



National Council of
Urban Indian Health



EXCELLENCE · EQUITY · EFFECTIVENESS

Digital Storytelling and Health Promotion

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.



Learning Objectives:

1. Recognize the significance of storytelling in Native culture
2. Building capacity to provide effective storytelling through digital means
3. Knowledge of technical requirements for successful digital storytelling
4. Discussing the strengths of digital storytelling during COVID-19



Significance of Storytelling in Native Culture

- Oral stories - a way to hand down teachings, culture knowledge, traditional practices
- Much of Native history is in oral traditions rather than written
- Present complex values and ideas in a simple engaging form
- Links each generation to their ancestors

Source;

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3098048/>



Why Storytelling?

- It's easier to absorb stories more readily than facts and figures
- Connect with stories – draws on relatable ideas and concepts
- Stories create a conversation – in turn this helps develop bonds between other Native communities
- Language revitalization & preservation of cultural knowledge
- Sense of belonging – history & where you fit in
- Develops self-identity



Strengths of Storytelling

Many of the strengths of storytelling are particularly relevant during COVID-19:

- Reaches a larger audience
- Helps overcome isolation through connection
- More accessible – easy to connect virtually, private, flexible times
- Ability to keep informed, lessens information overload
- Decreases exposure risk through virtual gathering
- Accessible for all ages



Effective Digital Storytelling: Platforms

Appropriate platforms:

- TikTok
- Instagram Reels
- Podcasts
- Photo or other live online gallery
- Triller (similar to TikTok)
- Zoom
- Facebook Live
- Webex

Effective Digital Storytelling: Technology

There are some necessary equipment and technical requirements to engage:

- Microphone
- Camera
- Adequate lighting
- Strong internet connection
- Software – this may have different licensing requirements.
 - i.e. Zoom accounts have capacity restrictions, depending on the licensure your organization supports.



Effective Digital Storytelling: Technology, cont.

In addition to technology/equipment physical requirements, a certain level of expertise is also advised:

- Knowledge of social media and other platforms. This allows appropriate safeguards (privacy/confidentiality blocks) to be maintained
- Ability to facilitate dialogue virtually. This is complicated as it may be difficult to ascertain tone/body language of participants in a virtual setting
- Experience troubleshooting technical difficulties – anything from audio/video issues or unstable internet connection to screensharing issues.

Tips:

- Make it simple
- Aesthetically pleasing visuals (multiple elements: photos, videos, animations)
- Be authentic & concise
- Use multiple platforms
- Speaking clearly, enunciation
- Structure to the session or event
- Closed captioning/awareness of accessibility challenges

Other Concerns around Digital Storytelling

There are two main concerns when implementing a digital storytelling event:

1. Confidentiality.

- Information shared may be private or sensitive in nature. Even with appropriate safeguards in place, there is never really a guarantee that the information will remain completely private. From an ethical perspective, participants should be made aware of this risk, particularly if they are younger and the information is sensitive.

2. Respect for Traditional Knowledge:

- Storytelling is an important and sacred form of handing down knowledge in Native communities. This practice should be treated with appropriate care and respect.





THANK YOU





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