

The BHWP Messenger

Culturally relevant, evidence-based, and trauma-informed behavioral health and wellness resources for schools, staff, students, and families.

CONTACT US

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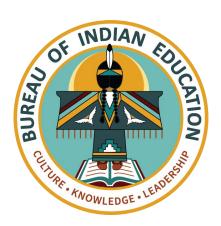
Welcome to *The BHWP Messenger*, a monthly newsletter focused on strengthening the resiliency of students, schools, colleges, universities, and staff. Each issue includes current information about webinars, trainings, resources, effective coping skills, and helpful videos to enhance your knowledge regarding behavioral health and wellness related topics.

Child Abuse Awareness and BIE Suspected Child Abuse/Neglect Protocol

Caution: This article contains sensitive content about child abuse.

April was Child Abuse Awareness Month. Raising awareness on child abuse, neglect, and physical harm can encourage individuals and communities to work together to prevent child maltreatment in all forms.

According to the amended Indian Child Protection and Family Violence Prevention Act, any person identified as a mandated reporter who knows or has reasonable suspicion that a child has been abused in Indian country, must report the information to the local protective services agency or law enforcement agency. Mandated reporters can remain anonymous. Confidentiality must be a priority throughout the process.



It is important we know the signs and the proper way to report incidents. Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) funded schools, including contract schools, follow federal mandates that all child abuse incidents must be reported. Incident reports of abuse are made through a Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect (SCAN) report form or the school's required process and procedure as outlined in the **Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect and Employee Incident Reporting Protocol (Revised 2019)**, and as established by the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). This document applies to all Bureau-Operated Schools and Tribally Controlled Grant/Contract Schools whose governing body has formally adopted it. The SCAN report needs to be filled out and filed directly with the BIE SCAN office. The form can be found at https://www.bie.edu/topic-page/scan.

When filling out a SCAN, it is important all information is complete and accurate, including names and dates. Do not wait to report an incident; reporting is for the safety of the child, and siblings in some cases. Mandated reporters who fail to report an incident in a timely manner can be found guilty of a class B misdemeanor and could also result in a fine up to \$5,000 or imprisonment up to 6 months if found negligent.

The four major types of abuse that must be reported are sexual abuse, physical abuse, emotional abuse, or physical and/or emotional neglect. Sexual abuse includes the employment, use, persuasion, enticement of a child to engage in, or assist another person to engage in, sexually explicit conduct. Physical abuse includes skin bruising, bleeding, malnutrition, failure to thrive, burns, fracture of any bone, and such conditions that are unjustified or not an accident. Emotional abuse includes harming a child's psychological or intellectual functioning. Physical and/or emotional neglect includes no shelter, inadequate clothing, health, or unmet medical needs for reasons other than poverty.

SCAN Report

(Suspected child abuse by an adult)

- Filed by BIE Staff
- Filed by Non-BIE Staff this form is not made available to non-staff to file.
- Filed by Grant-Contract School Employee

Employee Incident Report

(Non-physical involving staff)

- Filed by BIE Staff
- Filed by Non-BIE Employee this form is not made available to non-staff to file.

Student Incident Report

(Student against student)

- · Filed by BIE Staff
- Filed by Student this form is not made available to students to file; only staff.

By implementing the Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect and Employee Incident Reporting Protocol (Revised 2019), BIE-funded schools are taking an important step in preventing and addressing incidents of child abuse. By ensuring all incidents of abuse are reported, appropriate action can be taken to protect the safety and well-being of children. If you suspect a child has been abused or neglected, it is important to follow the SCAN protocol and report it immediately. For more information, please visit https://www.bie.edu/topic-page/scan or contact:

BIE SCAN Office 1011 Indian School Rd. NW, Suite 149 Albuquerque, NM 87104

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Protective Factors

Protective factors are conditions or attributes that, when present in families and communities, increase the well-being of children and families and reduce the likelihood of maltreatment. Identifying protective factors helps parents find resources, supports, or coping strategies that allow them to parent effectively—even under stress. There are 6 protective factors:

- Nurturing and attachment
- Knowledge of parenting and of child and youth development
- Parental resilience
- Social connections
- Concrete supports for parents
- Social and emotional competence of children

"What If" Game

Teach children to say NO with authority

The 'What If' game can be applied to any situation that you may suspect is happening to a child. Use the game to give answers to difficult situations that they may not know how to get out of safely.

