

Creating a Comprehensive Response to Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence in Tribal Communities

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Cass Lake IHS Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative

Cass Lake IHS Sexual Assault &
Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative



IHS Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative (DVPI)

- ▶ National surveys indicate high rates of DV & SA in Indian Country
- ▶ 2009 PL 11-8, the Omnibus Appropriations Act & congress: \$10 million for DVPI
- ▶ Purpose: support national effort by IHS to address DV and SA in AI/AN communities
- ▶ Funding for SANE/SART expansion, DV or SA advocacy – tribal and IHS programs/projects
- ▶ CLIHS 1 of 8 SANE/SART expansion sites funded nationally
 - Have expanded to include DV

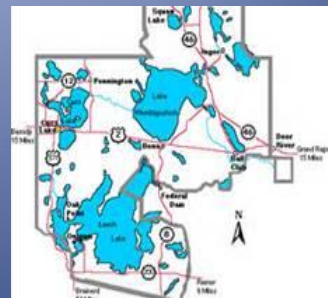
Federal IHS DVPI Program

- ▶ National Sexual Assault Protocol
 - Nation-wide IHS protocol of response to sexual assault victims
 - Mandates access to SANEs to provide exams
 - Standardized equipment
- ▶ National Domestic Violence Protocol
 - ▶ Being developed
- ▶ Webinars and other trainings and information-sharing opportunities
 - Domestic Violence Examiner training

Cass Lake IHS SADVPI Program

- ▶ SANE expansion
- ▶ Reservation-wide SARRT/DARRT
 - 4 counties
 - Law enforcement, prosecution, advocacy, corrections, child protection, FACNM +
- ▶ Improve IHS internal response
- ▶ Community awareness raising
- ▶ Professional education

Leech Lake Reservation



Leech Lake Reservation

- ▶ >8,000 members & 12,000 residents
- ▶ 973 sq miles
- ▶ Total surface area including water 1,310 sq miles
- ▶ 2,507 acres (6%) tribally owned
- ▶ Remainder:
 - 1/3 federal (Chippewa National Forest)
 - American Indians on fee/private property
 - State, companies, non-native land owners
- ▶ Encompasses parts of 4 counties
- ▶ Minn. is PL 280 state

Leech Lake Images



Leech Lake Area Images



Leech Lake Area Images



Leech Lake Area Images



Cass Lake IHS

- Circa 1937
- 12,000 patients
- Critical access hospital
- 11 in pt & swing beds
- 100,000 pt visits annually



Survey of 32 female patients

- ▶ 27 would prefer to come to our facility if SA
 - “This is MY hospital”
 - “...they’d be more caring and helpful”
- ▶ 31 felt victims would come if SANE available
 - “As long as the people know there is someone there to help them. Greatly needed on the rez.”
 - “Some providers treat rape victims with no compassion”
- ▶ 31 felt it important to have program specific to AI/AN

CLIHS SADVPI Major Accomplishments: Cass Lake IHS

- ▶ 24/7 SANE coverage
 - Training of SANEs to provide DV forensic nurse service
- ▶ CLIHS SANE equipment & training
- ▶ SA protocol & forms
- ▶ DV & strangulation protocol & forms
- ▶ Employee trainings on SA & DV

CLHS SADVPI Major Accomplishments: Improving Multidisciplinary Responses

- ▶ Formation of SARRT/DARRT
 - Sexual Assault MOU
 - Safety & Accountability Audit: “What is the response to sexual assault and domestic violence on the Leech Lake Reservation?”
 - Interviews, focus groups, surveys, listening sessions
 - Strangulation & DV MDT guidelines in progress
- ▶ 2 Regional SANE/SARRT trainings
- ▶ 3 Regional multidisciplinary trainings
- ▶ Safe Dates training
- ▶ DAIP batterer’s group facilitator training
- ▶ SANE & Advocate Summit

Leech Lake Sexual Assault Reservation Response Team (SARRT)



Collaboration, Communication & Cooperation!!

The Clothesline
Project
Take Back the Night

Collaborative
Events with local
agencies serving
Victims of Domestic
Violence & Sexual
Assault



CLHS SADVPI Major Accomplishments: Community Events

- ▶ Community outreach & education
 - Booths at area health fairs, other events
 - Presentations at workshops & trainings
 - PSAs
 - Tribal radio interviews
 - Newspaper articles
- ▶ Gaynachiwanig (a spiritual gathering)
- ▶ The Great Hurt
- ▶ Rape on the Reservation, Hollow Water viewing & discussion
- ▶ Guest speakers
- ▶ Shaken Tent, Wiping of the Tears ceremonies
- ▶ Community Advisory Council

Gaynachiwanig Gathering of Spiritual Elders



Gaynachiwanig



Robin Poorbear (Kind Hearted Woman) & LLPD Awards Ceremony



Maawanji'ding (meeting together) Onigum pre-powwow event



CLIHs SADVPI Major Accomplishments Funding for:

- ▶ LL Batterer's Re-education Program
- ▶ LLFVPP advocate
- ▶ Support Within Reach Anishinabe Equity Coordinator
- ▶ Peacemaker Resources in Schools
- ▶ LLPD logging recorder
- ▶ 63 cameras for 7 law enforcement agencies
 - Forensic photography training

Our Greatest Challenges

- ▶ Encouraging victims to present for medical care
- ▶ Changing norms
 - Identify and change messages that encourage VAW
- ▶ Changing community responses
 - Holding perpetrators accountable
 - Responses to victims
 - Threats, intimidation
 - Victim blaming
- ▶ Changing systems responses
 - Becoming more victim-centered
 - Reaching those who need it most

Other Challenges

- ▶ Trying to do it all while understaffed!
- ▶ Trying to do much of anything in the winter!
- ▶ Restrictions on appropriated fund spending
 - We need to be able to feed people!
 - Items such as t-shirts
 - Limited to \$25 gas card

The Fruits /Rewards of our Labor

- ▶ *“People are talking about it. Everywhere I go I hear people talking about sexual assault and domestic violence.”*
- ▶ *LL Chief of Police: “Thank you for everything you are doing. It has changed the way we work. Now in a domestic violence situation we ask ourselves “Is she afraid?”. If the answer is yes we take him in and let the courts figure it out from there.”*



It Will Take All of Us!

**MY MIND, BODY, AND SPIRIT
ARE SACRED.
PREVENT SEXUAL ASSAULT.**

IT WILL TAKE ALL OF US – MEN, WOMEN,
YOUTH, AND ELDERS – TO STAND TOGETHER TO
PREVENT SEXUAL ASSAULT: BELIEVE VICTIMS –
SUPPORT HEALING – KNOW YOUR RESOURCES

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