



Trainer's Manual

Native Pathways to Success

Native Pathways to Success Parent Workshop

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Native Pathways to Success Curriculum Introduction

A *pathway* is a way to get from one place to another. In educational settings, students and their families make many transitional pathways: from home to kindergarten, from elementary to middle school, from high school to postsecondary and trade school. Although these pathways can be difficult for students and their families, having updated and clear information on how to navigate and support their children through the system of education can assist Native families in being successful advocates for their children in achieving their educational goals.

A New Pathway for Native Families and School Engagement

American Indian youth and their families continue to develop goals, visions and educational aspiration, persistence and skills. Our hope is to reinforce what is being taught at home as well as give Native families the advantage of knowing how the educational system can work for them, they will learn how to be strong and positive advocates for their children. Therefore it is extremely important that we provide the most up-to-date and accurate information possible and understand that this curriculum does not stand alone but must work in partnership with schools, district staff, community, elders, tribal leaders, and positive role models to support American Indian families.

A centerpiece of resilience is spirituality. Because of the spiritual nature of all aspects of Indian life, teachers, trainers and facilitators must stress the concept of spirituality during these workshop sessions. Some of the shared spiritual concepts include:

- Belief in or knowledge of unseen powers of the natural world
- Knowledge that all things in the universe are interrelated and dependent on one another
- Understanding that humor is a necessary part of resilience and therefore is honored and is an element of being spiritual
- Accepting of the relationship to the mother earth and the interconnectedness of all the creator's living beings

NOTE: Some of the activities in lessons six, seven and eight are adapted from the *Expanding the Circle: Respecting the Past, Preparing for the Future* (Ness, J. J., & Huisken, J., 2001), a curriculum produced by the Department of Community Integration at the University of Minnesota. These are used with permission of the authors.

Defining Indian Cultural Values

All of us have certain cultural values that we learned from the communities that raised us. These values help us find our place in the world and they often guide our behavior. The Minnesota Department of Education produced an overview of the differences in cultural values that some people see between Native Americans and non-Natives. While many people—Indian and non-Indian—do not fit the generalized descriptions below, this overview can be helpful background information as you work through this curriculum on your path to educational success.

The following is an excerpt from *Positive Indian Parenting: a Reference Manual in Support of Minnesota Indian Parents and Families*, published by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Indian Cultural Values

Much has been written about American Indian cultural values and their differences to the non-Indian society. For obvious reasons there cannot be a complete authoritative list of Indian values. For one, there exists much cultural diversity between the various Indian cultures and also, who would be in a position to definitely define values for others and more specifically for American Indians? Other members of Indian cultures and communities would not tolerate this, and one clear danger of any such attempt may be the stereotyping of a culture and its participants. It may be useful to bring to mind some cultural differences without wanting to lock people on either side into a rigid system of such values and attitudes.

Self/Others

The Indian considers all individuals as equal, but the **group** as more important. The non-Indian has a more complicated system where certain individuals are more important than others and cases where an individual is more important than a group (i.e. supervisors, presidents, and kings).

Goods/Services

The Indian values people and services over goods, thus does not define the importance of a person by the goods he/she has. The non-Indian values goods and people together in importance and considers the goods a reflection of the person. Sometimes the non-Indian will consider it more important to sacrifice services to other people to preserve goods, and the non-Indian will sacrifice goods to maintain relations with people.

Sharing/Saving

The Indian considers generosity a value ranked above maintaining goods to preserve their own comfort. The non-Indian considers self-preservation more important and values the keeping of goods when sharing them causes personal hardship. In time of stress then, the non-Indian feels it is “every person for themselves,” while the Indian feels it is “we all fail or succeed together.”

Cooperation/Competition

In activities, the Indian values not trying to do better than another individual, thus by cooperative efforts getting more for all. The non-Indian values each individual competing against each other and thereby all will try there hardest. However, both groups value GROUP COMPETITION, and as a consequence team sports provide a common ground.

Action/Observation

Activities in strange situations, however, reflect differences between Indian and non-Indian values. The non-Indian practices trial and error as a means of learning about the situation; but the Indian practices extensive observation so that the first trial will be correct. Thus, the non-Indian appears to be more similar to a dog who runs about and an Indian like a cat watching carefully then acting.

Tradition/Novelty

To the Indian, what is old and traditional is more valuable than something new. The non-Indian, particularly those of the U.S., values newness over what are old or traditional. Thus, the Indian is reluctant to change what has worked well in the past, but the non-Indian person is always seeking new ways.

Family/Community

The Indian has different values as to relationships with other people. The Indian extends personal relationships outside of close blood relatives to what the non-Indian might consider as “the community.” The non-Indian feels less compulsion to do this and does not feel wrong if he/she only maintains close relations with sons, daughters and parents.

Work/Leisure

The Indian values activities more on the basis of their personal or social enjoyment and necessity. Work and leisure for the non-Indian are separated, with work being considered more important and “good” than leisure activities. One might say that the non-Indian evaluates activities on the basis of their end result while the Indian values them on what happens on the way toward achieving the end result.

Age/Ability

The Indian has deep respect for the wisdom of years, and values the counsel of the old. Over the generations, the Indian, because he valued listening and remembering, has found that the older people have invaluable advice to give. The non-Indian values listening/remembering less because books were available to record wisdom; as a consequence, he/she has less respect for the aged, considering their capability of forgetting a detriment to their value as wise people.

Aggression/Withdrawal

The Indian views conflict as disruptive annoyances to the smooth pattern of life, and thus considers devices, which ease conflicts most quickly, as very desirable. The non-Indian views conflict as the way of the world (see Action/Observation) and believe in the direct approach as being best. As a consequence, the Indian will sometimes withdraw or act suddenly and decisively, while the non-Indian will refuse to retreat until the conflict is forced to its conclusion.

Nature/Manufacture

The Indian has great respect for Nature and tries to attune his/her actions to be as much like nature as possible. He/she sees nature as natural and values adjusting actions to suit nature’s forces. The non-Indian looks upon Nature as something to be managed to suit their needs. Consequently, Nature is the **enemy** and fighting against natural forces is valued as human beings proper course.

Whole/Parts

The basic philosophy of the Indian is that the whole is all-important and that it is in their place to preserve the unity of the whole by considering all things as part of who they are. The non-Indian

philosophy is that the whole equals the sum of its parts, and that since nothing appears to be perfect, man must expend great effort to make it so by considering the surroundings different from him/her and changing them to suit his/her concept of perfectibility.

Stuecher, Uwe- second edition 2006, Minnesota Department of Education, with permission.

Values characteristic of specific tribes

Certain values are considered to be characteristic of specific American Indian tribes. This does not mean that all persons belonging to that tribe would display behavior that reflects those values, but rather that the culture as a whole ascribes to that value system. Generally, the adherence to the value system can be described as a continuum ranging from those very traditional American Indian who behave completely according to the cultural value system to those American Indians who have become acculturated into the value system of the majority society. Sometimes American Indians adhere to traditional values that conflict with the predominant values of Euro-American Society.

Some of those values and their associated behaviors are described on the following pages. This is not intended to be a comprehensive list or description of all the values of American Indian tribes—the value system is too complex to be described in the form of lists and descriptions.

Dakota Wichon (Dakota way of life)

Wodakota (Dakota values)

Wacantognaka

We must show compassion toward one another and share what we have. Elders sometimes say “give until it hurts.” In the Dakota way, our character is measured by how well we take care of one another.

Wo’ksape (wisdom)

Having the knowledge, ability and teaching to know how to recognize and not use, but live by these values.

Wo’ohittika (Courage-Bravery)

We need courage to be able to have fortitude and patience

Wo’wacintanka (fortitude, patience, perseverance)

The ability to preserve and endure a hardship and have patience, the events in our lives happen for a reason and are always an educational experience which we can learn from.

Wo’onsida (pity, compassion and mercy)

Do not judge but have pity on people who appear less fortunate or having a hard time in life. If they are going through a hard time at the moment it is your duty that your good thoughts and good words may help them.

Waho’da (to respect)

With respect, we can appreciate the good qualities and gifts each person has as an individual.

Wai’hakta (humble, to care for others before yourself)

We do not horde things, we share. If everyone but one person has food, clothing or any other necessity, they share it in equal value with people.

Seven Teaching of the Ojibwe

Love (Zaagidwin)

The Anishinabeg were to always act in love. To love the Great Spirit the same way he loves his people because it was the love of the Great Spirit that gave life. Children are to be loved, for children are a gift from the Great Spirit.

Respect (Muaadendiwin)

To respect all life in mother earth, to show real respect was to give of your self for the benefit of all life. To respect elders and the leaders who uphold the sacred laws of the Great Spirit.

Courage (Aakdehewin)

To have COURAGE to always do what is morally right. TO be proud of being Anishinabe and never deny the way of life the Great Spirit gave them.

HONESTY (Gwekwaadizwin)

To be honest to themselves, to live in the spirit of how they were created. Never to lie or gossip about one another.

WISDOM (Nbwaakaawin)

To live in WISDOM, is to know the gifts of the Great Spirit gave to everyone. TO use these gifts to build a family and community filled with caring, sharing, kindness, respect and love for one another. When we know and use our gifts we become an instrument of the Great Spirit, helping to bring peace to the world.

HUMILITY (Ddaadebdizwin)

Always to act in HUMILITY, One was to always think about their family, their fellow man, their community before they thought of themselves. To know humility is to know that there is a Great Spirit and he is the creator of all life, and therefore he directs all life.

TRUTH (Debwewin)

Always seek the TRUTH. The truth lies in the spirit. Prayer was to be done everyday at sunrise to give thanksgiving to the Great Spirit for all gifts of life. All gifts and each ceremony were given by the Great Spirit to the Anishinabeg to help him find truth, the true meaning of their life and existence. Living truth is living the seven laws.

The goal

The goal of this workshop is to provide assistance to Indian families by giving them choices and suggestions about ways to strengthen their understanding of education within Indian cultural norms, values and goals. Through this process we hope to represent the essence of culture according to Feuerstein (1980), who defines culture in the following way:

Culture is the process by which knowledge, values, and beliefs are transmitted from one generation to the next.

Development and Principals of the Workshop Lessons

The Native Pathways to Success Parent Engagement workshop curriculum was developed in response to a call in the Minneapolis urban Indian community that families need to find a way to be actively engaged in their children's education, but on their terms with their cultural values and community voice at the core.

An informal and formal community assessment and year long intentional listening sessions were launched through a project of Hennepin County formally known as, the School Success Initiative, which included reaching out to various members of the Indian Community across Minnesota but mainly in the south Minneapolis area where a high concentration of urban American Indian families reside. These workshop curriculum lessons were developed with the honored wisdom of many in the urban Indian community of Minneapolis and St. Paul.

Jeanine Downwind, community coordinator and lead staff on this project, spoke to over 150 people, ranging from families with children in pre-school to post secondary education students, youth currently in school and those who have recently drop out of public schools and those now attending alternative and charter schools and former graduates of Minneapolis Public Schools, Indian Educators and administrators, tribal leaders, youth workers and Minneapolis Public School administration staff from superintendents to secretaries. Anyone who wanted to share their views and had an interest or interaction with Indian youth in educational settings was included.

The information that inspired the activities of the workshops curriculum was gathered by having many intentional conversations with people who shared their perceptions and feelings about education. The goal was not to "interview," but to have a conversation, build relationships and gain an understanding about education and the Native community through many lenses. Among the questions that were asked in the conversations were:

- General demographics; Name, age, where do live, what do you do
- What is your experience with education (past present future?)
- Do you have young people in school now or do you currently work with Native youth in an educational setting?
- What made the difference for you in being successful in education?
- What was hard about school and what do you see as the barriers to participation of young people?
- What were you successful at in school?
- How would you change things for Native youth in school today?
- What do you think Native youth need to succeed in school?
- What resources are in the community to support Native youth that you know about?
- Do you feel you have information about school and how to be involved as a parent/student/community member?
- If you had all the resources and the perfect utopia for insuring Native youth are successful, what would it look like and what type of supports would you need to make it happen?

Most of the Native community participants spoke of their experiences by relating a story or feelings of what they lived through or wished for Native youth. Otherx provided a summation of policies that impact education in general and what they would do differently. Both responses were equally valued in this process of listening and learning.

In summary we found:

- There are a high number of academically-focused youth programs that are also culturally-focused.
- There was a huge gap in information and communication between schools and parents.
- Native families in Minneapolis are second and third generation attendees of Minneapolis public schools and many have had negative and traumatic experiences with the schools. However, there were some who had positive experiences related to programs such as the South High Pride program and Indian Upward bound.
- Native parents are unequivocally supportive of their children striving for academic success.
- School staff and administrators sometimes hold stereotypes of parents who do not participate in school events and conferences that are offered.
- The offerings at school for parent involvement are not adequate and do not support Native parents being engaged or welcomed.
- While there are ways that families can be involved in school, most Native parents are not aware of the offerings and do not feel comfortable in the traditional settings of parent involvement in school.
- Native families want and need more information about how schools work and how they can support their children.
- There are many policies and procedures that govern parent engagement that both can hinder and assist Native families in being active participants in schools.
- There is a wide range of data that can assist parents and the community in supporting Native youth, but it needs to be available and communicated clearly from schools and Indian education offices.

There are many more perceptions and conclusions but the patterns and similarities that are highlighted above cut across all the listening sessions over the year-long process.

A variety of materials also exist about the educational and cultural needs of American Indian students in school settings. However little has been developed that combines materials to address the specific and particular needs of Native American families as they navigate the pathways to success for their children in school. In order to address these needs, we applied native values to an established parent-engagement framework.

Parent Engagement

Applying Native values to the Epstein framework

The core activities of this curriculum are designed to address the framework developed by Dr. Joyce Epstein at the Center for School Partnerships at Johns Hopkins University, (*Epstein, 1995; Epstein et al., 1997). However, schools may not always apply the framework in ways that reflect the needs, values, and abilities of Indian families. This workshop is created to bridge that divide by transferring universal Native cultural values and learning's into each of the six main categories of the Epstein Parent Involvement framework.

Six types of parent involvement:

- *Parenting* (Type 1) — Assist families with parenting and child-rearing skills, understanding child and adolescent development, and setting home conditions that

support children as students at each age and grade level. Assist schools in understanding families.

- *Communicating* (Type 2) — Communicate with families about school programs and student progress through effective school-to-home and home-to-school communications.
- *Volunteering* (Type 3) — Improve recruitment, training, work, and schedules to involve families as volunteers and audiences at the school or in other locations to support students and school programs.
- *Learning at Home* (Type 4) — Involve families with their children in learning activities at home, including homework and other curriculum-related activities and decisions.
- *Decision Making* (Type 5) — Include families as participants in school decisions, governance, and advocacy through PTA/PTO, school councils, committees, action teams, and other parent organizations.
- *Collaborating with the Community* (Type 6) — Coordinate community resources and services for students, families, and the school with businesses, agencies, and other groups, and provide services to the community.

*Epstein, J., Sanders, M., Simon, B., Salinas, K., Jansorn, N., & Van Voorhis, F. (2002). *School, Family, and Community Partnerships: Your Handbook for Action*, Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

This workshop curriculum is designed to offer a structured process and a set of culturally-relevant activities that will facilitate skill building and sharing of group knowledge to support engagement opportunities for Native families. The lessons are designed for use by elders, youth workers, school staff, community members and parent peer educators.

The core ideology of the curriculum

- Native families are the first and foremost educators of their children.
- Native families and community are resilient.
- Humor is valued in Native culture.
- Process and creation are important (some of the activities in this workshop have materials and some are reflective).
- The author of this curriculum believes that the process of reflection is just as important as the materials that can be created.
- Sensitive topics may come up during the workshop that some individuals may feel are too sensitive or controversial. The author believes that without addressing and assisting families in finding resources for these topics that the process would not be completed. It is the author's intent not to have facilitators become counselors, but to assist the families in finding the community resources to support the issues that they may be facing in order to support them in supporting their children's educational vision and goals.
- Although not all of the engagement processes and outcomes may be appropriate for all families, the purpose of exploration is to develop educated consumers of school systems who can make informed choices.

