

Indigenous Youth Speak Out!



NATIVE AMERICAN WOMEN'S
HEALTH EDUCATION RESOURCE CENTER

ROUNDTABLE REPORT ON ISSUES AFFECTING THE YOUTH
OF THE IHANKTONWAN (YANKTON SIOUX) NATION

NOVEMBER 2015



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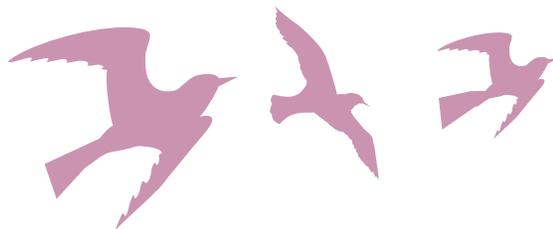
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INTRODUCTION BY CHARON ASETOYER, MA

The Native American Community Board is based on the Yankton Sioux Reservation in Lake Andes, South Dakota and has been serving Indigenous women and families for almost 30 years. It is headquartered in the Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center, which provides direct services to the communities including work on policy issues that improve the health and well being of Native women and their families.

One of the most recent projects of the organization is the KDKO 89.5 FM radio station. To better meet the programming needs of our youth, a series of youth dialogues were convened in order to hear what they felt are important issues affecting their lives on a day-to-day basis.

The following is what took place during the youth dialogues. I want to thank the youth of the Ihanktonwan Nation for their contribution to this report. The true warrior spirit was shown in their honesty and openness to share this information with us about the issues facing them. Their stories and information will help us to develop programming that will assist in better serving the challenges they are faced with. It will also challenge other services providers, Tribal Leaders and educators to find ways to better serve the youth of our communities.

Native American youth are left with the remnants of 500 years of oppression to live with and struggle with in order to survive each day. They face challenges that most other youth their age do not have to deal with. The drugs, alcohol, violence, rape, hunger, racial profiling, suicide, the school to prison pipeline and general poverty are only some of the issues facing our youth. Issues of dual jurisdictions, corporate encroachment, and the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968 that does not provide Native Peoples the same Civil Rights protections that all other American citizens have, often results in a fast tract to prison.

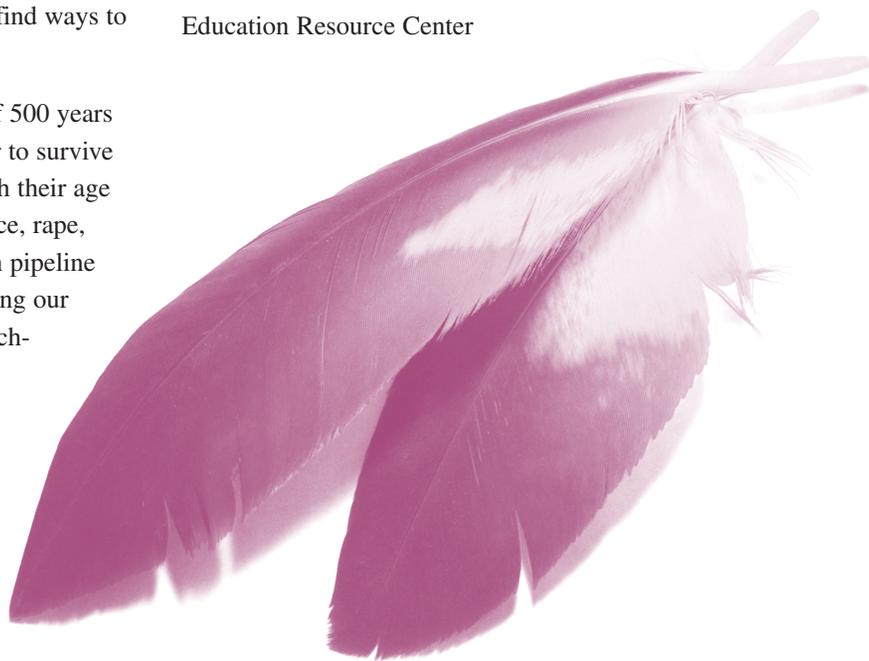
Because of the dual jurisdictions, many schools within the exterior boundaries of a reservation are lacking in Native parental representation on the school boards. This means that

Native parents do not have the same access to equal representation on the local school boards. The results are usually curriculums that do not embrace our cultural values, work to preserve our traditional language, and do not reflect the needs of the Native students often resulting in extremely high "push out" (dropout) rates of Native students. Many Native controlled schools lack the funding necessary to adequately prepare our students for college and/or vocational schools.

