

Supporting Connectedness

in Michigan Tribal Communities to Prevent Sexual Violence

Did you know?

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

56.0%

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

27.5%

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

7.9%

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.

Connectedness

is an important protective factor for Tribal communities in Michigan.

What is Connectedness?

Connectedness is a sense of trust, support, unity and safety between individuals and groups. It's found in many places, such as schools, the workplace, communities, and between friends and family. It also includes connection to culture, language, history, traditions, and land.

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

What are the strengths?

Culture is the **strength** of Tribal communities.

Culture is both **prevention and healing**.

Cultural knowledge and practices support healthy communities.



What are the needs?

Opportunities for young people to **learn cultural teachings and traditions** so they can pass these down to future generations.

Inclusive opportunities for Native people of all ages and backgrounds to **learn and practice cultural teachings and traditions**.

Recommendations to Increase Connectedness

- **Encourage** youth to take part in cultural gatherings, events, teachings, and ceremonies, where they can learn history and traditions with the elders in their community.

“Our culture can **lead to wellness** and **is wellness**.”

—CSVPA interview participant

- **Encourage** community organizers to create gatherings that welcome Native people of mixed-race heritage and those who may be disconnected from tribal communities.



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>