

Improving Tribal Access to Victim Services: Lessons from National, State, and Tribal Perspectives

January 29, 2015
3:00-4:30 p.m. ET

Tribal-State Intergovernmental Collaboration on Criminal Justice Issues and Solutions
Webinar Series

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National Criminal
Justice Association

www.ncja.org

Webinar Overview

3:00-3:05 PM – ***Welcome and Housekeeping*** – NCJA

3:05-3:20 PM – ***Speaker Introductions & Webinar Framing*** –
Steve Siegel

3:20-3:35 PM – ***Lessons from a National a Perspective*** –
Dianne Barker Harold

3:35-3:50 PM – ***Lessons from a State Perspective*** – Brian Hendrix

3:50-4:05 PM – ***Lessons from a Tribal Perspective*** – Nikki Finkbonner

4:05-4:25 PM – ***Moderated Q & A*** – All

4:25-4:30 PM - ***Closing Remarks*** – Steve Siegel/NCJA

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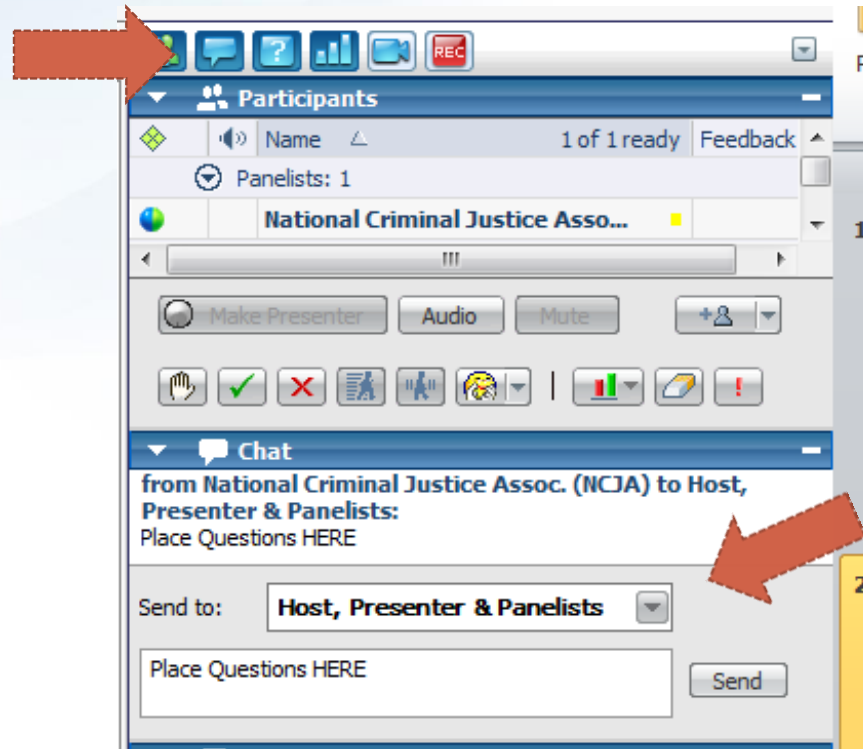
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Please remember to select **Host, Presenter & Panelists**

