

What does it mean for be an Indigi-Wellness Champion? Peer-to-Peer Support

Category: News

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My name is Shoshanna “Mah-Gah-Wah-See” Johnson and I’m a member of the Big Jim Band from the Absentee-Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma. Throughout my time on the Inaugural Youth Advisory Council, I’ve learned a lot about the importance of peer-to-peer support. Most of my friends and family members know that I work in suicide prevention so I’m very open to talking about mental health. It’s created a safe space for some of my friends to come to me for support whether it’s just being an open ear or helping them find resources specific to their needs. I’ve learned that it’s important for youth to know that being resilient does not mean that you still won’t face times in your life when you will have to deal with stress.

If someone you know is thinking about suicide, help them connect to resources. Help them build a support system so that they have others to reach out to for help, whether it’s 1-800-273- TALK (8255), family, friends, teachers, coaches or a counselor. Listen to their reasons for feeling hopeless and in pain. Listen without judgment and with compassion and empathy.

As Indigenous people, we owe it to our ancestors to come and work together because that intertribal connectedness is medicine in this day in age. That’s how our traditions will stay alive and how our people can stay resilient. This is what it means for me to be an Indigi-Wellness Warrior. If you are looking be a part of this national network and learn how to become an Indigi-Wellness Champion National Social Contest and Campaign that launches on September 10th. How do you get involved? It’s very easy.

1. **Create a post** and share photos of life, family, friends, hobbies as examples of ways you keep your Indigenous identity strong and what have you been doing to promote health and wellness in your community over the past 4 years.
2. **Answer 2 questions** in your post: “What does it mean to be an Indigi-Wellness Champion?” and “How do you stay resilient in your community”?
3. **Ask other Native youth to join the movement** in your post and ask them “What does it mean for you to be an Indigi-Wellness Champion?” and “How do you stay resilient in your community”?
4. **Share on Facebook, Twitter and/or Instagram.** Make sure that your social media post settings are public for NCUIH’s office to view your submission.
 - *Always get parental permission before posting any content online (if under 18 years old)
 - Include the Youth Council Campaign Logo & hashtags *#ThisIsNative* *#CultureIsPrevention* *#NCUIH* *#NCUIHYC18*
 - Create your post by using the YC’s two braided image representing both campaigns to be provided soon.
5. Submit your post at <https://www.ncuih.org/indigiwellness> before 11:59 PM **September 20, 2019.**

So I ask you how do you stay resilient in your community”?

Ne ah way!