



Reconnecting to Cultural Restorative Systems:

Mio' ohpokoiksi Program (JHWC)

Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native
Children

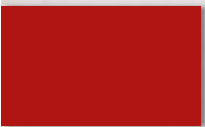
Testimony of Chaniel Grant, Program Coordinator

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Summary of Testimony

- ▶ Overview of the Mio' ohpokoiksi Program & the Blackfeet Nation
- ▶ Mio' ohpokoiksi (Bunched Stars)
- ▶ Vision and Purpose
- ▶ 10 Key Components
- ▶ Issues on the Blackfeet Reservation
- ▶ The Team
- ▶ Target Population
- ▶ The Case Process: Phases, Path to Graduation
- ▶ Incentives and Sanctions
- ▶ Demographics and Data
- ▶ Cultural Modules
- ▶ Challenges
- ▶ Recommendations



Mio' ohpokoiksi Program formerly JHWC

Blackfeet Indian Reservation in Browning, MT.

C.A.C consulted elders and speakers in planning process

Foundation of our culture is to become Niitsitapi: a real person in union and balance with the universe.

Symbol on all Blackfoot teepees on South ear flap. Recognizable.

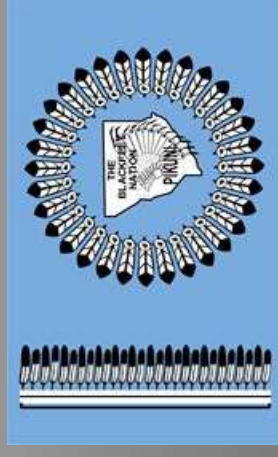
Reminds us to always take care of our children, not to neglect them so we don't lose them. Literal translation=Traveled in a pack tightly.

Language holds the key to our culture! Cultural Connectedness strengthens identity.



Pleiades Star Cluster

Blackfoot Tipi Design-
Mio' ohpokoiksi- The
Bunched Stars



A young girl with dark hair, wearing a black dress with a white patterned bodice, is looking down at a large, patterned rug. The rug features a repeating pattern of light-colored circles on a dark background. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. A red square is visible in the top right corner of the image.

