Press Release: NCUIH Launches RSV Vaccine Toolkit to Support RSV Prevention in Native Communities

Category: Press Release
written by Meredith Raimondi | October 21, 2025

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WASHINGTON, D.C. (October 22, 2025)– NCUIH is proud to share the launch of a new *RSV Toolkit*, developed to support health care providers in protecting Native communities from RSV.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms but can lead to serious illness in infants, young children, and older adults. RSV is highly contagious and can harm elders and babies. American Indian and Alaska Native children experience disproportionately higher rates of RSV-related hospitalization and ICU admission when compared to other U.S. infants.

> "RSV can cause serious respiratory illness in infants and young children, with Native children facing even higher risks. As a pediatric nurse, I've cared for too many babies suffering from severe RSV and witnessed the heavy toll it takes on families. At the time, there were no protection options available for babies, and it often left me feeling helpless. Today, I'm grateful to help raise awareness about RSV and share the ways we can now protect our future knowledge keepers and storytellers."
> – Alyssa Smith-Longee (Assiniboine/Sioux – Fort Peck), NCUIH Public Health Program Manager

Health care providers can help protect Native communities!

The toolkit features 20 graphics—including both real-life photos and storyteller-inspired illustrations—paired with ready-to-use social media posts. Together, we can raise awareness about RSV prevention and highlight the power of community care.

We encourage you to share the toolkit on your channels using **#NCUIH** and tag us to help us amplify these important messages.

Access the toolkit at ncuih.org/RSV and join us in protecting our youngest and most vulnerable relatives this RSV season.

About the Storyteller Design

These storyteller illustrations draw inspiration from Pueblo clay sculptures with roots that extend deep into generations of tradition. The modern storyteller figurine was first created in 1964 by Helen Cordero of Cochiti Pueblo, who gave visual life to the oral practice of passing down lessons, values, history, and ways of life. Today, storyteller figurines remain among the most cherished forms of clay art, with artists shaping their storytellers to reflect diverse traditions and beliefs. The open mouth of each figurine represents the act of sharing stories with the children gathered around it. This campaign continues that legacy, raising awareness about RSV to protect our most vulnerable, including babies and young children, and safeguarding the next generation of storytellers and knowledge keepers.

Social Media Copy and Graphics

8 different graphics for social media are available, including illustrated and photo versions.

You can protect your baby before they take their first breath.

American Indian and Alaska Native children face higher risk from RSV.
Protect our future storytellers with RSV prevention.

Newsletter Copy and Graphics

We have drafted text copy for your newsletters and included illustrated and photo versions of graphics as well.

Posters

Download and printable posters are available with 4 different illustrations.

Protect our stories.
Protect our knowledge.
Protect our circle.

RSV protection through RSV immunization.

NATIONAL COUNCIL OF URBAN INDIAN HEALTH

Native Health Protection Network

We're uniting health professionals who are dedicated to protecting Native families through strong immunization practices and culturally grounded care.

The **Native Health Protection Network** is a new circle for peer learning, sharing strategies, and strengthening vaccine confidence. This network will connect members to timely updates and resources designed to support vaccine readiness. Members can expect to receive email updates from NCUIH at least quarterly that will share exclusive insights, any updates to vaccine recommendations, and tailored resources and tools to boost vaccine knowledge. Those wishing to stay up to date with the latest vaccine recommendations are encouraged to sign up.

By signing up, members will receive quarterly email updates with:

- Tailored communications and educational tools to support your community's immunization efforts
- Exclusive insights and the latest vaccine recommendations
- Reminders of upcoming NCUIH vaccine Community of Learning sessions

About NCUIH

The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is a national representative for the 41 Urban Indian Organizations contracting with the Indian Health Service under the *Indian Health Care Improvement Act*. NCUIH is devoted to the support and development of high quality and accessible health and public health services for American Indian and Alaska Native people living in urban areas.

NCUIH respects and supports Tribal sovereignty and the unique government-to-government relationship between our Tribal Nations and the United States. NCUIH works to support those federal laws, policies, and procedures that respect and uplift Tribal sovereignty and the government-to-government relationship. NCUIH does not support any federal law, policy, or procedure that infringes upon or in any way diminishes Tribal sovereignty or the government-to-government relationship.

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