Moderator

Steve Siegel

Director

Special Program Unit, Denver District Attorney



National Criminal
Justice Association

Presenters

Dianne Barker Harrold

Indian Country Consultant

Brian Hendrix

Victims of Crime Tribal Liaison

State of Oklahoma

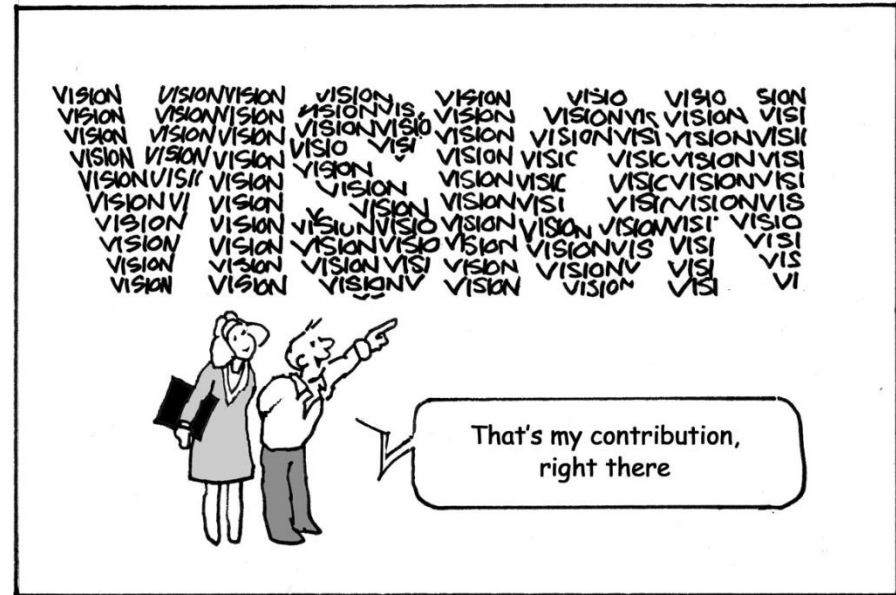
Nikki Finkbonner

Coordinator

Lummi Nation Victims of Crime Program

UNIVERSAL PRINCIPLES

- A shared vision
- Commitment
- Direct representation
- Decision making power
- Structure
- Resources
- Trust



Steve Siegel

Special Program Unit
Denver District Attorney

PLANNING FOR CHANGE

Who's Not At The Table???



From the MIT model of Identifying Stakeholders

WHO WILL BE.....

- Concerned in any way with the project**
- Located in the region**
- Hold an influential position**
- May be affected by the problems addressed in the program**

ASSESSMENT OF READINESS IS DONE FOR 6 KEY DIMENSIONS

-Efforts

-Community knowledge of efforts

-Leadership

-Community climate

-Community knowledge of the issue

-Resources



PLANNING FOR PARTNERSHIPS

Leadership

Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable...
Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice,
suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and
passionate concern of dedicated individuals.

-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



-Competence

-Reliability

-Integrity

-Communication



**Assume conflict but know
that the resolution can
achieve great things!!**



PLAN

- Research
- Identify strengths and weaknesses
- Cross-train
- Create powerful teams
- Set goals and objectives
- Acknowledge successes along the way
- Be systems oriented



**Are your plans and strategies
consistent with community level
readiness?**



IMPLEMENTATION

- Launch strategies
- Inclusiveness
- Training

Don't forget
communication



Plan a review date



BE PREPARED TO...

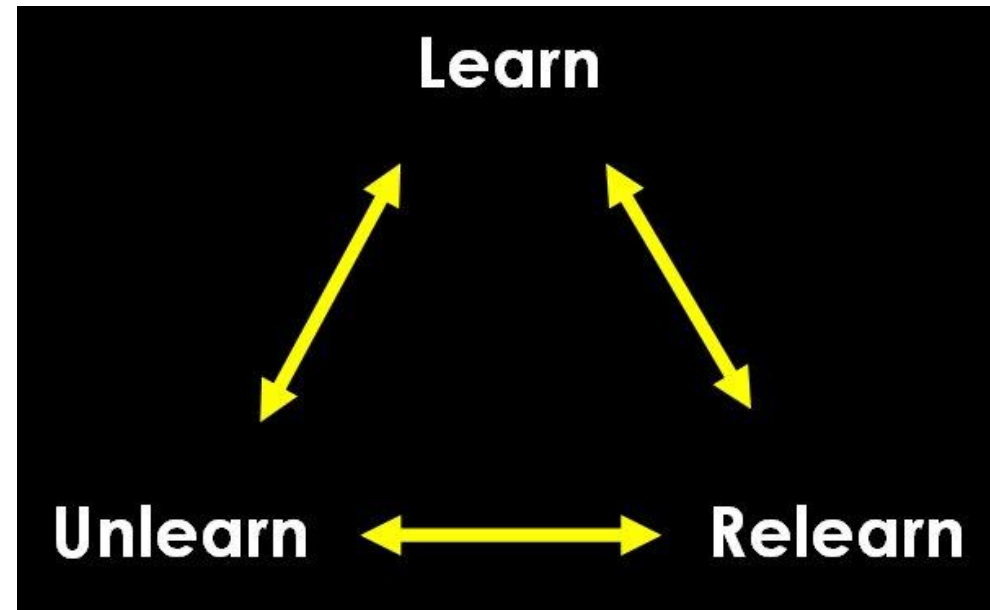
-Re learn

-Re audit

-Re think

-Re develop

-Re energize




COLLABORATION IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

Dianne Barker Harrold JD
Indian Country Consultant

THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF CRIME




A “ripple effect” describes how the impact of crime can spread beyond the immediate victim throughout his or her family, friends, and community and reflects why collaboration in tribal communities is important in serving tribal crime victims.



