

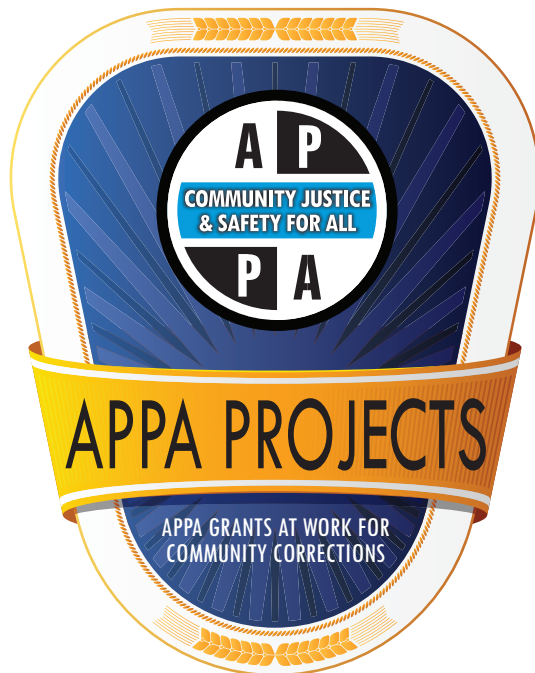
USING FAMILY MAPPING TOOLS TO ENHANCE OUTCOMES FOR TRIBAL MEMBERS UNDER COMMUNITY SUPERVISION

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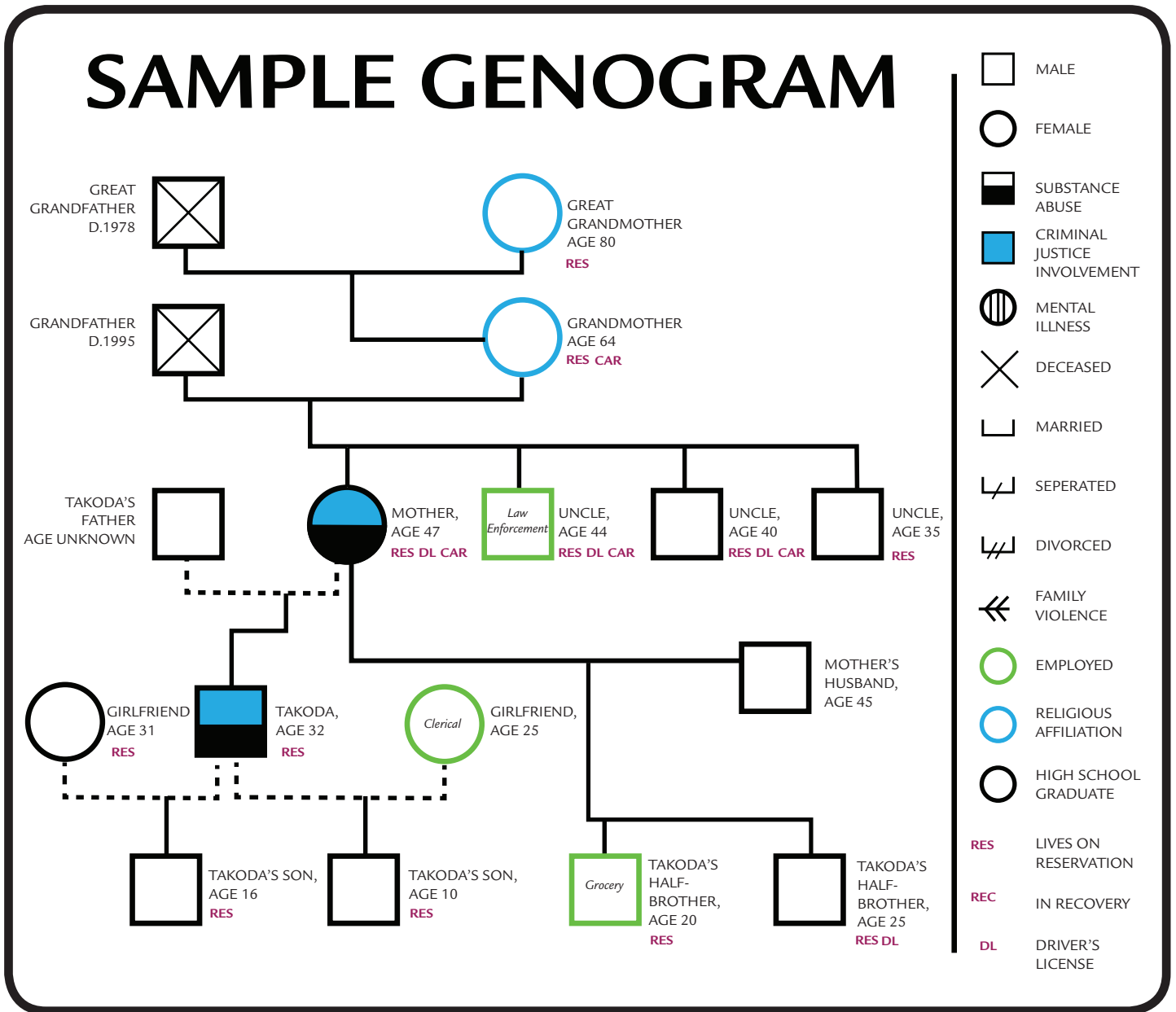
INTRODUCTION