Examples:

- 1. 'What If' someone knocks on the door and you are home alone, what would you do?
 - a) Never open the door
 - b) Call a trusted neighbor or relative if they will not go away
 - c) Call the police if you cannot get any help and you are scared
- 2. 'What If' a babysitter tries to touch your private parts?
 - a) Tell them NO, then go to a trusted adult
 - b) Do not keep it a secret even if someone asks you to do so

Resources

The What If Game - Child Abuse Prevention Programme. (n.d.). https:// www.mybodyismybody.com/the-what-if-game





How Caring Adults Support Indigenous Youth Wellness

For many generations, Native elders across Turtle Island have said the youth are the leaders of the future. Native youth have a unique perspective on the world and can be the seeds of future change and cultural conservation. It is essential for adults to cultivate positive spaces for youth to flourish and grow in Native communities. Native Youth learn skills and importance of culture when they have a strong sense of belonging and value in their community.

Caring adults can create healthy connections with Native youth by incorporating cultural teachings and practices in schools or any learning space. For example, highlight current and past Indigenous leaders. Furthermore, inviting respected community members to share cultural stories, styles of dance, Tribal songs, and prayer in Native languages. Consider appropriate times of the year since

most Native communities only share stories or teachings during specific seasons.

Another way for caring adults and educators to connect with youth is to get to know their interests and build on their strengths. This helps them feel valued and more receptive to learning. Native communities vary, so diversity in lesson planning is also important. Practice cultural sensitivity and seek cultural humility through formal training. Research Indigenous communities and Tribal knowledge



closest to the land the school is located and where students' families may reside.

It is important for educators to continually connect with youth by celebrating their strengths, cherishing their presence, and making a connection to culture. This encourages growth toward leading the future with confidence.

References

Liebenberg, L., Wall, D., Wood, M., & Hutt-MacLeod, D. (2019). Spaces & Places: Understanding Sense of Belonging and Cultural Engagement Among Indigenous Youth. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 18. www.doi.org/10.1177/1609406919840547

National American Boarding School Healing Coalition. boardingschoolhealing.org/

Native Hope. blog.nativehope.org/understanding-historical-trauma-and-native-americans



Personal Shield: A Team Building Exercise

To build a strong team, more than just documented work processes are needed. Great teamwork needs individuals who know and personally care about each other. Participating in a personal shield exercise is a great way of helping team members learn what strengths each person can contribute.

Purpose of the Shield

Teams become stronger when members know what each person considers their strengths and skills. The shield exercise allows individuals to share areas in which they want to grow. By exploring strengths and areas of potential growth, team members will better understand each other on a personal and professional level.

Materials

- Shield templates, either printed or shared electronically
- If printed, markers, colored pencils, or other art supplies

Instructions

Shields may be created by individuals or teams.

- Identify the team or individual shield name
- Brainstorm the following and incorporate into a theme:
 - o **Strengths:** Identify team or individual skills and areas of expertise. These can be areas others already know or hidden skills individuals want to share.
 - Support: What are areas to grow or where is support wanted for improving?
 - o **Motivation:** What motivates individuals or team members? Growing investment in team success is important.
 - o **Interests:** Individuals interact better if they connect on a personal level.
- Include cultural elements such as images, symbols, or colors to complete the shield.
- Set a reasonable time limit to complete the shield.
- Once complete, ask each person or team to share their shield.

