

# FVPSA Needs Assessment Annual Update Report

2024

**GLOBAL RIGHTS**  
*for* **WOMEN** *Justice for  
Victims of Violence*



## **Acknowledgments**

Global Rights for Women (GRW) extends our deepest gratitude to the courageous Native American survivors who participated in the focus groups and shared their experiences with us. Your voices are invaluable, and your willingness to speak out is essential for driving change. We honor your resilience and the cultural heritage you carry, which enriches our understanding and strengthens our collective journey toward healing.

We would like to thank the Abused Adult Resource Center (AARC) and the Community Violence Intervention Center (CVIC) for their crucial role in connecting us with the survivors, sharing your experience and insights, and for graciously hosting the focus groups. Your support and collaboration have been instrumental to the success of this project.

Additionally, GRW extends our sincere thanks to the Community Violence Intervention Center (CVIC), Domestic Violence Crisis Center (DVCC), Kedish House, Abused Adult Resource Center (AARC), Three Rivers Crisis Center, Family Crisis Center (FCC), Domestic Violence Program (DVP), Abuse Persons Outreach Center (APOC), Women's Action and Resource Center (WARC), Safe Alternatives for Violent Environments (SLVAP), McLean Family Resource Center, Hearts of Hope for their participation in GRW's information collection. Your valuable insights and inputs on the challenges observed in delivering services to survivors have significantly enriched our understanding and approach.

Our heartfelt thanks also go to everyone at the North Dakota Domestic and Sexual Violence Coalition and the Planning Committee for their dedication and hard work in bringing this initiative to fruition. Your insights on the design of this project, enthusiasm for collaboration, and unwavering commitment to addressing and preventing violence are deeply appreciated.

Finally, we want to acknowledge GRW's team members, Mingyu Ma, Vayuna Gupta, Cheryl Thomas, and Nicole Lindemyer, the authors of this report, whose efforts, expertise, and passion have made this project happen.

Together, we continue to strive for a safer and more just world.

# North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition FVPSA Needs Assessment Annual Update Report 2024

## **Introduction**

[North Dakota Domestic & Sexual Violence Coalition](#) (NDD SVC, formerly CAWS North Dakota) is the statewide domestic and sexual violence coalition, working to support and present a unified voice for the 19 service provider programs across the state. NDD SVC focuses on connecting victims of sexual and domestic violence, as well as dating violence, stalking, and human trafficking, to services in their communities. NDD SVC also connects diverse partners in communities across the state to better serve victims, from social and legal services to law enforcement and legislators.

[Global Rights for Women \(GRW\)](#) is an international non-governmental organization (NGO) based in Minneapolis, Minnesota that advances legal reform and systemic change to end violence against women and girls throughout the world. GRW partners with women's organizations and other leaders to strengthen their efforts to identify, intervene, and prevent gender-based violence by centering the voices and needs of survivors themselves, then working to amplify and integrate their voices and needs into legal and other systemic solutions.

In January 2023 to September 2023, NDD SVC and GRW assessed the statewide support system for domestic violence survivors throughout North Dakota, as required by Coalition's federal Family Violence Prevention and Services Act (FVPSA)<sup>1</sup> Grant. This culminated in the report, [Many Voices ND, A Needs Assessment on North Dakota's Response to Domestic Violence](#). NDD SVC and GRW again worked together to conduct a statewide Needs Assessment Annual Update, to identify the strengths and gaps in North Dakota's response to domestic violence. This Annual Update took place from November 2023 to September 2024 and builds on the Needs Assessment foundations with a narrower focus on the unmet needs of underserved<sup>2</sup> populations.

## **Needs Assessment Annual Update Inquiry**

### ***Project Design***

This Needs Assessment Annual Update project was divided into four parts, each with specific objectives and activities: 1) collaboration and design; 2) information gathering; 3) data analysis; and 4) review and report writing.

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<sup>1</sup> Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, 17 U.S.C § 10411(d)(1) (1984).

<sup>2</sup> FVPSA defines underserved populations as those who face barriers in accessing and using victim services, including "populations underserved because of geographic location, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, underserved racial and ethnic populations, and populations underserved because of special needs including language barriers, disabilities, immigration status, and age. Individuals with criminal histories due to victimization and individuals with substance use disorders and mental health issues are included in this definition." Family Violence Prevention and Services Act, 45 CFR § 1370.2.

In Part 1 of this Annual Update process, GRW worked closely with the Coalition Needs Assessment Planning Committee (the Committee) to identify the scope of inquiry and overarching questions to guide information collection. In this part, the Committee identified Native American women as the specific underserved community needing focus and prioritization. During this early part of the project, GRW assessed the interest and capacity of both NDD SVC and [First Nations Women's Alliance \(FNWA\)](#), the nationally recognized dual domestic violence/sexual assault Tribal Coalition in North Dakota, to engage in and host listening sessions with survivors and other information-gathering efforts.

Part 2 centered on gathering information from Native survivors and advocates and conducting preliminary analysis to refine methods used. GRW conducted two in-person and two virtual/remote listening sessions with Native survivors and two listening sessions with advocates and staff from member programs; consulted with leaders and staff from both NDD SVC and FNWA; and gathered information from advocates via surveys and discussions at multiple meetings with Coalition member programs and the NDD SVC Domestic and Sexual Violence Advocate Network. GRW employed a variety of community engagement strategies and methods to ensure a broad range of input--see Appendix A: *Questions for Listening Sessions with Native Survivors*.

In Part 3, GRW continued gathering information while reviewing and analyzing data from the surveys and listening sessions conducted. GRW identified emerging themes from the survivor listening sessions and discussed these themes with NDD SVC, its member programs, FNWA, and other stakeholders to refine and validate the data. The process also involved further development of key themes and recommendations identified during the initial Needs Assessment process.

Finally, Part 4 consisted of further analysis of information to identify the unique needs of Native American survivors, and research and development of recommendations to address those needs. The findings were compiled into this comprehensive report, which also includes actionable recommendations to address the identified needs. This report will be shared with the Committee and other stakeholders. The findings will also be presented to NDD SVC and its member programs, FNWA and its member programs, and the North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services State FVPSA Administrator.

### ***Scope of inquiry: Guiding questions***

In partnership with NDD SVC and the Needs Assessment Planning Committee, GRW identified the following four overarching questions to guide this Needs Assessment Annual Update:

Regarding survivors' needs:

1. To what extent are Native American domestic violence survivors' needs for safety and support being met in the current system of services and intervention in ND?

2. In what circumstances do Native survivors go outside the formalized system of services, and what is the result?

Regarding Coalition member programs' capacity:

3. To what extent do service providers/system personnel agree on what should be done to build on strengths or address gaps?
4. What goals are within reach?<sup>3</sup>

### ***Engaging Survivors and Their Advocates***

Throughout this Needs Assessment Annual Update project, participant engagement was a critical component to ensure a comprehensive and inclusive understanding of the needs of Native victim-survivors. To achieve optimal engagement of survivors and advocates, GRW employed a multi-channel outreach strategy to engage survivors from diverse backgrounds and locations.

First, GRW communicated with leaders from FNWA. Although FNWA expressed interest and support for the project, they indicated a lack of capacity to undertake additional work. Consequently, GRW reached out to individual tribal service provider programs that are members of FNWA. While some of these tribal programs responded, most did not, and those that did faced the same lack of capacity to undertake additional work.

It is important to note that GRW understands its experience with seeking engagement from the FNWA tribal coalition and ND tribal programs as a reflection of their lack of resources and the intensity of their work. A reluctance to engage with GRW may also have come from their seeing our organization as researchers representing the interests of mainstream, dominant-culture programs and survivors. GRW recognizes this reluctance as legitimate considering centuries of colonialism, exploitation, genocidal family separations, and general abuse of Native people, families, communities, and tribes by individuals and institutions. The dedicated advocates and leaders of FNWA and its member programs do the extremely hard work of serving Native women throughout North Dakota, despite insufficient funding and staffing.

GRW then directed efforts towards recruiting Native American women via the Coalition member programs. GRW presented information about the project at two NDDSVS Membership Meetings and solicited participation from programs to recruit Native American survivors for consultation. Coalition staff sent additional information by email to further recruit participants, ensuring broad awareness and engagement among member programs throughout the state. Two member programs agreed to host listening sessions with GRW,

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<sup>3</sup> For the sake of comparison, the overarching questions for the initial Needs Assessment were: 1) To what extent do ND domestic violence survivors get their needs for safety and support met in the current system of services and intervention? 2) Which trends do service providers and survivors identify as factors that impact how survivors and service providers connect with each other? 3) What is within the capacity for CAWS, member programs, and other key stakeholders to do to act on what we learn? What are possible stretch goals?

committing to recruiting Native survivors within their service areas. In April 2024, GRW held four in-person listening sessions: two with Native survivors and two with advocates for Native survivors; an additional two listening sessions were conducted virtually. In total, ten survivors in connection with two different member programs and 12 advocates from three different member programs participated in the sessions. GRW is grateful to the Abused Adult Resource Center/Bismarck and Community Violence Intervention Center/Grand Forks for hosting listening sessions and entrusting GRW staff with the stories of the Native survivors they serve.

To supplement the listening sessions with Native survivors and their advocates, GRW also designed and distributed surveys to Coalition member programs' staff. The first survey was distributed in March 2024 to assess program staff's feedback about culturally responsive services for Native survivors. This survey received 24 responses from nine NDD SVC member programs--see Appendix B: *Results of Survey of Advocates and Staff of NDD SVC Member Programs on Culturally Responsive Services*. The second survey was distributed in May 2024 to refine understanding of Child Protection System (CPS) involvement, a topic that arose during listening sessions with Native survivors; this second survey received 10 responses from advocates.

## **Needs Assessment Annual Update Findings**

### ***Same Areas of Need as Non-Native Women***

In the first Needs Assessment project, GRW identified six themes as areas of high need for survivors:

1. Safe and affordable housing.
2. Transportation.
3. Access to appropriate mental health care.
4. Economic security for themselves and their children.
5. Legal assistance.
6. Advocacy.

These six areas of need are discussed at length in the initial Needs Assessment report noted above. GRW encourages readers to review the NDD SVC Needs Assessment report to refresh recollection of those discussions. These same six areas of high need likewise emerged in the Annual Update process, in GRW's discussions with and about Native survivors.

### ***Additional/Unique Needs of Native Survivors***

Our research in this Annual Update process revealed again the six areas of high need identified in the initial Needs Assessment. In addition, we identified systemic discrimination, the need for culturally responsive services, and Native survivors of domestic violence

widespread experience of losing their children, often to the CPS. These unique barriers and needs are discussed in the following sections of this report.

### **Systemic Discrimination and the Need for Culturally Responsive Services.**

One theme that GRW heard repeatedly throughout consultations with Native survivors was how certain systems responded with discriminatory and racist assumptions and practices that exacerbated their crises and suffering. Both survivors and their advocates repeatedly noted discriminatory treatment of Native survivors in housing:

*Just to also piggyback off of [advocate's] comment around housing is the discrimination on people trying to seek housing as far as the expectations for somebody who is a person of color when it comes to who will rent to them, who won't rent to them.<sup>4</sup>*

*And a lot of times the application I don't feel even really gets looked at. They see the name and they can identify immediately they're native.<sup>5</sup>*

*Yeah, the increase in the amount that they'll charge a victim versus a non-victim or a non-Native victim. And that is, again, anecdotally things that we've heard, I think, and just attitudes between landlords and tenants.<sup>6</sup>*

And the healthcare system:

*I've even been in ER with different survivors and the level of care they receive is not the same as I would receive.<sup>7</sup>*

*I've had advocates who've responded and taken sexual assault victims to the emergency room and waited and waited and waited and waited to be seen for a sexual assault for hours watching optically. Perception wise, all of the white people get served before them.<sup>8</sup>*

*There's the downplay of their experiences basically because they're seen as med seeking or hurricane type of attitude.<sup>9</sup>*

*Going back to the hospitals, one thing I've noticed a lot too is when the ER is experiencing overflow, you don't typically see overflow patients who are white in the hallways. It's those native or colored people who are in the hallways without a room laying there waiting.<sup>10</sup>*

And the criminal justice system:

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<sup>4</sup> AARC Advocate Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>5</sup> AARC Advocate Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>6</sup> AARC Advocate Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>7</sup> AARC Advocate Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>8</sup> AARC Advocate Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>9</sup> AARC Advocate Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>10</sup> AARC Advocate Listening Session, Part 2

*When I went to prison, they told me that Native Americans were the most violent people that they housed and said "you're the type of people that go take somebody out in the field and shoot them in the back of the head." An officer told me that. Yeah, we were the most violent crime, the violent race of all of our races.<sup>11</sup>*

*Yeah, I fucking hated it and that's how they treat us in there in the jail like animals and they're supposed to be there to, I don't know why they're there.<sup>12</sup>*

*If you're Native American they do. They discriminate against you a lot. There's very few places that help Native American women when they reach out for help. I know with the cops.<sup>13</sup>*

Native American survivors of domestic violence also expressed the need for culturally responsive services—that is, services that affirmatively recognize, appreciate, and affirm Native American culture and traditions. Native survivors and their advocates described systemic responses that reflected widespread ignorance of cultural needs and practices, and/or a lack of understanding of issues common among Native people and communities, like the impact of intergenerational trauma, or the importance of extended family and kinship ties.