Collaboration is working with others to do a task and to achieve shared goals which is finding a common ground.

Benefits of Collaboration:

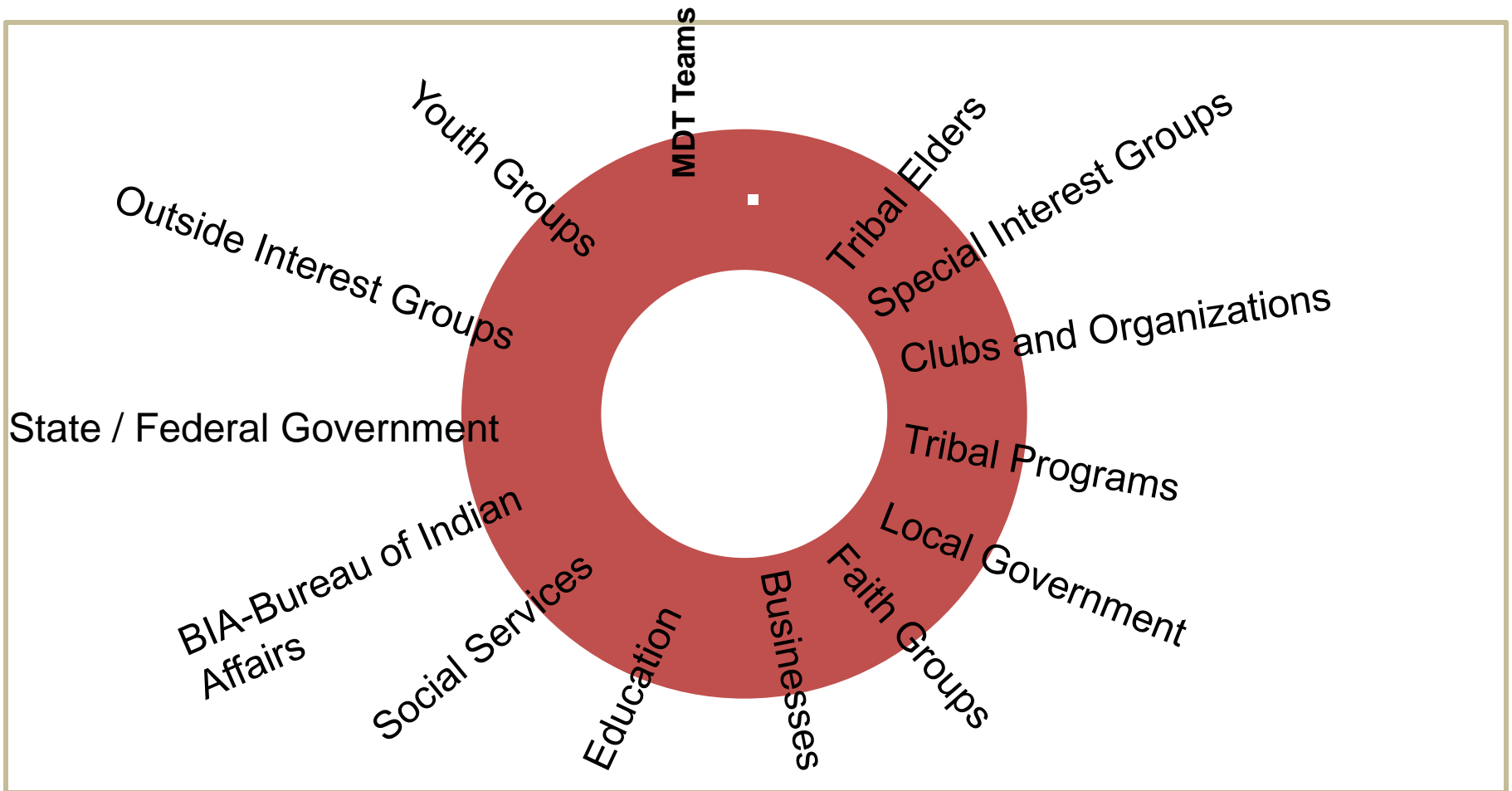
- *Diversity of problem solving styles, skills.
 - *More knowledge and information.
 - *Greater understanding and commitment.
 - *Will be more focused on victimization issues in tribal communities.
- 

