

Building Community Safety

in Michigan Tribal Communities to Prevent Sexual Violence

Did you know?

Survey data tells us that Native Americans experience high rates of sexual violence:



of Native American women in the U.S. have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime

SOURCE: NATIONAL INTIMATE PARTNER & SV SURVEY, 2010



of Native American men in the U.S. have experienced some form of sexual violence in their lifetime

SOURCE: NATIONAL INTIMATE PARTNER & SV SURVEY, 2010



of Native American high school students in Michigan have experienced forced sexual intercourse

SOURCE: YRBS HIGH SCHOOL DATA, 2019

'Sexual violence' is any sexual activity that happens without consent, including sexual assault, harassment, abuse, and rape.

There is hope!

Culture and community can help prevent sexual violence.



Protective Factors

decrease the likelihood that a person will experience sexual violence or choose to commit sexual violence.

Community Safety

is an important protective factor for Tribal communities in Michigan.

What is Community Safety?

Community safety means: I can use support services, such as healthcare, emergency services, and law enforcement, without experiencing fear, discrimination, stigma or harm. I can live and express myself freely without fear of harm. My community fully supports my safety and wellbeing.

The Michigan Community Sexual Violence Prevention Assessment (CSVPA) heard from Native community members about how to increase community safety. The following page shares strengths and needs, as well as recommendations to help prevent sexual violence in Michigan Tribal communities.

What are the strengths?

Native people generally **feel safer** accessing services from tribal healthcare, emergency, police, and legal systems than through state systems.

Tribal mental and behavioral health services that incorporate **traditional healing practices** are especially valued by Tribal communities.



What are the needs?

Tribal communities often **mistrust and avoid using police** and the legal system due to re-victimization experiences.

More funding is needed for mental and behavioral health care in tribal communities.

Native people often **mistrust non-Native healthcare systems** due to racism and a history of mistreatment.

Recommendations to Increase Community Safety

- **Invest in police training** and policy change to build trust.
- **Reform criminal justice processes** to better serve and avoid re-traumatizing Native sexual assault victims.
- **Increase funding** for tribal mental and behavioral health systems.
- **Expand funding** for tribal traditional healers, counselors, and sexual assault nurse examiners.
- **Invest in cultural humility training** for healthcare providers.



Background: These are select findings from the Michigan Community Sexual Violence Prevention Assessment (CSVPA). The CSVPA included interviews with individuals from Michigan's Native American communities, guidance from an Advisory Council made up of Native professionals working in the field of sexual violence prevention, and secondary data collection. To learn more about the CSVPA and sexual violence prevention work in Michigan, visit: www.mphi.org/svp

1. Rosay, A. (2016). Violence against American Indian and Alaska Native women and men: 2010 findings from the national intimate partner and sexual violence survey. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs. [Statistic includes rape, attempted rape, sexual coercion, unwanted sexual contact, and non-contact unwanted sexual experiences.] Accessed through: <https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/nij/249736.pdf>

2. Michigan Youth Risk Behavior Survey. (2019). Accessed through: <https://www.miacedata.org/Category?name=AbuseNeglect>