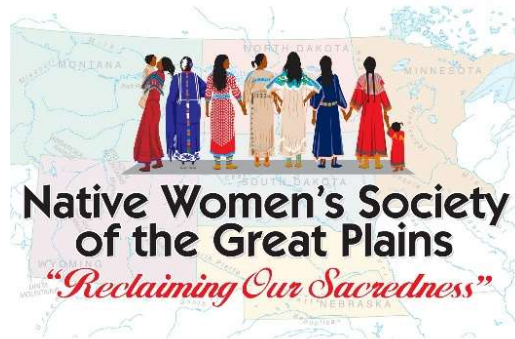


Empowering Children in Shelter

(Woksape Un Kpazo Pi)
(Wooksah-pe Un Kahpahzo-pe)



Overview

Safety, trauma and children

- Women and children enter our shelters often traumatized and will stay in the shelter long periods of time.
- Understanding how children are impacted by domestic violence with the effects of psychological, behavioral, cognitive, and physical.
- Safety planning is crucial when working with families.

Overview

Development steps

- This curriculum was developed for Shelter Advocates to have a quick guide to implement activities including moms and their children in cultural activities.
- The topics are chosen to give traditional beliefs life and teach the protective qualities of traditional lifeways.
- The positive outcome is to help the mothers reconnect with the children and help comfort and begin to provide long term safety for their children.

Overview

Activities

- Summary of activities developed by shelter advocates that are culturally crafts, activities and resources and ceremonies to enhance, strengthen children and their primary care providers and provide healing support of children.
- Three shelters piloted the activities.





Philosophy of NWSGP

- Native Women's Society of the Great Plains offers cultural relevant technical assistance and support to their membership to end domestic and sexual violence.
- The philosophy of the society is to strengthen Native women through reclaiming our sacredness with cultural relevant trainings and assistance.
- Traditionally women are considered the backbone of our nations, strength of family and children.

Helping Children Heal

- It is estimated between 2.3 and 10 million children witness domestic violence each year in the United States and are often overlooked by helping professionals.
- The statistics are high on reservations where domestic and sexual violence are so often kept silent.

Helping Children Heal

- When we think about advocating for children in our shelters, it is not just providing childcare, advocates should be encouraging children and support them as they learn about the violence that has affected their lives.
- When that process is enacted, it helps children to process the disruption in their lives.
- Advocates can be a voice and support for children as they heal.
- Creating and maintaining an area of safety for children and doing activities with children and their mothers or primary caregivers helps in the healing.

Helping Children Heal

- When children come from an environment where they witnessed domestic violence or were a part of it, their emotions are in an upheaval state with much stress and trauma.
- Providing support as an advocate or child advocate such as childcare, parenting groups, fun times are important to help children heal.
- Activities are needed to provide tool kits to mothers to help them work through difficult situations with their children by helping recognize behavioral changes and developing safety plans.

Helping Children Heal

- Providing activities that are culturally relevant with both child and mother and will help children connect to their traditional lifestyles through crafts such as beading, drum making, storytelling, painting, tipi making, hair teachings, Lakota language empowerment and games.
- Teachings of connections to Earth's elements and spiritual teachings through ceremonies, language and traditional rites of passage.

Shelter Needs

- Shelters in Indian country often lack planning networking and needed supplies and a frame network to coordinate resources from their communities that can enhance children in shelter.
- Empowering Children in Shelter (Woksape Un Kpazo Pi) was developed to provide that framework/curriculum for advocate use.
- The project was funded by First Nations Development Corporation through their working with youth funding.
- Activities were provided to advocates in three shelters, along with the materials needed to complete the activities, as a pilot project.

Resources

- There are many culturally relevant topics and resources in our communities that this project will help to identify and which will help children and their mothers to essentially reclaim their sacredness.
- Every tribal community has foundation teachings in philosophy, cultural connection and identity; rites of passage, traditional wisdom and thought.
- There are a host of creative ways in which activities can capture this timeless information through research, word of mouth, traditional teachers and Lakota practitioners.

