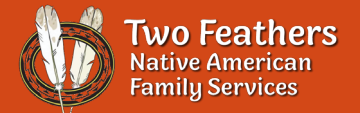




School-Based Substance Use Programming for Native American Youth

Dr. Virgil Moorehead Jr.
Yurok, Tolowa
Licensed Clinical Psychologist
Executive Director,
Two Feathers Native American Family Services



What knowledge, assumptions or biases might you have when working with Native Americans?

Indian Country

- 7 Mil. Identify as American Indian/ Alaska Native (AI/AN)
- 570 Federally Recognized Tribal Nations
- Majority AI reside off Reservations





California Indian Country

- **2020 Census- 630,000 AIs**
- **74% Increase over 10 years**
- **1.4 Million Mixed, 94.9% increase**
- **110 Federally Recognized Tribes**
- **Pan-Indian Movement, Diverse**
- **Strong Cultural Revitalization**

Native American Cultural Identity

- In the nationwide Indigenous Futures Survey (2020), over 90% of 1,086 Indigenous youth participants strongly agreed or agreed that being Native American is an important part of their identity compared to only 27% of participants strongly agreeing or agreeing that being an American is an important part of their identity.



Understanding Native Americans

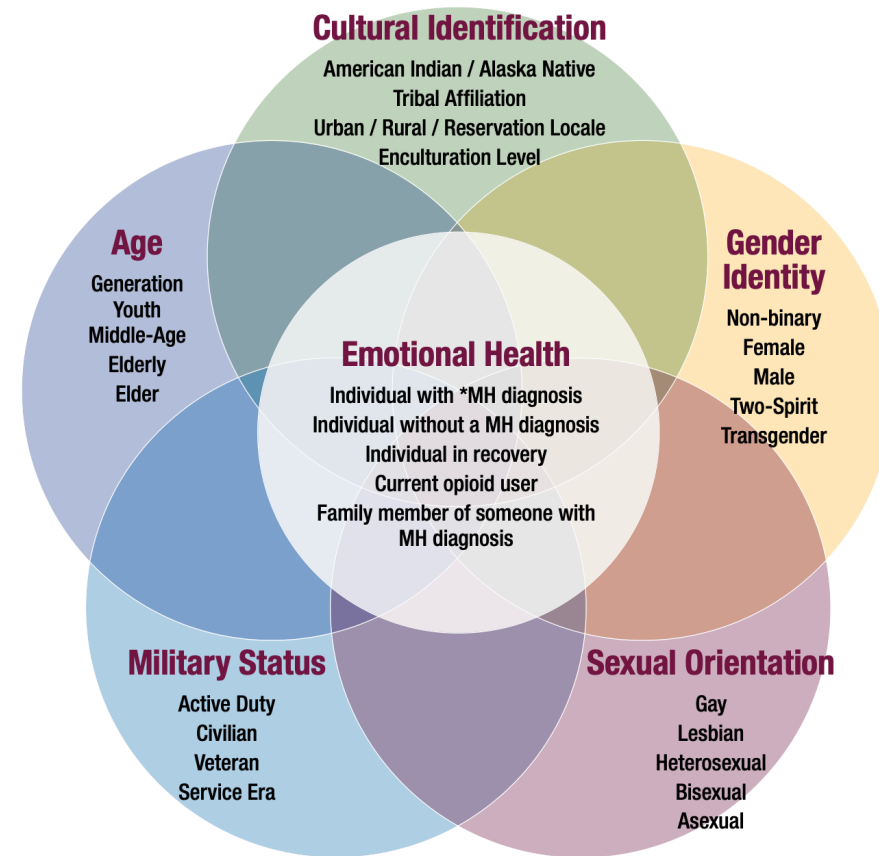
- Native American
- American Indian/
Alaskan Native
- Yurok, Tolowa, Hupa-
Nationhood
- Indigenous
- **Indigenous
Intersectionality**



Indigenous Intersectionality

- Overlapping social identities intersect to create a comprehensive whole that is different from each individual identity
- Important to consider systems of oppression, discrimination, and colonialism
- Indigenous knowledge systems -interconnected and interdependent

Indigenous Intersectionality Diagram



*MH (Mental Health)

*The identity factors highlighted above are those examined in depth in the current brief.
This is not an exhaustive display of all potential identities.*



Native American Behavioral Health Programming

Native American Mental Health

Integrating counseling interventions w/ Native Traditions

Strategies:

