

# Community Success Story: Native American Youth Tobacco Cessation Project, Year 1

## Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan, Inc.

### Summary

While Michigan tribal clinics have policies in place to screen adults for commercial (non-traditional) tobacco use and refer adults who use tobacco to cessation services, they don't address tobacco use with younger patients. The purpose of this 2-year project is to expand screening for commercial tobacco use and referral to appropriate cessation services to youth. Screening and referral will take place in both medical and dental care settings.

### Challenges

Smoking rates and smoking related chronic diseases are much higher among the Native American population compared to the general population. The American Indian Adult Tobacco Survey demonstrated that smoking rates vary from 34% to 72% in Michigan tribes, while the rate for the general population is 19%. The survey showed that Native American youth start smoking at early ages. The average age of smoking initiation ranged from 13.8 to 15.3 years of age in the different tribes, with smoking initiation starting as young as 8 years of age.

### Solutions

The Inter-Tribal Council is working with the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Community to establish and implement a commercial tobacco use screening and referral program for youth under 18 years of age. The first year of the project focused on provider training and policy and procedure development for youth tobacco screening. In addition to medical clinics it was determined that youth could also receive screening and be referred for cessation services when receiving dental care services. The project has also involved locating guidelines and recommendations for treating tobacco dependence among youth.

This project is being complemented by other funding for a statewide Inter-Tribal Council of Michigan youth tobacco prevention media campaign. This campaign, available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), encourages youth to not be a replacement for the thousands of smokers who die each day, with the slogan "Don't be a replacement. Be an Original."

### Look Ahead

Provider training will continue in Year 2 and youth screening will be initiated.

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