*And I've seen in a different role a lot of the children being taken out of the home by CPS and put with a family and how hard that is with maybe the family not knowing what the culture is like. And I had an instance where a child was placed in a non-native family, and they cut the son's hair. No bad intentions, but they didn't know. And it became a way bigger thing than it needed to be for simply not asking.<sup>14</sup>*

*I found that the state system anyway is not set up for intergenerational families. So, custody issues become really complicated outside of jurisdictional questions if they live on tribal land, but also it is just not set up for intergenerational families at all.<sup>15</sup>*

As part of this Needs Assessment Annual Update, GRW also surveyed the Coalition member programs to better understand how programs were equipping their staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide culturally responsive services—see Appendix B. The results of that survey are illuminating; there is wide variety among the levels of programs' training and staff familiarity with topics related to diversity, equity, and inclusion, and with topics specific to Native American culture. When asked how confident they are in their ability to meet the cultural needs of survivors who are Native American, only six of 24 respondents said "substantially" or "completely and fully." The survey results revealed a

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<sup>11</sup> AARC Survivor Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>12</sup> AARC Survivor Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>13</sup> AARC Survivor Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>14</sup> CVIC advocate listening session

<sup>15</sup> CVIC Advocate Listening Session



significant appetite for additional training, particularly regarding Native American traditions and beliefs, and tribal jurisdiction.

### **Loss of Children to the Child Protection System.**

*I got my kids taken away because of the cops and I regret that shit because I'm the one that called for help because I was tired of my abuser breaking my ribs.<sup>16</sup>*

*And isn't that the real issue with any system is they go toward the one they can more easily coerce and isn't that always the victim? Where's the focus? Where's the accountability for the offenders? CPS is no friend to abused women for so many reasons, but primarily because they're focusing on the victim, not the offender.<sup>17</sup>*

*And as far as child protection, I mean, I think we need to have more indigenous people that are involved in the Child Protective Services so that they can understand because [there are] laws in place to protect these children, that they're not going to some foster care that isn't an indigenous family.<sup>18</sup>*

Throughout the in-person listening sessions with survivors, GRW staff heard story after story from Native women who said they “lost their children because of domestic violence,” i.e., how they shared that CPS “took their children away.” Given the high rate of reporting on these issues, GRW conducted an additional survey of advocates to better understand programs’ level of engagement. Responding to this second survey, advocates noted not only a high occurrence of survivors stating that CPS removed their children from their homes, but a majority (60%) reporting that they are hearing about this happening more often from Native women than non-Native--see Appendix C: *Results of Survey of Advocates and Staff of NDDSVSVC Member Programs on Child Protection Services*. GRW research confirms that North Dakota has a high rate of removal of children from Native American families. While 87% of the children in North Dakota are white and 6% are Native American, within the child welfare population, 41% of children in foster care are Native American.<sup>19</sup>

### **Recommendations for NDDSVSVC and Its Member Programs: Potential Improvements to Respond to the Unique Needs of Native Women**

- 1. Institutionalize methods and strategies for gathering and incorporating feedback from Native survivors into decision-making.**

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<sup>16</sup> AARC Survivor Listening Session, Part 2

<sup>17</sup> CVIC Advocate Listening Session

<sup>18</sup> CVIC Survivor Listening Session

<sup>19</sup> See North Dakota Department of Health and Human Services, Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Round 4, Statewide Assessment (2024), page 24. Available at: <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/DHS%20Legacy/CFS/north-dakota-cfsr-rd%204-statewide-assessment.pdf>

NDDSVCS and its member programs need to consider ways to further create and implement strategies for gathering information directly from Native survivors. This input can then be reflected in Coalition's and member programs' decisions—with inclusive methods focusing on Native survivors. Best practices for inclusive means of gathering and incorporating information from Native survivors include formalizing these strategies into processes and logistical, political, funding, and programming decisions.

GRW also recommends the Coalition, and its programs increase Native survivor-centeredness—as both a priority and a practice. This requires continuous, ongoing communication and feedback loops, as well as a deeper commitment to revise and adapt strategies, methods, and decisions to reflect the needs of survivors, as told directly by survivors.

## **2. Build and nurture further collaboration across all programs, including tribally affiliated organizations.**

NDDSVCS, FNWA, and their respective member programs need to consider formalizing regular, ongoing communication, and identifying and implementing opportunities for further collaboration. Feedback from advocates throughout this Needs Assessment indicates their stated need for more connection and collaboration with tribal programs for survivors—see Appendix B. GRW acknowledges that barriers may exist that hinder effective collaboration between NDDSVCS, FNWA, and their respective member programs. At the same time, GRW encourages all involved to reflect on how their shared dedication to helping survivors unites them in principle, and how this unity in principle can carry forward to unite them in the practical decisions that affect Native survivors, directly and indirectly.

## **3. Strengthen services to meet Native survivors' needs for culturally responsive, trauma-informed care.**

Strengthening development of and adherence to trauma-informed, culturally responsive standards to assist Native survivors should be a priority for NDDSVCS, FNWA, and all their member programs. When survivors of domestic violence are in crisis and need help, they reach out to whatever program is nearest and easiest to access, wherever they are located throughout the state. Whatever domestic violence program they contact must be ready and prepared to provide the most effective services corresponding to each survivor's unique needs. While specialization among a portion of programs can be helpful, all programs throughout North Dakota, whether mainstream or tribally affiliated, should consider how to ensure culturally responsive and trauma-informed responses so that all Native survivors have equal access to services that meet their unique needs.

To make sure all domestic violence programs in North Dakota are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to provide culturally responsive services to Native survivors, GRW recommends connecting with training and technical assistance resources available nationally, a sampling of which is included in Appendix D: *Resources for*

## *Strengthening Understanding of Native American Cultures and Issues Critical to Native Communities.*

It is especially important for domestic violence advocates to learn about tribal jurisdiction and the interplay between tribal and non-tribal law enforcement to effectively advocate for enforcement of criminal laws protecting Native women. There are special tribal jurisdiction rules governing domestic violence offenses on tribal land; developments in recent years have changed the legal landscape significantly. The jurisdiction of law enforcement may depend on whether the victim and/or perpetrator are tribally enrolled, and/or whether the reported incident occurred on or off tribal land. Moreover, the overwhelming majority of men who perpetrate violent offenses against Native women are non-Native men, which may implicate legal issues of personal jurisdiction.<sup>20</sup>

#### **4. Build capacity to address the need for collaboration on efforts addressing child separation/removal.**

As context for GRW's focus on Native women's loss of their children, it is common for men who abuse their intimate partner to also abuse her children. This can result in intervention into the family by the CPS. In many states, for many decades, the CPS response to co-occurring domestic violence and child abuse includes allegations of abuse against victimized parents/caregivers under the legal concept of "failure to protect." Some CPS workers do order abused mothers to make certain the abuser moves out of the home, obtain a protection order, or perform other acts presumed to result in ending the abuse. This approach can fail to acknowledge the enormous lengths domestic violence victims have gone to in protecting their children's safety, can misdirect responsibility for abuse from offenders to victims, and can fail to ensure accountability for the persons actually committing harm.

Best practice in cases involving co-occurring domestic violence and child abuse requires that when children are targets of or directly endangered by acts of domestic violence, it is essential that child protection caseworkers connect with abused parents/caregivers to identify protective strategies they've taken and collaborate to enhance safety and see that basic needs of families are met. Whenever possible, best practice also means that efforts should be made to keep children safely in the care of parents/caregivers who are not the predominant violent aggressors in the family.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> According to a study published in 2010, of the estimated 1.5 million Native women who had experienced violence, 97 percent of the violence was committed by a non-Native perpetrator. See *Violence Against American Indian and Alaska Native Women and Men* (NIJ 2010), available at <https://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/violence-against-american-indian-and-alaska-native-women-and-men>.

<sup>21</sup> *Minnesota's Best Practice Guide for the Co-occurrence of Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence*, page 6, available at <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfserver/Public/DHS-3490-ENG>. Notably, the state agency responsible for overseeing North Dakota's provision of child protection services is aware of the connection between domestic violence and child safety, as its most recent Children and Family Services Review (CFSR) includes results of a statewide survey reporting that domestic violence services are ranked the third highest need for "services necessary to help children and families create a safe home environment." See North Dakota

Moreover, given the high rate of child removal in Native American families, effective best practice-based intervention in families experiencing co-occurring domestic violence and child maltreatment requires understanding of context. The history of colonization and oppression imposed on Native American needs to be considered when serving survivors. Prior to colonization by white Europeans, domestic violence was rare in Indigenous societies; to the contrary, the majority of Native peoples hold women as sacred, universally honored, and respected for their life-giving powers.<sup>22</sup> Historic domination and oppression of Native people increased both economic deprivation and dependency through retracting tribal rights and sovereignty. The boarding school era of Native experience created one of the most tragic chapters of loss in Native identity and left in its wake a legacy of domestic and sexual violence, alcoholism, displacement, and suicide that continues to affect tribal communities today.<sup>23</sup>

Consequently, a great number of Native American people today suffer from historical and intergenerational trauma, internalized oppression, and the normalization of violence forcefully imposed on their culture. As a result, when domestic violence occurs in Native families, best practices compel culturally responsive interventions that center cultural and traditional healing practices within families' tribal communities.

For Native American women experiencing domestic violence, one of the greater needs after ending an abusive relationship is rebuilding their sense of belonging, identity, and role within the community and tribe. Advocates can support this rebuilding by incorporating community-connectedness as a strategy in survivors' safety or case plans.<sup>24</sup>

This recommended goal relates to and is dependent on the second recommendation above (building collaborations with tribally affiliated programs) in that advocates' ability to help Native survivors connect or reconnect to their tribal community requires active, ongoing partnership among all domestic violence programs in the state, including both tribally affiliated and non-tribally affiliated programs. Of course, consistent with the principle of being survivor-centered, it is Native survivors' choice whether to connect to their tribal community.

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Department of Health and Human Services, Child and Family Services Review (CFSR) Round 4, Statewide Assessment (2024), pages 172-73, available at <https://www.hhs.nd.gov/sites/www/files/documents/DHS%20Legacy/CFS/north-dakota-cfsr-rd%204-statewide-assessment.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup> See Gunn Allen, P. (1992). *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*; "Honor our Voices: A guide for practice when responding to children exposed to domestic violence." Retrieved from: <http://www.honourourvoices.org/docs/GuideforPractice.pdf>, Apr. 26, 2021; Mending the Sacred Hoop, *Addressing Domestic Violence in Native Communities: Introductory Manual* (2003), retrieved from [www.msh-ta.org](http://www.msh-ta.org); Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center, "Hearing Their Voices Fact Sheets" (2018), retrieved from <https://www.miwrc.org/fact-sheets>.

<sup>23</sup> Minnesota's Best Practice Guide for the Co-occurrence of Child Maltreatment and Domestic Violence, available at <https://edocs.dhs.state.mn.us/lfsrver/Public/DHS-3490-ENG>, page 8.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

## **Closing**

To address the complex needs expressed by Native survivors and advocates in this Needs Assessment Annual Update, NDD SVC and its member programs need to pause and reflect on the origins of the battered women's movement, then trace those origins to current circumstances. Critics of the trend to professionalize advocacy for abused women argue that the battered women's movement has transformed from a social change movement rooted in feminist activism, to a service delivery system focused on individualized treatment and efficiency through criminalization of domestic violence and professionalization of advocacy work. They contend that domestic violence is now treated as an individual-level problem, with money provided for shelters, law enforcement, and intervention services, without confronting the socio-historical roots and causes of men's violence against women. These critics posit an alternative to this dominant trend, one that reframes domestic violence as the manifestation of patriarchy and male superiority, requiring confrontation of the systemic oppression that maintains the subjugation of women, and implementing strategies that unite women in active resistance to these systems.<sup>25</sup>

Whether one agrees with these claims, wholly or in part, or not, what became evident throughout this Annual Update project was the need for stronger connections between Native women survivors and the domestic violence programs that exist to help them. Common themes clearly emerged from Native survivors' stories, complex themes of dehumanizing racism, devastating loss of children, brutal and multi-faceted trauma.

Being survivor-centered means listening to and amplifying the voices of marginalized women and acting on their expressed needs. GRW recommends that NDD SVC and all programs within it further consider these complicated issues, reflect, routinely listen to survivors, and let their needs direct the next steps to be taken.

GRW knows from the experience of this project—and from the stories told by the courageous survivors who spoke up in listening sessions-- that there is need to strengthen advocates' understanding of Native American cultures, as well as the laws that govern Native people and communities. GRW encourages focus on both tribal jurisdiction and the CPS processes regarding co-occurring domestic violence and child abuse. Resources for training and technical assistance on both issues are included in Appendix D. When domestic violence program staff are trained and fluent in matters of tribal jurisdiction and CPS processes, they will be more empowered to advocate effectively on behalf of Native survivors who need their help.

