



NACS

NEWS

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**Native American
Community Services**

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Hepatitis Awareness Month

Hepatitis Awareness Month matters because it drives testing, vaccination, early treatment, and public understanding—all of which are essential to preventing liver disease, cancer, and deaths linked to viral hepatitis. It brings national attention to hepatitis A, B, and C at a time when many people who are infected don't know it, and when prevention tools are widely available.^[1]

Why Hepatitis Awareness Month Is Important

- ◆ **Raising public awareness** - May is used to educate communities about hepatitis A, B, and C, how they spread, and how to prevent them. Many infections are silent, so awareness helps people recognize risks and seek testing.^[1]
- ◆ **Promoting vaccination** - Hepatitis A and B are *vaccine-preventable*, yet many adults remain unvaccinated. Awareness Month encourages people to get protected.^[1]
- ◆ **Encouraging testing** - Hepatitis B and C often show no symptoms for years. Testing is the only way to know your status, and early detection prevents liver damage, cancer, and death. All adults in the U.S. are recommended to be screened at least once.^[1]
- ◆ **Connecting people to treatment** - Hepatitis C is *curable* with 8–12 weeks of oral medication, and hepatitis B has treatments that reduce long-term complications. Awareness campaigns help people access these services.^[1]
- ◆ **Reducing stigma** - Public education helps counter misconceptions about hepatitis, making it easier for people to seek care without shame.

- ◆ **Highlighting public health data** - Annual surveillance reports released around May help guide national strategies and show progress toward eliminating viral hepatitis.^[1]
- ◆ **Mobilizing communities** - Federal, state, and local partners use May to run campaigns, share resources, and expand access to vaccination and testing.^[2]

National Hepatitis Testing Day (May 19)

A key part of the month, this day encourages people to get tested and learn their status. It's a nationwide push to identify undiagnosed infections and link people to care.^[1]

Why This Matters Now

- ◆ In 2023, the U.S. saw an estimated **3,300 hepatitis A**, **14,400 hepatitis B**, and **69,000 hepatitis C** infections.
- ◆ Many people with chronic hepatitis B or C are **unaware** of their infection.
- ◆ Thousands of hepatitis-related deaths occur each year, most of them preventable with early detection and treatment.^[3]

These numbers show why a dedicated month of awareness is still urgently needed.

(¹ [CDC](#), ² [HHS](#), ³ [NACCHO](#))

Differences between hepatitis A B and C

Hepatitis A, B, and C differ mainly in *how they spread, whether they become chronic, and whether vaccines or cures exist*. Hepatitis A is short-term and food-borne, hepatitis B is blood/body-fluid trans-

mitted and vaccine-preventable, and hepatitis C is blood-borne and *curable* but has no vaccine.^[4]

Hepatitis A

- ◆ **Transmission:** Mainly through contaminated food or water, or close personal contact.^[4]
- ◆ **Course:** Causes acute illness only; **never becomes chronic**.
- ◆ **Symptoms:** Fatigue, nausea, jaundice, fever.
- ◆ **Prevention:** **Highly effective vaccine** recommended for all children and at-risk adults.
- ◆ **Treatment:** No specific antiviral-rest and hydration.

Hepatitis B

- ◆ **Transmission:** Blood and body fluids-sex, shared needles, childbirth.^[4]
- ◆ **Course:** Can be **acute or chronic**; chronic infection can lead to cirrhosis or liver cancer.
- ◆ **Risk of chronicity:** Very high in infants; low (~5%) in adults.
- ◆ **Prevention:** **Safe, effective vaccine** for infants, children, and adults.
- ◆ **Treatment:** No cure yet, but **antiviral medications** suppress the virus and prevent liver damage.

Hepatitis C

- ◆ **Transmission:** Primarily blood-to-blood-most commonly through shared needles.^[4]
- ◆ **Course:** Often silent; **50–70%** of infections become chronic.
- ◆ **Complications:** Cirrhosis, liver failure, liver cancer.
- ◆ **Prevention:** **No vaccine** available.
- ◆ **Treatment:** **Curable** in over 95% of cases with 8–12 weeks of direct-acting antiviral pills.

Why These Differences Matter

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- ◆ **Vaccination:** Only hepatitis A and B can be prevented with vaccines.
- ◆ **Testing:** Hepatitis B and C often have no symptoms-testing is essential.
- ◆ **Treatment:** Hepatitis C is curable; hepatitis B is manageable; hepatitis A resolves on its own.
- ◆ **Public health:** Understanding transmission helps prevent outbreaks and chronic liver disease.

(⁴ [CDC](#))

How can I prevent hepatitis?

You can prevent hepatitis by combining *vaccination, safe hygiene, and avoiding blood-to-blood exposure*. Vaccines protect against hepatitis A and B, and careful practices reduce the risk of hepatitis C.

Hepatitis Overview prevention (Harvard Health-Credible health information source)

You can reduce your chance of getting viral hepatitis. Follow these basic guidelines:

- ◆ Wash your hands frequently.
- ◆ Purchase shellfish only at reputable food stores.
- ◆ If you catch your own shellfish, take them only from waters that have been deemed safe by health authorities.
- ◆ Before traveling to foreign countries, ask your doctor whether you should be vaccinated against hepatitis A.
- ◆ Ask your doctor whether you

need to be vaccinated against hepatitis B. This vaccine is now routine for infants. It may make sense for some adults who have a higher risk of getting hepatitis B.

- ◆ If you may have been exposed to someone with hepatitis B, ask your doctor whether you need the hepatitis B immunoglobulin and/or vaccine.

Core Prevention Strategies

These steps apply across the major viral types and are supported by medical guidance from health organizations.

1. Vaccination

- ◆ **Hepatitis A and B vaccines are safe and highly effective.**
- ◆ Hepatitis A vaccine prevents infection from contaminated food/water.
- ◆ Hepatitis B vaccine protects against HBV and also prevents hepatitis D (which only occurs with HBV).

- ◆ There is **no vaccine for hepatitis C**, so prevention relies on reducing exposure risks.^[5]

2. Hygiene and food safety

Especially important for hepatitis A and E (fecal-oral transmission):

- ◆ Wash hands after using the bathroom and before handling food.
- ◆ Drink clean, treated water.
- ◆ Avoid raw or undercooked shellfish in areas with poor

sanitation.^[5]

3. Avoid blood exposure

Critical for preventing hepatitis B and C:

- ◆ Never share needles, syringes, or drug-use equipment.
- ◆ Ensure tattoos or piercings are done with sterile equipment.
- ◆ Use personal items (razors, toothbrushes) individually.
- ◆ Healthcare settings must follow strict infection-control practices.^[6]

4. Practice safer sex

- ◆ Hepatitis B can spread through sexual contact.
- ◆ Use condoms consistently to reduce risk.^[6]

5. Prevent mother to child transmission

- ◆ Pregnant individuals should be tested for hepatitis B.
- ◆ Newborns receive the hepatitis B vaccine at birth; infants of HBV-positive mothers also receive HBIG.^[6]

6. Get tested

- ◆ Testing identifies silent infections early.
- ◆ CDC recommends all adults be screened for hepatitis B and C at least once.
- ◆ Early detection prevents liver damage and reduces transmission.^[6]

7. Protect your liver

- ◆ Avoid excessive alcohol, which worsens liver inflammation.
- ◆ Use medications only as directed to avoid toxic hepatitis.^[7]

Mental Health Awareness Month

Mental Health Awareness Month is a national observance held every May to increase understanding of mental health, reduce stigma, and encourage people to seek support when they need it. It highlights that **mental health is essential to overall well-being** and promotes

community connection, education, and advocacy.^[1]

What Mental Health Awareness Month Is

- A **long-standing national observance** - established in 1949 to raise awareness

about mental health and celebrate recovery.^[1]

- A **month of education and outreach** - organizations share resources, host events, and encourage conversations about mental health challenges and

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- support systems.
- **A community-building effort** - many campaigns emphasize connection, storytelling, and reducing stigma so people feel less alone.^[2]

Why It Matters

- Mental health affects people in every community, and **1 in 5 individuals experience a mental health issue** in a given year.^[3]
- Stigma often prevents people from seeking help; this month encourages open dialogue and compassion.
- It provides a platform for sharing lived experiences, which can help others feel supported and understood.^[2]

What Happens During the Month

- National and local organizations (like NAMI, Mental Health America, SAMHSA, and state agencies) run campaigns, events, and educational programs.
- Toolkits, social media campaigns, and community events help people learn about mental health, self-care, and available resources.^[4]
- States may issue proclamations or host awareness activities—New York, for example, lights landmarks green and holds community events.^[3]

(¹ [SAMHSA](#), ² [NAMI](#), ³ [NYS Office of Mental Health](#), ⁴ [MN Dept. Of Mental Health](#))

Mental Health Stigma

Mental health stigma is the **set of negative beliefs, judgments, and stereotypes** that society attaches to mental health conditions - and it's one of the biggest barriers preventing people from seeking help. At its core, stigma turns a health issue

into a source of shame, which is both inaccurate and deeply harmful.