Organization of This Curriculum

Each unit of the curriculum includes lesson plans that take approximately 60-90 minutes to complete. Some activities can be on-going and are noted as such. The lesson plans in the curriculum are organized in the following manner and contain the following information:

- **Activity Name**
 - States the name of the activity
- **Outcome**
 - States the intended learner objective
 - Written in language of what participant will do/be able to do
- **Time Frame**
 - States the estimated time needed to complete the activity
- **Group Size**
 - Indicates the size of the group of participants appropriate to complete the activity intended
- **Materials Needed**
 - Indicates what the facilitator will need in order to lead the activity
- **Before You Begin**
 - Provides the information that is important to the facilitator prior to beginning the activity
 - May include background information, purpose of the activity, awareness of the sensitive topic area and activity modifications
- **Directions**
 - Lists step by step directions for the facilitator to follow for completion of the activity with participants
- **Closure**
 - Provides suggestions for journal and/or circles topics to be used at the end of the activity
- **Additional Resources or Suggestions**
 - Provides additional relevant information or resources that may be helpful to the facilitator in expanding a topic or activity

Tips for Successfully Using This Curriculum

As you plan to utilize the curriculum in your program, here are some tips that are essential for the success of the program and the well-being of the participants.

- Select a skilled facilitator/trainer to implement the workshop. Many of the activities require someone who can not only complete the activities with participants, but someone who is also able to facilitate effective post-activity discussions.
- Create a workshop where the participants feel safe by:
 1. Providing a culturally-welcoming environment
 2. Hiring and training staff that know the participants and know how to work well with American Indian families
 3. Scheduling carefully and following through on all activities
 4. Over-planning with more activities than you think you need
 5. Respecting the individuality and cultural community of each participant by meeting them “where they are,” so they can learn to be more accepting of themselves and others
 6. Providing relevant speakers and community resources that are dependable and can be counted on to participate and share their knowledge in a way that is non-judgmental and welcoming (your community presenters should be respectful of your participants and work hard not to fill their presentation with educational jargon and acronyms where possible or be prepared to explain what they mean)
 7. Actively participating in all activities with the participants (do not act like an on-looker who is observing, but not interacting)
 8. Taking the time to develop personal relationships with each participant (this is a gracious aspect of learning for most participants in a workshop but essential for most Indian families attending this workshop)
 9. Requiring that participants attend the workshop in its entirety—every session for every activity/process (emphasize that attendance is a critical element of learning not only for their children but for their own personal goals and growth as well)
 10. Exposing parents to informational opportunities as often as you can during the workshop (it is safe to assume that there has been little or no information coming from the schools to the participants during the school year)
 11. Planning the schedule with structured activities throughout the entirety of the workshop
 12. Revising/adjusting the schedule as needed to continually improve the workshops

About the Information and Resource Section

During the development of the Native Pathways to Success Parent Engagement workshop, an effort was made to connect and locate the most relevant and up-to-date materials related to policies, acts and general family engagement. The author researched various sources, including print, Internet, community, people and research institutions. While laws and policy may vary across the nation’s many school districts, it is vitally important that the facilitators continually update the *Information and Resource* section of the curriculum.

The core value of the workshops is to provide knowledge and action based on accurate information. During the start of every workshop facilitators should take time to review and reference the material in this section and up-date when necessary.

LESSON ONE: Indian Education

Education Past, Present and Future

Participant Outcome

Families will learn the outcomes and goals of the training and will develop group expectations. Participants will begin to develop an understanding of Indian Education and Minneapolis Public Schools history with regard to Native students. Parents will also begin to build connections with other Native parents.

Time Frame

2.0 hours

Group Size

15

Materials Needed

- Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products
- Sage, sage bowl and lighter
- Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
- Pencil/colored pencils
- Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
- Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
- Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
- Markers/stickers/art materials
- Flip chart
- Icebreakers activity—choose one from the book or design your own
- Minneapolis Indian Education—presenter
- Pre-evaluation survey
- Handouts:
 - Handout 1.1: *History Timeline: Dates in Indian History and in Education*

Before You Begin

Contact your state or district Indian Education office to secure a speaker who is knowledgeable about Indian Education (locally) and Indian Education in the U.S. Get sage, sage bowl, stipends and food prepared and ordered. Take care of any announcements.

Directions

- (30 Minutes) Sage/Prayer/dinner—ask someone to do prayer if appropriate and eat dinner together. Please ensure that cultural etiquette is followed for sage and prayer. Have everyone sit down & begin activities.
- (2 minutes) Binders—pass-out the binders during introductions. Explain that these are meant to organize information and the weekly activities. Invite participants to personalize their binders while you talk, please note that binders will not be taken home until midway through the session.

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- (5 minutes) Introductions—trainers only—introduce yourself and share some information about your family, education experiences (when you were in school or your children’s experience in school, both positive and negative), and professional work.
- (5 minutes) On flip chart before you begin the session—write and display the training outcomes: 1) to build a community of Indian parents at the school; 2) to learn/utilize strategies that will assist parents in being empowered communicators and decision-makers at their school; 3) to provide parents tools to support their children in being successful learners; 4) to empower parents to be evaluators and change agents at their schools through continued group participation. Ask if participants have questions.
- (5 minutes) Create group expectations by eliciting responses from participants on what commitments the group will be accountable to such as full participation, attendance, confidentiality, etc.
- (5 minutes) Explain the history of this work, the Memorandum of Agreement, the importance of parent engagement, and provide brief data on why family engagement will increase native youth success in school. Lastly, explain what each participant can expect from the workshop activities.
- (10 minutes) Icebreaker activity—use a “get to know you” activity listed in the resource section or create your own. Find a fun, high energy exercise.
- (30 minutes) History of Indian Education—speaker (reserve 5 minutes for questions)

Closure

Circle Discussion

Facilitators: Please reference the talking circle model located in supporting document

- Why is it important to know the history?
- Are there any surprises, what’s new, what hit home?
- Knowing what you know about history and utilizing your personal experiences, what would you do differently if you were responsible for the direction of Indian education? (record these answer in the *Section 1 Notes*)

Additional items:

- Remind everyone of the next meeting date
- Sign stipends sheet/ensure attendance is complete
- Begin a closing ritual that your group designs (e.g., a saying or phrase, or share a word that describes what each participant feels about the session)

Additional Resources or Suggestions

Handout 1.1: *History Timeline: Dates in Indian History and in Education*

Handout 1.1

This information was adapted from various sources. See the footnote at the end of the timeline for details.

History Timeline: Dates in Indian History and in Indian Education

The Beginning to 1492 (Period of Self-determination)

Before the introduction of the European system, tribal education was the norm in the Americas. Parents and other adult members of the tribe transmitted the people's values, customs, stories, religion, and history to the next generation. They taught children to use that knowledge wisely and responsibly, and they taught them in the language of the tribe.

1492 to 1776 (Colonial Period)

In the early days of Indian-European contact, education consisted of efforts to “civilize and convert” the Natives. Jesuits taught them French customs and language, Protestants Anglicized them and Franciscans tried to mainstream them by making them missionaries. During the colonial period, colonists signed treaties with Indians to acquire land and regulate transactions, with some treaties stipulating the employment of people to teach Indians.

1776 to 1830 (Period of Early U.S. – Indian Relations)

Between 1778 and 1871 – when it needed Indians as allies against European powers, land for settlers spreading west, and an end to wars with the Indians themselves—the U.S. government signed hundreds of treaties with tribes offering health services, schools, teachers, and money in exchange for Indian land, trade concessions, fishing and hunting rights, and the tribes' jurisdiction over their remaining land. But the schools the treaties authorized did little more than spread Christianity and Western culture and provide agrarian training to compensate for the loss of the Indians' livelihood. The schools were ill equipped to provide mainstream education, and they failed utterly to recognize Indian languages, culture, and history. Out of the treaty arrangement, however, the U.S. government assumed a protective role that developed into the “trust relationship,” albeit a shifting trust relationship, that governs U.S.–Indian relationships to this day.

1830 – 1850 (Removal Era)

Indians wanted to remain on their ancestral land, which settlers wanted to occupy. The solution reached by the states and the U.S. government under President Andrew Jackson was to remove the Indians from the path of white settlement. Some tribes, such as the Sac and Fox in Illinois and the Seminoles in Florida, resisted removal and were subdued. The Creek, Winnebago, Cherokee, and other tribes were forcibly resettled in “Indian Territory,” separated from whites. The Cherokees tried to hold onto their land by becoming “American” in customs, language, and constitution and by educating all their people through Osceola's syllabary of the Cherokee language. However, the state of Georgia refused to recognize the Cherokee Nation and declared its laws null and void.

1850 – 1880 (Period of Reservations and Wars)

The “Indian Territory” to which tribes were removed faced more demands by white settlers who continued to move westward, taking land, killing buffalo, and further weakening the economic viability of the tribes. Constant fighting ensued as Indians valiantly but unsuccessfully resisted

threats to their civilization. The period ended in 1890 with the Battle of Wounded Knee in South Dakota, in which more than 200 Indians were slaughtered.

1880 to 1920 (Period of Allotment and Assimilation)

This period saw a reversal of the U.S. policy of creating reservations to isolate Indians from settlers. Through the Dawes Severalty Act, Congress forced Indians to become landowners and farmers by refusing to allow tribes to own reservation lands communally. Under this law, the U.S. gave tracts of land to individual Indians and U.S. citizenship to adult owners—however, unlike other citizens, Indians did not get full title for 25 years. During this time, the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) forced Indian assimilation to white ways: it removed families from their land, sent Indian children to government-run boarding schools, stopped the practice of Indian rituals, and encouraged the spread of Christian churches to reservations. The boarding school movement grew, with the number of federal Indian schools reaching 106. Abandoned military posts were used for educating Indians. The period ended with the publication of the Merriam Report, which ushered in a period known as the Indian New Deal. The report brought the deprivation and abuse of Indian children attending public and BIA schools to the attention of the federal government. It resulted in the authorization of programs for improving the education of Indians and the provision of federal financial aid to local school districts, reservation day schools and public schools that had been established on Indian trust lands.

1930 to 1945 (Indian Reorganization Act)

During this period, Congress passed two landmark laws—the Indian Reorganization Act and the Johnson-O-Malley Act—and alternately strengthened and weakened the Indian tribes. Under the New Deal, for example, pressures on Indians to assimilate abated and U.S. policies toward Indians began to improve. This was seen in the Indian Reorganization Act, which returned significant political authority to the tribes; provided government funds for education, health care, and cultural activities; and reversed the allotment policy. As a result of this redistribution of land, Indian income increased and the tribes became more viable. However, the national unity pressures that built-up during World War II undermined this newly-found tribal strength, and many Indians who served as soldiers elected to live in the non-Indian world rather than return to the reservation.

1945 to 1965 (Termination Period)

Through the termination policy that was begun in 1953, Congress stopped recognizing the tribes as legal entities separate from the states where they were located. Instead, it made the tribes subject to the same local jurisdictions as other people and required that Indian property be managed, not by tribal councils, but by private organizations, such as banks, which served as trustees for tribal assets. Congress also reinvigorated the assimilation policy, encouraging Indians to move to cities. As a result, the tribes were weakened and corruption became widespread. Bowing to pressure from Indians, including the National congress of American Indians, President Dwight Eisenhower barred further terminations without the tribes' consent. The period ended with the passage of the Economic Opportunity Act and the channeling of federal community action funds to the tribes, which became more autonomous and began to mobilize for self determination.

1965 to 2005 (Period of Self-Determination)

During this period, the U.S. rejected the termination policy and began to be more responsive to Indian issues. Much of the credit for this responsiveness goes to the groundbreaking report, *Indian Education: A National Tragedy, A National Challenge*. The U.S. enacted and started to

implement Great Society programs under the Economic Opportunity Act, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Indian Civil Rights Act, the Indian Education Act, and the Tribally Controlled Community Colleges Act. At the same time, Indians started to win court victories to rectify broken treaties and started to organize more militant advocacy organizations, such as the American Indian Movement (AIM). These events, as well as clashes with Washington State officials over fishing rights and AIM's occupation of Alcatraz Island and Wounded Knee brought the Indians' plight to national attention. Two presidents' executive orders resulted in the collection and report of educational data that help to identify successful education strategies and the status of AI/AN early and K-16 education.

This information was adapted from *The Quest for Quality Education* (Washington, DC: NEA, 1982); *Report of the American Indian/Alaska Native Concerns Study Committee* (Washington, DC: NEA 1987); *American History: A Survey. Volume II: Since 1865* by Alan Brinkley et al. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1991); "Comprehensive Reform and American Indian Education" by David L. Beaulieu (*Journal of American Indian Education*, June 2, 2000); and "Reflecting on the Past: Some Important Aspects of Indian Education to Consider as We Look Toward the future" by John W. Tippeconnic III (*Journal of American Indian Education*, June 2, 2000).

A more detailed version of this timeline can be found in National Education Association, 2002 "Summary Report of a Panel Discussion on American Indian Education," compiled by Ron Houston & Tarajeau Yazee, amended by Octaviana Trujillo.

Notes Lesson 1

LESSON TWO: Barriers & Visioning

*“If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost, that’s where it should be.
Now put the foundations under them”*

-Henry David Thoreau from the conclusion to Walden

Participant Outcome

Parents will brainstorm barriers to participation at schools and counter barriers with solutions. Parents will also complete vision collage and/or picture for themselves and their children.

Time Frame

2.0 hours

Group Size

Large or small

Materials Needed

- Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products
- Sage, sage bowl and lighter
- Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
- Pencil/colored pencils
- Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
- Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
- Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
- Flip chart
- Icebreakers activity—choose one from the book or design your own
- Art supplies
 - Glue
 - Scissors
 - Markers or crayons
 - Magazines
 - Stickers
 - Calendars
 - Indian newspapers
 - Pictures
 - Double-sided tape
- Bricks—made out of construction paper—10-15 per participant
- Post-it notes, medium size
- CD player and flute music
- Large, colored construction paper
- Resources section: Pictures of Native youth in graduation cap and gown on the wall
- Handouts: 2.1 to 2.7

Before You Begin

- Brainstorm activity: cut out 30 paper bricks (use imagination and construction paper)
- Write this question on a flipchart paper and post it on the wall: “What are the barriers to participating at school for any/all parents?”
- Tape the pictures of the Native youth graduates (*Handout 2.7*) on the wall next to the question on the flipchart paper
- Place two pieces of flipchart paper together and draw a winding road on it, with praising words on each side of the winding road (e.g., “you’re wonderful,” “you’re on your way,” etc.). Place a couple of the Native graduate pictures at the TOP of the road. Don’t let the participants see this design until after you reach the solutions section of this activity
- Copy handouts 2.1 to 2.7 (can be copied back-to-back)
- Start the flute music CD and have it play during the whole session
- Write on a flipchart: *Vision* (at the top) underneath write:
 1. My life now
 2. My life ten years from now
 3. Things I like about my life today
 4. Things I look forward to in the future
 5. Things I don’t like about my life today
 6. Things I am afraid of in the future

Directions

Barriers to participation activity (30 Minutes)

As a group, participants will brainstorm perceived barriers to school participation for Native families. Each barrier will be written individually on a brick that will be placed to visually form a wall that begins to cover-up native youth graduation pictures.