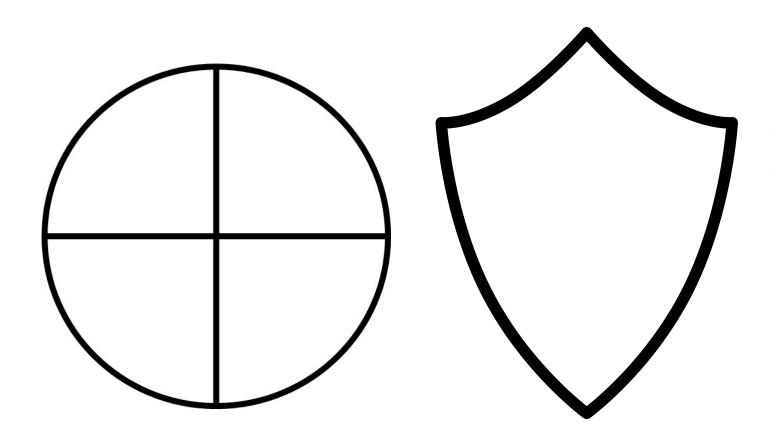
Closing Questions:

- What was something you learned?
- Where can we support each other?
- What surprised you?
- Are there obvious commonalities?
- Was the activity useful?



Thank everyone for sharing and reinforce this shield exercise is to learn more about the strengths and motivations of each other and to build stronger connections.

Sample Shield Shapes: The shield templates below may be split into four (4) quadrants—one (1) quadrant for each of the four (4) areas (Strength, Support, Motivation, Interests) to be filled in by the individual or team.



Mental Health Awareness Month

May is Mental Health Awareness Month. Mental health is an important part of wellness and affects many aspects of life. By learning about and managing mental health, schools, families, and communities can be stronger and healthier.

According to the MentalHealth.gov website, "Mental health includes our motional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood."



Mental health challenges can occur from stressful situations such as grieving the loss of a loved one or a chemical imbalance. Some warning signs of struggling with mental health challenges may include:

- Eating or sleeping too much or too little
- Not engaging with people or in usual activities
- · Having low or no energy, or unexplained aches and pains
- Feeling numb, helpless, or hopeless
- Feeling unusually confused, forgetful, on edge, angry, upset, worried, or scared
- Yelling or fighting with family and friends
- Experiencing severe mood swings
- · Hearing voices or believing things that are not true
- · Thinking of harming oneself or others
- Inability to perform daily tasks like going to work or school

Educational environments can present mental health challenges for staff and students. According to Susan Wilger, from the Southwest Center for Health Innovation, 1 in 5 children ages 13–18 currently has or previously had a serious or debilitating mental disorder. School policies support prevention by using positive classroom management, and wellness promotion. Staff training and peer-to-peer training can help schools create a healthy and supportive environment.

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) explains that Indigenous people have challenges in diagnosing and addressing mental health issues. These challenges include inadequate funding, rural or isolated locations, mistrust of government services, language barriers, poverty, and unemployment. NAMI recommends seeking professional help that validates, supports, and respects the individual seeking care. Building a relationship and effectively communicating with professional staff help treatment outcomes.



Only a licensed healthcare professional can diagnose and treat a mental health issue. Although not everyone experiencing a mental health issue may feel it is a problem, they should seek professional assistance as a preventative measure if there are concerns. Depending on the nature of the issue, a healthcare professional may prescribe medication or recommend therapy to help manage symptoms. It is important to understand that experiencing a mental health issue does not mean you are "crazy". Instead, you are experiencing a disorder that is affecting your mood, thinking, or behavior. There are many resources and assistance available to get you through the bad days and make the good days even better.



No one is immune from mental health issues. Statistically, they are common. Ways to maintain our mental health include nurturing a positive outlook, seeking professional help, engaging with and helping others, being physically active, getting adequate sleep, and developing healthy coping skills. We need to attend to our mental health just as we would to our physical health. By taking care of ourselves, we are better able to handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.

Resources

Home | NAMI: National Alliance on Mental Illness What Is Mental Health? | MentalHealth.gov







14 MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH ACTIVITIES



PEER-TO-PEER AND COWORKER SHOUT-OUTS

ATTENDA MENTAL HEALTH WORKSHOP





https://www.outbackteambuilding.com/blog/mental-health-awareness-month-activities/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise.com/classroom-ideas/mental-health-activities-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/https://www.teachingexpertise-for-high-school-students/ht

Substance Misuse: Affects, Risks, and Healthy Interventions

Caution: This article contains sensitive content about substance abuse.

Substance misuse is a growing problem affecting our communities throughout the country. This impacts health, safety, financial, and social issues. The National Institute of Health defines substance misuse as the prolonged, repeated use of any legal or illegal substances at high doses and/or high frequencies. Persistent misuse of substances can be a diagnosable illness by health care professionals.



