

The Impact of Human Trafficking in Native and Tribal Communities

July 17, 2018
2:00–3:30 p.m. (eastern time)

Presenters:

Nicole Matthews, Executive Director, Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual
Assault Coalition

Em Loerzel, MSW, Project Beacon Program Manager, American Indian
Center of Chicago

The material presented during today's webinar session will be available on the Human Trafficking Learning Grantees Community and the OVC TTAC Human Trafficking Webinars page.

The session will be recorded and will begin shortly.

As with all technology, we may experience a momentary lapse in the webinar session. In the event of a problem, please be patient and remain on the line. If the problem persists, please contact khough@ovcttac.org for technical assistance.



Today's Presenters

Emily Loerzel



Nicole Matthews



Introduction

- This webinar will provide an overview of human trafficking in Indian country and urban population centers, discussing what sex and labor trafficking look like for the American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) population, and the culturally appropriate resources available to better serve victims.
- This webinar will also include approaches for “mainstream” responders and service providers to identify and outreach to, largely invisible, AI/AN victims and work with urban AI/AN organizations to engage victims and provide services.



Project Beacon: An OVC Human Trafficking Program Award

- An award developed to increase services for urban American Indian and Alaska Native victims of sex trafficking.
- It helps to bridge the divide between urban American Indian and Alaska Native victims of sex trafficking and nonprofit, nongovernmental urban Indian centers.



Objectives

As a result of this webinar, participants will be equipped to:

- Recognize the forms and prevalence of human trafficking within urban and reservation AI/AN communities, and incorporate new approaches and partnerships to better serve victims.
- Discuss the importance and impact of historical trauma on service provision and community outreach efforts.
- Differentiate the experience of urban AI/AN populations from those living in tribal communities; including identity, vulnerabilities to exploitation, and supportive factors.
- Identify best practices and culturally appropriate tools and techniques for supporting Native victims of trafficking.



About the Minnesota Indian Women's Sexual Assault Coalition

Creating Safety and Justice Through the Teachings of Our Grandmothers

- MIWSAC provides technical assistance and training to over 100 tribes and tribal organizations funded through the OVW Tribal Governments and Tribal Sexual Assault Services Programs.
- We develop culturally-specific strategies for responding to and ending sexual violence against Native people.
- We also provide technical assistance to OVC Project Beacon grantees.



Boarding Schools



What We Know from Our Work....

- 78% of Native victims have been threatened with a weapon.
- 84% have been physically assaulted.
- 92% have been raped.
- 98% have experienced or are currently experiencing homelessness.
- 79% of victims have been sexually abused as children, by an average of 4 perpetrators.
- 72% have suffered traumatic brain injuries.



Arrests

- 52% of women victims of trafficking were arrested as minors an average of 8 times.
- Several had been arrested for prostitution as children.
- Most common offenses include: assault, underage drinking, truancy, and theft.



Racism

- 42% of victims have experienced racist verbal abuse by traffickers and buyers.
- As with other types of sexual violence towards Native women, a majority of perpetrators were non-Native.
- Native women were fetishized as exotic.



Dissociation

Symptoms:

- Flashbacks: 65%
- Spacing Out: 71%
- Dizziness: 28%
- Memory Problems: 68%
- Derealization: 59%
- Not in Your Body: 50%



Chronic Health Problems

- Muscle aches and pains: 72%
- Memory problems: 69%
- Trouble concentrating: 69%
- Headaches or migraines: 57%
- Joint pain: 52%
- Stomach ache or upset stomach: 48%
- Neck pain: 44%



Mental Health Issues

- Depression: 78%
- Anxiety Disorders: 71%
- Bi-Polar Disorder: 33%



Similarities and Differences: AI/AN and “Mainstream” Populations

- Warning signs/red flags for identification of victims of human trafficking are often the same:
 - Hanging out with older and/or new people, with few common interests.
 - Having unexplained luxuries: money, drugs, new clothes, cars, etc.
 - Living in a house with frequent traffic: a lot of coming and going, both day and night.
 - Sudden changes in daily activities, mood, behaviors.
- Victim-centered outreach:
 - Connect with local homeless shelters, shelters for run-away youth, juvenile detention centers, juvenile courts, probation officers, victim service programs, food shelves, or other local agencies that a survivor might access.
 - Build strong collaborations with other social service organizations, ***always adhering to confidentiality for the victim.***
 - Include ***welcoming language*** and information in program publicity.



Advocacy and Service Provision: Victim-Centered Approaches Still Apply!

Educate entire staff on human trafficking specific to the AI/AN Communities so the client does not need to educate you!

- Be patient
- Allow time and trust building
- Recognize fears
 - fear of prosecution
 - having children taken from them
 - family finding out
 - having the community find out
- Focus on action, not on the person
- Do not judge
 - It's important to check your own biases before working with client who has been exploited through trafficking.



Advocacy to Meet Basic Needs

- Culturally competent care
- Housing
- Healing
- Mentorship programs
- Chemical dependency treatment
- Work skills
- Limited English Proficiency services
- Safety from traffickers
- Relocation
- Civil and criminal legal assistance
- Help with children
- Health needs
- Access to trauma-informed care





De-colonizing = Social Change

Restore Tribal Values

- Sacredness and respect for women and children
- Sacredness of men as healthy family and community members
- Celebrate and respect differences
- Child rearing

Restore Customs

- Ceremonies (e.g.: naming)
- Build/use cradle boards
- Stories, legends, language specific to tribal teachings
- Name-sakes/spiritual teachers for child(ren)



Sovereign Responses to Safety = Systems Change



- Establishing and/or strengthening sovereignty and the right to self-determination
- Tribal courts and justice system
- Tribal social services
- Tribal advocacy programs
- Government-to-government consultations
- Change public policy



Poll

Does your organization/agency serve AI/AN victims of human trafficking?