FINDING COMMON GROUND



- **Build on the positive**
(Is a vision emerging?)
- **Identify commonalties**
- **(Common values?)**
- **Formalize**
 - **Agree on a Decision-Making Process**
 - **Plan Some Action Steps**
 - **Assign Responsibilities**
 - **Consider Writing it down-bylaws, team policies, etc.**

Gathering people: The Circle of Community



TRIBAL NATIONS, STATES, ADVOCATES, LAW ENFORCEMENT, and OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS AND COLLABORATIVE PARTNERS WORKING TOGETHER



- 1. Establish a relationship by learning each other's job duties and cultures.**
- 2. Dispel myths and misunderstandings**
- 3. Identify your similarities as well as your conflicts**
- 4. Resolve the differences**
- 5. Creating culturally appropriate services and educating collaborative partners as to cultural issues**



TYPES OF COLLABORATIONS IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

- ❖ **Federal Victim Specialists: US Attorneys; FBI and BIA**
- ❖ **State Services: State Crime Victims Compensation Groups, State Prosecutor Victim Advocates; State Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault (DV/SA) Coalitions and Child Welfare**
- ❖ **Local: State and County Agencies and service providers such as Human Services, Child Welfare, Adult and Elder Abuse, DV/SA programs and DV Shelters**
- ❖ **Internal Collaborations with tribal agencies and service providers**
- ❖ **Creation of Multi-disciplinary teams**
- ❖ **State, local and tribal law enforcement-cross deputizations in certain states**
- ❖ **Involving community members/tribal citizens**
- ❖ **Cultural and spiritual healers**

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NATIVE VILLAGE OF BARROW/ARCTIC WOMEN IN CRISIS





**CONFEDERATED TRIBES OF WARM
SPRINGS, WARM SPRINGS, OREGON
TRIBAL VICTIM OF CRIMES PROGRAM**



**PRAIRIE BAND POTAWATOMI NATION
COMMUNITY STORY TREE PROJECT**

The Six Process Factors in Building Collaborations

COMMUNICATION

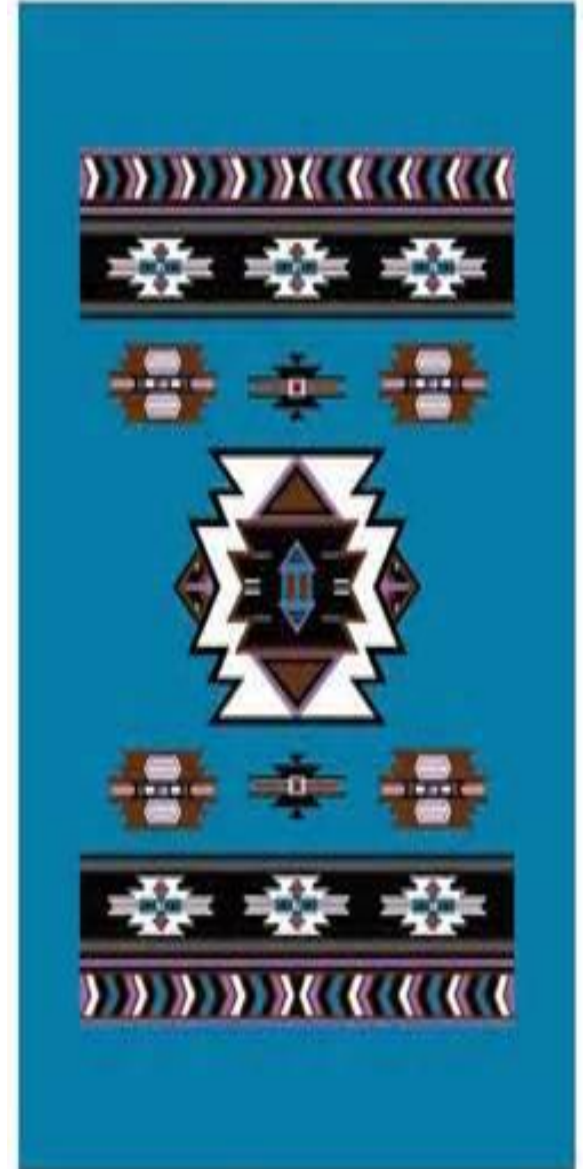
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