What Mental Health Stigma Is

- **Public stigma** - society's negative attitudes toward people with mental health conditions, often rooted in myths ("dangerous," "weak," "unreliable").
- **Self-stigma** - when people internalize those beliefs and start to feel ashamed or unworthy.
- **Structural stigma** - discrimination built into systems like workplaces, schools, or healthcare (e.g., limited coverage, biased policies).

♥ Each form reinforces the others, creating a cycle that makes it harder for people to speak openly or access support.

Why Stigma Happens

- **Misunderstanding** - mental health is often invisible, so people rely on assumptions instead of facts.
- **Fear of the unknown** - when people don't understand something, they may react with avoidance or judgment.
- **Cultural norms** - some communities emphasize toughness or privacy, making emotional struggles taboo.
- **Media portrayals** - sensationalized stories can distort how mental illness actually shows up in real life.

How Stigma Affects People

- Delays in seeking help, sometimes for years
- Isolation or withdrawal from friends, family, or community
- Lower self-esteem and increased self-criticism
- Barriers to employment, housing, or healthcare

- A sense of being "othered," even when symptoms are manageable

♥ Stigma doesn't just hurt feelings - it shapes opportunities, health outcomes, and quality of life.

What Helps Reduce Stigma

- ◆ **Open conversations** — hearing real stories humanizes mental health conditions.
- ◆ **Education** — accurate information replaces myths.
- ◆ **Language shifts** — using respectful, person-first language ("a person living with bipolar disorder," not "a bipolar person").
- ◆ **Community support** — compassion reduces shame and encourages connection.

The importance of Mental Health in the workplace

Mental health in the workplace matters because it directly shapes **performance, retention, culture, and the overall health of an organization**. When employees feel psychologically safe and supported, they do better work - and companies thrive. When they don't, productivity drops, burnout rises, and turnover becomes expensive.

Core Takeaway

A workplace that prioritizes **mental well-being** is more productive, more resilient, and more human. It benefits both employees and employers in measurable ways.

Why Mental Health Matters at Work

- **Employee well-being** - Good mental health helps people stay focused, creative, and engaged.
- **Productivity and performance** - Stress, burnout, and anxiety reduce concentration and increase errors.

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- **Workplace culture** - Supportive environments build trust and collaboration.
- **Retention and turnover** - Employees stay longer when they feel valued and supported.
- **Reduced absenteeism** - Mental health challenges often lead to missed work or “presenteeism,” where someone is physically present but mentally drained.

Benefits for Employees

- Greater job satisfaction and motivation
- Lower stress and burnout
- Stronger sense of belonging
- Improved physical health (mental and physical health are deeply connected)
- More confidence in speaking up or asking for help

Benefits for Employers

- Higher productivity and better work quality
- Stronger team cohesion and morale
- Lower healthcare and disability costs
- Better reputation as an employer
- Increased innovation - people think more clearly when they're not overwhelmed

What a Mentally Healthy Workplace Looks Like

- **Open communication** - Employees can talk about challenges without fear of judgment.
- **Reasonable workloads** - Expectations match capacity.
- **Supportive leadership** - Managers model healthy boundaries and empathy.
- **Access to resources** - EAPs, mental health days, flexible schedules, or wellness programs.

- **Inclusive culture** - Everyone feels respected and valued.

The importance of Mental Health for minorities

Mental health is especially important for **minority communities** because they often face unique pressures that increase stress while simultaneously reducing access to care. The result is a double burden: **higher risk, fewer resources**. Understanding this isn't about pathologizing minorities - it's about recognizing the real structural and social forces that shape well-being.

Core Takeaway

Minority mental health matters because **systemic inequities, discrimination, and cultural barriers** create added stressors that impact emotional well-being, access to care, and long-term health outcomes.

Why Mental Health Is Especially Important for Minorities

- **Chronic stress from discrimination** - Experiencing racism, xenophobia, homophobia, or religious bias increases anxiety, depression, and trauma symptoms.
- **Cultural stigma** - In some communities, seeking help is seen as weakness, leading to silence instead of support.
- **Barriers to care** - Cost, lack of insurance, language differences, and limited culturally competent providers make treatment harder to access.
- **Historical mistrust** - Past abuses and ongoing disparities create understandable skepticism toward medical systems.
- **Intersectional stress** - People who belong to multiple marginalized groups often face compounded pressures.

How These Factors Affect Mental Health

- Higher rates of anxiety, depression, and trauma
 - Delayed diagnosis or misdiagnosis
 - Increased risk of chronic physical conditions (because stress affects the body)
 - Feelings of isolation or invisibility
 - Lower likelihood of receiving effective, culturally informed treatment
- ♥ This isn't about individual resilience - it's about structural realities that shape mental health outcomes.

Why Prioritizing Minority Mental Health Helps Everyone

- **Stronger communities** - When marginalized groups thrive, the whole community becomes healthier and more connected.
- **Better workplaces and schools** - Inclusive environments reduce turnover, conflict, and burnout.
- **More equitable healthcare** - Addressing disparities improves outcomes across the board.
- **Greater cultural understanding** - Normalizing conversations about mental health reduces stigma for everyone.

What Supports Minority Mental Health

- **Culturally competent care** - Providers who understand cultural context and identity.
- **Community-based support** - Faith groups, cultural organizations, and peer networks.
- **Representation in mental health fields** - People feel safer opening up when they see themselves reflected.

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- **Safe spaces** - Environments where people can speak without fear of judgment.
- **Education and stigma reduction** - Knowledge empowers people to seek help earlier.

The Importance of Mental Health for Women

Mental health is especially important for **women** because they often navigate biological, social, and structural pressures that uniquely shape their emotional well-being. These pressures don't mean women are "weaker" - they mean women carry **different burdens**, often with less support and more expectations.

Core Takeaway

Women's mental health matters because **gender-based stress, caregiving roles, hormonal changes, and societal expectations** create unique challenges that affect emotional well-being, physical health, and long-term quality of life.

Why Mental Health Is Especially Important for Women

- **Gender-based discrimination** - Unequal pay, workplace bias, and limited leadership opportunities increase chronic stress.
- **Higher rates of certain conditions** - Women experience anxiety and depression at nearly twice the rate of men due to biological and social factors.
- **Reproductive and hormonal changes** - PMS, PMDD, pregnancy, postpartum changes, and menopause all influence mood and mental health.
- **Caregiving burdens** - Women often carry the emotional and logistical load for families, which can lead to burnout.
- **Violence and trauma** - Women are disproportionately affected by domestic violence, sexual

assault, and harassment, all of which have long-term mental health impacts.

How These Factors Affect Women's Well-Being

- Increased anxiety, depression, and chronic stress
- Higher risk of burnout from juggling multiple roles
- Sleep problems, fatigue, and physical health issues
- Feelings of guilt, overwhelm, or emotional exhaustion
- Delayed help-seeking due to stigma or caregiving responsibilities

♥ These challenges are not personal failings - they're the result of structural and cultural pressures.

Why Supporting Women's Mental Health Helps Society

- **Stronger families** - Women often anchor emotional support systems.
- **Healthier workplaces** - When women thrive, teams become more collaborative and resilient.
- **Better community outcomes** - Women's well-being influences education, caregiving, and community health.
- **Greater gender equity** - Addressing mental health disparities is part of closing broader inequality gaps.

What Supports Women's Mental Health

- **Accessible, gender-informed care** - Providers who understand women's unique experiences.
- **Workplace flexibility** - Remote options, parental leave, and reasonable workloads.
- **Community and peer support** - Safe spaces to share experiences without judgment.

- **Education and stigma reduction** - Normalizing conversations about postpartum depression, menopause, and emotional labor.
- **Safety and trauma-informed resources** - Support for survivors of violence or harassment.

The Importance of Mental Health for Men

Mental health is critically important for **men**, not because men struggle more or less than anyone else, but because men often face **unique pressures that make it harder to recognize, express, or seek help for emotional challenges**. Cultural expectations around masculinity can turn normal human feelings into something men feel they must hide - and that silence can be dangerous.