This fact sheet is designed to serve as an overview of two family tools that help people visualize the connections within families and the connections families have to their community: genograms and ecomaps. This fact sheet also provides ideas for tribal probation officers about how they can incorporate family mapping tools into their work.¹ Tribal probation officers may find that family mapping tools are useful for a number of reasons. Drawing a family map with a client can encourage them to open up and further develop a cooperative relationship with you as their probation officer. Seeing family and other connections represented visually can help probationers recognize links that may not otherwise be apparent to them. Visual tools can also be a source of pride, as probationers can chart changes to their maps, consolidate information about key contacts, and identify the supports they can access. You may already use these types of maps in your wellness courts and have seen other benefits to them.

¹ For more information on using genograms and ecomaps, please see C. Toner and T. Mullins, “Implementing the Family Support Approach for Community Supervision” available on the APPA website: <http://www.appa-net.org/eweb/docs/APPA/pubs/IFSACS.pdf>.

GENOGRAMS

A genogram is essentially a family tree that shows the origins and interconnections of a family and the nature of various relationships between members of the family. It is important that the probationer and his or her family play an active role in creating the genogram. Below is an example of what a completed genogram may look like.



From this genogram, you can see that Takoda's mother is involved in the criminal justice system, has a history of substance abuse, and is now in recovery. You can also see that Takoda has an uncle, girlfriend, and half-brother who are all gainfully employed and that he has a number of family members residing on the reservation, many of whom have driver's licenses and vehicles. This information can be used to help identify solutions to barriers that Takoda may face during the supervision process, such as difficulty getting to appointments due to a lack of transportation. A genogram can help probationers identify patterns of behavior in their family that they would like to change as well as identify strengths in the family that can support them during their supervision.

Common information about people depicted in a genogram includes:

- Gender
- Date of birth
- Living or deceased
- Cause of death
- Chronic illness (e.g., mental illness, substance abuse, diabetes, hypertension)
- Education
- Marital status
- Occupation (including retirement and disability)
- Location of birth
- Primary language
- Status as adopted or foster child
- Religion, observant or not
- Criminal justice involvement, history, and status
- Alcohol or drug use
- Length of time in recovery
- Tobacco use

Genograms should balance intergenerational problems and deficits with strengths. Information included on a genogram can assist a probationer in identifying individuals that could be supportive during the supervision process. Once individuals are identified, information for each individual can be captured, such as:

- Graduation/attendance at college/high school
- Languages spoken
- An elder or tribal council member
- Owns a car
- Has a driver's license
- Employed
- Computer literate
- Owns a home
- Lives nearby, lives on the reservation
- Owns a business

Connections that can be depicted on a genogram with lines and circles grouping people together include:

- Who lives together
- Who is speaking to each other
- Healthy alliances
- Long-term relationships

GETTING STARTED WITH A GENOGRAM

It often works best to start the genogram yourself and then hand it over to the probationer or their family members, if they are present in the session, to continue. You might outline the current household members and their birthdates, and then have the probationer or family take it further. Allow them to spontaneously document as much information as possible, then probe for people and connections that are not included. For example, if an individual does not initially mention siblings or indicate any family history of substance abuse, recovery, or current employment, probe for these items. If family members disagree about where in a genogram to place a person or some other symbol, put it in both places. It is extremely important to probe for a balance of strengths and challenges.

If you have limited time, you could focus on capturing employment-related information on the genogram if, for example, the probationer is working toward an employment-related goal. You might ask them about who in their family could help them develop a resume or complete a job application. Based on the discussion, you can come up with next steps for the probationer to work on before your next meeting with him or her. As other goal areas surface, you can return to the genogram to add an additional element, such as discussing alcohol/substance abuse history if a probationer is working towards a sobriety-related goal.

