ABOUT NCUIH

The National Council of Urban Indian Health (NCUIH) is the national non-profit organization devoted to the support and development of quality, accessible, and culturally-competent health and public health services for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/ANs) living in urban areas.

NCUIH is the only national representative of the 41 Title V Urban Indian Organizations (UIOs) under the Indian Health Service (IHS) in the Indian Health Care Improvement Act (IHCIA). NCUIH strives to improve the health of the over 70% of the AI/AN population that lives in urban areas, supported by quality, accessible health care centers.

Understanding Suicide and Substance Misuse among Urban Native Youth
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Kelley McCall is a third-year MSW/MPH student and a member of the Cherokee Nation. She graduated with a BA in Psychology from the University of New Mexico. As a dual-degree in MSW/MPH student, she hopes to implement traditional programs and intervention strategies within the current medical institutions and tribal communities. Kelley currently serves as an intern for NCUIH. Upon graduation, Kelley plans to continue onto a Ph.D. in Social Work with the goal of becoming a tenured professor.
A strength-based perspective on American Indian/Alaska Native Substance Use & Suicidal behaviors

Kelley McCall
ALCOHOL USE AMONG NATIVE AMERICANS
Alcohol Use Disorder among AI/ANs

PAST YEAR, 2015-2018 NSDUH, AI/AN 12+

* Estimate not shown due to low precision.

No differences between prior year estimates and the 2018 estimates are statistically significant at the .05 level.
Alcohol Initiates among AI/ANs

PAST YEAR, 2015-2018 NSDUH, AI/AN 12+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>2015</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
<th>2018</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12-17</td>
<td>11K</td>
<td>5.5K</td>
<td>9K</td>
<td>6K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>13K</td>
<td>8.0K</td>
<td>5.0K</td>
<td>2.9K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 or Older</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>3K</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall US population 12-17 9.6%

* Estimate not shown due to low precision.

No differences between prior year estimates and the 2018 estimates are statistically significant at the .05 level.

SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER AMONG NATIVE AMERICANS
According to a study by the JAMA Network, rates of alcohol and marijuana abuse among reservation-based Native American students are up to 3.4 times higher than National U.S. students.¹

Of students at schools on or near reservations:

- 4/10 used alcohol
- 4+/10 used marijuana

https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2682593
RISK FACTORS AMONG NATIVE AMERICANS
Social and Cultural Factors

Several socioeconomic factors contribute to the prevalence of substance abuse in Native American communities:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High unemployment rate</th>
<th>Low school completion rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Underdeveloped support systems</td>
<td>Unmet developmental needs of children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of culture and traditional values</td>
<td>High rates of trauma and loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative rates of use by peers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Urban Factors

- Fewer Native Resources
- Access to Tribal Services
  - Political Processes
- Identity-sustaining Cultural Resources
  - Cultural Knowledge
Rural Factors

- Social Isolation
- Shortage of Comprehensive Healthcare
- Unemployment/Poverty
- Transportation
- Lack of Anonymity
SUICIDE RISK AMONG NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH
Suicidal Thoughts, Plans, and Attempts among AI/AN Young Adults (18-25 y.o.)

Past Year, 2008 and 2018 NSDUH, AI/AN 18-25

- Serious Thoughts:
  - 2008: 8.3% (14K), 2018: 15.1% (33K)
  - Overall US population 18-25: 11.0%

- Made a Plan:
  - 2008: 6.7% (15K), 2018: 2.8% (5K)
  - Overall US population 18-25: 3.4%

- Attempted:
  - 2008: 3.4% (12K), 2018: 5.4% (2.8K)
  - Overall US population 18-25: 1.9%

* Estimate not shown due to low precision.

No differences between prior year estimates and the 2018 estimates are statistically significant at the .05 level.

Co-Occurring Substance Use Disorder (SUD) and Suicidal Thoughts, Plans, and Attempts among AI/AN Adults

PAST YEAR, 2018 NSDUH, AI/AN 18+

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Serious Thoughts</th>
<th>Made a Plan</th>
<th>Attempted</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No SUD</td>
<td></td>
<td>17K</td>
<td>0.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUD</td>
<td>44K</td>
<td>8K</td>
<td>8K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>5.1%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Estimate not shown due to low precision.

No differences between the estimates for adults without SUD and estimates for adults with SUD are statistically significant at the .05 level.

What has worked
Community wellness

(Hancock & Perkins, 1985)

- Group AA/NA session
- Individual counseling
- Random drug/alcohol testing
- Weekly check-ins with Judge Fox
- Permitted to leave rez for work
- 6 months and everyone set to graduate, did

http://www.wellnesscourts.org/files/Pueblo%20of%20Laguna%20Wellness%20Court%20nadcp%202014.pdf
SUCIDE ATTEMPT

DEFINITION

Pre-meditated, self-injury with the clear intention of taking one’s life
STATISTICS

- 13 times higher suicide rates than US population
- 73% used substances during the suicide attempt
- 60% females (often young mothers)
SUICIDE PREVENTION PROGRAM ELEMENTS

- Radio, TV, newspaper public service announcements
- Support walks
- In-person campaigns
- Skills workshops
- Cultural activities
- Field trips to sacred sites (children)
- ELDER INVOLVEMENT
Within 5 years (2007-2012)

White Mountain Apache suicide rates DECREASED by 38%
Most notable PROTECTIVE FACTORS determined were related to tribal values:

❖ Sacred sites
❖ Cultural activities
❖ Elder involvement
SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVALENCE:

❖ “Other” Race-11% (overall 13%)
❖ Unpaid Caregivers for Adults- 32.9% vs. 6.3%
❖ Rural- 11.5%
❖ Urban- 13.5%

Czeisler et al., 2020
SERIOUS SUICIDAL IDEATIONS PREVALENCE:

- “Other” Race-9.8% (overall 10.7%)
- Unpaid Caregivers for Adults- 30.7% vs. 3.6%
- Essential Workers- 21.7%
- Rural- 10.2%
- Urban- 10.7%

Czeisler et al., 2020
2018 to 2020

Substance Misuse
- 2018 - 17.5%
- 2020 - 11%

Suicidal Thoughts
- 2018 - 10.3%
- 2020 - 9.8%


Reference, contd:


We’ll stick around