Core Takeaway

Men's mental health matters because **social expectations, stigma, and underdiagnosis** create conditions where men often suffer quietly, seek help less often, and face higher risks of severe outcomes.

Why Mental Health Is Especially Important for Men

- **Masculinity norms** - Many men are taught to "be strong," "man up," or avoid showing vulnerability, which discourages emotional expression.
- **Underreporting of symptoms** - Men often describe physical symptoms (fatigue, irritability) instead of emotional ones, leading to missed diagnoses.
- **Higher rates of certain outcomes** - Men are statistically more likely to experience severe consequences when mental health challenges go untreated.
- **Work-related stress** - Pressure to be a provider or succeed

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professionally can create chronic stress.

- **Relationship expectations** - Men often rely heavily on partners for emotional support, which can leave them isolated during conflict or breakups.

How These Factors Affect Men's Well-Being

- Emotional withdrawal or irritability
 - Difficulty forming deep connections
 - Increased stress, burnout, or anger
 - Physical symptoms like headaches, fatigue, or sleep issues
 - Turning to unhealthy coping strategies instead of support
- ♥ These patterns aren't personal

flaws - they're learned responses shaped by culture.

Why Supporting Men's Mental Health Helps Everyone

- **Healthier families** - Men who feel emotionally supported are more present and connected.
- **Stronger relationships** - Emotional openness improves communication and trust.
- **Better workplaces** - Men who manage stress well contribute to healthier team dynamics.
- **More resilient communities** - Reducing stigma encourages everyone to seek help earlier.

What Supports Men's Mental

Health

- **Normalizing emotional expression** - Encouraging men to talk about feelings without judgment.
- **Accessible, male-friendly care** - Providers who understand how men communicate and cope.
- **Peer support and community** - Spaces where men can connect without pressure to perform.
- **Healthy coping strategies** - Exercise, hobbies, mindfulness, or structured routines.
- **Education and stigma reduction** - Challenging the idea that seeking help is a sign of weakness.

(More resources: [NAMI](#), [Smart Solutions](#), [Vail Health Foundation](#))

May is Lupus Awareness Month

Lupus Explained

What is systemic lupus erythematosus?

Systemic lupus erythematosus (SLE), or lupus, is a chronic autoimmune disease where the immune system mistakenly attacks your body's healthy tissues.

(From [benlysta.com](#))

Lupus Awareness Month

From [National Today](#)

Lupus Awareness Month occurs every May and we celebrate this month to contribute to the welfare of the affected community. This inflammatory disease is caused when the immune system attacks its own tissues and affects the overall well-being of the person in many ways. This month is all about raising awareness about its impact on the physical, emotional, and economic aspects of a person's life.

History of Lupus Awareness Month

Originally, from 1977, Lupus Awareness Month was observed as

National Lupus Awareness Week in September, and then it was moved to October. It was only in 2009, owing to the efforts of the Lupus Foundation of America, that it was shifted to May as Lupus Awareness Month, and it has officially been observed throughout this month since then.

Lupus is difficult to diagnose as it is often mistaken for other diseases. Most of the time, people don't even know they're living with it. However, one common symptom that has been noted is a bright red rash on the face that runs from the bridge of the nose, under the eyes, and across the cheeks. Due to its resemblance to a butterfly, it's known as a butterfly rash. This is likely also where it got its name from, with its scientific name being systemic lupus erythematosus and 'erythroid' being derived from the ancient Greek word for 'red.'

Lupus Awareness Month has be-

come increasingly important for lupus advocates over the years as a lot of people do not know about the disease or how to manage it. The color purple has become associated with lupus awareness. One may wonder why purple specifically? That's because purple is a combination of the passion of the color red and the calmness of the color blue. Purple is thought to pacify the mind and nerves, uplift the spirit, and provide the courage to fight. The movement to create awareness about this autoimmune disease sees several events taking place every year in May across the country. These are aimed at raising funds for research initiatives and to financially support affected families.

Lupus Awareness Month timeline 1851 - Lupus Defined as an Autoimmune Disease

Various research and documentation leads to the advancement of the understanding and diagnosis

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of lupus as an autoimmune disease.

1977 - Establishment of Lupus Awareness Week

President Jimmy Carter signs Public Law 95-72, which establishes the week-long observance for lupus awareness.

2004 - Establishment of World Lupus Day

Lupus Canada creates World Lupus Day on May 10 to spread awareness about this little-known disease.

2009 - Transition from Awareness Week to Month

Lupus Awareness Week is extended to an entire month to raise awareness for this disease.

What is the lupus color?

Purple is a combination of red and blue - the color **red** represents passion/motivation and the color **blue** evokes a sense of calmness. Thus, **purple** is the color for lupus as it is the perfect blend of colors that represent the characteristics required to fight lupus. A purple butterfly is also the symbol for lupus.

What day is National Lupus Day?

World Lupus Day is on May 10. The observance falls during Lupus Awareness Month, which sees multiple events taking place across the country that endeavor to create awareness, raise funds, and hopefully support families that are affected by lupus. Lupus advocates also observe the month in their own way with digital campaigns, fundraising activities, and educational sessions.

Is lupus considered a disability?

For Social Security purposes and subject to certain criteria being met such as the involvement of two or more organs or body systems and if it includes at least two major signs or symptoms (such as

severe fatigue, fever, malaise, and involuntary weight loss), lupus may be classified as a disability.

How to Observe Lupus Awareness Month

1. Advocate for Lupus

Lupus lacks significant awareness and there isn't even a cure for it yet. Education and continuous research are imperative if we want to conquer this disease. During this awareness month, you can advocate for lupus through social media by inciting informative conversations and equipping others with the knowledge you possess. You can even participate in the Walk To End Lupus Now event hosted by the Lupus Foundation to further your advocacy.

2. Sign a pledge

The lupus community needs an ever-growing support base. You can head to World Lupus Day's official website and sign an awareness pledge. By doing so, you are pledging to help those affected by lupus and garner the much-needed attention from the relevant people in leadership positions.

3. Wear purple

Purple is the color associated with lupus since purple brings together the passion of red and the calmness of blue. You can show your support for lupus by wearing all things purple on **Put On Purple Day** on May 21. Make sure to inform others why you're doing this and the significance behind it.

5 Facts You Should Know About Lupus

1. Women are at high risk

Studies have found that 90% of patients who have lupus are women.

2. Lupus can be limited to skin

Patients with discoid lupus may only get rashes and skin lesions as compared to systemic lupus.

3. Lupus can impact the kidneys

According to a study, about 40% to 70% percent of patients with lupus have kidney inflammation.

4. There is no cause

One of the reasons lupus is such a complex disease is that there is no definite known cause that triggers the symptoms.

5. Lupus has 4 types

There are four different types of Lupus - systemic lupus erythematosus, discoid lupus erythematosus, drug-induced lupus, and neonatal lupus

Why Lupus Awareness Month is Important

1. A need for increased awareness

Some studies show that way too many people know little to nothing about anything related to lupus. A survey by the Lupus Foundation of America states that "while lupus affects an estimated 1.5 million people in the U.S. alone, 63% of Americans surveyed have never heard of or know little or nothing about this disease that has no cure." Thus, a dedicated month is crucial to spread as much factual knowledge as possible about this autoimmune disease.

2. It provides hope and encouragement

Lupus neither has a cause, nor a cure. It can be an isolating feeling to fight through this disease alone with its heavy mental and financial impact.

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Lupus Awareness Month is critical as it brings people together and shows the lupus community that they are not alone in this fight. It provides them with hope for a better tomorrow and encourages them to fight through this.

3. It raises funds and increases research

Lupus needs to be extensively researched to find a cause and cure so it can be handled better. More research can hopefully help in early detection and a better plan for treatment. Lupus Awareness Month helps in gathering funds for research and to financially support families in need.

How Well Do You Know Lupus?

Take the Know Lupus quiz, test your knowledge, and help spread awareness!

