

Building Platforms to Prevent Violence and Promote Healing for Native Youth



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Executive Director

15th Annual Indian Nations Conference
Palm Springs, CA
December 8, 2016



CENTER FOR NATIVE AMERICAN YOUTH
AT THE ASPEN INSTITUTE

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Center for Native American Youth
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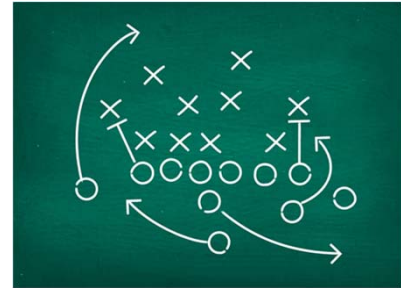
cnay-amber **genindigenous**

Let's get to know each other!

1. Your name and where you're from
2. What is one thing you hope to take away from this session?



Game plan for today



1. What is the Center for Native American Youth?
2. What are Native youth saying about their interactions with the justice system?
3. How are we addressing youth's priorities? Where are the gaps?
4. Building innovation strategies together to engage more Native youth

Activity: Identifying the obstacles

Based on your experiences as community member or someone working for a program, what are the biggest violence-related challenges Native youth face? How do these challenges impact them?

Write down your answers, and we'll share them a little later



Our vision is for all Native American youth to lead full and healthy lives, to have equal access to opportunity, and to draw strength from their culture and inspire one another.



Our Mission: The Center for Native American Youth is an advocacy organization that works to improve the health, safety and overall well-being of Native American youth.



How we work

Program highlights

Youth Recognition, Leadership Development, and Engagement



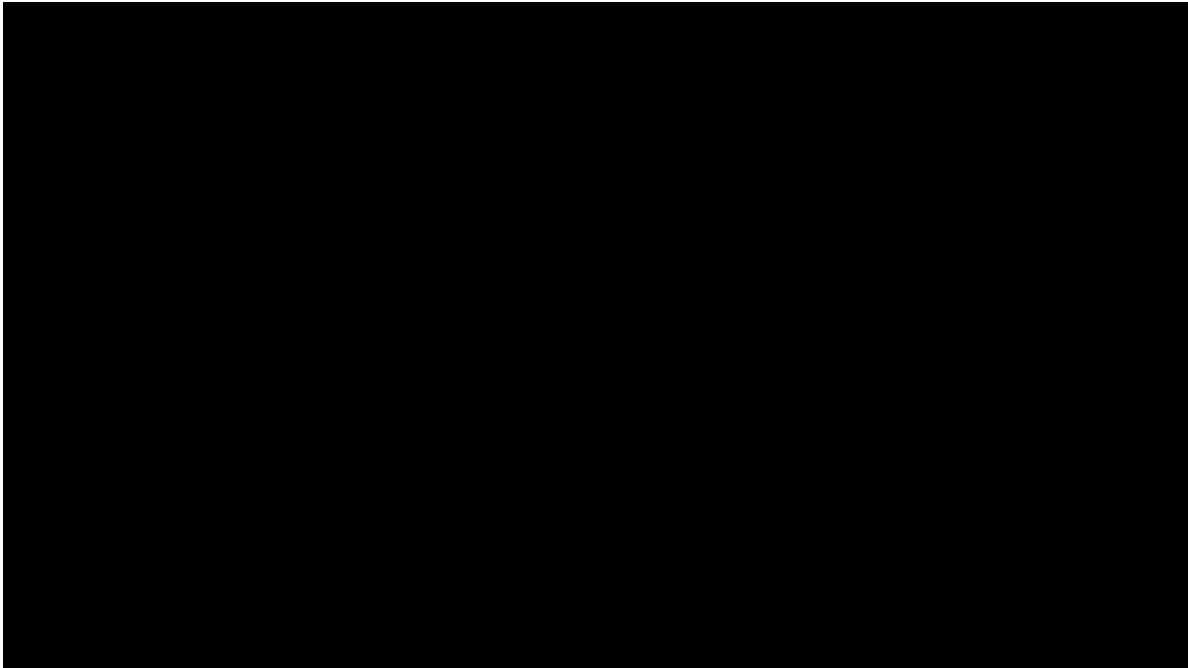
Native youth roundtables: what we hear

- **Access to Health Care**
 - Mental Health
 - Substance Abuse (Opioids)
- **Suicide Prevention**
- **Culture and Language Preservation**
 - Traditional Foods
- **Health & Wellness**
 - Access to Sport
- **LGBTQA+/Two Spirit issues**
- **Combatting Racism**
- **Education**
 - Higher education scholarships
 - Early education
 - Culture-based lessons
- **Community Needs**
 - Housing
 - Public safety
 - Youth community center/shelter
 - Social services
- **Juvenile Justice**
 - Maintaining community/cultural connectedness