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<sup>25</sup> See Mehrotra, G. R., Kimball, E., & Wahab, S. (2016). "The Braid That Binds Us: The Impact of Neoliberalism, Criminalization, and Professionalization on Domestic Violence Work." *Affilia*, 31(2), 153-163.

## Appendix A

### **Questions for Listening Sessions with Native Survivors**

April 2024

*The following questions varied according to the number of survivors who participated in the sessions and the responses they provided when answering the questions.*

#### **Introductions and Purpose**

- Confidentiality
- Informed Consent
- Self-care and support

#### **Questions**

1. Could you tell us a bit about the experiences that led you to seek services or get connected to the [name of the local program]?
2. Thinking about that experience, were there other agencies or organizations that got involved or that you went to for some kind of help? If yes, who were those organizations?
3. Have you sought support or services from your tribe or services on the reservation? If so, can you share your experience?
4. What kinds of services would have been most helpful to you then? Did you find those services? From which organizations?
5. Did any agency refer or connect you to another resource? Did anyone try to get you in touch with tribal services? What worked or did not work about that?
6. Of the services you did receive, which ones increased your safety or made some things better? Which ones decreased your safety or made some things worse?
7. Were there any cultural practices or traditions within your family, community, or tribe that provided support during your experience?
8. What kinds of cultural practices do you wish that organizations outside of your tribe could provide?
9. Who or what else has been an important support for you during your experience?
10. Who and what else do you feel should've provided support but failed to? What do you think were the reasons behind that?
11. Is there anything else you would like us to know?

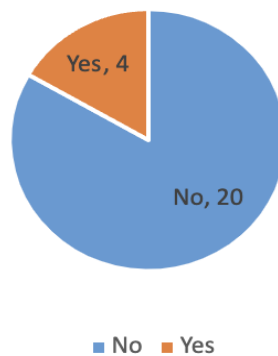
## Appendix B

### ***Results of Survey of Advocates and Staff of CAWS ND Member Programs on Culturally Responsive Services***

March 2024

1. Are you a person who identifies as Native American or American Indian, either as an enrolled member of a tribal nation or not?

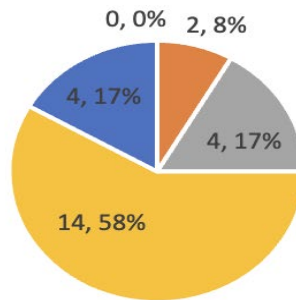
Are you a person who identifies as Native American or American Indian, either as an enrolled member of a tribal nation or not?



Demographic Information:

Out of the 24 respondents, four advocates identified as Native American or American Indian, or as an enrolled member of a tribal nation.

2. How long have you worked as an advocate and/or been working within the movement to end domestic and sexual violence?



- None that I can recall
- General information about diversity, discrimination, or a similar topic
- A few trainings about diversity, discrimination, or a similar topic
- Multiple/many trainings on many different aspects of diversity, equity, inclusion, or similar topics
- Comprehensive and ongoing training on many aspects of diversity, equity, inclusion, or similar topics related to intercultural adaptation

The survey respondents' experience in the field of domestic violence advocacy varied, providing a broad spectrum of perspectives:

- Less than 1 year: 2 advocates
- 2 to 3 years: 5 advocates
- 4 to 6 years: 5 advocates
- 7 to 10 years: 5 advocates
- 11 to 15 years: 2 advocates
- More than 15 years: 5 advocates

This distribution indicates a mix of both new and experienced advocates.

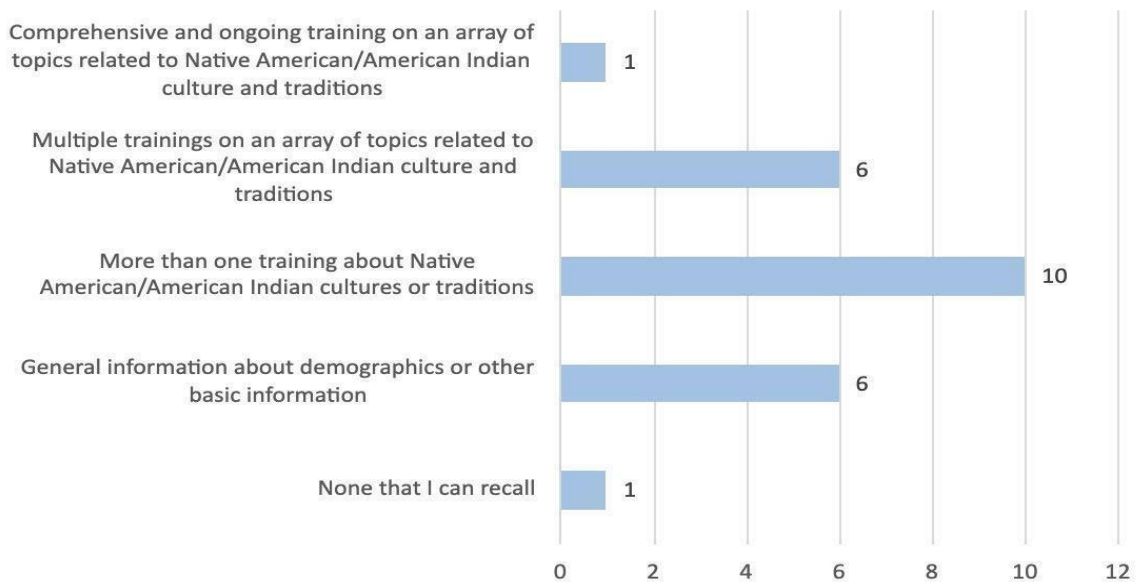
3. What level of training has your program/organization provided you about working with people from cultures that are different from your own culture?



All advocates who participated in the survey indicated that they have experienced training provided by their programs about working with people from cultures that are different from their own culture. Fourteen advocates, accounting for 58% of the received responses, have experience receiving multiple/many trainings on several distinct aspects of diversity, equity, inclusion, or related topics. This is a positive sign that a large number of advocates are well-versed in DEI topics, although the need for more specific and practical training is evident from other responses.

The responses also show that two advocates have experienced general level training are; four experienced a few training sessions, and four others experienced a more comprehensive level of training. This variety in training experience suggests that while most advocates are well-versed in DEI topics, there is room for improvement in providing consistent and advanced training opportunities for all staff members.

4. What level of training has your program/organization provided you about Native American or American Indian cultures and traditions?

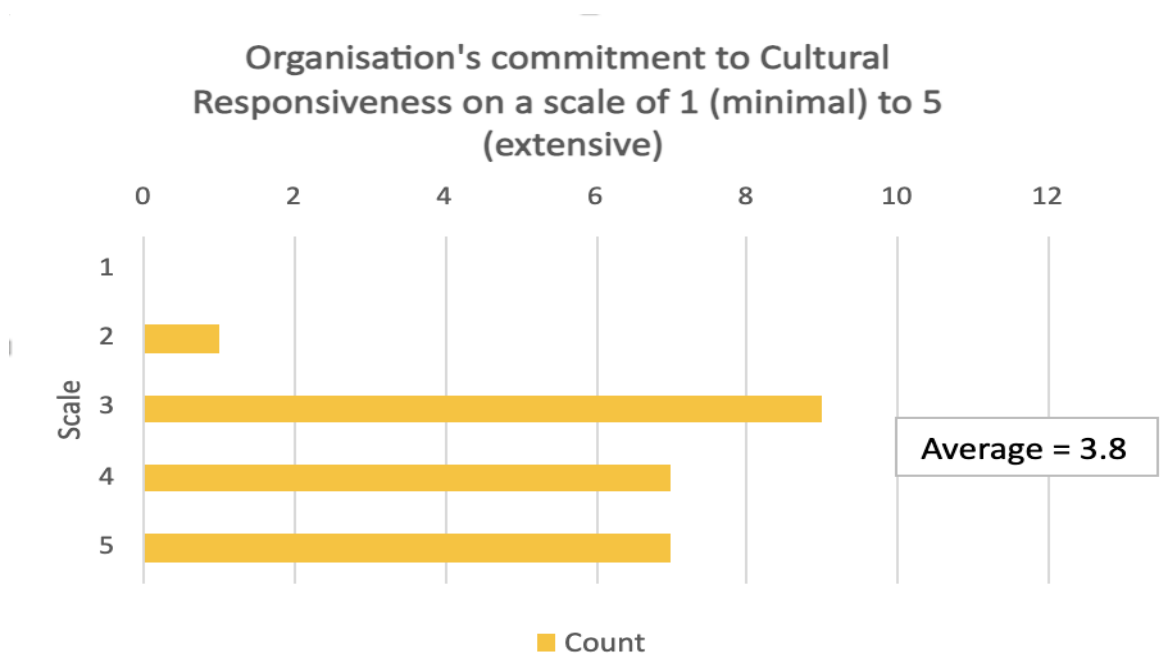


In terms of training about Native American or American Indian cultures and traditions, 10 advocates indicated that they have received more than one training about Native American/American Indian cultures or traditions. Six advocates have experience receiving multiple pieces of training on an array of topics related, and one advocate has had more comprehensive and ongoing training experiences. These three groups of responses account for 17 advocates, showing that over 70% of the total advocates

who participated are equipped with knowledge of Native American or American Indian cultures and traditions, with repeated training advancing their access to the topic. Six advocates also indicated that they have received general-level training about Native American or American Indian cultures and traditions. And one advocate doesn't have experience with participating in such training at all.

The high percentage of advocates trained in Native American/American Indian cultures suggests a significant organizational effort to equip staff with the necessary cultural knowledge, although the presence of advocates with only general or no training indicates an opportunity to standardize and expand these educational efforts.

5. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being minimal and 5 being extensive, how would you rate your organization's commitment to cultural responsiveness?



When evaluating their organizations' commitment to cultural responsiveness on a scale from 1 to 5:

- 9 advocates rated their organizations a 3, the most common rating.
- 7 advocates rated their organizations a 4.
- 7 advocates rated their organizations a 5.
- Only 1 advocate rated their organization a 2.

This distribution shows that most advocates perceive their organizations as moderately to highly committed to cultural responsiveness, with a mean score of 3.8, and most ratings falling between 3 and 5. The lone advocate who rated their organization a 2 has over 15 years of experience in the movement and feels only somewhat but minimally able to meet the cultural needs of Native American/American Indian survivors. This suggests that despite overall positive ratings, there may still be gaps in cultural responsiveness, particularly in organizations where experienced advocates feel their needs for further cultural competence training and organizational support are not fully met.

6. Please describe a specific example that demonstrates the organization's commitment to cultural diversity and responsiveness:

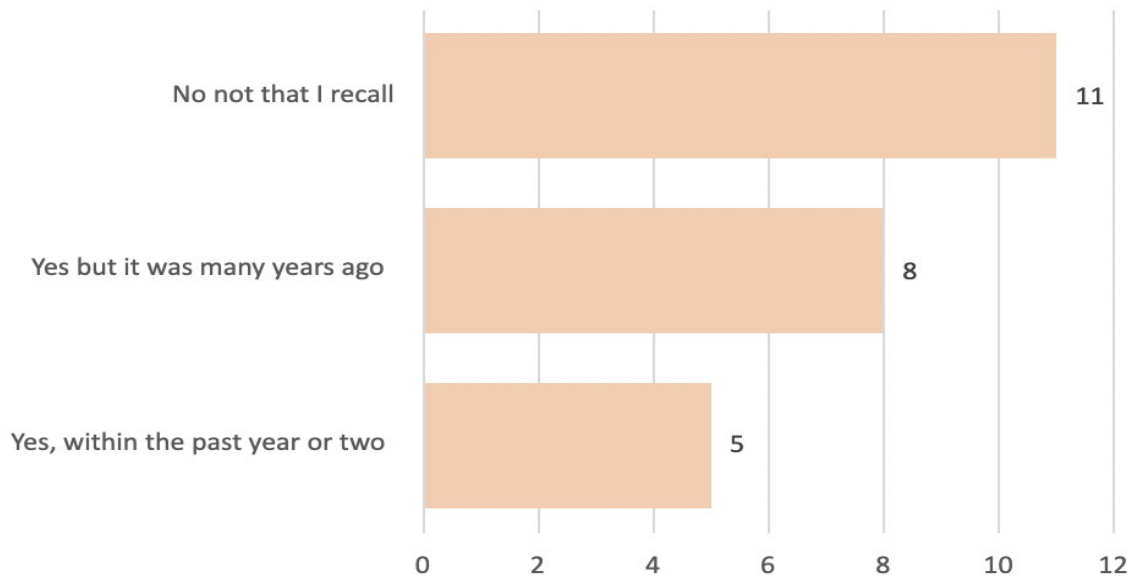
Answers:
<i>Policy language</i>
<i>Working with Native organizations</i>
<i>Having a rural office for clients that are in rural parts of ND/SD.</i>
<i>Taking time and resources to develop a DEIA Statement and progress tangible goals of the DEIA committee.</i>
<i>We now have a DEIA committee which provides our staff with training and resources to encourage and expand our knowledge and responsiveness.</i>
<i>DEIA training is a program dedicated to educating on differing and various cultures.</i>
<i>We have a DEIA committee that tries to ensure that we have adequate and diverse training and speakers that come to our agency.</i>
<i>We have created a DEIA committee that brings monthly training, agency wide updates, as well as hired a service provider to assist in advancing and guiding our DEIA efforts.</i>
<i>We have a DEIA committee which discusses opportunities for community involvement. With the DEIAC, we have also been give cultural competence</i>
<i>DEIA Committee updating articles for ongoing self-education and the DEIA book club</i>
<i>We have a DEIA Committee, and they/we do quite a few trainings on equality</i>
<i>DEIA work</i>
<i>We strive to work with people where they are.</i>
<i>Smudging</i>
<i>[Program name] is working on putting together a coordinated community response team with other agencies that provide services to survivors.</i>
<i>We have on our pamphlets and all of our handout we serve all people, and we are open to anyone</i>
<i>We provide medicine bags, healing work, and drum sessions.</i>
<i>[Program name] is now holding a support group specific for Indigenous Women</i>