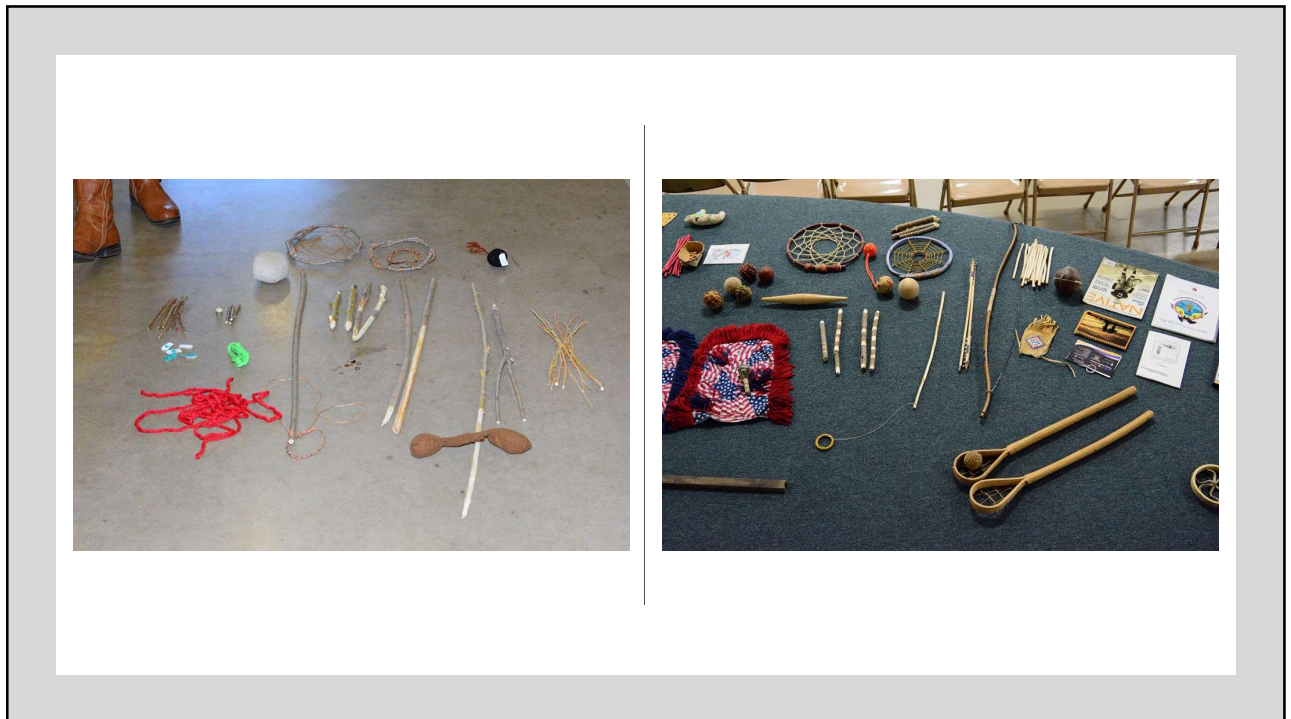
Resources

- The project support is coordinated and implemented by shelter advocates and Native Women's Society of the Great Plains staff.
- Activities were developed and provided by shelter advocates and NWSGP staff.
- The framework of the project is a continuing activity and can be added on.
- These resource guides and purchased materials can be used for same activity planning for future use in other membership shelters.