1. Pass out 10-15 bricks to each participant. Ask each person to work individually to brainstorm barriers to their own child’s participation at school.
2. If the ideas aren’t flowing, get people started by listing some of the possible barriers: transportation, child care, etc. Ask the question: “Are the barriers economic, personal, social or cultural? Let’s begin to list those.”
3. Ask participants to continue to add/brainstorm more barriers, or if they feel they have exhausted all responses, ask them to move into groups and remove any duplicate answers to the question.
4. When the brainstorming seems to slow down, ask everyone to take a moment to look over the bricks of perceived barriers from their small group.
5. Don’t begin a group discussion on the barriers just yet, this will stop the flow of ideas.
6. Have each group come up with a solution to each barrier brick and write it on the back of the brick.
7. While the participants are brainstorming solutions, unveil flipchart paper with the winding road showing the Native graduate at the top. Tape it to the wall.
8. Take a moment to read a few of the solutions aloud.
9. Now ask each group to take turns individually placing the solution bricks on the winding road leading to the Native graduate. Read each one out loud first then tape it to the winding road.
10. On a post-it, write if the solution needs to be supported by families, our community, elders, reservation, government, funding etc. Please write the name of the organization, person or place on the post-it note that can help us achieve the solution.

Visioning Activity (30 minutes)

1. Give each participant a copy of the visioning handouts (*Handouts 2.1 to 2.7*).
2. Briefly share the story in the resource section about vision quests.
3. Have each person take a moment to quickly write a few words that come to mind for each question.
4. Let the participants know the importance of having a mental picture of what they want for their life and their children's life.
5. Share this quote from author Stephen Covey's *Seven Habits for Highly Effective Families*. Covey advises his readers to "begin with the end in mind." To parents with vision, the end is the starting point. Remember that this idea that humans must live from vision is a value of Native people—a vision begins at its completion.
6. Let the participant know that this is not just a simple activity, but one that will call upon their highest self. It will give parents a sense of purpose, meaning and direction.
7. Visions are not just singular; they can be multifunctional. You can have a vision for school, home, culture, learning, education, health, and fun.
8. Have the participants briefly share what they like about their lives today and write it on the Family Vision flipchart paper posted on the wall. Ask the participants what they don't like about their lives today. Write these responses as well.
9. Now have each participant grab 2 piece of construction paper.
10. Place the magazine and other art supplies in the middle of the room/table.

Guide Imagery

1. Ask participants to take a moment to sit comfortably in their chairs and close their eyes.
2. Quietly begin to ask them to see each of their children in the future. "What dreams do you have for them, what are your hopes?"
3. Ask the following questions:
 - "Now we're going to look 10 years into the future. What do your children look like?"
 - "What are they wearing?"
 - "Where are they?"
 - "What scents can you pick up around you?"
 - "What are they doing?"
 - "How do you feel?"
 - "What things can you touch around you? "
4. Ask them to breathe-in deeply and remember that image.
5. Each participant will design a picture or make a collage of what they imaged for their children.
6. Display the collages/pictures and ask each participant to share their picture with the group.

Circle Discussion

- Questions to ask participants:
 - "What have you included in your collage/picture?"
 - "Why did you select the pictures/symbols/drawing that you included?"
 - "How can we make these solutions come to life?"
 - "How can we move our vision to action?"
 - "What resources do we need in order to achieve these goals and solutions?"
 - "How can we reach-out to our community to ask for support to make each solution a reality?"

Native Pathways to Success Parent Workshop

- “How do the two activities—barriers and vision—compliment each other and why?”
- “How does having a vision relate to your children being successful in school?”
- “What should our next steps be?”
- Share this quote: “If you have built castles in the air, your work need not be lost, that’s where it should be. Now put the foundations under them.” Henry David Thoreau from the conclusion to Walden.
- Let each participant know that they are building the foundation for their educational vision. This is the castle that this quote speaks about. Each solution and vision is the foundation for success.

Closure

- Remind everyone of the next meeting date.
- Sign stipends sheet/ensure attendance is complete.
- Closing ritual that your group designs—a saying or phrase, or share a word that describes what each participant feels about the session.
- Tell participants that they have a homework assignment. They must each make a vision collage/picture and bring it to share next session.

Additional Resources or Suggestions

Handout 2.1: Visioning

Handout 2.2: Why Create a Vision?

Handout 2.3: What is a Vision?

Handout 2.4: The power of Vision

Handout 2.5: Clarifying and Refining the Vision

Handout 2.6: Taking Action and Supporting the Vision

Handout 2.7: Living the Vision

Handout 2.1: Visioning

A very great vision is needed and the man who has it must follow it as the eagle seeks the deepest blue of the sky. -Crazy Horse

- My child's life now
- My child's life ten years from now
- Things I like about my child's life today
- Things I look forward to in my child's future
- Things I don't like about my child's life today
- Things I am afraid of for my child in the future

Handout 2.2: Why Create a Vision?

- Choices and decisions we make create consequences. Without the direction of a clear vision to guide us, we fail to acquire the quality-of-life results we expect.
- Partial visions lead to imbalance in life.
- Visions based on reflections by others, and not on the inner personal-self are not rewarding and empowering to the individual.
- A shared vision empowers and impacts quality-of-life.
- A well-defined vision leads to satisfaction and a sense of meaning and purpose in life.
- The lack of a clear vision leads to settling for whatever happens. Creating and staying true to a vision makes things happen.

*"If we keep doing what we're doing,
we're going to keep getting what we're getting."*
-Steven Covey

*"When one door closes, another one opens. But we often look so regretfully upon the closed door
that we don't see the one that has opened for us."*
-Alexander Graham Bell

"The most damaging phrase in language is: 'It's always been done that way.'"
-Rear Admiral Grace Hopper

Handout 2.3: What is a Vision?

- A vision begins as an idea in your imagination that you have a desire to make real.
- The idea turns into the intention and will to achieve that idea.
- Refining and clarifying the idea along with the intentions to achieve it are what turn into the vision.
- The vision is the articulation of the desired future that is better in some important way than what exists or what is expected (as of now) to exist in the future.

"A vision is a clear picture of what you hope to create."
-Chynoweth and Dyer (1991, pg 63), Strengthening Families

"A vision is the art of seeing things invisible."
-Jonathan Swift

"The best way to predict your future is to create it."
-Anonymous

Handout 2.4: The Power of Vision

Vision

The ability to see beyond our present reality, to create, to invent what does not yet exist, to become what we not yet are. It gives us the capacity to live out of our imagination instead of our memory.

-Steven Covey (1994, p103), *First Things First*

Creating a Vision: Begin by Dreaming

- Consider who you and your child would like to participate in helping to build a vision.
- Brainstorm, Dream, Imagine.
- Focus on things you hope for your child, a sense of purpose and meaning in life.
- Do not limit your dreams to what is, where things currently exist, or what has typically occurred in the lives of others who share similar background to your child's.
- Dreams are not based on or limited by your child's needs; their needs will be determined by the dream.

"You can't have a better tomorrow if your thinking about yesterday all the time."

-Charles Kettering

"The best way to predict your future is to create it."

-Anonymous

"A ship in harbor is safe—but that is not what ships are for."

-John A Shedd

"You see things and ask 'Why?'"

But I dream things that never were and say 'Why not?'"

-George Bernard Shaw

Handout 2.5: Clarifying and Refining the Vision

- Creating a vision is a process of nurturing and cultivating ideas and imagination.
- Differentiate between the future that would become real and the future of your vision.
- The vision must be about changing that *which is likely to occur*, rather than changing *what is*.
- The vision is about changing the world in a way that wouldn't have normally happened.
- The vision must distinguish between what must change and what must not change.
- A vision must be clear and well-defined to be a real vision.

"Imagination is more important than knowledge."
-Albert Einstein

"It is better to aim high and miss than to never aim at all."
-Unknown

"Only those who attempt the absurd ... will achieve the impossible."
-Anonymous

*"I always wanted to be somebody,
but I see now I should have been more specific."*
-Lily Tomlin

Handout 2.6: Taking Action and Supporting the Vision

- Share the vision and help others recognize their importance in the realization of the vision.
- Lock onto the vision; make it a way of life, a part of every decision.
- Make each day a step toward making the vision a dream come true.
- Become aware of and utilize the natural forces that move toward achievement of the vision.
- Become aware of and avoid, reduce, or neutralize those things that lead away from the vision.
- Anticipate resistance in the accomplishment of the vision.
- Envision the implications of successfully achieving the vision.

"Vision without action is a daydream. Action without vision is a nightmare."
-Japanese Proverb

*"Action may not always bring happiness:
but there is no happiness without action."*
-Henry Van Dyke

*"Our goals can only be reached through a vehicle of plan in which we must frequently believe,
and upon which we must vigorously act.
There is no other road to success."*
-Steven Brennan

*"Obstacles are those frightful things you see
when you take your eyes off your goals."*
-Unknown

Handout 2.7: Living the Vision

"Most people who feel empowered by their vision statement find that there seems to be some point at which their statement "lives." They own it. It's theirs. The vital connection is made between the vision and the moment in life. Then, with nurturing and continuing cultivation, the vision becomes the primary factor that influences every moment of choice. "(Covey, *First Things First* pg 116)

Characteristics of empowering statements

1. Represents the deepest and best within you. It comes out of a solid connection with your deep inner life.
2. Is the fulfillment of your own/child's unique gifts? It's the expression of your unique capacity to contribute to yourself or your child.
3. Is transcendent. It's based on principles of contribution and purpose higher than itself.
4. Addresses and integrates all four fundamental human needs and capacities. It includes fulfillment in physical, social, mental, and spiritual dimensions.
5. Is based on principles that produce quality-of-life results. Both the ends and the means are based on true north principles.
6. Deals with both vision and principle-based values. It's not good enough to have values without visions—you want to be good, but you want to be good for something. On the other hand, vision without value can lead to something terrible; like Hitler. An empowering vision statement deals with both power and competence: *what you want to be and what you want to do in your life.*
7. Deals with all the significant roles in your life. It represents a lifetime balance of personal, family, work, and community—whatever roles you feel are yours to fill.
8. Is written to inspire you—not impress anyone else. It communicates to you and inspires you on the most essential level.

Handout 2.7: Native Youth Graduates 1



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Handout 2.7: Native Youth Graduates 2



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Handout 2.7: Native Youth Graduates 3



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Notes Lesson 2

LESSON THREE: Communication 1

“It will be what you make it.”

–Native youth voice

Participant Outcome

Participants will be able to describe the components of nonverbal communication & effective listening.

Time Frame

50 minutes

Group Size

Large or small—it is ideal to have an even number of participants

Materials Needed

- Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products
- Sage, sage bowl and lighter
- Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
- Pencil/colored pencils
- Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
- Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
- Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
- Markers/stickers/art materials
- Flip chart
- Handout: 3.1, Non Verbal Communication

Before You Begin

- Make copies of handouts

Directions

1. Discuss the idea of non-verbal communication. How much do we use it in everyday communication? Let’s come up with and list ways in which people use non-verbal communication. How do American Indian people use non-verbal communication (e.g., pointing with lips, moving away from a speaker, turning away, snapping your eyes, etc.).
2. Pass out handout 3.1: *Non Verbal Communication*.
3. Talk about the feelings that are the handout and think about how many people use non-verbal communication and why? Write down action/signal on the handout that conveys these feelings/emotions.
4. Talk about the concept that similar methods of non-verbal communication can be misconstrued to mean something different. Give an example. Discuss ways that dual messages can sometimes be displayed in non-verbal communication, and how this can lead to miscommunication by someone misunderstanding what feeling is being communicated.

Discussion Communication 1

Nonverbal activity

1. What have you learned through family or our cultural community through non-verbal communication?
2. How often do you feel people misunderstand your non-verbal communication?
3. What ways do you communicate non-verbally?
4. Why is this important to know?

Effective listening activity

1. How did you feel when you were talking?
2. How did you feel when you asked the questions?
3. How can you use active listening when working with schools?

Closure

Journal

- How does this activity relate to your interaction with schools?

Additional Resources or Suggestions

Handout 3.1: Non Verbal Communication

Handout 3.2: Concepts of Active Listening

Handout 3.3: Active Listening Activity

Handout 3.1: Non-Verbal Communication

Anger

Acceptance

Defensive

Discouraged

Bored

Anxious

Handout 3.2: Concepts of Active Listening

No talking when someone is talking

Nobody can listen and talk at the same time. Think about what you're going to say in response to what is being said. Listen carefully—this will help you gain understanding about what is being shared.

Non-verbal cues

Look at the person who's talking. Listen so you can repeat back what was said. When you look at the speaker (no need to stare or gaze into eyes), you show that you are interested in what is being said.

Being distracted

Work hard not to doodle when someone is talking to you. If you allow something to occupy your time while someone is speaking to you this interferes with concentrating on the message and could lead to miscommunication. Also, the other person may think you don't listen.

Patience

Work hard to hold judgment and reaction to what is being said, Don't respond until you hear the whole story. If you interrupt or become angry, you have lost your ability to be a good listener.

Go easy on the argument or criticism

If someone is trying to explain—and you immediately argue your point or criticize—you have stopped listening and the explanation has not even reached you. The person you are talking to may tune you out or respond with their argument and critiques. When this happens you are heading to a complete breakdown in communication.

Ask questions

When it's your turn to speak should start by clarifying what you didn't understand. Be sure to ask if you are unsure; you have to be responsible for yourself in communicating your views.

Handout 3.3: Active Listening Activity

The rules to active listening

1. Listen to your partner. Let them know you are listening by making sounds and nodding your head (for example, “Mmm-hmm, I see,” or “yes, ahhh”). Don’t interrupt in any way to talk when your partner is speaking.
2. Restate what you thought you heard (“Did I understand what you were saying...”).
3. Clarify what is being said by focusing on what was said and the emotion behind it. You could say, “you seem to be saying or I thought I heard you say...”
4. Focus on the feelings and information to encourage more information. For example, you could say, “so, what do you think you’re going to do about that?”

Active listening—get ready, set, go

Take turns stating the sentences below and finish them using your personal experiences. After your partner completes a statement, use the rules to active listening. It may seem strange or ridiculous at first but you’d be amazed how much more you learn about the other person because they will share more.

Statements

1. The hardest part of this workshop is . . .
2. What I want to do most in the next few years is . . .
3. One of my children worries me because . . .
4. I get scared when I think about meetings at school because . . .
5. I feel best about my ability to . . .
6. The best thing I ever did in my life was . . .
7. The part of the workshop I like best so far is . . .
8. The best interaction that I had at my child school was . . .

Notes Lesson 3

LESSON THREE, SECTION 2: Communication 2

"It will be what you make it."
—Native youth voice

Participant Outcome

Participants will be able to describe how personal differences and experiences affect communication.

Time Frame

20 minutes

Group Size

Large or small—it is ideal to have an even number of participants

Materials Needed

- Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products
- Sage, sage bowl and lighter
- Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
- Pencil/colored pencils
- Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
- Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
- Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
- Markers/stickers/art materials
- Flip chart
- Index cards
- Word list
- Handout: 3.2.1: Shapes and 3.2.2: More Shapes

Before You Begin

✓ Make copies of handouts for students and have plain paper available

Write these words on index cards:

| | | | |
|----------------|-----------|----------|--------------|
| Family | Laughing | Flute | Candy |
| Neighborhood | Sad | Angry | Elephant |
| School | Drum | Branch | Lamp |
| Graduation | Snow | Apple | Key |
| Running | Celebrate | Fork | Jingle dress |
| Orange | Beach | Tree | Friend |
| Ice cream | Singer | Shawl | Party |
| Birthday | Crying | Sandwich | Fry Bread |
| Pow-wow | Dancing | Campfire | |
| Bridge | Afraid | Bird | |
| Ant | Happy | Fan | |
| Valentines Day | Sunset | Flower | |

Directions

Communication pictorial activity

1. Have participants pair-up.
2. This activity is similar to the game of pictorial where one person in a pair draws something and the other person guesses what has been drawn. Decide who will draw and who will guess first in each group.
3. Show an index card with a word on it. The person who is to draw looks at the word and then closes his/her eyes. He or she must draw a picture to represent the word without using words and without looking at what he/she is drawing.
4. The guesser must guess the word in the allotted time (up to the facilitator).
5. Repeat the process and ensure that each partner has a chance to draw and guess several of the index card pictures.
6. Explain that whether we communicate verbally or non-verbally, some ideas are harder than others to communicate because of the varying levels of concreteness (e.g., ice cream vs. excited), varying level of meaning based upon a person's experiences (e.g., one person's idea of a celebration may be different than your own), and varying levels of comfort with someone who you are close to or who you have things in common with (it is usually easier to communicate verbally than non-verbally).