The intent of this report is to bring to the forefront the above concerns and issues of the Ihanktonwan youth. We appreciate them so very much and hope their voices provide the motivation to work for constructive and positive change in the families and communities of the Ihanktonwan and other tribal Nations.

Pidamaya,

Charon Asetoyer, MA,
Executive Director
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METHODOLOGIES

This report is largely a youth dialogue report wherein Native youth from the community (defined as coming mostly from Lake Andes, Marty, and Wagner South Dakota—all within the Yankton Sioux Nation, which encompasses most of Charles Mix County) engaged in facilitated discussion to highlight the issues they saw as important in their communities. The goal of this was to uncover which issues are affecting youth in the community and how.

The youth dialogues were carried out in five parts. Four of these parts were dialogues comprised exclusively of youth participants. The last part was a conjoined dialogue between the youth and service providers in the community.

Youth were guaranteed total confidentiality in exchange for their honest participation. Because of this there will be no name mention but rather an occasional indication of whether the participant was male or female unless this was ambiguous in the recordings taken. A total of 24 youth participated in these dialogues with meetings varying in size but never increasing over 16 participants at a time.

Youth Participants ranged from 12-20 years in age. All participants were Native and from the surrounding community (community defined as part of the Yankton Sioux Nation). The facilitator was a 20-year-old female intern at the Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center (NAWHERC) who was not part of the surrounding community.

A service providers dialogue consisting of two parts supplemented the youth dialogues. The first of these parts was a meeting of service providers from the area in which they discussed the issues they saw affecting local youth. The second was the joint meeting between service providers and youth. Service providers included law enforcement officials, child-care providers, treatment center counselors, youth center administrators/directors

and staff, and women shelter directors. A Senior Program Specialist at the Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center facilitated these two groups.

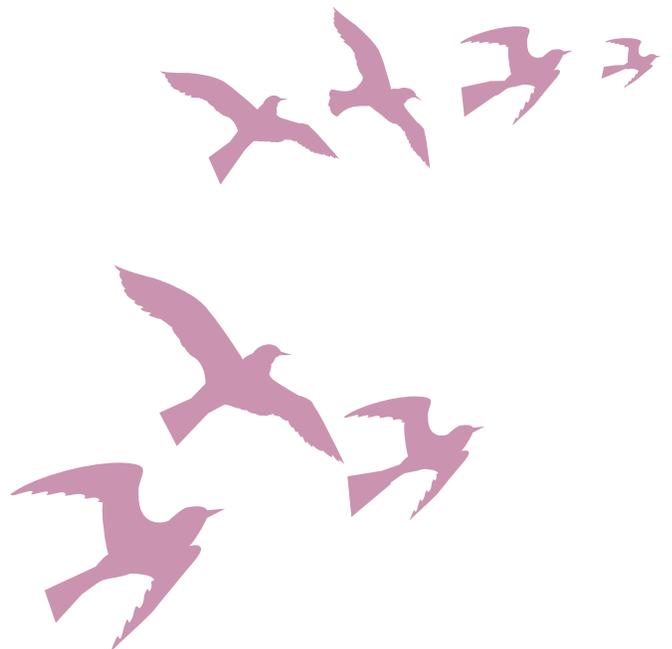
The research questions outlined the main purposes of the dialogue to be discussed such as issues of drug abuse, sex trafficking, school to prison pipeline, etc. All other areas of discussion were at least initially generated by the youth and then encouraged or guided by the facilitator through discussion and questions.

Please use the following key to understand indications of speakers included with quotes:

Pf=Female Participant

Pm=Male Participant

P=Participant





ISSUES OVERVIEW

In the youth dialogues many issues were presented. In organizing the problems they had voiced as being prevalent there were some common themes among causes and results of many of the problems.

That is, youth identified that many of the issues were partially caused by parental neglect. This will be further detailed within each individual section but it is significant to note that this seemed to be a running theme throughout many of the issues affecting the youth.

Youth also spoke to a lack of infrastructure, outside activities, and adequate guidance to be part of the cause of the issues they experienced.

The youth dialogues also resulted in the understanding that many of the issues youth face in the Yankton Sioux Nation's community result in dropping out of school. This theme seemed to occur continuously throughout discussion of teen pregnancy, drug abuse, and gang membership.