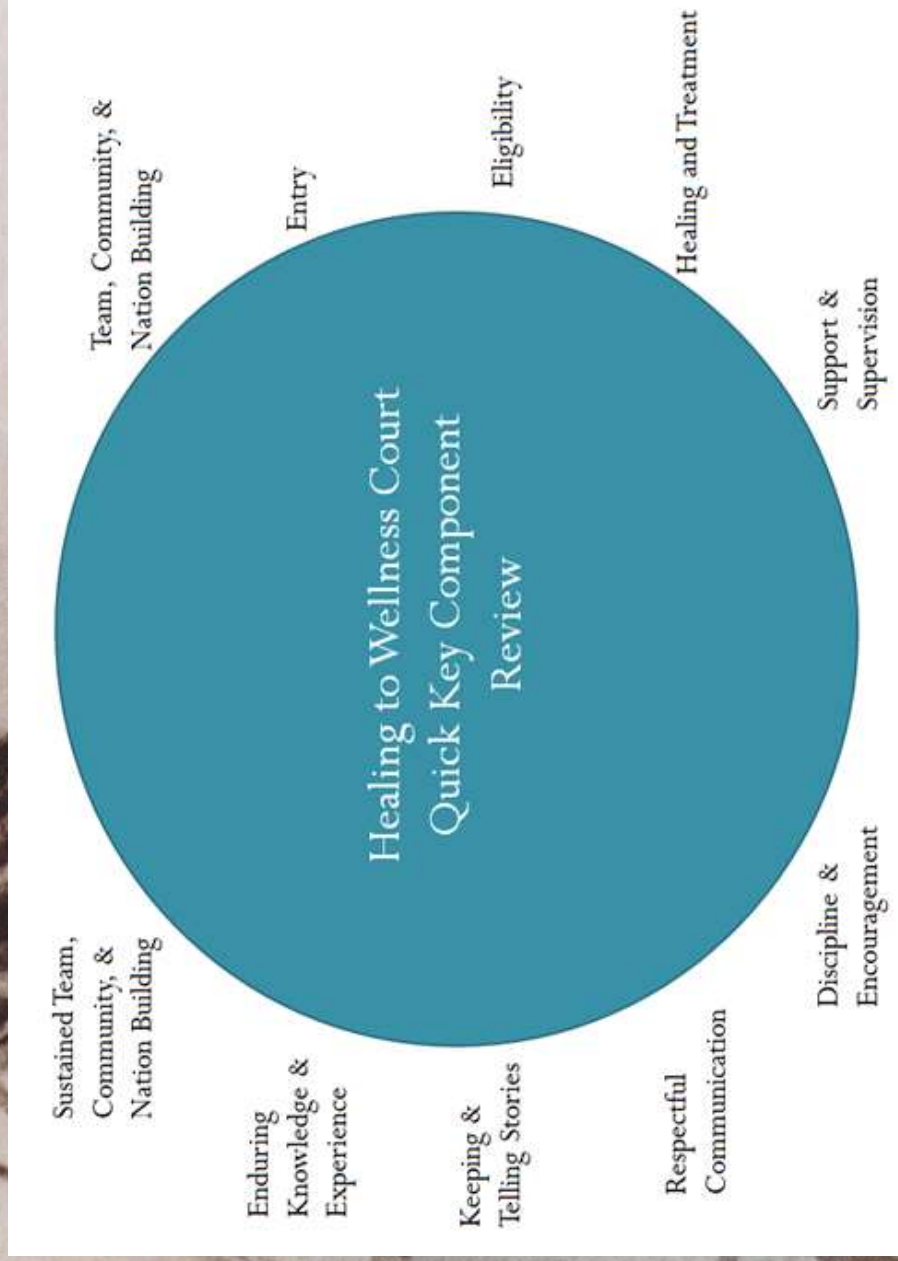
“

Vision: Strengthen youth by connecting them to culture and support resources.

Purpose: The revitalization and reconnection of Tribal Youth to their Culture. Tribal Youth will have a strong cultural identity as a foundation for healing, skill building and pride.

”

The Key Components



What are the issues?

- ▶ The Blackfeet Family Court: 160 new cases of juvenile delinquency/year and 90% are alcohol or drug related.
- ▶ For youth, 24 and under, the mortality rate is nearly equal Cascade County (pop. 85,000+). TOP 5 causes of death are liver diseases and drug use/poisoning (including alcohol poisoning). The second highest emergency room diagnosis ages 13-45 is alcohol abuse.
- ▶ 80% of all Blackfeet Tribal Court cases involved drugs or alcohol use by the offender.
- ▶ 80% of children removed from parental care due to issues related to parents suffering SUD-methamphetamine, opioids, and alcohol.
- ▶ Community data shows drug/alcohol use is starting at younger ages - as low as 10 years old
- ▶ 61% of youth reported never using cultural healing methods, and 97% did not know how to access them
- ▶ Suicide Rates are 7 points higher than the national average
- ▶ Currently all youth detention centers and treatment centers are 1000+ miles away

SYNERGY: The Team

- Weekly Staffing
- Wrap Around
- “Increased communication & collaboration will be our guiding values to widen the collective work and ensure accountability, consistency, and follow through to protect our children.