<i>We host regular training on working with multiple underserved populations, as well as attempting to maintain contact with many of our community partners directly servicing these populations. We work hard to maintain helpful, collaborative relationships, and not step on toes while still empowering them to do the best work we can with our power and influence in the community.</i>
<i>smudging kits</i>
<i>Smudging, cultural spirituality sensitivity,</i>
<i>We accept Sexual Assaults and Domestic Violence survivors from counties that we do not typically serve.</i>
<i>Hopen to learn more</i>

Responses reveal various initiatives that organizations have implemented to demonstrate their commitment to cultural diversity and responsiveness. Here are the most frequently mentioned efforts by the advocates:

- DEIA Committees and Efforts (11 responses):
  - *Creation of DEIA committees to guide and implement diversity initiatives.*
  - *Development of DEIA statements and setting tangible goals.*
  - *Providing staff with regular DEIA training and resources.*
  - *Hosting monthly training and agency-wide updates.*
- Training and Education (10 responses):
  - *Regular training on cultural diversity and sensitivity.*
  - *Encouraging self-education through book clubs and updated articles.*
  - *Bringing in diverse speakers and trainers to enhance staff knowledge.*
- Cultural Practices and Sensitivity (6 responses):
  - *Incorporating cultural practices such as smudging, medicine bags, and drum sessions.*
  - *Holding support groups specifically for Indigenous women.*
  - *Promoting cultural spirituality sensitivity.*
- Collaboration with Native Organizations (2 responses):
  - *Working directly with Native organizations to support cultural needs.*
- Accessibility Efforts (1 response):
  - *Establishing rural offices to ensure services are accessible to geographically isolated clients.*

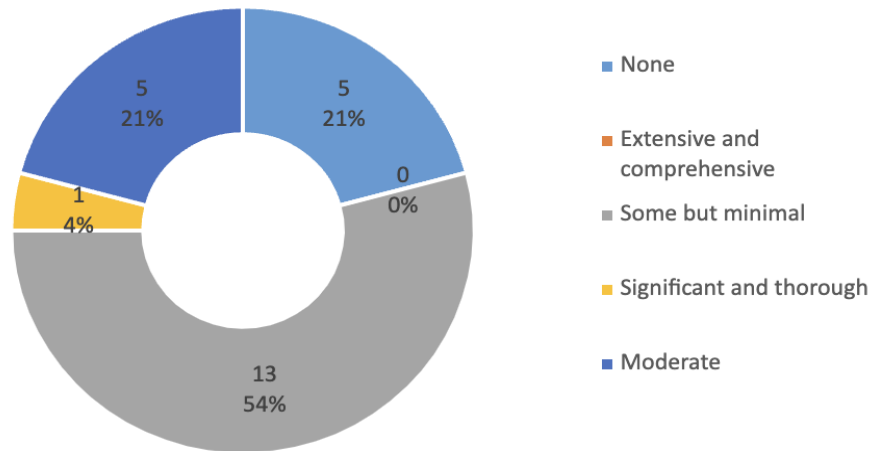
7. Have you ever received training on the laws and rules governing tribal jurisdiction?



The data reveals a significant gap in training related to tribal jurisdiction laws and rules among advocates. Eleven advocates answered that they have no experience participating in training on the laws and rules governing tribal jurisdiction. Over one-third of these advocates are those with more than seven years of experience working in the field, and two of them are new in the work with fewer than one year of experience. This shows that training on the laws and rules governing tribal jurisdiction is a missing piece for advocates onboarding the work and was deficient in various organizations' long-term efforts of serving native survivors.

Additionally, eight advocates who reported having received training on tribal jurisdiction laws noted that this training occurred several years ago, with seven of these individuals having over seven years of experience. This suggests that even experienced advocates may lack up-to-date knowledge in this area. Only five advocates have had recent training (within the past year or two), underscoring a need for more current and regular training sessions on tribal jurisdiction laws to ensure advocates are well-equipped to serve Native American/American Indian survivors effectively.

8. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being none and 5 being extensive, how would you rate your understanding of the laws and rules governing tribal jurisdiction?



The self-assessment of understanding the laws and rules governing tribal jurisdiction mirrors the lack of training reported. Five advocates rated their understanding as nonexistent, while thirteen rated it as minimal. Together, these groups constitute 75% of the total responses, indicating a widespread lack of confidence and knowledge in this critical area.

Moreover, over 90% of those who have never participated in such training fall into these two groups, reinforcing the direct correlation between lack of training and limited understanding. Only five advocates consider their understanding to be moderate, and just one feels thoroughly knowledgeable about tribal jurisdiction laws and rules. This disparity highlights a need for targeted and ongoing training programs to bridge the knowledge gap and enhance the capacity of advocates to navigate the complexities of tribal jurisdiction effectively.

9. What culturally specific services does your organization offer for survivors who are Native American/American Indian?

Answers:
<i>The same services we provide to everyone would be offered to Native American but none specific.</i>
<i>referrals and working with BIA</i>

N/A
Unsure/None?
At our shelter clients have been provided resources, such as sage for smudging.
Nothing that I'm aware of that is specific for Native American survivors.
We will try to help the client get in touch with their tribe if they are seeking tribal resources.
we've done trainings on talking circles, and offer smudge supplies
I can't think of anything culturally specific
at shelter we have the shells and grass for smudging as needed for clients
I'm not sure specifically.
Non specific but ultimately utilize a culturally sensitive approach to advocacy and services
None
We will try to accommodate anything they ask for within reason
Unsure if what is provided would be considered culturally specific
They would be served as any other victims and they would be asked what other specific services they may need
collaborations with Native Inc. to provide community and cultural fellowship for Native American clients
A new support group for indigenous women specifically.
We currently are trialing an Indigenous Women's Support Group for Indigenous survivors. We also provide medicine bags for Indigenous clientele who are looking for that.
smudging
Tiwahe Program referral, Smudging items, Sage, shell,
smudge kits, sweats, prayer
We have referrals, sage boxes

The responses to the question about culturally specific services for Native American/American Indian survivors reveal varying levels of cultural responsiveness and specific service offerings among organizations.

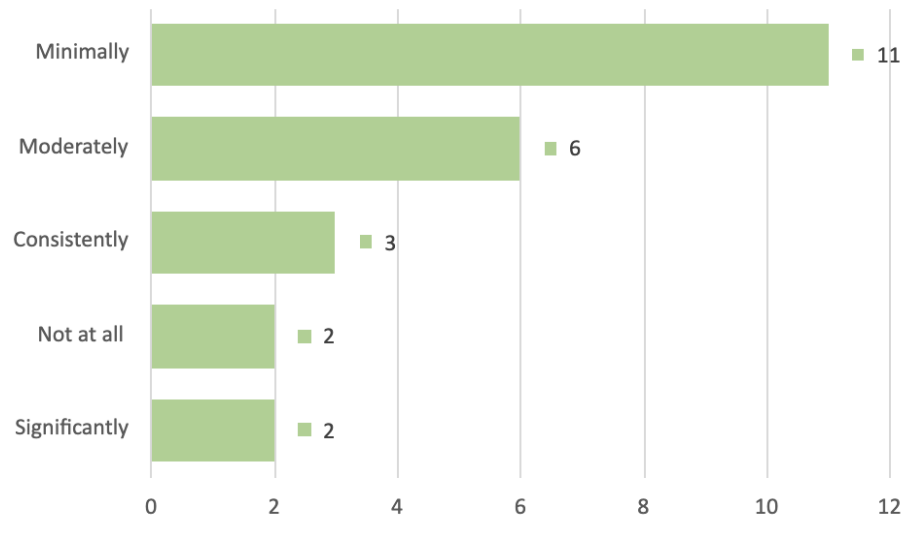
- General Services Provided:
  - Six respondents indicated that their organizations offer the same services to Native American survivors as they do to all clients, without any culturally specific adaptations. This approach suggests a general framework of support that may lack tailored cultural sensitivity.

- Referrals and Collaborations:
  - Five respondents highlighted that their organizations make referrals to tribal resources or collaborate with Native organizations. This approach demonstrates an awareness of the importance of connecting Native American survivors with culturally appropriate support systems, leveraging external expertise to enhance service delivery.
- Cultural Practices and Supplies:
  - Seven respondents mentioned providing culturally specific supplies and supporting cultural practices such as smudging. This includes offering sage, smudge kits, shells, and other items that are significant in Native American cultural practices. These efforts reflect an understanding of and respect for the cultural needs of Native American survivors, integrating traditional healing practices into the support services.
- New Initiatives:
  - A few organizations are taking steps to introduce new culturally specific services. For example, they have initiated support groups specifically for Indigenous women and are providing medicine bags for those who seek them. These initiatives indicate a proactive approach to addressing the unique needs of Native American survivors.
- Uncertainty and Lack of Specific Services:
  - Several respondents expressed uncertainty about whether their organizations offer culturally specific services or admitted that there are none in place. This highlights a gap in culturally tailored support, suggesting a need for more focused efforts to understand and meet the needs of Native American survivors.

Overall, while some organizations have made significant strides in providing culturally specific services, others still rely on general approaches that may not fully address the unique needs of Native American survivors. The responses indicate a mix of awareness, proactive measures, and areas for improvement in culturally responsive service delivery.

10. To what extent does your program collaborate with tribal domestic violence programs and/or other tribal programs?



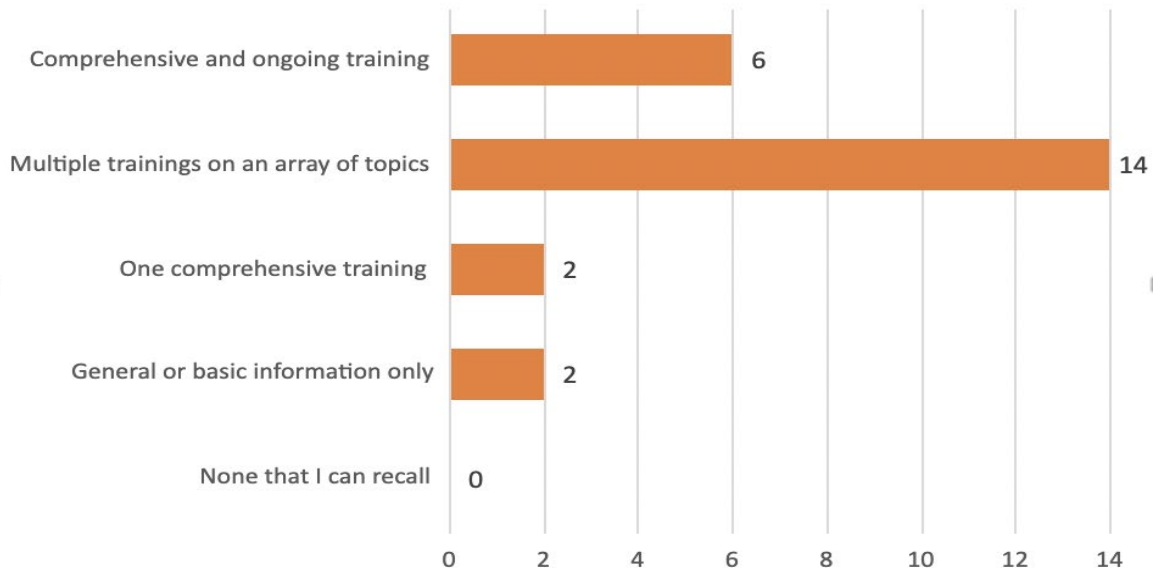


The responses indicate a generally low level of collaboration between non-tribal advocate programs and tribal domestic violence or other tribal programs.

Two advocates reported no collaboration at all, while eleven stated their collaborations were minimal, collectively making up 54% of the responses. This lack of collaboration can be a barrier to providing culturally competent and effective services to Native American/American Indian survivors. Six advocates reported moderate collaboration, suggesting a level of engagement, but not enough to be deemed substantial. Only three advocates claimed consistent collaboration and just two described their organizations as having significant partnerships with tribal programs.