I. VIOLENCE AND DRUG ABUSE

A. Meth

In both the service provider's dialogue and the youth dialogues the issue of meth was the first to come up. Meth use was not specified as an issue by either facilitator in these groups. However, when the issue of drug abuse was presented to the youth group one of the first statements was, "Meth. Is a big thing here."—Female Participant (Pf). All youth in the dialogue seemed to be well aware of the problem meth had become in their community and all seemed to know a lot about the drug and its addictive qualities. Participants noted through observations that it caused physical damage to users and spoke about how much of a struggle it had been for people they know to try and quit using the drug. When directly asked whether or not they have seen meth users overcoming their addictions multiple youth answered, "No."—Male Participant (Pm). Coming down off of meth use was also said to be especially difficult because the process of coming down "makes them mad"—Pm, and "makes them depressed"—Pm and because "they need to have it to be happy"—Pm.

They also indicated that people in their community understood the detrimental effects of meth and chose to start using it anyways. Youth said people knowingly started meth use for reasons ranging from peer pressure to wanting to escape from real life.

.....
"I think why they do it is because they want to get away from all the chaos that our community is filled with." —Pf
.....

Youth pointed out that meth not only caused the user physical detriment but also caused deteriorating relationships and struggles in education. Meth use, as was described by the teens, often led to tense family relationships in which meth addicts would steal insulin needles from diabetic family members in order to shoot up. "A lot of people have a family member that's diabetic and uses needles for insulin shots. Some people steal the needles."—Pm. This practice highlights the desperate measures meth users will go to in order to get their fix of the drug, which is also causal of other issues such as sex trafficking, stealing, and gang activity in the community. Other participants noted that family dynamics often became strained when a family felt embarrassed of a meth addict relative or when one family member encouraged the meth addiction while others discouraged it.

Youth suggested that users paid for meth by selling food stamps, stealing money, robbing homes, having sex for meth, borrowing money, or getting a job.

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While the typical starting age for meth use was said to be about 17 participants also knew children as young as 12 who had begun using the drug. Others mentioned knowing kids ages 13 and 14 that were also using meth. Law enforcement officials also noted youth at increasing rates using meth.

Meth was one of the most central issues spoken about in the first service provider dialogue too. Some community members attended the dialogue representing a community task force against meth since it has become such a prominent issue. These providers seemed to understand meth as a huge and widespread problem in the community and were also at a loss for what to do about it, especially since they did not have the capacity at the nearby treatment center—Canku Teca—to fully rehabilitate meth addicts. Furthermore, they noted, drug circles ran so tightly and had instilled such fear in the community that it was virtually impossible to find out what source was actually selling the drugs. They voiced that it was difficult to even “catch” a person using meth while driving since the tribal police could not administer a narcotics stop, or pullover, on the highways and because meth addicts had discovered methods (such as swallowing comet wrapped in tissue and tied with a tiny rubber band) to avoid testing positive on urine tests.

When the youth discussion group was asked whether or not meth users typically drop out of school the unified response was that dropout was inevitable if the user hadn’t already done so.

In the second youth meeting the issue of meth use resurfaced as participants linked it with gang activity, wherein gangs provided income for young men through having them deal drugs to the community.

B. Gang Activity

While gang activity was not one of the many topics included in discussion participating youth urged a discussion about it, saying it was important “because a lot of people are in gangs”—Pm “at a young age.”—Pm, and “‘cause people are dying.”—P. This “young age” was later revealed when youth stated that gang members typically joined when they were 11-15 years old.

.....
“I think that gangs are an issue in our community because they’re affecting the youth, and little kids are joining gangs and dropping out of school.” —Pf
.....

Gangs mentioned included Bloods and Crips along with a couple other more local gangs, which were very briefly noted, such as the Projects gang. While both young men and young women joined gangs, youth observed that the majority of gang members were young men.

The purpose of the gangs was to get money through selling drugs and through robbing people—an act, which, sometimes, resulted in murder. Some of the participants had seen gang members mark themselves with their gang sign through self-made tattoos that they designed by cutting the sign into their skin and then filling it with ink. This had been observed happening in school classrooms.

Participants noted they had known people who died at the hands of gang violence in Wagner and Yankton (part of the Yankton Sioux Nation which, for the purposes of this report will be identified as their community) as well as on the Rosebud and Pine Ridge Reservations in other parts of South Dakota.

.....
“I think that’s why people join gangs is that—to protect their families...from other gangs who are trying to hurt their family, so they step in to get them.” —Pf
.....

C. Sexual Violence

One of the issues the participants in the dialogue wanted to speak about was bullying. However, what they began to describe encompassed not only bullying but more specifically sexual violence directed towards young women and gay people. A discussion about bullying was first brought up by a young



woman who said cyber-bullying is a problem in the community, **“causes people to kill themselves over it”** —P.