1. Increase access to traditional treatment models for AIs
2. Use Psychotherapeutic Techniques aligned w/ Native Traditions
3. To ensure cultural competence and **connection w/ Native wisdom**, integrate traditional healing methods w/ these forms for psychotherapy

LaFromboise, Trimble, & Mohatt, 1990



~~THE~~ [POST]COLONIAL PREDICAMENT

- On one hand, *urgent community needs...*
 - Multi-Stressed Communities
 - Documented disparities in mental health status, **Historical Trauma, Colonial Disorders**
- On the other hand, *incongruent clinical services*
 - “*Brainwash me forever so I can be like a Whiteman*”

Gone, J. P. (2010). Psychotherapy and traditional healing for American Indians: Exploring the prospects for therapeutic integration. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 38(2), 166-235.



Current Documented Disparities

Research Letter

April 12, 2022

Trends in Drug Overdose Deaths Among US Adolescents, January 2010 to June 2021

Joseph Friedman, MPH¹; Morgan Godvin, BA²; Chelsea L. Shover, PhD³; [et al](#)

» [Author Affiliations](#) | [Article Information](#)

JAMA. 2022;327(14):1398-1400. doi:10.1001/jama.2022.2847

Table. Characteristics of Adolescent Overdose Deaths, 2010, 2019, 2020, and 2021^a

Characteristics	2010		2019		2020			2021 ^b		
	Deaths, No.	Rate	Deaths, No.	Rate	Deaths, No.	Rate	Change, %	Deaths, No.	Rate	Change, %
Total among overall population	38 329	12.41	70 630	21.52	91 799	27.86	29.48	101 954	31.06	11.48
Total among adolescents	518	2.40	492	2.36	954	4.57	94.03	1146	5.49	20.05
Substance										
Benzodiazepines	83	0.38	71	0.34	142	0.68	100.13	152	0.73	6.97
Cocaine	22	0.10	53	0.25	84	0.40	58.59	84	0.40	−0.07
Heroin	52	0.24	37	0.18	40	0.19	8.18	26	0.12	−35.04
Illicit fentanyl and synthetics	38	0.18	253	1.21	680	3.26	168.95	884	4.23	29.91
Methamphetamine	38	0.18	80	0.38	104	0.50	30.09	112	0.54	7.62
Prescription opioids	159	0.74	52	0.25	74	0.35	42.40	66	0.32	−10.87
Race and ethnicity ^c										
American Indian or Alaska Native, non-Hispanic	11	4.86	14	6.88	16	7.87	14.37	24	11.79	49.89
Black or African American, non-Hispanic	24	0.70	46	1.49	114	3.69	148.22	96	3.10	−15.92
Latinx	62	1.38	136	2.68	276	5.35	99.44	354	6.98	30.51
White, non-Hispanic	412	3.32	281	2.50	521	4.67	87.02	604	5.36	14.93

^a Drug overdose deaths among high school-aged adolescents (14-18 years), shown as counts, and rates per 100 000 population for 2010, 2019, 2020, and 2021, compared with values for the all-age US population. Data for adolescents are also stratified by substance involved and race and ethnicity. Year-to-year percentage increases are shown for 2020 (relative to 2019) and 2021 (relative to 2020).

^b 2021 refers to January to June 2021, and rates and counts have been annualized.

^c Race and ethnicity were assessed in this study, as categorized in the underlying records, because recent data have suggested that racial and ethnic inequalities in overdose are increasing among the general population and may also be a concern among the adolescent population assessed herein.⁵ Trends among Asian individuals were not included because of differences between the representation of this group in the preliminary and final databases used.

“American Indian adolescents experienced the highest overdose rate in 2021”



What can we do
in the schools?