Traditional games

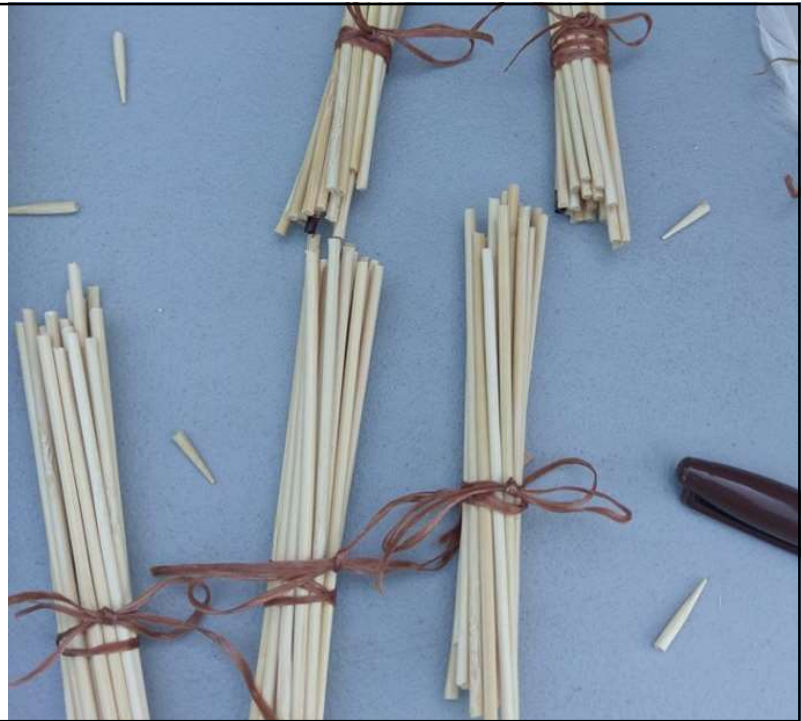
- A list of in shelter activities was developed, which shelter advocates picked and choose what to do with children and their mothers in shelter.
- Level I and II Traditional Native American Games Training, October, 2017: NWSGP staff and five staff members from the three shelters attended the training. They were trained in over 20 games, how to make the equipment, materials and how to play. The games can be used as activities with children in shelter. Each participant was given a traditional games curriculum manual with the 20 games and many other games. Lessons are developed around each game and more can be added on regarding safety, self-care and good health and connection to ancestors through their survival. Children playing with parent.
- Materials needed: sinew, hide, willow, good pair of shears, buffalo hair