You can return to genograms frequently and update them during the course of working with a probationer. They can be used to note additional family members entering recovery, a new arrest, births, deaths, new diagnoses of illnesses, and other life events.

ECOMAPS

An ecomap is a visual representation of valuable resources available outside the family. It is more than just a list of resources—it can display links as well as conflicts between service providers and highlight the need for coordination. As the person under supervision describes the various service providers with whom he/she interacts, many probation officers find it useful to write down the name and number of key contacts next to each circle to use as a quick reference. On the next page is an example of what a completed ecomap may look like.

From this ecomap, it is clear that the probationer is involved in a high number of systems—child welfare, public housing, drug treatment, and probation. Throughout the supervision process, as involvement in these systems change, you can highlight these changes on the ecomap to illustrate how far the probationer has progressed. Also from this ecomap, you can see that the probationer identified a strong relationship with his godmother and his house of worship. From this information, you can ask the probationer how these two relationships can support him during the supervision process and build that into your case plan with the

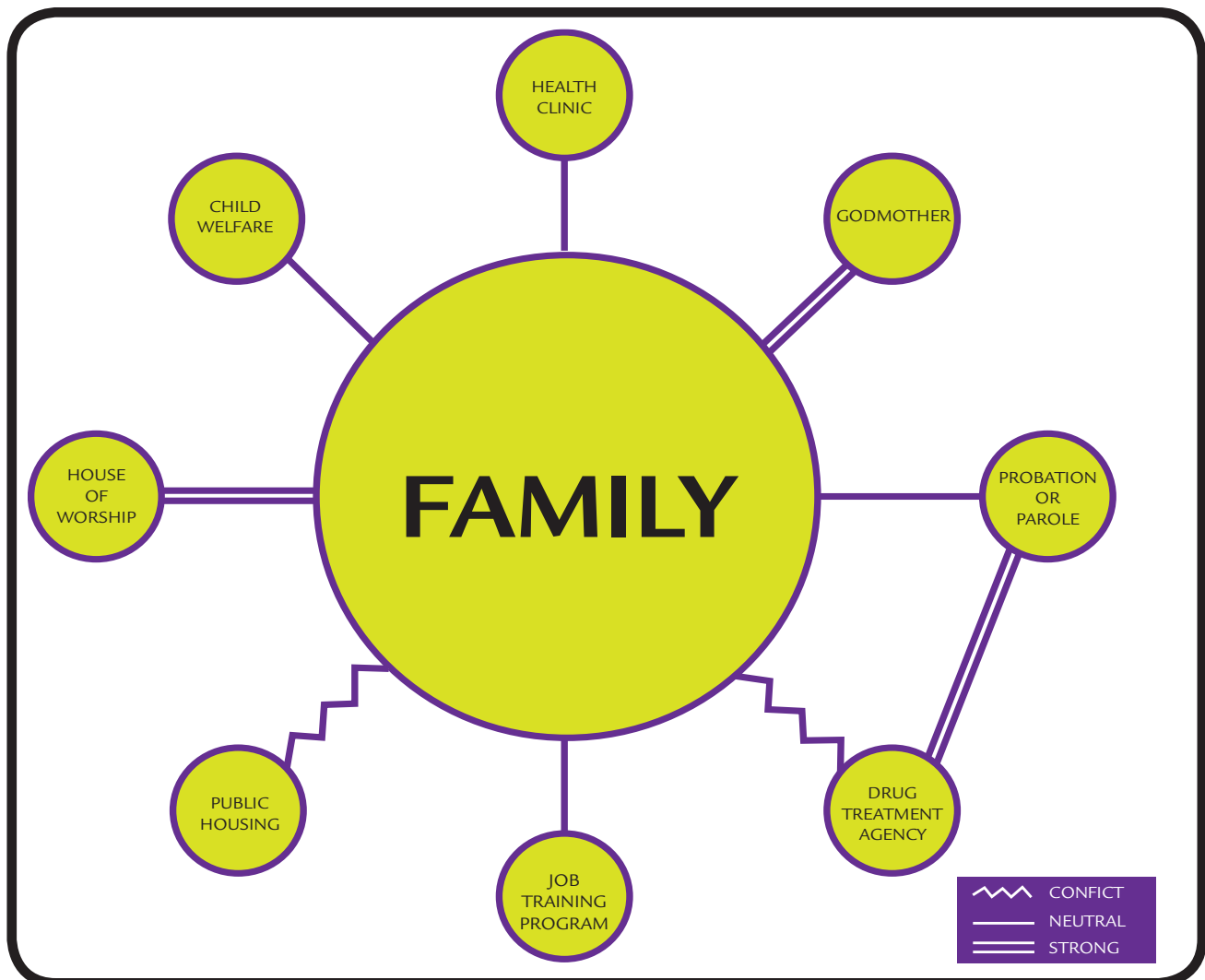
“I SHOWED A GENOGRAM TO ONE OF MY PROBATIONERS THAT FELT THERE WAS NO SUPPORT FOR HIM. HE FELT BETTER AFTER SEEING ALL THE FAMILY SUPPORT THAT THERE WAS.”