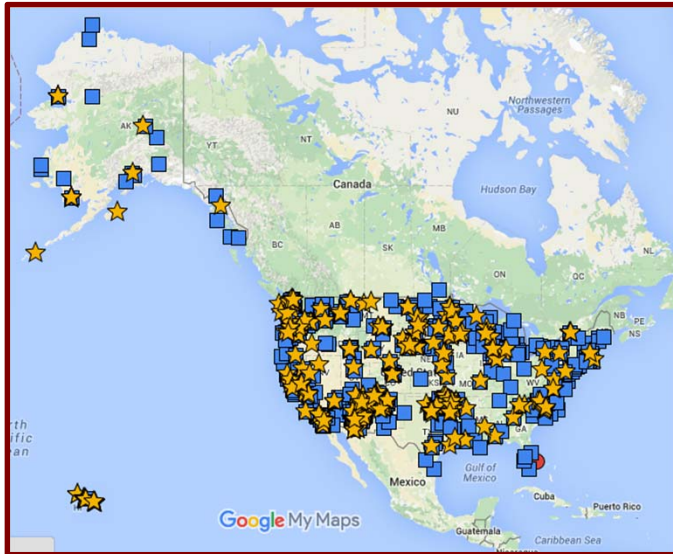


Champions for Change Program

5th class of Champions announced
December 2016.



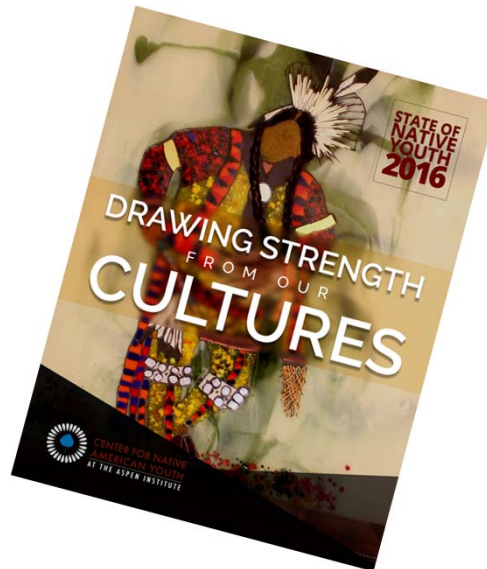
Gen-I Youth Network and Challenge



Research, Advocacy, and Policy Change



State of Native Youth 2016: Just Released!



Download the report by scanning the qr code or go to:

<http://bit.ly/2gb3zV1>

Resource Development and Exchange



Building a Native Youth-Driven Narrative



Group share: what are some of the challenges you see facing Native youth?

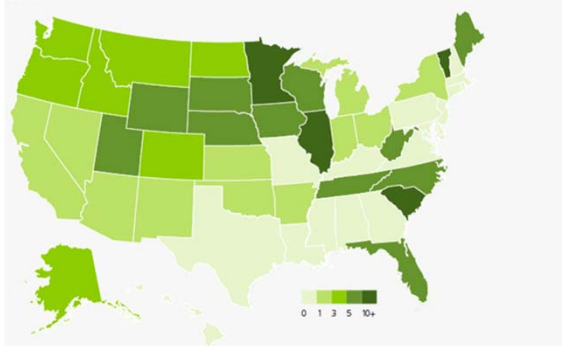
- With violence
- In the juvenile justice and foster care systems
- In school
- Others?

What the data tells us about Native youth and the impact of systems

- Disproportionate incarceration rates
- Native youth more likely to receive out-of-home placement
- Incarceration further enhances severe traumatization.
- **Cultural identity has a strong correlation to positive behaviors within tribal communities.**

Growing disparities for Native youth in the juvenile justice system

Figure 6. American Indian/White Racial Disparity in Commitment Rates per 100,000 Youth, 2013



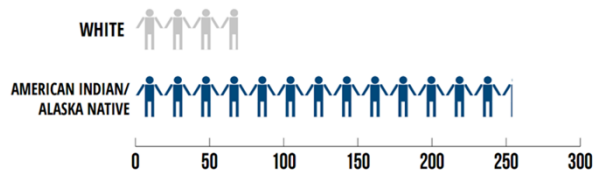
See full data in Appendix C.