- Guessing Game
- Patience
- Intuition
- Simple to make and use



Holiday Activity

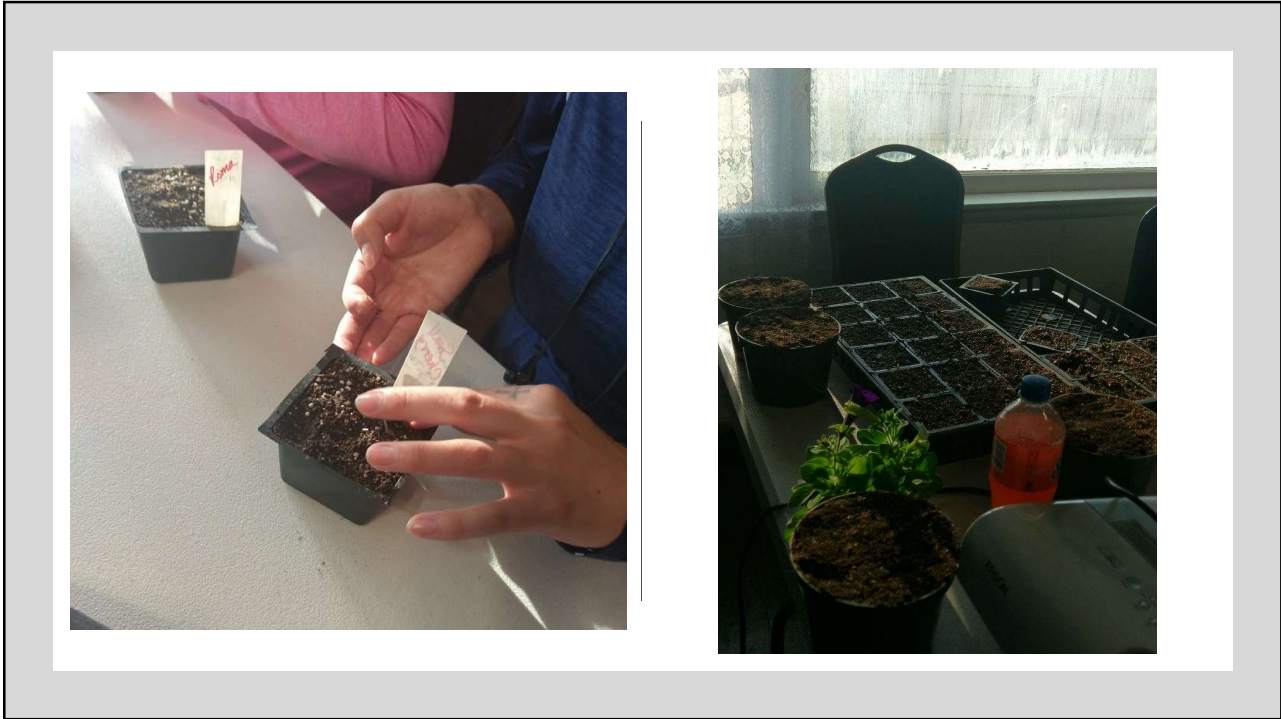
- Cookie cutters in the shapes of cultural icons were purchased for each of the three shelters. Buffalo, arrow, tipi, moon, star, turtle, dragonfly sugar cookies along with other cultural images with the traditional Christmas cookie shapes.
- A fact sheet listing the images was developed and reviewed with the children and what the icons mean.
- The children decorated the cookies for their families or gave them as gifts. For example, the buffalo, discussion was held on the tatanka oyate and what that meant to community and family. What the buffalo meant historically to their families. Picture images of the shapes were also shown to the children. In the traditional holiday cutters, those images were also discussed like the star of David and what that meant, along with the angel, snowman, Christmas tree shape. The cookie cutters can be purchased online through Amazon and are not expensive.

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- Materials needed: cookie cutters, ingredients for sugar cookies and frosting, a good oven.



Gardening Activity

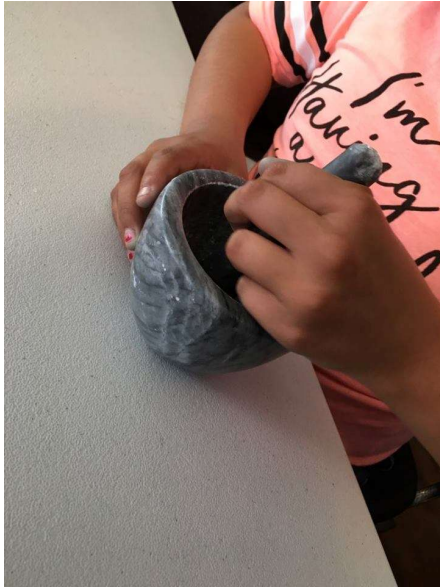
- Two shelters held gardening activities, both planted gardens.
- An expertise on gardening (greenhouse) from a local tribal college presented to mothers and children the basics of raised garden beds, companion planting, herbs and the skills of planting.
- Children planted starter plants and stories were told about ancestors and planting.
- Discussion was held on the importance of connection to Mother Earth, healthy nutrition through produce and fruits.
- One child asked about the smell of rain and it brought forth much discussion on DNA connections to water and Earth.
- Materials needed: seeds, potting soil and containers



Wasna Making (Pemmican)

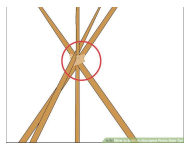
- Purchased dehydrators for the three shelters, found consultant or community member expertise on wasna making, drying meats and chokecherry patties.
- Highlights on sacred food teachings, lessons on ancestral survival skills, food safety and relate it to today's way of doing these foods.
- Most mothers want to know this skill set and enjoyed working with their children in mincing the dried meat and making chokecherry patties.
- Materials needed: Dehydrator, (keep for shelter use), meat, chokecherries, timspsila, dried corn, fat, wooded bowls.





