


NICWA
 National Indian Child Welfare Association
Protecting our children - Preserving our culture

Relational Worldview


A Tribal and Cultural Framework for Improving Child Well-Being

Terry Cross, MSW, National Indian Child Welfare Association

Minneapolis, Minnesota
May 6, 2014

Linear Worldview

Social Work/Medical Model

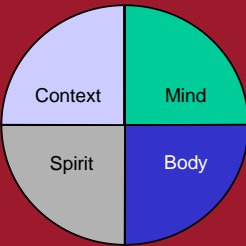


Cause → Effect → New Cause → New Effect

Social History → Presenting Problem → Assessment → Treatment → Outcome

Relational Worldview

Native and Tribal Thought




BALANCE

Relational Worldview

Native and Tribal Thought

- Fluid, cyclical view of time.
- Each aspect of life is related.
- Services aim to restore balance.
- Interventions may not be directed at "symptoms."
- Underlying question is "how?"



Relational Worldview

Individual and Family Level

Social History

Economics

Work/School

Family/Peers

Community

Culture

Innate Positive

Learned Positive

Innate Negative

Learned Negative

Knowledge/Judgment

Thinking Process

Self-Esteem

Memories

Emotions

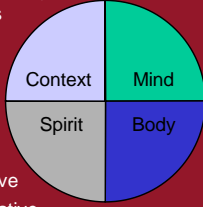
Biochemistry

Genetics

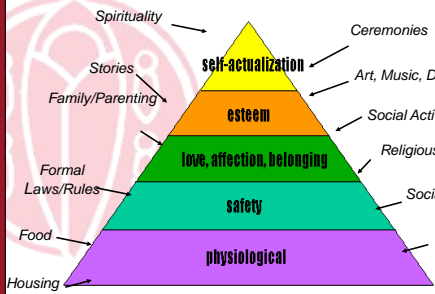
Health Status

Sleep/Rest State

Substance Use/Abuse

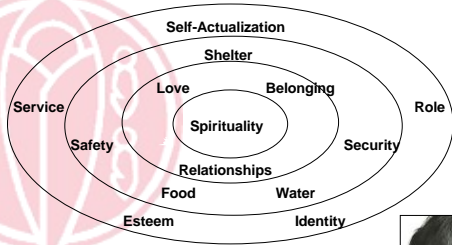


Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

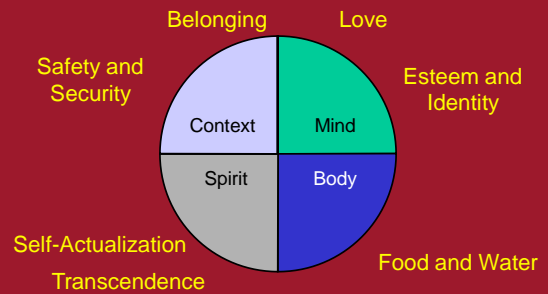


- Spirituality
- Ceremonies
- Stories
- Art, Music, Dance
- Family/Parenting
- Social Activities
- Formal Laws/Rules
- Religious Institutions
- Food
- Social Rules
- Housing
- Clothing

Maslow: Through Indigenous Eyes

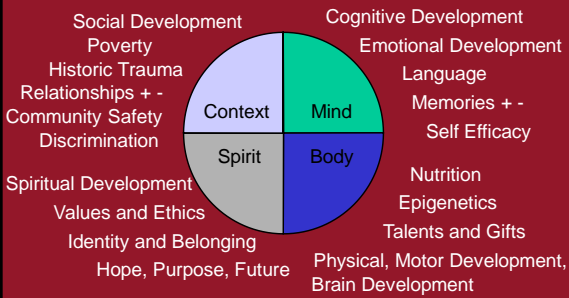


Plotting Maslow



Relational Worldview

Child Development



For Colonialism to Succeed

- Take Territory—Land
- Take Natural Resources—Energy/Food
- Take Sovereignty—Disrupt Leadership and Governance
- Take Away the Legitimacy of Thought—Worldview, Language, Spirituality, Healing
- Take the Children

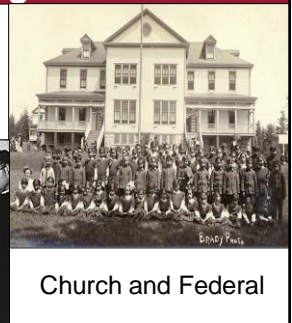


Historical Background

- Tribal governments disrupted.
- Traditional land and economies taken away.
- Generations of children forced into residential schools.
- Children taken from families for adoption outside their cultures.