– Tribal Probation Officer from South Dakota

probationer. For example, if employment is a goal for this individual, you can ask whether there are ways that the godmother may help him. He might identify that she could save newspapers for him so he can review the job ads and that she has a computer that he could use to submit job applications online. If community service is a condition of supervision that you have built into a case plan goal, you could check if the house of worship is willing to allow the individual to complete his or her community supervision at that facility.

HOW TO CREATE AN ECOMAP

Once the individual identifies the persons and institutions with whom he or she interacts, you can instruct him or her to draw lines from the center circle (family or household) to each of the outside circles and indicate the type of relationship the individual or family member has with each entity. Typically, a straight line represents a neutral relationship, a double line represents a strong positive relationship, and a jagged or zigzag line represents a challenged relationships. The person also can indicate the type of relationships various entities have with each other (if known).



One tribal probation officer found the ecomap to be helpful in working with a juvenile who was not going to school: “[I] prepared an ecomap showing the relationships between offender and her support network as well as relationships among support network. It helped explain that there is in effect a web around her. The diagram provided a picture of the various ties and network web surrounding her in both a good and bad way. It showed the tight connections between the PO and school, therapy, CPS and the parents.”

Several tribal probation officers mentioned how the maps were helpful in court:

“Some offenders live on the reservation; others do not. When the court imposes community service our agency has traditionally required all of them to perform their hours at the same location/time. Some offenders have transportation or can get a ride from a family member or friend. A few have a driving license of their own. In allowing community service to be located within the area that the offenders live, we have a better chance of them complying with the court orders. By being able to show this information quickly to the courts we have been able to get their approval.” – Tribal Probation Officer from Washington State.

GETTING THE CONVERSATION STARTED

Potential connections for an ecomap can be identified by using motivational interviewing and supportive inquiry techniques.² A helpful way to start is by telling a client that the ecomap represents a walk through a week of his or her life. Ask open-ended questions and prompt him or her, if needed. For example:

- What do you do on Saturday afternoon? Sunday evening?
- When did someone in your family last go to a doctor or hospital? Where did they go?
- Where did you live before your current home?
- Who picks your children up from school?
- Whom do you help?
- Who asks you for help?

The following connections may appear on someone’s ecomap:

- Church or other faith-based institution
- Childcare provider
- School: own, children’s
- Workplace: own, other household member’s

² Motivational interviewing is a way to asking questions and providing statements to build someone’s willingness to change their behavior. For more on this technique and how it is applied in community corrections, see Scott T. Walters, Michael D. Clark, Ray Gingerich, and Melissa Meltzer, “Motivating Offenders To Change: A Guide for Probation & Parole Officers” Practice Monograph (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Corrections, 2007).

- Co-parent of a child who does not live in the household
- Vocational training
- Treatment program or service provider
- Medical care provider
- Child protective services/parenting class
- Probation/parole
- Landlord/public housing authority
- Gang/peer group
- Neighbors
- Wellness court
- Government entities (federal, state, tribal)
- Mutual aid groups
- Informal organization and groups such as social clubs, sports teams

No matter what information you gain from the completion of an ecomap, the information can be used to enhance the supervision process. Like many other things in life (such as making a big purchase, choosing the right college/career), the more information you have, the better informed decision you can make.

CONCLUSION

Family maps such as genograms and ecomaps can be effective tools for the people you supervise. For the people you supervise, it can often be an eye-opening experience to see their connections visually represented by these family maps—and it may be the first time they realize all of the people/agencies/entities with which they are involved. The other thing that is typically noted when working with family maps is that many of the agencies/systems with which your clients are involved are not systems they would typically choose (e.g., services they are required to complete such as probation, drug treatment, mental health, and child and family services). The goal during supervision and the challenge for the individual is to see his or her family maps change over time so that the systems and people with which they are involved become more systems or agencies of choice.

