FIRST NATIONS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE
Educating Grassroots Practitioners – Advocating Systemic Change – Capitalizing Native Communities

AMERICAN INDIAN YOUTH

Gifts From the Creator:

Leading Issues Facing Native Youth

May 2005

Cover photos are First Nations Native Youth and Culture Fund grantees: The Cheyenne River Youth Project in Eagle Butte, South Dakota, and Ya Ne Dah Ah School in Chickaloon, Alaska.

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Leading Issues Facing Native Youth

Prepared by First Nations Development Institute
for the Open Society Institute

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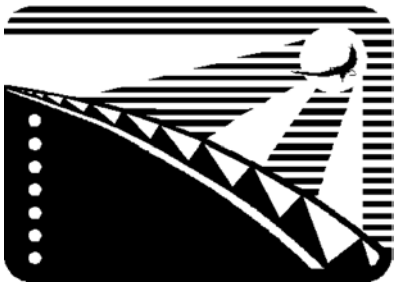

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **First Nations has over 10 years of experience in grantmaking to rural reservation based Native communities.**

- **First Nations has been funding Native youth projects through its Native Youth and Culture Fund for 3 years, and has identified some key lessons from the field.**

- **Key issues identified by applicants to our Native Youth and Culture Fund:**

  ✓There is a lack of activities aimed at Native youth in their communities;

  ✓High rates of substance abuse;

  ✓A lack of adult role models;

  ✓High rates of teen pregnancy;

  ✓A lack of opportunity for youth and elders to interact;

  ✓High rates of language loss;

  ✓A lack of activities that focus specifically on learning, preserving, or practicing cultural traditions.

- **Key lessons learned from First Nations' grantees thus far:**

  ✓The best projects build upon traditional knowledge in the community

  ✓Elders are the conduits through which traditional knowledge is passed

  ✓The best projects come from the communities themselves

  ✓Spirituality is important

  ✓Communities are the vessels that carry lifeways from generation to generation – Economic Development is Youth Development

- **Issues affecting Native youth are complex and multi dimensional:**

  ✓A cultural youth strategy is needed to bridge the Native world view and Euro-American worldview

  ✓Current data reveal disparate gaps across many factors that lead to Native youth imbalances

  ✓Finding solutions that promote all forms of mental wellness and healthy lifeways is key

  ✓Reconnecting youth to culture will ensure that every child counts to mitigate the traumas of the past.

"Let us put our minds together to see what life we can make for our children."
– Sitting Bull, Hunkpapa Sioux Chief

I. INTRODUCTION

First Nations Development Institute believes that American Indian (AI), Alaska Native (AN), and Native Hawaiian youth represent the future of their communities, and that their health and well-being will determine the future health and well-being of a community overall. By providing young people with a sense of hope and pride in their community and traditions, a community ensures that its youth will become productive community members. Youth experience a greater feeling of well-being when they find a sense of place in the world and understand and connect with their spiritual and cultural traditions and heritage. By providing youth with activities that challenge them and provide them a safe space to explore their culture, their identity, and their potential, a community ensures that their youth have an opportunity to grow into future community leaders.

This paper will provide an overview of the key issues facing Native youth and will draw from First Nations grantmaking evaluation data and an extensive literature review to identify key areas of need and lessons learned. *Gifts from the Creator* is a summary of the conditions and challenges AI/AN youth face in their communities, their families, and their schools, and will provide insights from the field that we believe can make a difference for our greatest gift from the creator, our children.

II. FIRST NATIONS DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE'S EFFORTS

First Nations Development Institute was founded in 1980 with the mission to assist Native communities in controlling their assets and building their capacity to direct their own economic futures. First Nations began its grantmaking program in 1994, and since then has granted over $10 million in grant funds to rural, reservation based Native nonprofits and tribal governments in support of innovative development strategies. For the past three years, First Nations Development Institute has been investing in Native youth and their communities through our Native Youth and Culture Fund. First Nations has invested over $344,722 in 19 communities across the nation to support Native directed and controlled youth education projects (see Appendix A for a list of these programs).

First Nations Development Institute practices a three part strategy of Education, Advocacy, and Capitalizing Native-directed projects. First Nations envisions strong, healthy, culturally vibrant Native communities where Native people have the tools to direct their own destinies through diverse and thriving economies. Our organization was founded on the belief that when armed with the appropriate resources, Native people hold the capacity and ingenuity to ensure the sustainable economic, spiritual, and cultural well-being of their communities. Through a three-pronged strategy of education, advocacy, and capitalization of Native-directed projects, First Nations is working to restore Native control and culturally compatible stewardship of the assets they own- be they land, human potential, cultural heritage, or natural resources – and to establish new assets for ensuring the long term vitality of Native communities.

First Nations Development Institute is working to make changes in the social, educational, cultural and economic outlook of the lives of Native youth in tribal communities through its Native Youth and Culture Fund. The basis for development of the Native Youth and Culture Fund was to capitalize tribal based youth programs that represent innovative strategies to preserve cultural knowledge, build Native youth self esteem, and encourage youth-elder interaction. This type of program provides young people a sense of hope and pride in their community and traditions, to ensure the community will have future leaders.

By helping youth find a sense of place in the world, and helping them understand and connect with their spiritual and cultural traditions and heritage, youth can develop a greater sense of well-being.
--First Nations Development Institute.

The Native Youth and Culture Fund was launched with this overarching goal in mind. The projects funded by the Native Youth and Culture Fund have an integrated approach in addressing activities that preserve, strengthen, or renew Native culture among youth, and include one or more of the following components:

- Youth development through preserving, strengthening, or renewing cultural values, spiritual beliefs, or traditional knowledge.
- Youth development through intergenerational activities involving the family.
- Development of integrated youth programs that emphasize tribal language, traditional knowledge, tribal arts, ritual, historic research, or other cultural topics.
- Development of educational or mentoring programs addressing youth and culture.
- Use of appropriate technology (traditional and/or modern) by youth and culture.
- Development of youth programs that incorporate culture and tradition to address social issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, teen pregnancy, and mental health issues.

Native Youth and Culture Fund Evaluation

First Nations implements an extensive evaluation strategy for each of its grantees, and a wealth of data has been collected from our Native Youth and Culture Fund grantees. We have collected baseline data on a variety of indicators from over 50 Native youth projects and their communities. In addition, we have collected impact data from several grantees from our first round of funding, and have been able to identify key needs in communities, strategies for effectively addressing these needs, and innovative program designs. First Nations is in a unique position to see what types of projects rural, reservation based nonprofits and tribal governments are asking for money to fund, and therefore we have a sense of what is important for their communities. From this we have been able to extrapolate that these are the issues that are important for Indian communities in general with regard to Native youth programs/issues.

Key Findings from the Native Youth and Culture Fund grantees

Our evaluation of the Native Youth and Culture Fund grantees has revealed findings that are both surprising and completely expected. Our baseline data collection revealed that within our sample of Native rural reservation based communities (N=50), the following issues face Native youth:

- A lack of activities aimed at Native youth;

- High rates of substance abuse;
- A lack of adult role models;
- High rates of teen pregnancy;
- A lack of opportunity for youth and elders to interact;
- High rates of language loss;
- A lack of activities that focus specifically on learning, preserving, or practicing cultural traditions.

While national studies of Native youth have identified high rates of substance abuse and teen pregnancy and a lack of activities available to Native youth, we were surprised at how many applicants to our Native Youth and Culture Fund also specifically mentioned the lack of opportunities for Native youth to learn about their cultural traditions and interact with elders in the community.

In our first round of grantmaking, we funded eight projects that are noteworthy for their innovative approaches to youth development (see Appendix B for a list of these projects and a description of each). There were several key lessons learned from these grantees, which they shared in their final reports to our foundation. Each of the Native Youth and Culture Fund projects was able to help Native youth acquire knowledge of their community and their Native language, impacting the way youth feel, building self esteem, and strengthening individual behaviors. The following are the key lessons learned that we gleaned from a cluster analysis of our grantees:

BUILD ON TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN THE COMMUNITY

Each Indian community reinforces and sustains its beliefs and knowledge in their own way. The Hoopa, Yurok, and Karuk youth used basketry. The Navajo youth focused on the integration of financial literacy and Hogan home building. The Inupiat focused on subsistence hunting and fishing in Alaska. Each project was unique to their community, their intent, and their methods, but all shared the common outcome of preserving, strengthening, and renewing culture values.

ELDERS ARE THE CONDUITS THROUGH WHICH TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE IS PASSED

Indian elders are vast repositories of traditional values, information, and knowledge. These lifeways are practiced by elders in the communities in which they live. Elders can help ensure the cultural survival of the Indian people and help exemplify traditional lifeways as a means for guidance for the life and work of all people. In all of the Native Youth and Culture Fund projects, a core program element was increasing the opportunity for elders and youth to interact. These interactions were centered on very participatory activities with the elders such as basketry (Hoopa, Yurok, Karuk), hunting (Inupiat), art (Oneida), history (Tlingit), and Hogan building (Navajo). In every case, language and Native values were also an integral part of the program.