Boarding Schools



Church and Federal

Symptoms of Post-Colonialism

- Intergenerational Trauma
- Lateral Oppression and Violence
- Internalized Racism—Self-Blame
- Identity Politics
- Dismembered Social Norms
- Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Blaming the Victim

Post-Colonial Reality

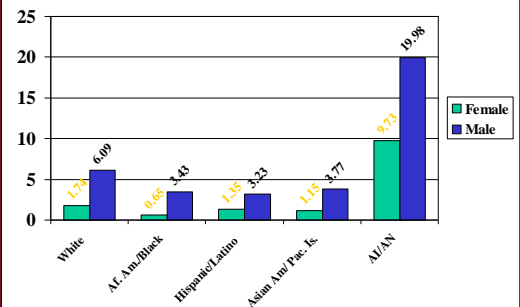
- Disparities—Racial inequity in economic security, health, education, social conditions
- Disproportionate representation in systems (over and under)
- Poor outcomes for American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children in state services
- Barriers to self-determination—funding
- ICWA not fully implemented



Child Well-Being, 2007/2008

	National Average	White (Non-Hispanic)	Black/African American	Asian and Pacific Islander	American Indian and Alaska Native	Hispanic/Latino
Infant mortality rate	6.7	5.6	13.2	3.7	8.8	5.7
Teen death rate	62	58	83	33	87	58
Teen birth rate	43	27	64	17	59	82
% of teens 16-19 not in school/not graduates	6	5	8	2	13	11
% of children in poverty	18	11	34	12	31	28

Suicide Rates by Race/Gender Age 10-18, 2006



RISK FACTORS

What Is an Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE)?

The experience of "significant abuse or household dysfunction during childhood"

Specific Indicators:

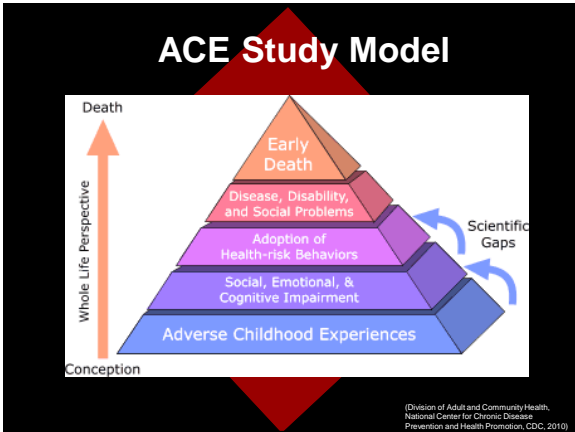
- Recurrent physical abuse
- Recurrent emotional abuse
- Contact sexual abuse
- An alcohol and/or drug abuser in the household
- An incarcerated household member
- Someone who is chronically depressed, mentally ill, institutionalized, or suicidal in the household
- Mother is treated violently
- One or no parents
- Emotional or physical neglect

(Division of Adult and Community Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC, 2010)

The ACE Study

- The ACE Score is a count of the total number of ACE indicators for an individual.
- The score ranges from 1 (low trauma) to 9 (high trauma).
- In the mainstream population, as an ACE score increases, the risk for numerous health problems increases.

(Division of Adult and Community Health, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, CDC, 2010)



American Indian Youth Victimization and Delinquency Outcomes Study (AIYVDOS)

- Used a participatory research model:
 - Culturally sensitive and scientifically sound
 - Involving community members as partners and owners throughout the research process

Final Sample

- 110 Young Adults, Aged 18–25
- 82% Enrolled Tribal Members
- 58% Female, 42% Male
- Grew up:
 - On the Reservation: 46%
 - Rural: 5%
 - Small Town: 21%
 - Suburbs: 10%
 - Urban: 18%

AIYVDOS and ACEs

# of ACEs	% of AIYVDOS Participants	% ACEs study (CDC, 2010)
0	30%	36%
4+	25%	13%

The percent of youth in our study with four or more ACEs is almost TWICE the rate in the mainstream population.