These findings highlight an area for improvement, emphasizing the need for stronger partnerships and more integrated approaches to better support Native American/American Indian survivors.

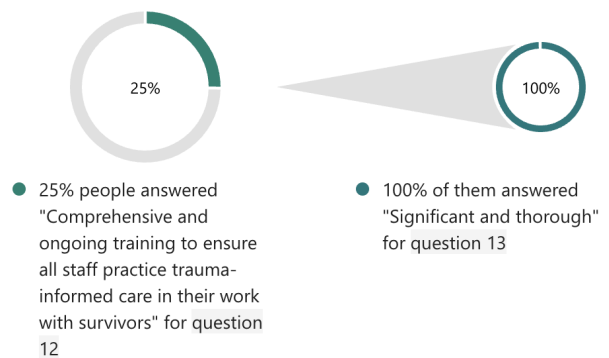
11. What level of training has your program/organization provided you about trauma, trauma-informed care, and/or how trauma impacts the brain and behavior of survivors?



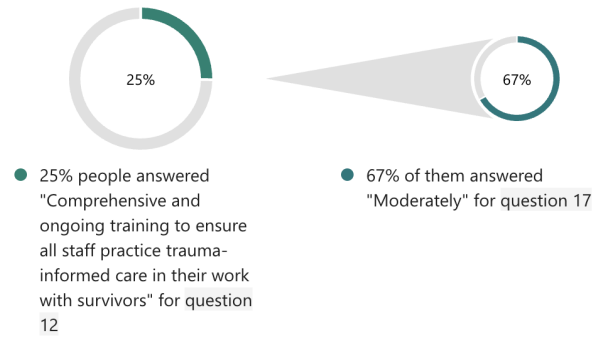
The data shows that a substantial number of advocates (14) have received multiple training on trauma and trauma-informed care. Six advocates have undergone comprehensive and ongoing training, representing 25% of the total responses. All advocates in these categories feel they have a significant understanding of how trauma affects survivors' brains and behaviors. However, only 67% of these well-trained advocates feel moderately capable of meeting the cultural needs of Native American/American Indian survivors. Interestingly, 85% of the advocates with extensive trauma-informed training have fewer than three years of experience, indicating that newer advocates may be receiving more comprehensive training. Conversely, the two advocates who have only received general or single comprehensive training tend to be more experienced, with over 15 years in the field, suggesting a potential gap in ongoing professional development for long-term advocates.

**Relationship with Q13:**

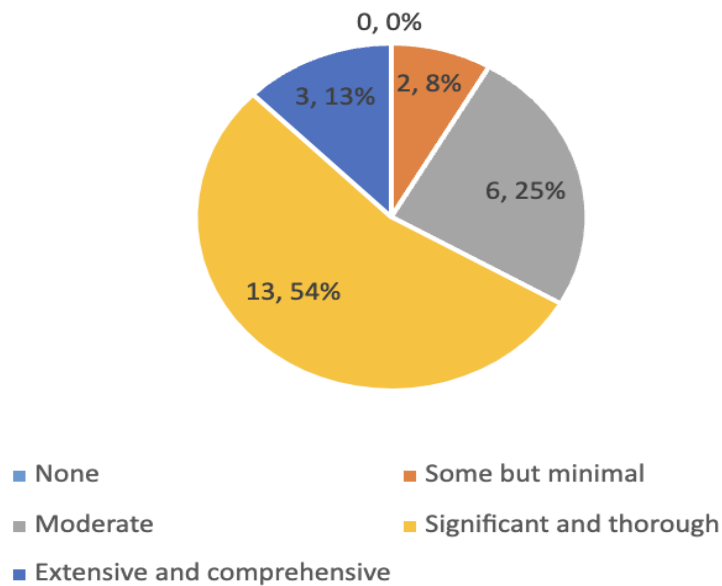
On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being none and 5 being extensive, how would you rate your understanding of how trauma affects survivors' brains and behaviors?



Relationship with Q17:  
 How confident are you that you are able to meet the cultural needs of survivors who are Native American/American Indian?



12. On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being none and 5 being extensive, how would you rate your understanding of how trauma affects survivors' brains and behaviors?



Thirteen advocates believe they have a significant and thorough understanding of how trauma affects survivors' brains and behaviors, making up over 50% of the responses. Three advocates indicated an extensive and comprehensive understanding, while six described their understanding as moderate. Notably, 67% of those with moderate understanding have over 11 years of experience, implying that experience does not always equate to comprehensive knowledge in trauma-

informed care. Only two advocates rated their understanding as somewhat minimal. This highlights that while a majority feel confident in their trauma-informed knowledge, there remains a notable proportion of experienced advocates who may benefit from further training and education in this area.

13. Please describe a specific example that demonstrates your organization's commitment to using trauma-informed care in working with survivors.

Answers:
<i>Quarterly training on trauma informed care.</i>
<i>Safety planning, empowerment, emotional support</i>
<i>Counseling referrals, support group</i>
<i>Empowering survivors to make their own choices on how to move forward and what they want to do. Just supporting them however we can in that process.</i>
<i>Training in evidence-based treatments such as EMDR, CPT, TF-CBT, PIT, and others.</i>
<i>All providers are expected to have become trained and/or certified in Trauma informed care.</i>
<i>When responding to a SA we use a SART response by having advocates, law enforcement, and SANEs present to reduce the amount of time the survivor has to explain what happened.</i>
<i>Continuous referrals to trainings and webinar, yearly evaluation of policies and procedures</i>
<i>I had a client who was going to school here and it was their first time away from home and their tribe for an extended period of time. She was feeling so alone and isolated. When she was victimized, it made everything so much harder. While we were identifying supporters, I got her in contact with a woman from Fargo from Youth Works who is also Native American. The social worker offers many cultural specific events like sweat lodges and beading. Both are things that I couldn't provide but I still wanted her to have the option of using those services. More locally to campus, I also connected her with various professors who are Native American who could act as mentors to the client.</i>
<i>Asking the client their needs and continuing the conversations about being client centered as an advocate. These are discussions we have with our advocacy team on the regular. Not necessarily formal training</i>
<i>Not sure</i>
<i>We try to utilize a trauma informed lens when working with clients</i>
<i>We work with people where they are and let them guide us so that we can help them get to where they want to be.</i>
<i>We meet the client where they are at and let them lead to where they want to go.</i>
<i>Currently scrubbing all agency policy/procedures to ensure services provided are</i>

<i>trauma-informed.</i>
<i>It is on a case by case according to the needs</i>
<i>Using appropriate language</i>
<i>Not holding policies preventing clients from seeking services for no showing or canceling appointments. We know our client's are in unsafe situations much of the time and their schedule might change rapidly. We work toward self sufficiency and consistency while also providing space for changes.</i>
<i>We work hard on understanding the impacts of trauma on the brain's alert centers, and work to understand the fight, flight, freeze, and fawn responses, while providing varying levels of psychoeducation to clients on these topics. We have a wide selection of trauma informed resources such as handouts, art therapy, and holistic practices to assist clients at varying levels of trauma. We dedicate ourselves entirely to trauma informed, culturally sensitive work. We also have several therapists who are certified in EMDR.</i>
<i>Questions we ask</i>
<i>Boarding school survivors, sexual assault, abuse counseling</i>
<i>We keep historical trauma in mind for victims and offenders.</i>
<i>Counseling</i>

The following are the key themes mentioned by advocates:

- Training and Certification in Trauma-Informed Care (seven mentions)
  - *Quarterly training on trauma-informed care.*
  - *Training in evidence-based treatments such as EMDR, CPT, TF-CBT, PIT, etc.*
  - *All providers are expected to have become trained and/or certified in trauma-informed care.*
  - *Continuous referrals to training and webinars.*
  - *Yearly evaluation of policies and procedures.*
  - *Regular discussions about being client-centered with the advocacy team.*
  - *Certified therapists in EMDR.*
- Empowerment and Client-Centered Approach (five mentions)
  - *Empowering survivors to make their own choices.*
  - *Asking the client their needs and continuing conversations about being client-centered.*
  - *Letting clients guide the process.*
  - *Meeting clients where they are and letting them lead.*
  - *Providing space for changes in client schedules.*
- Support Services and Resources (five mentions)
  - *Counseling referrals and support groups.*
  - *Connecting clients with culturally specific events and mentors.*

- *Providing a wide selection of trauma-informed resources like handouts, art therapy, and holistic practices.*
- *Boarding school survivors, sexual assault, and abuse counseling.*
- *Counseling.*
- **Policy and Procedure Adjustments (three mentions)**
  - *Scrubbing all agency policies/procedures to ensure services are trauma-informed.*
  - *Not holding policies preventing clients from seeking services for no-shows or cancellations.*
  - *Understanding the impacts of trauma on the brain's alert centers and working on related policies.*
- **Multidisciplinary Approach (one mention)**
  - *Using a SART response by involving advocates, law enforcement, and SANEs to reduce the number of times survivors have to explain their trauma.*
- **Holistic and Psychoeducation Practices (1 mention)**
  - *Providing varying levels of psychoeducation and understanding trauma responses like fight, flight, freeze, and fawn.*
- **Cultural Sensitivity (1 mention)**
  - *Keeping historical trauma in mind for victims and offenders.*

14. What do you believe are the most significant barriers to safety and justice faced by survivors who are Native American/American Indian?

Answers:
<i>Housing</i>
<i>Feeling safe enough to Communicate and tell their story of the abuse (being believed), for Justice to be served, abuser's run and hide on the reservations, families get involved in abusing/threatening the victim (backlash from the small community) and justice not being served and the abuser runs free or does it to another victim.</i>
<i>Transportation, advocacy, funding, shelter</i>
<i>Systemic barriers with the judicial system and child protective system.</i>
<i>The history of injustice toward Native American/American Indian people in the United States and the continued discrimination in society today, cause many to fear reaching out to programs that might be able to help.</i>
<i>Misunderstanding or lack of understanding of how historical events affect current life choices and circumstances regarding American Indians</i>
<i>Working within and outside of their tribe and having to navigate the different laws and processes between the two.</i>

<i>Racism, conflicts of interest in the CJS</i>
<i>Multiple layers of trauma. With each of my clients who are Native American, they all have a very complex history of trauma, discrimination, and oppression which greatly impacts how I approach services as a provider.</i>
<i>Trust. Consistency. Financial. Safety.</i>
<i>Have care that is close to them, especially in the rural areas.</i>
<i>Systems distrust</i>
<i>Tribal laws vs state laws</i>
<i>Money</i>
<i>Nepotism in the tribal systems on the reservation leaves survivors perceiving their inability for self-determination</i>
<i>We are not near any reservations and serve none to very few Native Americans</i>
<i>Lack of safe housing, lack of resources for those 1st and 2nd hand affected by substance use disorders, cultural oppression</i>
<i>A lack of understanding of the extensive generational trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples by the service providers they seek to work with. The extensive lack of trust the service providers have created between them and the Indigenous communities.</i>
<i>The systematic racism woven throughout all of our entities of power. I regularly attend jail groups and am shocked to see the consistent slant in Indigenous survivors who are attending my group, despite the fact they make up little over 1% of Fargo's population. While these could speak to the higher rates at which Indigenous survivors are affected by IPV, it also could read as law enforcement over arresting these populations. I often work with Indigenous survivors who speak of overt and covert racism within our legal systems, who know from the start that it is not worth reporting things, as they believe their case will not find justice. Clients have also vocalized they do not feel safe coming to the [program name]. While we work hard to be an accepting, and culturally competent environment, it's clear clientele still do not feel safe with us, and we stand as another powerful entity who may treat them poorly.</i>
<i>Family disconnect, housing, offenders arrested and prosecuted, offenders family threatening, employment, daycare, transportation</i>
<i>Transportation to safety, safe emergency housing, continued care afterwards.</i>
<i>Everyone knows everyone and their business-relatives and tribal gossiping. Also, the use of drugs and alcohol</i>
<i>Knowing where to get help</i>



The following are the key themes mentioned by the advocates:

- Systemic and Judicial Barriers (seven mentions)
  - *Systemic barriers with the judicial system and child protective system.*
  - *Racism and conflicts of interest in the criminal justice system.*
  - *Tribal laws vs state laws.*
  - *Systematic racism in entities of power.*
  - *Navigating different laws and processes between tribes and external systems.*
  - *Nepotism in tribal systems.*
  - *Over-policing and discriminatory legal practices.*
- Historical and Cultural Issues (six mentions)
  - *The history of injustice and continued discrimination causing fear of reaching out.*
  - *Misunderstanding or lack of understanding of historical events affecting current circumstances.*
  - *Generational trauma.*
  - *Cultural oppression.*
  - *Lack of trust between Indigenous communities and service providers.*
  - *Family disconnect and cultural gossiping.*
- Safety and Trust Concerns (six mentions)
  - *Feeling safe enough to communicate and tell their story.*
  - *Systems distrust.*
  - *Safety concerns and threats from abusers and their families.*
  - *Trust and consistency issues with service providers.*
  - *Survivors not feeling safe with certain crisis centers.*
  - *Backlash and threats from small community dynamics.*
- Housing and Shelter (five mentions)
  - *Lack of safe housing.*
  - *Emergency housing and continued care.*
  - *Housing is a significant barrier.*



