



September 1, 2021 | ISSUE 3

The BHWP Messenger

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

Welcome to the Messenger!

Wellness and Self-Care Opportunities

The next Wellness Wednesday will be September 15, 2021. The topic is **Moving through Grief and Loss: Creating a Path toward Healing**. This topic will be presented by BHWP Behavioral Health Specialists Fredericka Hunter and Jennifer Nanez. The webinar will discuss the cultural impact of dealing with grief and loss and how some tribes incorporate their traditions in the grieving process. [Click here to register.](#)

All previous Wellness Wednesday webinars have been recorded and are available on [our YouTube channel.](#)

Virtual Talking Circles

Registration is available for Virtual Talking Circles provided by the BHWP. These events are open to any staff or employees working for a Bureau-operated school (BOS), Tribally-controlled school (TCS), Navajo K-12 school, Southwestern Indian Polytechnic Institute (SIPI), Haskell Indian Nations University or any Tribal college and university (TCU), and employees within any BIE department. Talking Circles provide a safe and sacred space for participants to share ideas, thoughts, or feelings and to offer support for others. They are led by qualified knowledge-keepers and are based on traditional Indigenous practices. Virtual Talking Circles will be offered on an ongoing basis and are an excellent way to focus on back-to-school issues and concerns in a positive and supportive environment. Talking circles will be held after school in the afternoon, with alternating schedules to account for time zones.

Our next Talking Circle will be held Tuesday, September 7, 2021. Space is limited to ensure that our team is aligning with best practices to keep group sizes small so each participant will

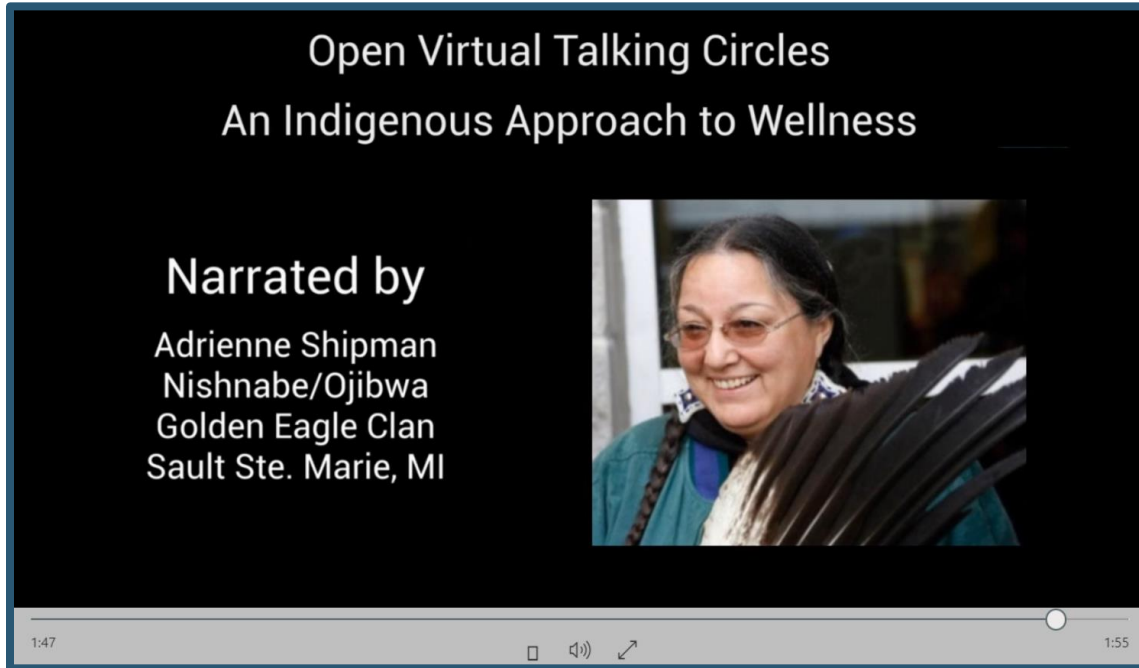


The BHWP team would like to wish all students, faculty, and staff a safe and healthy return to school for the upcoming year! Please see our list of resources and strategies for a successful start to the school year on page 2.





have an opportunity to share if they desire. [Please register here for the next Talking Circle!](#) To learn more, please watch our Talking Circle public service announcement (PSA) video on [our YouTube channel](#).