UNDERSTANDING THE COMMUNITY

LEADERSHIP

RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

SUSTAINABILITY



Improving Tribal Access to Victim Services: Lessons from National, State, and Tribal Perspectives



BRIAN HENDRIX
OKLAHOMA STATE-TRIBAL CRIME
VICTIM LIAISON

Oklahoma's State-Tribal Crime Victim Liaison Initiative

There was a homicide in Oklahoma that resulted in expenses for the grandmother of a victim. The grandmother requested the following expenses; however, she had not kept receipts for these expenses:

Beef: \$200.00 Flour: \$50.00
Pork: \$ 75.00 Fruit: \$69.00

Indian Blankets: \$320.00
 (\$80 each x 4 pastors)

Baskets of Groceries for Cooks: \$240.00
 (\$60 per basket x 4 cooks)

Burial clothing for deceased: \$75.00

-To solve the issue of no receipts, the Victims Compensation Board accepted a notarized statement of these expenses from the claimant.

-The compensation staff met with the Board and educated them about the traditional burial ceremony, the giving of the blankets and baskets, and advised the Board that the meal was part of that ceremony.

- Other burial expenses were paid by the victim's Tribe.

-The Victims Compensation Board found that the expenses requested were reasonable and allowable by statute, and awarded reimbursement to the claimant in April, 2010.

-Funding for the project came through a federal grant from the Department of Justice, Office for Victims of Crimes.

- The project, the only one of its type in the nation, is a demonstration program dedicated to improving communication among tribal, state, federal, and local officials in order to enhance victim assistance and outreach services to tribal communities in Oklahoma.

- The purpose of the project is to enhance victims' compensation and assistance outreach to Oklahoma's 38 federally recognized tribes.

Assigned Lands Pre-1890



Statistics



Law Enforcement in Indian Country

- 27 District Attorneys Prosecutorial Districts
- 3 U.S. Attorneys Districts
- 77 County Sheriffs
- 19 Tribal Police Departments
- 20 Tribal Court Systems

Oklahoma American Indian Populations by County

- 35 Counties with Native American population 10% or more
- 23 Counties with Native American population 15% or more
- 8 Counties with Native American population 20% or more
- Adair County 43% and Cherokee County 34%

Outreach Plan



- Hire a Liaison
- Assemble an advisory board
- Meet with existing field resources
- Contact executive branch leaders at each tribe
- Contact tribal domestic violence advocates, children and family services workers, and program department heads
- Visit with the district attorneys' victim witness coordinator in each area
- Outreach to DV/SA advocates within each tribal community
- Outreach to Tribal court clerks, judges, and law enforcement
- Development and implementation State-Tribal Victims Services Roundtable Discussions
- Resource table at conferences in Indian Country

Outreach Plan



State-Tribal Victims Services Roundtable Discussions:

- Informal meetings with open agenda
- Hosted by tribes at tribal facilities
- Bring together state and federal victims' services personnel with tribal victims' services programs
- Held grant writing workshop in October 2013 specifically for tribes.
- VOCA and VAWA grant information was the highlighted topic at Tribal Roundtables held in February 2014.

