

Suicide Prevention with American Indians and Alaska Natives in Indian Country

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Suicide Prevention in Indigenous Communities: A Virtual Workshop-Webinar 1

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The national **Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)** is your one-stop source for information to help you develop, deliver, and evaluate evidence-informed suicide prevention programs.

What we offer

- Toolkits
- Online trainings
- Effective Suicide Prevention Model
- Research summaries...and more!

Who we serve

- Organizations
- Communities
- Agencies
- Systems

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The **Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SPRC)** is the only federally funded resource center devoted to advancing the implementation of the **National Strategy for Suicide Prevention**. SPRC is supported through a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

SPRC builds capacity and infrastructure for effective suicide prevention through consultation, training, and resources for state, tribal, health/behavioral health, and community systems; professionals and professional education programs; and national public and private partners and stakeholders.

Diversity, inclusion, and equity guide our mission.



Toolkit: Lead, Indian Country



Best and Promising
Practices for the
Implementation of Zero
Suicide in Indian Country



SPRC Tribal Needs Assessment Survey 2022 (TNS)

575 Federally Recognized Tribes Contacted

200 Email confirmed contacts for individuals who identified as the suicide prevention contact

200 TNA surveys distributed to tribal contacts

40 completed surveys returned on tribal suicide programs

5/2020 Webinar scheduled on TNS results





Cultural Based Knowledge integrated into Prevention Transition Period

- Transitions period have always been a part of Indigenous ways and practices
 - Prayer: Offering words before beginning any activity is a way of moving into that activity
 - Ritual: Making an offering of water or some other objects to set that time as being sacred or important
 - Gift giving: Recognition of someone being present or leaving and honoring that time since the person will no longer be around
 - Coming of age ceremony: Passing from one way of awareness of self to the next level of awareness of self
 - Naming: Giving a person a new name is the most common typically because of a change in status or a change in what was before to what is now different



Cultural Teachings integrated into Prevention Belonging, Identity, Connections and Circles

Understanding and practicing principles of 7th Generation – paving the way for those who yet to be born but know of the prayers

Embracing extended family relationships – aunties, uncles, grandparents

Adoptions and Taking of a Relative – inclusion, acceptance, welcome,

Identification of genealogy – who we are, where we came from, how we are connected, and who came before us and who comes after us

Naming especially native name, use of native language, recognition, acknowledgement, how the person is connected to relatives

Connection to land, location, place

Belonging: Tribal Identity

Land Acknowledgement



Cultural Teachings integrated into Prevention Belonging and Circles

A sense of belonging, connectedness, and identity are important aspects of wellbeing, lessen distress, reduces anxiety, increases sense of purpose and generational pride. Allow for learning about self by better understanding the experiences of ancestors. Stories of ancestors give purpose for following generations. Improves mental health and resiliency skills for better decision making and helpful choices while building compassion and advocacy for self and others. Allows for humanity to be seen through the eyes of humility. And to not make the mistakes of the past by helping the healing and recovery process. To do the work of ancestors who prayed for the next generations.



Cultural Teachings integrated into Prevention

Ceremony Teaches Self Regulation

Dolores Subia BigFoot, PhD
& Ah-in-nist Sipes



Eastern Shoshone
Recovery Center
Wind River Reservation
Wyoming

Ceremony is about preparation, sacrifice, service, reflection, offerings, and grounding that results in self-regulation. The definition for self-regulation involves controlling one's behavior, emotions, and thoughts in the pursuit of short term and long-term outcomes. More specifically, emotional self-regulation

refers to the ability to manage disruptive emotions (feelings), behavioral impulses and actions (doing), and intrusive or negative thoughts (thinking). Self-regulation is an on-going process that is practice daily and improved over time. For ceremony, there is preparation which includes planning, scheduling, and thoughtful engagement with ceremonial individuals and family or others that guide actions. One instruction that is typically given is to think good thoughts in preparation of moving toward ceremony. Sacrifice is a significant aspect of ceremony, not only in preparation but in the actual ceremony.



Cultural Teachings integrated into Prevention Silence, Pause, Reflection

Not react immediately
Speech cadence
Thoughtful response
Halt impulsiveness
Comfort with silence
Comfort with listening
Comfort with being present