[Take the Know Lupus Quiz](#)

(From [Lupus Foundation of America](#))

THE LONG WAY TO BELONGING

A Poem Written by Angelina Marie Hilton

Submitted by Solomon Joseph, Manager of Economic Empowerment

Once upon a time
About four decades ago
A girl with eyes the color of Earth
Was born in KC, MO

Mama held her close, heart full and free
Wondering who her daughter might grow
An advocate, an activist, an artist maybe
But more than anything
She hoped she'd grow to be happy

Born between worlds, both vast and wide
A woman of multiple identities she'd carry inside
Her maternal grandma
Born in a house on the Rez
Up in the plains of Reserve, Kansas
Her paternal grandma
An Italian pianist
As a child
Her Mama would tell her she was a Native American
When she told this to kids in school
She was harassed and felt helpless

Upstate New York is where she would grow
Not realizing assimilation would be all that she'd know
Although she traveled back and forth to visit family each year
To protect herself from being teased

She tried to make her Indigenous identity disappear

More than a thousand miles from where her roots lay deep
From the Prairie lands to the Woodlands
Her Indigenous identity would softly sleep
She earned the nickname "Princess Blackfoot"
Because she walked barefoot everywhere she'd roam
Where home became a white suburb
Although surrounded by people, she felt all alone

After high school, she ventured away
And chose to study art despite what people would say
"That won't pay," they warned, but she stayed true
And followed the path she felt called to pursue

A degree in advertising she earned a claim
While searching for herself, she tried on a new name
Back to New York, determined to thrive
As an advertising executive, she built a new life

But deep in her spirit there was a whisper, a call

Telling her there was more to her life after all

So she left it behind, crossed oceans wide
Still searching for purpose buried deep inside
She immersed in a culture where she witnessed extreme poverty
This experience completely changed her trajectory

She decided to come back to the states
And work with a man she fell for
But that was not enough
She needed to learn what she was put in this world for

Soon she had a child of her own
And would continue to make the trek
To visit family back home
Being in two worlds, she didn't really pay attention
To what it meant to be a card carrying Indian
Or that because of blood quantum
With less than 500 members in her Nation
That her people would soon face extinction

Then a mother again
Still, she traveled back to her people, back to her land
Though she still did not under-

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stand
What it meant to be enrolled, or
belong to a Clan

Then life shifted sharply and loss
entered the room
Her grandmother passed, then her
brother too soon
And grief brought a clarity she
couldn't ignore
She couldn't keep living the way
she had before

If she stayed the same, if she let
things be
Something sacred would die with
her legacy
So she chose a new path, intention-
al and true
Toward holding on tight to what
her ancestors knew
Toward preservation, visibility,
reclamation
Toward truth, toward voice, to-
ward reconciliation

After years of omission, of staying
unseen
She decided to dig into all that her
roots really mean
They never let her go, they waited
patiently for her with grace
Until she was ready to reclaim her
place

She founded Native Made Ventures
LLC
With a mission and a vision
To increase Indigenous visibility
While striving to uplift marginal-
ized voices
To build creatively with empathy
And make different life choices

She began gathering people, like-
hearted and diverse
Those seeking connection, to heal
and reverse
To disarm silence and dismantle
borders built so high
Creating safe spaces where truth
and visibility would apply

For reflection, connection, com-
passion, and care
For those who felt lost to know
they belong there
Building bridges of unity
through community ties
And protecting love as it multi-
plies

She nurtures relationships to
honor each other
As well as taking steps to stew-
ard a deep love for our Earth
Mother

And still, she is becoming, still
learning the way
A single mom raising two chil-
dren night and day
Living between worlds, holding
all she's been through
With intention in what she says
and will do

Always reflecting, is this truth, is
this right?
Still learning and unlearning,
while shining her light

This woman with eyes the color
of Earth
Is still discovering her purpose,
and valuing her worth
Taking each breath with mind-
fulness and grace
Continuing the journey she was
created to embrace

BIO

Angelina Marie Hilton is an en-
rolled member of the Sac and
Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas
and Nebraska and a descendant
of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and
Nebraska. She is the founder of
Native Made, an organization
dedicated to increasing Indige-
nous visibility. Angelina organiz-
es the Native Made Market in
Rochester, NY, held annually on
Small Business Saturday. Now in
its fifth season, the market

brings together Native creatives
and allies to immerse attendees in
Indigenous cultures in ways that
are engaging, meaningful, and im-
pactful.

Angelina began working with Na-
tive American Community Services
(NACS) in early 2023, following
the first Native Made Market, after
recognizing a need for greater visi-
bility for Native peoples. She start-
ed in the Economic Empowerment
department and later became in-
volved in the Together We Walk
Peer Education Program. She con-
tinues to serve alongside NACS
members across the Rochester, NY
region in other capacities such as
on the Indigenous Health Coalition
and the Indigenous Peoples Day
Committee.

NACS has been both an encourage-
ment and a steady source of sup-
port throughout Angelina's profes-
sional and personal journey, as she
has grown her business while also
navigating her own healing. She
shares deep gratitude for this or-
ganization that genuinely invests
in empowering individuals and
believes NACS has been a powerful
force, guiding her and walking be-
side her as she continues to learn
and grow.

To connect with Angelina, email
nativemadehq@gmail.com or visit
her Linktree at [linktr.ee/
nativemadehq](https://linktr.ee/nativemadehq) to learn about ways
to get involved in projects like the
Native Made Market and Native
Made Marketplace.

The fifth Native Made Market will
take place on Saturday, November
28, 2026, from 10 AM to 5 PM at
the Central Library of Rochester &
Monroe County NY, located at 115
South Avenue, Rochester, NY
14604.

(See flier on page 12)



ROCHESTER'S FIFTH NATIVE MADE MARKET

▶▶ SAVE THE DATE ◀◀
SATURDAY 11.28.26

▶▶ **CENTRAL LIBRARY** ◀◀
OF ROCHESTER & MONROE COUNTY NY
115 South Ave, Rochester NY 14604



Native Made Market 2024



Angelina Marie Hilton



Native Made Market 2024

Native Programs Targeted for Major Cuts as White House Requests Historic Defense Spending in FY 2027 Budget

by [Levi Rickert](#), [Native News Online](#), April 3, 2026

The White House released the [92-page](#) Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 President's Budget Request on Good Friday, asking Congress to approve roughly \$1.5 trillion in defense spending. With the Iran War of choice entering its fifth week, this request would represent a nearly 40 percent increase over current Pentagon funding levels, marking the highest level of military spending in modern U.S. history.

At the same time, the administration proposes \$73 billion in cuts to domestic programs, targeting a wide range of agencies and eliminating or scaling back key investments in health care, housing, and education—programs that disproportionately support low-income communities and communities of color, including Indian Country.

Native News Online's sister publication, Tribal Business News, [reports](#) that the FY2027 budget would slash hundreds of millions of dollars from tribal programs, including housing, Native lending, and critical health initiatives—echoing reductions that Congress rejected in the prior year's appropriations process. The proposal reflects a broader rebalancing of federal priorities, increasing funding in defense while cutting or restructuring programs related to housing, health care, economic development, and infrastructure. Tribal programs receive little direct mention in the administration's narrative, yet the underlying policy changes would affect nearly every sector of tribal economies.

"The vision President Trump has outlined for America in his budget is bleak and unacceptable," Sen.

Patty Murray (D-Wash.), vice chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee, said in a statement.

Tribal Housing

The budget slashes funding by \$467 million, or about 34 percent, for programs addressing the severe housing crisis in Indian Country, where residents are nearly twice as likely to live in poverty and nearly three times more likely to experience overcrowded conditions than other U.S. households. It also proposes eliminating the \$3.3 billion Community Development Block Grant program, which supports housing and infrastructure projects nationwide, including initiatives led by Native organizations. "The President's FY27 budget request signals concerning reductions that would constrain vital tribal housing programs, even as housing needs across Indian Country continue to grow," Rudy Soto, executive director of the National American Indian Housing Council, told Tribal Business News. "While this proposal is only a starting point, it underscores the importance of strong advocacy from Indian Country to ensure tribal housing resources are protected and strengthened through the congressional appropriations process."

Indian Health

The administration requests \$9.094 billion for the Indian Health Service (IHS), an increase of \$1.1 billion over FY2026 enacted levels. The proposal includes an \$800 million boost for advance appropriations, major in-

vestments in Electronic Health Record modernization, and continued increases for health care facilities construction—longstanding priorities for the National Indian Health Board. The budget would provide \$5.6 billion in advance appropriations for FY2028, a \$327 million increase to protect funding from government shutdowns, \$287.07 million for EHR modernization, and full funding for Contract Support Costs and 105(l) lease agreements. Hospitals and health clinics would receive \$2.84 billion, including five new facilities in Alaska, Arizona, Nebraska, and Washington. Purchased/Referred Care would rise by \$57.7 million to \$1.05 billion, while Urban Indian Health funding would decrease slightly to \$95 million.