- *Safe emergency housing in rural areas.*
- *Lack of resources for those affected by substance use disorders.*
- **Transportation and Accessibility (four mentions)**
  - *Transportation barriers.*
  - *Transportation to safety and continued care.*
  - *Accessibility of care in rural areas.*
  - *Knowing where to get help.*
- **Financial and Resource Constraints (three mentions)**
  - *Financial barriers.*
  - *Funding issues for advocacy and shelter.*
  - *Employment and daycare challenges.*
- **Multiple Layers of Trauma (two mentions)**
  - *Complex histories of trauma, discrimination, and oppression.*
  - *Multiple layers of trauma impacting service provision.*

15. What suggestions do you have for how to overcome those barriers?

Answers:
<i>I wish I did</i>
<i>More education and safe places for them to go</i>
<i>Funding</i>
<i>Thoroughly explaining the system to survivors and what barriers they might face and talking together how we can minimize or overcome those barriers.</i>
<i>Increased involvement with tribal domestic violence programs or other tribal programs.</i>
<i>Training related to local American Indian cultures: training to include laws, history, and current events.</i>
<i>Try to develop a relationship with tribal resources who can work with your agency and the client to help navigate through the process.</i>
<i>I will have to think on this</i>
<i>A DV/SA agency on tribal lands with culturally specific programs to better serve clients. Then with this program, maybe there could be satellite offices housed with other DV programs in areas where there are Native populations living off the reservation. Also, I would love to see more community based programming for Native Americans in Grand Forks. Many of my clients are here for school and identify feeling so isolated being away from their family, social connections, and their tribe. Having something built up and established to enhance the community would be greatly beneficial for our work because then they will have more social support in place for when the unthinkable happens.</i>
<i>Creating a space where all will feel safe to come for help. Continuing conversations with</i>

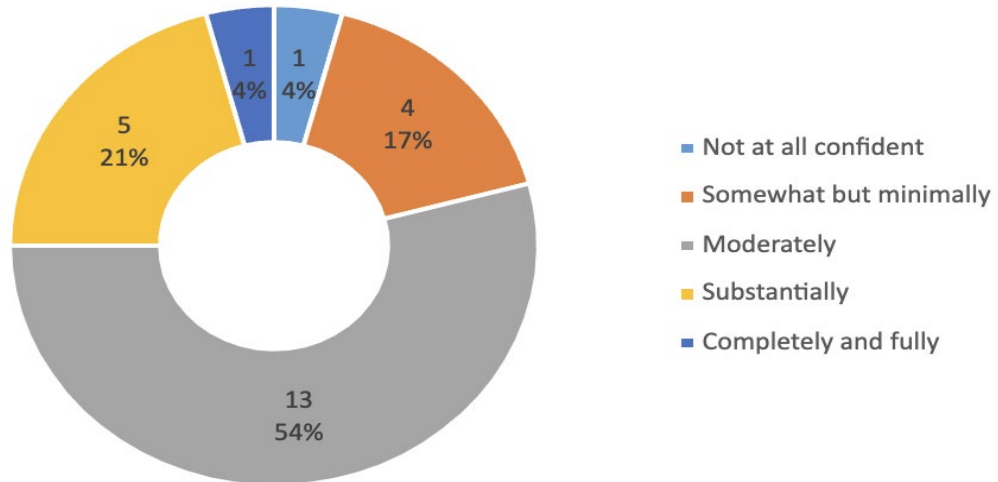
<i>first responders to also provide client centered language and behavior. Having a financial baseline and entity that understands the long term financial need that survivors must have to be successful. Consistent programs for all backgrounds to be equitable and accessible. More attention on working with Tribal resources and not as a side conversation.</i>
<i>Not sure</i>
<i>Continue outreach and working on culturally sensitive advocacy</i>
<i>I don't know how these barriers can be overcome</i>
<i>Do not have an answer</i>
<i>Providing empowerment to the survivor, but no system strategies.</i>
<i>I think the best policy for serving any victim is to ask them what they believe they need</i>
<i>Strong leaders for kids to look up to and more awareness of the issues along with funding</i>
<i>For service providers to further their education on generational trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples.</i>
<i>Radical change in our community response to working with survivors. We need to take an anti-capitalist, anti-colonialist approach, and understand that we are just as much of the problem as our systems we work with are. We need to learn to engage in safe cultural boundary crossing with clients and understand how violence affects Indigenous populations differently than our white clientele. We also need to acknowledge our personal biases and check ourselves when we are being prejudiced towards these populations. [Program Name] should push for policy that works to increase funding to agencies for more culturally aware services, and work to train Judges, courts, law enforcement, hospitals, jails and governments on the impacts of violence on Indigenous peoples.</i>
<i>[Program Name] Shelter</i>
<i>To do a MOU with Spirit Lake Tribe and Turtle Mountain Tribe to aid all survivors</i>
<i>Teaching children more of their culture and giving opportunities to children who are seeing and being abused alternative ways of healthy relationships and by having a CPS system that is willing to step up and get help for the family.</i>
<i>Learn more, more training</i>

Here are the key themes mentioned by the advocates:

- Education and Training (seven mentions)
  - *Training related to local American Indian cultures, including laws, history, and current events.*
  - *Education on generational trauma experienced by Indigenous peoples.*
  - *More training for service providers to be culturally sensitive.*
  - *Continuous outreach and culturally sensitive advocacy.*

- *Learning more about cultural issues and providing more training.*
- *Providing education to children on their culture and healthy relationships.*
- *Creating spaces for safe cultural boundary crossing.*
- Collaboration with Tribal Resources (six mentions)
  - *Increased involvement with tribal domestic violence programs or other tribal programs.*
  - *Developing relationships with tribal resources to navigate processes.*
  - *Working with tribal resources as a main focus, not a side conversation.*
  - *MOU (Memorandum of Understanding) with specific tribes to aid all survivors.*
  - *Working with tribal resources to ensure consistent and equitable programs.*
  - *A DV/SA agency on tribal lands with culturally specific programs.*
- Safe and Accessible Spaces (four mentions)
  - *Creating spaces where all feel safe to seek help.*
  - *Developing safe places for survivors to go.*
  - *Consistent programs that are accessible to all backgrounds.*
  - *Establishing community-based programs to reduce isolation for those away from their tribes.*
- Funding and Financial Support (four mentions)
  - *Increased funding for culturally aware services.*
  - *Funding to aid survivors long-term.*
  - *Financial baseline for survivors to ensure success.*
  - *Increased funding for agencies to provide more culturally aware services.*
- Community and Systemic Change (four mentions)
  - *Radical change in community response to working with survivors.*
  - *Anti-capitalist, anti-colonialist approach to understand violence's impact on Indigenous populations.*
  - *Pushing for policy changes to increase funding and train key entities on the impacts of violence on Indigenous peoples.*
  - *Raising awareness and providing strong role models for children.*
- Communication and Empowerment (three mentions)
  - *Thoroughly explaining the system to survivors and discussing ways to minimize or overcome barriers.*
  - *Providing empowerment to the survivor without focusing solely on system strategies.*
  - *Asking survivors what they need and tailoring support to their responses.*
- Creating Specific Programs and Resources (two mentions)
  - *Establishing a DV/SA agency on tribal lands with culturally specific programs.*
  - *[Program Name] Shelter as a potential resource.*

16. How confident are you that you are able to meet the cultural needs of survivors who are Native American/American Indian?



Thirteen advocates consider themselves moderately capable of meeting the cultural needs of Native American/American Indian survivors, while five believe they can substantially meet these needs. Four advocates feel only somewhat capable, and one advocate feels completely confident in their ability to meet these cultural needs. Another advocate, despite having participated in multiple trainings about Native American/American Indian cultures or traditions, does not feel confident in delivering this service. This indicates a disparity between training participation and perceived competence. It suggests that while training is valuable, other factors such as practical experience, continuous learning, and support systems also play significant roles in building confidence and competence in culturally responsive care.

17. What would make you feel more confident in your ability to meet the cultural needs of survivors who are Native American/American Indian?

Answers:
<i>Training to include our demographics</i>
<i>confident</i>
<i>Connections to other Native American agencies in our community</i>
<i>More training</i>
<i>More training on the cultural needs of survivors who are Native American/American Indian.</i>
<i>Resources specific to American Indian cultures represented by client population.</i>

<i>Knowing what tribal resources I can reach out to in order to help the client get the answers they are seeking.</i>
<i>Specific examples of services specific to native american</i>
<i>I wish we had better relationships with the various Tribes and had training from them. Especially local ones. National training is great and all but each Tribe is so unique that it would be nice to have a bit of individualization to the area we are in.</i>
<i>Ongoing training on cultural background, historical trauma, basic comfort needs that are tied to the ceremonies and ongoing training on Tribal law.</i>
<i>Know more about their culture and beliefs</i>
<i>Continued training and outreach</i>
<i>We would just speak with the survivor to see what it is that she needs and go from there</i>
<i>Training</i>
<i>It is important to ask the survivor what they require. In my experience, each tribe has very different cultural mores and assuming anything across the board as "Native American" culture is not being sensitive to the individual.</i>
<i>Probably more training</i>
<i>A safe place to refer them for housing needs when necessary</i>
<i>Additional education on what cultural needs would be helpful to them in a setting like [program name] as well as having the agency obtain any needed materials to accomplish these needs.</i>
<i>More community support and understanding of these populations needs. Destruction of our colonialist mindsets and our centering of capitalist dogma. Unless we make radical change in our system's cloth, no amount of money or resources is going to create the long-term change we need.</i>
<i>Know and understand the traditions</i>
<i>More access to tribal court, jail roster, vine system to let victim/survivors know jail status, charges etc A place on the reservation where safety is a priority, not being taken off the reservation for aid.</i>
<i>More training in victim advocacy</i>
<i>More training</i>



Key themes mentioned by the advocates:

- Training and Education (11 mentions)
  - *Training to include local demographics and cultural needs of Native American/American Indian survivors.*
  - *Ongoing training on cultural background, historical trauma, and tribal law.*
  - *Continued training and outreach.*
  - *Specific examples of services specific to Native American cultures.*
  - *More training in victim advocacy.*
  - *Training tailored to individual tribes, especially local ones.*
  - *National and individualized training for different tribes.*
  - *Additional education on what cultural needs would be helpful in specific settings.*
  - *Knowing and understanding their traditions and beliefs.*
- Collaboration and Connections with Tribal Resources (five mentions)
  - *Connections to other Native American agencies in the community.*
  - *Knowing what tribal resources are available to help clients.*
  - *Better relationships with various tribes and having training from them.*
  - *Access to tribal court, jail roster, VINE system, etc.*
  - *More community support and understanding of these populations' needs.*
- Resources and Materials (three mentions)
  - *Resources specific to American Indian cultures represented by the client population.*
  - *Ensuring the agency obtains any needed materials to meet cultural needs.*
  - *Safe places to refer clients for housing needs when necessary.*
- Client-Centered Approach (three mentions)
  - *Speaking with the survivor to understand their specific needs.*
  - *Asking the survivors what they require, acknowledging the diversity among tribes.*

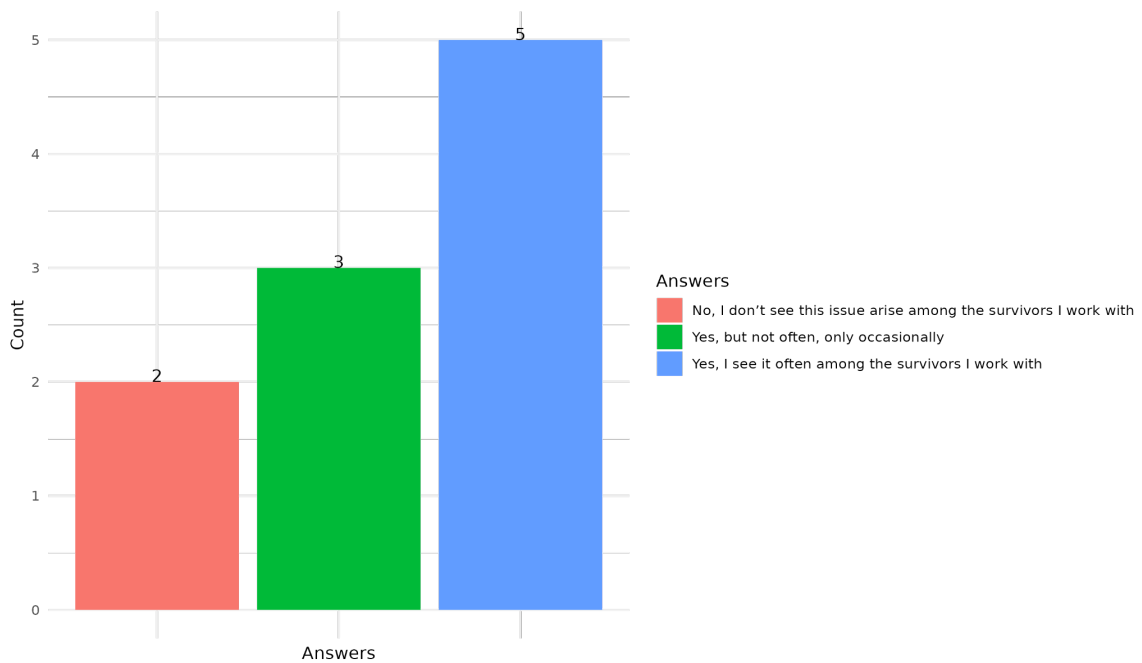
- *Understanding the importance of a personalized approach rather than assuming uniform cultural needs.*
- Systemic and Radical Change (one mention)
  - *Destruction of colonialist mindsets and capitalist dogma to create long-term change in the system.*

## Appendix C

### **Results of Survey of Advocates and Staff of CAWS ND Member Programs on Child Protection Services**

May 2024

1. We heard from many women in our recent listening sessions that Child Protection Services (CPS) took their children away while they were experiencing domestic violence. Is this experience of survivors losing children to CPS common among those you've worked with?