Increased Tribal VOCA Subgrant Awards from:

- 2 in 2008 and 2009
- 3 in 2010
- 4 in 2011, 2012, and 2013
- 8 in 2014 – this makes up 5% of our award total

Outreach Plan



- Types of services awarded:
- Personnel/Benefits:
 - Victim Witness
- Coordinator:
 - Elder Advocate
 - Shelter Attendant
 - Therapist
 - Victims Advocate
 - DV Advocate
- Contractual:
 - Therapist
 - Attorney
- Travel, Supplies, Facilities/Operating
- Annual Sovereignty Symposium
- Muscogee (Creek) Nation Doing Business in Indian Country CLE Conference
- Southern Plains Child Protection Team
- Coordinated Community Response Teams to Address Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault
- Oklahoma Indian Child Welfare Association Annual Conference/Quarterly Meetings
- Choctaw Nation Labor Day Festival
- Community Service Coalition Meetings

Challenges to Providing Victims' Services



- Each of the Indian nations is unique. However, all of the tribes in Oklahoma share the common challenge of providing services to their citizens in a checkerboard .
- Oklahoma's 38 federally recognized tribes are not reservation- based tribes.
- Cross deputization agreements and memorandums of understanding between tribal, state, and local agencies exist to close service gaps. However, those agreements are voluntary and do not exist in every part of the state.

Other Challenges to Providing Victims' Services



Access to Victims Assistance Grants

- Staff members within tribes who were tasked with writing grants often do not feel adequately trained to create the funding request.
- The contract grant writer employed by a tribe often does not know about the community demographics and may commit the tribe and its resources to a service project that it cannot implement nor sustain.

Statutes require many victims' services programs to be certified by one or more state agencies or organizations

- Certified programs must submit to the supervisory and compliance authority of the certifying agency.
- Tribal victims' service programs that would otherwise be able to serve non-Indian victims who are referred from state courts are limited to American Indian referrals from tribal court.
- Staff members for those programs receive the same training hours as their state counterparts in certified programs; however, they are not recognized as a certified program.

Other Challenges to Providing Victims' Services



Much of Oklahoma is rural

- Most of the Indian nations have headquarters outside the larger metropolitan areas of Tulsa and Oklahoma City.
- Service providers are plentiful in the metro areas but resources available to victims are less accessible as one travels thirty to forty miles away.
- Victims' service providers are far fewer on the western half of Oklahoma.
- The cost or availability of time and transportation to access services.

Challenges Conclusion

- Although tribal law enforcement, victim advocates, and shelter staff receive equal or greater training for their respective disciplines, they continue to struggle to gain recognition from their state counterparts as viable resources and partners. Still, many tribal governments in many areas of the state contribute significant financial resources and facilities for education, law enforcement, infrastructure, health care, and employment.

Responding to Tribal Crime Victims: Best Practices



- Acknowledge that every tribe is unique with a unique story and collection of customs, traditions and challenges.
- Be consistent. Under promise and over deliver. This advice is particularly true in Indian Country. Historically, Indian people have been the recipients of numerous empty promises and breached agreements. It is important to be honest and consistent with regard to contacts, services offered and follow-up.
- Contact tribal people in their communities or at tribal facilities. By interacting with people in the environment where they live, the liaison will gain a better understanding of the resources available to them and the challenges that they face.
- Develop a champion or sponsor. In the event the tribal liaison does not have any contacts in Indian Country, he/she should develop a relationship with someone who is trusted and accepted in Indian Country and who can endorse the liaison while introducing the liaison to key community members.
- Eliminate electronic communication to the extent possible. Meet with tribal contacts face to face whenever possible or by telephone when it is not possible.
- Employ active listening in the field and advocate for policy changes based on problems identified by each community rather than perceived problems at the agency.
- Develop culturally specific materials for the crime victims' compensation program and distribute among the tribes.

Responding to Tribal Crime Victims: Best Practices



- Ask for permission to post victims compensation information and leave victims compensation brochures in key locations such as social services buildings, courthouses, police departments, and health and wellness facilities. This is a pattern that will need to be continued annually.
- Provide a longer window of time between the notice of availability of funds and the deadline to submit proposals to allow the tribe's legal counsel and governing body sufficient time to review and approve grant proposals.
- Develop a toolkit for grant writers that would include tips on the importance of understanding the business practices and community demographics prior to writing the grant.
- Conduct regional grant-writing trainings specifically designed for tribal staff with no prior grant-writing experience.
- Address concerns that arise in the field, and have a mechanism for bringing parties together to solve issues that arise, specifically in the area of jurisdiction and the importance of collaboration between agencies.
- Assist communities in bridging the gap in services offered to victims within each tribe, state, federal and non-profit organization, for the common goal of improving services to crime victims in Indian Country.
- Focus on building relationships between all people, which is the key to successful best practices.