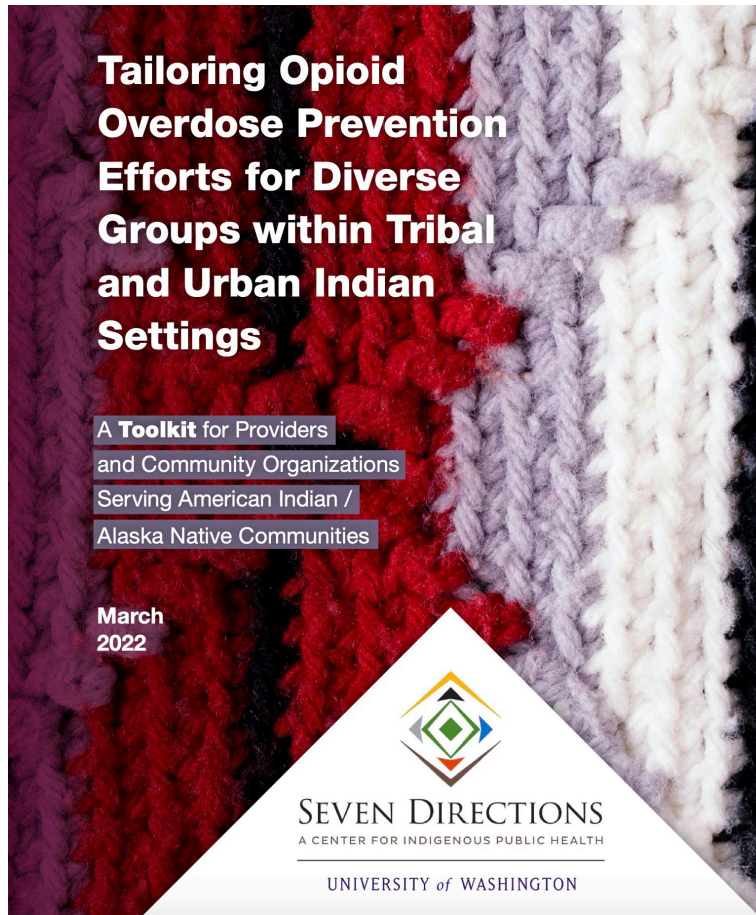


Problematizing
the Systems,
Not our People

Western Mainstream society operates from a “normative” viewpoint- what is considered Normal.

Social Norms, Social Factors,
Individualizing Care

Best Practices



In multiple qualitative studies, Native youth have articulated the importance of..

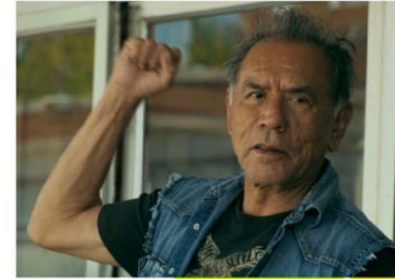
Being flexible and supportive

- Hearing from parents (even when it may seem like youth don't want to!) about their views on drug use, protective behaviors, limits, etc.
- Receiving support from parents and other trusted adults to learn about cultural practices, increase community connectedness
- Deep listening to youth perspectives and limiting reactivity to youth statements
- Using Personal Experience, HUMBLE

YOUR PATH IS NOT
AN EASY ONE. KEEP
GOING!



Reservation Dogs Wellness Meter Pt. 2 How are you feeling today?



