



Indian Health Service 2012 NATIONAL BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CONFERENCE

Welcome

Youth Suicide Prevention Through Community Partnerships and Cultural
Strengthening: The Wiconi Ohitika Suicide Prevention Program

Wiconi Ohitika, Cankdeska Cikana Community College



Mobilizing Partnerships to Promote Wellness



House Keeping

- Please be sure to sign in and out on the Sign In Sheets located near the entrance to this room.
- Please complete the evaluation at the end of this presentation.
- For more information on Continuing Education Units (CEUs), please visit the Registration Desk


Comfort Room

- To promote wellness and self-care, a Comfort Room is available in Atrium Room 8 for your use.
- If you need further assistance, please visit the Indian Health Service Division of Behavioral Health booth.



Objectives of this Presentation

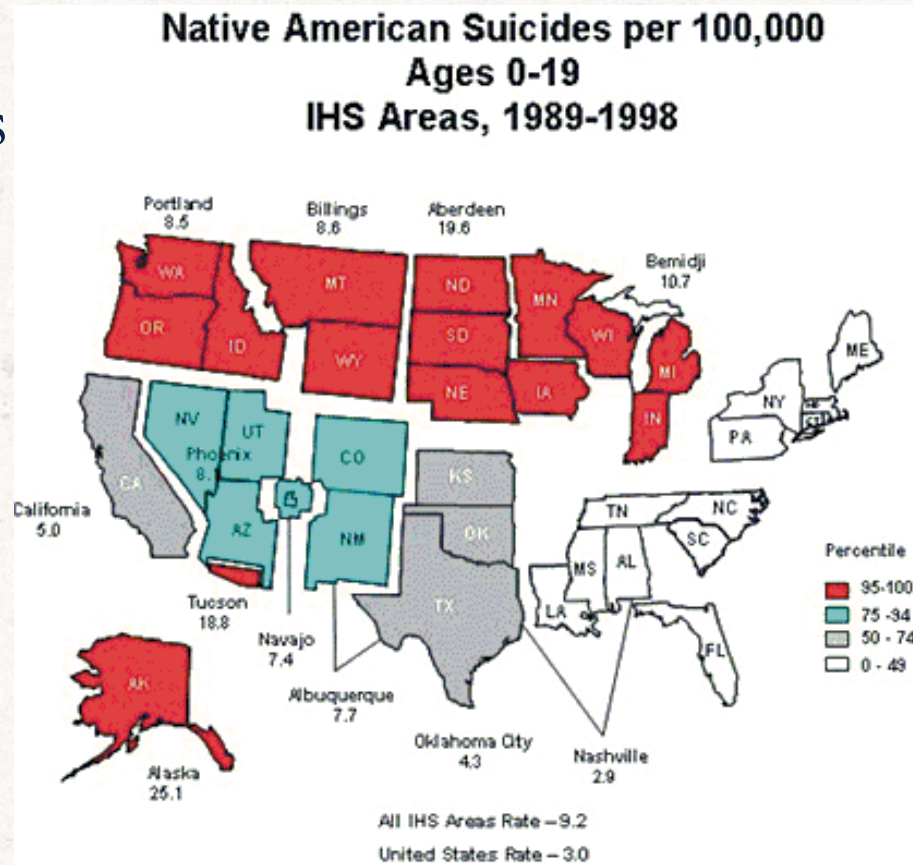
At the conclusion of the workshop, participants will have:

- Increased knowledge about cultural strengthening as a strategy for reducing risk behaviors for suicide.
 - Increased information about coalition building within tribal communities and regionally to support suicide prevention efforts.
 - Increased skills in the development of prevention strategies that are both evidence- and culturally-based.
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Factors that May Contribute to Suicide

- Depression
- Violence and trauma
- Family history
- Substance use and abuse
- Loss
- Isolation
- Access to methods
- Lack of access to help

- American Indian rates of suicide between 2002-2004 rate (17.9) is 1.7 times greater than the U.S. all-races rate (10.8) for 2003.



