

Cultural Competency Issues with American Indian Students

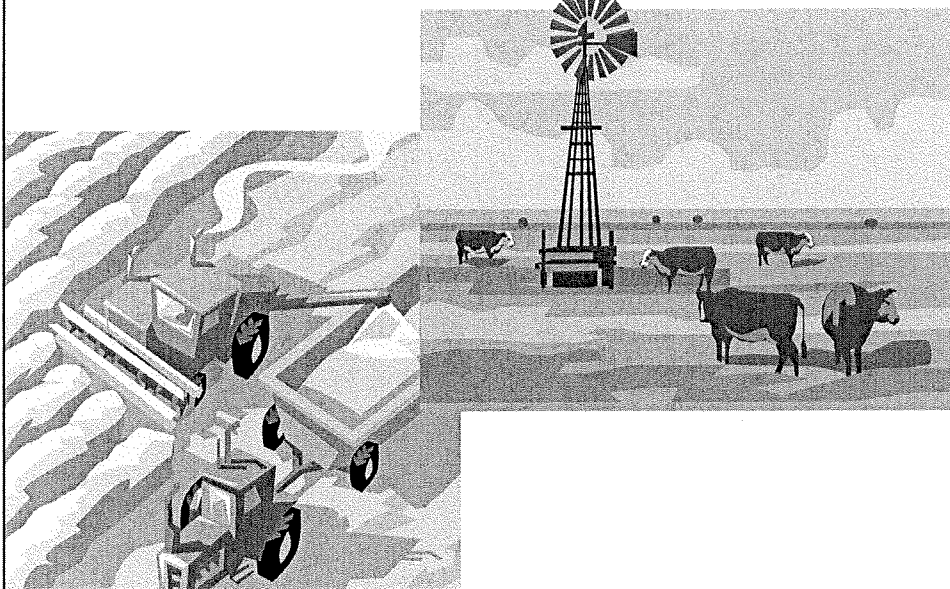
January 8, 2009

Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Grantee
Meeting

Presented by:

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Rural Perspectives

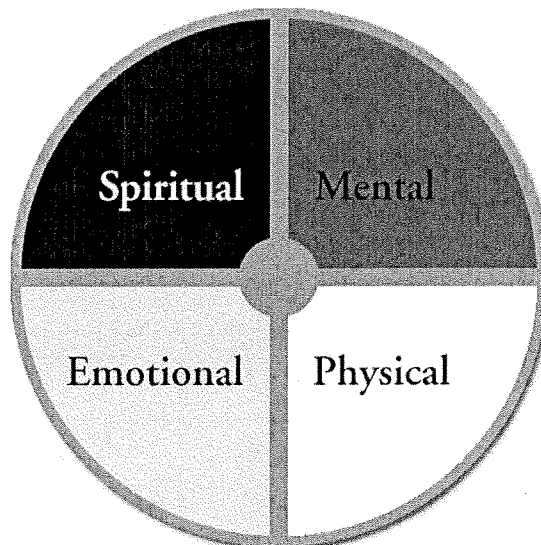


Rural/Frontier Perspectives



- Lack of confidentiality—Everyone knows
 - Mental health (stigma, impact on business)
- Few Resources/Long Distances to Travel
 - 95% ND MHPSA
 - 100 miles one way for services
- Increased Depression and Suicide among Farmers (some studies as high as 50%)
- Economic impact has multiple losses
 - Job, income, lifestyle, home, identity
 - Multi-generational loss (3-4 generations)

Medicine Wheel



Medicine Wheel Origins



- 4 multi-dimensional, sacred parts
- 4 sacred colors (red, yellow, black, white)
- 4 parts of spiritual & physical world
 - (mental, physical, emotional, spiritual)
- 4 values of the Lakota People
 - (respect, generosity, wisdom, courage)
- 4 directions (East, North, West, South)
- Key Principle: Interconnectedness

Mental



- Gatekeeper training
- Education
- Problem Solving
- Communication Skills
- Stress Management
- Build Strong Minds

Physical



- Engagement: Food as a part of all gatherings
 - Nourishes physical needs
 - Fosters connections with others
- Activities/Services/Interventions
- Soup Fridays
 - Gathers students, faculty, and staff to share informally
 - Develop social networks throughout the university
- Nutrition activities from Wellness Center
- Physical activities from Wellness Center

Emotional



- Organizational
- Culturally based counseling services
- Referral to American Indian counselor or psychologist
- Recognize the impact of stressors from home & school
- Help the student to communicate needs to campus faculty & staff

Spiritual



- Engagement
- Access to Spiritual Leader for Ceremonies
 - Activities/Services/Interventions
 - Sweat lodge, Smudging, Purification
 - Pipe Ceremony, Wiping of Tears
- Talking Circles
 - Include prayers, sharing, ceremony, songs
- Honoring
 - Songs from Drum group
 - Well wishes from those supporting
 - Gift giving

Challenges



- Fighting Sioux Mascot Issue
 - Dissention among AI students/reservations
 - Racism on campus
 - Hostile environment for learning/living

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