Commitment disparities, 2003 versus 2013

Equally distressing to the existence of racial and ethnic disparities is their persistence. Under the federal Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Act, since 1988 states have been required to address disparities in confinement.⁸⁰ Those disparities persist today, having remained constant for Hispanic youth while growing for African American and American Indian youth over this ten-year period.

YOUTH INCARCERATION RATES

Per 100,000 Youth (2013)



Source: The W. H. Hoagwood Center, "Measuring the Rising Role of Racial/Ethnic Disparities in Youth Incarceration: Strategies for Change" (The W. H. Hoagwood Center, Oakland, CA/Emory, 2013). <http://www.hoagwoodcenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Measuring-the-Rising-Role-RAE.pdf>

A disturbing trend in out-of-home placements for Native youth

Disparity Gap Between White and Native American Youth in Out-of-Home Placements by Offense (1997 vs. 2013)			
	White	1997	2013
		Native American	Native American
Total	1	2.4	3.7
Drugs	1	1.8	3.2
Public Order	1	2.0	2.7
Technical	1	2.7	4.5
Status	1	1.8	3.8

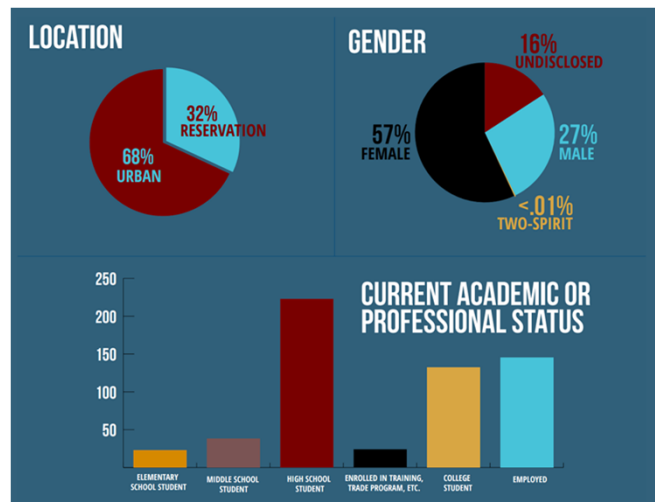
Source: Burns Institute

2016 Gen-I Online Roundtable Survey

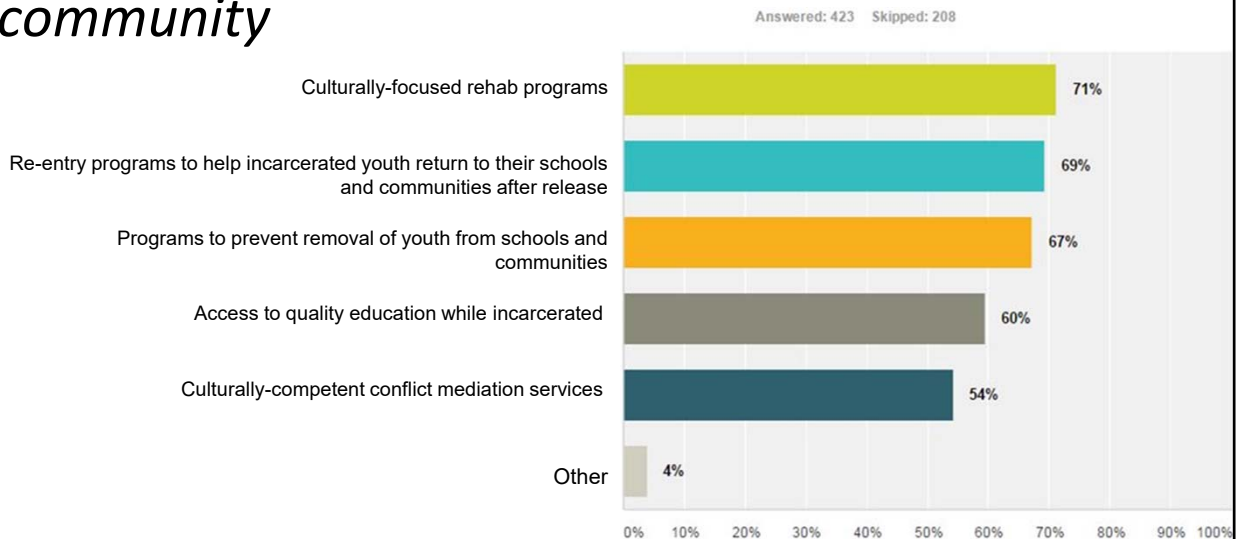
630 responses

Fielded May-Sep 2016

Questions focused on the kinds of resources needed to support Native youth



Native youth perspective: *I need the following resources to address juvenile justice in my community*



"Kids are mostly peaceful, respectful but bored and some seem depressed. They don't feel valued or invested in. They feel they don't have a future and by about 7th grade, they realize they are getting an inadequate education or are stagnant and frustrated with school. Many tend to start sneaking pot and beer by about age 15. After high school, most stay but have no year round jobs and that increases. Then teen pregnancies happen. They don't get chances to learn how to become mature adults."

Native youth want...



- Prevention & education
- Law enforcement presence & training
- Peer & Community Supports
- Culturally-based prevention, intervention, & post-intervention

Addressing violence against Native women

- Education about domestic violence and support for victims
- Programs showing the rate that Native women are raped, and how to seek help or help someone else

"More self defense classes specifically for Native women. We are easy targets everywhere we go. "



Using community strengths

- I truly think **mentorship** programs would help. Individuals from the community who support the youth while incarcerated and their transition back into school would be very helpful.