Suicide Rates in Indian Country

The Wiconi Ohitika Youth Suicide Prevention Project


Goal 1. Increased awareness of suicide, its risk factors, protective factors and suicide prevention.

Goal 2. Increased identification of youth at risk, referral to appropriate resources, and follow-up.


Goal 3. Increased youth, family, and community engagement.

Goal 4. Effective and efficient program implementation and sustainability.





Development of Wiconi Ohitika Youth Suicide Prevention Project

- 2005 Local coalition created with common mission to save lives.
 - 2005 Participated in North Dakota Youth Suicide Prevention Coalition, writing grant for State Youth Suicide Prevention program.
 - 2006 One of 6 communities funded through State Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention Program (SAMHSA).
 - 2008 Spirit Lake Nation received SAMHSA Garrett Lee Smith Youth Suicide Prevention funding for Wiconi Ohitika (Strong Life) Youth Suicide Prevention Project, at Cankdeska Cikana Community College.
 - 2011 2nd GLS grant awarded.
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Wiconi Ohitika, a culturally enriched approach to youth suicide prevention...

BASED ON

- promoting positive self-identity,
- increased self-esteem, and
- increased knowledge of the Dakota way of life.



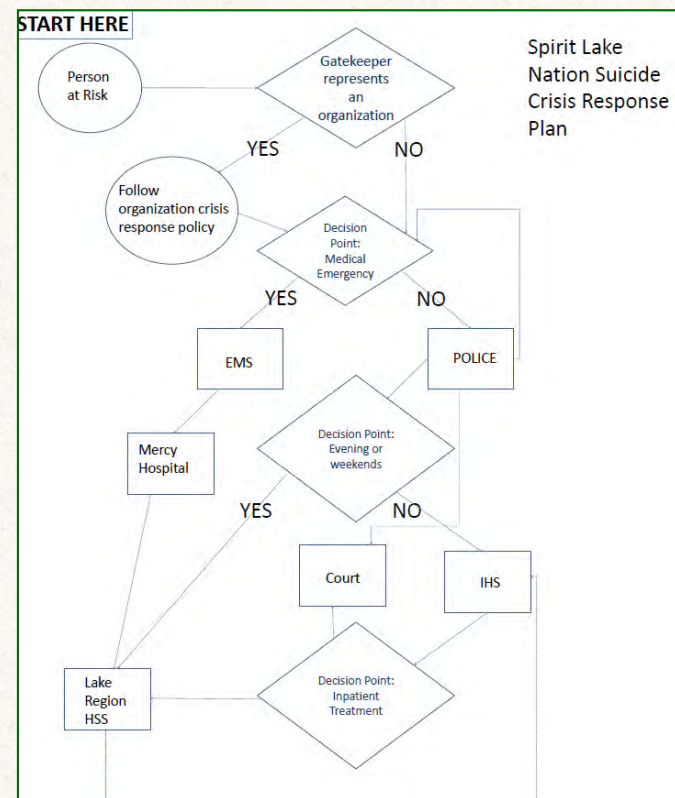
Elder Advisory Council

- Meet monthly
- Approve project products
- School presentations
- Plan yearly cultural strengthening seminar and serve as presenters
- “Wiconi Wakan” (Life is Sacred) videos and PSAs



The Spirit Lake Suicide Prevention Coalition

- Spirit Lake Health Center (Indian Health Service)
- BI A Law Enforcement
- Lake Region Human Services Center
- Spirit Lake Tribal Court
- Youth Healing & Wellness
- Area school counselors and administrators
- UND Social Work Intern
- Local ministers and spiritual leaders
- Community members



Cultural Strengthening, Connectedness, and Reduction of Risk Factors



The Importance Of Culture In Suicide Prevention

The spiritual values, traditions, history of Native Americans and Spirit Lake Nation are all connected.

To strengthen us as a Dakota nation, we need our traditions, culture, and spirituality.

We learn from the past to change the present and to prepare ourselves and our people for the future...

