Tribal Learning Collaborative

August 5, 2013

Cora Whiteman, Coordinator, Wiconi Ohitika Strong Life Project, Cankdeska Cikana Community College, Spirit Lake Nation

Francene Larzelere-Hinton, BA., Sr. Field Program Coordinator, Johns Hopkins University Center for American Indian Health

Novalene A. Goklish BS., Sr. Field Program Coordinator, Johns Hopkins University Center for American Indian Health

Elinor Nault, M.Ed. Montana Board of Crime Control Youth Justice Council - Rocky Boy, Montana
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Objectives

- Encourage Tribes to review/revise and enforce suicide prevention statutes
- Understand the importance of community based code development
- Familiarize Tribes with resources and tools available to assist in revising or developing statutes
Tribal Suicide Prevention Codes

✅ Few tribal suicide prevention codes exist

✅ Misconception that tribal communities do not have resources to draft their own codes

- Adoption of state codes, or the adoption of other tribal codes
- Codes that are not relevant to the community’s history, culture, tradition or geography
- No buy in from the community
Presenters

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Wiconi Ohitika Strong Life Project, Cankdeska Cikana Community College

Cora Whiteman, Coordinator
Spirit Lake Nation
Spirit Lake Nation, North Dakota
White Mountain Apache Tribe
Constructing a Suicide Data Surveillance System

Novalene A. Goklish BS., Sr. Field Program Coordinator

Francene Larzelere-Hinton, BA., Sr. Field Program Coordinator,
White Mountain Apache Tribe
Constructing a Suicide Data Surveillance System
White Mountain Apache Tribe

- ~15,500 enrolled tribal members
- Fort Apache Res. (1.6 million acres)
- Geographically isolated
- Spectrum of traditional and mainstream cultures
- Governed by Apache Tribal Council
- 30-year relationship with JHU & Center for American Indian Health (JHCAIH)
- Infectious Disease, Behavioral and Mental Health, & Training programs
History

Talk:

- Community Initiative to Prevent Suicide 20 years of progress
  - Seeking Guidance and Support - 1992
  - Tribal Mandate – 2001 to Present
  - Surveillance System 2004 - Present
  - Community intervention design and implementation
  - Evaluation
Seeking Guidance & Support 1992

- Community Meetings In Whiteriver & Cibecue
- Tribal Members & Tribal Council Meetings
- Tribal Council & Health Authority Meetings
- Tribal Council & Health Authority Requesting for Assistance from Johns Hopkins University
- Community assessments and surveys

- Established based on outcomes from assessments and surveys.
- WMAT Police Department seek funding for Ghost Busters.
- Ghost Busters consist of elders to provide guidance & support.
Tribal Mandate – 2001 to Present

- Tribal Council formed Suicide Task Force

- Tribe mandates suicide surveillance and registry system

- First Tribal Registry
  - Paper and pencil reporting system
  - Limited follow-up & financial resources
  - Suicide Task Force received funding for 1 yr for follow-ups.
Surveillance System 2004 - Present

- 2004: Tribe partnered with JHU CAIH to launch new project:
  - Update and computerize registry system
  - Follow-up with all reported suicidal behaviors
  - Celebrating Life Program for youth attempters
  - Case management and aided referral for suicidal individuals

- 2006: WMAT-JHU partnership expands with GLS Funding
  - Design and piloting of prevention interventions
  - Universal
  - Targeted
  - Selected
Major AI/AN Youth Health Disparities

Death Rate (0-25 yrs): 3.2x higher

Suicide Rate (15-24): 5x higher

Injury Deaths: 3.8x higher

Alcohol-related Deaths: 7x higher

Teen Childbearing: ~2x higher

Diabetes: ~3x higher
Apache Youth Suicide

- Very low suicide rates prior to 1950
- Spike in youth suicide rates:
  - 1990-1993
  - 2001-present
PHASE I: Methods

- Yellow Surveillance Form
  - Collected from all tribal health and human service agencies, schools, churches, individuals

- Pink Follow Up Form
  - Verify surveillance data
  - Case management
  - Referrals
White Mountain Apache Tribe “Celebrating Life” (Suicide Prevention)

Date of Report: ____________

Name (Last name, First name): _________________________________

Gender (circle one):     Male          Female

Date of Birth: __ __/__ __/____  Age: _____ (please estimate)

Tribal affiliation (check one):
___White Mountain Apache
___San Carlos Apache
___Navajo

Marital status (check one):
___Single
___Married
___Co-Habitating (Unmarried and living together)
___Unknown

Educational status (check one):
White Mountain Apache Celebrating Life Case Ref: 123456

INSTRUCTIONS: COMPLETE THIS FORM BASED ON ALL THE INFORMATION WHAT PERSON TELLS YOU, YELLOW FORM, POLICE REPORT, E.R.