As the conversation on bullying continued, almost exclusively female participants detailed the issues that Facebook and other social media outlets had presented in the realm of kid-to-kid harassment. Over the internet these girls reported that there were “girls calling each other hos and sluts”—Pf. Participants continued to detail the way in which this was done publicly as a humiliation tactic, **“They tag each other in statuses”**—Pf **“so people will be able to see”** —Pf.

This way of humiliating young women through public posting on social media was a particularly effective form of bullying since even **“little kids, at the age of nine have Facebook.”**—Pf, and therefore many people are viewing these posts. Some of these girls as young as 11 years old were also using this technology to send nude photographs of their bodies to older men.

.....
“Little kids are like at the age of 11 sending like nude pictures to 32-35 year old boys.”—Pf
.....

Male recipients of the pictures were estimated to typically be in their early 20s, and the children photographing themselves were stated to be exclusively female.

Not only for just the very young girls sending the pictures, but for all young women sending nudes to men—these pictures were often used as a way to control these women. One participant noted, **“They would—like if the girls did something to the boys that they didn’t like, they would grab their phones where the photo was sent and they can post it online like ‘this girl did this and she sent me these pictures’ and it’d be like a little back fire.”** —Pf .

As participants gave examples of the ways in which bullying happened in their communities they continuously used a female victim. When the facilitator questioned whether or not boys could be the object of bullying and rumors, participants at first said, **“No, they’re always about girls”**—P. They then retracted this belief talking about how the word “faggot” was used against boys as a form of bullying. “Faggot” was described as

being used both as a feminizing term to tease straight boys with as well as a targeted term to tease gay or gay-presenting boys. Through discussions participants explained that there was also a comeback some boys might use when they were called a “fag”: **“Female Ass Grabber.”**—Pm. This comeback reveals that the term “fag” even when used simply to feminize a male is extremely sexist and homophobic.

Girls in the group said the same anti-gay sentiment was not used against lesbian girls, but a couple boys in the group quietly disagreed.

It is important to point out that in both of the discussions in which LGBTQ populations were noted there was laughter and teasing of other members in the dialogue using anti-gay sentiment.

II. Reproductive Issues/Sexual Issues

A. Pregnancy

Pregnancy was another issue the youth group generated on its own. This occurred in their first dialogue group, which shows how pressing they considered the issue to be. Youth said the issue was such an important one to talk about because **“everyone’s getting knocked up”**—Pm **“like all the teenagers”**—P who were said to be **“mostly 14 years old”**—Pf.

In the first service provider’s dialogue the Director of the Women’s Lodge in Lake Andes noted, **“The kids having sex at a very young age. Girls are getting pregnant very young. One was 11.”**—Director. Law enforcement officials noted, **“In 2010 this county was in the top five in the nation for teen pregnancy”**—Law Enforcement.

Youth observed that these young girls were having sex with mostly older men in their late teens through mid twenties. While girls were often in relationships with these men before and during the pregnancy, **“it seems like when they have the baby the guys leave”**—Pf, **“a couple days and they’re gone”**—Pf.

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Pregnant girls also were observed typically dropping out of school at some point during their pregnancy. They dropped out, according to participants, when the bump started to show around 5 months, because it was embarrassing or because they had to take care of their baby.

Participants indicated that there were many affordable or free ways to get contraceptives and prevent pregnancy. However, as is common knowledge, it often feels better for a man to not use a condom during sex, which is one of the explanations participants offered for why condoms are not being used to prevent pregnancy. As one participant put it, *“It feels good”*—Pf. Other participants suggested that perhaps young women were embarrassed to go get protection.

When asked: *“Why’re girls having children so young?”*

Participants responded *“Alcohol”*-P (both male and female participants). Alcohol was said to be the reason for teen pregnancy not only because it *“makes you want to get laid”*—Pm, but also because of the ways alcohol is used in sexual assault cases. One participant neatly tied these two issues together stating, *“At parties...like say they’re using alcohol and then the girl passes out. Then she can get raped and she can get pregnant by that.”*—Pf. This participant confirmed that this is something that does happen in her community a lot.

B. Sexual Assault

Sexual assault was one of the least *directly* spoken about subjects covered in these youth discussion groups. This is possibly because the youth were unaware of what exactly constitutes sexual assault. Many of their examples during other conversations would have fit into the category of sexual assault or even rape, such as young girls at the age of 14 having sex with men in their twenties as those girls could not legally consent.

