Healthy Homes Grantees in Region VIII, Rocky Mountains

Name of Grantee: Montana State University Extension Service Housing Program
Name of Project: Native TRACKS" - Tracking Risks of Asthma through our Communities' KidS ... an Asthma Awareness and Trigger Reduction Program for Native American Children
Amount Awarded: $326,459
Year of Grant: 2002
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Project Partners: The Tribal Extension Service, Indian Health Services, and the Indian/Tribal Housing Authority/Program

Summary of Project Activities:

Demographics of the Project

Within the medical community serving Native Americans it is widely known that Indian children suffer from asthma at a level almost twice that of the general U.S. population. This project is ultimately designed to assist Native American families throughout the United States. However to address the asthma issue with American Indian families, Native TRACKS will initially concentrate efforts on developing and implementing a pilot asthma awareness and trigger reduction program for Native American children (175 family units) on these seven underserved Montana Reservations:

- Fort Peck Reservation
- North Cheyenne Reservation
- Crow Reservation
- Fort Belknap Reservation
- Flathead Reservation
- Rocky Boy's Reservation
- Blackfeet Reservation

Generally, Native American families of these areas are classified as low to very-low income (Montana Native American is 31% of the median income). Throughout these Reservations the unemployment rates are as high as 80 percent (average unemployment of Montana Reservations is 52%). Higher education achievement of Native American is much lower than the U.S. average - about 38% of Montana Native Americans have less than a high school diploma.

Housing conditions on Montana Reservations vary greatly - from mobile homes, some new homes, but most homes - even those constructed within the past 15-20 years - reveal sub-standard features and certainly lack the necessary maintenance to assure a safe, clean, comfortable environment. For all people, Indian as well as non-Indian, housing conditions triggers asthma episodes. Among the top triggers are: tobacco smoking in the presence of children homes with elevated level of molds, household pests (such as cock-roaches) and dust mites household pets sharing the living environment with children. To deal with these issues, the goal of this project is to build Reservation capacity and provide culturally specific resources to created a strong and sustainable asthma education program.
Native TRACKS
Achieving HUD's Goals and Objectives

This project develops and promotes the national capacity to prevent asthma triggers among Native American children. This is done by mobilizing public and private resources, building local capacity to create a sustainable project, promotes fair housing and environmental justice, and provides an opportunity to explore economic opportunities related to the initiative.

How the Work will be accomplished

The goal of Native TRACKS is to develop, implement and evaluate a culturally specific asthma education program for reservation-based Native American adults and children. The impact outcome objectives for Native TRACKS are:

a. 5000 Native American children, ages 8-11, will understand the basics of asthma while improving literacy.

b. 5000 Native American children, ages 8-11, will become aware of home asthma triggers through in-home exploratory education activities.

c. 5000 Native American children and their parents will adopt asthma prevention solutions through incentive learning and tribal recognition programs.

d. Native American children, ages 8-11, will share knowledge about asthma triggers through peer mentor activities to 7500 Native American children, ages 4-7.

e. 12,500 Native American children and their families will adopt a self-sufficient ethic and behaviors to deal with asthma triggers and control in their home.

Although this project will be designed for national outreach, the initial development phases of Native TRACKS efforts will be focused on Native American families located on Montana Indian Reservations. For each of these Montana Reservations families will be targeted to implement elements of Native TRACKS. To identify and select participating families the Native TRACKS project will partner with Native American organizations such as the Tribal Extension Service, Indian Health Services, and the Indian/Tribal Housing Authority/Program. To assure local project efforts are being followed-through, a project lead will be designated for each Reservation. Working through the project lead and the partner organizations Native TRACKS will provide marketing materials and an organizational training meeting to support local promotion, recruitment and educational efforts. The four primary criteria for choosing targeted families are:

- families with children diagnosed with asthma
- families with children living in "5-trigger homes" (homes with children exposed to five asthma triggers - molds, pets, and pests, environmental tobacco smoke, and dust mites.
- families with children having disabilities unable to physically provide solutions for asthma prevention and control
- families that are willing to follow through with all elements of
Product Outcomes/Outputs:
   a. 5000 Native American children, ages 8-11, will understand the basics of asthma while improving literacy.
   b. 5000 Native American children, ages 8-11, will become aware of home asthma triggers through in-home exploratory education activities.
   c. 5000 Native American children and their parents will adopt asthma prevention solutions through incentive learning and tribal recognition programs.
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