Date of visit: ____/____/______

Name (Last name, First name): ________________________________________

Gender (circle one): Male    Female

Date of Birth: ____/____/______ (mm/dd/yyyy)

Tribal affiliation (check all that apply):
____White Mountain Apache
____San Carlos Apache
____Navajo

Living status (check all that apply):
With mother
With father
With siblings
With other relative
With foster parent
With friend
With no family
N/A
PHASE I:
What can the data teach us?

Suicide Rates for 15-24 Year Olds

Year

2000 2001 2002 2003 2004

Age adjusted suicide rates/100,000

CDC/WISQARS 7/2007
### How do Apache Rates Compare?

Average suicide incidence rates per 100,000/year

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<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Population, Age Adjusted</strong></td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td>40.1 (~4x US)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ages 15-24</strong></td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>17.25 (~2x US)</td>
<td>129.9 (~13x US)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Completion methods: WMAT vs. other populations

- Firearm: 52% U.S., 52% AI/AN, 16% I.H.S., 42% WMAT
- Overdose/Poisoning: 8% U.S., 6% AI/AN, 6% I.H.S., 4% WMAT
- Suffocation/Hanging: 33% U.S., 47% AI/AN, 37% I.H.S., 80% WMAT
- Other: 7% U.S., 5% AI/AN, 5% I.H.S., 0% WMAT
Rates of WM Apache attempts and completions, 2001 - 2006

![Graph showing the average annual age- and sex-specific suicide rates among WMAT population, 2001-2006.](image)
“Celebrating Life”
Phase I Summary

- Apache youth suicide rate: 13x U.S. All Races, ~6x AI/AN rates

- Highest completion rates: 15-24 yr olds; highest attempt rates: 15-19 yr olds

- Male : Female ratios: 6:1 completions; ~1:1 attempts

- Methods - 80% Hanging despite availability of fire arms

- Known triggers for attempters: conflict with partner or close relative; loss of loved one; substance use
Celebrating Life Phase I
Stakeholder Interpretation of Findings

- Possible reasons for hanging:
  - No disfigurement
  - Shames the “finder”
  - Contagious
  - Silent method
- Males losing traditional roles; in crisis
- Females – possible role of abuse
- Outside media incongruous with Apache culture
- Alcohol/drug use integrated with self-harm
- Youth feeling “somehow”
- Depression and suicide link new revelation
- Lack of mental health service providers
Thank you
Tribal Code Revision Project

Elinor Nault, M. Ed.
Rocky Boy, Montana
Goal

Designed to address the efficiency and effectiveness of a juvenile justice system and demonstrate that communities can improve their systems without sacrificing public safety.

Restructured codes, policy and practice to create system improvements that reach far beyond detention alone.
Required Community Collaboration

• All relevant local, state and federal partners were invited to participate in training and process of code, policy and procedure revision.
Partners

- OJJDP Tribal Youth Program - Technical Assistance
- Montana Board of Crime Control Youth Justice Council
- Annie E. Casey Foundation Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiative
- Association of American Indian Affairs
- Indian Child Welfare
- National Council of Crime and Delinquency
Partners cont.

• Courts
• Law Enforcement
• Social Services
• Boys & Girls Club
• Schools
• TANF
• Chemical Dependency Center
Developed policies and procedures to assess youth at various points of contact in the justice system:

- Immediately upon contact with Law Enforcement personnel.
- Prior to preliminary hearing.
- Prior to adjudicatory hearing.
- Reassessed within three (3) months while on probation.
Revised code to include:

- Risk Assessment Instrument
- Informal Process
- Alternatives to Detention - Healing to Wellness Drug Court (HTWC)
- Probation Assessment
Results:

Decreased the number of youth unnecessarily or inappropriately detained;

Reduced the number of youth who fail to appear in court or re-offend pending adjudication;

Redirected public funds towards effective juvenile justice processes and public safety strategies;

Reduced the disproportionate minority confinement and contact of the juvenile justice system; and,

Improved the juvenile justice system overall.
THANK YOU! Question & Answers
Q & A

What are the barriers, if any, to implementing suicide prevention statutes in your community?
Q & A

What strategies have been successful in empowering sites/communities to begin these discussions? What kinds of information have been useful to stakeholders?
Q & A

How do statutes move from being just a discussion to becoming a movement by the suicide prevention program staff?
Presenter Contact Information

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Announcements

• Resource List; Title VI-Children’s Protection Code; PowerPoint

• Evaluation

• Next Meeting: November 4, TBD
  • If you have additional ideas or questions, contact Petrice at ppost@edc.org