Sensory bottles and slime crafting

- Mostly enjoyed by children, it is an popular activity with young children and was well received.
- Exploring our senses. Sensory play is a type of play that is very beneficial for children. Starting at birth, babies begin to explore the world around them using their five senses. As children grow, their senses are their most familiar and most basic way to explore and process new information. Sensory play enhances learning through hands-on activities that stimulate the child's senses.
- This is a great way for children to explore the world they live in! You can use sensory bottles for time out time, like using a sand hour glass, the time it takes for the particles to go from one end to the other, children can take time to breath and be calm.
- When children are scared, have fears, playing with a sensory bottle can help calm those fears. Talk with your child about their fears and use the bottles to help them understand they can let their fears drain away as the materials in the bottles go from end to the other.
- You can use the bottles for anxiety relievers also.
- Materials needed: bottles, baby oil, corn syrup, vegetable oil, beads, eyes, glitter, glue, cheap eye solution, baking soda, shaving cream.



Minature Tipi Making

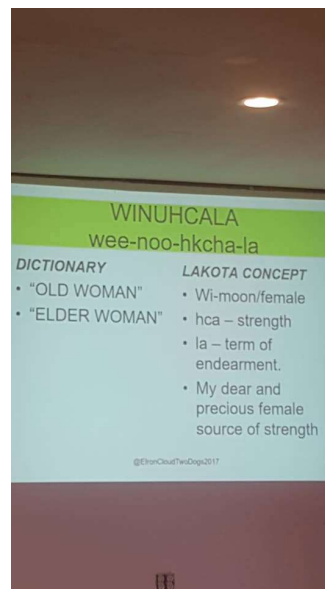
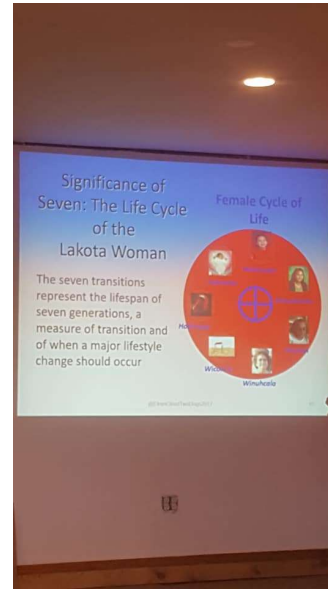
- Discussion on safety in home, family structure, chores, night light, fears of dark and other fears, gender roles.
- Also can be discussed with children is design, painting, use of paints, fabric paint, markers. A tipi power point was developed on history of tipi, ancestor use, women's roles, how hide was used.
- Materials needed: light canvas, wooden dowels, glue gun, glue sticks, acrylic paint, fine tipped markers, sinew, small flameless battery operated candles.

Lakota Language family games

- Family kinship terms in relation to safety and harmony, children's healing songs, Lakota Pictionary games.
- Exposure to the range of games and language and the number of words learned, creates self-esteem, cultural self pride, family bonding, fun. Understanding that words have more than one meaning. They can take with flash cards.
- Kinship terms help children to understand the need for harmony.
- Materials needed: flash cards, CDs of songs, flip charts (already have) markers, prizes and making kinship charts.

Coming of Age -IsnaTi Awicalowanpi

- Two shelters worked with families of young girls with the ceremony of IsnaTi Awicalowanpi, one of the seven sacred ceremonies of the Lakota/Nakota/Dakota people.
- Four days of teachings on skills needed for womanhood, final day of ceremony in which family brings out their young woman.
- Elders, community women, mid-wife, authors and other speakers and teachers working with the girls for four days on skills needed when they move into their rite of passage.
- Families had their ceremony dress made, moccasins, knife and sheath, parfleche bag.



