



Sisseton-Wahpeton Tribal Research Office

Current Research Projects on the Lake Traverse Reservation

- 1. “Understanding the Context of Northern Plains American Indian Teen Pregnancy: Phase 2 (My Journey)”**
Project PI: DenYelle Kenyon, Ph. D
Permit Expiration date: 9/20/19
The purpose of the study is to evaluate the effectiveness of a newly developed teen pregnancy prevention program with youth in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades.
- 2. “American Indian and Alaska Native Beliefs and Practices: What are the perceived barriers to access and utilization of healthcare?”**
Project PI: Lisa Daniel, RDH
Permit Expiration date: 10/29/16
This project intends to explore the health beliefs and the barriers to access and utilization of healthcare services provided by IHS.
- 3. “The impact and challenges experienced by tribal governments’ implementation of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act (SORNA)”**
Project PI: Melissa E. Riley, Ph.D.
Permit Expiration date: 2/16/17
The purpose of the research is to inform SMART of the successes, challenges, and experiences of tribes who have successfully implemented, preparing to implement, or considering whether or not to implement.
- 4. “Project Ina: Holistic Improvement of Maternal Health on the Lake Traverse Reservation”**
Project PI: Nivedha Kannapadi
Permit Expiration date: 6/21/17
This study seeks to assess the climate of maternal health on the Lake Traverse Reservation during and shortly after pregnancy, specifically focused on the accessibility, significance, and socialization of information surrounding this topic. The data collected from this pilot study will be used to inform future studies and potential interventions based on sharing information about pregnancy.
- 5. “Our Youth, Our Future”**
Project Co-PIs: Randall C. Swaim, Ph.D., Linda R. Stanley, Ph.D.
Permit Expiration date: 6/21/18
The Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research at Colorado State University proposes to conduct a survey of substance use and related risk and protective factors among the 7th – 8th grade students at Enemy Swim Day School (ESDS). The study is part of an ongoing effort to understand the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors regarding substance use among youth living on or near American Indian reservations. The ESDS was selected randomly from among over 500 schools nationwide. No individual student, ethnicity, tribal affiliation, or community will be identified in the report of the students’ responses.
- 6. “A Community Readiness Assessment (CRA) as the First Stage of Safe Healthy Children: Improving Immunization Series Completion in Rural American Indian Communities”**
Project PI: Linda Littlefield, MSW
Permit Expiration date: 9/20/18

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This project seeks to improve the immunization completion and coverage levels in American Indian children in the Great Plains Area.

7. **“Dissemination, Implementation, and Evaluation of Native STAND in American Indian Communities”**
Project PI: William Lambert, Ph.D.
Permit Expiration date: 9/20/18
This project will disseminate and implement an evidence-based culturally-specific curriculum to reduce high-risk behaviors in AI/AN teens.
8. **“Adapting and testing the feasibility of Tribal Head Start REDI with Native American children in South Dakota”**
Project PI: Janet Welsh, Ph.D.
Permit Expiration date: 02/26/2022
The Head Start REDI (Research based, Developmentally Informed) program was developed with the goal of improving the long-term success of at-risk children. The REDI program incorporates evidence-based curricula and professional development activities for teachers into regular Head Start programming.
9. **“Eat Smart, Play Hard—The Oyate Way”**
Project PI: Suzanne Stluka, MS, RD, LN
Permit Expiration date: 3/20/18
The overall objective of the Eat Smart Play Hard (ESPH) project is to test the efficacy of a 6-week nutrition and physical activity curriculum that is culturally relevant to South Dakota’s American Indian population in changing diet and physical activity knowledge and behavior.
10. **“The Association of Developmental Defects of Enamel with Severe-Early Childhood Caries: a retrospective chart review”**
Project PI: John Zimmer, DDS
Permit Expiration date: 3/20/2020
The retrospective chart review would be limited to children age 1-6 years old and will record the presence of: 1) decayed, missing, and filled teeth, 2) enamel defects, and 3) the need to utilize a general anesthetic to restore the decayed teeth. The data will be analyzed to determine if an association exists between developmental enamel defects and the number of decayed primary teeth.
11. **“Preliminary study on the socio-economic factors affecting microbiome, nutrition, and health outcomes in American Indian population”**
Project PI: Joy Scaria, Ph.D.
Permit Expiration date: 7/30/2020
Disparities of health exist among the members of Native American populations. We hypothesize that health gradients are present among the members of the American Indian community in South Dakota and it is likely impacted by socio-economic status and dietary habits. Recent research on human gut microbiome reveals that the microbial diversity in the gut has profound effect on health. Our overall goal in this study is to analyze the relationship between socio-economic status and dietary habits and to determine whether this has an impact on digestive health measured using microbiome diversity in fecal samples. Data for the research will be collected through survey instruments and fecal sample collection. Findings from our research will influence the policy discourse on topics related to the economic and social well-being of the American Indian population.
12. **“Project Ina: Holistic Improvement of Maternal Health on the Lake Traverse Reservation (Phase 2)”**
Project PI: Nivedha Kannapadi
Permit Expiration date: 5/10/18

