

(Written by a current colleague and faculty member at OUHSC, Dr. Dolores Subia BigFoot, Ph.D., who is an American Indian child psychologist, and faculty member at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center... Dr. Diane J Willis mentored her during her training, and she has gone on to make many contributions to mental health for American Indian children and families... This is what she wrote about Dr. Willis...)

Dr. Dolores Subia BigFoot wrote: Diane J. Willis, PhD., has been a mentor, teacher, advisor, counselor, guide, and friend to me. She developed a post-doctoral fellowship for me at the University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center in the Child Study Center that allow me to gain a foundation in treatment of child maltreatment, policy development, community programming, and service delivery with diverse communities. Dr. Willis has been providing direct clinical services to the Cheyenne-Arapaho tribal communities for over 30 years and in the post-doctoral position allow me the opportunity to accompany her as she worked with the Cheyenne and Arapaho children and their families. She has always maintained a constant and deep level of concern for underserved American Indian children across the nation. Whether it is at a Head Start program on the Hopi Reservation, running for president of APA, facilitating a national meeting on child maltreatment, or gathering clothes for a family, Dr. Willis is always seeking to present the best and making certain that diversity is a guiding principle. She single handedly has initiated major conferences on American Indian children's mental health, persistently advocated for policy change to improve clinical services, and initiated several publications addressing the needs of American Indian children. In all of those activities she has gently but unrelentingly included me as co-therapist, co-committee member, co-policy maker, or co-author. I am but one ethnic minority student who has benefited from her mentoring and continued to contribute to the field of psychology by following in her academic footsteps. She is a scholar and a researcher. She has mentored many students; in her role as mentor, she has shaped the professional development of all her students in a very positive manner while teaching and practicing tolerance and acceptance. Dr. Willis has used her professional influence to maintain attention on the need of all children, including children of color with a special emphasis on American Indian children. She says with pride, "I am an enrolled member of the Kiowa Tribe of Oklahoma" which has a bit of bias to it but this is allowed when one is standing for all children equally.

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