Healing to Wellness Court Staffing Team and Browning
Public School Partners

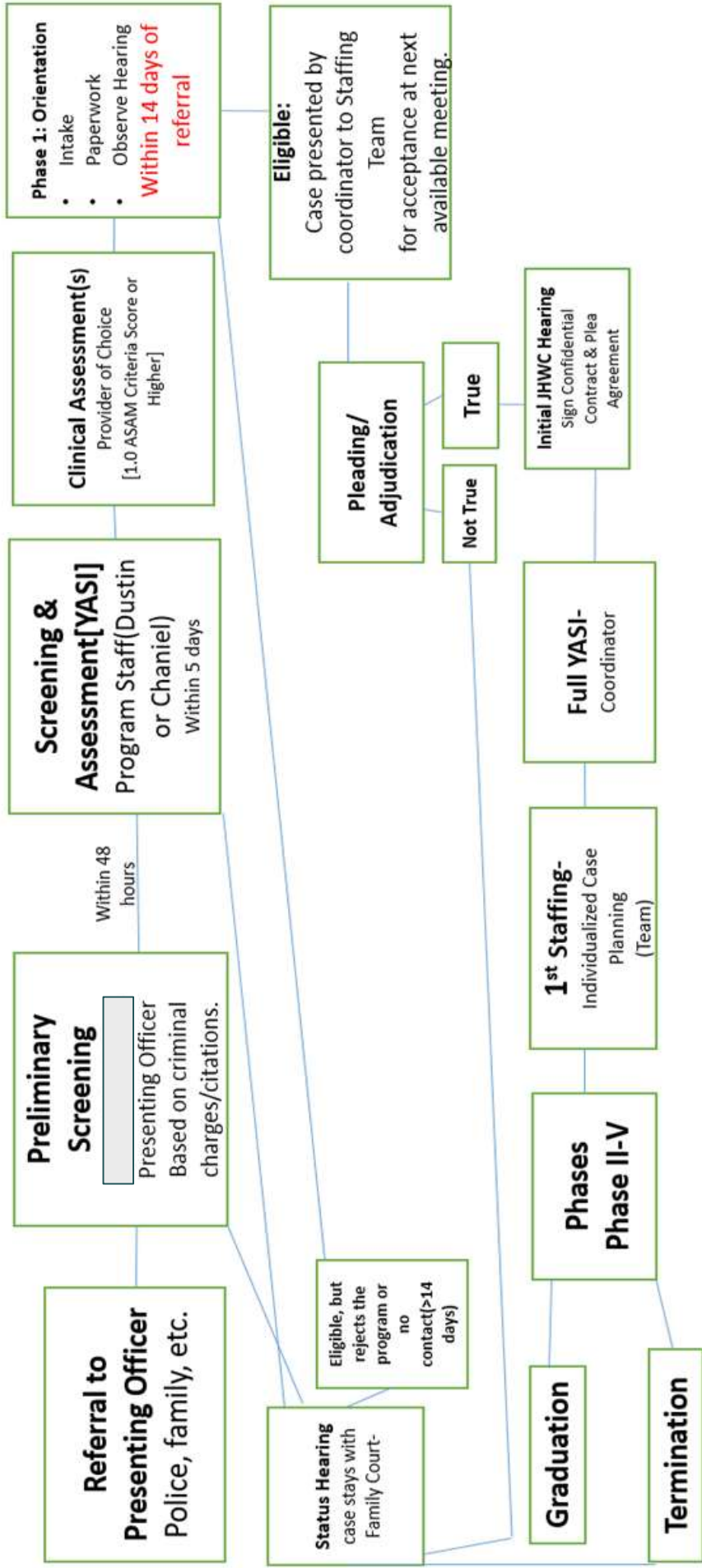


2020 Miss Blackfeet Alia Plume & Judge
Mistee Rides at the Door

Target Population

- ▶ Age 14 to 21.
- ▶ Participant must admit to the Court the underlying charges or actions against him/her prior to acceptance to the program.
- ▶ Participant must be an enrolled member or a descendant of a federally recognized tribe.
- ▶ Participant must not be a violent offender as indicated by their criminal background record.
- ▶ Participants must have at least a moderate criminogenic risk
- ▶ Participants must have underlying criminal offense(s) or juvenile offense(s).
- ▶ Juvenile Participants must have at least a medium clinical need
- ▶ Participant must be accepted by consensus
- ▶ TARGET: High Risk High Need
- ▶ Youth Assessment & Screening Instrument (YASI)