THE BEST PROJECTS COME FROM THE COMMUNITIES THEMSELVES

The eight projects funded by the Native Youth and Culture Fund represent innovative solutions that local community leaders identified and designed themselves. Many Native communities have external, non-Native models imposed upon them and these models are not as effective in bringing about change. Grantees repeatedly reported that their own, self designed projects provide youth with learning opportunities unique to their cultures and their communities, whether it be Hogan building for Navajo elders, or learning traditional Inupait hunting techniques.

SPIRITUALITY IS IMPORTANT

A connection to one's spiritual essence does not always come from prayer and the trappings of religious ceremonies. In many Native cultures, spirituality is holistic in nature, and encompasses one's natural environment. Many of the youth in these projects learned more about their culture, their heritage, their community, and their sense of self. Some of the youth projects, such as Indigenous Community Enterprises, did involve exposure to spiritual ceremonies and other religious events. Others, such as projects at Wrangell, Red Cliff, Oneida, and Inupiat, helped youth understand more about their culture, their mythologies and creation stories, their place in the world, and their own identity through exploring traditional practices. The goal of each of these projects was to give youth an opportunity to recognize and nourish their internal spiritual essence and ideally assist them in realization of their own potential. All of these projects helped youth connect to their cultural heritage, deepen their self-awareness, and develop a greater sense of belonging in an ever-changing world.

COMMUNITIES ARE THE VESSEL THAT CARRY LIFEWAYS FROM GENERATION TO GENERATION – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IS YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

A strong and persistent culture correlates with a strong community. The prerequisites for such a community include a vibrant economy; a strong network of services including health care, education, police, and infrastructure; a strong system of community networks including after school programs, church and community events; and a supportive cycle of individual human development. Strong communities correlate with strong cultural values. Native youth benefit from a vibrant, healthy community and a vibrant healthy economy, and therefore any Native youth strategy must include a focus on community and economic development.

Through FNDI's evaluation of these programs and their accomplishments, FNDI maintains that the many cultural aspects of the programs were important for youth to connect with community. What people know, how they feel, and what they do defines a culture. This is true for American Indian youth --their lifeways, or culture, are defined by what they know, how they feel, and what they do. The strength of Indian people is found in their unique worldview, the tribal identity, and traditional tribal knowledge. The language, customs, spiritual practices, thought, and traditional values define a philosophy or way of viewing the world, worldview, and a way of living. This worldview rests upon an idea of adhering to a set of core values that, when properly achieved, creates balance. These projects were championed by different community organizations with strong leadership. Each project focused on providing a connection to the past, present, and the future. By looking back at history, youth were able to understand and see the strength of their tribe or community. By living the language and participating in these projects they were able connect their own sense (today's) of purpose to their people (past). And lastly they were able to understand their responsibility for the future.

Through our Native Youth and Culture Fund, we believe that we are already gaining insight into what are the most important components of a successful Native youth strategy, and we hope these lessons learned from the field can continue to strengthen our work and provide direction for others working in the field of Native youth.

III. AMERICAN INDIAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH WELL-BEING

There has been a great deal of research on the issues facing Native youth in their communities and the strategies communities have used to ensure that Native youth have the opportunity to thrive, grow, and succeed. In order to understand the issues facing Native youth and the context for addressing these issues, it is necessary to review the extensive literature that addresses these topics.

Sufficient data on American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth and well-being is not available for most of the 20th century. If not for work conducted by dedicated AI/AN researchers and social work experts driving the focus for more critical information on AI/AN youth, research and policy that benefits AI/AN families would not have evolved. In recent studies supported by tribal communities, much of the information on a myriad of healing components for AI/AN youth and their families is grounded in culturally responsible analysis of data collected by tribes and local community members. This work has led to a change in the way society assesses and perceives today's Native American cultures. One such change is in identifying and distinguishing Native youth assets as principal indicators towards wellness and ensuring asset development through cultural programs. This is later discussed with the efforts FNDI has made in recent years. The following pages describe a fraction of the related issues that must be understood about AI/AN Native youth, the AI/AN family, and cultural implications for building sustainable programs for preserving, strengthening, and renewing cultural values, spiritual beliefs, and traditional knowledge.

Cultural Youth Strategy

Two clashing worldviews, the Native worldview and the Euro-American worldview, are illustrated by the different stories of history coming from each. The intersection of these two cultures has generated a great deal of historical trauma, as well as persistent institutional racism for Native children and families (Goodluck and Willeto, 2000).

A "cultural youth strategy" that balances youth assets, community, family, education, and cultural heritage is needed. This process should establish a way to end and lessen the adverse factors leading to AI/AN youth disparities in criminal justice, educational attainment, wellness, and socioeconomic disadvantages. A structure focusing on the resilient factors of American Indian children from childhood to adolescence into adulthood can provide the contextual foundation. The strategy must address attitudes, behaviors, and activities that enable individuals and communities to participate in their own culture(s) without conflict (Grantham-Campbell, 1998). School, home, and neighborhood are a child's only place to interact with their peers (FYSB, 2004), and for American Indian children in rural communities there are few locations with access to positive peer-to-peer interaction or group involvement. This adds more value to the programs that exist in Indian country that continue to struggle for funding to serve their Native youth.

A Native youth methodological approach must give high importance to social goals, traditional American Indian family values and beliefs throughout its community-oriented concepts. This moves away from assessment based strategies that use western methodologies composed of standards across individuals as a means to assess. Furthermore, measures of well-being are

generally used to assess the effectiveness of social services at various levels rather than to measure the well-being of the whole society, or of Native American nations (Goodluck and Willeto, 2000). In order to holistically respond to these issues, a comprehensive initiative that provides culture specific support for AI/AN children and youth could have strong prevention outcomes.

The Seventh Generation

According to the U.S. Census 2000, the AI/AN population (alone or in combination) totaled 4,119,301 (1.5 percent total population) with 66 percent of this population living in an urban area (Forquera, 2001; UIHI, 2004) and an estimated 1,383,000 AI/AN children (under age 18) (Kids Count, 2004; U.S. Decennial Census, 2000) and 183,000 American Indian or Alaska Native youths aged 12 to 17 (NSDUH, 2004). It is expected that the numbers of AI/AN youth between 1995 and 2015 will increase by 17 percent (DHHS, 2001). Currently the median age for AI/ANs is 28 years of age, with 33.9 percent less than 18 years old, and an average AI/AN family size of 3.6 persons (Kids Count, 2004). In 2002, there were 577 Indian communities in the United States, comprising 562 federally recognized tribes (Vigil, 2002).

Well Nations

"Well nations" is a term used by tribal communities to signify a vision of sober, healthy, spiritual, and active living Native communities. The impetus for Indian nations to return to a state of wellness is prompted by hope to resolve historical grief brought on by traumatic events experienced by Indigenous people in the United States. A brief background is presented to explain culminated traumatic events that connect many of the psychosocial problems of today's Native youth to the past. Specifically, insight into factors of historical trauma (HT), and historical trauma response (HTR), which are clinical terms used to define emotional wounding over the lifespan and across generations, emanating from massive group trauma experience and the features in reaction to this trauma (Brave Heart, 2004). Exposure to the ongoing effects of HT and HTR by AI/AN youth is a consequence of generations untreated for emotional distress created by events such as Indian boarding schools, relocation, the separation of Indian children from their parents, and disrupted Native family support systems.

Forced assimilation and cumulative losses across generations, involving language, culture, and spirituality, contribute to the breakdown of family kinship networks and social structures. This historical legacy and the current psychosocial condition contribute to ongoing intergenerational trauma (Brave Heart, 2004).

Government policies sought to break down the tight knit cultural family structure to ensure that the children of tribal nations across the country were preyed upon and were forced to attend Indian boarding schools to assimilate into 'civil society'. Imposed mandatory education for Indian children became law in 1893 (Two Frogs, 2005). Many authors and testimonies from boarding school survivors explain the course for such education:

Schools would be able to quickly assimilate Indian youth. Religious training in Christianity would be taught to eradicate all vestiges of Indian culture. The assault on the cultural identity began by first doing away with all outward signs of tribal life that the children brought with them. Boys had their long hair cut. All children were given standard uniforms to wear. They received new "white" names, including surnames, which it was felt would help when property was inherited. Students were not allowed to speak their native languages, not even to each other (SIRC, 2005).

Disciplinary measures at many of these schools were corporal and harsh. A report on Indian education issued in 1928 revealed glaring deficiencies in the boarding schools, including poor diet, overcrowding, below-standard medical service, excessive labor by the students, and substandard teaching resulting in the eventual closing of all government mandated Indian boarding schools (Two Frogs, 2005; Marr, 2004).