*"We need a juvenile justice center here on the Rez based on our own **traditional** beliefs."*



- Community based security; **local** programs for concerned families to come together and address public safety concerns

YMCA facility, youth **facility**, counseling center for domestic violence victims and vulnerable youth

Neighborhood/ Community Watch Programs

Community **legal aid office** for children and families

Better Training

- Not just more law enforcement, but **law enforcement that cares about and knows the community**
- For our law enforcement to be more **visible** and involve in community activities especially with youth.
- More **professional development** for the individuals working with incarcerated youth like police officers, detention officers, counselors, and lawyers.
- Law enforcement **trained on interacting with youth** through a youth adult partnership model

Rebuilding Trust

"Racist cops tazed my classmate until unconsciousness."

- We have a dysfunctional copshop. For their training they used blanks on us for a mock shooting drill. Didn't offer us protective gear. They do not **help us or encourage us**.
- End over-policing of our neighborhoods



Strengthen Protections

- Prosecution and investigation of violence against Native women.
- Need the county to deputize Tribal Police
- Gang and bullying interventions

"The Law Enforcement on the Navajo Nation is very short handed, which can cause violence to stir. In a recent tragedy, a young girl was kidnapped and murdered. If there were to be more police, maybe something could have prevented that young girl's life from being taken."

Education & Opportunity

"I need education on how crime affects me as an adult the consequences that come later. "

- Learning how to identify abuse and foster healthy relationships
- Community service and skill building opportunities for the incarcerated

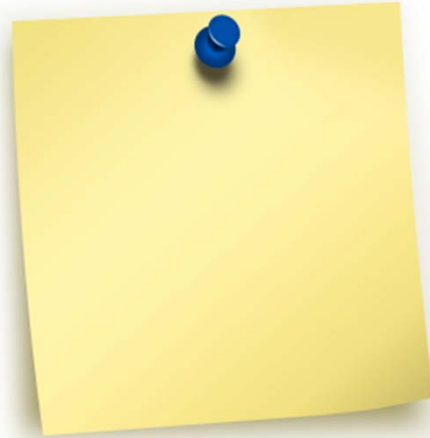


Emphasis on culture and closeness

*"In our community drugs are a big issues with the older kids in the community, there is not much for them to do so I don't know if that's why they turn to drugs. Both of my older brothers do drugs and **have wasted a lot of their life** having to go to non-Indian places to get help which has seem to make them worse."*

Activity: How is your organization/agency helping prevent violence and promote healing?

- What promising programs have you seen in your community or other communities?
- What further national/regional resources do you need to support these youth?
- Does tribal culture play a prominent role in your work?



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