However, the budget also proposes steep cuts to critical programs. Sanitation Facilities Construction would drop 87 percent to \$14 million, and the Special Diabetes Program for Indians would be reduced by 75 percent to \$49 million, a \$150.6 million decrease. Overall, the Administration requests \$111.1 billion for the Department of Health and Human Services, a 12 percent reduction from FY2026 enacted funding levels.

Education

Federal funding for Indian education would see a sharp reduction, with an estimated 32 percent cut to the Bureau of Indian Education (BIE). The BIE operates roughly 180 schools serving Native students, many in rural or reservation communities where alternatives are limited. These schools already face aging facilities, staffing short-

(Continued on page 14)

(Continued from page 13)

ages, and limited resources, meaning cuts of this magnitude could reduce teachers, curtail student services, and delay critical infrastructure improvements. Beyond the classroom, these reductions raise concerns about the federal government's trust responsibility to tribal nations, as education funding for Native students is grounded in treaties and legal obligations.

Department of the Interior & Tribal Economic Programs

The budget proposes eliminating the Indian Guaranteed Loan Program, which provides critical financing for tribal businesses. Congressional Democrats have also noted proposed reductions of 27 percent for the Bureau of Indian Affairs and 32 percent for the Bureau of Indian Education, calling the cuts a rollback of federal trust

and treaty obligations. “[This budget] abandons our trust and treaty obligations to Native Americans,” said Rep. Rosa DeLauro, ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee.

The administration also targets the Native American CDFI Assistance (NACA) Program, proposing a net cut of more than \$200 million. Roughly \$300 million in existing programs would be eliminated, replaced by a \$100 million “Rural Program” that does not explicitly prioritize investment in Indian Country or Native CDFIs. “Native CDFIs play a critical role ... delivering capital, building economies, and supporting Native communities on the ground,” Pete Upton, CEO of the Native CDFI Network, told Tribal Business News. “We are actively working both sides of

the aisle to ensure the NACA program is not eliminated ... and to secure the release of FY2025 and 2026 funds.”

Congressional Role

In practice, Congress almost never passes a president's budget exactly as submitted. The presidential budget serves as a blueprint and starting point for negotiations, outlining administration priorities and framing the fiscal debate. Once submitted, Congress—through the House and Senate Appropriations and Budget Committees—reviews, modifies, and rewrites funding levels to reflect legislative priorities, political compromises, and constituent needs. Historically, final appropriations bills often differ significantly from the president's request, both in total spending and allocation across agencies and programs.

FBI Announces Personnel Surge to MMIP Crisis

By [Elyse Wild](#), [Native News Online](#), April 3, 2026

The FBI announced yesterday that it is dedicating additional personnel to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Peoples (MMIP) crisis. The staffing surge supports *Operations Not Forgotten*, an initiative focused on solving violent crimes in Indian Country, particularly those against women and children.

Native communities face a disproportionate amount of violence, with a high number of cases going unsolved, which experts say is a result of inadequate public safety resources, jurisdictional confusion and federal apathy.

According to the [Bureau of Indian Affairs](#), there are 4,200 unsolved MMIP cases, but advocates say that the actual number is likely

much higher. In [2023](#), homicide was the fourth leading cause of death among Native men, and the sixth leading cause of death among Native women.

Surged personnel, including investigative, intelligence and victim service support, will be deployed on rotating temporary duty assignments across Indian Country in 11 FBI field offices, in Albuquerque; Billings, Montana; Detroit; Denver; Jackson, Mississippi; Las Vegas; Minneapolis; Oklahoma City; Omaha; Portland, Oregon; and Phoenix.

The FBI says it will work in coordination with Tribal law enforcement agencies, the BIA Missing and Murdered Unit, and U.S. attorneys' offices.

At the start of this fiscal year, the FBI's Indian Country program carried approximately 4,100 open investigations including death investigations, child abuse cases, and domestic violence and adult sexual abuse investigations.



National Prom Graduation Safety Month - May 2026

Prom safety is a crucial concern for May 2026, as celebrations can pose various risks for teens.

Key Safety Tips

- **Supervision:** Parents and guardians should ensure that prom events are supervised to minimize risks associated with alcohol and substance use.
- **After Prom Activities:** It is advisable to conclude the evening with organized after-prom events rather than unsupervised parties, as late-night driving increases accident risks.
- **Education:** Schools and organizations are encouraged to provide safety education and resources to students, emphasizing the importance of responsible behavior during prom.
- **Emergency Contacts:** Students should be aware of whom to contact for help if they find themselves in unsafe situations during prom.

👂 Prom season can be exciting, but prioritizing safety ensures that these milestones are memorable for the right reasons.

What every parent can do before, during, and after prom:

- Throughout the year, get edu-

cated about the current drug trends in your community

- Talk to the guidance personnel at your school or Student Assistance Counselor
- Gain a perspective from Parent Teacher Association (PTA) representatives
- Attend educational workshops that address the issues young people face with and alcohol and other drug use
- Continue to discuss the dangers of adolescent drinking and drug use
- Pinpoint medical emergencies, such as alcohol poisoning
- Reinforce that they should get help if a friend is in trouble
- Stress that they should tell an adult immediately if someone has lost consciousness
- If they are hesitant to notify an adult, tell them to call POISON Control for anonymous advice: 1-800-222-1222

At least one week prior to the prom

Talk to your son or daughter:

- Reinforce that you love your teen, and that your primary

concern is their safety

- Ask your teenager if he/she has any concerns or apprehensions about prom night
- Ask if there are any post prom celebrations that have been planned
- Reassure your teenager that you understand prom night pressures and fears and talk about them
- Ask your teen to think about these issues and indicate that you would like to continue the discussion

On Prom Night

When the limousine or party van arrives:

- Speak directly to the driver and discuss your expectations for an alcohol and drug-free ride
- Inspect the limo, including the trunk too to ensure it is drug and alcohol free
- Do not allow non-alcoholic beverages in the limousine if the seal has been broken or the beverage has been opened
- Emphasize to the driver that you do not want any stops made on the way to or from the prom

(From [Power to the Parent](#))

Workplace Electrical Safety Month

Implementing effective electrical safety measures in the workplace is crucial for preventing accidents and injuries. Here are some essential tips to enhance electrical safety:

Understand Electrical Hazards

- Always assume that electrical wires are live.
- Identify and label all electrical panels and circuits clearly to avoid confusion.

Use Proper Equipment

- Ensure that all electrical equip-

ment is properly maintained and inspected regularly.

- Use insulated tools and wear appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) when working with electricity.^[1,2]

Follow Safety Protocols

- Establish and enforce safety protocols for working near electrical installations.
- Provide training for employees on electrical safety practices and emergency proce-

dures.^[3]

Maintain a Safe Environment

- Keep work areas dry and free from clutter to reduce the risk of electrical hazards.
- Ensure that all electrical outlets and cords are in good condition and not overloaded.^[4,5]

(¹ [HSE Study Guide](#), ² [Certainty](#), ³ [OSHA](#), ⁴ [Safety Culture](#), ⁵ [The Safety Master](#))

Healthy Generations Moves Forward Following Successful Site Visit and Community Social

Submitted by Sherrie Kecheho, Healthy Generations Coordinator

Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties' *Healthy Generations* program recently marked an exciting milestone with a successful two-day Tribal MIECHV site visit held April 16–17 in the common area of NACS. The visit also served as an opportunity to introduce the Healthy Generations team: Sherrie Kecheho, Healthy Generations Coordinator; Yingquan Dong, Data and Evaluations Coordinator; and Ganondahlid Patterson, Home Visitor. Together, the team is helping build a culturally grounded home visiting program designed to support Native families, maternal wellness, and healthy child development.

Over the two days, program staff, leadership, and federal and technical assistance partners engaged

in meaningful discussions focused on program planning, implementation, and community strengths. A special highlight was collaboration with the Elders Program, whose wisdom and input have been invaluable in shaping the vision of Healthy Generations. We extend heartfelt thanks to the Elders for sharing their guidance and helping ground this work in culture and community.

We also want to recognize the Cultural Department, Tina Smith, Dakota Jonathan, and Colleen Casali for their tremendous support in organizing our community social held Friday, April 17 in Niagara Falls. The event saw a wonderful turnout and created an opportunity to

gather, connect, and share excitement about Healthy Generations with community members and partners.

Special thanks also go to our visitors; Mariel Valerio, Angela Harbaugh, and Emily Chavis, for their guidance, technical assistance, and partnership through this whole project. Their support helps strengthen our path forward as we move from our community needs and readiness assessments to implementation planning.