Verbal communication Shapes Activity

1. Divide into pairs.
2. Have partners sit back-to-back on the floor or in their chairs.
3. Give one participant a copy of handout 3.2.1: Shapes, and have him/her verbally communicate what they see to their partner.
4. Have partners switch roles and give the next handout 3.2.2: More Shapes.
5. Share the process with the participants focusing on the difference between verbal and non-verbal communication.

Discussion Communication 1

Nonverbal

1. What have you learned through family or our cultural community through non-verbal communication?
2. How often do you feel people misunderstand your non-verbal communication?
3. What ways do you communicate non-verbally?
4. Why is this important to know?

Effective listening

1. How did you feel when you were talking?
2. How did you feel when you asked the questions?
3. How can you use active listening when working with schools?

Pictionary

1. What was the difficult task—drawing or guessing? Why?
2. How would this have been different if you could draw, look at your picture and speak?
3. How does this activity relate to working with and communicating with your child's school?
4. Did this activity assist you in understanding the importance of verbal and non-verbal communication, different learning styles and how your personal experience play into verbal and non-verbal communication?

Verbal communication Shapes

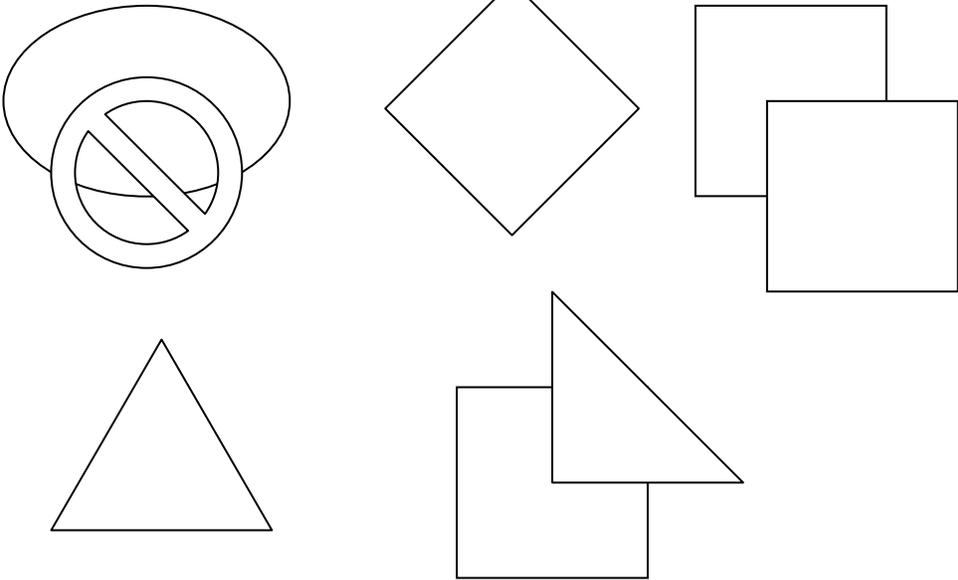
1. Where is it important to utilize good verbal communication?
2. How did you communicate verbally?
3. Why is it important to hone these skills?

Closure

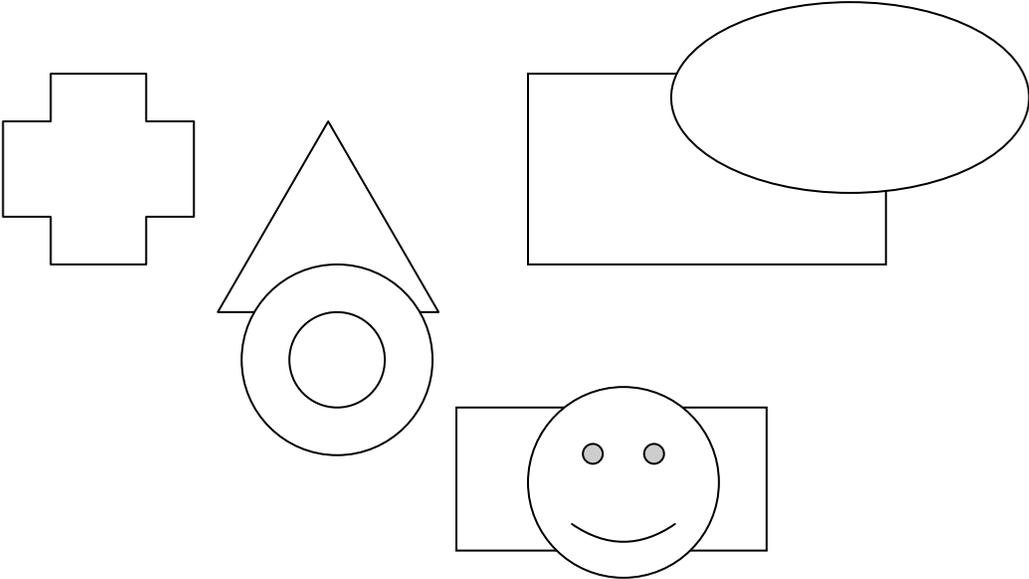
Journal

- How do these activities relate to your interaction with schools?
- What time in your life were you faced with not being able to verbally communicate what you were thinking and feeling?
- Were these activities easy or hard?

Handout 3.2.1: Shapes



Handout 3.2.2: More Shapes



Notes Lesson 3.2

LESSON FOUR: Advocacy and Conflict Resolution 1

“Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage. The human spirit is to grow strong by conflict.”
-William Ellery Channing

Participant Outcome

Describe the basic concepts of advocacy and how advocacy can vary in different situations. Explain multiple positive approaches to getting one’s needs met, and distinguish between different types of behaviors (passive, aggressive and assertive).

Time Frame

90 minutes

Group Size

Any

Materials Needed

1. Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products
2. Sage, sage bowl and lighter
3. Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
4. Pencil/colored pencils
5. Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
6. Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
7. Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
8. Markers/stickers/art materials
9. Flip chart
10. Handout Personal Advocacy 4.1
11. Handout how do I get what I need? 4.2
12. Handout Personal advocacy questionnaire 4.3
13. Markers
14. Pen/pencils
15. Plain paper
16. Three pieces of heavy tag board—8 ½ x 11
17. String
18. Hole puncher
19. Tape
20. List of settings provided in the activity direction

Before You Begin

1. Make copies of all the handouts in section 4.
2. Look over the sample “KWL” chart located in the handout section of lesson 4.
3. For some people the term, “personal advocacy,” implies putting the needs of oneself first and working to get individual needs met. For the purpose of the workshops, the activities related to personal advocacy are meant to teach participants in the American Indian community how to advocate for the needs of the community as a whole and for their children. Emphasis should be placed on encouraging participants to use the skills they learn in the personal advocacy lesson to overcome challenges they face individually and as a part of a larger community and to work as family/parent leaders in getting their children and personal needs met.
4. **KWL** is a teaching method that is used to understand the level of prior knowledge and curiosity that participants may have in a particular area. The “**K**” is the column for what participants already **know** about the subject area and is filled out at the beginning of the lesson. The “**W**” is the column for what participants **want** to know about in the subject area and is also filled out at the beginning of the lesson. The “**L**” is the column for what participants **learned** after lesson 4 is completed and is filled out at the end. A sample chart is provided in the handout section of lesson 4 for reference.
5. Prior to starting the workshop, prepare a large KWL chart of flipchart paper and write “Personal Advocacy” at the top.

Directions

What is personal advocacy activity

1. Refer to the flipchart with the KWL chart on it. Explain that the purpose of completing a KWL chart is for the group and the facilitator to identify what they already know about a topic and what more they would like to learn. Explain that the last column is used at the end of lesson 4 to see what the group has learned. Tell the participant there is no right or wrong answers.
2. Complete the first 2 columns of the KWL chart with the participants.
3. Pass out handout 4.1: Personal Advocacy. Discuss the principles/concepts of personal advocacy. Refer to the KWL chart as appropriate particularly to reinforce what is already known.
4. Complete column 3 when the personal Advocacy and conflict resolution section is complete.

How to get what I need activity

1. Make copies of the handouts.
2. Pass-out handout 4.3: Personal Advocacy Questionnaire. Ask participants to put them aside until later in the workshop.
3. Pass-out handout 4.2: How do I get what I need? Have participants review the three common types of asking for assistance (passive, aggressive and assertive). Discuss briefly that appropriate personal advocacy involves being assertive as oppose to being passive and/or aggressive.
4. Explain to the participants that people vary on their levels of personal advocacy and that being a strong advocate for yourself, your family and your community takes practice.
5. Review the advocacy questionnaire. Ask the participants to think about what their preferred behavior is when asking for assistance. Invite participants to share the results of their questionnaire if they are willing. Discuss individual questions from the questionnaire and identify what types of behavior each option may be.

Discussion

Personal advocacy activity

1. How does the concept of personal advocacy fit with supporting your child in school?
2. Do you agree with personal advocacy? Why & why not?
3. What do you think the community thinks about personal advocacy? What does your family think?

How to get what I need activity

1. How do people in your community advocate for their needs? Are there people in your support circle that can personally advocate well?
2. How does this activity relate to supporting your child at school?

Closure

Personal advocacy

- Do you think of your self as an advocate? Why and why not?
- What method of getting support do I use most often?

Know-Want-Learn K.W.L

| KNOW | WANT | LEARNED |
|------|------|---------|
| | | |

Handout 4.1: Personal Advocacy

What is it?

- Asking appropriately and positively for what you need

What does it look like when you're utilizing personal advocacy?

- Takes initiative
- Introduce self to persona
- Is prepared and has information ready
- Is organized
- States clearly
- Asks specifically for what is needed
- Is well mannered and ask in a reasonable and respectful way
- Uses appropriate body language
- Listens without interrupting
- Has realistic expectations
- Is calm and cooperative
- Is open-minded and tolerant

Handout 4.2: How do I get what I need?

People act in different ways to get what they need or want. There are typically three different types of behavior that people use.

Passive

A passive person has difficulty stating what they want or need. They tend to accept what is happening to them without protest even when what is happening to them is unfair. A passive person struggles with speaking her mind and will wait to see if other people will speak up or do something. The problem with passive behavior is that the person's needs and wants go unnoticed.

Aggressive

Aggressiveness involves acting against others in a way that hurts them and minimizes their worth as people. An aggressive person will get what they want or need at the expense of another person. People fear being hurt and devalued by aggressive behavior. Aggressive behavior may seem to get people what they want, but it won't last. People's fear and discomfort will cause them to avoid aggressive people.

Assertive

People often confuse assertion with aggression, but there is a tremendous difference. When someone is assertive, they make their own choices. An assertive person speaks up or acts appropriately to get what they want to need.

Benefits of being assertive

- You can learn to say no without feeling guilty
- You can express disagreement respectfully
- You can be persistent
- You can speak up for your rights without getting hostile
- You can make your own choices

Handout 4.3: Personal Advocacy Questionnaire

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. When you need support, which of these are likely to be difficult for you?

(Check all that apply)

- Taking the initiative and asking for assistance
- Making your needs clearly understood
- Asking in a positive way
- Knowing what support you need and asking specifically

2. Imagine that you had a difficult encounter with parent/teacher conferences last year. You are getting ready to prepare for this year's conferences and you know that your child is having difficulty relating to the teacher. When are you most likely to ask for support for this issue?

- The first two weeks of school
- Right before the conference
- After you realize that there is an issue
- After the conference and the teacher didn't bring it up
- Never, you figure it will work it self out
- Only after your child is suspended

3. You are having trouble understanding your child's homework assignment and what is expected on the assignment. Who are you most likely to ask for help?

- Other parents
- Tell your child to ask and let you know
- Teacher
- You'd figure it out on your own without asking

4. When you need help with issues/concerns that are affecting your child at school, how do you feel about asking for help?

- Embarrassed to have anyone know that your child needs special attention
- Frustrated with the teacher and school
- Frustrated with yourself
- Confused about just what sort of help to ask for
- Comfortable asking teacher, principal, or other school staff for help

Who have you reached-out to for help in the past?

Who could you ask for help that you haven't asked? What prevents you from asking again?

What specific things could you do to get more help and support for your child's education?

Notes Lesson 4

LESSON FOUR, SECTION 2: Advocacy and Conflict Resolution 2

“Difficulties are meant to rouse, not discourage. The human spirit is to grow strong by conflict.”

-William Ellery Channing

Participant Outcome

Participants will discuss similarities and differences of personal advocacy.

Time Frame

20 minutes

Group Size

Any

Materials Needed

- Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products
- Sage, sage bowl and lighter
- Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
- Pencil/colored pencils
- Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
- Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
- Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
- Markers/stickers/art materials
- Flip chart
- Handout 4.2.1 “Toughest Indian in the World,” Sherman Alexie

Before You Begin

Make copies of the handout (Sherman Alexie excerpt) for participants.

Directions

1. Review the characteristics of passive, assertive and aggressive behavior.
2. Have each person individually read the story.
3. Facilitate a discussion including encouragement of different opinions from the participants on how the person in the story handled the situation. Have the participants choose whether the person in the story acted in a passive, assertive or aggressive manner.
4. Fill in the last section of the KWL Chart at the end of the session.

Discussion

1. Was the main character acting in passive, assertive or aggressive? How?
2. How are different types of behavior the same or different?
3. Do you think this was the best possible way of handling the situation? Why or why not?

Closure

Journal

- How would you have acted or handled that situation? What if you were the main character or that was your child?

Handout 4.21

Toughest Indian In the World,

By Sherman Alexie

(pp 164-172)

Up until her death, Grandmother Fury had been the very last Spokane Indian who knew how to make salmon mush in the way that Spokane Indians had been making salmon mush for the last hundred years or so. In terms of the entire tribal history, salmon mush was a recent addition to the traditional cuisine—just as human beings were among the most recent life-forms on the whole planet—but salmon mush was a singular and vitally important addition.

After all, Grandmother Fury's own grandmother had served salmon mush to Chief Joseph just a few days before he led the Nez Perce on their heroic and ultimately failed thousand-mile flight from the Ninth Cavalry. Though he was captured and sent to the prison of some other tribe's reservation, Joseph praised the salmon mush he'd eaten and often hinted that the strange combination of fish, oats, and milk was the primary reason why he'd nearly led his people into the wild freedom of Canada. Nine decades later, on the Spokane Indian Reservation, Grandmother Fury said a prayer for Joseph and stirred a few more slices of smoked salmon into the pot of oats boiling on her woodstove. At that point, many cooks would have poured in the milk and brought it all back to the boil. But Grandmother Fury was cousin to salmon and knew their secrets. She poured the ice-cold milk over the boiling salmon and oats just a few seconds before serving. In that collision between heat and cold, between mammal and fish, between

liquid and solid, there was so much magic that Grandmother Fury trembled as she set a bowl in front of her grandson and watched him eat. "It's good," said Roman. He was eighteen years old and lovely in his grandmother's eyes. "*But you haven't even tasted it,*" she said, in Spokane, the tribal language. "Don't have to," said Roman in English. "I believe in your mush more than I believe in God." "*You liar,*" she said in Spokane and laughed.

"Yes," he said in English. "But it's a good lie." Grandmother and grandson sat in the small kitchen of her home—their home!—and found no need to speak to each other. Because they were Indians, they gave each other room to think, to invent the next lie, joke, story, compliment, or insult. He ate; she watched.