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This study seeks to understand if SWO pregnant women are able to use and benefit from the Project Ina mobile app, and, if so, how they benefit. To address this research question, the study is split into two parts: short-term co-design workshops and long-term (3 months) interaction with the mobile app. The co-design workshop, involving interactive generation of ideas for improving the app to best meet participants' needs, will elucidate how the Project Ina app currently reflects the needs and desires of the Lake Traverse pregnancy community and how it can improve in doing so. During the long-term alpha test portion of the research study, data will be collected from a group of 20 pregnant women on the reservation over a period of three months that they engage with the Project Ina app. Data collected will help the research team to understand how, specifically, the mobile app is beneficial to SWO pregnant women and ways that it can be improved.

13. “Impacts of Commercial Tobacco Marketing on American Indian Reservations – Tribal Retail Environment (TREE) Study”

Project Co-PIs: Kristine Rhodes, MPH & Rachel Widome, Ph.D.

Permit Expiration date: 6/19/18

The prevalence of commercial tobacco use among American Indian (AI) adults in the Upper Midwest has been estimated to be 60%; compared to the general population's smoking rate of 18%. It is known that greater exposure to tobacco advertising, promotion, and certain retail practices increase the likelihood that adolescents start smoking, encourage continued smoking and lead to relapse among quitters. The goal of this project is to learn more about attitudes towards marketing and retail practices related to commercial tobacco via key informant interviews with up to 6 community members (at least one tribal leader, one person working in tobacco control, and one person who sell commercial tobacco).

14. “Examining Matriculation, Transfer, and Capabilities of Tribal College Students in the form Educational Opportunities”

Project PI: Francis Arpan, Ph.D.

Permit Expiration date: 7/31/21

The percentage of Native Americans with bachelor's degrees falls way behind the percentage of people in the general population. The project will examine matriculation, transfer, persistence, and capabilities of Native American students in the form of educational opportunities. The research will also examine how students' decisions in higher education are affected by barriers, motivating factors, and the educational opportunities available to them. The approach is concerned with social justice and working to increase individual and community capabilities and the proposed research, when finished, can be applied by Sisseton Wahpeton College as they work to increase student success and capabilities in the community. Within the framework of the proposed research project is a student research component that is designed to present SWC student researchers with the opportunity to gain knowledge in methods, analysis, and reporting.

15. “Documenting Dakota: Informal Ways with Words in the Santee-Sisseton Dialect Spoken at Lake Traverse Reservation”

Project PI: Josh (Richard) Wayt, MA

Permit Expiration date: 6/19/19

This project creates audio-visual records of fluent elders using the Santee-Sisseton dialect of Dakota spoken at Lake Traverse Reservation. Focusing on informal genres of speech, this work investigates the form and function of linguistic patterns that are prevalent in (and perhaps unique to) playful or humorous speech, e.g. entertaining guests, telling jokes, teasing relatives. This research thus addresses a serious gap in existing studies, which have focused on compiling dictionaries, describing grammatical structures, and producing textual records of very formal genres of speech, e.g. sacred narratives. However, there is little documentation of more informal ways of speaking Dakota. This absence is increasingly significant for individuals, organizations, and institutions involved in language revitalization efforts, because language curriculum and pedagogy center on informal ways of speaking. In this regard, another purpose underlying

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this research is to support revitalization initiatives by providing documentary data that may subsequently be used in developing curricular materials or pedagogical activities.

