

Intentional Inclusion of Indigenous Families in Service Provision

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This session began with a brief opening ceremony by a Native American family, Sarah, Keith, and Monti, to give thanks to the ground, which was indigenous land first. The presentation focused on better ways to engage Native American families in residential or community-based treatment settings by increasing service provider awareness of the impact of cultural considerations of vulnerable youth populations such as indigenous youth, include family involvement through a culturally inclusive lens, and the cultural differences between youths living in urban and rural areas. Only 20% of indigenous people at any time live on tribal land, so the other 80% live off reservation, and statistically comprise anywhere from one to two percent of any city and state population. This multi-media presentation included the viewing of multiple videos. To augment a summary of this presentation, links to much of the statistical information provided and to the instructional and informational videos are provided in the text below.

Indigenous youth are at greater risk for substance abuse, human trafficking, and suicide. For example, in 2013, among persons age 12 or older, the rate of substance dependence or abuse was higher among Native Americans than any other population, and almost 39% of these youth aged 12-17 years old had a lifetime prevalence of illicit drug use. Alcohol and drug use are initialized at earlier ages than their non-native counterparts, placing indigenous youth at risk for escalating and problematic use. A recent SAMSHA study found higher average rates of marijuana, heroin, and oxycontin use amongst these youth when compared to the national data. Non-medical use of opioids by this population was reported to be more than twice the rate of whites and three times that of African Americans. For detailed information and reports on indigenous youth and substance abuse, Ms. Johnson listed the follow link:

https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/topics/tribal_affairs/ai-andata-handout.pdf

Apart from the usual risk factors for becoming a human trafficking victim—for example poverty and abuse and neglect history—indigenous youth risks are higher because of jurisdictional dynamics with police agencies and courts. Because reservations are policed by tribes and the federal government, some loopholes exist that allow crimes to be perpetrated upon indigenous youths that are not prosecuted dependent on where the youth resides, where the victimization occurred, and the status of the perpetrator. More detailed information on this can be found at the following links: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6D5uj9gjLM&feature=youtu.be>
<https://digitalcommons.law.seattleu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1193&context=ailj>

For clinicians, learning and applying ways to help connect youth to native culture is helpful to augment treatment success. Not all indigenous youth want those connections, and clinicians should respect the decision of those youth that do not want to connect to culture. To learn or improve clinical skills on how to intentionally add inclusiveness for indigenous youth, please visit the following links: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zwLR23fHBQU>

<https://wemattercampaign.org/toolkits/>

<https://www.tribalyouthprogram.org/>