The only times in which sexual assault and rape were spoken to directly were when participants talked about girls getting drunk at parties and then men taking advantage of them.

The service providers dialogue, however, shared other insights into this issue. The tribal law enforcement officers, in particular, had a great deal of information to offer to the group. Notably, they said that date rape drugs, specifically, were also being used

on men in some cases. Service providers described the shame many youth felt in reporting rape and having to talk about it, many rapes do not get reported because of this reason.

Law enforcement officials also shared, *“We have had cases this year where there have been some alcohol and drug use and rapes have happened.”* This seemed to follow the youth observations that rape or other forms of sexual violence seemed most prevalent when alcohol and drugs were involved. Law enforcement officials stated that a lot of the rape perpetrators were teens—in the same age group as the victims.

In handling the aftermath of sexual assault or rape officers had to use outside sources. They described, *“We use Child’s Voice (Sioux Falls). We get our Child Protection Services (CPS) involved and they [CPS] will take them to Child’s Voice to be interviewed.”*—Law Enforcement. The group also stated that there was not an advocate at IHS to assist victims of rape and the Director of the Women’s Lodge recalls only being called into advocate for victims at IHS once.

C. Dating Violence

Many youth observed dating violence as a common occurrence in their communities. When the topic of dating violence was first presented to the group youth were asked if this was relevant to them, if they knew people who had experienced dating violence. The overwhelming consensus was *“Yes. Like a lot around here.”*—Pf. This was a belief that was echoed in the service providers dialogue, *“There is a lot of teen dating violence”*—Law Enforcement.

Youth recognized that dating violence was happening at high rates in their communities as young as 16 & 17 years of age. Participants noted that dating violence usually started because of heavy drinking both in the house and at parties.

.....
“I know like usually relationships around here like everybody, everybody always wants to drink all the time and like if the boy gets drunk then he usually ends up like hitting his girlfriend and beating her up or something.”—Pf
.....



Participants also noted that this abuse was typically seen as acceptable, noting that *“they usually like just end up getting back together”*—Pf. Even though this seemed to be a common issue youth said it wasn’t an issue that was spoken about among the youth and that guidance counselors in the schools only brought up the issue when they were trying to step in, asking a girl if she was being abused: *“Like they’ll ask you what happened—I don’t know like some—I don’t know like girls just say it.”*—P.

If a girl did tell a guidance counselor what was happening to her, the youth observed, the boy would be reported to legal authorities. Although it did seem like some girls would tell an authority figure, such as a guidance counselor, when asked about the abuse, participants, later in discussion, concluded that most girls would not tell anybody about the abuse they were experiencing,

“No. Like they usually don’t really—girls around here they usually don’t really say anything just—”—Pf

“They might be embarrassed.”—Pm This was further exemplified by the observation that *“when they like get beat up or whatever they like try to cover it up. Like with Band-Aids”*—Pf.

While the conversation the youth talked about were the ways young women experience dating violence, when questioned, they said that young men occasionally experience dating violence too.

D. Sex Trafficking/Prostitution

As a topic many adults in the community have observed as pertinent and as an increasing issue, sex trafficking was written into the grant proposal as a topic to be discussed among youth participants. The group, which discussed this issue on the fourth meeting, only knew of occasional cases of sex trafficking, but it should also be noted that this particular group had mostly younger youth in it (most were 12-16). Regardless, it is significant that such young people could pinpoint sex trafficking that they saw happening in their communities. One girl retold a sce-

nario she had witnessed unfolding wherein a man sex trafficked one of his relatives for alcohol.

“I’ve heard of that happening....Like, I heard this girl once, her friend was at this party—or...they were at her house and like he told this guy “Yeah she’s over here. Bring a bottle over and blah blah blah.” —Pf

“A bottle over here to what?”—Facilitator

“A bottle over here to drink, you know? And, yeah, she’ll have sex with you or something.”—Pf

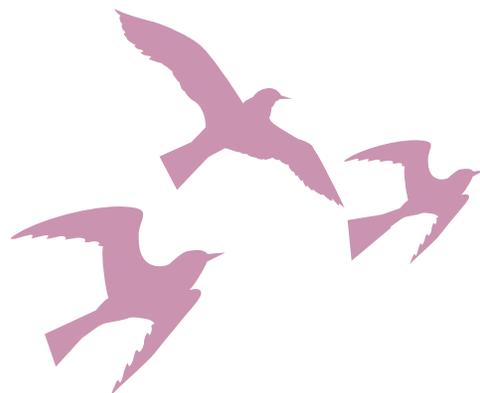
The issue of prostitution—or as it was phrased in these groups: girls selling themselves—was one that was brought up by participants during a discussion about meth. During later discussion participants confirmed that girls did most commonly sell themselves in exchange for drugs or alcohol—not money typically.

