



# Tribal Home Visitation

A Pathway to Long-term Health and Wellbeing for  
American Indian and Alaska Native Families

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Initiatives

# Overview: Tribal MIECHV

- Federal program funded through the Administration for Children and Families (ACF), under the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- The Tribal program is funded through a 3% set-aside from the larger Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting (MIECHV) Program.
- \$21 million has been awarded to 25 Tribes, Tribal Consortia, Tribal Organizations, and Urban Indian Organizations.



# Background

United Indians of All Tribes Foundation (UIATF),  
Seattle / King County Urban Indian Organization

- UIATF has over 40-years of community service experience
- UIATF has long emphasized social determinants of health as a target for ensuring AIAN equity
- Primary focus is to culturally adapt an evidence-based home visiting curriculum for a diverse urban Indian community.



Lynnette Jordan, Director, Family Services

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# Background

## Ina Maka Family Program – Service Population

- Mother's average age at enrollment is 30 years old
- 16% of mothers are under 22 years old at enrollment
- 32% of mothers enroll while pregnant or when their child is less than 3 months old.
- Average household income of current clients is \$22,068/year
- 53% of households are under the 200% Federal Poverty Level at enrollment.
- At enrollment, 18% of mothers do not have a high school diploma or GED
- 37% of families have had experience with Child Protective Services or the Child Welfare System
- 24% have a history of substance abuse
- 42% are stay-at-home moms, 16% work full-time, and 13% work part-time.



# Background

## Culturally-Informed Approach

- Home visiting program grounded in the Native community
- AIAN home visitors and kias (grandmothers)
- Culturally-adapted curriculum
- Scientific and Community Advisory Board
- Regular community meetings to share reports and findings
- Use of community focus groups to assess acceptability of program



# Objectives

## Home Visitation Curriculum – Adaptation and Evaluation

- In-depth literature review of AIAN risk and protective factors and parenting and child development
- Review by expert panel and CAB
  - Revisions
- Home visitor and elder focus group review
  - Revisions

**PARENT** handout

### Visit 9 - When Stress Takes Over



**What is Stress?**  
Stress is mental or emotional strain resulting from demanding circumstances. Being a parent can sometimes be very stressful. Many American Indians and Alaska Natives have grown up away from their families and home communities. As a result, they may not have learned how to deal with stress from parenting or daily life.

A calm environment is important for children's development. Yelling or slamming things makes children stressed. High levels of stress can cause children to have problems developing relationships with others and concentrating on tasks.

Maintaining a calm approach is challenging, but with practice, it is possible to develop and learn ways to handle stress and maintain a calm environment.

**What Are Some Ways to Cope?**  
Way to cope with stress can be positive or negative. Negative ways of coping may help you feel better right away, but can be harmful. For example, using food as a source of comfort might help a person feel better for a few hours, but using that to cope for months or years can result in obesity, diabetes, or heart disease.

Positive ways to cope help a person find a calm attitude, help release good brain chemicals that soothe and promote happiness, and help people address complex issues in ways that address the underlying stress. For example, deep breathing relaxes tight muscles and reduces stress chemicals in your body, allowing you to focus on problem solving.



**Other Ways to Relieve Stress**  
**Take a break.** – Even one minute will help you refocus by stepping outside of the situation and taking a moment to relax.  
**Take a deep breath.** – Inhaling and exhaling slowly for a few minutes changes the chemistry in your body to help calm and refocus.  
**Try to think positively.** – Negative thoughts like, "She's crying and I'm not sure why, I must be a bad parent" add to your stress. Practice thoughts with a positive spin: "She only cried a few times today, I'm learning how to understand her needs and she's learning to stay calm!" can help your state of mind.

**Take a walk** – Walking for a few minutes helps to reduce stress chemicals in your body in the long term. Making exercise a daily practice will allow you to relax and refocus.

**Choose an activity that you enjoy.** – Gardening, walking in the park, practicing Native spirituality, or spending time with family help you relax. Stay away from activities that reduce your activity level (both physical and mental), such as watching TV or texting on your cell.

**Get enough sleep** – Lack of sleep increases stress chemicals in your body. It can cause you to turn to frustration and anger, rather than problem solving skills.

**Eat a healthy, balanced diet** – Vegetables, fruits, lean proteins, and complex carbohydrates help you maintain steady blood glucose levels and have antioxidants that promote health. Stay away from processed food, like fast food, white bread, or high sugar foods.