Fight the man



Someone put onions in your meatpie



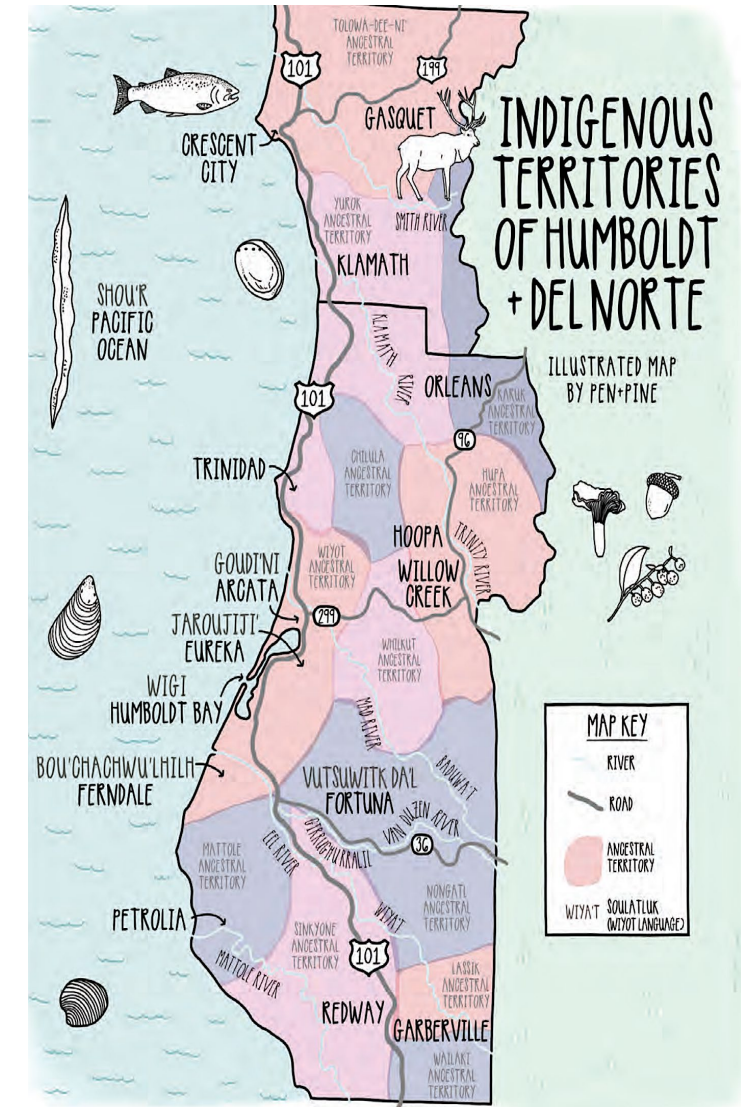
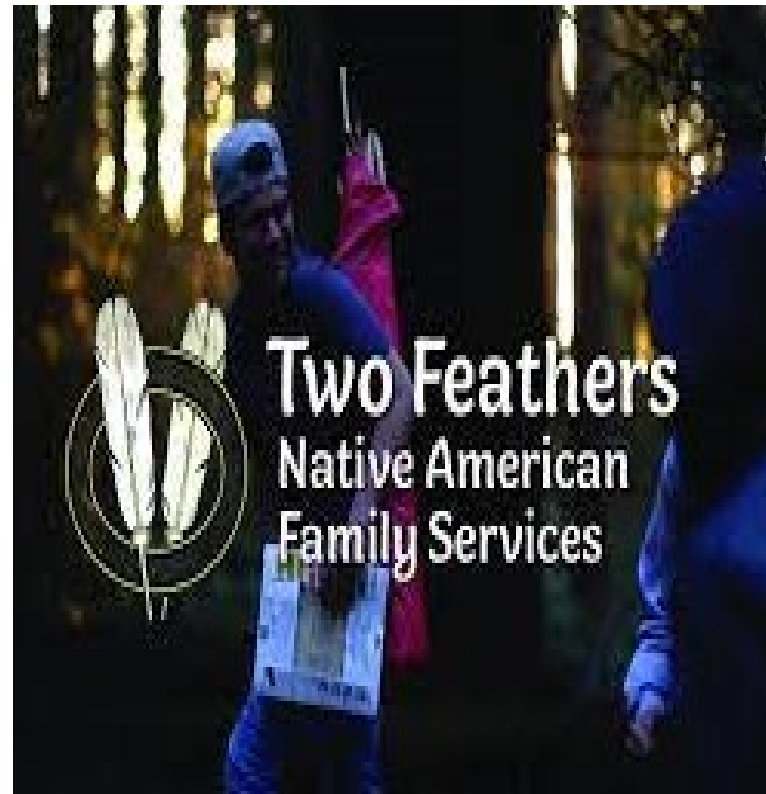
Ready to take on a tornado



You bought the wrong medallion, smh

Social Media- Native Perspective

Case Study:



This map is a living document. We have worked with local Indigenous representatives to synthesize available information and reflect it accurately and sensitively. We acknowledge that there is always more to learn. To help improve the map, please email food.guide@cooperationhumboldt.com.



Two Feathers
Native American
Family Services

Lessons Learned

- Youth Mental & Wellness
- Staff 4 to 27
- 25 to over 300 youth
- Expanded Services to most rural areas
- Advocacy, “Rethinking Mental Health & Youth Wellness”

Impacting Social Norms

- **Wellbeing of the Person**- understanding why we are doing the work, working on oneself, showing up in a good way, Inspired
- **Teamwork**- Interdependent Selves, Partnership Building, “No Crabs in Bucket Mentality.” **Giving away power**. Healthy Conflict Resolution (impacted by trauma)
- **The Wisdom is Us**, Community, the federal & state gov’t will not lead us to decolonization, community thriving
- **Removing Barriers to Treatment**- “removing barriers to kindness, care.”



Impacting Social Norms: Specific Mindsets

- **Responsible without blaming.** Unconditional Care, Solidarity.
- **Enculturation-** knowing one's history, stories, cultural teachings
- **Mattering-** Valuing lived Experience, focusing on Purpose, Meaning, Identity. MATTERING-FEELING VALUED, ADDING VALUE

Strongest Determinants of Wellness: quality of relationships, health of land/environment, Transforming the Whole- Recovery as “we” rather than “Me”



Individualizing Care

Temperament
Cultural Knowledge
Socio/economic factors
Family Support
“Showing Up”

Constantly Adapting

Signature Two Feathers Program

ACORN Youth Wellness Reconnect to “Culture”

Flower Dance



Stick Game



TIS Five tribes across three counties find hope in...