That afternoon, Roman was going to take the Colonial Aptitude Test, his college boards, and hoped to score high enough to get into college, any college. He was the first member of his extended family who'd even wanted to pursue higher education. In fact, there were only a couple of dozen Spokane Indians who'd ever graduated from any four-year university and only a few more than that who'd bothered to attend even the smallest community college. A few small colleges had offered full basketball scholarships to Roman, but he'd turned them down. He wanted to attend the best school possible, whether he played basketball for them or not.

“You know,” Grandmother Fury said in rough English, in careful *and* clumsy syllables, after Roman had finished one bowl of mush and started in on another. “Those college tests, they’re not for Indians.” Roman nodded his head. He knew the Colonial Aptitude Test was culturally biased, but he also knew the CAT was *supposed* to be culturally biased. The CAT was designed to exclude from college as many poor people as statistically possible. Despite the rumors of democracy and fairness, Roman knew, when it came to the CAT, that meritocracy was to college as fish was to bicycle. He knew the CAT was an act of war. As a result, Roman wasn’t approaching the test with intellect and imagination. He was going to attack it with all of the hatred and anger in his heart.

“I’m afraid,” he said. “*Yes, I know,*” she said in Spokane. “I don’t want to be afraid.” “*Yes, I know,*” she said in English.

With tears in his eyes and a salty taste at the back of his throat, Roman finished another bowl of salmon mush and asked for another.

“Yes,” said his grandmother. Three months later, Roman Gabriel Fury sat in the waiting room of the Colonial Aptitude Testing Service office in Spokane, Washington. He held two letters in his hands. One letter congratulated him on his exceptional CAT performance. The other letter requested his presence for a special meeting with the president of the Colonial Aptitude Testing Service. Nervous and proud, Roman wondered if he was going to be given a special commendation, a reward for such a high score, unusually high for anybody, let alone an Indian boy who’d attended a reservation high school without

chemistry, geometry, or foreign-language classes. Sitting in the CAT office, in that small city named after his tribe, Roman wore his best suit, his only suit, a JCPenney special that his father had purchased for him four years earlier. Roman’s father was a poor and generous man who had given his son many things over the years, mostly inexpensive trinkets whose only value was emotional, but the JCPenney suit was expensive, perhaps the most expensive gift that Roman had ever received, certainly more valuable than being named after a professional quarterback who had some Indian blood, or the rumor of Indian blood. Young Roman had often wished his father had given him the name of the other professional Indian quarterback, Sonny Six Killer, the one who had demonstrable Indian blood.

Roman Gabriel Fury often wished that his name was Sonny Six Killer Fury. With a name like that, Roman knew that he could have become a warrior. “Mr. Furry,” said the CAT secretary, mispronouncing his name for the third time, adding an extra *r* that changed Roman from an angry Indian into a cute rodent. She sat behind a small desk. She’d worked for CAT for ten years. She’d never taken any of their tests. Roman sat in silence. He hated wooden chairs.

“Mr. Furry,” she said. “I’m not a hamster,” said Roman.

“Excuse me?” “My name is not Furry. It’s not Hairy or hirsute either. My name is Fury, as in righteous anger.”

“You don’t have to be so impolite.”

“You don’t have to mispronounce my name.”

“Well, Mr. Fury,” she said, feeling somehow smaller in the presence of a boy who was twenty years younger. “You can go in now. Mr. Williams will see you.” “Assuming that he has eyes, I’m sure that’s an anatomical possibility.” Roman stepped into another office and sat in another wooden chair across a large oak desk from Mr. Williams, a white man who studied, or pretended to study, the contents of a file folder.

“Hmmm,” said Mr. Williams, as if the guttural were an important part of his vocabulary. “Yes,” said Roman, because he wanted to be the first one to use a word actually found in *Webster’s Dictionary*, Ninth Edition. “Well,” said Mr. Williams. “Let me see here. It says here in your file that you’re eighteen years old, a member of the Spokane Tribe of Indians, valedictorian of Wellpinit High School on said reservation, captain of the chess, math, history, and basketball teams, accepted on full academic scholarship to St. Jerome the Second University here in Spokane.” “Yes,” said Roman, with the same inflection as before. “That’s quite the all-American resume, Mr. Fury.”

“No, I think it’s more of an all-Native American resume.” Mr. Williams smiled. His teeth, skin, and pinstriped suit were all the same shade of gray. Roman couldn’t tell where the three season wool ended and where the man began. “Roman Gabriel Fury,” said Williams. “Quite an interesting name.” “Normally, I’d say thank you, sir, but I don’t think that was a sincere compliment, was it?” “Just an observation, young Mr. Fury. I am very good with observation. In fact, at this very moment, I am observing the fact that your parents are absent. A very distressing observation, to be sure, considering our specific request that your mother and father attend this meeting with you.”

“Sir, my parents are dead. If you’d read my file in its entirety, you might have observed that.”

Mr. William’s eyes flashed with anger, the first display of any color. He flipped through the file, searching for the two words that would confirm the truth: *deceased, deceased.*

At that moment, if Roman had closed his eyes, he could have seen the yellow headlights of the red truck that smashed head-on into his father’s blue Chevy out on Reservation Road. He could have remembered that his father was buried in a brown suit. At that moment, if Roman had closed his eyes, he could have seen his mother’s red blood coughed into the folds of a white handkerchief. Roman was three years old when his mother was buried in a purple dress. He barely remembered her. “Yes,” said Mr. Williams. “I see now. Your grandmother has been your guardian for the last three years. Why didn’t she come?”

“She doesn’t speak much English, sir.” “And yet, you speak English so well; speak it well enough to score in the ninety-ninth percentile in the verbal section of our little test. Quite an amazing feat for someone from, well, let’s call it a modest background.” “I’ve never been accused of modesty.” “No, I would guess not,” said Williams, setting the file down on his desk. He picked up a Mont Blanc pen as if it were a weapon. “But I guess you’ve been called arrogant,” added Williams. “And, perhaps, calculating?”

“Calculating enough for a ninety-nine on the math section of your little test,” Roman said. He really hated wooden chairs. “Yes, indeed,” said Williams. “A nearly perfect score. In fact, the second-

highest score ever for a Native American. Congratulations.” “Normally, I’d say thank you, sir, but I don’t think that was a sincere compliment, was it?” Mr. Williams leaned across his desk, straightened his back, placed his hands flat on either side of his desk, took a deep breath, exhaled, and made himself larger.

He owned all ten volumes of Harris Brubaker’s *How to Use Body Language to Destroy Your Enemies*.

“Son,” said Williams, using what Brubaker considered to be the second-most effective diminutive. “We’ve been informed there were certain irregularities in your test taking process.” “Could you be more specific, sir?” “You were twenty minutes late for the test.”

“Yes, I was.” “I also understand that your test-taking apparel was, to say the least, quite distracting.”

Roman smiled. He’d worn his red, yellow, white, and blue grass dance outfit while taking the test — highly unusual to say the least — but he had used two standard number-two pencils, as specified in the rule book. “There’s nothing in the rule book about a dress code,” said Roman. “No, no, there’s not. But I certainly would enjoy an explanation.” “My grandmother told me your little test was culturally biased,” said Roman. “And that I might need a little extra power to do my best. I was going to bring my favorite drum group and let them sing a few honor songs, but I thought the non-Indians in the room might get a little, as you say, distracted.”

“Power?” asked Williams, using Harris Brubaker’s favorite word. Roman stood and leaned across the desk. He’d read Brubaker’s first volume, had found it

derivative and ambiguous, and never bothered to read any of the others. “Well, you see, sir,” said Roman. “The thing is, I was exhausted from having to walk seventy-five miles to get from my reservation to Spokane for the test, because my grandmother and I are too poor to afford a dependable car.” “You hitchhiked?” asked Williams. “Oh, no, hitchhiking would mean that I actually got a ride. But people don’t pick up Indians much, you know?”

“Do you expect me to believe you walked seventy-five miles?”

“Well, that’s the way it is,” said Roman. “Anyway, I get to the city, but then I have to run thirty blocks to get to the private high school where they’re giving the test, because I had enough money for lunch or a bus, but not both, and sometimes you have to make hard choices.

“And then, once I got to the private high school, I had to convince the security guard, who looked suspiciously like a member of the Seventh Cavalry, that I was there to take the test, and not to vandalize the place. And hey, thank God I wasn’t wearing my grass-dance outfit yet because he might have shot me down on the spot.” “Anyway, once I got past him, I was, as you observed, twenty minutes late. So I ran into a bathroom, changed into my grass dance outfit, then sat down with your little test, realizing belatedly that I was definitely the only Injun in the room, and aside from the black kid in the front row and the ambiguously ethnic chick in the back, the only so-called minority in the room, and that frightened me more than you will ever know.” “But I crack open the test anyway, and launch into some three dimensional calculus problem, which is written in French translated from Latin translated from the

Phoenician or some other God-awful language that only white people seem to find relevant or useful, and I'm thinking, I am Crazy Horse, I am Geronimo, I am Sitting Bull, and I'm thinking the required number-two pencil is a bow and arrow, that every math question is Columbus, that every essay question is Custer, and I'm going to kill them dead."

"So, anyway, I'm sure I flunk the damn test, because I'm an Indian from the reservation, and I can't be that smart, right? I mean, I'm the first person in my family to ever graduate from high school, so who the hell do I think I am, trying to go to college, right? So, I take the test and I did kill it. I killed it, I killed it, I killed it."

"And now, you want to take it away from me, a poor, disadvantaged, orphan minority who only wants to go to the best college possible and receive an excellent Catholic, liberal arts education, improve his life, and provide for his elderly, diabetic Grandmother who has heroically taken care of him in Third World conditions." "And, now, after all that, you want to take my score away from me? You want to change the rules after I learned them and beat them? Is that what you really want to do?" Mr. Williams smiled, but none of his teeth showed. "I didn't think so," said Roman as he turned away from the desk. He stepped through one door, walked past a woman who'd decided to hate him, and then ran.

"The Toughest Indian in the World" is reprinted with permission from the publisher of Alexie, S. (2000). *The Toughest Indian in the World*. New York: Grove Press.

Notes Lesson 4.2

LESSON FIVE: Community and Personal Support

“Hear me! A single twig breaks, but a bundle of twigs is strong.”
—Tecumseh, Shawnee, 1795

Participant Outcome

Participants explore community history and resources and will also begin to explore the impact of social layers which can touch their lives and the importance of positive interaction within the Native community and their surrounding community.

Time Frame

90 minutes

Group Size

Any

Materials Needed

- Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products
- Sage, sage bowl and lighter
- Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
- Pencil/colored pencils
- Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
- Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
- Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
- Markers/stickers/art materials
- Flip chart
- Handout: 5.1: Circles of Influence
- Reference materials
- Materials for presentations

Before You Begin

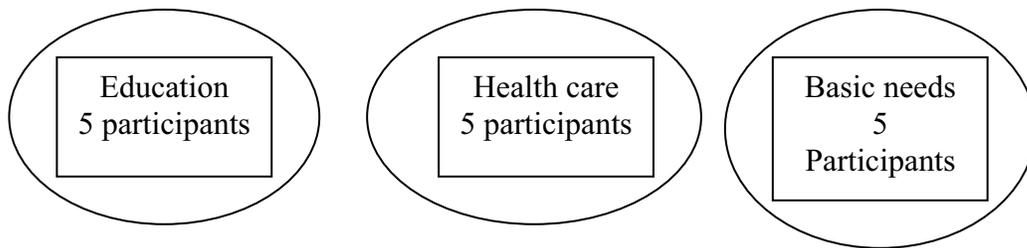
1. Make copies of Handout 5.1
2. Familiarize yourself with jigsaw teaching. Jigsaw teaching is a teaching method that can be used in a wide variety of learning environments. The value of the jigsaw method is that it provides an opportunity to cover a large amount of information in a relatively short amount of time by dividing the learning material equally among participant groups. In addition, participants become involved in the activity because they are responsible for teaching their peers.
3. Gather resource materials for the activity. Use of web sites can prove to be invaluable for the purposes of time and effort. For the State of Minnesota, the web site of Minnesota Indian Affairs Council is an excellent recourse. Minneapolis American Indian Center AIRRNET is also a good resource. Explore the web sites prior to the start of the lesson to facilitate the process with the participants. Discuss the activity with community historians and resources for concise accurate information (Minnesota History Center and People resources).

4. Think about how you would like to facilitate a discussion on defining what community is. This discussion process should be quick.

Directions

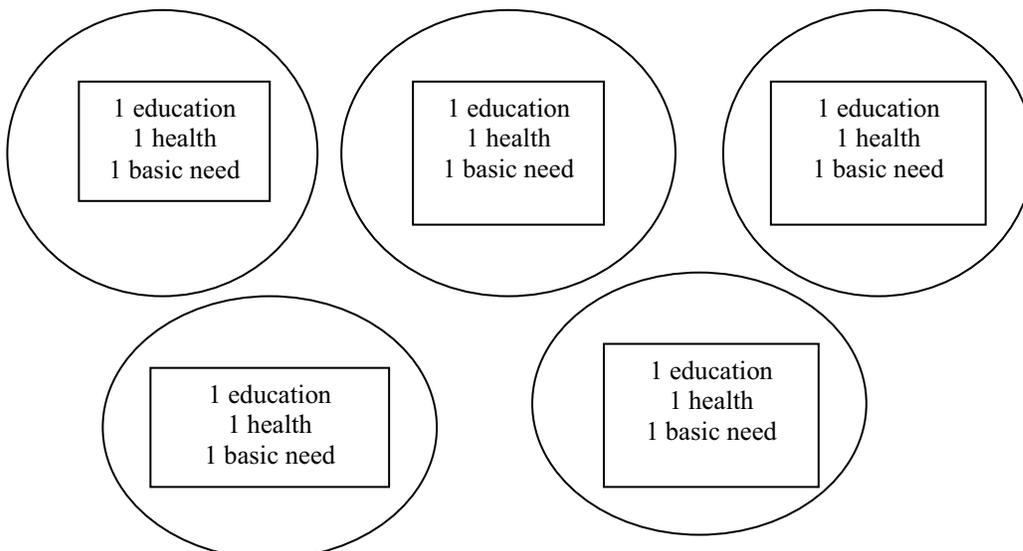
Jigsaw teaching activity

1. Divide participants into equal groups to the number of resources areas. The example listed below is based on 15 participants and three areas of focus. Adjustments should be made depending on the number of participants and the number of focus areas. (i.e, health care services, educational support services, basic needs resources).
2. Give each group 20-30 minutes to learn all they can about their assigned resource area. Multiple resources can be utilized, depending on time and availability of resources. After researching the focus area, group members need to decide on what information should be presented and in what manner. The goal is to become “experts” on the information.
3. First order of grouping:



4. Shuffle participants so that group members from each topic area are in a new group formation. Do this so that the information from the three resource areas gets to new group members so they can hear about the resources in these particular areas. This allows each “expert” to share the information learned with a new group.

Second order of grouping:



Circles of Influence activity

1. Explain the importance of positive interaction between participant's Native community and the broader community and the fact that history has shown us that it is important to interact with the broader community for mutual understanding and survival of our community.
2. Share how we move in and out of different circles/groups in our lives (personal, social, career, family, spiritual, etc.).
3. Have the participants brainstorm about the different circles/groups that affect their lives (for example, drum groups, advisory councils, sports, friends, neighborhood, political, community service, exercise groups, support groups, bowling leagues, councils, etc.).
4. Provide each participant with 5.1: Circle of Influence.
5. Have each participant write their name in the center of the circle.
6. Have each participant write the names of each groups/circle that they identify with or would like to be a part of either in the Native community or the broader community.

