

A Needs Assessment for Native Americans for Community Action (NACA) Pathways Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Program



Center for Health Equity Research



Meet Our Research Team

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(NACA)

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Overview

- I. Introduce Community Partner
- II. Literature Review
- III. Project Objectives and Design
- IV.3 Phases- Implementation and Results
- V. Overall Findings
- VI.Areas for Growth
- VII.Implications



- Native American after-school youth program
- Award winning substance abuse prevention program
- Education on healthy lifestyles through a culturally-competent design
- Promotes self-esteem, educational enrichment, physical fitness, traditional practices and cultural values



Literature

Epidemiology, etiology, and scope of the problem

- 5.2 million Native American individuals in U.S.
 - 1/3 of this population is under 18 years old¹
- Youth have increased suicidal behaviors
 - Rate is more than double that of White youth²

Health disparities within the Native American population

- Limited access to resources and healthcare³
 - Only 18.2% receive quality substance abuse treatment
- Highest rates of alcohol, marijuana, cocaine, and hallucinogen use disorder
- 2nd highest methamphetamine abuse rates after Native Hawaiians⁴

Literature

Resilience and cultural importance

- Important to promote cultural identity²
- Cultural activities → Increased sense of ethnic identity
 - Significantly associated with higher grades⁵
- Beneficial for youth living in urban settings
 - Appears to be a cultural clash
 - May cause a disconnect for Native American youth from their culture⁶

Project Objectives & Research Question

- Conduct an overall needs assessment of Pathways program through 3 phase approach
- What are the current strengths and weaknesses of the Pathways program from the parents' perspective?

Structure of the Project

**Phase 1:
Participant Observation and Programming**



**Phase 2:
Parent and Staff Interviews**



**Phase 3:
Needs Assessment**

- IRB approval was obtained for all phases of the project

Analysis Plan

Phase I: Field notes regarding our observations

Phase II: Code qualitative interviews and
organize findings into major themes

Phase III: Survey data analysis via SPSS

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Phase II: Interviews

- **Objective:** Interview stakeholders of Pathways program
- Flyers were distributed to parents
- Phone Interviews
 - Director of NACA
 - 1-2 Pathways Staff
 - 7 Parents (anonymous and no identifying information)
 - 19 open-ended interview questions
- Transcriptions and Qualitative Coding
 - Major Themes

Phase II: Major Themes

- Strengths
 - Cultural Component
 - Programmatic Component
 - Socialization component
 - Structure of the program
 - Staff

“[My kid] tells me about like what he learned at Pathways. I really liked the presentation that was done on cigarettes and tobacco. And he really like understood what they were talking about. And he’s like only 7 years old. They tell him that smoking is bad but how they did a little project with them showing them like how to make a lung like your lungs out of a paper bag and showing the effects that a tobacco has on your lungs so you can feel like telling me basically everything you know.” (Interview 4)

“You have that home feel when you get there. It doesn’t even stop at Pathways. They give you a phone call, sometimes they just check in on you to see how you’re doing, or to give you a heads up on upcoming events. They’re more like family than they are just people who just work and their time ends.” (Interview 3)

Phase II: Major Themes

- Areas for Improvements
 - Space
 - Structure
 - Awareness of program
 - Interview 1- gender-inclusive language

Phase III: Needs Assessment

- **Objectives:** Develop and distribute quantitative needs assessment survey; evaluate program to identify strengths and weaknesses
- Consulted NACA program director and administrative personnel
- Aimed to have 15 parents/caregivers complete the survey
- 35 Likert scale questions
- 4 open-ended questions

Phase III: Needs Assessment

Major Areas of Investigation:

- Child engagement
- Cultural component of program
- Emotional well-being component of program
- Positive socialization
- Programmatic content
- Programmatic values
- Programmatic structure
- General assessment of the program

Phase III: Needs Assessment

- NAU scholars distributed
- At program pick up time, parents were able to complete/take home survey
- Responses entered into separate data file
- Shared results - Pathways program director and NACA administrators
 - Information can be used to address areas of improvement identified

Summary of Needs Assessment Results

- N=14 (13 filled it out in its entirety)
- Overall, highly positive ratings of the program!
- For every question except one (97% of the questions) the majority of respondents rated “agree” (4) or “strongly agree” (5)
- For two questions, less than 75% of respondents provided ratings in the 4-5 range
 - Behavioral health group- 62% rated 4 or 5
 - Willing to pay- 43% rated 4 or 5

Results: Open Ended Questions

Child's favorite part- Activities and friend time

Quote:

"Doing fun activities with NAU students"

Parents most appreciate- Cultural component, staff, homework assistance, free program

Quote:

"That my child learns more about their cultural background and that it's a free program (a very good one too)"

Negative experiences- None

Requested changes- Space, field trips, two day a week structure

Quote:

"Maybe do a small field trip of nature or some sort of cultural values"

Overall Findings from the Project

1. Children and parents value Pathways program
2. Staff are key to success
3. Cultural component important to parents
4. Homework assistance and tutoring greatly appreciated
5. Program being free → Contributes significantly to participation

Ways the Program can be Improved

1. Larger and better space
2. Serve children every weekday
3. Gender-inclusive environment
4. Promote program more widely (school year & summer)
5. Increase promotion of values, goals, and program information

Strengths

- Unique population
- Project complete in 10 months
- Relationship built

Limitations

- Number of interviews
- Survey completeness
- Not generalizable

Implications for Adolescent Behavioral Health

- Next steps
 - Qualitative interviews with students
 - Pre/post tests to assess student knowledge
- Practice
 - Absolutely critical to be hands-on/work alongside the community physically
- Policy
 - Provide more funding for Native American youth programs

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- University of South Florida, College of Behavioral & Community Sciences
- University of South Florida, College of Public Health
- Northern Arizona University, Center for Health Equity Research
- Native Americans for Community Action

Thank you!

Questions?

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