“How do they pay for [meth]?”—Facilitator

“They sell themselves for it.”—Pm

“Like selling sex?”—Cecilia

“Yes”—Pm



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III. Exhibiting Internalized Oppression/Coping with Hardship

A. Self Harm

Self-harm was brought up multiple times by youth participants during the course of their dialogues. This was because, in large part, it occurred as an outcome of many of the issues they spoke on. Youth participants said that many of their peers self-harmed. Some would do this publicly—by cutting on their thighs instead of their wrists, or by wearing long sleeves. Others would attempt to hide their cuts—burning themselves with erasers (through scrubbing off their skin) during class. The youth who exposed their cuts, or showed them off, were said to do so to gain attention, sometimes because they'd been neglected by their parents and badly wanted somebody to care about them and sometimes as a cry for help. For instance, one female participant told a story of a girl she had known using social media to gain attention and to get help for her self. This girl was then further isolated from her community when she was removed from her family.

Pf: I know a person that...posted pictures of like their cuts on their arms and they called child services and took the child away.

Facilitator: *They took the child away—away from the family? Why?*

Pf: Because she had posted statuses about—FML is “blank my life”?... And saying that “I hate life” and “I don’t want to be here” and she’s posting pictures of her cuts on her arms... She felt like she was being alone. She was saying... “my family and friends don’t care about me so like they don’t even like me” or—she posted saying some of that stuff.

Facilitator: *Was that an issue of abandonment? Like were her parents actually—*

Pf: They weren’t checking up on their child because they don’t know how to do nothing online [and] they were drunk.... And the parents no longer have rights to her ‘cause of child neglect.

Youth also noted that bullying could also drive young people to self-harm. Bullying, parental neglect, and going through a major life crisis were the three main reasons offered up as to why youth self harm in their communities.

.....
“When people cut themselves it gives them a rush to forget what happened. To do like they have this mindset like ‘I do this, it makes me forget.’”—Pf

“They say it takes the pain away”—Pf

B. Suicide

.....
Suicide was an issue that was brought up by youth in the first dialogue. They said it was an issue in the community and that there were people in their communities committing suicide. While suicide was acknowledged to sometimes be a result of cutting or depression, youth participants also stated that often times it was very hard to tell if a person was going through a struggle that might result in suicide. When asked whether or not people exhibited signs of depression before attempting suicide participants’ responses included the following:

.....
“Yes...some of ‘em in my words, the bloody violin, they cut themselves like in places where they can hide and no one see it.”—Pf

“Not all the time, like sometimes you see someone looking really happy, the next day you find out they killed themselves.”—P

“Like they think they can hide their pain really well like they have a fake smile and you think they’re just happy. But deep down they’re hurting. They’re in pain or whatever.”—Pm.



C. Grief

The facilitator generated the conversation on grief. It was an incredibly brief conversation, which mostly resulted in the youth response that people suffering “just ignore it”—Pf. Youth said that even though there were counselors at their schools that people were allowed to use for such issues they mostly did not see people grieving and those who were either took pills or handled the issues on their own.

While the conversation itself was relatively short it was also revealing of the ways in which sadness, depression, grief, etc. are pushed under the rug. This may contribute to the issue of unpredictable suicides in the community as is detailed above.

Solutions/Recommendations:

I. Guidance

A. Parental Neglect

Throughout many of the conversation on community youth, participants and service providers alike noted the prevalence of parental neglect. Parents were stated to either be neglectful or unaware (which was deemed to result in neglect) of children’s activities. This caused an unmonitored use of technology which allowed youth to bully other youth, older men to exploit young girls for nude pictures (and for young girls to send nude pictures to older men without their parents knowing), and for youth to garner attention through posting pictures of their self harm to social media. In other words, parental neglect was seen to cause youth to seek attention through other harmful means. Both service providers and youth alike noted the importance it might be to hold parenting classes for all parents in order to help them get on board with the struggles their children may be encountering in an ever-changing landscape of technology, bullying strategies, and violence. Youth also suggested that the issues of neglect were stemming from parental drug and alcohol use or unfamiliarity with Facebook and other forms of social media. In youth dialogues this was exemplified in a few conversations including one on young girls sending nude photos to older men over technology.