- A. Yes
- B. No



Discussion Polls

Use the chat box to participate!

- What does your agency need to feel confident in serving Native trafficking survivors?



Discussion Polls

Use the chat box to participate!

- What support does your agency need to strengthen relationships with tribes or Native organizations in your region?



Discussion Polls

Use the chat box to participate!

- What strategies have you successfully used to improve access to services for Native survivors?



Discussion Polls

Use the chat box to participate!

- Does your organization provide culturally appropriate services (e.g.: give them sage and a smudge shell to use) for Native survivors?



Emily Loerzel

American Indian Center of Chicago



About the American Indian Center of Chicago

- The American Indian Center, Inc. (AIC) was founded on September 7, 1953, with assistance from the American Friends Service Committee.
- AIC remains one of the first urban-based Native membership community centers in the United States.
- AIC formed in response to the growing needs of a rapidly-expanding local American Indian population.



Programs of AIC Chicago

- **Arts and Culture:** the mission of the AIC is to provide space to Native artists and audiences to create, teach, share, and perform by inviting and exploring other media, styles and expression.
- **Education:** the mission is to create and sustain innovative learning environments that are built from the intellectual and cultural strengths of our community.
- **Community Activism:** the mission is to amplify the voice of Indigenous Peoples living in the Chicagoland area.
- **Project Beacon:** aims to provide legal and social services that enhance the cultural, spiritual, physical, and psychological well-being of Native Americans who have been victims of human trafficking. We are a resource for education, training, and outreach to the wider community.



The Indian Relocation Act of 1952

- A United States law intended to encourage Native Americans in the United States to leave Indian reservations, acquire vocational skills, and assimilate into the general population.
- Part of the Indian termination policy of that era, which terminated the tribal status of numerous groups, it played a significant role in increasing the population of urban Indians in succeeding decades.
- Today, 7/10 Native American live off the reservation.



Effects of the Indian Relocation Act

- This act had devastating effects, including:
 - Isolation from community
 - Racial discrimination and segregation
 - Low paying jobs
 - Redlining
 - Inability to return to reservations that had been dissolved
 - Labor trafficking
- The impact can still be felt to this day in the forms of:
 - Cultural disconnection
 - Lack of access to culturally specific resources
 - Economic vulnerability



Statistics of the NA Population Overall and in Chicago

- US: 5.2 Million
- Only 15 states nationwide with a population over 100,000
- Illinois: 101, 500
- Chicago and 6 Collar-County Region: 80,000



Top 5 Cities with the Largest NA Population

1. New York, NY: 111, 749
2. Los Angeles, CA: 54,236
3. Phoenix, AZ: 43,724
4. Oklahoma City, OK: 36,572
5. Anchorage, AK: 36,032

Source: 2010 US Census



Challenges of Serving in “Ground Zero”

- Lack of federally recognized tribes in Illinois makes it difficult for greater visibility of issues in the mainstream
- Lack of culturally specific advocacy
- Lack of culturally specific services
- Denial of problems
- Gaps in services
- Frequent racial misidentification



Tactics to Break into Service Provision

- Be present in community events (i.e., pow wows, potlucks)
- “Trafficking 101” with community members
- “Native 101” with service providers and non-Natives
- Taskforce presence
- Advocating for Native friendly services (i.e., allowing tobacco and sage in safe housing)
- Access to traditional medicines and knowledge



Poll

Do you ask clients if they are AI/AN?

- A. Yes
- B. No



Poll

What topic, specific to the AI/AN communities, would you be interested in learning more about in the coming year?

- A. Considering male victims of trafficking in the AI/AN community
- B. Two-Spirit and the LGBTQI+ community
- C. Jurisdictional considerations
- D. Labor trafficking
- E. Other (please specify in the chat box)



Audience Q&A

Join the conversation:

Ask in the chat box below.

Send an email to

humantrafficking@ovcttac.org



Resources

- OVC Human Trafficking Task Force e-Guide: Resources for Native American Communities:
<https://www.ovcttac.gov/taskforceguide/eguide/4-supporting-victims/resources-45-victim-populations/>
- OVC Tribal Multimedia Resources:
<https://www.ovc.gov/library/tribal-multimedia-resources.html>
 - OVC materials designed to inform and assist victim service providers and allied professionals in their efforts to help crime victims in Indian Country.
- SAMHSA, CultureCard, “A Guide to Build Cultural Awareness: American Indian and Alaska Native”:
<https://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA08-4354/SMA08-4354.pdf>

*Most importantly, connect with your local
and community resources!*



Upcoming Training Opportunity from CAST

- “Working with Native American Communities to Address Human Trafficking”
 - **Wednesday, July 25, 2018 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM PDT**
 - **Register:** <https://attendee.gototraining.com/r/7196924119758492929>
- This training will discuss cultural humility in working with Native American populations, jurisdictional issues on tribal land, and how the domestic violence and human trafficking crossover manifests in tribal communities.
- This training will be presented by Mica R. Llerandi, Staff Attorney with California Indian Legal Services.



Thank you!

Please take a moment to fill out an evaluation for this webinar.



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