Types of substances include:

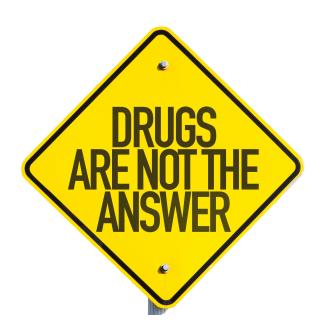
- Alcohol all forms of beer, wine, and distilled liquors
- Cannabis marijuana, hashish, hash oil, and THC edibles
- Inhalants used in "huffing" could include paint, aerosol canned products, markers, and glue
- Opioids/Opiates including heroin, codeine, methadone, oxycodone, hydrocodone (e.g., Vicodin, Lortab)
- Stimulants including cocaine, amphetamines, methylphenidate (e.g., Ritalin)
- Nicotine cigarettes, vapor cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, and snuff
- Depressants including benzodiazepines (e.g., Valium, Librium, and Xanax)
- Hallucinogens including LSD, mescaline, and MDMA (e.g., Ecstasy, Molly)

Substances can be ingested, inhaled, or injected, affecting the mind and body. Misusing substances increases short-term and long-term risks. According to the Centers for Disease Control, most individuals diagnosed with substance use disorder began using substances in their teens and young adulthood. Risk factors include a family history of substance use, exposure to trauma, behavioral or impulse-control problems, environmental factors, and normalization of alcohol and drug use in the community. Misuse of substances contributes to increased rates of violence, risky sexual behavior, and suicide.

The good news is substance misuse and associated risks are preventable. Prevention efforts and education in communities can lessen the potential misuse of substances. Protective factors contribute to healthier outcomes including strong bonds with family, school, community, problem-solving skills, spirituality, and opportunities for positive social involvement.

Healthy interventions for prevention and treatment include physical activities, emotional coping techniques, engaging in behavioral therapies, and practicing spirituality. Examples include creating time to exercise, taking breaks from social media, journaling thoughts and feelings, leaning on supportive people, finding ways to connect to elders or culture, and engaging in prayer and meditation. Professional treatment options for individuals and families struggling with substance misuse are available virtually (telehealth) or in-person.

Wellness is a lifelong journey of striving for good mental and physical health, and quality of life to the best of a person's ability given their unique circumstances. Behavioral health professionals, health care clinicians, and peer specialists can facilitate this journey for individuals by creating necessary opportunities and support. Having a substance misuse problem does not preclude a wellness journey. On the contrary, it makes the journey essential.



References

McLellan A. T. (2017). Substance misuse and substance use disorders: Why do they matter in healthcare? Transactions of the American Clinical and Climatological Association, 128, 112–130.

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2022, September 29). High-risk substance use among youth. www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/substance-use/index.htm

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, January 26). Commonly used terms. www.cdc.gov/opioids/basics/terms.html#:~:text=%E2%80%9Copiates%E2%80%9D%20vs.,%2C%20semisynthetic%2C%20and%20synthetic%20opioids

Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2020, August 21). Youth risk behavior surveillance – United States 2109. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), Supplement, Vol. 69, No. 1. www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/pdf/2019/su6901-H.pdf

Preventing Drug and Alcohol Abuse Among Children and Adolescents

The National Institute on Drug Abuse, Preventing Drug Use Among Children and Adolescents, A Research-Based Guide for Parents, Educators, and Community Leaders provides information that can be used to support youth. In this document, readers will find information about risk factors, protective factors, program planning and implementation, and examples of research-based drug abuse prevention programs for elementary, middle, and high school-aged youth. The following is an excerpt from Page 3:



Prevention programs can be designed to intervene as early as preschool to address risk factors for drug abuse, such as:

- aggressive behavior
- poor social skills
- academic difficulties

Prevention programs for elementary school children should target improving academic and social-emotional learning to address risk factors for drug abuse, such as early aggression, academic failure, and school dropout. Education should focus on the following skills:

- self-control
- emotional awareness
- communication
- social problem-solving
- academic support, especially in reading



Prevention programs for middle or junior high and high school students should increase academic and social competence with the following skills:



- study habits and academic support
- communication
- peer relationships
- self-efficacy and assertiveness
- drug resistance skills
- reinforcement of antidrug attitudes
- strengthening of personal commitments against drug abuse

Resources

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (n.d.). *Preventing Drug Use among Children and Adolescents: A Research-Based Guide for Parents, Educators, Community Leaders*. Retrieved May 23, 2023, https://nida.nih.gov/sites/default/files/preventingdruguse_2_1.pdf



Foundation of the Talking Circle Training at Muckleshoot Tribal School

In January 2023, the Behavioral Health and Wellness Program (BHWP) Team traveled to Muckleshoot Tribal School in Auburn, Washington, and shared a presentation about the history, types, and benefits of Talking Circles to paraprofessional staff. Muckleshoot Tribal School's paraprofessional staff were then invited to participate in a Talking Circle and received training about how and when to implement a Talking Circle.



What is a Talking Circle?

A Talking Circle is an Indigenous ceremonial gathering of people who come together to communicate and share knowledge, experience, feelings, and spirit. This gathering is led by a respected knowledge keeper who has earned the privilege of conducting ceremonial gatherings. A Talking Circle is a safe, trauma-informed, non-judgmental sharing environment of mutual respect where everyone is equal, acknowledged, and given the opportunity to speak or share.



The BHWP offers opportunities for BIE school staff and employees to learn about and participate in Talking Circles. Events hosted by BHWP can be onsite or virtual.

If your college, university, program, school, or department would like to request a Talking Circle training, please email biebhwp@tribaltechllc.com. Dates and registration for ongoing twice-monthly virtual Talking Circles can be found on the events calendar on the BIE BHWP website. To learn more, watch BHWP's Talking Circle PSA on the BIE BHWP YouTube Channel.

Meet a Member of Our BHWP Team

Communication Specialist Heather C. Gomez



Daanzho, (Hello in Jicarilla Apache) I am a Communication Specialist with the Behavioral Health and Wellness Program (BHWP). I started at the beginning of the year, and currently enjoy working on The BHWP Messenger newsletter and working with the Communication Team on various projects and events. I am looking forward to the 2023 year with BHWP and the opportunities to grow and network.

I am an enrolled Jicarilla Apache member (Red Clan) and reside in Dulce, New Mexico on the beautiful Jicarilla Apache Nation (JAN) reservation. I previously worked as the Editor of the Jicarilla Chieftain and enjoyed working for the JAN for 5 years before joining the National Public Radio's (NPR) NextGenRadio as a Digital Editor.

NextGenRadio is a weeklong program that mentors young journalists and reporters across the country. I worked as a Digital Editor at Syracuse University for NPR's NextGenRadio: Indigenous in 2022 and in April 2023.

I attended San Juan College in Farmington, New Mexico for my Associate of Applied Science Degree in Digital Media and Art Design, followed by my Bachelor of Arts degree in Graphic Design with a minor in Advertising and Marketing from the Southwest University of Visual Arts in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

I enjoy hiking near my home while listening to my daily devotional and creating a peaceful prayer time. Attending church and having time to study the Bible is critical to my spiritual health. Spending time with loved ones and having family time is very important. I love spending quality time with my grandparents who teach me some of the Jicarilla language and culture.

Fishing, hunting, and camping are big on my list of activities to do. I enjoy soaking at the natural healing hot

springs in Pagosa Springs, Colorado. I refurbish wood furniture by painting with chalk-based paint and recently started selling in a Pagosa Springs consignment store called Upscale Resale. Cooking with green chile is my specialty, and I introduced New Mexican cuisine to my partner Dustin, who is from Texas. I have a very special little lady in my life, Dustin's daughter Ariel who is ten years old. I recently lost my brother-in-law Brandon Ashby to cancer whom I loved very



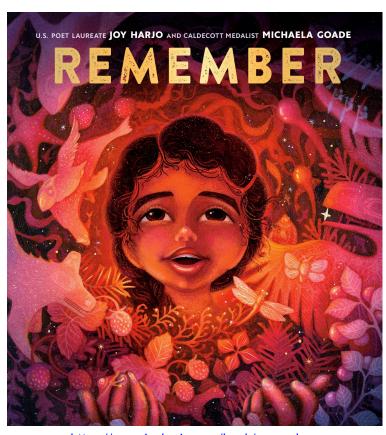
dearly. I chose to share a picture that included him, my two sisters Chelsea and Samantha, and my brother Mitchell. Iheedin. (Thank you in Jicarilla Apache).