16. “Ignite: Community Based Participatory Research (CBPR) Model in preventing overweight and obesity among 6th – 8th grade youth in low-income racial/ethnic communities”

Project PI: Kendra Kattelmann, Ph.D., RD, LN, FAND

Permit Expiration date: 11/02/18

This project proposes to use a quasi-experimental design to determine the effectiveness of the CBPR Model to assist communities in identifying behavioral and environmental factors that influence overweight and obesity in 6th-8th grade youth in selected communities; and engaging selected communities to implement effective and sustainable strategies to increase dietary intakes of fruits and vegetables; increase the variety of vegetables in the diet; decrease dietary intakes of foods high in solid fats and added sugars; and increase physical activity among 6th-8th grade youth. One intervention and one control community were selected in South Dakota to participate in this project. An assessment tool was developed to help give a clear picture of the barriers to healthy eating and physical activity among 6th-8th grade youth.

17. “Today and Beyond Project: An Educationally-based Mentorship Intervention”

Project PI: Crystal Aschenbrener, DSW, MSW, APSW

Permit Expiration date: 1/17/19

This project is a mixed methods case study of an educationally-based mentorship intervention program that supports an underrepresented at-risk group of youth. The middle school students from a tribal school in South Dakota are the mentees while the mentors are college students from two universities with the intervention occurring at the tribal school. The intervention supports the youth by providing role models who host three components: a college visit, a career day visit, and educationally-based, career-related activities carried out in the classroom. Surveys and participant observations are used with the mentees and interviews are used with high schoolers who participated in the intervention in their seventh and eighth grades (some at another tribal school site). The study focuses on the mentees’ perceptions about their educational futures.

18. North Dakota Pregnancy Risk Assessment Monitoring System (PRAMS)

Project PI: Grace Njau, MPH

Permit Expiration date: 5/07/2020

ND PRAMS is an ongoing, population-based surveillance system designed to identify and monitor selected maternal experiences and behaviors that occur before and during pregnancy and during the child's early infancy among a stratified sample of women delivering a live birth. It was initiated to help state health departments establish and maintain an epidemiologic surveillance system of selected maternal behaviors and experiences.

19. Revitalizing the Dakota Language and Reproducing Cultural Values at Lake Traverse Reservation, S.D.

Project PI: Josh (Richard) Wayt, MA

Permit Expiration date: 5/31/19

This research project investigates how cultural values shape language revitalization efforts, and how those efforts address broader social concerns that animate the SWO. Specifically, the researcher hopes to examine how, when teaching the Dakota language, fluent elders and their semi-fluent apprentices simultaneously transmit broader cultural values and principles for appropriately conducting relationships. The researcher plans to collect and analyze three lines of evidence: (1) Fluent elders' instructional discourse at Sisseton-Wahpeton College's (SWC) tri-weekly "elder sessions;" (2) Life-history interviews conducted with fluent elders involved in SWC's program; and (3) Semi-structured interviews on curriculum design with SWC's language learners. The project proposed here will result in the transcription, translation, and

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further annotation of audio data on fluent Dakota speech (1 and 2 above). This dissertation research will thus contribute to and support ongoing efforts to revitalize Dakota Language at SWC.

20. **Great Plains Area Good Health & Wellness Qualitative Study (Partnership)**

Project PI: PJ Beaudry, MPH

Permit Expiration date: 5/31/19

As part of the larger regional evaluation and documentation of impacts of the Good Health and Wellness in Indian Country initiative, the Great Plains Tribal Epidemiology Center (GPTEC) has been asked to conduct a qualitative study to add breadth and depth to the data being collected/compiled for these purposes. Given the importance of partnerships to the project in driving the policy, systems, and environmental changes that are foundational to it, GPTEC has decided to focus on the question: “what are the impacts of the various partnerships formed as a result of GHWIC programming?” As such, GPTEC plans to inquire about the nature of partnerships formed, how these partnerships have proceeded, and what the perceived impacts have been. We hope that in contributing to a broader understanding of the impacts of the initiative and illuminating best practices, this study will support the excellence and sustainability of this programming in the future.