Contacts



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Lummi Victims of Crime

Nikki Finkbonner

Coordinator

Lummi Nation Victims of Crime Program

Mission Statement

The mission of the Lummi Crime Victims (LVOC) Program was developed through the recognition that too often the needs and rights of those victimized by crime have gone unrecognized and unmet. With this in mind, the Lummi Victims of Crime Program was established to provide healing resources and support to crime victims and to help them uphold their legal rights. The program shall do so by providing culturally appropriate services, which contribute to the empowerment of victims and their families. While upholding victim's rights, program staff shall also assist and support justice for the victims through successful prosecution of suspected offenders. Through direct client services, public education and active networking, the program shall contribute to an environment at Lummi which is less conducive to criminal activities.



Core Functions

Provide confidential services to all members of the community. Through prevention and services to those who are victimized.

- **Advocacy**
- **Crisis Intervention**
- **Shelter**
- **Therapy**
- **Support groups**
- **Legal assistance**
- **Community education**
- **Transportation**
- **Assistance with medical care**
- **Other services**

Alternative Services

The LVOC program provides alternative services to assist clients in their healing process. These services can be either traditional or church based, depending on the clients' beliefs. Some of the services we offer are:

- **Traditional Healer (Medicine man/woman)**
- **Brushing/cleansing of the individual and/or their home**
- **Sweats (sweat lodge ceremony)**
- **Pastor/Priest/Father/Church leader**
- **Talking/prayer circle**

LVOC Staff

- **Nikki Finkbonner, Coordinator – 15+ years – Lummi Member**
- **Andrea Johnson, Office Manager – 2 + years – Lummi Member**
- **Olivia Solomon, Advocate – 10 years – Other Native**
- **Winona Boxberger, Advocate – 7+ years – Lummi Member**
- **Irenee Owings, Advocate – 3 + years – Lummi Member**
- **Terrence Adams, Community Educator/Advocate-2 years-Lummi Member**
- **Michelle Hull, Civil Legal Attorney – 8 + years – Non-Tribal**
- **Vacant Civil Legal Attorney**
- **Misty Casimir, Legal Assistant – 2 years – Lummi Member**
- **Lorayne Dennis, Shelter Manager – 4 + years– Lummi Member**
- **Charlene Casimir-George, Cultural Advocate – 3 + years – Lummi Member**
- **Tanya McCutchen, Big Sister –2 + years – Non Tribal**
- **Tracy Douglas, Big Sister –2 + years – Other Native**
- **Brenna Torres, Big Sister – 1 + years Lummi Member**



LVOC Staff Continued

In order to prevent burn-out/compassion fatigue, staff are given the opportunity to take advantage of self-care for one hour each week – through counseling, meditation, yoga, etc.

The tribal office also allows employees to take three, thirty minute fitness breaks each week to promote wellness.

Staff are encouraged to debrief with each other to give themselves a release from the mental and emotional stress that can come from their positions.

Outreach

Community Education/Awareness and Collaboration

- **April is *Sexual Assault Awareness Month* and *Child Abuse Prevention Month***

- **October is *Domestic Violence Awareness Month***

- **During April and October, the LVOC provides community awareness and educational events such as: conferences, fun run/walks, golf tournament, pow wow, info. booths, candle light vigils, clothing give-away, etc.**

- **Post articles in the tribal monthly newsletter.**

- **The LVOC program hosts monthly Domestic Violence Task Force (DVTF) meetings. The task force is comprised of staff from various programs, agencies and concerned community members. The members of the task force agree to meet monthly for the purpose of collaborating and participating in efforts designed to reduce the incidence of domestic violence in the Lummi Community.**
- **The LVOC program holds weekly staff meetings to debrief with each other to help come up with solutions, referrals, information, ideas and suggestions for clients and co-workers.**
- **The LVOC program hosts presentations to other agencies to inform people what the program does and who it assists. We outreach to other Lummi departments, neighboring schools, and other local agencies within our service area of Whatcom County.**
- **The LVOC program strives to attend all major tribal events to have an information booth available regarding our services. We attend tribal elder fairs, health fairs, and college fairs**

Collaboration

LVOC was informed by our Hereditary Chief of the Lummi Nation, Tsilixw (Bill James), that we need to be at the table with our allies! Being among the first responders, it is very important that our voice be heard.



