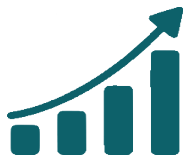


Minority Mental Health Awareness Month

American Indians and Alaska Natives

Minority Mental Health Awareness Month brings awareness to the unique struggles that underrepresented groups face in regard to mental illness. This observance aims to improve access to mental health treatment and services for multicultural communities through increased public awareness.

FACTS:



American Indians and Alaska Natives report higher rates of posttraumatic stress disorder and alcohol dependence than any other ethnic or racial group.
[American Psychiatric Association](#)

16%

In 2017, 13.3% of youth ages 12-17 had at least one depressive episode, but that number was higher among American Indian and Alaska Native youth at 16.3%. [Dept. of Health and Human Services Office of Minority Health](#)

21%

In 2014, approximately 21% of American Indian and Alaska Natives ages 18+ reported past-year mental illness, compared with 17.9% for the general population.
[American Psychiatric Association](#)



American Indian and Alaska Native children and adolescents have the highest rates of lifetime major depressive episodes and self-reported depression than any other ethnic or racial group.
[American Psychiatric Association](#)

High rates of substance use disorders, posttraumatic stress disorder, suicide, and attachment disorders in many American Indian and Alaska Native communities have been directly linked to the intergenerational historical trauma forced upon them, such as forced removal off their land. [American Psychiatric Association](#)

BARRIERS TO MENTAL HEALTH CARE:

- Economic barriers (cost, lack of insurance)
- Lack of awareness about mental health and available services
- Stigma associated with mental illness
- Lack of culturally sensitive mental health services
- Mistrust of health care providers
- Lack of appropriate intervention strategies (including integration of mental health and primary health care services)