

Technology-Based Sexual Health Curriculum for American Indian/Alaska Native Youth

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INTRODUCTION

- American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth experience sexual and reproductive health disparities.¹
- Culturally relevant sexual health education programs are needed that are culturally acceptable, need fewer trained personnel, provide lesson fidelity, are accessible, and have geographic reach.²
- Effective Internet-based sexual health education programs may reduce disparities by overcoming these challenges.

PURPOSE

To culturally adapt an effective HIV/STI & pregnancy prevention program for use in AI/AN communities, evaluate it's efficacy, enhance it for accessibility and reach, and to disseminate it in Indian Country.

METHODS

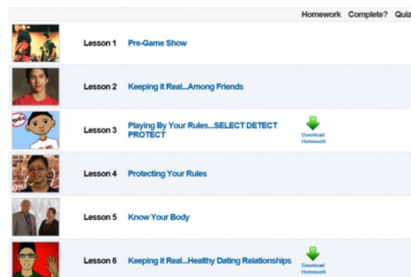
- ADAPT:** Tribal members & youth provided recommendations for cultural acceptance and usability testing (pre- & post-adaptation) provided a data driven approach.
- EVALUATE:** NIYG was rigorously evaluated in a RCT with > 500 AI/AN youth (12-14 yrs.) in 18 tribes in 25 communities in AK, AZ, & the Pacific NW. Psychosocial determinants of sexual behavior were assessed at baseline and 12-month follow-up.
- ENHANCE:** A systematic, iterative, expert review process informed technical and content enhancements for NIYG 2.0.
- DISSEMINATE:** NIYG 2.0 was released for use in Indian Country via the Healthy Native Youth website (Fig. 1 & QR Code).

RESULTS

1. ADAPT

The adapted program, Native IYG, is a 13-lesson online HIV/STI & pregnancy prevention program for AI/AN middle school-aged youth (12-14 yrs.)(Fig. 1).

Fig 1 : NIYG lesson menu (excerpt).



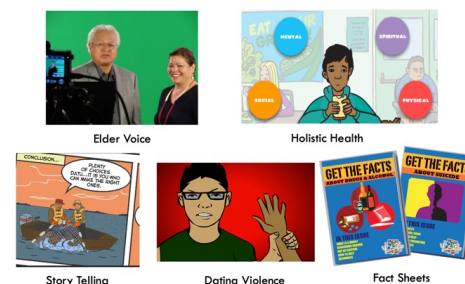
A. Surface cultural adaptation: Enhanced images of clothing, locations, logo design, and language (Fig 2)

Fig 2 : Surface culture example



B. Deep cultural adaptation: Reflecting cultural values, beliefs, & environmental and psychological influencers of sexual health behaviors (Fig. 3).

Fig 3 : Deep culture examples



2. EVALUATE

- A. Participants:**
- Participating youth (n=574):
 - 55.1% self-identified as female,
 - Mean age was 13.2 years, and
 - 6.5% reported being sexually active.



- B. Findings included improved ...**
- Knowledge about condom use.
 - Confidence to obtain condoms and use condoms.
 - Intention to pursue education beyond high school compared to youth in the comparison group.

3. ENHANCE

Next generation curriculum (NIYG 2.0) upgrades ...

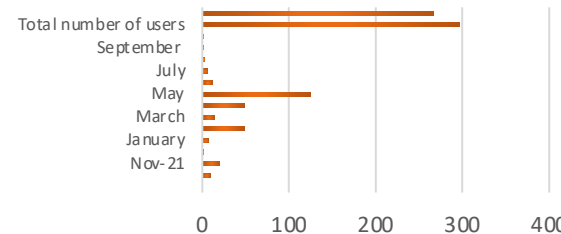


- Curriculum:**
- Updated content responsive to community feedback.
 - Enhanced facilitator curriculum manual.
- Technical specifications:**
- HTML/Java delivery platform.
 - Downloadable program option.
 - Revised content management system
 - Teacher-student admin. & feedback.
 - Enhanced backend tracking database.
 - Report generation.

4. DISSEMINATE

To date NIYG 2.0 has been accessed by teachers (n=144), classes (n=149), and students (n=1781) (Fig 4)

Fig 4 : Number of new users (Oct. 2021 – Oct 2022)



CONCLUSION

- ADAPT:** NIYG provides a culturally acceptable, appealing, and accessible sexual health curriculum to optimize reach and fidelity for to AI/AN youth.
- EVALUATE:** NIYG has demonstrated an evidence-base for increasing protective factors for AI/AN middle school youth and also a predictor of successful vertical social mobility.
- ENHANCE & DISSEMINATE:** NIYG 2.0 represents one of few fully online curricula demonstrated culturally acceptable to AI/AN communities and readily accessible online.

NEXT STEPS:

A next generation NIYG 3.0 that is responsive to trauma-informed curriculum with greater inclusivity and responsiveness to Two-Spirit and LGBTQ youth is indicated. Strategies include user feedback from youth in the form of testimonials.

REFERENCES

- Shegog R, Craig Rushing S, Jessen C et al. (2017) Native IYG: Improving Psychosocial Protective Factors for HIV/STI and Teen Pregnancy Prevention among Youth in American Indian/Alaska Native Communities. JARC, Vol. 8: Iss. 1, Article 3
- Craig Rushing, S., Stephens, D., Shegog, R., et al. (2018). Healthy Native Youth: Improving Access to Effective, Culturally-Relevant Sexual Health Curricula. Frontiers in Public Health. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpubh.2018.00225>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The study was funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (#5U48DP001949-02), the Indian Health Service HIV Program and the Secretary's Minority AIDS Initiative Fund.

