




# Relationship Between Child Abuse, Substance Abuse and Violence



# Native American Population


(All Ages)

- 
- Leads nation in death caused by:
    - alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities
    - chronic liver disease and cirrhosis
    - diabetes (infections/ amputations / health complications)
    - fetal abnormalities
    - homicide




# Four Leading Causes of Death

## American Indian and Alaska Natives

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- Ages 1-4 Accidents/Homicide
  - Ages 4-15 Accidents/Homicide
  - Ages 15-24 Accidents/Homicide/  
Suicide
  - Ages 25-44 Accidents/Chronic  
Liver Disease &  
Cirrhosis/Suicide/  
Homicide



# Substance Abuse and Child Abuse in American Indian communities

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- 70-90% of child abuse cases involve alcohol
  - Higher frequency with females (70.4) than males (60.)
  - 50-80% of child neglect involve alcohol
  - Alcohol abuse less frequent in cases of sexual abuse


NIJC, 1995



# Maternal Alcohol Use

## Perinatal Effects

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- Leading cause of mental retardation
  - Average IQ of 63 found in FAS




\*NIJC, 1995



# Maternal Alcohol Use

## Increased Risk of Sudden Infant Death

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- 2 to 20 fold higher than baseline rates
  - Not known whether due only to effect of drugs or also to environmental factors in addicted household





# Maternal Alcohol Use

## Long-term Effects on Children

- High level of psychosocial problems
  - conduct disorder
  - antisocial behavior
  - non-compliant
- Growth failure and mental retardation
- Secondary Disabilities
  - learning disabilities
  - hyperactivity
  - impulsively





# Current Statistics: Violence and Victimization in Indian Country

- Average annual violent crime rate among American Indians –
    - 124 per 1,000 persons age 12 or older
    - Approximately 2.5 times national rate
  - Rates of violent victimization for both males and females are higher among American Indians than for all races.
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# Violence, Crime and Victimization

- The rate of violent crime experienced by American Indian women is nearly 50% higher than that reported by Black males.
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# Violence, Crime and Victimization

- American Indians experienced approximately 1 violent crime for every 8 residents age 12 or older compared to 1 violent victimization for:
  - 1 for every 16 Black residents
  - 1 for every 20 white residents
  - 1 for every 34 Asian residents



# Violence and Child Maltreatment

- On a per capita basis, 1995 data indicate approximately 1 substantiated report of a child victim of abuse or neglect for every 30 American Indian children age 14 or younger
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# Contributing Factors

## Parental Alcohol and Substance Usage

- Criminal activity
  - ▶ increase likelihood of stealing and/or selling drugs
  - ▶ increase likelihood of prostituting self or children
  - ▶ increase likelihood of other illegal activities to support substance usage




# Contributing Factors

## Parental Alcohol and Substance Usage

- Mental health disorder
  - ▶ Masking of affect disorders (depression, anxiety)
  - ▶ Substance abuse contributing to antisocial personality disorder
  - ▶ Drug induced psychosis
  - ▶ Organic brain disease caused by substance abuse




# Contributing Factors Increase Risk of Abuse and Neglect

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- Diversion of resources
    - ▶ Cash used for drugs
    - ▶ Food assistance sold for drugs
    - ▶ Appliances/other articles pawned
    - ▶ Results in: more energy directed toward acquiring drugs and less energy directed toward children



# Characteristics


## Parental Alcohol and Substance Usage

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- Unemployed or limited marketable skills
  - Short term relationships that produce children
  - Increase probability of out-of-home placement of children



# Characteristics

## Parental Alcohol and Substance Usage


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- Increase risk for prenatal exposure to alcohol
  - Produces difficult-to-parent infants and children
  - Increase probability of conflict with education system and court system







# Characteristics

## Parental Alcohol and Substance Usage

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- Family life chaotic and unpredictable
  - Parents demonstrate
    - higher commitment level to drugs
    - higher commitment level to each other
    - lower commitment level to children



# Effects of Substance Abuse

- Violence
  - Paranoia
  - Anxiety
  - Distrust
  - Less constraints about hurting, injuring, neglecting, or molesting children
  - Interference with appropriate parenting ability
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# Effects on Children

- Increased risk for car accidents and accidental deaths,
- Increased risk for behavioral problems,
- Increased risk for neglect,
- Increase risk for suicide with age,
- Increase risk for substance abuse with age,





# Effects on Children

- Increased likelihood of inconsistent or limited nurturing,
- Increased likelihood of inconsistent or limited attachment,
- Increase likelihood for poor or dysfunctional family relationships and patterns,





# Effects on Children

- Increased likelihood of living in a less desirable or dysfunctional environment,
  - Increased likelihood of inappropriate and/or limited parental/adult supervision,
  - Increased likelihood of inappropriate parental/adult models.
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# Effects of Family Violence

- Bullying among children
  - Use of corporal punishment
  - No sanctions against spousal abuse
  - No sanctions against elderly abuse
  - Increased use of alcohol and other drugs
  - Acceptance of violent activities for entertainment, humor, and compliance
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# THE HEALING JOURNEY


## Prevention Strategies

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- Support sobriety pledges
  - Support sobriety activities
  - Maintain no tolerance for substance or child abuse
  - Maintain no tolerance for activities that harm children



# THE HEALING JOURNEY

## Prevention Strategies

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- Maintain accountability for behavior toward others (self and others)
  - Support the right to parent Native children in an honorable way
  - Incorporate the Honor based society teachings in parenting and relationships and communities