Healthy Generations is growing through collaboration, culture, and community voice. Stay tuned as we move into the program implementation stage and continue building a strong foundation for Native families for generations to come.



Pictured from left to right: Yingquan Dong, Michael Martin, Mariel Valerio, Angela Harbaugh, Emily Chavis, Sherrie Kecheho, Theresa Veprek, Tracy Zachariah, Ganondahlid Patterson



Native American Community Services

In Development: Healthy Generations

A Culturally-Based Home Visiting Program
for Native American Families

Through personalized home visits, families will receive:

- A program culturally grounded in family traditions and values, offering trauma-informed care that supports healthy beginnings.
- Prenatal and maternal support to promote healthy pregnancies
- Early childhood support for growth, learning, and development
- Health and wellness guidance for parents and children
- Connections to community resources that strengthen family well-being

Healthy Generations is a new, culturally-based home visiting program supporting families with children ages 0-5. Home visitors will work directly with families to provide guidance, resources, and support that honor culture and help families thrive at home, in the community, and for generations to come.



For more information, contact:

Sherrie Kechego
Healthy Generations Coordinator
716-574-3378
skechego@nacswny.org

~From Our Traditions, Healthy Generations Rise~



Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & People (MMIW) Walk & Community Dinner

Tuesday, May 5th, 2026

Walk starts at the Museum at 3pm
Community Dinner & Presentation at
the Grand Hall in the SAAB at 5:30pm

Please join us at the Onöhsagwë:de'
Cultural Center for a walk and community
dinner. We will be featuring a keynote
speaker, Aiyana Jacy Martin, Mohawk
(Six Nations) who is the founder of *A Walk
in Her Shoes*, an MMIW Fashion Show.



Onöhsagwë:de' Cultural Center
82 W. Hetzel St., Salamanca NY 14779

Aiyana Jacy Martin is an Afro-Indigenous, 25-year-old model, activist, and student. Aiyana attends Buffalo State University and is a part of Urban Indigenous Collective's MMIW Task Force. Aiyana uses modeling and fashion to help reclaim Indigenous visibility and hopes to continue to be a voice for her people.

Future Healers Night



Wednesday, May 27th

6:00pm-7:30pm

Native American Community Services

1005 Grant St, Buffalo, NY 14207

Grades 5 - College

Join us for a fun and interactive evening exploring healthcare careers through hands-on activities.

Snacks & beverages provided!



Jacobs School of Medicine
and Biomedical Sciences

University at Buffalo



NACS ON THE ROAD



Protecting Our Children Annual Conference

MARCH 29-APRIL 1, 2026
OKLAHOMA CITY, OK



NACS attended the 44th Annual Protecting Our Children NICWA conference in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. It's the largest national gathering on Native child advocacy issues as NICWA supports the safety, health, and spiritual strength of Native children and works to keep Native children with their families and their communities.

Executive Director Michael Martin led a regional discussion with child welfare professionals, including legal professionals to improve implementation of ICWA in our region. Representing the East Coast, our team met and engaged with representatives from all regions to exchange ideas. Also, they attended valuable workshops on best case work practice for child welfare, mental health, and addressing trauma in our communities.

Pictured is Theresa Veprek (Family Services Manager), Sherrie Kechego (Healthy Generations Coordinator), Tracy Zachariah (Deputy Director of Services), Anna Miller (Clinic Services Coordinator), and Michael Martin (Executive Director). Not pictured is Shuri Ann Powell (Foster Case Worker) and Star Wheeler (Health and Wellness Coordinator).

NACS Mission

**To strengthen, empower, and advocate
for Native individuals, families, communities
and all lives who come into our care,
utilizing Haudenosaunee Good Mind principles and practices**



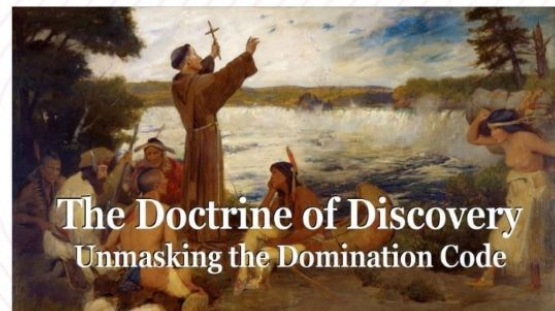


Indigenous Health and Wellbeing Promotion (IHAWP) Program

Presents

“Native American Cultural Competency: Examining Historical Trauma, Residual Consequences, and Opportunities to Move Beyond Continuing Dynamics”

Featuring a screening of the powerful
documentary *The Doctrine of Discovery:
Unmasking the Domination Code*,
with a discussion/debrief to follow



Wednesday
June 24, 2026
9:00 AM - 4:30 PM

Lunch provided by NACS

NACS
1005 Grant St.
Buffalo, NY 14207

Limited Seating!
Pre-register using QR CODE
or link in the comments.



Contact Pete Hill, Special Initiatives Coordinator,
at phill@nacswny.org with questions

The IHAWP Program is funded by the New York State Department of Health / AIDS Institute

COST FREE SUMMER PROGRAMS 2026

BCAT BUFFALO CENTER FOR ARTS & TECHNOLOGY
368 Sycamore St
(716)259-1680
bufcat.org

JULY 6th - August 13th
Monday - Thursday
12pm - 5pm



Join us for a free, creativity-powered summer! Our 6-week program gives young people hands-on access to arts and technology in a fun, supportive environment. Participants will build real projects, learn new skills, and explore future creative pathways. Lunch and snacks are provided. Registration is first come first serve, space is limited to fill out the interest form today!

Level up your creativity this summer in...

- DIGITAL ARTS**
- MUSIC PRODUCTION**
- 3D PRINTING**
- FINE ARTS**



YOUTH & ARTS TECH

visit bufcat.org
or scan below
for more info
& registration



BCAT's programs are made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature.



PARENTING *Circle*

This Native American Family Research program is aimed at enhancing family dynamics to reduce your child's risky behaviors and to learn about family health preparedness.

STUDY REQUIREMENTS

- 10 weekly classes
- Participation in a parenting and health research study
- Families will be randomly selected to participate in Parenting in 2 Worlds or Healthy Families in 2 Worlds

ARE YOU ELIGIBLE?

- ✓ Self-Identify as Native American
- ✓ Live in urban area of Erie & Niagara County
- ✓ Are a primary caregiver of Native American youth 12-17 years old

HIGHLIGHTS

- Childcare services provided for enrolled participants
- Healthy food provided
- **Your Family could be eligible to receive up to \$300 in gift cards**

✉ pjacobs@nacswny.org
jrose@nacswny.org

☎ 716-339-1831 (Peter)
 716-574-3041 (Justine)

Participation is voluntary

ASU IRB IRB # STUDY00016808 | Approval Period 3/17/2023 – 2/20/2026



**REDISCOVERING OUR
ONKWEHON:WE TRADITIONS**

ABOUT US

ROOTS is here to increase the availability of cultural education programs and resources for the urban Haudenosaunee people. We aim to implement opportunities to learn about Haudenosaunee traditions and practices through an increased number of Haudenosaunee cultural programs

CLASSES

arts/cooking classes
cultural speaker series
elder and youth information exchange
community socials
singing and dancing classes
yearly marketplace

GOAL

The long-term community goal would be that all Native Americans have access to opportunity, knowledge, and the ability to incorporate traditional concepts and teachings within their families and communities

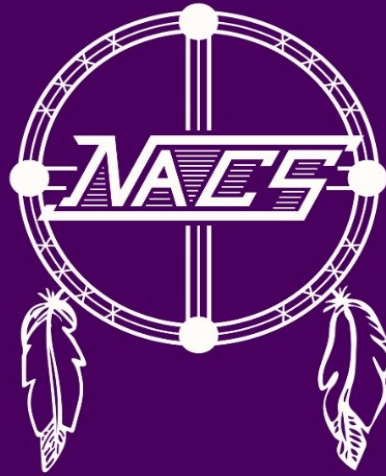
Arriana Smith
ROOTS Project Specialist
asmith@nacswny.org

Colleen Casali
ROOTS Project Coordinator
ccasali@nacswny.org

Dakota Jonathan
ROOTS Project Specialist
djonathan@nacswny.org

FUNDED BY: THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES-
ADMINISTRATION FOR NATIVE AMERICANS

Native American Community Services of Erie and Niagara Counties, Inc.