October 2007 Walk to End Domestic Violence

- LVOC is a unique department for we are under the Police department and have exceptional collaboration. MOU On-Call Advocacy: A Project of the Lummi Victims of Crime and the Lummi Police Department.
- Collaboration is vital; mainly so outside agencies understand the values of our people in order to provide the utmost culturally appropriate services. Having these collaborative relationships facilitate a greater understanding of having a client-centered commitment.
- Ensures that issues are responded to with a common goal; pertaining to all direct services involving law enforcement, courts, medical, therapy etc, at the tribal, city, county, state and federal levels.

Challenges

There are many challenges the LVOC program faces and we continue to seek new ways to break through these barriers.

- Due to the sensitive topics we present, we have low turnouts for our meetings and events. This causes the community to feel that our program isn't out there enough or they don't even know we exist.
- Shelter clients feel we are too strict with them because of the few rules we have in place for their safety.
- Tribal employees try to overstep our procedures to get services for themselves, friends or family without knowing if they fit our criteria.

The largest and most difficult issue our program faces is the multi-generational trauma that invaded our tribal community during the boarding school era. The breakdown of the family unit happened, we could not practice our traditional beliefs, abuse/violence/alcoholism became a part of our vocabulary and daily lives. This trauma has become so ingrained in to our peoples lives, that we hear youth saying that they feel incest is normal. Our people are so use to domestic violence, sexual assault and elder abuse, that they don't even think to bring an end to it or speak out against it. Our children don't even call 911 when their parents are in a domestic violence situation.

Resolutions

A collaborative effort by all is needed to overcome the challenges we face.

- **As to the sensitivity of the topics we deal with, all we can do is to continually reach out to the community and other programs. People need to realize that abuse in any form is not ok, that they can report it and break the cycle of what is considered normal.**
- **We are updating our shelter policies keep clients from feeling like they are being re-victimized. We are changing policies to give them structure, accountability, motivation, the tools for success, and the power to make their own decisions.**

• **As for tribal employees trying to overstep our procedures, all we can do is to finish up presentations to all departments so they are aware of who we assist and how. Remind them that they cannot break procedure, if they want to receive services.**

• **For the multi-generational trauma: we will never stop what we are doing. We will continue to fight for the rights of victims and to constantly remind people that any form of abuse is not ok. That they can break this cycle and not pass it along to the next generation. We will continue to educate the community until our words no longer fall on deaf ears.**

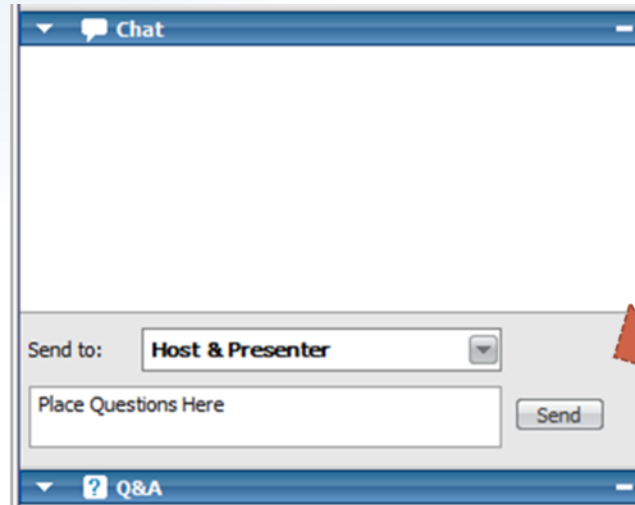
Hey'shq'e

(Thank you)



Q & A

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Moderator

Steve Siegel

Director

Special Program Unit, Denver District Attorney



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- National Criminal Justice Association
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