

# Urban Indian Organizations Encouraged to Apply for Healthy Lifestyles in Youth Cooperative Agreement

Category: Policy Blog

written by Sam Sears | August 29, 2022

On August 12, 2022, the Indian Health Service (IHS) [announced](#) a request for applications for the Healthy Lifestyles in Youth (HLY) grant program. Aimed at improving the health of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth, the program supports health promotion and education programs, to address healthy lifestyle development, and emphasizes nutrition and physical activity for AI/AN children 7 to 11 years old. IHS will issue one award under this announcement, and the project period for the program will be five years. The identified funding for FY 2022, the first budget year for the grant, is \$1,250,000. Applications for this cooperative agreement should be submitted by September 15, 2022, through [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov). The earliest anticipated start date is September 30, 2022. Urban Indian organizations (UIOs) are eligible and encouraged to apply. For more details on the requirements for the application and the cooperative, [see here](#).

Awardees of this cooperative agreement must take on the following:

- Collaboration with selected Native American Boys and Girls Club sites using the “Together Raising Awareness for Indian Life” (TRAIL) curriculum
- Administer health and physical education programs
- Support youth in achieving and maintaining healthy lifestyles through participation in fitness programs
- Help youth acquire a range of physical skills
- Facilitate the development of a sense of teamwork and cooperation amongst youth

## **Background**

Through the HLY grant, facilities can offer a wide range of prevention and treatment services – exercise and physical activity programs, community gardens, culinary education programs, health and wellness fairs, culturally-relevant nutrition assistance, group exercise activities, garden spaces and youth-focused activities. Evidence-based early intervention strategies have been shown to reduce, or even halt, the increasing trend in obesity and diabetes among youth and young adults. The TRAIL curriculum was developed to educate the youth participating on good nutrition and to promote physical activity. Through a 3-month, 12-lesson program, the curriculum may help to curtail the effect of unhealthy behaviors surrounding food and physical activity, which can lead to obesity, diabetes, and/or other chronic illness throughout life.

Compared to the general Indian population, urban AI/AN communities experience [exacerbated health problems](#) due to lack of family and traditional cultural environments in major metropolitan areas. Urban AI/AN youth are at greater risks for serious mental health and substance abuse problems, suicide, gang activity, teen pregnancy, abuse, and neglect. Between 1994 and 2004, the type 2 diabetes rate for AI/AN youth 15 to 19 years old [increased](#) by 68%. Despite the disproportionately high rates of health disparities in urban AI/AN populations, UIOs have continued to provide critical services aimed at addressing and combatting negative health outcomes through grants and cooperative agreements. For example, as of 2022, 30 of the 41 UIOs received funding

through the Special Diabetes Program for Indians.

## **Call to Action**

NCUIH encourages interested UIO leaders to submit application materials to IHS via [grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov) by September 15, 2022. UIOs are uniquely positioned, in part thanks to their work through the Special Diabetes Program for Indians grants, to already have established programs focused on exercise and physical activity, culturally relevant nutrition programs, and youth programs.

Please contact NCUIH's Policy department at [policy@ncuih.org](mailto:policy@ncuih.org) if you would like assistance with the submission, or if you plan to apply.