In mainstream culture, adults who had experienced four or more ACEs compared to those who had experienced none had at least four times higher risk of

- Alcoholism/drug use
- Depression
- Suicide attempts

The good news...

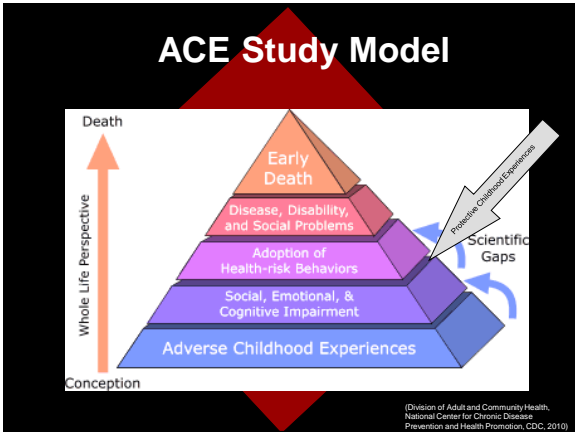
PROTECTIVE FACTORS

What is a Protective Childhood Experience (PCE)?

Positive relationships and experiences while growing up that protect young people from negative influences and behaviors.

Specific Indicators:

- Supportive Adults
- Positive Peer Groups
- School Activities
- Family Resources
- Spiritual/Religious Connection
- Connection with Tribal Elders, Learning a Tribal Language
- Safe and Strong Community



ACE Scores, PCE Scores, and Juvenile Delinquency

We examined how ACEs and PCEs relate to delinquency by grouping people according to both ACEs and PCEs

- The group with **low ACEs** and **high PCEs** had the lowest delinquency (14%)
- The group with **high ACEs** and **low PCEs** had the highest delinquency (67%)
- Even when ACEs were high, the group with high PCEs had lower delinquency (39%) than the group with low ACEs and low PCEs (46%)

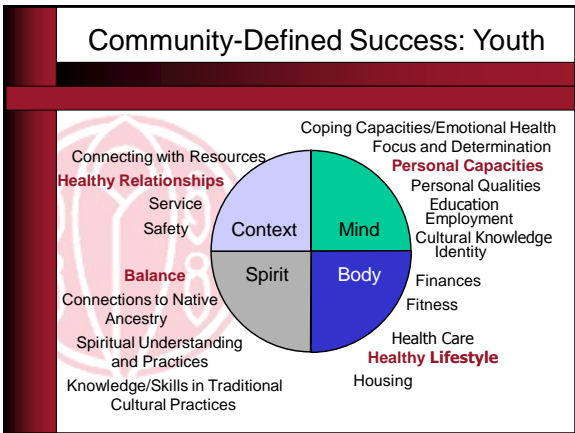
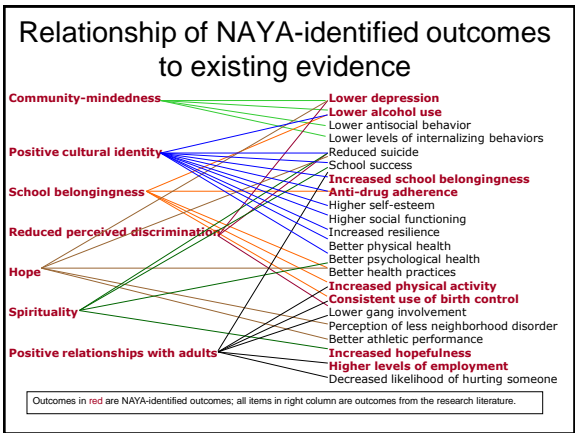
ACE scores, PCE scores and Depression

We also examined how ACEs and PCEs relate to depression.

Depression was related to the following:

- Gender (female)
- Higher Sexual Abuse (ACE)
- Lower Safe and Strong Community (PCE)
- Lower Spirituality (PCE)

How do we understand this research?



www.nicwa.org



National Indian Child Welfare Association

Protecting Our Children, Preserving Our Culture