Restoration Of Wellness

The assault on Indian children set the course for the next 70 years in dealing with post traumatic stress disorder that continues to be prevalent in Indian country today. The solutions that move forward from these atrocities are taking place within tribal communities and creating resources for every member of the family to take part. FNDI's Native Youth and Culture Fund endeavors bring to the funding table the conversation to develop those programs that promote cultural well-being and wellness across the community. It is a common methodology in Indian country that central to wellness is the balance of all elements surrounding the child's environment. Sought as the foremost-accepted theory of the state of wellness and presented in the *Relational Worldview Model,* as conveyed by Terry Cross, Director of the National Indian Child Welfare Association:

On our globe today there are two predominant worldviews, linear and relational. The linear worldview is rooted in European and mainstream American thought. It says cause has to come before effect. In contrast, the relational worldview sees life as a harmonious relationship … maintaining balance between the many interrelating factors in ones circle of life. The relational worldview finds its roots in tribal cultures. It is intuitive non-time oriented and fluid. The balance and harmony in relationships between multiple variables including spiritual forces make up the core of the thought system…(relational worldview) helpers and healers are taught to understand problems through the balances and imbalances in the person's relational world…the balance contextually, cognitively, emotionally, physically, and/or spiritually…. is the constant change and interplay between various forces that account for resilience… *restoration of balance*.

Mental and Physical Health

The community is working to ensure that "Every Child Is Visible" (Yup'ik Alaska motto).

Research on AI/AN children and youth well-being has been overlooked in years past, but recent reports from leading resources on Indian child welfare have begun to fill the gaps in literature which provide valuable data from tribal communities in the healing process. Information on AI/AN populations from public health, mental health, juvenile justice, and social service sectors are based on national statistics and at the local level are almost never reported. This is due in part to misidentification and lack of culturally competent policies by these sectors that do not include delineation of racial specific identification of American Indian/Alaska Native from the term "other". This contributes to misleading conceptions that AI/AN tribes are vanishing, and adds to the confusion for youth encountering ignorance. The total impact of these negative experiences on AI/AN students, that include labeling, dismissing heritage, or the student being seen as a special needs student, can lead to lack of motivation to attend classes or to drop out of school to avoid these encounters.

At the outset to better understand the source and severity of disease, trauma, and social barriers that AI/AN youth and their families face in everyday life, one must consider the precipitating factors. We need to identify the baseline malaise in order to employ inherit strength based support systems in prioritized areas of appropriation. The following information is given in the areas of mental health, wellness, education, and socioeconomic characteristics. The status of AI/ANs as a disenfranchised and severely underserved community is changing, and as such the tolerance for abject environments created by the succession of federal laws to destroy Native familial systems and economies has past.

Type 2 diabetes is affecting our Native youth and families in high proportions.

The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, publishes data for objective resources on Healthy People 2010, which has reported diabetes among AI/AN men age 20-44 was 3.2 per 100 population compared to 0.6 for Whites and for AI/AN women of the same ages, diabetes was even higher at 4.1 per 100 population compared to 1.3 for White females. On the Pima reservation Pima Indians have a 50 percent incidence rate of diabetes, and Pima Indian children from 1967 to 1996 found the prevalence of type 2 diabetes in girls age 10 to 14 increased from 0.72 percent to 2.88 percent.

Similar to other ethnic minorities, AI/ANs have been disproportionately impacted by HIV/AIDS (Clark, 2004).

HIV/AIDS among AI/ANs has doubled in 7 years from 572 in 1993 to 1185 in 2000. New AIDS cases were 10.9 per 100,000 population in Native people age 13 years and older. AIDS cases among AI/AN adults and children reported in 2001 were 1,971 men, 460 women and 31 children under the age of 13 (CDC, 2004). Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) among AI/AN infants was 5.2 per 1,000 live births compared with .4 per 1,000 among the U.S. population as a whole. Indian children have a 500 percent greater chance of being born with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (NHSDA, 2003).

Children of substance abusing parents are much likelier to become substance abusers themselves (CUNCASA, 2005).

Substance abuse in tribal communities among its youth is preventable. Taking action that concentrates family, community, support, or outreach clinics and prevention programs towards the same goal will change the statistics on Native youth. Binge alcohol use by AI/AN youth was higher (13.8 percent) than the national average (10.3 percent) and heavy alcohol use was higher (3.8 percent) than the national average (2.5 percent) (Clarke, 2004). 25 percent of AI/AN youths (19 percent from other racial/ethnic groups) believed that all or most of the students in their school grade get drunk at least once a week. AI/AN parents were less likely to provide help with school homework or to limit the time out with friends on school nights. AI/AN parents were also perceived to not disapprove of substance use by their teens. AI/AN youth perceive that there is moderate to no risk associated with substance use and were less likely to participate in youth activities or regularly attend religious services (NSDUH, 2004).

Mental Health

American Indian youth are far more likely to commit suicide than any other groups (Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 2004).

In 1998, the suicide rate for white juveniles was 31 per 1 million; however, the rate for AI/AN juveniles was 57 per 1 million, almost twice the rate for white juveniles. From 1981 to 1998 the proportion of AI/AN juvenile suicides increased from 2 percent to 3 percent of the population, keeping in mind that AI/AN youth make up less than 0.3 percent of the total population, while white juvenile suicide rates decreased from 91 percent to 84 percent of all juvenile suicides (OJJDP, 2004). In a Bureau of Indian Affairs study, 19 percent of AI/AN high school youth had seriously considered suicide during the preceding year. Although still a strong cause for concern, this statistic does represent an improvement over the 29 percent reported in the 1994 survey (Shaughnessy, Branum, & Everett-Jones, 2001).

AI/AN children appear to be at greater risk for emotional problems than other children in the United States (Inouye, 1993).

Social and justice research contends that socioeconomic factors are determinants for AI/AN children's well-being across many levels and contribute to the quality of living. In a recent study on domestic partner violence it was shown that Native American women were four times more likely to have been assaulted by their partner if they experienced additional severe socioeconomic conditions, as indicated by living in severe poverty, receiving public assistance, or having a partner who has not graduated from high school (Malcoe et. al., 2004). In respect to child abuse, AI/AN children had the highest rate of victimization at 21.7 per 1,000 children, while White children were victimized at a rate of 10.7 per 1,000 children (NCANDS, 2002).

Culture Counts in Science and Practice

In the Surgeon General's Report on Mental Illness, an unprecedented focus on ethnic minorities provided a supplement document titled, *Culture Counts: The Influence of Culture and Society on Mental Health, Mental Illness*. The supplement reported comprehensive coverage of issues on the mental health of racial and ethnic minorities that revealed disparities across the AI/AN population. Ethnic and racial minorities in the United States face a social and economic environment of inequality that includes greater exposure to racism and discrimination, violence, and poverty (DHHS, 2001).

There is evidence of the growing influence of science-to-practice initiatives on AI/AN children and youth examined in scattered discussions or "think tanks" across professional services to build bridges between tribal practice and science. This document provides FNDI evaluation findings on less tangible subjects such as spirituality, impact on elder teachings, cultural pride and value. The text represents qualitative information in a positive light for science-based efforts to raise awareness on Native youth that is not based on emotional and economic deficits. AI/AN practitioners who are putting together national resources to discuss key issues faced by tribal youth programs summarize current challenges (Echo-Hawk, 2003).

Growing governmental emphasis on science-to-service initiatives and the application of evidence-based practices is cause for alarm in tribal communities… a) evidence based practices are currently developed from a scientific knowledge base that does not include AI/AN populations; b) prevention, intervention, and treatment practices within tribal programs have at their core spiritual and cultural belief systems that may be locally accepted as critical factors in practice based efficacy, but are not included in broader research studies….

How do we bridge what we know works well in our communities with compatible aspects of the research and science world? And, how can we influence and change the emphasis from science-to-service to service-to-science (Echo-Hawk, 2003)?

Wellness

These inequalities in health status are found across most racial groups and diseases. What does this mean for communities of color? Their health status is lower, their death rates higher (California Endowment, 2003).

Health coverage in Indian Country also affects the quality of life for Native children and youth. Just under half of AI/AN have job-based health coverage compared to 72 percent of whites. This disproportion affects Indian children and their families as reservations offer fewer opportunities for jobs that are likely to offer health benefits (Kaiser, 2000). A study, the largest of its kind requested by Congress entitled, *Unequal Treatment: Confronting Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Health Care*, published by the National Academy of Science's Institute of Medicine, reports on the startling health gaps and racially biased health practices of the nation's health workforce. Among its findings were complex societal issues Native Americans and other minority groups face when receiving healthcare that included poverty, lack of access to health insurance, language barriers, cultural isolation, and racial prejudice.

Education

From a tribal and Native American professional perspective, the creation of lifelong learning environments and meaningful educational experiences for both the youth and adults of a tribal community requires a language and cultural context that supports the traditions, knowledge, and language(s) of the community as the starting place for learning new ideas and knowledge (Demmert and Towner, 2003).