Book Review for Educators

April was National Poetry Month. There was no better way to celebrate than reading the new children's picture book, *Remember*, by Indigenous author and 23rd Poet Laureate of the United States, Joy Harjo (Mvksoke).

Remember is an adaptation of Harjo's poem and is marvelously illustrated by Caldecott Medalist Michaela Goade (Tlingit). This book is easy to read and welcoming for all ages. Your spirit is called to think and reflect on your journey, through the here and now, making it the perfect book for the classroom!

Sharing this book in a classroom opens up opportunities for students to share stories of culture, traditions, nature, and connections with others. Readers are pulled into the illustrations to see reflections of themselves and their Tribal identity.



https://www.joyharjo.com/book/remember



https://www.amazon.com/Remember-Joy-Harjo/dp/0593484843

Book Details:

Hardcover: 40 pages

Reading age: 4 - 8 years old

Lexile measure: AD480L



Greater Health Wellness Corner

As you start the week, it is important to prioritize your personal well being.

Remember when you are feeling exhausted, it becomes challenging to be fully engaged at work and attentive to your friends.

So this week, focus on integrating self-care practices into your daily routine.





Behavioral Health and Wellness Program Summer Institute 2023

PLEASE SAVE THE DATES:

July 17-21, 2023 (Minneapolis, MN) *OR* July 24-28, 2023 (Albuquerque, NM)

This exciting, informative 5-day summer institute will be offered twice in July, so please choose the week that works best for you! This is a unique opportunity for staff from all BIE-funded entities to meet the BHWP Team and learn behavioral health and wellness centered skills that will assist with supporting your students. If you have questions regarding the BHWP Summer Institute, please contact us at biebhwp@tribaltechllc.com.

BHWP Summer Institute Topics Include These and More:

- Culture and Drugs Don't Mix Training of Facilitators
- Overview of BHWP Counseling and Crisis Services
- Positive Classroom Management
- Postvention Planning for Effective Post Crisis Response
- Self-Care and Wellness for Staff
- Youth Mental Health First Aid Training



In Loving Memory of Dave Brave Heart

Dave Brave Heart, Hunkpati Dakota and enrolled member of the Oglala Sioux Tribe from the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation, was a kind and knowledgeable colleague, committed to his family, community, and Indigenous people. He loved his work as a Prevention Specialist with Tribal Tech, LLC providing training to Tribes and schools to reduce drug and alcohol misuse, suicide, and increase protective factors for Indigenous youth.

He was passionate about helping others while keeping everyone around him in good spirits and laughing. Uncle Dave's Joke Corner is dedicated to our dear friend and coworker, Dave Brave Heart, who made his journey on April 11, 2023, after living with ALS since 2021.



BHWP Calendar

Please visit our Events page for more information. To request training for your staff, school, or department, please email us at biebhwp@tribaltechllc.com.

JUNE 2023

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	
4	5	Talking Circle	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	Wellness Wednesday	Talking Circle	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

JULY 2023

S	M	Т	W	Т	F	S
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2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	BHWP Summer	19 Institute 2023 – M	20	21	22
23	24	25	26 Institute 2023 – Al	27	28	29
30	31					

VIRTUAL TALKING CIRLCES

The Talking Circle is a safe and sacred space to share thoughts, feelings, joys, and sorrows while providing support among colleagues and friends. Respected knowledge-keepers who have earned the privilege of conducting the Talking Circle will lead this confidential virtual event.

WELLNESS WEDNESDAY

Wellness Wednesday webinars provide practical strategies and information about mental health trends, healthy lifestyle choices, educational best practices, and Indigenous resiliency building.

BHWP SUMMER INSTITUTE 2023

This exciting, informative 5-day summer institute will be offered twice in July. This is a unique opportunity for staff from all BIE-funded entities to learn skills to support Native students.