



Bridging Communities

Supporting Indigenous Families with
All Nations Health Center

Dacia Red Thunder Griego, BSW
Anishinaabe / Nêhiyaw / Coahuiltecan





All Nations Health Center

Mission

All Nations is committed to providing sustainable healthy lives for our Native people and the surrounding community through culturally based, holistic care.



History

Established in 1970, All Nations Health Center (ANHC) is a non-profit 501(c)(3) community -based organization governed by a volunteer Board of Directors elected by the Indigenous community .

ANHC is one of 41 Urban Indian Health Programs (UIHP) located in the United States .



ANHC Services

830 W Central - Medical Clinic · 1511 S. Russell Behavioral Health · 2100 Stephens - Dental Clinic



Medical

- Primary & Pediatric Care
- Diabetes Clinic
- Immunizations & Lab Screenings
- Insurance Eligibility Specialists



Behavioral Health

- Integrated Behavioral Health
- Chemical Dependency Services
- Mental Health Services
- Traditional Healing Practices



Dental

- Comprehensive Dental Care
- Dental Exams & X-rays
- Dental Cleanings



Prevention & Health Promotions

- Wellness Clinics
- Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- Community Engagement
- Youth & Elder Programming



Understanding the Needs of Indigenous Families

- + Defining Family
- + Parenting & Family Roles
- + Cultural Norms & Practices
- + Challenges to Indigenous Family Systems
- + Creating Supportive Spaces





Defining Family

+ Collective Identity

Family structures often extend beyond the nuclear family model to include extended relatives, clans, and community members.

+ Cultural Values

Values like respect, reciprocity, and interdependence shape family dynamics and roles within Indigenous communities.





Parenting & Family Roles

Roles can change based on needs and circumstances, family support may come from non -relatives, including friends or community members.

+ Multi -generational Families

In Indigenous families, it's common for multiple generations to live together or have a close -knit relationship.

+ Elders

Elders often play a central role in raising children, offering guidance and sharing stories that instill cultural values and teachings.

+ Siblings

Older siblings often care for younger ones, helping to foster responsibility and strengthen familial bonds. This dynamic reflects the collective nature of Indigenous families, where everyone contributes to the well -being of the whole.





Other Cultural Norms & Practices

+ Smudging

Smudging is a sacred practice used for purification, prayer, and connection to Creator. It involves the burning of sacred medicines like sage, sweetgrass, cedar, or tobacco. The fragrant smoke created is used to cleanse negative energy, promote healing, invite positive intentions, and for prayer. Practices vary depending on the person, tribe, and tradition.

+ Concept of Time

Indigenous peoples have historically adapted to Western systems of timekeeping (e.g., work schedules, appointments) but time is often viewed as fluid and event-based rather than rigid schedules. Time unfolds naturally and is often viewed as part of a larger cycle—seasons, life stages, ceremonies, or community events.

“Indian Time” - “Indian Time” is a term that is often used humorously within Indigenous communities to describe this flexible, event-based concept of time. However, it also carries deeper cultural meaning. It reflects the value placed on relationships, patience, and adaptability.

Not Laziness or Disrespect - “Indian Time” is not about procrastination or disregard for others' time. Instead, it reflects the cultural understanding that meaningful interaction and presence matter more than rigid adherence to a clock.



Challenges to Indigenous Family Systems

+ Historical Trauma

Colonization, forced assimilation, and historical trauma have had a catastrophic impact on traditional Indigenous Family Systems.

+ Socioeconomic Factors

Systemic issues such as poverty, lack of access to education and inadequate healthcare disproportionately affect Indigenous communities.

+ Cultural Displacement

Policies that have caused urbanization and loss of traditional land have created cultural disconnection for some Indigenous families leading to challenges in maintaining family ties and community cohesion and have created barriers in accessing cultural resources.

+ Misinterpretation of Cultural Norms

Practices like smudging or fluid concepts of time misunderstood or dismissed. Collective family structures often viewed through a Westernized lens, leading to biases or stigmatization.





Creating Supportive Spaces

+ Listening & Learning

Actively listen to Indigenous clients and learn about their unique family structures and needs. If you don't know - Ask!

+ Building Trust

Work on building trust in relationships with Indigenous families while acknowledging historical distrust toward systems due to past traumas. Reserve your judgement and be intentional with your words. Be humble.

+ Culturally Relevant Resources

Make an effort to be informed on Indigenous issues and current events. Seek out resources to educate yourself on these topics without relying on Indigenous people, especially those in crisis or seeking services, for this labor.





Practical Strategies

+ Inclusive Language

Use language that respects and acknowledges diverse family structures and cultural practices.

+ Empowerment Through Cultural Practices

Incorporate cultural practices and traditions into support and programs, when appropriate to promote healing and connection to identity.

+ Be Flexible

Accommodate cultural practices and needs.

+ Involve Indigenous Voices

Include Indigenous voices when making creating programs, materials, and making decisions that will impact Indigenous people.

+ Accept Feedback

Seek feedback from Indigenous clients about their experiences and needs, fostering an environment of continuous improvement





Thank You!

CONTACT INFO:

Dacia Red Thunder Griego

 dgriego@allnations.health

ANHC BEHAVIORAL HEALTH CLINIC

1511S. RUSSELL

406 -829 -9515

ALLNATIONS .HEALTH