In reviewing the vast amount of information on education and America's student age school children, AI/AN education still lacks literature pertaining to current trends on how Native Americans learn in Native and non-Native environments. Leading resources of literature on AI/AN education however, are making significant headway in developing a resource foundation based on appropriate research methods that are culturally in sync with the learning styles of AI/AN children and youth. Teaching practices should align with student 'learning styles' and the home culture of adult-child interactions (Demmert and Towner, 2005; NEA, 2005). Tribal education authorities and teachers must undertake the additional measures to learn about current information on today's AI/AN youth to produce effective programs and curriculums based on these findings. Indian education resources can be found on the web at resource links that have acknowledged these authorities:

Table 1

- American Indian College Fund.
- American Indian Higher Education Consortium- provides information on all 30 tribal colleges.
- American Indian Library Association.
- The American Indian Science & Engineering Society - featuring *Winds of Change* magazine and their "College Guide for American Indians", a goldmine of information.
- American Indian Studies Research Institute - an interdisciplinary research center at Indiana University for projects focusing on the Native peoples of the Americas.
- Center for Indian Education.
- Gabriel Dumont Institute of Metis Studies and Applied Research - the educational arm of the Metis Nation of Saskatchewan.
- Indigenous Bilingual Education Special Interest Group of the National Association for Bilingual Education.
- Native Access Program for Engineering - from Lakehead University in Thunder Bay, Ontario.
- Native American Homeschool Association.
- Northern Teacher Education Program / Northern Professional Access College - teacher training for the Native peoples of Saskatchewan
- Office of Indian Education Programs - from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.
- Ottawa Aboriginal Head Start Added.
- South Dakota Indian Education Association Added.
- Health Careers Opportunity Program - recruiting Native students into the health professions at the University of Montana.

AI/AN school attendance includes 500,000 school aged students in American's public schools and at least 8 percent in Bureau of Indian Affairs schools (NEA, 2005). A Harvard Civil Rights project study found that only 51.1 percent of AI/AN 9th graders complete 12th grade with a regular diploma (compared to 75 percent of whites) (NEA, 2005). Ten percent of AI/AN teens are high school dropouts (ages 16-19) (Kids Count, 2004). The Office of Indian Education Programs has 25 offices throughout the United States, with 185 elementary and secondary schools funded by the federal government that provides an education program to 50,000 students from birth through grade 12. OIEP also operates two colleges and funds 25 colleges operated by tribes and tribal organizations (OEIP, 2005). Associate, bachelors, and professional AI/AN educational attainment has doubled in the past 20 years. Most majors were in the liberal arts, business, and social sciences, with law and health care being the most popular (NEA, 2005).

Recent outcomes from the 2004 "Nations Report Card" exposed the education gap between AI/AN students and the rest of the nation, leaving Indian children behind in many areas. Without proper or equal education in America's grade schools and middle schools AI/AN children and youth will suffer economic disadvantages as adults. Ultimately, the dispossession of the primary asset to a healthy adult life, a college education, means AI/AN students will probably not achieve economic success. Workers with limited education are often relegated to low-wage work and face high competition for jobs given today's global economy (Ong et. al. 2002).

Native culture is arguably the single most powerful resource when thinking about improving the lives of Indian children and families (Hunt, 2004).

Research is important for change to happen for the future of AI/AN children and youth by taking a closer look at the best practices and strategies that move AI/AN students toward success. For example, a way to help AI/AN college students has been successfully illustrated

through a partnership between Northwest Indian College, Washington State University and Western Washington University. This program was funded through private funds and the US Department of Education to assist AI/AN students going through a two year program, then to a Bachelor's program, and then a Master's degree through granting (NEA, 2005). The cultural-based education (CBE) priority of Native people has been reinforced in recent years through several events (Demmert and Towner, 2003):

Indian Nations At Risk: An Educational Strategy for Action
The White House Conference on Indian Education
The Native American Languages Act of 1990
The Executive Order of August 1998 on Indian Education

Socioeconomic characteristics

Indians experience trauma and its aftermath more often than the U.S. as a whole. It is the environmental exposure to trauma, not one's intrinsic cultural identity that predisposes a person to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (Manson, 2003).

Indians from various tribes began migrating in significant numbers from the reservations to major urban areas like Oakland and San Francisco during the 1950's BIA Relocation Program. Ultimately, the BIA did not deliver on its promises of transitional assistance, and relocation only succeeded in creating a chronically disenfranchised urban Indian population (Nebelkopf, Phillips and King, 2001). Since, American Indians as a whole remain severely disadvantaged because of low human capital (Ong et. al., 2002). The effects of the 'relocation' continue to plague second and third generation AI/AN families in urban areas as many have lost their extended family support systems by leaving the reservation. Financial factors on the reservation are also among the worst in the nation. Unemployment on the reservation hovers at 37 percent nationally, with some reservations reporting over 70 percent (Kaiser Commission, 2000). Those jobs that are available are mostly in the service industry with little chance of career growth.

The most critical concerns in Indian country communities are the social problems that contribute to youth gang involvement, not gangs themselves (Major et. al., 2004).

Gang activity in Native country is relatively recent and has not been fully understood. According to a survey on gangs in Indian country in 2000, half of the respondents surveyed said gang problems began after 1994, suggesting the relatively recent onset of gang activity (Major, et. al., 2004). In a study based on a convenience sample of nearly 14,000 youth in 50 tribes located in 12 states, 15 percent of reservation American Indian youth reported some level of gang activity, with younger teens participating at higher levels than older teens (Children, Youth and Family Consortium, 1992). The onset of gang activity stems from an assortment of factors dealing with environmental and community realities across the economic landscapes of reservation life. For instance, Indian Country communities suffer from a violent crime rate that is two to three times greater than the national average (Wakeling et al., 2001). Importation and spread of youth gangs are facilitated by specific structural factors in the community (Armstrong et al., 2002). These factors include the frequency with which families move off and onto the reservation; poverty, substance abuse, and family dysfunction; the development of cluster housing instead of traditional single-family housing; and a waning connection to Native American culture and traditional kinship ties among cousins (Vigil, 2002).

Native Family Preservation

It is estimated that approximately 25 percent- 35 percent of all Native individuals in the U.S. today grew up apart from their birth families, in foster homes, adoptive homes, or institutions (George, 1997).

The results of the boarding school experience for Native American children were devastating to Indian families as Indian children returned home without having learned traditional methods in parenting. This left the Indian child that grew up in a boarding school environment without the nurturing of a positive parental role model, absent of the knowledge to care for their children (Stoltenberg and Earle, 2002). The risk for substance abuse, as well as trauma exposure, increases when children are subjected to non-nurturing and ineffective parental disciplinary practices; absence of family rituals; and alcohol-related violence (Brave Heart, 2004).

The presence of culture in a young person's life may not be apparent in their dress, speech, physical characteristics, or even verbally. However, youth may display their culture through taught beliefs. The invariable characteristics of Native American values are instilled throughout all stages of the young persons life and learned through ceremony and positive interactions with parents or parental custodians and tribal teachers. Cultivating youth resiliency factors within the Native American culture are laid out in these developmental areas (Strand and Peacock, 2002):

Spirituality-living according to the belief in the interrelatedness of all things.
Mental well-being – having clear thoughts.
Emotional well-being- balancing all emotions.
Physical well-being – attending to the physical self.

Today's Native Youth

Although their survival in the face of decimating diseases and destructive U.S. policies speaks to the resilience of Indigenous cultures and peoples (Weaver, 1999), Native youth are invisible in society. This is apparent when you review statistical measures or studies that in most instances capture data on White (non-Hispanic), Black, Hispanic, and Asian youth populations. Despite these inequities, AI/AN youth find ways to connect to their cultural environments. One way is to attach themselves to role models within the community such as elders, peers, teachers, and adults who provide support to them traditionally, academically, and socially. It is outside this environment that Native American role models are not usually prominent in mainstream society like professional and collegiate sports stars, pop music stars, and movie and TV actors. Possibly most distressing is the absence of Native representation in public/federal governing positions or figures of authority (i.e. member of congress, legislature, governor, federal judges). AI/ANs are greatly over represented in the child welfare system, suffer disproportionately from a variety of health problems, and are among the poorest people in the United States (Weaver, 1999).

There is a need for cross system collaboration among funders and tribal youth based organizations to promote and create alternative options for AI/AN youth. A consensus on well-being indicators for youth using available data can help understand what needs to be done. According to Kids Count Data Book 2004, the profile of 10 key indicators of child well-being reported for the total U.S. and American Indian population were (Kids Count, 2004):

Table 2

US	AI	Key Indicators of Child Well-Being, by Race and Ethnicity
7.8%	7.2%	Low-birth weight babies.
6.8%	9.7%	Infant mortality rate (deaths per 1,000 live births).
22	29	Child death rate (deaths per 100,000 children ages 1-14).
50	92	Rate of teen deaths by accident, homicide and suicide (deaths per 100,000 teens ages 15-19).
23	31	Teen birthrate (births per 1,000 females (ages 15-17).
9%	18%	Teens not attending school and not working (ages 16-19).
25%	43%	Children living in families where no parent has full time year round employment.
17%	35%	Children in poverty.
28%	49%	Families with children headed by a single parent.