Pf: A way I think we can prevent it is like telling families to stop neglecting their kids and show attention to the kids so they wouldn’t have to seek attention from Facebook or from other guys or—so just give their kids the attention they’re seeking.

Facilitator: Yeah. So girls are doing this ‘cause they don’t feel like adequate?

Pf: Yeah they feel like, like no one’s giving them attention so they have to go to these weird guys and send them a picture to get attention.

B. Mentorship

Parental neglect was quickly linked to talks about how else to find support for children within their communities. One suggestion from the youth group was to set up a mentorship program. This program would, hopefully, allow younger children to have a role model in the community who they could rely on and learn from while simultaneously giving older children a chance to be role models.

Youth participants pointed to programs that had previously been in place in their schools where they had been allowed to mentor younger ages. Many participants were excited about the idea and thought it could become a mutually beneficial relationship between the mentor and the mentee, and thus could benefit the community for future generations.

C. Authority Figure Support

It became clear through conversation, that authority figures (such as guidance counselors and most teachers at school to name a few) were not providing adequate support on crucial issues to the youth in the dialogue. Descriptions of children able to cut, burn, or tattoo themselves during class illustrates a lack of responsibility within the education system.

In another conversation, wherein the facilitator asked whether or not there were conversations about non-straight people at their schools, the responses given linked inadequate authority figure support concerning bullying of gay youth:

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Facilitator: *Do people talk about [non-straight people]?*

Pm: *Ahhhhhhh.*

Pm1: *When they're trying to make fun of me—yeah.*

Pm: *[laughs]. What?*

[Laughter]

Pm1: *Callin' me names.*

Facilitator: *Do teachers talk about it?*

P [multiple]: *No*

Facilitator: *No? Do guidance counselors?*

P [multiple]: *No.*

Many problems the youth are facing could be addressed within the educational system. The youth often have no other place to turn to for help except for the school staff and should be able to turn to them for assistance in finding some kind of support and guidance. Finding a solution for creating support for these youth among authority figures in their lives is important.

D. College Help

Over the course of these dialogues many different participants requested a meeting session discussing college on multiple occasions. Quite simply, participants wanted information, on financial aid, or what college to first attend, how you applied, how it worked, etc. Many of the youth during the discussion in which college was discussed indicated that they wanted to attend college, however a vast majority of their parents, who were surely encouraging and supportive, had not been to college and didn't know what the process looked like.

Even though some of the students said guidance counselors would talk to youth about college occasionally, it seemed to the facilitator that the youth had many more questions and needed significantly more information, resources, and support if they wanted to be able to apply and attend an undergraduate or associates program. This is where the educational system needs to spend more time focusing on with the youth.

II. Community Based Infrastructural Support

A. Jurisdictional Awareness

Another prominent issue that was raised during the service provider's dialogue seemed to in itself be a solution to what service providers described as youths putting themselves in double jeopardy by violating both tribal law and state law by committing a crime or escaping punishment on both tribal and state lands.

Law enforcement officials and other community members voiced that they wanted to come into schools and talk to students about these issues so they would understand exactly what kind of trouble they could get themselves into in dual jurisdiction scenarios. This kind of knowledge is important for the students to know about because they live in a dual jurisdiction setting. This information could very well be incorporated into a social studies class or even a class about Tribal law.

B. Meth Treatment Capacities

In the service provider's dialogue one of the most pressing issues that came up was an inability to stop the meth use in the community. In large part this was determined to be because there were only three long-term rehabilitation programs in the state, all of which were typically filled. Furthermore, Canku Teca Treatment Center (the local rehabilitation center) did not have the capacity to perform full term rehabilitation for meth addicts.

This seemed to start a vicious cycle, wherein, if a meth addict knew that they could not get support in their community to stop use then they would feel hopeless and just get back on the drug. One of the youth participants observed this pattern in a particularly insightful comment: *"I think that the people who're on meth, and they're trying to get off meth—they're too influenced from a lot of other people in their community doing meth. So they just get back on it."*—Pf.

A possible solution could be investment in a long-term treatment program at Canku Teca in order to provide specific and effective treatment for meth users in the local community.



C. Anti-Bullying Campaigns

The youth spoke on a program that had come to their school to do anti-bullying work, called Rachel's Project. However, even though they identified bullying as the number one issue they were facing there didn't seem to be any anti-bullying work set up in the schools. Bullying should be looked at as a form of violence & abuse and thus handled in such a matter.