# Methods

## Study Design and Intervention



- Quasi-experimental, mixed methods design with random assignment to the culturally enhanced PAT program (PAT + DS) versus the original PAT program (PAT + SE)
- PAT + DS delivery followed a similar format to that of PAT + SE for the first 8 required visits
  - Surface Level Differences – AIAN organization delivering services
  - Deep Structure Differences – elder visits, and group connections and referrals included tribally-specific content and providers, and visits 9-16 included the 8 culturally-adapted materials

# Data and Methods

## Mixed Methods Rigorous Evaluation

- Quantitative – 2-group comparison on four outcomes: (1) parenting confidence; (2) program retention; (3) program engagement; (4) parent satisfaction
- Qualitative – focus groups and interviews with parents, home visitors, and elders to discuss relevance of culturally-adapted content, home visit “fit” and relationships between elders, home visitors, parents, and children



# Mixed Methods Approach



# Mixed Methods Approach cont.

## **Benefits**

- Enabled evaluation and program team members to triangulate and contextualize results
- Enhanced needs assessment, cultural adaptation, and evaluation quality and overall process

## **Challenges**

- Resource intensive given funding
- Time intensive

## **Community Perception**

- Overall positive – appreciative of community process
- Community provided important, constructive feedback

# Results

- Quantitative
  - No significant differences between the two groups on retention (96.2% vs. 100%), program engagement (75% vs. 72%), or satisfaction (avg. score of 112.6 vs. 108.5)
  - Both groups had higher retention rates than those reported in comparable programs in the research literature. (about 98% vs. 40%)
- Qualitative
  - Strong program buy-in for cultural adaptations by parents
  - Confirmation across providers and parents that relationships between home visitors and parents and children were key
  - Home visitor challenges rested in paperwork and data entry

# Results cont.

*[The Ina Maka Family Program]...helped me, to not just be...a passive parent.*

*If he's not crying, if he doesn't need anything right now, or doesn't really need me, I'm more aware that my son has other needs, but he's not able to tell me.*

*So I try to talk to him more, read more books, and be more interactive with him.*

*I think that [the program] helped me to be more thoughtful with my son.*

# Results cont.

*I remember the sleep and tantrum [handout]. I keep them in a notebook. There's times where, a couple months back we talked about something that I'm dealing with now, and I'm able to go back and look at it again. Just brings back, oh, maybe I should try some of these things...it was just helpful to have something always to go back to.*

# Results cont.

*I feel like to our Native people as whole, this is... a value that...Natives have. [B]e true to yourself, think positive... and see all the possibilities.*

*I know when I was growing up, my grandma and my aunts were like, “You shouldn’t think negative about other people.” [The culturally-adapted sessions were] really nice, to have that reminder about different values we have as Native people, like with being healthy, and historical trauma, and we never really had fry bread before...*

*[I]t’s nice to pass on to our children that “We’re Native people, we don’t eat fry bread. We have a healthy meal system that we had before we had lard, and flour, and coffee beans.” Yeah, it’s just nice to instill those values.*

*And to be able to know which values to instill. Because if you don’t know, it’s important to learn.*

# MEICHV Reauthorization 2017

- First enacted in 2010
- Expires September 30th
- Needs to be renewed before the end of the calendar year
- House voted on September 26th
- Senate bipartisan bill introduced
- Need to push this forward – with the right provisions

United Indians of All  
Tribes Foundation

SouthCentral  
Foundation

Inter-Tribal Council  
of Michigan



# What is in the Legislation for Tribes?

- Good news: changes were made to House bill to protect all models, including Tribal adaptations
- Tribal match struck from House bill; Senate bill has no grantee match at all
- Possibility to increase funding?





# What Can You Do?

- Support the bipartisan bill that eliminates the matching fund requirement
- Ask for more money for Tribes!
- Tribes can communicate with elected officials
- Individuals can send emails and make calls
- Request contacts by organizations that represent tribes such as NIHB, NCAI, AIHEC, NICWA
- Participate in ASTHVI!

# Does it Really Matter?

## Case Study: Tribal Head Start

- Prohibitions on using Head Start funds for facilities
- With blessing of Tribal Councils, delegation of Tribal representatives set out to change
- Wrote letters, scheduled meetings in DC and at home
- Worked through own Members of Congress, Senate Indian Affairs Committee
- Secured language in Senate bill and insisted on keeping language in House-Senate conference

Please contact us  
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