IV. YOUTH AND CULTURE

Native Youth Resiliency

Resilience is not just about coping, resilience is about being so much the better and so much the stronger in light of the challenges (Echo-Hawk, 2003).

Resiliency among Native youth is evident as a growing number of successful after school programs and youth initiated activities are emerging on and off the reservation. The very presence of these programs sheds light on the development and progress towards a healthy generation. As it relates to AI/AN youth, resilience is exemplified by certain qualities possessed by these children and youth who, though subjected to undue stress and adversity, do not give way to school failure, substance abuse, mental health problems, or juvenile delinquency (Peacock, 2002). Findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health on ethnic minority youth, state that the presence of protective factors in unstable environments allow an individual to learn and innately become equipped to handle or bounce back from adverse situations. This is key when you consider that if the child or youth is simply given the opportunity to access positive experiences, this may set a life-changing course for the future.

Assimilation, not into our culture but into modern life, and preservation and intensification of heritage…are interdependent through and through (Reyner, 2004).

Native thought methodologies have been used in repairing disconnect among Native youth and their cultural community by introducing resilient based curriculums. Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) initiated by Federal government through the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, was designed and developed by Native Americans. It is a culturally centered curriculum used with adults and youths in the Native American community. The four-day curriculum incorporates the value of these four levels of human growth and responsibility, which are found in Native culture (CSAT, 2000; Strand and Peacock, 2002):

Belonging:	A place for all ages, a place for all kinds of people. The first day represents infancy and childhood, a time when we need to know how we belong.
Mastery:	Empowerment, for individual and for community. The second day honors adolescence as a time of vision and mastery.
Interdependence:	Action, community leadership. The third day focuses on adults, integral and interdependent within their families and communities.
Generosity:	Teacher/elder, and resources in the community. The final day honors our elders, who give their knowledge and teachings to our generations of the future.

Native Youth At Risk

The "at-risk" AI/AN youth population is concerning as tribal communities struggle to find alternative ways to mitigate the consequence of inadequate educational facilities, deteriorating community centers if any, and Indian parents recovering from boarding school trauma as previously discussed. A risk factor is anything that increases the probability that a person will suffer harm, while protective factors decrease the potential harmful effect of a risk factor (DHHS, 2001). Here are some current statistics to consider. A 2001 study by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reported the following rates of participation in a variety of high-risk behaviors among AI/AN youth aged 12 to 17 years in 1999-2000 combined (Clarke, 2002):

- Illicit drug use was more than twice as high (22.2%) as the national average (9.7%).
- Driving under the influence of illicit drugs or alcohol in the past year was slightly lower (10%) than the national average (11.2%).
- Use of cigarettes was more than twice as high (27.2%) as the national average (13.4%).
- Getting into at least one serious fight at school or work in the past year was higher (22.1%) than the national average (19.9%).
- Taking part in at least one group-against-group fight in the past year was higher (22.4%) than the national average (16.1%).
- Carrying a handgun at least once in the past year was about the same (3.3%) as the national average (3.2%).

Complex issues in determining risk-factors and related prevention measures should focus on the protective factors. There is a movement in Indian country today to reattach traditional Native values exemplifying inherent cultural protective factors, as it has been the root of Native teachings. This will compensate for the modern social ills that youth may be exposed to daily.

Theoretical rationale groups risk factors into domains (individual, family, school, peer group, and community) to outline multiple risk-factors and protective factors. We may see risk factors associated with youth violence that gives thought to what happens to a child in an unhealthy, unsupportive environment. Will this predetermine the fate of the youth to be a violent person? No, prevention and other emotional support can change the outcomes by identifying aggressive behavior, antisocial behavior, and more serious depression early on. As reported in the previous paragraphs, counteractive social and environmental descriptors are epidemic in the lives of Native children and youth. Risk factors may be found in the individual, the environment, or the

individual's ability to respond to the demands or requirements of the environment. Factor in the poverty of the reservation, its few cultural resources and the enormous distances between population centers, and the result is a landscape desperately in need of healing (Manson, 2004).

Prevention

Prevention is pivotal for Native children who are predisposed to risk factors in tribal communities. Efforts seen across the country have stemmed from community based organizations and national Native youth agencies that are expanding youth service programming to include school based after school programs, tribal athletics, mentoring, science and math clubs, media, environmental and agricultural awareness, and recreational programs. Among some of the cultural programs that FNDI and other funders have seen possessing great success are: beading, basket weaving, Hogan building, hunting, fishing, art, powwow-dance, singing, drumming, and spoken word. Creating programs that incorporate traditional teaching methods enable the cultivation of protective factors that address violence prevention, anger management, bullying, and mentoring targeted youth of alcoholic and incarcerated parents.

A host of national initiatives are leading the way for prevention activities in tribal communities including Drug Free Communities Support Program, National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative Community Treatment and Services Centers, Adolescent Dating Violence, Family Violence, Street Outreach Program, and A National Resource Center for Child Abuse and Neglect.

Traditional concepts

Treat the earth well; it was not given to you by your parents; it was loaned to you by your children." We do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children." Chief Crazy Horse (Wakanyeja Wape Tokeca, 2005).

The seventh generation is a conceptual way of planning and thought for many Native American tribes and council traditions. A known example is in the way of the Iroquois, *"In our every deliberation we must consider the impact of our decisions on the next seven generations."* This declaration has remained in contemporary planning to progress without losing sight of cultural continuities. Recognizing one's self-identity through cultural heritage is at the core of AI/AN traditional learning. The way a young person learns varies from tribe to tribe and clan to clan, and can incorporate different practices to establish the child is no longer a child but a working member in a specific role of the tribe. Differences in how AI/AN children and youth learn should be considered in educational settings. For example, AI/AN children learn through observing and modeling; working cooperatively rather than competitively (NEA, 2005).

V. NATIVE EXISTENCE AND POLICY

It angers us when practices linked to the last century, and the centuries before that, are still employed to deny the validity of Indigenous peoples' claim to existence, to land and territories, to the right of self-determination, to the survival of our languages and forms of cultural knowledge, to our natural resources and systems for living within our environments (Smith Tuhiwai, 1999).

As with many Indigenous cultures around the world, Native Americans have faced cultural upheaval and genocide in centuries past. The evolution to today's withstanding broken treaties

remains a horrific record for all to account and for tribes and tribal people gone, the memorial continues through the spirit of those reclaiming cultural wholeness. Though a complete or exhaustive policy chronology is not attempted here, leading authors on Native American studies cite common assertions related to outcomes regarding post policy implementation on sovereignty, trust relationship, government to government relations, and self-determination:

- **The Pope** granted proportions of the earth deemed for the purpose of the 'Christian civilization'.
- **Before European contact** Indigenous cultures estimated 10 million with hundreds of tribes massing the continent. These tribes were healthier and content.
- **In 1823 the Supreme Court,** in the case Johnson v. McIntosh, handed down a decision which stated that Indians could occupy lands within the United States, but could not hold title to those lands. This was because their "right of occupancy" was subordinate to the United States' "right of discovery".
- **Indian Removal Act of 1830: Trail of Tears.** In 1838 and 1839, as part of Andrew Jackson's Indian removal policy, the Cherokee nation was forced to give up its lands east of the Mississippi River and to migrate to an area in present-day Oklahoma. The tribe faced hunger, disease, and exhaustion on the forced march. Over 4,000 out of 15,000 of the Cherokees died.
- **American Indians' claim to sovereignty** was supported by Chief Justice Marshall in the 1830s. This claim acknowledged that AI/AN law provides the inherent right of sovereignty and complete jurisdiction to rule AI/AN territory.
- **In 1870 Congress authorized an annual appropriation of $100,000** to support industrial and other schools among tribes that shall provide with overall authority to act on behalf of the government, appointing all Indian agents and hiring all personnel employed on the reservations. Attendance at these mission schools was made mandatory by regulation on many reservations for all Native children aged six through sixteen. By the 1880s there were 60 schools with 6,200 Indian students in the United States.
- **In 1879 Carlisle Indian Boarding** School was established in Carlisle, Pennsylvania**,** to enact assimilation through education policies headed by Captain Richard Henry Pratt who coined the phrase "kill the Indian, not the man."
- **The Dawes Commission was organized in 1893** to accept applications for tribal enrollment between 1893-1907 from American Indians of the Five Civilized Tribes who resided in Indian Territory, which later became the eastern portion of Oklahoma.
- **The Indian Reorganization Act, June 18, 1934 (Wheeler-Howard Act)** was designed to conserve and develop Indian lands and resources, extend the right to form business and other organizations, establish a credit system, grant certain rights of home rule (tribal councils), and to provide for vocational education, among other things. The Act established the trust relationship between tribes and the government and marked the end of the forced assimilation boarding school law.
- **The Social Security Act of August 14, 1935 (H. R. 7260).** Under the act only state governments are authorized to administer social security programs which include these grants related Indian children: grants to states for maternal and child welfare; grants to states for aid to dependent children; and children welfare services. This undermined the trust relationship since the federal government was not responsible for grants leaving

the funding for these programs up to the states, ultimately leaving Tribal communities without these Federally designated supports for Indian families and children. Even if states granted Tribes funding, Tribes did not have the data collection infrastructure to comply with state demands.