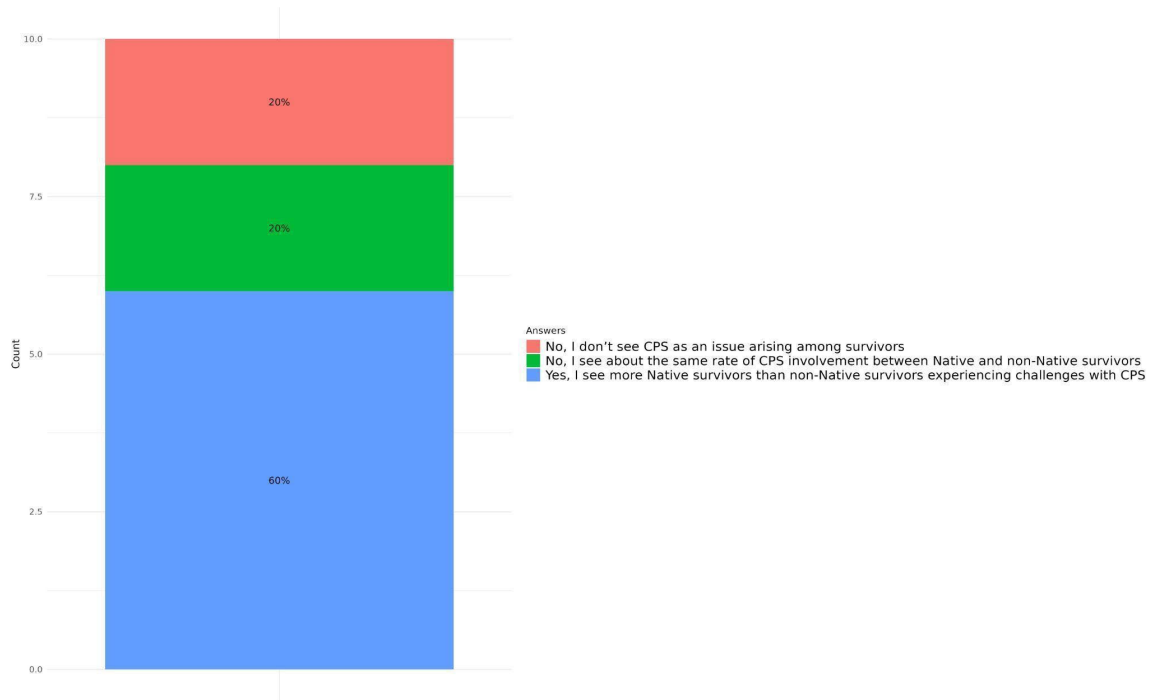


The majority of respondents, seven out of ten, reported that it is common for survivors to lose their children to CPS while experiencing domestic violence. Five of them also said that this situation happens often. Only three respondents indicated that they do not commonly see this issue.

These responses indicate a significant concern among advocates about the intersection of domestic violence and child protection interventions. Even with disparity in the responses, the answers still suggest that the removal of children by CPS during domestic violence is a prevalent issue.

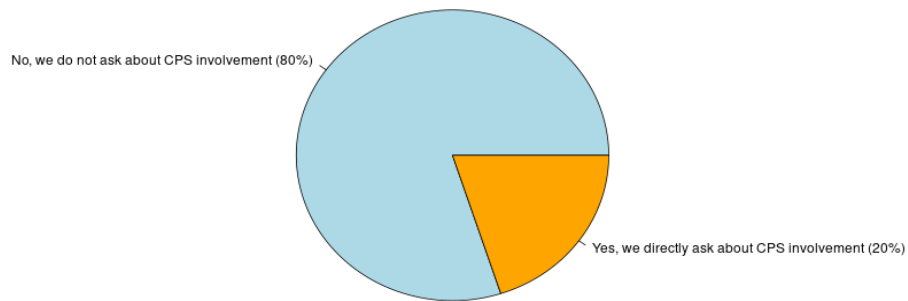


2. Our recent listening sessions were with Native survivors. Do you see CPS issues arise more frequently with Native survivors than non-Native survivors?



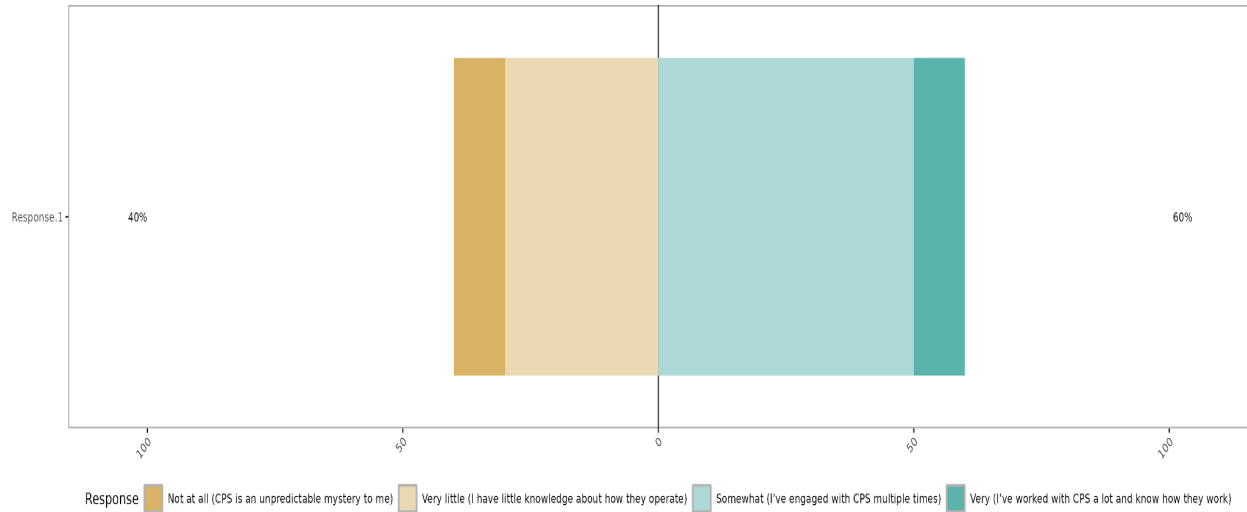
Similar to the first question, six out of ten respondents observed that CPS issues arise more frequently with Native survivors compared to non-Native survivors. This finding highlights an area of concern regarding the disproportionate impact of CPS involvement on Native communities. The responses suggest systemic issues and potential biases within CPS that affect Native American/American Indian survivors more heavily. The remaining respondents include two advocates reporting not seeing a significant difference in CPS issues between Native and non-Native survivors and two advocates not seeing CPS arising as an issue for survivors.

3. Does your program's intake process include any questions about CPS involvement?



The overwhelming majority of respondents (eight of ten) report that their program does not ask about CPS involvement during intake. At the same time, of the eight advocates whose organizations don't include questions about CPS involvement in their intake processes, five of them answered earlier that they see CPS issues arise more frequently with Native survivors compared to non-Native survivors. As intake processes and screening questions tend to reflect a program's priorities and what information they deem necessary to serve victims, the fact that CPS involvement is not asked about reflects a possible lack of focus by programs on the issue—despite it being both prevalent and of importance to Native survivors. Including questions about CPS involvement in the initial intake process is an opportunity for growth and improvement in programs' services to survivors, particularly those who Native and more likely to experience CPS involvement.

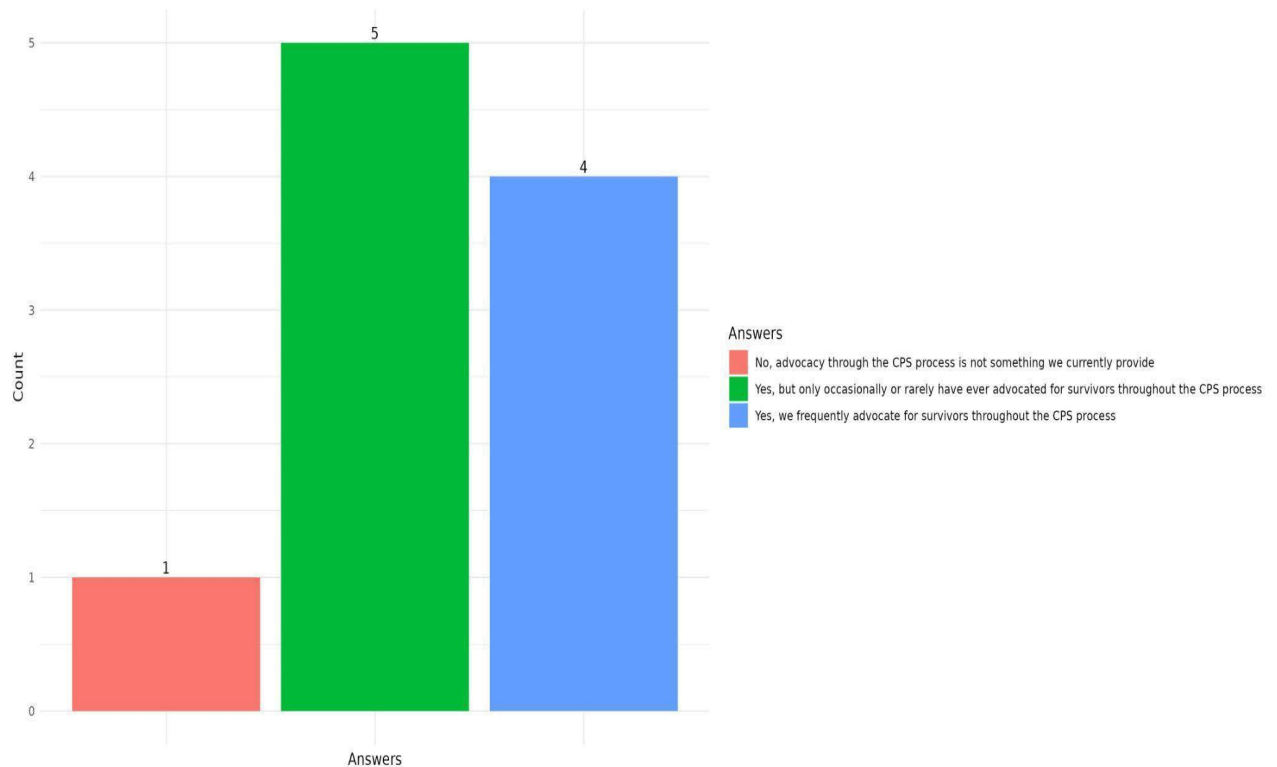
4. Advocates in most US states are mandated reporters of child abuse or maltreatment. Beyond making mandated reports, how familiar are you with CPS processes and rules?



The survey revealed varied levels of familiarity with CPS processes and rules among advocates. A total of 50% of the respondents indicated they are somewhat familiar, and one advocate reported a high level of familiarity due to frequent interactions with CPS. Three advocates reported only a basic understanding, and one advocate indicated no understanding of CPS processes and rules at all. For the four advocates who have no understanding or only a little understanding of the CPS work, all of their organizations also don't ask questions about survivors' experience with CPS in their intake processes. Three of these four advocates indicated that they see CPS' removal of children being a problem for survivors.

5. Most domestic violence survivors are absolutely terrified of losing their children to CPS. Has your program ever provided advocacy for survivors within CPS? In other words, have advocates at your program helped survivors

communicate with CPS to ensure survivors' needs and perspectives are included in CPS decisions?



Most respondents affirmed that their programs provide advocacy for survivors within CPS. Specifically, four of the nine advocates who answered Yes to this question reported that they frequently advocate for survivors within the CPS process. These advocates also reported earlier that they commonly observe that survivors lose children to CPS. There is also one advocate who indicated that their organization doesn't provide advocacy services for survivors involved in CPS.