Schoolwide YMHFA Training for Staff

Youth Mental Health First Aid (YMHFA) training provides a streamlined 5-step action plan to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. This evidence-based, trauma-informed training teaches skills and highlights resources for suicide prevention, substance use, exposure to trauma, and other types of mental health challenges. For more information or to request a training, please contact us at biebhwp@tribaltechllc.com. Training is available for all faculty and staff of a BOS, TCS, and TCU.

Strategies and Resources for a Successful Return to School

1. **Review the Department of Education's (DOE) Return to School Roadmap.** Released on August 2, 2021, this roadmap is for schools and communities and includes a [checklist for parents](#), a [general fact sheet](#), and a comprehensive [guide to reopening](#) for K-12 districts. The reopening guide includes recommendations for physical distancing, nutrition, and other helpful topics for the new school year.
2. **Use the wellness and self-care services from the BHWP.** Virtual talking circles, wellness webinars, and youth mental health first aid training are all helpful resources



that highlight the importance of wellness and self-care as students and staff return to school.

3. Connect with other school staff to create a supportive environment.

When returning to the classroom at beginning of the year, connecting with colleagues is a great strategy for building a supportive community and network. These connections also help build mutually supportive learning

environments for students. Encouraging others, sharing strategies, and setting aside time to connect over lunch or coffee will help strengthen these connections.



4. Attend a virtual or in-person professional development activity or training this fall.

Attending professional conferences and activities, either in-person or online, will help equip and prepare you for the transition back to school. Engaging in professional development, such as BHWP webinars and trainings, can help facilitate a successful transition back to school, especially during these challenging times.

5. Engage with the BIE on social media and help promote #SafeReturn. The BIE posts regularly on their social media platforms, including [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#). Resource links are available so you can access and learn more about agency-wide efforts to return to the classroom, engage with other BIE staff and view timely and engaging posts from the BIE.

Meet a member of our BHWP Counseling and Wellness Team

Jennifer Nanez, LMSW
BHWP Behavioral Health Specialist

“Gu’waa’dzi! Du shinome Aat’saya, Yaa’ka Kuchinish Hanu. Hello everyone! My name is Jennifer Nanez, and I am from the Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico.”

How do you practice self-care?

“I practice self-care by spending time with my family and enjoying all our





moments we have together. The chance to spend time with my children and my husband after a busy workday helps to re-ground me. But the place and space I feel most at peace and my spirit fed is being at home in Acoma. Having been away from home during this period of COVID has been difficult. My heart was happy to touch the rock in our recent return home as COVID restrictions were lifted in our Tribal community. To see the sunset reflected on our Mesa top home is the best self-care in the world for me.”

Jennifer S. Nanez, MSW, LMSW, is an enrolled Tribal member of the Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico. Ms. Nanez has been in the social work and education fields for over 20 years with an emphasis in serving the American Indian and Alaska Native population. Areas of expertise include mental health first aid training, community readiness assessment, community-based suicide prevention and post-vention, and trauma-informed systems of care.

Elsewhere in the World of Education and Behavioral Health and Wellness



Save the Date: NIEA Convention and Trade Show October 13-16, 2021

The National Indian Education Association (NIEA) will host its 52nd annual Convention and Trade Show in Omaha, Nebraska. The theme will be **Native Control of Education: A Time to Lead**. To learn more about this conference or to register, please [click here](#).

Save the Date: NATCON22 April 11-13, 2022

The National Council for Mental Wellbeing is hosting their national conference in 2022. NATCON is the largest conference on mental health and substance use care and your destination for next-level learning, peer-to-peer engagement, and high-octane entertainment. The event will be held at National Harbor in Washington, D.C.



We welcome your suggestions for the BHWP Messenger.
Contact us at biebhwp@tribaltechllc.com.