- **Indian Education Act of 1972 (P.L. 92-318 as amended)**. The Act was a major force for implementing new ideas generated from the emerging national discourse on ways to improve schools and schooling for Native American students and was the only national education system implemented for American Indian children. Priorities in the legislation included: funding for schools to develop culturally based curriculum; support for increasing the numbers of Native teachers and other professionals (an amendment added in 1973); opportunities to develop Native language and cultural programs; and a requirement for active, meaningful parental participation. This legislation put into place the first Deputy Commissioner of Indian Education, in the U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, U.S. Office of Education, and a presidentially appointed National Advisory Council for Indian Education (Demmett and Towner, 2003; USCCR, 2003).
- **The Indian Child Welfare Act of 1978**. Congress declared that it is the policy of this Nation to protect the best interests of Indian children and to promote the stability and security of Indian tribes and families. The legislation established minimum Federal standards for the removal of Indian children from their families, requires the placement of such children in foster or adoptive homes which will reflect the unique values of Indian culture, and provides for assistance to Indian tribes in the operation of child and family service programs.
- **Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments: the Executive Memorandum of April 29, 1994**. President Bill Clinton, on Government-to-Government Relations with Native American Tribal Governments, instituted this historic event. On issues relating to tribal self-government, tribal trust resources, or Indian tribal treaty and other rights, each agency should explore and, where appropriate, use consensual mechanisms for developing regulations, including negotiated rulemaking.
- **Reauthorization of the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, 2003 (S 556 & HR 2440).** This bill was designed to improve the implementation of federal responsibility for the care and education of Indian people by improving the services and facilities of federal health programs for Indians and encouraging maximum participation of Indians in such programs, and for other purposes.
- **Native American Health and Wellness Foundation Act of 2003 (S 555)**. This bill would amend the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act to establish a charitable foundation that would engage in activities to promote health and wellness opportunities for Native Americans. The Senate passed the bill by unanimous consent on July 16, 2003. No further action has taken place by House Resources Committee and Energy and Commerce Committee (UIHB, 2003).
- **Executive Order American Indian and Alaska Native Education, April 30, 2004.** The President signed this E.O. to assist American Indian and Alaska Native students in meeting academic standards of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Public Law 107-110) in a manner consistent with tribal traditions, languages, and cultures. Designed to build on the innovations, reforms, and high standards of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, including: stronger accountability for results; greater flexibility in the use of

federal funds; more choices for parents; and an emphasis on research-based instruction that works (OPS, 2004).

It is important to keep this policy framework in mind when addressing the issues facing Native American youth.

VI. Conclusion

First Nations has many years of experience working with Native rural, reservation based communities to support them in self directed development strategies. We are only beginning to learn about what works in the communities we have funded, and we continue to draw upon others' research and experience for an idea of how to improve and strengthen our strategies and make information available to the broader field. First Nations Development Institute will continue to strive to make available the necessary resources for all American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native peoples to begin their journey towards sound economies and healthy nations. By empowering Native youth through the Native Youth and Culture Fund, the measures we take today will live on throughout the changes to come for Native cultures. Now is the time to take control and use the strengths found within the traditional teachings that Native people learn throughout their lives from birth on, and plan for the seventh generation.

We thank the creator who has provided us with wisdom from our elders and children. We thank the creator for the giving hearts and minds that come together to strengthen the path towards healing for our families. Thank you Creator for sharing your spirit that is within us. All My Relations.

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APPENDIX A:
FIRST NATIONS' NATIVE YOUTH AND CULTURE FUND GRANTEES

ROUND 1 GRANTMAKING

Organization	Grant Amount	Month	Year
California Indian Basketweavers Association	$20,000.00	December	2002
Gila River Indian Community	$20,000.00	December	2002
Native Village of Barrow	$20,000.00	December	2002
The Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin	$20,000.00	December	2002
Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewas	$20,000.00	December	2002
Wrangell Cooperative Association	$20,000.00	December	2002
Indigenous Community Enterprises	$20,000.00	March	2003
Tamastslikt Cultural Institute	$20,000.00	December	2002

ROUND 2 GRANTMAKING

Organization	Grant Amount	Month	Year
Indigenous Advocacy, Inc.	$13,529.00	April	2004
Ka'ala Farm, Inc.	$20,000.00	April	2004
Makah Cultural and Research Center	$18,999.00	April	2004
The Center Pole Foundation	$20,000.00	April	2004
Chickaloon Village Traditional Council	$20,000.00	April	2004
Pueblo de Cochiti	$11,500.00	April	2004
Developing Innovations in Navajo Education, Inc.	$20,000.00	April	2004
Sitka Tribe of Alaska	$20,000.00	April	2004
Tamastslikt Cultural Institute	$19,914.00	April	2004
Ute Tribe of the Uintah and Ouray Reservation	$10,780.00	April	2004
Dine Be Iina, Inc.	$10,000.00	April	2004

ROUND 1 TOTAL:	$160,000.00
ROUND 2 TOTAL:	$184,722.00
GRAND TOTAL	**$344,722.00**

APPENDIX B:
PROFILES OF ROUND I OF THE NATIVE YOUTH AND CULTURE FUND GRANTEES

V'ath-O-Hab-Ep-E-Ju (We Will Do It Again!) Youth Cultural Development Project
Akimel O'odham/Pee Posh Youth Council in collaboration with the Gila River Indian Community
Sacaton, Arizona – $20,000

"with a limited understanding and appreciation for our Native culture, our youth often show a lack of interest on how to preserve, strengthen, or renew Native culture among youth. We can't afford to lose our young people to this process if our tribe is to be successful in achieving self determination." ~ Christopher Blackwell, President of Akimel O'odham/Pee-Posh Youth Council

Baseline Community Profile	**Project Profile**
Key Problems: Juvenile delinquency, substance abuse, and gangs. No current social service programs responding to the above issues incorporate the preservation, strengthening, or renewal of Native culture or spirituality in any way. Currently available youth programs tend to be structured using western models, i.e., Boys & Girls Club and Teen Court. However, the Gila River Youth Council is active, and 21st Century Community Learning Centers (a State of Arizona initiative) within the community provide "Culture and Language" classes. The latter is the only program which incorporates the preservation, strengthening, or renewal of Native culture or spirituality in any way. Other community events affording opportunities for cultural and spiritual renewal are on a limited (usually annual) or sporadic basis. These include Elder's Day, the Tribal Fair, and Elderly Concerns meetings. Youth participation tends to be limited and only at annual events. Youth-Elder interaction tends to be limited to community service. It is unclear whether this type of service is court ordered or voluntary.	The youth council has as its purpose a broad mandate to make policy recommendations to the community council in all areas affecting the physical and cultural well being of young tribal members. The project seeks to ensure that tribal youth receive the services and support to assist them in becoming productive adults who are proud of their cultural heritage, and will make positive contributions to the future development of the Gila River Indian Community. The project is designed with the objective of integrating language, culture, and community history awareness activities to provide better opportunities for success for tribal youth. Three programs, focused on the Pima/Maricopa tribes, will be offered. Elders and community members will teach on history, language, and culture, in addition to arts and crafts. Field trips to cultural resources such as the local heritage center, cultural events, and archeological parks will also be offered. These programs are designed to provide a continuum of educational services to better address the cultural needs of tribal youth and the promotion of culture and traditions which does not currently exist.