Connectedness

Connectedness includes:

- interpersonal connection to significant others (relatedness)
- individual autonomy supported by others.

Individual, Family, and Community



Strategies to Prevent Suicide and the Wiconi Ohitika Youth Suicide Prevention Project

Individual

- 🪁 Cultural activities
- 🪁 Classroom awareness and life skills activities

Family

- 🪁 Cultural activities
- 🪁 Takoja Niwiciyapi

Community

- 🪁 Community Coalition
- 🪁 Crisis Response Plan
- 🪁 Awareness Activities



Knowledge of traditional practices is shared by local elders/experts in:

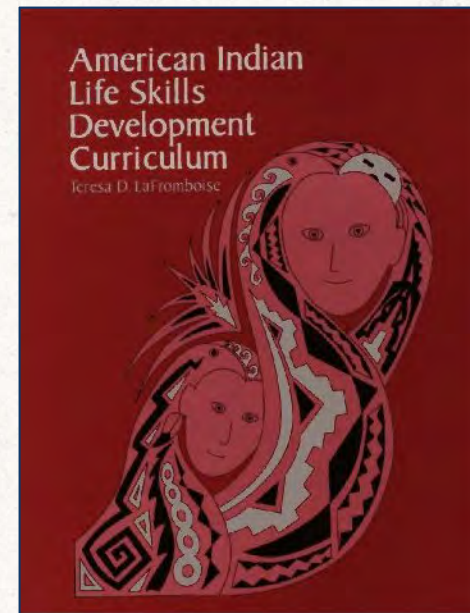
- **Beading**
- **Star quilt making**
- **Regalia making**
- **Singing at the Drum**
- **Moccasin making**
- **Storytelling**
- **Dakota History**
- **Historical landmarks**
- **Dakota values, customs, traditions, and language**



Culture Camp

American Indian Life Skills

- A school-based suicide prevention curriculum designed to prevent suicide by reducing suicide risk and improving protective factors among American Indian adolescents 14 to 19 years old.
- Lessons are interactive and incorporate situations and experiences relevant to American Indian adolescent life, such as dating, rejection, divorce, separation, unemployment, and problems with health and the law.



Increasing Recognition of Youth at Risk: Gatekeeper Training

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

- Local people trained as trainers.
- Training provided by Indian Health Service

Question, Persuade, & Refer (QPR)

- Trained 160+ in community in 2010 at schools, college, youth gatherings.
- Trained local law enforcement

Family: Takoja Niwiciyapi



Culture and Connectedness in the Schools



Sources of Strength



Sources of Strength is a student centered strengths based suicide prevention project. Our goal is to connect peers and caring adults in order to prevent suicide and promote an environment of health and well being.



Community

- Public service announcements
- Elders DVD: “Wiconi Wakan”
- Traditional Healer interviews
- Good Health TV
- Monthly Newsletter
- PSAs



PEACEFUL WARRIORS SUMMER CAMP

A partnership with I.H.S. Mental Health to offer a social skills building camp for ages 9-12. Morning are spent on activities and discussion on various social skills and conclude with a cooking lesson and a service learning opportunity to give back to our home community.



**Wicozani Oigduhe (Healthy Living)
Day of Prayer**

Red Road Approach



Red Road is a holistic healing process, a spirituality, not just for alcoholism or gambling or drugs. It's wellness beyond addiction. We apply Lakota spiritual principles in a physical manner to take care of our earth body through rest, exercise, nutrition. We are aware of our mental and emotional capacities, physical beingness, and spiritual purpose on this earth. All together we then balance our walk in life. I pray to the Creator for the right words to bring to the people. This is my spiritual commitment and my way of life.

Gene Thin Elk (2004)

Sustainability



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Crisis Hotline Numbers

Suicide Prevention Lifeline Number:

- 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

National Domestic Violence Hotline:

- 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224

National Child Abuse Hotline:

- 1-800-4-A-CHILD

Sexual Assault Hotline:

- 1-800-262-9800
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