

National Indian Health Board



National Indian Health Board Resolution 17-08

HEALING THROUGH CULTURE: A REQUEST TO FUND SUBSTANCE ABUSE INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION PROGRAMS FOR AMERICAN INDIAN/ALASKA NATIVE YOUTH THAT PROMOTE HIGH SELF-ESTEEM AND RESILIENCE THROUGH CULTURAL ENRICHMENT

WHEREAS, the National Indian Health Board (NIHB), established in 1972, serves all Federally recognized American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Tribal governments by advocating for the improvement of health care delivery to AI/ANs, as well as upholding the Federal government's trust responsibility to AI/AN Tribal governments; and

WHEREAS, NIHB has a strong history of advancing the emotional, spiritual, and mental well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native people through the support of regulatory and Congressional action, advocacy for increased funding for behavioral health in Indian Country, creation of national venues to discuss behavioral health issues (such as suicide and substance use), and creation of educational and programmatic materials for Tribal public health professionals; and

WHEREAS, culture has been defined as the "complex ensemble of emotions, beliefs, values, aspirations . . . that together make up behavior," taken from (Sanchez-Way, R. 2000); and

WHEREAS, culture is carried from generation to generation through language. Culture also encompasses the stories, songs, art, and ceremonies of our people. It is the framework and the essence of our being and which childhood socialization takes place; and

WHEREAS, research shows that strong cultural identification reduces adolescent risk factors for drug use as opposed to those who lack this identification (Sanchez-Way, R. 2000); and

WHEREAS, on the basis of national data of American Indian students collected from 1975 to 1994, Beauvais (1996) reported that 15% of Native youth had consumed alcohol or used drugs at least once by the age of 12, 62% had been intoxicated at least once by age 15, and 71% of seventh through twelfth graders had used alcohol during their lifetime; and

WHEREAS, 56.2% of American Indian eighth graders have used marijuana while only 16.4% of eighth graders of all races have reported the same. 61.4% of American Indian tenth graders have used marijuana while 33.4% of tenth graders of all races have reported the same (Stanley, L. 2014); and

WHEREAS, American Indian 12th graders' annual heroin use is approximately two times greater (2.1% vs. 0.8%) than the national average for the same age group. Oxycontin use at the 12th grade level was also approximately two times greater (9.1% vs. 5.0%) than the national average (Stanley, L. 2014); and

WHEREAS, according to the *U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2015)* between fiscal years 2014 and 2015 there were 64 less substance abuse programs offered across the nation for American Indians/ Alaska Natives; and

WHEREAS, grants through the Special Diabetes Program for Indians are given directly to tribes, for use in ways that they see best fit for their community and for culturally tailored programs; and

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the National Indian Health Board encourages the United States government to allocate funds towards an alcohol and drug abuse prevention and intervention program that parallels the structure of the Special Diabetes Program for Indians; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, the funds will be allocated toward substance abuse prevention and intervention programs for American Indian/Alaska Native Youth that promotes high self-esteem and resilience through cultural enrichment.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Board, with quorum present, on the 2 day of May, 2017.



Vinton Hawley
Chairperson

ATTEST:



Lisa Elgin
Recording Secretary