JHWC CASE PROCESS



BHWC Program Phases

Represents holistic healing and wellness

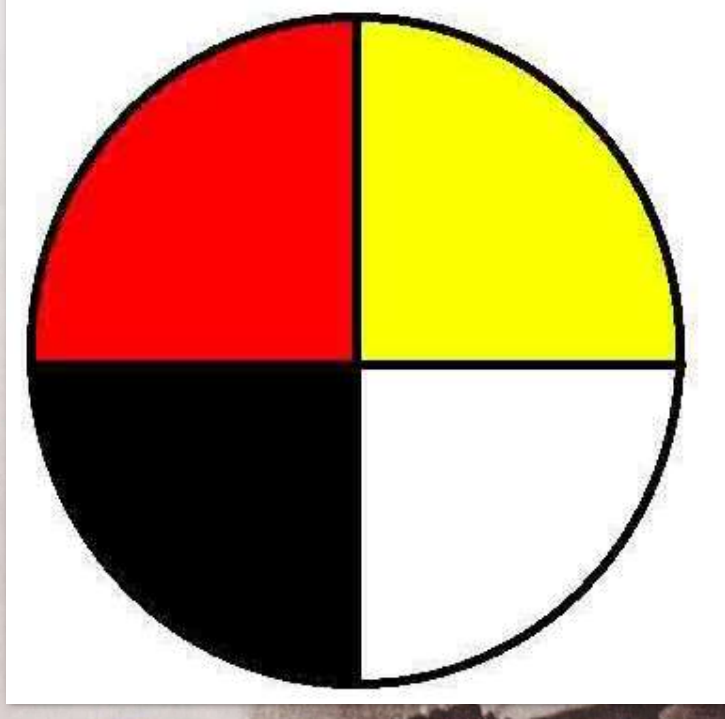
Phase 1: Orientation(2 weeks)

(Yellow) Phase 2: STABILIZATION AND TREATMENT PHASE Spiritual(Honesty). Foundation Level.

(Red) Phase 3: MAINTENANCE & TREATMENT PHASE Emotional (Humility, Respect). Patience Level

(Black) Phase 4: BLACK PHASE: Physical (Bravery, & Love). Awareness Level.

(White) PHASE 5: CONTINUED CARE/AFTERCARE. Mental (Wisdom, Truth). Choice Level.



PATH TO JHWC GRADUATION

Orientation
Phase I
 14 days

- Qualifications**
- 12-21 years old
 - Enrolled Tribal Member of Fed. Rec.
 - Clinical Need: ASAM Score 1.0 or higher
 - Must have underlying juvenile offense(s) which they plead true.
 - Participant must voluntarily agree to participate in the programs (including consent of parent/guardian for juvenile participants), after consultation and orientation with the BHTWC staff.
 - Parent/Guardian of juvenile participant must voluntarily agree to participate in the parent/guardian capacity in the BHTWC.
 - Participant must be accepted by consensus of the BHTWC Staffing Team
- Disqualifications**
- Certain Violent/Sexual Offenders
 - Developmental Delays (in some circumstances)
 - Does not meet risk/need requirements
- Expected Behaviors that Lead to JHWC**
- Public Intoxication/Possession
 - Disorderly Conduct
 - Trespass
 - Malicious Mischief
 - Vandalism
 - Consumption
 - Theft/Burglary
 - DUI
 - Reckless Driving
 - Elder Abuse
 - Assaults (not felony level offenses)
 - Domestic Abuse (not felony level offenses)

Phase II
 Minimum of 4 Weeks

- Requirement Options**
- Random Drug Testing (At least 2/week)
 - Curfew
 - Breathalyzer
 - Check ins (in person preferable)
 - Home Visits
 - Treatment Service (Chemical Dependency and/or Behavioral Health)
 - Volunteerism
 - School Attendance
 - School Visits
 - GPA (no failing classes)
 - Cultural Modules/Activities
 - Weekly/Bi-Weekly Court Hearings
 - Physical Exam
 - Positive activities (alcohol/drug free)

Phase III
 Minimum of 4 Weeks

Phase length is determined by individual needs and compliance.