California Indian Baskerweavers Association *(CIBA)*
Nevada City, California – $20,000

"I want to be able to teach my children." ~ Lovey Sanchez, Hoopa Valley High School student

Baseline Community Profile	**Project Profile**
Key Problems: Lack of cultural activities for youth, lack of Elder-youth interaction, lack of hope, and low expectations. Several social service programs incorporate elements of personal awareness, but it is unclear whether all of these are culturally specific. A pilot Teen Drug Court includes a "Cultural Lifestyles" component and tribal Elders will provide traditional cultural perspectives for youth within this program. A school reform effort incorporates expanded Native language classes and a local history course for 9th graders, while the school district provides Native language instruction for kindergarten through 12th grade. Cultural activities are available through the Johnson O'Malley (after-school) program. Various other classes are offered on an occasional basis in language and ceremonial dress-making. Other youth programs tend to be structured using western models, i.e., school and league athletics. Youth-Elder interaction occurs during language classes and other social and ceremonial functions within the communities, such as traditional ceremonial dances. It is unclear how often these events take place.	The goal of this project is to preserve, promote, and perpetuate California Indian basketweaving traditions. Traditional cultural art activities will be used as a catalyst for promoting self-esteem and positive lifestyles among Native youth. Youth will work with and learn from traditional cultural artists and Elders, whose teachings include respect for the environment and being in a positive frame of mind when weaving. As younger weavers learn from their Elders, they learn not only the skill of basketweaving, but also the associated spiritual and cultural values of the tribal heritage. The basketry traditions and practices of the Karuk, Hoopa, and Yurok people provide lifelong lessons perfected over millennia by their ancestors. Long term, it is hoped that this project will: ▪ Keep basketweaving traditions alive by helping pass them on to Native youth. ▪ Close the gap between generations (youth and Elders) for cultural continuity. ▪ Help build self-esteem in Native youth.

Tamástslikt Cultural Institute – Computer Stories Camp
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR)
Pendleton, Oregon – $20,000

"We are very lucky to have our Elders working with us to preserve, protect, and teach our languages. This project would give us an opportunity to get involved with youth in a new way." ~ Mildred Quaempts, CTUIR Language Coordinator

Baseline Community Profile	**Project Profile**
Key Problems: Substance abuse, lack of parental direction and supervision, lack of cultural identity, and lack of youth activities. Most social services provided by tribal members within this community do promote Native culture and spirituality for both youth and the community at large. However, school programs, including curricula, and services provided by the medical clinic are not typically "filtered" through a Native perspective. The only community program cited by youth was the gym (i.e., after-school basketball), and there is perception among youth that there is, in fact, "nothing" for them to do. There is an underutilized after-school language program but it is not offered consistently, and other opportunities for language study are offered at times when youth are unable to attend (during the day). Other cultural activities are offered through the Substance Abuse Prevention and Juvenile Justice Programs, and there is a Root Feast and Longhouse activities, but again, these are only offered on a periodic basis. Youth activities tend to be structured using western models, i.e., school and league sports, 4-H, and Scouts, and are often cost prohibitive and/or too far away for tribal youth to participate. Opportunities for youth-Elder interaction exist, but awareness of such is limited. Elders feel that they are accessible, but youth perceive that unless there is an Elder in their family they are not really able to interact.	Cultural survival is considered the most critical issue facing this community, and their 1996 comprehensive plan included objectives "to retrieve, educate, share, preserve, and pass on to future generations, the history, culture, heritage, and treaty protection of Umatilla, Cayuse, and Walla Walla Tribes." Only about forty tribal members (approximately 17 percent) on the Umatilla Indian Reservation speak the traditional languages. In order to compete for the attention of youth in our modern "hurry up," media-saturated society, this project will create a product that will make culture and language accessible to youth. This project will build multimedia cultural stories in tribal languages for the Computer Stories Camps, presented by the Tamástslikit Institute.* With these activities, the project hopes to: ▪ Give tribal youth a stronger, positive cultural identity, and to subsequently help them perform better in school. ▪ Improve knowledge of tribal languages, stories, and culture. ▪ Create tribally-focused media for children and community members. * Tamástslikt means "interpret" in the Walla Walla language.

While youth did express interest in participating in traditional community events, various other barriers precluded them from doing so. Issues such as the cost of a new costume, or the lack of an Elder to teach them to dance, limits youth participation.	

Indigenous Community Enterprise *(ICE)*
Flagstaff, Arizona – $20,000

"We believe … that we can demonstrate to young people that they do not have to make a choice between remaining 'Native' versus becoming like Anglos to be economically successful. ~ Brett KenCairn, ICE Program Director

"We like the hard work in the hot sun and we know that the Grandma we are building for is happy we are there to help." ~ Nathan Morgan, Monument Valley student builder.

Baseline Community Profile	**Project Profile**
Key Problems: High drop-out rates, teen pregnancy, rising crime and juvenile delinquency, and substance abuse. The Drug Elimination Program does provide Native cultural knowledge and counseling, as does Indian Health Services through teaching of the "Beauty Way Curriculum," which addresses pregnancy prevention. These culturally appropriate services, however, tend to be available only to those youth who live in proximity to service providers and these are the only two programmatic opportunities for youth to experience Native traditions and cultural learning. Most school districts incorporate Navajo language, reading, and writing classes, which, ironically, fulfill the state accreditation requirement for foreign languages. Youth-specific activities are limited to those structured using a western model – school and league sports and 4-H. The Community Profile does state that 40 percent of youth participate in traditional community activities, but no further information is provided. Finally, opportunities for youth-Elder interaction are scarce.	Project proponents state that an essential step in the restoration of traditional culture and practices is a reclaiming of the sense of ability and power to be materially successful in our current world setting – without giving up unique aspects of Navajo culture and practices. ICE has been developing a unique approach to culture-based affordable housing on the Navajo Nation integrating traditional dwelling designs (hogans) with modern log construction technology. ICE believes that, this program will: ▪ Provide a means to integrate the youth in the community by creating educational and training opportunities that have relevance to traditional knowledge and culture. ▪ Create pathways by which youth can build professional level skills and find economic opportunities for utilizing these skills in their own communities. ▪ Provide youth with traditional knowledge on savings and building assets for the future. This last component of the project is the development and implementation of a Youth Individual Development Account (IDA) program, which includes a culture-based financial literacy curriculum. The IDA program will assist young people to develop savings and asset management skills while earning wages during their construction work experience.

Inupiat Traditional Government
Native Village of Barrow
Barrow, Alaska – $20,000

"it will increase self-esteem and cultural pride in our youth as well as perpetrate subsistence activities which are so central to the identity of Inupiat people." ~ Bill Tegoseak, Executive Director, Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope.

Baseline Community Profile	**Project Profile**
Key Problems: Lack of structured recreational programs, substance abuse, generational breakdown in communication due to language barriers. All available social service programs for rural youth are developed and conducted from a western values perspective. They are devoid of culturally appropriate beliefs and do not incorporate Native traditional knowledge. This also tends to be the case for the program offered by faith-based organizations in the community. As with the majority of grantees, all youth programs in the community are based on western models (scholastic sports and the Boys & Girls Club) or faith-based (church youth group). None have a Native focus. To address the wide disparity between youth and Elder Inupiat speakers, a summer culture camp is operated by the Arctic Slope Native Associations, but language courses are offered sporadically. School curricula covering culture and customs are extremely limited. Furthermore, traditional methods of learning are more oral and experiential than these structured programs, which may explain why these tend to be less than successful. Most events organized for youth are, again, not culturally focused. There are, however, annual festivals celebrating subsistence traditions, but these are not specifically geared toward youth. A Youth and Elders Conference is held periodically but is perceived by youth as ineffectual. Other intergenerational activities have largely been curtailed due to funding constraints, and due to the language barrier between youth and Elders.	The development of intergenerational, and non gender-biased, subsistence educational programs to increase self-esteem and cultural pride among youth and keep traditions and culture alive for generations. This project will provide youth programs on safe subsistence hunting and harvesting practices in addition to teaching traditional techniques for construction of skin boats and hunting implements. This training will be conducted in a collaborative, intergenerational manner, to include the wisdom of community women in weather prediction, safety, and skin sewing. A secondary, yet no less critical goal of this project is the preservation and perpetuation of culture, that can only be achieved by binding generations together in the sharing of traditional knowledge, folklore, and customs associated with subsistence hunting activities. Community youth will gain traditional subsistence knowledge with practical application, which has not only economic importance to the community, but will assist the community's efforts in retaining their subsistence hunting and fishing rights via the exercise of those rights.

Oneida Tribe of Indians of Wisconsin on behalf of the
Onayote'Aka (Oneida) Tribe Gang Prevention Task Force Culture Camps
Green Bay, Wisconsin –$20,000

"it's up to our generation to change things" – "I'm not alone in the world" – "how to trust others"
~ Culture Camp participant responses to, "What did you learn?"

Baseline Community Profile	**Project Profile**
Key Problems: Lack of self-esteem and a sense of "not belonging," substance abuse, depression, teen pregnancy, and gangs. The Oneida Tribe has integrated culture and traditions into community life in a variety of ways, and makes a concerted effort to incorporate traditional values and customs into all decisions and programs. Of key interest in a program offered by the KA'NI KUHLI'YO Family Center, which incorporates the Native American Medicine Wheel into the healing experience, while other services also have a strong focus on holistic healing. The Oneida Cultural Heritage Department additionally offers free language and culture classes to the community, although it does not appear that these are targeted at youth specifically. Core youth programs in the community include the Oneida Youth Community Coordinated Response Team, the Oneida Gang Task Force, and Oneida Social Services. Youth participation in the community includes ceremonies, rites of passage, sweat lodges, pow wows and other annual events. Youth are additionally involved in the Community Tsyhehw^ (life sustenance) Center. Youth and Elders interact regularly through participation in community projects.	The primary activities associated with this project are learning camps for at-risk youth, tribal group home residents, and other youth referred from various other tribal programs, with the goal of creating a bond between at-risk youth and those that are achieving success in other areas, such as academics and athletics. Culture camps will focus on youth learning their culture and identity as Native Americans in today's world, empowering them for positive change in the community, and linking families together through culturally appropriate activities. Camp activities will include: ▪ Intensive five-day culturally appropriate self-esteem resiliency training. ▪ Youth visits to the senior home for the sharing of a meal and performance of chores for the Elders. ▪ Awards banquet for participants and their extended families and friends, in addition to certificates for successful completion of the camp.

