Supporting Tribal Youth at Risk for Suicide: Honoring Children, Mending the Circle

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Funding and Disclaimer

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About SPRC

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

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

The Indian County Child Trauma Center (ICCTC) was established to develop trauma-related treatment protocols, outreach materials, and service delivery guidelines specifically designed for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children and their families.

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Dolores S. BigFoot, PhD
Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge that the land that now makes up the United States of America was the traditional home, hunting ground, trade exchange point, and migration route of more than 574 American Indian and Alaska Native federally recognized tribes and many more tribal nations that are not federally recognized or no longer exist.

We recognize the cruel legacy of slavery and colonialism in our nation and acknowledge the people whose labor was exploited for generations to help establish the economy of the United States.

We honor indigenous, enslaved, and immigrant peoples’ resilience, labor, and stewardship of the land and commit to creating a future founded on respect, justice, and inclusion for all people as we work to heal the deepest generational wounds.
Overview

• My Background
• Treating Child Trauma
• Questions
My Background
Caddo Nation of Oklahoma
My Background

I was raised by a great grandmother who helped me establish my cultural, spiritual, and professional identity. My professional identity seeks balance (mental health).

Increased suicide protective factors are a sense of identity, connectiveness, and belonging. Being in a culturally based family provides a sense of identity, connectiveness, and belonging.
Northern Cheyenne Tribe of Montana
Treating Child Trauma
Project Making Medicine

- Honoring Children Series is the cultural adaptation of evidenced-based (EB) treatments including:
  - **Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy**
    Culturally enhanced for Honoring Children, Mending the Circle
  - **Parent-Child Interaction Therapy**
    Culturally enhanced for Honoring Children, Making Relatives
  - **Problematic Sexual Behaviors Cognitive Behavioral Therapy**
    Culturally enhanced for Honoring Children, Respectful Ways
Cultural Enhancement Considerations for EB Models

- EB Models with principles that are compatible with American Indian and Alaska Native world views are less biased
- Comparable concepts that illustrate cultural application (practice-based evidence)
  - Expression of feelings can be recognized by ceremony such as Wiping of the Tears
  - Child-centered attentiveness can be recognized by the concept of children being the Center of the Circle
- Identify cultural practices that are therapeutic which can replace or be used in collaboration with EB practices
- Maintain fidelity to EB model structure and implementation for effectiveness
- Collaborate with family to determine what level of cultural integration is desired
- Therapists are encouraged work with cultural liaisons to better understand customs, traditions, stories and symbols relevant to Indigenous cultures within their geographic area
Evidence-Based Practices and Indigenous Knowledge

Evidence-Based Practices

- Cognitive and behavioral principles
- Attachment
- Humanist
- Developmental
- Neurobiology
- Empowerment

Indigenous Knowledge

- Thinking, feeling, doing
- Relational and circle theory
- We are all related
- Naming, Medicine Wheel
- Mind-body-heart-spirit. We knew the earth was round, racial memories
- Non-interference, non-judgment, equity, voice, and empowerment
Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy

Psychoeducation and parenting skills
Relaxation
Affective modulation
Cognitive coping
Trauma narrative/cognitive processing
In vivo desensitization
Conjoint parent-child session
Enhancing future safety and development

For more information go to: TFCBT.org
Honoring Children, Mending the Circle

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Indigenous Pathway: Practice Based Evidence

• Identification of Indigenous practices that are healing: Ceremony
• Identification of Indigenous ways of explaining the world: Tribal creation stories
• Identification of Indigenous ways of explaining how things happen: How, why, when stories
• Identification of Indigenous ways of explaining when things do not go well: Trickster, Iktoma, Spider, Coyote
• Identification of Indigenous ways of moving from one status to another status: Transition
Indigenous Ways of Knowing

Indigenous Knowledge

- Wisdom
- Reflections
- Beliefs
- Practices
- Relational
- Kinships
- Awareness

Observers of stars, plants, animals, movement, ice, water, wind, earth

Understandings of who we are, where we came from, and where we are going
How do you define Alaska Native child well-being?
### American Indian/Alaska Native Healing Practices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity/Object/Item</th>
<th>Use/Purpose</th>
<th>Meaningfulness/Value/Belief</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Singing a goodbye song after a family member passes away</td>
<td>To help family members say goodbye to the deceased family member</td>
<td>Gives permission for the spirit to journey onward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>To recognize the family member’s spirit is on a new journey</td>
<td>To acknowledge that this is a transition period for everyone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To give permission to mourn</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>To provide a supportive structure for mourning</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Serves as a reminder for the loved one when sung again in the future</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Which PRACTICE components would this activity address?
Storytelling

Creation stories are the history and tradition of the tribes; they tell how the world began in what manner. They explain how the world, people, animals, and plants are related. Through creation stories, people can understand the natural order of life and in what direction they came and in what direction they are going. They give reason to the overall scheme of things. It is therefore important to understand the creation of things because it provides the framework within which wise decisions can be made.

Storytelling was the form of transmittal for how things were and why things happened. There were winter stories and summer stories, stories for days that the rains fell, and stories for early mornings. Creation stories were retold and retold many times in the growing years.
Storytelling

• Reassessing and decision-making
• Consequences and outcomes
• Explanations about behavior
• Character and attributes
• Values and beliefs
• Suffering and sorrow
• Maintaining and self-sufficiency
• Grounding and resiliency
Questions?
How To Claim Credit

Simply follow the instructions below. Email LearningCenter@psych.org with any questions.

1. Attend the virtual event.
2. Submit the evaluation.
3. Select the CLAIM CREDITS tab.
4. Choose the number of credits from the dropdown menu.
5. Click the CLAIM button.

Claimed certificates are accessible in My Courses > My Completed Activities
Resources

Suicide Prevention Resource Center:  
www.sprc.org

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration:  
www.samhsa.gov

National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention:  
www.actionallianceforsuicideprevention.org

Education Development Center:  
www.edc.org

American Foundation for Suicide Prevention State Policy Priorities:  

American Indian/Alaska Native Suicide Prevention:  
http://www.sprc.org/populations/aian

Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, National Therapist Certification Program:  
https://tfcbt.org/
References


Thank you!

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