## **Appendix D**

### ***Resources for Strengthening Understanding of Native American Cultures and Issues Critical to Native Communities***

#### **Association on American Indian Affairs**

The [Association on American Indian Affairs](#) is the oldest non-profit serving Native Country, protecting sovereignty, preserving culture, educating youth and building capacity. The Association was formed to change the destructive path of federal policy from assimilation, termination and allotment, to sovereignty, self-determination and self-sufficiency. Throughout their more than 100-year history, the Association has provided national advocacy on watershed issues that support sovereignty and culture, while working at a grassroots level with Native Nations to support the implementation of programs that support Native Peoples and the revitalization of culture.

#### **Alliance of Tribal Coalitions to End Violence**

The [Alliance of Tribal Coalitions to End Violence](#) (ATCEV) is a Native organized and led nonprofit organization incorporated in 2013 by Tribal Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalition leadership to support and strengthen the work, services, training, and technical assistance provided by the Tribal Coalitions to Tribal governments, Tribal communities, and Tribal domestic and sexual violence direct service providers and programs. The ATCEV provides a unified and strengthened voice and presence of the Tribal Coalitions.

#### **American Indian Public Health Resource Center**

[American Indian Public Health Resource Center](#) (AIPHRC) addresses American Indian public health disparities through technical assistance, policy development, self-determination feasibility analysis, education, research, and programming in partnership with tribes in North Dakota, across the Northern Plains, and the nation. Their vision is engaging and partnering with tribes to improve the delivery of culturally appropriate public health services and functions in American Indian communities. The AIPHRC is enabled by a multifaceted program and team approach to assist each tribe in their service priorities. At the heart of the AIPHRC's philosophy is respect for tribal authority, autonomy, and self-determination.

#### **Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women**

The mission of the [Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women](#) (CSVANW) is to eradicate violence against Native women and children by championing social change

within Native communities. They are dedicated to taking responsibility for the future wellbeing of Native women and children. Through the pillars of support, education, and advocacy, CSVANW leverages collective strengths, power, and unity towards the creation of violence-free communities. Their vision encapsulates the essence of their efforts-- fostering Healthy Families, Healthy Communities—and guides their commitment to healing and transforming communities into safe, nurturing spaces for the growth and prosperity of all its members.

### **Healthy Native Youth**

[Healthy Native Youth](#) is a one-stop-shop for educators and adolescent health advocates who want to expand learning opportunities for native youth. The site is designed for tribal health educators, teachers, parents, and caring adults – providing the training and tools needed to access and deliver effective, age-appropriate programs. Their curricula promotes positive youth development, embraces cultural teachings, and demonstrates evidence of effectiveness.

### **Indian Child Welfare Act Law Center**

The [Indian Child Welfare Act Law Center](#) (ICWA) works to represent Indian families affected by the child protection system. They also collaborate with tribes, community service providers, and child protection professionals to provide a responsive and meaningful approach to address their clients' strengths and struggles. In doing so, they advocate for systematic responses for better meeting the needs of Indian children and families, providing training focused on compliance with the mandates and spirit of the ICWA, and facilitating a national ICWA resource through their website.

### **Indian Law Resource Center**

[The Indian Law Resource Center](#) (ILRC) is a non-profit law and advocacy organization established and directed by American Indians. They provide legal assistance to Indian and Alaska Native nations who are working to protect their lands, resources, human rights, environment and cultural heritage. ILRC seeks to overcome the grave problems that threaten Native peoples by advancing the rule of law, by establishing national and international legal standards that preserve their human rights and dignity, and by challenging the governments of the world to accord justice and equality before the law to all indigenous peoples of the Americas.

### **Many Voices Many Traditions**

[Many Voices Many Traditions](#) is a toolkit for FVPSA Formula Grantees for building strong, inclusive relationships with indigenous partners and communities. This toolkit is designed

to support the work of FVPSA state administrators and domestic violence coalitions. As recipients of the designated domestic violence federal funds, states and coalitions are expected to outreach, engage, fund and support underserved communities, including Indigenous Nations.

### **Mending the Sacred Hoop Coalition**

[Mending the Sacred Hoop](#) (MSH) is a Native-led non-profit organization dedicated to addressing and ending violence against Indigenous women. MSH organizes on issues surrounding violence against American Indian/Alaska Native women in its home community of Duluth, MN and throughout the State of Minnesota. MSH also works on a national level with Tribes and Native communities that are addressing the issues of domestic and sexual violence, dating violence, sex trafficking, and stalking in their communities. MSH provides training to strengthen Tribal and Native community responses to these crimes, including advocacy and systems responses, community understanding and awareness, engaging men in the work to end violence against women, and coordinating community responses that provide for survivor safety and uphold offender accountability.

### **Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center**

[Minnesota Indian Women's Resource Center](#) (MIWRC) is a non-profit social and mental health services organization committed to traditional ways of being and support of Native women and their families. MIWRC provides a broad range of programs designed to educate and empower Native women and their families, and to inform and assist those who work providing services to the community.

### **National Indigenous Women's Resource Center**

[National Indigenous Women's Resource Center](#) (NIWRC) serves as the National Indian Resource Center Addressing Domestic Violence and Safety for Indian Women. NIWRC supports culturally grounded, grassroots advocacy and provides national leadership to ending gender-based violence for American Indian and Alaska Native tribes, Native Hawaiians, and Tribal and Native Hawaiian organizations through the development of educational materials and programs, direct technical assistance, and the development of local and national policy that builds the capacity of Native communities and strengthens the exercise of tribal sovereignty.

### **Native American Development Center**

The mission of [Native American Development Center](#) (NADC) is to provide affordable low-interest loans and financial education to Native Americans throughout North Dakota, living

on or off tribal lands. NADC's lending services are culturally responsive to building kinship relationships that may last a long time.

### **Native American Rights Fund**

Since 1970, the [Native American Rights Fund](#) (NARF) has provided legal assistance to Native American tribes, organizations, and individuals nationwide who might otherwise have gone without adequate representation. NARF has successfully asserted and defended the most important rights of Indians and tribes in hundreds of major cases and has achieved significant results in such critical areas as tribal sovereignty, treaty rights, natural resource protection, voting rights, and Indian education.

### **Native Hope, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women**

Across the United States and Canada, Native women and girls are being taken or murdered at an unrelenting rate. For Native Americans, this adds one more layer of trauma upon existing wounds that cannot heal. Communities are pleading for justice. [Native Hope](#) exists to address the injustice done to Native Americans. They dismantle barriers through storytelling and impactful programs to bring healing and inspire hope.

### **NATIVE, Inc.**

To better serve their Tribal and other Indigenous clients within ND urban communities, [NATIVE, Inc.](#) utilizes Tribal curriculums, person-centered and wrap-around models to improve services to Indigenous persons and families including curriculum imposing Indigenous values and cultural ways. NATIVE, Inc. staff are comprised of care coordinators and peer support staff who share lived experiences and cultural backgrounds to best relate to the clientele and the communities it serves ensuring clients and the community have a community space and culturally responsive services for its youth, adult, and family households.

### **Native Wellness Institute**

The [Native Wellness Institute](#) recognizes the profound impacts of historical trauma and oppression on Native people. They understand that historic trauma has led to present-day trauma in families and communities. This is evident in the high rates of substance abuse, violence, gossip, negativity, poverty, and other destructive behaviors and conditions. The Native Wellness Institute exists to help create an awareness of the origins of negative behavior, provide opportunities for growth and healing, and most importantly, to help people move forward in a good way. They do this by providing training and technical assistance rooted in Native culture that promotes the well-being of individuals, families, communities, and workplaces.



### **North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission**

[North Dakota Indian Affairs Commission](#) is the liaison between the Executive Branch and the Tribes in North Dakota. Duties include mediation service with the Tribes and State and working with other state agencies regarding proper protocol in working with Indian people and Tribal governments.

### **North Dakota Tribal College System**

[North Dakota Tribal College System](#) (NDTCS) leverages the higher education experience by sharing ideas and broadening networks and alliances, toward improving student outcomes. NDTCS' focus is to help students and communities thrive by assuring rigorous curricula and high-impact education practices; advancing enrollment, retention, and completion rates; cultivating partnerships for Tribal communities; nourishing the integration of culture into college programming; and supporting a culture of institutional effectiveness and accountability.

### **Northern Plains Indian Law Center**

The University of North Dakota School of Law, in consultation with area tribes and Indian leaders, established the [Northern Plains Indian Law Center](#) in the early 1990s. The Center's primary purposes are to promote diversity in the legal profession by recruiting American Indian law students, preparing native and non-native law students for the practice of federal Indian and Tribal law, and serving tribal governments in addressing legal issues affecting Indian country.

### **Red Wind Consulting**

[Red Wind Consulting](#) works to strengthen Tribal programs and Native organizations' ability to develop and enhance local responses to domestic violence, sexual assault, and stalking through training and tribal technical assistance. Red Wind offers training on developing victim-centered and culturally appropriate shelters, safe homes, and transitional housing programs and technical assistance to build the capacity of Tribes in the development and implementation of their shelter, safe-home, or transitional housing policies and procedures. They provide technical assistance and training to improve victim services and justice responses to Urban Native populations, as well as Tribal College Campus (TCC) training and technical assistance, and also provide comprehensive training and technical assistance to Tribal Government Program grantees.

### **SAMHSA Tribal Training and Technical Assistance Center**

The [Tribal Training and Technical Assistance \(TTA\) Center](#) guides tribal communities and organizations in applying cultural knowledge and strengths to support wellness around substance use disorders, suicide prevention, and mental health. They define TTA as the process of providing targeted support using culturally relevant, evidence-based, holistic approach to support Native communities in their self-determination efforts through infrastructure development and capacity building, as well as program planning and implementation. The Tribal TTA Center helps Native communities build local capacity and skills, and TTA is customized and tailored to meet the need and readiness level of each community they work with.

### **Seventh Generation Fund for Indigenous Peoples, Inc., Thriving Women**

[Thriving Women](#) centers and uplifts Indigenous women's leadership and strategies to reclaim traditional matrilineal lifeways that have sustained and built nations since time immemorial. It recognizes the targeting of Indigenous women and girls as a manifestation of ongoing colonization and the link between extractive industries and violence against Mother Earth as it is mirrored in the lives and bodies of Native Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit Relatives. The program supports grassroots, Indigenous women-led and serving initiatives to prevent and remedy gender oppression including strategies addressing MMIWG2; uplifts matrilineal centered traditional health and wellness practices (birthkeeping, healing, arts, etc.), bolsters coming-of-age ceremonies; advances multi-generational kinship and leadership development and revives subsistence food systems and traditional women's healing through land-based practices.

### **Southwest Center for Law and Policy**

[Southwest Center for Law and Policy](#) (SWCLAP) works across jurisdictions to develop comprehensive, interdisciplinary responses to violence in Indian country. Their staff of skilled trial attorneys has decades of experience working with tribal, state, and federal court systems and provides legal training and technical assistance to tribal communities and to organizations and agencies serving Native people. SWCLAP is the host of the National Tribal Trial College providing free legal training for attorneys, judges, law enforcement, advocates, and community members on violence against Native women issues.

### **Sovereign Bodies Institute**

[Sovereign Bodies Institute](#) (SBI) builds on Indigenous traditions of data gathering and knowledge transfer to create, disseminate, and put into action research on gender and sexual violence against Indigenous people. As part of SBI's commitment to Indigenous research practices, they envision research as part of a broader system of care for their

people. SBI views research as a flowing relationship, wherein stories and data are informed by lived experiences as families, survivors, and advocates; people are empowered to be their own experts on the violence they experience and the healing they create; and the stories and data SBI holds are transformed into meaningful action to create and maintain effective, culturally relevant systems of care. SBI is not 'only' a research institute – they also provide mutual aid to families of missing and murdered Indigenous people and Indigenous survivors of violence, as an active part of their research philosophy.

### **StrongHearts Native Helpline**

[StrongHearts Native Helpline](#) (844-762-8483) is a safe, anonymous, and confidential service for Native Americans affected by domestic violence and dating violence.

Advocates are available at no cost 24/7 when survivors are ready to reach out.

StrongHearts offers immediate peer-to-peer support, crisis intervention, safety planning, and referrals to culturally appropriate resources.

### **United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues**

The [United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues](#) is an advisory body to the Economic and Social Council, with a mandate to discuss Indigenous issues related to economic and social development, culture, the environment, education, health, and human rights.

### **United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc.**

[United National Indian Tribal Youth, Inc.](#) (UNITY) is a national network organization promoting personal development, citizenship, and leadership among Native American youth. UNITY's Mission is to foster the spiritual, mental, physical, and social development of American Indian, Native Hawaiian, and Alaska Native youth, and to help build a strong, unified, and self-reliant Native America through greater youth involvement.

### **US Department of Agriculture Resource Guide for American Indians and Alaska Natives**

This [Guide](#) is a helpful summary of USDA programs specifically written for Tribes, Native Americans, and Alaska Natives across four categories: agriculture, food sovereignty, and traditional foods; Indian Country economic development; conservation and forestry; and research, extension, and outreach.

### **We R Native**

[We R Native](#) is a comprehensive health resource for Native youth, by Native youth, providing content and stories about an array of relevant topics that promote holistic health

and positive growth in local communities and the nation at large. We R Native includes comprehensive, culturally specific information for Native youth about healthy relationships and dating, as well as sexual health.