Our Ways as Lakota Females

Our Ways as Lakota Females

- Keepers of the Fire of the home, leaders of our home
- We are Matriarchs
- We are Warrior Women
- We pray when we prepare food so that the food becomes medicine
- We isolate ourselves during our monthly



Let's talk about your hair



Hair Lessons

- Cultural understanding of how and why our ancestors took care of their hair.
- Lesson of the hair, DNA, self-care, ancestral knowledge, power point developed for mothers and children to understand using graphics
- Hair care supplies and best uses and understanding of lice and their environment.
- Materials needed: power point on hair, brushes & combs, hair care magazines, lice meds.

Summary of Other Activities

ACTIVITY: Tipsila activity (spring)

MATERIALS: Transportation, gas, digging tools, consultant expertise

OUTCOME: Learning together, safety in avoiding snakes, ticks, braiding the turnips, financial resource, nutritional facts, hard work.

ACTIVITY: Wintercount

MATERIALS: Canvas, cardboard, markers, pencils, paint

OUTCOME: Record their feelings, trauma of has happened. Understand history, timelines, re-telling story for healing.

ACTIVITY: Police Officer visit

MATERIALS: stickers, look at police car

OUTCOME: Importance of knowing about 911, safety, support, what are crimes

Summary of Other Activities

ACTIVITY: Doll Making, Barbie Doll Fashions

MATERIALS: fabric and other materials, sewing machine,

OUTCOME: Identity by dress, no face teachings, dress design, play dolls, role playing

ACTIVITY: Hand drums

MATERIALS: hide, sticks, sinew, paint, brushes

OUTCOME: Songs, cultural identity, Lakota language, song is healing,

ACTIVITY: Taste and Smell Therapy

MATERIALS: food likes, lemon, strawberry, sage sweet grass, lavender, essential oils

OUTCOME: they taste it, what it smells, taste likes, talk about feelings that come up when doing the smells.

Summary of Other Activities

ACTIVITY: Vision Boards

MATERIALS: magazines, poster board, (not glamor magazines),

OUTCOME: who are your heroes, character development, identity, traditional leaderships,

ACTIVITY: Digital Story Telling

MATERIALS: computer, power point, lessons in storytelling, YouTube

OUTCOME: telling story for healing, telling story for entertainment, Internet safety, promoting healthy behavior

ACTIVITY: Financial Literacy

MATERIALS: Curriculum, play money, Monopoly game,

OUTCOME: Basics of budgeting, learning about money resources

Summary of Other Activities

ACTIVITY: Internet Safety

MATERIALS: Tablets, phones, desktop computers, videos

OUTCOME: Internet safety, dating, healthy relationships, sex trafficking

ACTIVITY: Knife and knife sheath

MATERIALS: canvas, hide, beads, leather, sinew

OUTCOME: Tool kit for safety, tool kits for healthy relationship, tool kit for family resources, adolescent knowledge

Discussion During Activities

Safety planning intake: Important to do with both mother and child. Talk to mom about responsibility of safety planning. Education goes further sometimes than counseling. Educating mother and child on safety planning, what is safety planning, what happens in adulthood. Make a safety bag, where would you put in it and hide it.

Materials: action figures, snacks, small blankets, photos, drawings, something they like to do, their favorite. What happens when mom gets angry? What happens when dad gets angry? Emotional talk.

Talk to implement to each activity

All activities talk about what makes you feel safe? (being home, friends, family, blanket, stuffed animal, pet various animals.)

We can talk about what safety means.

Emotional: people who will not call names, people who care about us. How do they show it?

Physical: Safe place, away from storms, a playground, lights, enough to eat, answers vary by needs of family.



Talk to implement to each activity

- Questions to ask:
- Who is your favorite person?
- What happens when people are angry?
- Who helps you be happy?
- Do you ever get scared? What makes you scared? (this answer can vary from thunderstorms, when dad yells, to monsters under the bed.)
- Lets talk about times you might get scared:
- What could you do?
- Who would you talk to? What if they were not around?
- Is there a place to run to?
- Is there a place to hide?
- Who would you talk to when it happens
- Who would you talk to the next day?

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