



SUNY COVID SNAPSHOTS

MODULE

CONTENT

Module 3 Lesson 1

Virtual Native Language Revitalization for Behavioral Wellness

Virtual Native Language Revitalization addresses both current terminology as well as traditional languages. Focuses on behavioral health terms and using language sensitivity for discussion of contemporary issues. *“Language is a core part of who we are as Indian people. Each of us has our respective languages that connect us to our place of birth, teach us how to pray, and show us who we are as Indian people. Language is sacred.”* – Benny Shendo, Jr., First Nations Board Chair

Understand:

1. The cultural importance of Native languages as a tool to enhance sense of self/identity.
2. History of language
 - a. Your tribe’s history; preserving knowledge
 - b. Gives a sense of where YOU belong
3. Culturally appropriate definitions for sensitive topics
 - a. Sensitivity to all language usage; addict vs. person in recovery, abuse, misuse (individual blame) vs. disorder (not their fault, but biological)
 - b. Completing suicide or death by suicide vs. committed suicide; concept of suicide being unique-affects the community, we are all suffering vs. act of suffering alone; different perspectives on the act itself or what caused the emotions behind the act can vary across cultures and religions (Japanese, Catholics) <https://www.suicideinfo.ca/resource/suicideandlanguage/>
4. PTSD (not post event or one specific event) vs. Historical Trauma (long-term, ongoing events) vs. Oppression (government influencers Indian Country now) as in the work we do is against the oppressors, Compound Traumas (Complex – PTSD or C-PTSD).
 - a. Not assuming people haven’t experienced these events or conditions; assumes ignorance in others; these are real issues for Native Youth; sensitive topic to that individual who has these ideations, addictions; Youth are wise and should be respected
 - b. Acknowledging these issues are widespread

Build awareness of Language Programs/Training resources via apps and webinar training platforms during COVID-19

1. Apps for specific languages
 - Arikara language** ^[8]
 - Blackfoot language** (The Siksika Nation has created an app for IOS devices)
 - Caddo language** ^[9]
 - Cherokee language** ^[10]
 - Chickasaw language**
 - Comox language** (A Sliammon iPhone app was released in March 2012. ^[11] An online dictionary, phrasebook, and language learning portal is available at FirstVoices. ^[12])



Module 3
Lesson 1
continued

Cree language app produced by the Maskwacis Cree of Samsun Cree Nation

Dakota language^[13]

Haida language A Skidegate Haida language app is available for iPhone, based on a “bilingual dictionary and phrase collection comprised of words and phrases archived at the online Aboriginal language database FirstVoices.”^[14]

Halkomelem language A Halkomelem iPhone app was released in 2011.^[15]

Inuvialuk language^[16]

Konkow language

Kutenai language A Kutenai language app, Ktunaxa is available at the FirstVoices website.^{[17][18]}

Lakota language^[19]

Lillooet language

Luiseño language

Mandan language^[20]

Nisga’a language

Nuu-chah-nulth language

Ojibwe language

Saanich dialect

Seneca language As of January 2013, a Seneca language app was under development.^[21]

Stoney Nakoda language This app was produced by the Stoney Nakoda Nation.

Tanacross language

Tłıchǫ language^[16]

Upper Kuskokwim language

Winnebago language

<http://northernpomolanguetools.com>

App: Jano sho:jin (for Pomo language)

2. Language programs

a. Schools, elementary and high school, college-

i. whatever lands you are on, that is the language you have the option of learning that instead of Spanish, French, etc.

b. Native Voices programming – radio stations

c. Native Language Immersion Initiative- focus on funding native language programs

i. Considering different funding sources- Tribes, humanities endowments

ii. Scholarships for language immersion

iii. Challenge between language programs/choosing schools

3. What’s been effective?

a. Cherokee Nation



Module 3
Lesson 1
continued

- i. All about language, many different resources. Language portals with audio and visual elements.
- b. Accessible online forms of language revitalization seem effective
 - i. Can reach a larger audience
 - ii. Need to be maintained/keep site host active
 - iii. Even if there is no formal program, the resources exist
- c. Making this part of everyday life
 - i. Greeting/salutation and thank you's

Lesson 2

Creating an Engaged Community in a Virtual World

Key Aspects of Virtual Engagement

- Short timeframes (~ 1 hr.) - Be precise
- Establish group agreements
- Interactive engagement (ice breaker activities) with physical movement
- Learning Topics relatable to youth
 - ASK YOUTH
 - > (Partner with Youth Council)
- Indigenous framework

Examples of activities:

Trivia games (polleverywhere.com)	Talent Show
Art Exhibit	Film showing
Music Sharing/Dance	Art Class
Brainstorming/Mind-mapping	Talking Circle
Elder and Youth Activity	Outdoors tour: Gathering medicine
Guided meditation	Language class
Scavenger Hunt (an ice breaker activity)	Team challenges (with ice breaker as activity)

Strengths

- Allows for continued connections during COVID-19
- Decreases risk exposure/maintains physical distancing
- Gaining sense of cultural identity, belonging
- Increase of positive coping skills

Enhancing participation and engagement

- Promote locally
- Partner with local youth council and organizations
- Outreach on social media platforms
- Reminder notifications for those registered (by text, email)
- Rewarding youth engagement
- Clearly state what equipment or internet access will be needed



Lesson 3

Digital Storytelling for Prevention and Health Promotion Using Stories for Healing and Health

Digital Storytelling offers a way to engage in traditional storytelling through more modern means. It is accessible to a larger audience and provides safety from risk of disease/infection, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Significance of storytelling in Native culture:

- 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 entertaining form
- Links each generation to their ancestors

Strengths of storytelling?

- Absorb stories more readily than facts and figures
- Connect with stories
- Stories create a conversation – develops bonds with other Natives
- Language revitalization
- Sense of belonging – history
- Develops self-identity

What is needed for digital storytelling?

Appropriate platforms:

- TikTok
- IG Reels
- Podcasts
- Zoom
- Photo Gallery
- Triller (like TikTok)
- Writing exhibit (like photo gallery)
- Facebook Live

Tips:

- Make it simple!
- Have aesthetically pleasing visuals (multiple elements)
- Be authentic and concise
- Use multiple platforms
- Speak clearly and enunciation of words
- Have a clear structure
- Awareness of accessibility challenges (closed captioning)
- Maintain confidentiality
- Respect traditional knowledge