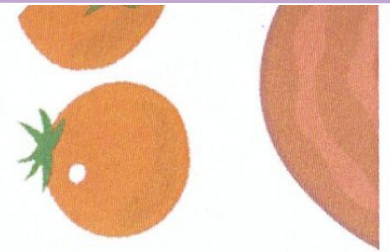


3RD ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT



SAVE THE DATE

Monday, June 15, 2026
Seneca Hickory Stick Golf Course



GOOD NEIGHBOR PRODUCE PROGRAM SNAP AND DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS

Buffalo Residents: Get 50% off fresh produce and produce boxes, even if you do not have SNAP benefits!

Details: Eligible for the following zip codes: 14204, 14206, 14208, 14211, 14212, 14215.

Free home delivery included.

SNAP Members: Get 50% off fresh produce and produce boxes with Double Up Food Bucks, when you use your SNAP benefits.

Details: Free home delivery available to all City of Buffalo residents. Pick-up only for residents outside of Buffalo.

Why Sign Up?



LOCAL

Choose your box, subscribe, and customize each weekend with fresh, local produce and locally made goods.



CONVENIENT

Free home delivery each Thursday
Using SNAP? Pay in person.
Prepaid? Leave a cooler with ice!



COMMUNITY

Support local farms and uplift your community with every FreshFix box—fresh food that gives back to your neighborhood!

SIGN UP NOW AND START SHOPPING FOR YOUR FIRST WEEKLY BUNDLE OF LOCAL PRODUCE, PROTEINS AND PANTRY STAPLES!



3 Easy Ways to Sign Up

Register at
www.FreshFix.com

Call us at
(716) 218-3668-Ext 5

Email us at
support@freshfix.com

Food and Nutrition Support Through Medicaid

Nutritious meals can make a difference in your health. If you are enrolled in Medicaid, you or your family may qualify for support connecting to food and nutrition assistance depending on your access to healthy food and health status.

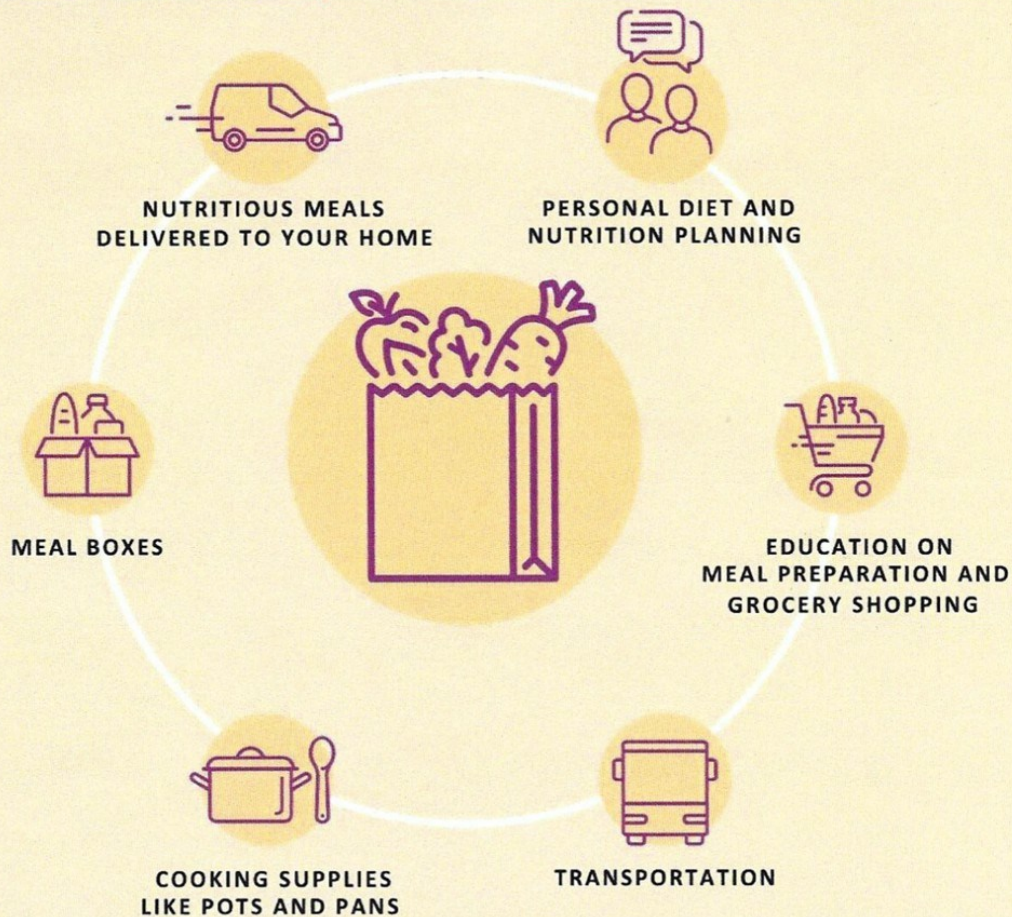
Medicaid Members can reach out to Integrated Care or one of our Network Partners to discuss their social needs and learn more about services available in our community.

Visit wnyscn.org or call 716- 431-5100

Scan Here



Better Health with Integrated Care.



Social Care Network Partner:

Ask for:



Delicious, locally sourced food and personalized nutrition support, delivered.



The Western NY Social Care Network



Employment Opportunity



www.nacswny.org

Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.

MICHAEL N. MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1005 Grant St. Buffalo, NY 14207 • Phone: 716-874-4460 • Fax: 716-874-1874
 1522 Main St. Niagara Falls, NY 14305 • Phone: 716-299-0914 • Fax: 716-299-0903
 76 West Ave. Lockport, NY 14094 • Phone: 716-302-3035 • Fax: 716-302-3037
 100 College Ave. Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14607 • Phone: 585-514-3984 • Fax: TBD
 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Healthy Generations Home Visitor

Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

Salary Range: \$19.00-\$21.00 / hour

Office: Niagara Falls/ Buffalo (1) Rochester/Syracuse (1)

SUMMARY:

The Healthy Generations Home Visitor will be responsible for supporting the development and delivery of family-centered, evidence-based services to expectant mothers and families with young children within NACS service areas. During the first year of program, the focus will be on completing the Community Needs and Readiness Assessment (CNRA), strengthening community partnerships, conducting outreach and interviews, developing an Implementation Plan and preparing for direct service delivery to begin in February 2027. The Healthy Generations project provides services to 17 counties. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Participates in the Community Needs and Readiness Assessment (CNRA) for maternal, infant, and early childhood health home visiting.
- Conducts community outreach, and engagement, to gather input from families, community partners, and stakeholders.
- Participates in planning meetings, training, and implementation activities to prepare for service launch.
- Provides home visits, assessments, and case management services to families enrolled in the Healthy Generations program.
- Delivers effective parenting practices using program-approved, evidence-based models.
- Completes all necessary paperwork related to the provision of Home Visitor Services within two business days of the completed home visit/contact.
- Consults with the Deputy Director of Services, Manager of Family Services, and Healthy Generations Coordinator on a regular basis and for all decisions involving mandated Child Protected Services reporting.
- Refers families/children to community resources and/or other programs at NACS or other organizations.
- Maintains a positive relationship with support networks and community-based organizations for provision of referrals and other support for clients.
- Ensures the program remains compliant with all contractual obligations and requirements.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in a human services or related field of study. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Lived experience as a parent, caregiver, or in supporting families and children is preferred.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, conflict resolution and communication skills.
- Interpersonal skills to work cooperatively and effectively with individuals, groups, and diverse populations.
- Intermediate computer skills: ability to use Microsoft Office Suite.
- Knowledge of local Native communities and culturally responsive or trauma-informed practices is strongly preferred.
- Ability to become certified in CPR & First Aid. Must be able to do medium lifting.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

Employment Opportunity

BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Life Insurance
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Health & Dental Insurance
- Employee Assistance Program
- 403 (b) Retirement Plan

For consideration send resume to: humanresources@nacswny.org

Employment Opportunity



www.nacswny.org

Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.