- Incentives**
- Applause
 - Gift Certificates
 - Gift Cards
 - Certificates for accomplishments
 - Fish Bowl Incentive Drawing
 - Food opportunities
 - Travel Pass
 - Mistee Bucks (JHWC Dollars)
 - Phase Advancement
- Sanctions**
- Phase Pause
 - More Check-ins
 - Volunteerism
 - Earlier Curfew
 - Essays
 - Reduce Curfew
 - House Arrest
 - Flash Jail
 - Termination

Phase IV
 Minimum of 4 Weeks

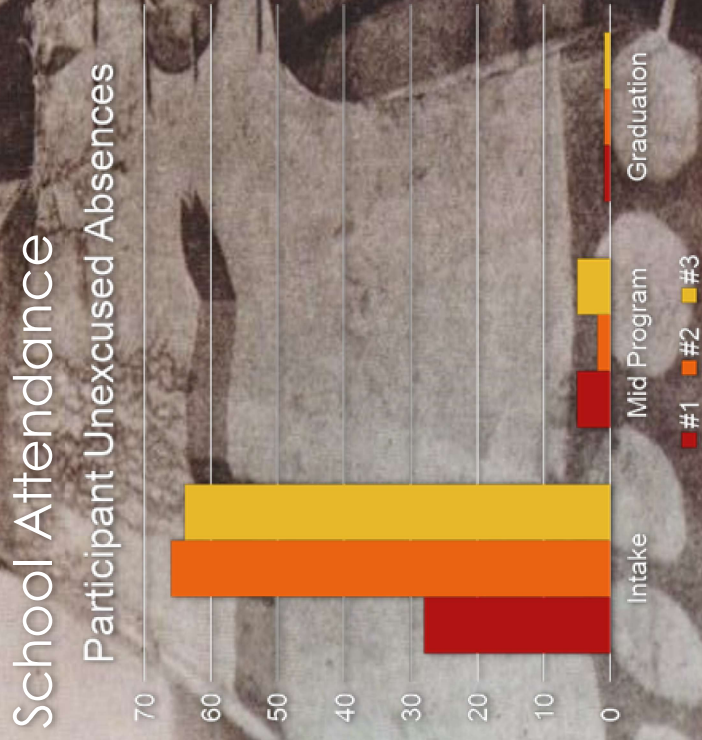
Phase V
 Minimum of 4 Weeks

Graduation

INCENTIVES, SANCTIONS, & THERAPEUTIC ADJUSTMENTS

- ▶ Graduated
- ▶ Incentives: Incentive bin, verbal praise, courtroom applause, phase advancement, later curfew, approval of trip requests, gift cards,
- ▶ Sanctions: Essays, community service, delay phase advancement, demote to earlier phase, increase drug testing, FLASH JAIL IS USED LAST or in Extreme situations.
- ▶ Behavior Modification
- ▶ Responses are matched to the behavior and individualized based on Distal and Proximal Goals
- ▶ FISHBOWL method. Compliant = 1 ticket. 10 tickets = 1 draw from fishbowl. Chance to win are low, but have a chance to win small, medium, large prizes

Participant Demographic and Family Structure



- All drop-out risk at intake
- Majority now high school graduates or significant improvement
- Average Age: 16
- 55% Male 45% female
- 17% identify as LGBTQ
- 19 of 24 raised by grandparents

Cultural Modules

- ▶ 13 member C.A.C. utilized Community Readiness Assessment
- ▶ Cultural Forums- 65 elders/knowledge holders helped develop. 13+ Cultural Modules
- ▶ Developed and Pandemic delayed progress
- ▶ Cultural Connectedness Scale- PRE & POST; Measures: identity, worldview, Traditions/Language, and desire to learn
- ▶ Beginning to implement, anecdotal evidence of increase in Connectedness



Challenges

CHALLENGES:

- ▶ Internal Controls for the Tribe
- ▶ Funding Restrictions by funding agency
- ▶ Overturning of staff
- ▶ Office Space
- ▶ Lack of inpatient treatment for youth in community
- ▶ Lack of juvenile detention center in community
- ▶ Lack of sufficient adult inpatient treatment in community

Recommendations

1. Family Centered Approaches- more opportunities for reconnecting families
2. Approaches to promote healing within own community
3. Sustainability! HTWC save \$! not spending thousands for inpatient treatment or incarceration
4. Amending policies to allow more flexibility with incentives and culturally appropriate program needs
5. More training opportunities for lgbtq support
6. Supporting data collection positions in programs
7. Providing mentor court opportunities

THANK YOU

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