



ABOUT

The A.C.O.R.N. Youth Wellness Program is evaluating the mental health prevention and early intervention impact of two culturally specific practices - the Stick Game and Flower Dance. Our program works with American Indian/Alaskan Native youth (age 7-17) from rural Northern California. These two cultural practices involve multiple Tribes that reside in rural Humboldt and Del Norte Counties. These counties are the ancestral territories of the Wiyot, Hupa, Yurok, Karuk, and Tolowa Peoples.



The Stick Game is attended by American Indian boys, as direct participants, and the multi-generational community of both men and women that come to watch. It has always been an inter-Tribal competition and is played regionally on Tribal Lands.

The Flower Dance is a young woman's coming-of-age ceremony. The Flower Dance takes place on Tribal Lands in a traditional redwood plank house either held in common by the Tribe or held privately by a family. As a public celebration of the young woman, the entire community is invited to participate.



TWO FEATHERS NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILY SERVICES



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CALIFORNIA REDUCING DISPARITIES PROJECT

October 2018 April 2019 August 2019 December 2019

COMMUNITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

- Provide community-driven, culturally grounded feedback on project activities, materials, research methods, data analysis, and dissemination of outcomes.
- Promote project and culturally based programs and activities.
- Provide expertise and lead workshops or portions of events for the project.
- Provide feedback and guidance on local evaluation.

MAKE IT STRONGER

Over 100 youth attended 5 programs held over 4 months

- A holistic approach to wellness
- Incorporates both physical and psycho/social interventions.
- Traditional stories and native languages emphasized
- Local guest speakers from Tolowa, Wiyot, Yurok, Hupa and Karuk communities invited to share expertise and knowledge.

"It's good to get these kids exposure early on to their culture. It gives them a sense of confidence about who they are and where they come from. And I think that alone will go a long way towards fighting issues like substance abuse and mental health in our communities."

"Being able to connect with so many people who share my culture in this area is amazing. You can tell the kids are involved and proud of who they are. I think it's pretty important to know your culture."

STICK CAMP

40 youth attended a 3-day stick training camp in August 2019.

- Teach techniques, training regiments, values of stick game.
- Facilitate bonds with other young men and mentors.
- Encourage participation and future activities.

FLOWER DANCE PROGRAM

Over 60 youth and parents attended 2 programs. There are 2 additional programs planned for 2019.

- Give participants insight into all that goes into making a Flower Dance happen.
- Sessions include: regalia day, cultural sharing, bark skirt making and dress making,.
- Provides opportunities to meet ceremonial leaders.

OUTCOMES & EVALUATION

