



CALIFORNIA AREA INDIAN HEALTH SERVICE
Project ECHO®

Representation and Relevance: Adapting Youth Mental Health First Aid for Tribal Communities and Indigenous Peoples

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Teresa Gomez, MA



Lecturer II
for Community Education Services
University of New Mexico
Community Behavioral Health Division

Teresa Gomez is an enrolled member of the Pueblo of Isleta and a life-long resident of New Mexico. Teresa has dedicated her career to serving Tribes and advocating for issues affecting American Indians. In 2006, Teresa served as the Deputy Cabinet Secretary for the New Mexico Indian Affairs Department. Teresa also served as the Deputy CEO for the NM Behavioral Health Purchasing Collaborative.

Teresa has worked extensively with Tribal governments and various governmental agencies at the federal, state, and local levels. She has been instrumental in building and strengthening Tribal-State relations and collaboration.

Teresa is a faculty member of UNM's Division of Community Behavioral Health serving as a Lecturer II.



Jennifer S. Nanez, MSW, LMSW



Jennifer S. Nanez, MSW, LMSW, currently serves as a Lecturer II with the University of New Mexico, Division of Community Behavioral Health in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. Ms. Nanez is an enrolled tribal member of the Pueblo of Acoma, New Mexico and is a daughter, sister, an auntie; and mother to two young Indigenous matriarchs in training. Ms. Nanez has been in the social work and education fields for over 25 years, with experience working across Tribal, Urban Indian, Federal and University Systems; all with an emphasis in serving the American Indian population. Ms. Nanez's interests lie in suicide prevention and mental health treatment support. Ms. Nanez works to promote effective community engagement and clinical practice, while emphasizing cultural resilience, connection to traditions, and Indigenous based knowledge and healing in American Indian Tribes and communities.

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Learning Objectives

At the end of this presentation, participants will be able to:

- Examine how the YMHFA for Tribal Communities and Indigenous Peoples better aligns with the unique history, challenges and resilience of Indigenous Youth, their families, Tribes and communities.
- Understand the importance of the role culture plays in helping protect and heal Indigenous youth and their families.



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Development Timeline

2008

Mental Health First Aid USA launched

2010

Many Indigenous communities and Instructors are implementing MHFA

2017

Permissions from Indian Health Service, First Nations in Canada, National Council, Boys and Girls Clubs of America

Development and piloting of Indigenous version of MHFA and YMHFA

April 20-22: Albuquerque, May 18-19: Oklahoma City

June 15-16: Minneapolis, July 10-11: Sacramento

August 24-25: Billings, September 14-15: Rapid City

2022

Focus Groups and Feedback Sessions

Youth Mental Health First Aid for Tribal Communities and Indigenous Peoples



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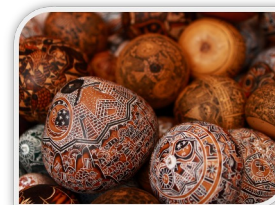
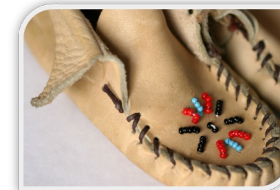
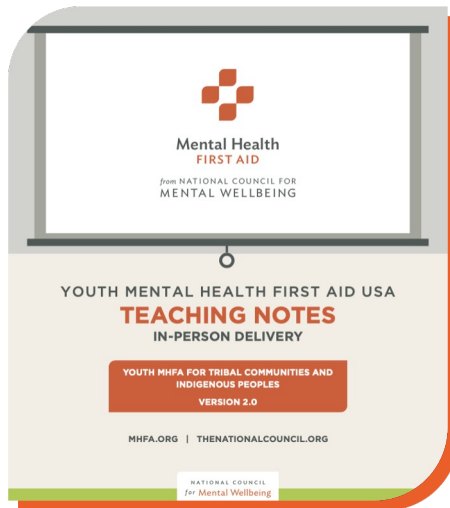
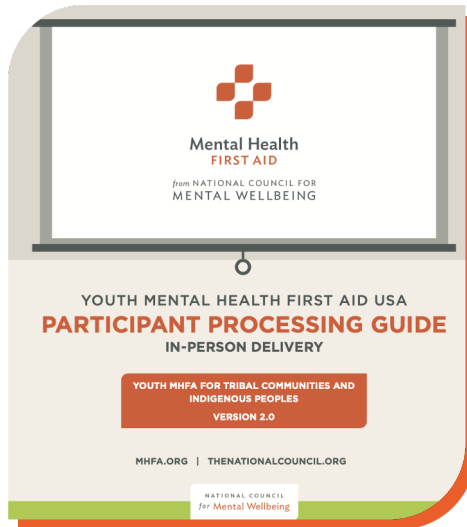
Mental Health First Aid for Tribal Communities and Indigenous Peoples provides a strong cultural connection and early intervention with a culturally appropriate course designed to acknowledge and honor Tribal Communities' and Indigenous Peoples' practices.

- ☐ Risk factors and protective factors specific to Indigenous youth.
- ☐ How mental health topics apply to their community, family and selves.
- ☐ Applying the MHFA Action Plan (ALGEE) in scenarios that reflect the unique
- ☐ needs and experiences of youth of Tribal and Indigenous Communities.
- ☐ National, regional and community mental health resources for youth of Tribal and Indigenous Communities.



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MATERIALS: DATA, ACTIVITIES, SCENARIOS, IMAGERY



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Know Before You Go Highlights

Instructors should have a **demonstrated connection** to Tribal Communities and Indigenous Peoples.

Availability, accessibility, and acceptability of mental health services may have a significant impact on Tribal or Indigenous communities.

Acknowledge the presence of **historical and current-day trauma** that exists within Tribal and Indigenous communities. Learn about the specific Tribal and Indigenous community you are training in.



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Know Before You Go Highlights

CONNECT: Identify an appropriate contact/cultural mentor/leader to guide you in gathering information, making connections, and augmenting the course to be more culturally responsive. If the individual is willing, consider reviewing these questions with them to ensure that all possible information, individuals, considerations, and practices are included.

IDENTIFY: Identify an appropriate co-Instructor to co-train. In general, it is highly encouraged to co-train.

- When you are not part of the Tribal and Indigenous community where you are teaching, it is even more imperative to co-train.
- Are there any Instructors who have a relationship with, or are from the community?
- Review the list of individuals with the appropriate contact/cultural mentor/leader to guide in you inviting the co-instructor.



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Know Before You Go Highlights

LEARN: If you are not from the Tribal or Indigenous community you are teaching in, utilize the following to learn more about the community in order to make the YMHFA course more culturally responsive and relevant.

Learn if an opening ceremony or practice at the beginning of the course may be appropriate to incorporate.

Learn if a closing ceremony or practice at the end of the course may be appropriate to incorporate (e.g., gift giving, Mahalo bags, etc.).

Learn about the community's traditions, values etc. and the appropriate ways to honor and incorporate them as a part of the training.



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