Discussion

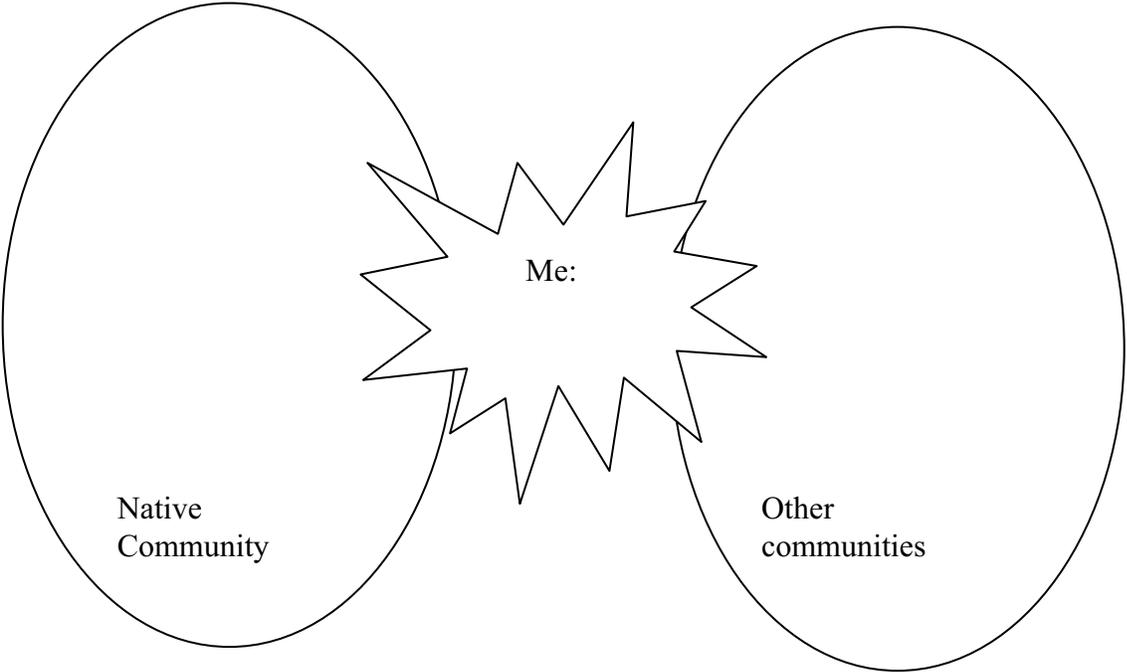
1. What is the interaction like between your community and the broader community?
2. What particular groups give you positive support and encouragement (e.g., friends, family, other parents)?
3. Are there any interests within your community or the broader community that you haven't explored which may bring more opportunities for positive interaction with other parents or to support you in being an engaged parent?
4. Are there any groups/circles in which you are interested in being a part of, but are not sure how to approach this group? What group?
5. Are there groups/circles that you have had the opportunity to interact with but have chosen not to? What are your reasons for not continuing to participate in these groups?
6. What are the possible solutions that may help you feel comfortable in participating with groups you are interested in being a part of?

Closure

Journal

- Jigsaw activity: Ask participants to share one new piece of information learned during this activity.
- Circle of influence activity: Ask participants to reflect on other ideas they have to assist with positive interactions and support in either native or broader communities.

Handout 5.1: Circles of Influence



Notes Lesson 5

LESSON SIX: Public Schools

"We may misunderstand but we do not inexperience."
-Dr. Vine Deloria, Standing Rock, 1992

Participant Outcome

Learn about the multiple programs and policies in public schools that can assist or affect our children and gain insight into how each individual school budget and system works.

Time Frame

90

Group Size

Any

Materials Needed

- Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products
- Sage, sage bowl and lighter
- Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
- Pencil/colored pencils
- Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
- Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
- Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
- Markers/stickers/art materials
- Flip chart
- Index Cards
- Program and Policy Resource information
- Learning Ed Tool—Parent to School Evaluation Section
- Panel Speakers: local school principal, Offices of Special Education and Family & Community Engagement representatives (state or district) and School Board director, Indian Education director and Indian Parent Committee member

Before You Begin

1. Contact speakers and confirm their attendance. Have them come about a ½ after the meeting starts.
2. Ensure that the school principal can speak to how the school budget is determined.
3. Prepare copies of Program and Policy Resources—NCLB, Special Education, Title 1 funding, family Engagement Policy, and school calendars.
4. Make copies of the Learn Ed Tool—Parent to School Evaluation, located in the resource section of this manual.
5. Set-up panel area for speakers.
6. Prepare chairs in U-shape facing speakers.
7. Prepare flipchart with welcoming message.
8. Give each participant a few index cards.

Directions

1. Before speakers arrive, share the information on the different types of programs and policies that govern a school, students and families, and that can support families.
2. Work with the participants to brainstorm questions to ask the panel and one thing they would like to share during the introduction.
3. Ask participants to write questions on the card for the speaker to respond to about issues that they may be having or have concerns about.
4. Introduce the panel—share some of their history with family and community engagement
5. Let panel members add any pertinent information about themselves.
6. Have participants introduce themselves and share one thing about their experiences with the workshop thus far.

Discussion

1. What new information did you learn?
2. What information will assist you with being a better advocate for your child?
3. In what ways can you see yourself being involved?

Closure

Journal

- How can this information help me support my child and be more visible at school?

Some of the activities in lessons six, seven and eight are adapted from the *Expanding the Circle: Respecting the Past, Preparing for the Future* (Ness, J. J., & Huisken, J., 2001), a curriculum produced by the Department of Community Integration at the University of Minnesota. These are used with permission of the authors.

Notes Lesson 6

LESSON SEVEN: Family Engagement, Native Style

“I don’t think that anybody anywhere can talk about the future of their people or with talking about education. Whoever controls education or our children controls our future, we have always placed a great deal of importance on education and that has helped us as a people. We must continue to do that.”

–Wilma P. Mankiller, Cherokee, 1987

Participant Outcome

To begin to develop meaningful ways of engagement for Native parents and to provide parents information on organizing parent groups for school change.

Time Frame

90 minutes

Group Size

Any

Materials Needed

- Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products
- Sage, sage bowl and lighter
- Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
- Pencil/colored pencils
- Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
- Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
- Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
- Markers/stickers/art materials
- Flip chart
- Sticky dots
- Plain paper
- School calendar—get from school office
- Representative from PTA and District Advisory, Principal
- Copy of Golden Eagle Event Planner, located in the supplemental resources section

Before You Begin

1. Get copies of school calendar.
2. Confirm guest—take the time to talk either face-to-face or by phone to share the outcome of this lesson, why we want them to participate, and to communicate the importance of having Native parents begin to build a connections to each other and then to school. Let the representative know that they will be asked to be a part of planning an event for the school along with the participants.
3. Prepare copies Golden Eagle Event Planner, located in the supplemental resources section.

Directions

1. Ask the participant to share what they know about engagement opportunities at the school for families?

2. Share the current ways and opportunities that parents/community can be involved at the school. Ask your guest to share other ways that may have not been mentioned.
3. Let participants know that often-times, because we have not been involved in planning engagement events and opportunities, we may not be as likely to participate because we don't feel it speaks to our values and community. Tonight we have an opportunity to change that by planning and thinking about our opportunities together with the school.
4. Ask participants to work in small groups with the guests to brain-storm a list of activities/events that would bring more Native families and community members to the school. Ask one participant from each group to record the information on a piece of paper.
5. Be sure to let the participants know not to think about budget cost right now. It's a time to dream about the possibilities.
6. On another piece of paper, have the participants brainstorm another list that will include ways that Native families/community can be involved with schools beyond current events/activities.
7. On a large flipchart paper, write the words, "Events & Activities" at the top. Then ask the groups to share what they have listed for events/activities. Record those response onto the flipchart paper.
8. On another sheet of flipchart paper write the words, "Beyond Events & Activities" at the top, then ask participants to share what they have listed.
9. Pass out sticky dots to the participants and guests and then have the participants and guests rank the lists by placing a dot by the things that would bring higher participation to the school.
10. Have participants begin to plan the highest ranked event/activity using the planning handout.
11. On the Golden Eagle Event planner handout, be sure to state a goal of attendance.
12. Ask parents if they would like to have monthly meetings to learn more about what is happening at the school and begin to build a connection to PTA, Site Council, Principal, etc.
13. Ask the participants and guest to brain-storm solid and intentional ways that connections can be made to this new group.
14. Decide on a day and time to meet and what the first monthly meeting should include.

Discussion

1. Have you experienced a positive school event? What made it special for you and your family?
2. What ways can we continue to reach out to other families/community to get more people involved?
3. How can we support each other in being active and involved partners at school?
4. What was exciting about the lesson today? What made you nervous?

Closure

Journal

- In what ways can I commitment to be an active partner at my child's school?

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Notes Lesson 7

LESSON EIGHT: College, expectations and celebration

Participant Outcome:

Participants will learn about opportunities for their children's future education, become familiar with grade-level expectations, and take part in the workshop celebration.

Time Frame

90

Group Size

Any

Materials Needed

- Food and beverages, and utensils and paper products—cake and/or other treats for celebration
- Sage, sage bowl and lighter
- Paper—three holed punched, wide rule lined, loose-leaf
- Pencil/colored pencils
- Three-ring binders with picture slots in front (give participants time to personalize their binders)
- Name tents—made out of index cards—and/or name tags
- Sign-in sheet and child care stipend sheets (if needed)
- Markers/stickers/art materials
- Flip chart
- Post Evaluation
- Grade-level proficiency handouts
- View the example grade-level proficiency
- Achieve! Minneapolis presenter
- Stipend sheet
- Attendance sheet
- Certificates
- Camera

Before You Begin

1. Call *Achieve! Minneapolis* to request a speaker to present information about postsecondary opportunities and preparation. They can also assist your group for middle & high school readiness. Be sure to let them know what grade level you would like to know more about.
2. Check the attendance and participant information sheet to find out what grades the participants children will be entering next year.
3. Go to the Minneapolis Public School web site and find the Curriculum & Instruction home page (click *Department* link, then click *Curriculum and Instruction*). Click on the core content links on the right side of the web page to download & print a copy of the grade-level expectation for the UPCOMING year for each participant's child.
4. Make enough copies for each participant to take home.
5. Complete certificates.

6. Design a completion and commitment celebration that is special and well thought-out and honors your participants. Have a drum group come in, invite a speaker or entertainer, decorate the space with celebration decorations—what ever you decide to do make it memorable.

Directions

1. Welcome and introduce speaker.
2. Explain the importance of planning and understanding what it takes to get ready for the next level of schooling.
3. Pass-out the grade-level expectation sheets that are relevant for each participant.
4. Tell parents where to get this information on the website or from their schools.
5. Complete the evaluation.
6. Ask participants if they would be willing to commit to starting a monthly parent meeting at the school?
7. Start the celebration!

Discussion

Before leaving: Ask what was good about the workshop

Closure

- Thank them for participating and set-up the monthly meeting group at the schools or in the community for parents to continue to meet to support family engagement.
- Complete Evaluations!!!

Some of the activities in lessons six, seven and eight are adapted from the *Expanding the Circle: Respecting the Past, Preparing for the Future* (Ness, J. J., & Huisken, J., 2001), a curriculum produced by the Department of Community Integration at the University of Minnesota. These are used with permission of the authors.

Notes Lesson 8

Resources Section

Building Trust with Schools and Diverse Communities

The following text (pages 79 to 91) is an excerpt of the article created by NWREL (Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory) entitled “Building Trust With Schools And Diverse Communities,” created by Jennifer Railsback and Cori Brewster, December 2003. To read the full article, go to www.nwrel.org/request/2003dec/textonly.html.

Introduction: building trust with schools

Students will need more than just good teachers and smaller class sizes to meet the challenges of tomorrow. For students to get the most out of school, we need to promote a partnership between parents, community leaders, and teachers ... Only through partnerships can our schools keep improving and stay on the right track.

—Susan Castillo, Oregon Superintendent of Public Instruction, Daily Astorian, June 12, 2003.

During the past several decades, the benefits of parents' and other family members' involvement in children's education have been well-documented. Although it isn't the only factor in improving student learning, 30 years of research has consistently linked family involvement to higher student achievement, better attitudes toward school, lower dropout rates, and increased community support for education, as well as many other positive outcomes for students, families, and schools (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). When families are involved in learning, the research shows, "students achieve more, regardless of socioeconomic status, ethnic/racial background, or the parents' education level" (Antunez, 2000).

Despite these findings, many schools struggle to actively engage high numbers of parents and other family members in children's schooling. Of those families who do get involved, the majority are white and middle income, typically those whose home culture most closely matches the norms, values, and cultural assumptions reflected in the school. Minority, lower-income, and families who speak limited English, on the other hand, are often highly underrepresented in school-level decision-making and in family involvement activities—a phenomenon that speaks far more often to differing needs, values, and levels of trust than it does to families' lack of interest or unwillingness to get involved (Antunez, 2000; Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, & Hoy, 2001; Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, Greenfield, & Quiroz, 2001; Young, 1998).

This booklet examines issues of trust and family involvement, focusing specifically on relationships between diverse families and schools. After providing a brief introduction to three core concepts—trust, culture, and family involvement—we offer a summary of relevant research and a discussion of common obstacles to school-family partnerships. Tips for reaching out to diverse families, profiles of several current family involvement efforts in Northwest schools, and additional resources are provided at the end.

In Context: Family Involvement and No Child Left Behind

"In the best of all possible worlds," write Adams and Christenson (2000), "the family-school relationship would be based not only on two-way communication, cooperation, and coordination, but also on collaboration" (p. 478). The 2001 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), No Child Left Behind (NCLB), signals a move in that direction. The inclusion of several new provisions related to family involvement reflect the gradual shift in U.S.

educational policy and practice from viewing parents as important players to full partners in the formal education of their child.

The new provisions under NCLB, particularly those under Titles I and III, expand schools' obligations to inform parents and to reach out to families who have traditionally been underrepresented in school activities and decision-making, such as parents of English language learners. Schools that receive Title III funding, for example, are required to: implement an effective means of outreach to parents of limited English proficient children to inform such parents of how they can—(A) be involved in the education of their children; and (B) be active participants in assisting their children—(i) to learn English; (ii) to achieve at high levels in core academic subjects; and (iii) to meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet (Title III, 3302 (e) cited in Gomez & Greenough, 2002, p. 4).

Past provisions of the ESEA related to family involvement, "such as school-parent compacts, parental involvement policies, and the parental involvement funding formula," also remain in effect (Gomez & Greenough, 2002, p. 1). In short, NCLB establishes that:

- Parents have the right to be informed of the content and quality of their children's education
- Parents have the right and responsibility to participate in decision-making and learning at the school
- Parents have the right to make educational choices in the best interest of their children*

Although the legislation provides guidelines and provisions for schools to follow as they develop family involvement policies, schools may also face challenges in complying with the law, especially in how to strengthen relationships with families whose needs and concerns have not been addressed. Clearly, if families and schools are to form partnerships that work, there must first be a foundation of mutual trust, confidence, and respect. The goal of this booklet is to provide some starting points for schools to address these challenges.

*For the full text of Title I and III guidelines see the NCLB Web site at www.ed.gov/nclb/overview/intro/progsum/index.html.

Core Concepts Trust, Culture, and Family Involvement

Although most of us have a general understanding of terms like "trust," "culture," and "family involvement," articulating precisely what they mean can be difficult. A working definition of each term, along with a brief introduction, is offered below.

Trust

Drawing on their comprehensive review of the literature on trust, Hoy and Tschannen-Moran (2003) offer the following definition:

Trust is an individual's or group's willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the confidence that the latter party is benevolent, reliable, competent, honest, and open. (p. 189).