Five tribes across three counties find hope in tradition

ACORN program promotes youth wellness with cultural events



Hope Kibby leads a demonstration of the flower dance, a coming of age ceremony for young Native American women. (Jessa Quetzada — for the Times Standard)



ACORN Research Questions

N = 47

Your Culture Gives You Strength

How would you describe a Healthy Native Person

What is the biggest problem youth face in our community

Reasons for Learning Your Native Culture?

Earth, Local Plants, Animals, Sacred Sites, Language?

Qualitative/Stories from Native Youth

- “Without culture, there’s no way of thinking you are somebody, it affects identity, gives you a purpose to believe in yourself, your family and where you come from.” -14 y.o. female
- **What do you think youth need in order to help address issues of mental health in their lives?** Learning about Native languages, learning more on the land of different tribal communities.— 15 y.o. male
- “Without culture there’s no way of thinking you are somebody; it affects identity, and gives you a purpose to believe in yourself, your family and where you come from. It gives you direction, a way of life.” 16 y.o. female

Further Re-imaging: Native Mental Health, Education & Wellness

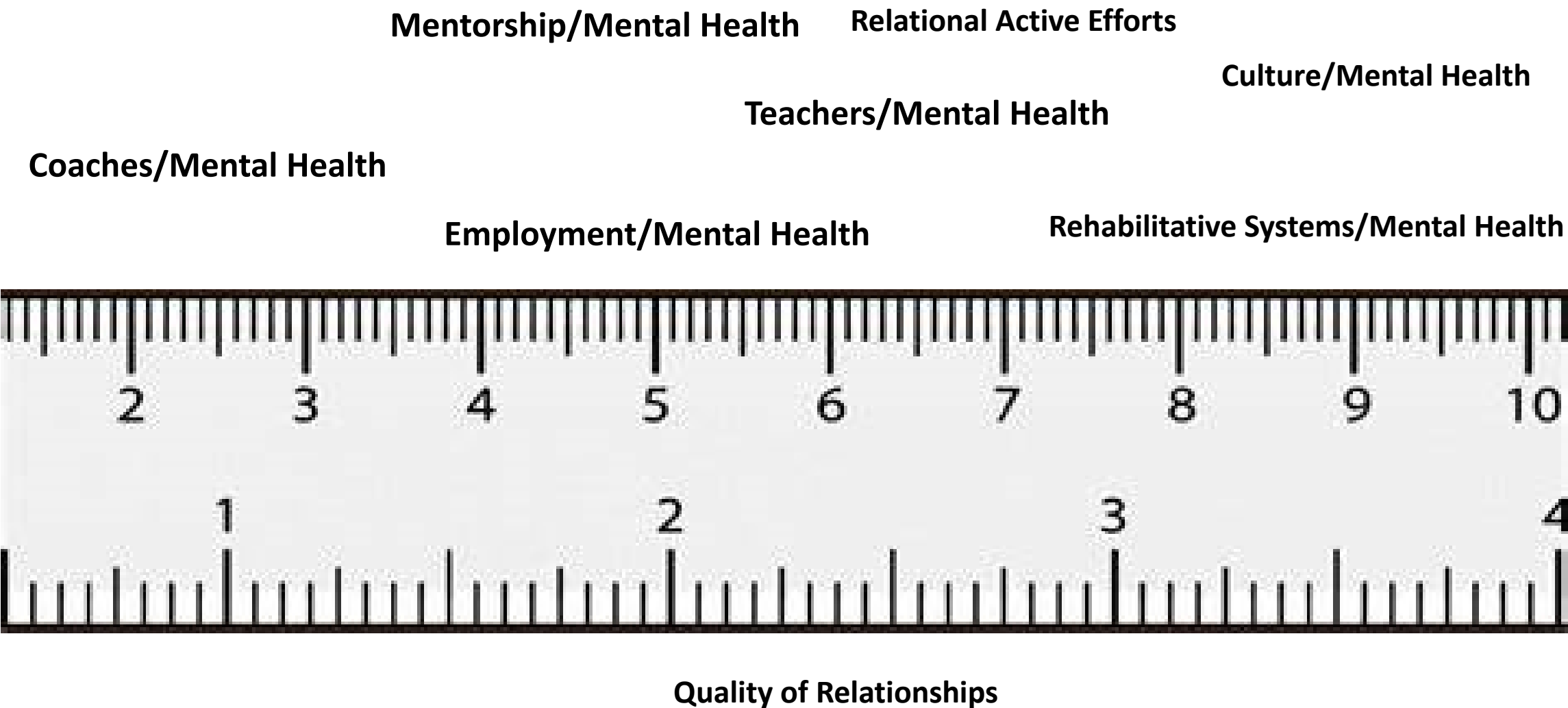
How do we promote Native American thriving in the 21st Century?