According to the youth, something of this nature could have an incredible impact on making youth feel safer and more accepted within school. Because bullying seemed to be a part of the youth social landscape, simply shifting focus to anti-bullying or handling it, as a form of violence with stiffer discipline action would make the students understand how dangerous it is.

D. IHS Advocate/Sexual Assault Support Staff

One of the most striking and yet least noted issues presented in the service provider's dialogue was the fact that the nearby IHS does not have an advocate for women and young women who have been raped or sexually assaulted. Nor does it call on the local shelter program to assist with this service.

The tribal law enforcement officers also offered that when a youth is raped, their Child Protective Services would come in and take that child all the way to Sioux Falls in order to get an evaluation done. While it may not be an amendable issue it should be noted that after a trauma such as sexual assault or rape, traveling so far from home can be a terrible experience and not one that these young women should have to go through. A possible solution seems very clear—the community seems to need more sexual assault advocate support. The local agencies should work together to provide improve services. The local IHS should be open to working with the local shelter especially concerning a rape.

III. Policy

A. Educational Policy

Part of the purpose of this report is also to simply reveal the detrimental affects policies that permit, for instance, the absence of a sex education curriculum in South Dakota schools, have on children. In one conversation where health education or sexual

education became a topic of discussion all but one of the youth said they did not have a sex education curriculum at their schools. The only participant, who did, described a class as half health education, half physical education and mostly constituted with impractical and non-useful information on the human body.

Facilitator: *What do they teach you in your health class?*

Pf1: *Like—I think we did CPR and he just like makes us do power points on like—like on the body and stuff. He just like teaches us about like bones and about the body and stuff.*

Facilitator: *Okay. Do you all get information about sex Ed?*

Pf1: *No.*

Youth then stated they'd been getting information on safe sex through "sex talks" with parents where their parents would tell them about STDs etc. While some youth knew all about STDs they later indicated through asking of very elementary questions that they did not have sufficient knowledge to protect themselves against STDS, didn't have correct definitions for domestic abuse, and were ultimately very under educated on issues of sex in general. This means that, while the youth knew such issues existed they weren't aware of how they might actually happen to them. For instance in one exchange a girl showcased her knowledge that STDs were to be avoided and, frankly, existed, but the group didn't know how they might affect a person:

Pf: *My brother's dad has hepatitis. What is that anyway?*

Facilitator: *It's a blood disease.*

Pf: *Jesus.*

Pm: *How do you get it?*

Furthermore, even those youth who claimed they knew how to have safe sex, as they had learned from family members had absolutely no idea how to have safe gay or lesbian sex. Not a single participant was aware of this information.

This put participants in an extremely compromising position. If youth are only able to get safe sex information from family members this would mean that if LGBTQ youth in the communities are trying to get information on how to have safe sex with

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their dating partners they are forced to come out to their families. This can be incredibly uncomfortable and psychologically traumatic for youth who are not ready for this step yet, and can have tangible repercussions as well as LGBTQ youth are often kicked out of their homes and left homeless by families who are not supportive of LGBTQ populations. Even worse, some LGBTQ youth might not know that there is a way to have safe gay or lesbian sex making them especially prone to STDs and HIV/AIDs. Youth with STDs are also jeopardized, as they may not know the signs of the STD until it reaches its late stages.

The Native American Women's Health Education Resource Center has done what it can to place some workshops in both the Marty Indian School and the Lake Andes Schools, however, while this is first and foremost not nearly enough to fully and continuously educate young people, it is also limited work in the sense that some schools, such as the nearby Wagner schools, will not allow this workshop within their boundaries. Such makes it impossible to guarantee all children sufficient knowledge about sexual health, dating violence, and other issues of the like.

B. Meth Laws and Tribal Codes

Service provider's brought up a difficulty in being able to enforce anti-meth laws against those meth addicts who, were clearly on meth in public. This was because, while community members might know they were on meth, the law enforcement had to bring in a specialist to determine whether or not that individual was or was not on meth in order to make an arrest.

For this reason, service providers suggested writing into tribal codes the ability of tribal law enforcement to administer narcotics-related stops, which would allow them to hold a person and then test them for narcotics use or allow their specialist time to come and determine whether or not the individual was using narcotics. Service providers pressed that this would allow actual enforcement against meth use and then help for meth users. However this would mean that random stops and drug testing would have to be allowed without cause. This would mean profiling would be legal and would violate a person's rights. This exemplifies the desperation of the community and its desire to address the drug problem.

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