Trustworthiness, then, is typically judged according to these five main facets:

1. **Benevolence:** The degree to which the other party takes your best interests to heart and acts to protect them
2. **Reliability:** The extent to which you can depend upon another party to come through for you, to act consistently, and to follow through
3. **Competence:** Belief in the other party's ability to perform the tasks required by his or her position

4. **Honesty:** The degree to which the other person or institution demonstrates integrity, represents situations fairly, and speaks truthfully to others
5. **Openness:** The extent to which the other party welcomes communication and shares information with the people it affects

If families are to trust teachers and other school staff members, in other words, they must believe that school personnel are qualified, fair, and dependable, and have their child's best interests at heart (Adams & Christenson, 2000; Bryk & Schneider, 2002; Young, 1998). In most cases, such trust is built over time, based on sustained interactions between the parties in question. "In the absence of prior contact," Bryk and Schneider (2002) assert, families and educators "may rely on the general reputation of the other and also on commonalities of race, gender, age, religion, or upbringing" to assess a new person's trustworthiness. The more parties interact over time, however, the more their willingness to trust one another is based upon the other party's actions and their perceptions of one another's intentions, competence, and integrity.

Culture

Another slippery term, culture can be defined as a way of life, especially as it relates to the socially transmitted habits, customs, traditions, and beliefs that characterize a particular group of people at a particular time. It includes the behaviors, actions, practices, attitudes, norms and values, communications (language), patterns, traits, etiquette, spirituality, concepts of health and healing, superstitions, and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious, or social group. It is the lens through which we look at the world (Edwards, Ellis, Ko, Saifer, & Stuczynski, in press, p. 11).

Particularly for members of a majority cultural group, it may be difficult to identify certain values and norms of behavior as being connected to cultural background. As Ahearn et al. (2002) remark, "Our own culture is often hidden from us, and we frequently describe it as 'the way things are'" (p. 5).

One model commonly used as an entry point into discussions about cultural differences places cultural groups along a continuum from highly individualist to highly collectivist. More individualistic cultures place higher value on "individual fulfillment and choice," according to this framework, while cultures that are more collectivist place greater emphasis on "interdependent relations, social responsibility, and the well-being of the group" (Trumbull et al., 2001, p. 4). As these authors note in *Bridging Cultures Between Home and School: A Guide for Teachers*,

These two orientations of individualism and collectivism guide rather different developmental scripts for children and for schooling; and conflicts between them are reflected daily in U.S. classrooms. Keener awareness of how they shape goals and behaviors can enable teachers and parents to interpret each other's expectations better and work together more harmoniously on behalf of students (p. 6).

For example, if schools are aware that in more collectivist communities extended family members regularly and naturally take on parenting and mentoring roles with children, then schools can work to develop relationships with all community members who are concerned about their children's well-being.

As Trumbull et al. (2001) stress, being aware that different cultural orientations exist is extremely valuable in developing programs, policies, and activities that build on the strengths

and values of a diverse school community. However, it is important not to over generalize or to use general information about different cultural groups to make assumptions about individual students and their families:

Members of the same culture vary widely in their beliefs and actions.... We all have unique identities that we develop within our cultures, but these identities are not fixed or static. This is the reason that stereotypes do not hold up: no two individuals from any culture are exactly alike.... Because individual differences within cultural groups are far greater than differences between cultural groups, it is both particularly crucial and particularly challenging to operationalize understandings of culture and avoid stereotyping in diverse classrooms (Ahearn et al., 2002, pp. 8–9).

Getting to know students and their family members as individuals, participating in social activities in the community, visiting families at home, and asking parents to share their views are all good ways for educators to broaden their understanding of family and cultural diversity.

Family Involvement

Also referred to as parent involvement, school-family collaboration, and school-family partnerships, family involvement refers to a wide range of activities through which parents, grandparents, older siblings, tribal members, and other members of students' extended family contribute to and support student learning. Under the widely-used framework developed by Joyce Epstein (Epstein, 1995; Epstein et al., 1997), there are six main categories of involvement: parenting, communicating with schools, volunteering at school, supporting learning at home, participating in school governance and decision-making and taking part in school-community collaborations, such as adult literacy classes or tutorial services. In this model, providing a quiet study environment for students at home, expressing value for learning, setting high expectations, helping with homework assignments, chaperoning school events, attending parenting classes, and serving on the school board are all considered valuable contributions to students' learning.

Epstein's framework suggests many different ways for families to be involved in children's education, and also challenges schools to engage in practices that reach out to diverse families. Trumbull et al. (2001) note, however, that schools may not always apply the framework in ways that reflect the needs, values, and abilities of diverse families. For example, schools that offer parenting instruction may not recognize cultural differences in child-rearing practices. Similarly, some parents may not possess the time or the skills to assist children with schoolwork at home; others come from cultures in which schooling is considered to be strictly the teacher's responsibility. If schools are to be successful in engaging diverse families, Trumbull and others argue, they will need to reevaluate traditional models of involvement and include families in discussions of how they would most like to be involved (Mapp, 2002; Trumbull et al., 2001; Voltz, 1994). To be effective, involvement efforts must become more collaborative, more inclusive, and more culturally relevant (Gomez & Greenough, 2002).

What the Research Says

In their comprehensive review of 51 recent, high-quality studies* on family involvement, *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*, Henderson and Mapp (2002) highlight the following key findings on partnerships between families and schools:

1. Students with involved parents, regardless of family income and background, are more likely to:

- Earn higher grades and test scores, and enroll in higher-level programs
 - Be promoted, pass their classes, and earn credits
 - Attend school regularly
 - Have better social skills, show improved behavior, and adapt well to school
 - Graduate and go on to postsecondary education (p. 7)
2. Family and community involvement that is linked to student learning has a greater effect on achievement than more general forms of involvement. To be effective, the form of involvement should be focused on improving achievement and be designed to engage families and students in developing specific knowledge and skills (p. 38).
3. Schools that succeed in engaging families from very diverse backgrounds share three key practices. They:
- Focus on building trusting, collaborative relationships among teachers, families, and community members
 - Recognize, respect, and address families' needs, as well as class and cultural differences
 - Embrace a philosophy of partnership where power and responsibility are shared (p. 7)

As the above findings suggest, trust and relationship-building are recurrent themes in discussions of family involvement. Until recently, however, trust in particular has received far less attention in the research than have other aspects of family involvement. Few studies have focused specifically on the role of trust in relationships between schools and families; fewer still have considered ways in which issues of race, class, culture, home language, family involvement, and trust intersect. Difficult to define, trust is even more difficult to measure; let alone link causally to family involvement or other outcomes for students, families, and schools. Three current, large-scale studies that have taken the issue on are described:

- Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, and Hoy's (2001) study of 47 elementary schools in a large urban school district in the Midwest resulted in two major findings related to relationships between families and schools: one, that student achievement is higher in schools where teachers report greater trust; and two, that "poverty more than ethnicity seems to be the culprit" in hindering trust in urban schools (p. 15). In examining levels of trust among teachers, parents, and students, the researchers concluded that "trust is systematically associated with student socioeconomic status—the larger the proportion of poor students in the school, the lower teachers' perceptions of trust" (p. 13). Further, they found that even after controlling for the effects of the proportion of low-income students in a school as a whole, trust still plays an important role in student achievement. In fact, the amount of trust teachers have in students and in parents outweighs the effects of poverty.... Trust seems to foster a context that supports student achievement, even in the face of poverty (p. 14).
- In their 10-year study of more than 400 Chicago elementary schools, Bryk and Schneider (2002) concluded that trust among teachers, principals, students, and parents is a strong predictor of student and school success. Schools with higher levels of trust are more likely to successfully implement and sustain reforms, while those with low levels of trust stand little chance of making significant gains. According to the researchers, schools demonstrating high levels of teacher-family and teacher-principal trust generally possess the following characteristics: they have a stable population; there are minimal "racial and ethnic tensions" among students, parents, and staff; and educators are able to provide parents with clear evidence "that students are learning" (p. 97).
- Adams and Christenson's (2000) survey of 1,234 parents and 209 teachers in a large suburban school district found that both teachers and parents believed that improving home-school communication was a "primary way to enhance trust in the family-school relationship" (p. 491). They also found that the kinds of interactions parents and teachers had

been better predictors of trust than was the frequency of interactions. Additionally, family-school trust "correlated significantly with three indicators of school performance for high school students: credits earned, grade point average, and attendance (p. 491).

Although there are few studies on trust to date, these and other sources (listed in the References) provide us with an understanding of why trust is so important in building relationships and suggest ways in which schools can build trust.

*Studies selected for inclusion in *A New Wave of Evidence* (2002) were reviewed to meet the following standards: "1. Sound methodology: experimental, quasi-experimental, or correlational design with statistical controls. For qualitative studies, such as case studies [the authors] looked for sound theory, objective observation, and thorough design. 2. Study findings that matched the data collected and conclusions that were consistent with the findings" (Henderson & Mapp, 2002, p. 13). For more information about these studies, a database of more than 200 articles, and more research on family involvement see the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory Web site at www.sedl.org/work/family.html.

Obstacles to Trust -Barriers to Strong Family-School Relationships

A common misperception about families who aren't actively involved at school is that they simply "don't care about their children's education" (Mapp, 2002, p. 7). Educators who see the same small group of families helping out in the classroom, attending school events, and participating in school governance, for example, may conclude that the others in the district are not interested or do not place high value on education. In fact, most families do care a great deal about their children's education. Although white, higher-income families tend to be more visible in many schools, the vast majority— in all ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic groups— support their children's learning at home in a variety of different ways (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Mapp, 2002). Further, studies of immigrant Latino, African American, and other under-represented family groups have repeatedly found that they are "highly interested" in being more directly involved (Trumbull et al., 2001, p. 32).

Rather than assuming families are unwilling to become more active partners with schools, educators would do well to examine closely the specific causes of poor school-family relationships and low levels of involvement in their community. By examining these barriers, schools can begin to develop solutions for gaining support and trust. Some common obstacles:

- **Bad first impressions.** The way parents and other family members are received the first time they come to the school can set the tone for the duration of their relationship. Families who feel ignored or slighted by the adults in the building are unlikely to come back, especially if they had been hesitant to come to the school in the first place.
- **Poor communication.** Whether it is miscommunication, or a lack of communication on the part of both families and schools, these issues can create tension and distrust.
- **Past experiences.** Family members' prior experiences with school also have a significant impact on how willing they are to trust school staff members and become involved in their children's schooling (Antunez, 2000; Mapp, 2002). Family members whose own experiences were negative may not feel comfortable entering the school building, or may not trust that teachers will value their input. Similarly, families who have encountered problems with another teacher or with another school their child attended may question the value of communicating with schools at all. Teachers, too, who have had previous negative experiences with families, may question the value of communicating with others.
- **Family members' lack of self-confidence.** Some may not believe that they are capable of contributing to their children's education (Antunez, 2000; Onikama, Hammond, & Koki, 1998); others find school personnel intimidating and fear looking incompetent if

they ask teachers questions about how to help. Families may doubt that they have anything to offer by participating in the classroom, working with their children on schoolwork at home, or serving on school decision-making teams (Trumbull et al., 2001).

- **Teachers' lack of confidence.** An equally powerful barrier to developing strong relationships with families is teachers' lack of confidence. According to Hoover-Dempsey, Bassler, and Brissie (1987), "a teacher's belief in his or her own teaching effectiveness is the strongest predictor of successful parental involvement" (cited in Onikama, Hammond, & Koki, 1998, p. 7). Newer teachers, in particular, may fear being viewed as incompetent by family members, and thus initially avoid contact with them. New and veteran teachers alike may also doubt their ability to involve families effectively (Onikama, Hammond, & Koki, 1998). Until recently, few teacher education programs offered training on working with families as partners in their children's education. Even fewer addressed strategies for collaborating with families from diverse cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic backgrounds.
- **History of discrimination.** Past and present acts of discrimination—whether they occurred in school or in the larger community—remain a major barrier to family involvement and trust in schools (Antunez, 2000). As Onikama, Hammond, and Koki (1998) emphasize, "It is difficult for families to want to become involved with institutions that they perceive are 'owned' by a culture that discriminated against them in the past" (p. 5). It should come as no surprise that Native families, for example, are often hesitant to trust public schools:

In American Indian and Alaska Native communities formal education has often been imposed upon people in a degrading and destructive manner. In fact, the early efforts at education on the part of the American government and religious groups were aimed at eliminating Native cultures, languages, and traditions. Clearly, this has not left a good impression of mainstream education among many Native peoples (Meadow et al., n.d., p. 14).

- **Differing expectations of parent-teacher roles.** Recent immigrants to the United States may have little knowledge of the public school system, much less a particular district's expectations regarding family involvement in their child's education. They may also hold very different beliefs about the roles of teachers and parents than those assumed at school (Trumbull et al., 2001). As Antunez (2000) notes,

In some cultures ... teaming with the school is not a tradition. Education has been historically perceived as the responsibility of the schools, and family intervention is viewed as interference with what trained professionals are supposed to do.

Families from such cultures may believe that their role is to raise "respectful, well-behaved human beings" and leave the academic instruction to schools (Trumbull et al., 2001, p. 39).

- **Lack of confidence in the school.** Finally, and perhaps most important, families' doubts about school effectiveness, teacher competence, and the integrity of school leaders are prime causes of mistrust and unwillingness to engage in activities related to the school. Family members who raise concerns about a problem at school and fail to see any action taken may see no reason to continue interacting with the staff. Persistent problems, such as low test scores or repeated incidents of violence and discrimination, may lead some to conclude that educators simply aren't doing their job. As many districts have seen,

negative news coverage can exacerbate this problem, especially if it is the only source of information families and other community members receive about teachers, school leaders, and school performance.

Laying the Foundation—Building Trust between Families and Schools

A critical first step in engaging diverse families, then, is to focus on building relationships of mutual trust, confidence, and respect. As Henderson and Mapp (2002) emphasize, "When outreach efforts reflect a sincere desire to engage parents and community members as partners in children's education, the studies show that they respond positively"(p. 66). Some places to begin:

- **Assess the level of trust in the school community.** Selecting an assessment tool is a good place to start (for some examples, see the Resources section). Discuss perceptions of current school-family relationships with teachers, administrators, students, parents, and other family members; identify specific barriers to trust in your community; and solicit input from all parties on ways to address them.
- **Actively welcome students and families.** Letting families know that they are welcome in the school building, greeting them when they arrive, and posting signs in their native language are just a few ways to communicate to parents that they are valued members of the school community. Hiring administrative staff who speak the same language as families is another way to not only welcome bilingual families, but to provide them with someone who can act as an interpreter. Providing a Family Resource Center, as will be discussed in the following section, is another way to demonstrate that families are welcome at school. Parents and other family members are also more likely to trust that the school values their involvement when they see people who share their cultural and linguistic background among the school staff.
- **Begin relationships on a positive note.** Adams and Christenson (2000) remark that oftentimes, the only time parents have contact with the school is in crisis situations such as when the student has violated school regulations. ...with no previous contact ... these situations often lead to non-trusting interactions and, subsequently, non-optimal results for the student. A previous time in which to signal trusting intentions is considered an essential prerequisite for handling critical issues for students (p. 482). Teachers whose first contacts with family members are positive—notes or phone calls about something good the student did in class, for example—demonstrate to families that the school is interested in and values their child.
- **Highlight school successes.** Families cannot be expected to place trust in schools and teachers about whom they know very little. Identify ways to communicate with parents and other family members about student accomplishments, professional development efforts, and other school programs that reflect the school's commitment to quality teaching and learning.
- **Improve school-family communication.** Too often, school-home communication is only one-way, with schools determining what information parents need and sending it to them. Opening up more and better ways for families to communicate with schools, listening to what they say, and responding seriously are essential to trust-building (Adams & Christenson, 2000). "Make sure that you convey the message to parents that their input is considered valuable"(Voltz, 1994, p. 290).
- **Demonstrate that you care.** Knowing that principals, teachers, and other school staff have their children's best interests at heart is critical to families developing trust in schools (Goddard, Tschannen-Moran, and Hoy, 2001). Even small things, such as learning a few words in a families' native language, make a difference.

