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation:** Kickapoo Project LAUNCH partners with [KANZA Mental Health & Guidance Center](#) to train staff who work with young children and their families on mental health first aid, cultural competency of service providers, and to ensure that early childhood providers meet each family where they

are. Project LAUNCH staff are also collaborating with Head Start’s Parent Policy Council in order to build upon internal community partnerships that could support mental health referrals and consultations and to give voice to parents and families about the emotional, social, and historical wellbeing of the community.

- **Integrating Behavioral Health into Primary Care:** Since tribal members access services from a number of providers across the reservation and surrounding counties, the Kickapoo Project LAUNCH team has developed key area partnerships with behavioral health professionals and incorporated these services in a range of primary care settings. Kickapoo Project LAUNCH has also successfully integrated the [ASQ:SE-2™](#) screening tool into primary care and early education settings throughout the community, including the Kickapoo Nation Health Center, Kickapoo HS/EHS, and the Project LAUNCH Home Visiting program. The ASQ:SE-2™ encourages families to work with providers to monitor social–emotional growth, celebrate milestones, and screen for behavioral health concerns. Key to this successful integration is the hard work of the pediatric nurse, who has built a robust pediatric program at the Kickapoo Nation Health Center with the support of Project LAUNCH and the Health Center physician. Over the past few years, the pediatric nurse has more than doubled well-child visits annually and has revitalized an immunization program for which she was awarded the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Childhood Immunization Champion award in 2017.
- **Enhancing Home Visiting:** Kickapoo Project LAUNCH is implementing the [Parents as Teachers](#) (PAT) Home Visiting model with 25 families each year. This is in large part administered by the home visitor/patient navigator, but several other positions including the program assistant, the parent education coordinator, and the Early Head Start home visitor have also been trained and support families through home visits to ensure a wide-reaching, diverse, and responsive approach to Home Visiting.
- **Family Strengthening:** The Kickapoo Project LAUNCH team recognizes two important community values that inform their family strengthening strategy: 1) that parent figures in the community are varied and diverse and 2) that all members want the best for our future generations. Community engagement events such as a Back-to-School Bash (supporting the school readiness of all community children with physical exams, immunizations, school supplies, and a hygiene program), an annual Community Carnival, and health and wellness-focused events for families during Pow Wow weekend have successfully brought families together and provided Project LAUNCH with the opportunity to deliver holistic parenting messaging and program materials in an accessible way. Kickapoo Project LAUNCH staff engage not just with parents but also with grandparents, aunts and uncles, siblings, and extended relatives to provide an intergenerational approach to family well-being that strengthens the network of supports in each child’s life. In addition, families receiving Home Visiting services are actively engaged in increasing their knowledge and understanding of child development and healthy relationships to support the well-being of the child—and ultimately the entire family.

Systems Integration

Project LAUNCH is intended to improve coordination and collaboration across systems that serve young children and their families. By creating new partnerships and expanding existing ones, Kickapoo Project LAUNCH has increased accessibility and utilization of services by families in the community. The Young Child Wellness Council provides a forum for collaboration to address challenges and take advantage of



opportunities to meet the needs of children and their families. Partnering with Head Start and Early Head Start increases the reach of high-quality Home Visiting services. The partnership has created “no wrong door” access for families. Discussions with the Child Care NEW Program and Kickapoo Social Services may lead to policy changes that create pathways for families to be linked to quality services. The Kickapoo LAUNCH program has had successful strategies replicated in the community, including the pediatric nurse’s initiatives for childhood immunizations, which has been adapted into a fully stocked immunization and flu-shot service at the Kickapoo Nation Health Center.

Vignette

“The Project LAUNCH home visitor is now integrated into many of the daily workflows of Kickapoo Head Start and has become a trusted and respected educator to the young kids who spend their days there.”

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