

Homelessness and Violence  
Against Native Women:  
Collaborations  
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&  
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Who are we?

- **The American Indian Community Housing Organization (AICHO)** is a non-profit social service agency committed to improving the lives of American Indian families in North Eastern Minnesota.

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AICHO's Programs:

- **Oshki Odaadiziwini Waaka'Igan** (a place where we dream of new beginnings), offers 10 units of offsite and onsite transitional housing, comprehensive goal oriented support services, access to community resources, and cultural programming to homeless women and children.

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### AICHO's Programs

- **Dabinoo'Igan**, (a place where you are safe, comforted, and sheltered), provides emergency shelter, advocacy and support to survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, trafficking, stalking and/or dating violence.



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### AICHO's Programs:

- **The Giiwe Mobile Team**, (comes home), is an interagency collaborative that serves households who have experienced long-term homelessness. Giiwe provides affordable housing and supportive services through intensive case management.



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### AICHO's Programs

- **Gimaaji-Mino-Bimaadiziyaan**, (we are beginning a good life), is currently under development. It will provide 27 units of safe, affordable, and stable housing with supportive services that welcomes Native American families and others who are precariously housed.



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**The Problem: Duluth Area Statistics**

- 49% of American Indians in Duluth have incomes below the poverty line (compared to 15% of all other groups)
- In Duluth, rental housing costs are disproportionately high in comparison to income.



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**The Problem: National Statistics**

- Native women are 50% more likely to be victimized by violent crime than any other ethnic group.
- Native women are seven times more likely to be raped than non-Native women.



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**The Problem: Homeless Definitions**

- Federal— “an individual who has primary nighttime residence that is: ...a shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations”, or “...a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.”



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### The Problem: Homeless Definitions

- MN state— “ an individual, unaccompanied youth, or family that is without a permanent place to live that is fit for human habitation. Doubling up is considered homeless if that arrangement has persisted less than 1 year.”

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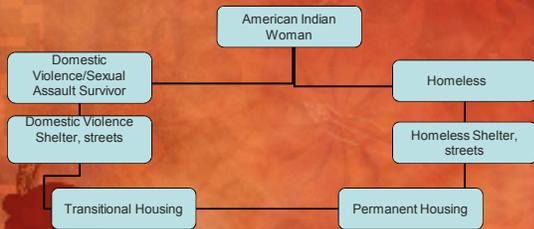
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### Mainstream Cycle



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### Why isn't this working? Mainstream

- Eligibility
- Quantitative vs. Qualitative
- Impersonal
- Housing Focused on Housing
- Local Payment Standards

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### Why isn't this working? Culturally

- Geographic Location
- No Room for the Spirit
- Lack of Cultural Understanding (landlords, social service programs)



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### Jane's Story

- So what happens if she were to just get a job...?
- Minimum wage in Duluth-- \$6.55
- Could you survive on \$2.40?



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### Community Partnerships

- Community partnerships are essential for providing holistic, intensive, wrap-around services for Native women seeking assistance.



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**Why collaborate?**

- Everyone contributes to the circle.
- Easy access to the people who can help
- Eliminates “turf wars”
- Education and societal change



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**What is important in a Community Partnership?**

- Make sure each partnership is a meaningful collaboration.
- Make sure partnerships are aligned with your vision/mission.
- AICHO's Vision: “ By honoring our resiliency, AICHO's vision is to strengthen our communities by centering indigenous values in all aspects of our work.”



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**Example of how a partnership is formed:**

- Like minded organizations, seeing the same problem, pull in other organizations to create change.
- Example: Trafficking collaboration in Duluth



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Community Partnerships do work!

- Example: Giiwe Mobile Team
- 5 agencies working together to serve 32 long term homeless families/singles.
- Over 2/3 of the families maintained a year long lease, and removed some barriers that had kept them homeless.



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Community Partnerships do work!

- Oshki Odaadiziwini Waaka'Igan
- Houses homeless women and children who are either homeless or leaving domestic violence situations.
- Wrap around meetings including: schools, social workers, head start, etc. This helps families establish themselves and children/mother gains support.



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"Human kind has not woven the web of life. We are but one thread within it. Whatever we do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things are bound together. All things connect."

Chief Seattle, 1854



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