- **Show respect for all families.** Voltz (1994) advises educators to use titles, such as Mr., Ms., or Mrs., when addressing parents, unless they tell you otherwise: "Although the use of first names in some cultures may be viewed as a means of establishing a collegial, friendly relationship, in other cultures, it is viewed as disrespectful or forward"(Voltz, 1994, p. 290). Using "a tone of voice that expresses courtesy and respect" is also important.
- **Treat parents as individuals.** "Resist the stereotyping of parents based on race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or any other characteristic. Recognize the diversity that occurs within cultural groups, as well as that which occurs between them"(Voltz, 1994, p. 290).
- **Be open with parents.** As Voltz (1994) advises, "Don't ignore or dodge tough issues"(p. 290). Making information easily accessible to families, providing it in language they can understand, and ensuring that they know who to talk to if they have questions is a good place to start in demonstrating openness.
- **Take parents' concerns seriously.** Listen, respond, and follow through. Depending on the situation, consider inviting families to help generate solutions. Be sure that they know what is being done to address their concerns.
- **Promote professionalism and strong teaching.** To build strong family-school trust, families must view the school principal, teachers, and other personnel as competent, honest, and reliable. Failure to remove staff members, who are widely viewed to be racist or ineffective, according to Bryk and Schneider (2002), quickly leads to low levels of trust in the school and its leadership.
- **Remember that trust-building takes time.** Families whose past encounters with the school or community have been negative may have no reason to expect things will be different now. Rebuilding trust takes time and a serious commitment to establishing strong relationships.

When a school initiates and implements programs, policies, and procedures with the express intention of seriously meeting the needs of the students, then the school can begin to develop an environment in which the community can begin to rightfully place trust in the local school and its staff (Young, 1998, p. 18).

Next Steps—Strategies for Engaging All Families

As the level of trust in a school increases, teachers, family members, and administrators not only become more willing to work together, but develop higher expectations for success. There is still much that can be done, however, to make opportunities for involvement more meaningful and more accessible to all. Listed below are a number of strategies suggested by practitioners, researchers, and parents for engaging families with diverse backgrounds, interests, and needs:

- **Collaborate with families on ways to be involved.** In many schools, staff members have traditionally been responsible for establishing the nature of the relationship between themselves and parents. If parents feel uncomfortable with the school's conceptualization of family involvement, they may be inclined to abstain from any of the 'menu items' made available by school personnel (Voltz, 1994, p. 290). Communicating with families and asking them how they would like to be involved and how the school can facilitate that is an essential part of developing true family-school collaborations.
- **Provide family members with opportunities to develop participation skills.** "If ethnically diverse parents feel they lack the knowledge and competence to operate within the bureaucratic structure of the school, they may involve themselves at lower levels or not at all" (Young, 1998, p. 16). Programs such as the Parent Effectiveness Leadership Training (discussed in the Northwest Sampler) can be helpful for families to understand their rights,

responsibilities, and roles in the education system, and develop their leadership and communication skills.

- **Express high expectations for family-school partnerships.** "Teacher expectations can affect teacher-family interactions in the same way that teacher expectations can affect student-teacher interactions" (Voltz, 1994, p. 289). It is up to schools to make genuine efforts to reach out to families and assure them their contributions are valued.
- **Communicate with families in person.** In some cultures, notes sent home from the school are regarded as too impersonal and may not be interpreted as genuine invitations for parents to participate. Visiting families in their home at times that are convenient for them may be a better way to reach out.
- **Recognize diverse family structures.** "School personnel often regard mothers as the primary caregivers in the family, and therefore direct most communications about a child's school performance to his or her mother. Under these circumstances, paternal involvement may not be encouraged, and fathers may even receive messages implying that it is not welcomed" (Onikama, Hammond, & Koki, 1998, p. 6). Don't overlook other adults in students' lives—grandparents, older siblings, tribal leaders, and so on—who play a central role in their upbringing (Voltz, 1994).
- **Create a family resource center in the school.** Family resource centers should be centrally located in the school, conveying the message that families are valued partners in education. Ideally, centers should be equipped with kitchens and bathrooms, soft furniture, resource information in many languages, telephone and computer access, and toys for small children. When the center welcomes the whole family—including children of all ages—parents or grandparents can access the resources available to them more easily. Even more important, making the whole family welcome displays the school's respect for the family as a unit (Trumbull et al., 2001, pp. 43).
- **Make school events more accessible to families.** Providing transportation and childcare may make participation in school events possible for a number of family members who were not previously able to attend. Holding events in other places in the community that parents frequent and where they feel more comfortable is another way to encourage participation (Sosa, 1997). It may also be necessary to offer events at different times of the day or week to reach all families.
- **Don't let language be a barrier.** As Antunez (2000) writes, "Inability to understand the language of the school is a major deterrent to the parents who have not achieved full English proficiency. In these cases, interactions with the schools are difficult, and, therefore, practically nonexistent." There is much that schools can do to prevent language from blocking families' involvement with the school, from hiring bilingual staff members to connecting parents with others in the community, as discussed below. Whenever possible, schools should avoid asking children to translate for their parents, as this may do more to make parents uncomfortable than to aid in communication.
- **Build connections between families who speak the same language.** Connecting recent immigrants to other members of the school community who speak their language and are more familiar with the school may be especially valuable, particularly for families with few other connections in the area. Families may also feel more comfortable attending school events if they know that other people they recognize and can communicate with easily will be there.
- **Provide opportunities for meaningful involvement.** Studies have shown that family members are generally more interested in activities that are directly connected to their child. Volunteering at a school fundraiser, for example, may be seen as less valuable to some

families than receiving information on how to work with their child at home on reading or math. Further, families need to know what purpose activities serve and how they relate to overall goals.

- **Design assignments that build on families' "funds of knowledge."** Families offer a wealth of knowledge that can contribute to the curriculum. One teacher, for example, identified construction work as a topic with which many of her students' families had experience. She then developed a series of assignments in which students researched and wrote about construction work, built model buildings, and gave oral reports on their projects. "By the end of the semester, 20 parents and community people had visited [the] class and shared their knowledge with her students" (NCREL, 1994). Other schools, such as Heritage Elementary in Oregon, have developed projects in which children interview their families about their culture in the classroom, and the families teach the students dances and songs. (See the Northwest Sampler for more about this project).
- **Provide staff training on working with families.** As noted earlier in the booklet, many teachers have had little experience or training on ways to engage students' families. Others may feel intimidated by parents or worry that involving parents more directly in the classroom will be a waste of time. School leaders may need to jumpstart a school wide family involvement initiative by providing professional development on school-family collaboration, intercultural communication, connections between culture and learning, or other topics specific to involving diverse families more directly in students' education (Trumbull et al., 2001).
- **Consider ways to involve and build relationships with family members of high school students.** "As students move to secondary schools, parents and students are faced with the challenge of communicating and building relationships with several teachers" (Adams & Christenson, 2000, pp. 491–492). Teachers who have more than 100 students find it increasingly challenging to build relationships with all their students' families. Under these circumstances, a school can develop relationships in such ways as inviting families to participate in activities such as student mentoring, career days, senior projects, and fundraisers. Sending short but frequent notes by e-mail to families also helps to keep the school in touch with families on a regular basis.

Conclusion

To be certain, there is no set recipe for increasing trust in a school or for developing stronger relationships between families, students, principals, and teachers. As Young (1998) writes,

Each individual school, in cooperation with the community in which it serves, must reflect on its current educational program and its relationship with the community in which it is embedded. Based on this self-reflection, the school and the community must jointly determine which strategies are likely to be the most effective in creating a sense of trust...(p. 17).

Making a commitment to building partnerships with diverse families, is a good place to start.

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Materials Needed

1. Attendance list
2. Child care stipend sheet
3. Budget worksheet
4. *Thank you* letter for presenters, organizations and school
5. Graduation certificate
6. School partnership contract
7. Evaluation/survey pre-post and focus group outline
8. Important contact numbers list
9. Recruitment flyer
10. Workshop brochure
11. Parent engagement research information
12. Learn-Ed tool
13. Memorandum of Agreement document
14. Native Family Involvement resolution

These items are included in the workshop manual but are not a part of the main curriculum because these items would be individually developed by the organizations sponsoring workshops. Facilitators must design these items prior to the first workshop meeting.

Talking Circles

"You have noticed that everything an Indian does is in a circle, and that is because the Power of the World always works in circles, and everything tries to be round. In the old days when we were a strong and happy people, all our power came to us from the sacred hoop of the nation, and so long as the hoop was unbroken, the people flourished. The flowering tree was the living center of the hoop, and the circle of the four quarters nourished it. The east gave peace and light, the south gave warmth, the west gave rain, and the north with its cold and mighty wind gave strength and endurance. This knowledge came to us from the outer world with our religion. Everything the power of the world does is done in a circle. The sky is round, and I have heard that the earth is round like a ball, and so are all the stars. The wind, in its greatest power, whirls. Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours. The sun comes forth and goes down again in a circle. The moon does the same, and both are round. Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing, and always come back again to where they were. The life of a man is a circle from childhood to childhood, and so it is in everything where power moves."
-Black Elk

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The Art of Communication

Communication in Native American culture is quite different than the "usual" American competitive-style communication. Native communication values cooperation over competition, which reflects in many areas of their lifestyles. When many Native Americans engage in conversation they listen intently, usually looking down and not establishing eye contact, until the person speaking is completely finished talking. Then the other person talks and fully expects to be able to completely finish their thought without interruption or before the conversation turns to another person.

What is Left Unsaid?

In some Native American cultures there is a ritual called, "what is left unsaid" and it is practiced in various ways. In one instance, a group gathers in a circle and uses what is called a *talking feather*. Whoever has the feather states what has been on their mind but hasn't been said. When that person is finished talking, the feather is handed to the next person in a clockwise direction and the next person says what they have left unsaid. This is called a "Talking Circle."

Guidelines for a Talking Circle

1. The person holding the talking feather, or some other Native American object, is the only who has the right to talk, even if it takes several minutes to think about what they wish to say or if there is a pause in the conversation. Whoever has the talking feather has the floor.
2. If someone in the circle wishes to express a view or comment on what is being said, it is limited to noises that can be made through the nose. This would be a faint grunt of agreement. Any comments, especially negative comments while someone is speaking, are absolutely not allowed. In fact, they are banned. Each person **MUST** wait his or her turn.
3. When the talking feather comes to you, you may talk about "whatever is in your heart or on your mind." There may be an overall topic that the Talking Circle is discussing but you are in no way limited to discussing or commenting on anything anyone has said. A talking circle is not limited in topic content. You are free to say whatever you desire, without limitation or fear. Talking circles are safe environments and you should feel comfortable knowing that no one will interrupt or criticize you.

4. If someone talks longer than what seems customary (this is called "overlong"), then those in the circle may quietly cough as a signal. The term "overlong" is usually defined according to the size of the circle, topic, and how long the group intends on spending in the circle. This may be discussed before the circle begins. Typically, 3 -10 minutes is a sufficient amount of time to talk. If you have the talking feather and notice that others are quietly coughing, it's time to pass the feather to the next person.
5. Using an alarm or timer is inappropriate for a Talking Circle because it would disrupt the flow of communication and energy. It would also create an unnatural presence in the circle.
6. The circle can go around several times or until everybody has had at least one opportunity to talk. If the group is large, time constraints may be placed beforehand, although remembering that interruptions are not allowed. The talking feather can be passed around once again to give everyone the feeling that they have left nothing unsaid.

Commit to the Circle

- When committing to a talking circle, remember the rules and watch the healing begin. It is purgative, relaxing and cleansing. The affect of sharpened listening and learning from others is truly a blessing. You will also become more adept at thinking while on your feet because your communication skills will be more exercised.
- Talking circles are amazing. Go ahead and try this practice even between you and a friend.
- For purposes of the Native Pathways to Success closing circle we will incorporate some of the rules of the talking circle that will be beneficial for us to complete our closing in a respectful manner.

Icebreakers

Below are sample icebreaker activities. Please take some time to gather as many icebreakers as you will need for your workshops.

Name Tag Match Maker

Each group member will need a 5" x 7" card for a name tag. Then give the following directions:

1. Put your name in the center of your card.
2. In the upper left corner, write four things that you like to do.
3. In the upper right corner, write your four favorite singers or groups.
4. In the lower left corner, write your four favorite movies.
5. In the lower right corner, write four adjectives that describe you.

When everyone finishes, have them mingle with the group for a few minutes. Without talking, they are to read the upper left corner of the other group members' cards. When time is up, they are to find one or two people who are most like them and visit for a few minutes. When time is up, they are to mingle again reading the upper right corner of the other group members' cards. They then find the one or two people most like them and visit. Repeat with the lower left corner and lower right corner information.

To make sure everyone visits with several people, you could implement a rule that no two people can be in the same group more than once.

Who am I?

For this activity you will need one sticky note per person.

- On each note write the name of a celebrity, political figure, cartoon character, book character, etc. You can choose one category or mix them up. Use a different person for each note.
- Place a random sticky note on the back (or forehead) of each participant so that they cannot see the name.
- Have each participant find a partner and silently read each other's sticky notes.
- Each partner can then ask three yes/no questions about their own note to try to figure out their identity.
- Once the questions have been asked and answered, make a guess as to the identity on the note. If you are correct, move the sticky note to your chest and you become a "consultant" who gives clues to those still trying to figure out their identities. If you are not correct, find a new partner and repeat the process.

NOTE: Be sure to choose characters that are appropriate to the age of the participants to avoid "generation gap frustration."

Toilet paper game

Get a roll of toilet paper and explain to your group that they are going need this paper for the next few weeks and to take as much toilet paper as they think they may need for the next few weeks of meetings. Once everyone has an ample supply, explain to the group that for every square in their possession, they must share something about themselves. *Can use M & M's in lieu of Toilet paper.

NOTE: If anyone knows the activity, ask them not to give away the secret under any circumstances.

Truth, truth, lie

Give the group some time to write down two things about themselves that are true, and one thing that is a lie. Each group member will then share these facts about themselves, and the rest of the group has to figure out which “fact” is actually a lie.

Where were you?

Pick a year or a date before the meeting and then give each person a chance to tell what they were doing on that date (Jan ‘87, Summer ‘90).

Uncle Bear’s suitcase

The group forms a circle. The first person states their name and the reason they chose to come to Native Pathways Family Engagement Workshop. Continue going around the group with each person repeating the names of the people preceding them and why each person chose to attend. You also can substitute the “why you came here” with other things. Another version of the game is to begin with, “I packed Uncle Bears’s suitcase with.....” and continue around like that. The real trick is the last person in the group who has to name all the people and why they came, what they like, etc.

String game

Participants select pre-cut lengths of string from the group facilitator. Each member holds the string between his/her thumb and forefinger. For each “wrap” of the string around the finger, participants must share one thing about themselves.

Important item

Have each person bring something to the meeting that means something special to them or that they would not have left home without, and then ask them to take turns sharing.

Human scavenger hunt

Hand each participant a sheet of paper divided into squares (bingo format) with questions in each square except the center square. Participants are required to find another participant who can answer “yes” to a question. They must have that person sign their name within the square. The object is to meet as many people as you can, and fill a “BINGO!” (A complete line either horizontally, vertically, or diagonally). You can only use each participant once.

NOTE: The center circle should be a freebie.

Here are some sample questions:

- Knows their clan
- From a another state
- Knows when Martin Luther King’s birthday is
- Member of a tribe in another state
- Took part in sports while in school
- Has been to more then five teacher conferences
- Knows how to pow-wow jingle

Animal call

Break the group into pairs. Each pair must choose two things; a machine and an animal. They then have to decide who is which. The pairs then divide up on opposite sides of the room. Everyone must close their eyes (if they feel comfortable), and by making only the noise that their character would make, they must find their partner. When they find their partner, they can open their eyes and wait until everyone else is done.

NOTE: When conducting an activity with eyes closed, have the group raise their hands in front of their chests as “bumpers,” and have at least one person (facilitator) acting as a spotter.