MICHAEL N. MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1005 Grant St. Buffalo, NY 14207 • Phone: 716-874-4460 • Fax: 716-874-1874
 1522 Main St. Niagara Falls, NY 14305 • Phone: 716-299-0914 • Fax: 716-299-0903
 76 West Ave. Lockport, NY 14094 • Phone: 716-302-3035 • Fax: 716-302-3037
 100 College Ave. Suite 200, Rochester, NY 14607 • Phone: 585-514-3984 • Fax: TBD
 960 James St. Syracuse, NY 13203 • Phone: 315-322-8754 • Fax: TBD

Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Family Preservation & Strengthening Caseworker- Erie County

Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

Salary/Range: \$19.00- \$21.00 / hour

Office: 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

SUMMARY:

The Family Preservation & Strengthening Caseworker works in conjunction with the Local County Department of Social Services (LCDSS/DSS) and is responsible for providing prevention services to families referred from DSS. Incumbent helps children remain safely in their homes and prevent placement outside of their home. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Provide effective and efficient case management for assigned families.
- Make use of appropriate counseling, parent training, home management, support and advocacy services.
- Work collaboratively with referral sources, community service providers, and family members to meet goals.
- Produce accurate, thorough, and timely progress notes in CONNECTIONS.
- Ensure all court mandated or recommended services are applied and supported.
- Provide transportation for meetings, services, and appointments in a safe, reliable vehicle as necessary.
- Maintain strong communication with the family working toward stabilizing and strengthening the family unit, with regular face-to-face contact.
- Maintain confidentiality of sensitive information.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in human services or related field of study required with experience in child welfare.
- Knowledge of the Indian Child Welfare Act (ICWA), Federal and State regulations, as well as mandated reporting requirements.
- Intermediate computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must have a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Employee Assistance Program
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- 403 (B) Retirement Plan
- Life Insurance
- Health and Dental Insurance

For consideration send resume to: humanresources@nacswny.org

Employment Opportunity



www.nacswny.org

Native American Community Services of Erie & Niagara Counties, Inc.

MICHAEL N. MARTIN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

1005 Grant St. Buffalo, NY 14207 • Phone: 716-874-4460 • Fax: 716-874-1874
 1522 Main St. Niagara Falls, NY 14305 • Phone: 716-299-0914 • Fax: 716-299-0903
 76 West Ave. Lockport, NY 14094 • Phone: 716-302-3035 • Fax: 716-302-3037
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Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Program Secretary
Type: Full- time/ hourly/ non-exempt
Salary/Range: \$17.00-\$18.00 / hour
Office: 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207

SUMMARY:

The Program Secretary is responsible for greeting and guiding all NACS' visitors to the appropriate staff/component, understanding all NACS' services and responding to general questions. Incumbent will provide clerical assistance in support of NACS' staff, programs, and other NACS' business. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Greet and guide all visitors in a friendly and professional manner.
- Liaison between building personnel and NACS' staff and inform them of events, mail, packages, and building issues.
- Maintain a clean and well-maintained reception area with relevant and up-to-date information.
- Answer phone calls in a friendly and professional manner and provide basic information to callers, directing them to the appropriate staff.
- Refer non-routine or sensitive requests to the appropriate staff.
- Facilitate effective communication between various components of the organization.
- Manage office machines and ensure an adequate stock of office supplies.
- Process incoming and outgoing mail, maintaining confidentiality of sensitive information.
- Monitor staff sign-in/out and keep accurate records.
- Coordinate room requests and calendar schedules for staff and community room use.
- Assist in the planning and execution of meetings, including room setup and recording meeting minutes.
- Assist in the usage of the language and cultural resources library and enforce circulation protocols.
- Order office supplies, food, equipment, and any other needs for programs.
- Maintain necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary reports and recordkeeping, including the utilization of database systems.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Associate degree in an appropriate field of study or 2 years of related experience in a similar position.
- Experience working with community and group settings. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Knowledge of local Native American communities.
- Computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Interpersonal skills to work cooperatively and effectively with individuals and groups
- Excellent organizational skills with strong attention to detail. Strong written and verbal communication skills.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Life Insurance
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Health & Dental Insurance
- Employee Assistance Program
- 403 (b) Retirement Plan

For consideration send resume to humanresources@nacswny.org

Employment Opportunity



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Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Niagara County Youth Clubhouse Site Supervisor

Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

Salary/Range: \$20.00- \$21.00 / hour

Office: 1522 Main St, Niagara Falls, NY 14305

SUMMARY:

Under the guidance of the Health & Wellness Coordinator, the Youth Clubhouse Supervisor is responsible for assisting and leading in the performance of day-to-day duties in delivering and providing a safe, supportive, culturally appropriate, alcohol and drug free environment for all Native American youth (ages 12-17 years old) clubhouse members. This position will lead in the oversight of activities, cultural programming, and supervise youth leaders. Incumbent must be available for non-traditional hours (evenings and weekends). The Clubhouses are open 25 hours per week. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Implement, plan, and lead program activities, field trips, and workshops in accordance with contractual obligations both virtually and in-person.
- Have knowledge and understanding of substance use and ensure youth programming utilizes a percentage of research and evidence-based and best practices prevention models.
- Serve as a facilitator and member of the Youth Advisory Council.
- Coordinates scheduling of the Clubhouse Youth Leaders.
- Organize, supervise, and provide safe transportation for youth clubhouse members.
- Ensures Clubhouse maintenance, cleanliness, and safety is maintained.
- Recruit participants for the clubhouse program through outreach events and materials.
- Maintain necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary recordkeeping, including the utilization of database systems.
- Ensures the program remains compliant with all contractual obligations and requirements.

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree from accredited institution with supervisory experience or relevant role.
- Experience working with at-risk youth, community and group settings. Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Knowledge and understanding of substance use.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Computer skills: ability to use Microsoft Office Suite.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

BENEFITS:

- Paid Time Off (PTO)
- Life Insurance
- Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Health & Dental Insurance
- Employee Assistance Program
- 403 (b) Retirement Plan

For consideration send resume to: humanresources@nacswny.org

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Equal Opportunity Employer

Position: Prevention Specialist

Type: Full-time/ hourly/ non-exempt

Salary/Range: \$19.00-\$20.00 / hour

Office: 1005 Grant Street, Buffalo, NY 14207 – travel required

SUMMARY:

Incumbent provides and presents evidence-based prevention curricula to youth and community as part of an overall strategy that addresses alcohol and substance-use and prevention and other at-risk topics. Key roles include outreach, recruitment, and engagement of participants. Must be comfortable speaking in front of an audience. All efforts will be performed with the understanding of and in accordance with Good Mind principles, while also adhering to the principles of Trauma Informed Care (TIC).

ESSENTIAL DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Plans, coordinates, and delivers prevention presentations comfortably and accurately to both youth and adults.
- Performs effectively within a classroom setting and through video conferencing platforms.
- Delivers comprehensive, evidence-based, medically accurate, age and stage appropriate education workshops/sessions.
- Delivers and collects pre/post surveys to participants for monthly reports.
- Connects participants with appropriate services and develops referral resources and linkages.
- Collaborates with local community resources and conducts regular outreach.
- Attends and participates in weekly component staff and other required meetings.
- Accurately collects and maintains necessary documentation and ensures the timely completion of all necessary recordkeeping per regulatory requirements.
- Maintains confidentiality of sensitive information and handles it with utmost discretion

EDUCATION, QUALIFICATIONS, AND SKILLS:

- Bachelor's degree in health or human services or related field of study preferred, with two (2) years' experience with at risk youth.
- Work experience may replace some of the education requirements at the discretion of the Executive Director.
- Competency in issues regarding alcohol/substance abuse, family planning, and reproductive health.
- Effective problem solving, organization, time management, and communication skills.
- Intermediate computer skills and understanding of office applications including MS Office Suite.
- Familiarity with and sensitivity toward local Native American communities.
- Must be flexible to evening and weekend hours as needed.
- Must pass all background checks and pre-hire requirements including a clean and valid NYS driver's license and carry minimum auto liability coverage of \$100k/\$300k.

BENEFITS:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| • Paid Time Off (PTO) | • Health & Dental Insurance |
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Nya:wëh, Thanks for reading!

Please share this newsletter with family, friends, and coworkers. If you know of anyone who would like to receive the month NACS News by email, please have them send their first name, last name, and current email address to: gghosen@nacswny.org

You can also look for our newsletter on our [website](#).

FUNDED BY: Erie County Department of Social Services; New York State Office of Children & Family Services; New York State Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services; Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo; National Urban Indian Family Coalition; Niagara County Department of Social Services, Niagara County Office of the Aging; United Way of Niagara, US Department of Labor; Administration for Native Americans (ANA); Indigenous Justice Circle; Jessie Smith Noyes Foundation; Erie County Department of Mental Health; NYS Research Foundation for Mental Health; NYS Medicaid Program 29-I; Western New York Foundation; New York State Department of Health/AIDS Institute, Tribal Home Visiting Program, Administration for Children and Families, Health and Human Services as well as businesses, foundations and caring individuals.

I'd like to help NACS continue it's Tradition of Caring...

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