Red Cliff Band of Lake Superior Chippewa First American Prevention Center
Red Cliff Anishinabe Ajigwe-mino bimadissiwin (returning to the good life) Project
Bayfield, Wisconsin – $20,000

"I know that our tribal culture and traditions are very important to us for now and in the future. We youth will be leading the tribe in the future and will need to be aware and knowledgeable." ~ Andrew Bresette, Chairman, Red Cliff Junior Tribal Council

Baseline Community Profile	**Project Profile**
Key Problems: Lack of coordinated, comprehensive family services, lack of employment opportunities, and a lack of sober, committed adults who can serve as mentors to youth. A variety of social services and school programs within the community have incorporated culturally-based models and curricula. The First American Prevention Center in particular operates with the goal of strengthening culture and traditions into all aspects of their work. However, with the exception of school classes, the majority of these programs and services appear to be implemented on a "hit-or-miss" basis. As is the case with virtually all NYCF grantees, youth activity programs based on western models, with the usual school and league athletics. Red Cliff does also have a Youth Center, although it is unclear what activities or programs are offered there. It is reported that youth participate in the annual pow wow and other gatherings but no additional information is provided. It appears that a planned reinvigoration of the Junior Tribal Council is the current priority for youth participation in the community. Youth-Elder interaction has occurred during a variety of previous programs, none of which are currently funded. The community recognizes the value of these efforts, however, and continues with plans for future activities.	This project is designed to empower the Red Cliff youth and the community with information and knowledge about their own history, culture, and traditions. It is hoped that lasting, respectful, intergenerational relationships between youth and Elders will be built through the structured environment of recorded interviews. The project will: ▪ Preserve oral histories, traditional tribal practices, cultural norms and values, and spiritual beliefs. ▪ Use knowledge acquired to educate the larger tribal community. ▪ Produce a booklet and radio program for regularly scheduled programming. ▪ Host an Honor and Recognition Feast for all participants. Increased awareness of the importance of local cultural norms and values, traditional tribal practices, and historical knowledge will create a greater respect for self and identity among both youth and Elders, and bring a higher quality of life for the greater community. The ultimate project impact will be the preservation of this knowledge for future generations.

Wrangell Cooperative Association Johnson O'Malley Program
Tlingit Language Program
Wrangell, Alaska – $20,000

"Tlingit education is the process of living from the land, of subsisting, of surviving. Unfortunately, with each passing year, and the passing of each Elder, the ability to learn the meaning of the spirit of the language will become more difficult." ~ Virginia Oliver, Director, Wrangell Johnson O'Malley Program

Baseline Community Profile	**Project Profile**
Key Problems: Alcohol abuse, teen-age sex, tobacco use. No current social service programs incorporate the preservation, strengthening, or renewal of Native culture or spirituality in any way, nor do they target Natives. There are course offerings in Native self-empowerment, but it reported that these are usually offered in other communities far from home. Specific information about these classes was not included, except that they are offered through Indian Education Aide. The community has a teen center, a Johnson O'Malley after-school program, and youth church groups. No information is provided on what, if any, culturally oriented activities or programs are offered through these venues. Several opportunities for youth to participate in the preservation, strengthening, or renewal of Native traditions are mentioned (Alaska Native Sisterhood scholarships, Talking Circles, and Spirit Camp) but again, no details were provided. The same types of youth organizations exist here as well (school sports, 4-H, Scouts), although this is interestingly the only community with a performing arts and drama club. Youth and Elders interact at the Alaska Sisterhood Christmas party, sports events, and the Johnson O'Malley artist program (no details provided).	The focus of this project is the development of a youth-integrated after-school program that emphasizes tribal language, traditional knowledge, tribal arts, ritual, historic research, and other cultural topics. This program is designed to establish in youth a sense of who they are and illustrate alternatives to substance abuse and other destructive behaviors, in addition to providing a safe forum for youth and Elders to come together to share the Tlingit language and cultural values expressed through art, song, and traditional knowledge. There are no longer any fluent Tlingit speakers in the Wrangell area and this project is designed with the dual objectives of 1) strengthening the bond between youth and Elders and 2) developing individual self-esteem within the tribe with the acquisition of Native language skills, before the local Tlingit languages drifts into oblivion. This project will: ▪ Teach the Tlingit language to tribal youth and adults. ▪ Continue to develop additional capacities to better address the needs of tribal at-risk youth. ▪ Introduce various aspects of traditional culture, such as Tlingit song and dance, making and decorating traditional regalia, and traditional food gathering and preparation.

APPENDIX C:
Analysis of Baseline Data -
ROUND I OF THE NATIVE YOUTH AND CULTURE FUND GRANTEES

Data Collection

In order to better inform our grantmaking within the Native Youth and Culture Fund initiative, First Nations developed a data collection instrument which was incorporated into the "request for proposal" (RFP) process. Questions were clustered in three areas: 1) Community Issues; 2) Community Resources; and 3) Education. In terms of analyzing responses to this survey within a culturally-oriented context, this analysis focuses on those questions that elicited the majority of information about cultural "climate," and opportunities for youth to preserve and strengthen their cultural and spiritual place in the community. This analysis discusses key problems, existing services and programs, opportunities for cultural renewal, and youth-Elder interaction.

Key Problems

The overwhelming threat to the well being of youth in this group of communities is substance abuse, with 75 percent of communities reporting that abuse of alcohol, drugs, and/or tobacco is a large problem facing their youth. Above and beyond youth substance abuse, several communities reported variations on the theme of, 'a lack of sober, committed adults,' to both supervise youth and to act as mentors. Juvenile delinquency, which includes increased gang activity, crime rates and, truancy, was reported as a major problem by 50 percent of responding communities. 25 percent listed teen sex/pregnancy as an issue in their community, while only one community listed a high drop-out rate among students as a major problem.

The balance of respondents cited far more intangible "problems" – lack of youth-Elder interaction, lack of hope and low expectations (including depression), lack of cultural identity, and lack of self-esteem. While it is, of course, possible that some respondents included these issues in direct response to the RFP, these circumstances would explain the high incidence of all other at-risk behaviors listed.

Existing Services, Programs

All respondents in this group are keenly aware of the need for opportunities for not just youth, but the larger community, to preserve and strengthen tribal identity and spirituality. Some, however, have been more successful than others at incorporating those elements into their program and services. Almost without exception, youth-specific programs and activities are limited to western model organizations such as the Boys & Girls Club, Scouting, 4-H, and school and league athletics. Several communities did report language and/or culture classes either within school curricula or as part of a community program, and most also hold various cultural ceremonies and gatherings. However, many of these are offered only sporadically, in large part due to funding constraints.

Also significant among many of the community service programs that were reported as incorporating traditional healing and spirituality, is the fact that these opportunities are not often available to youth until the point when they have reached "at risk" status. While of ***all*** youth in Native communities are arguably at risk given the levels of poverty and substance abuse that often exist within the population at large, there appeared to be few preemptive programs to preserve and strengthen Native cultural and spirituality.

Community Events and Youth-Elder Interaction

Various community cultural events are held in each of the communities, although these tend to be on an annual basis only for most of the respondents. Furthermore, these gatherings tend to be the only occasions for youth and Elders to interact with each other for sharing and learning of traditional knowledge and customs. As with several of the services and programs, these events too may or may not be held on a regular basis, further limiting opportunities for preservation and renewal of tribal traditions.

Almost unanimously the community surveys stressed the need for increased interaction between tribal wisdom keepers and the next generation but few offer regular, youth-Elder specific opportunities for communication. In one case in particular, very few of the youth speak the Native language and few of the Elders speak English, further exacerbating an already tragic situation.

The Projects

While the picture painted by the community surveys appears quite bleak, the projects submitted for funding under the Native Youth and Culture Fund are truly inspiring in terms of their scope and dedication to preserving, strengthening, and renewing culture and spirituality. Without exception the proposed activities bring Native heritage into all aspects of community life, from youth governance councils to artistic traditions, from language restoration to culturally-appropriate economic development, and from technology-based preservation of traditions to subsistence hunting and gathering. Collectively these projects provide great hope for not only addressing the myriad social problems facing each of these communities, but for making strong inroads into the preservation of tribal cultures and sharing with the next generation