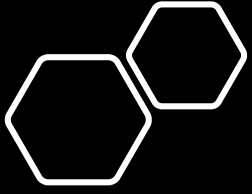
K'winya'nya:n-ma'awhiniw “the human way”- demonstrated through values such as honor, respect, humility, discipline, generosity, and “having a good heart.” “Proud of who you are.”

Hupa Giftedness- “someone who cares and loves the people.”

From Rights to Responsibilities

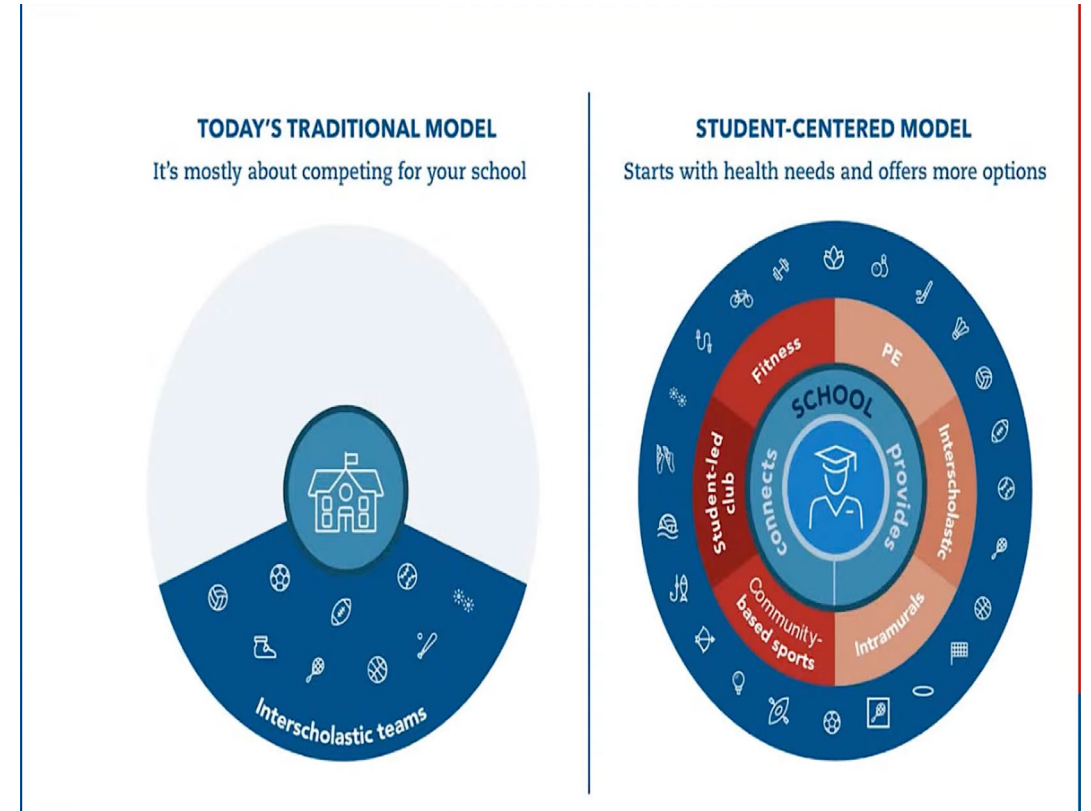
Specific Approach: Relationship Ruler





Reimagining School Sports

- Shifting Norms
- Connecting for Impact





Changemakers

- If everyone is a changemaker, there's no way a problem can outrun a solution
- Don't be content to just give a fish or teach one how to fish. We will not rest until we have revolutionized the fishing industry

-Bill Drayton



Native Wellness-Asset Framing

- We're reclaiming our roles and our purpose in this world. And I think for a lot of Natives, that role was cut. That's why we're here today. We are trying to find a way that we fit into [and improve] this world with respect to ourselves and our relatives.

~ Stephen Cheney (Lakota, Kul Wicasa Oyate)