21. **“Wiyukcan ka Ecuñpi Social Media Research Project”**

Project PI: Cheyenne Ironheart, BS

Permit Expiration date: 10/22/2020

The purpose of this research project is to study what effect social media has as a support tool for mentoring youth on the Lake Traverse Reservation. This research targets at risk youth in hopes of spreading awareness of suicide prevention. The youth will partake in Facebook posts directed at the youth who are part of the study. Texting, messaging and Facebook posts will be implemented as a form of mentoring at risk youth. The mentors involved in this study will undergo mandatory reporting training and will be instructed to follow a developed protocol on how to help at risk youth while providing mentorship and available resources for those who may need additional support outside of our area of research. This research will break down the participants into three specific categories: 5th – 6th grade, 7th – 8th grade, and 9th – 12th grades.

22. **“Effectiveness of Pregnancy Health Research Dissemination”**

Project PI: DenYelle Kenyon, Ph.D.

Permit Expiration date: 4/05/20

This study will evaluate previous work done through a partnership between Sanford Research and the Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate (SWO) health education team. In 2015, SWO conducted a Pregnancy Health Survey and, recently, Sanford Research staff have been working with SWO to disseminate key findings to the SWO community through infographics. This study will evaluate these infographics and determine if the approach taken was effective in informing and educating the community. To do this, members of the SWO First 1000 Days Initiative Interagency Forum will be sent an online survey to explore their thoughts and use of the infographics in their work to educate women and men of childbearing potential. Additionally, two focus groups will be conducted with SWO community members to gain feedback on the infographics. The SWO health education team will assist with data interpretation once the analysis is complete and work with the research team to disseminate the findings through reports and infographics. The findings from this study will help inform SWO programs on effective ways to communicate with SWO community members. Additionally, the results may be used to inform future researchers on appropriate dissemination methods.

23. **“Improving awareness of opioid safety and naloxone education and distribution in high risk patients at a rural health clinic”**

Project PI: Leah Weiss, Phar.D.

Permit Expiration I date: 10/22/2020

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We propose to conduct a retrospective chart review of the patients at Woodrow Wilson Keeble Memorial Health Care Center who are receiving greater than or equal to thirty milligram morphine equivalents daily. The primary objective of this study is to determine if education regarding opioid safety and naloxone availability increases the amount of naloxone prescriptions picked up by patients. Subjects will be contacted via telephone if they are eligible for participation. Informed consent will be obtained and the importance of opioid safety and naloxone awareness will be discussed using a pre-determined telephone script and signed in person at the training seminar. Subjects and their loved ones will be invited to a live naloxone training course where they will learn about proper administration techniques of the lifesaving medication and they will be encouraged to go to the pharmacy to pick up a prescription from the standing order at no cost to them.

24. “Survey of Head Start Grantees on Training and Technical Assistance”

Project PI: Carol Hafford, Ph.D.

Permit Expiration date: 12/18/2020

The Administration for Children and Families (ACF) is conducting a national survey of Head Start grantees about their use of, need for, and experiences with training and technical assistance (T/TA). The survey will collect information from Head Start Directors and Managers/Coordinators about how grantees select T/TA to meet their needs and what kinds of T/TA grantees use. ACF is also interested in understanding how the T/TA that grantees receive influences practices in Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The survey includes questions about four content areas: 1) Fiscal Operations; 2) Early Childhood Development and Education; 3) Health, Mental Health, and Safety; and 4) Family and Community Services. The purpose of this survey is to inform ACF and the Office of Head Start (OHS) about how Head Start programs use and experience T/TA services offered by various providers, including local, regional, tribal, and federal providers. The information will help OHS and ACF ensure that the OHS T/TA system meets program needs.

25. “Will Tai Chi Decrease the Number of Elder Falls and Increase Strength in the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Elder Population?”

Project PI: Veronica Leaf-Bellile, BS

Permit Expiration date: 12/18/2020

Abstract: Local clinic data identifies elder falls as the number one unintentional injury for the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate elders. This project seeks to identify two aspects of fall prevention efforts for tribal members: 1) the effectiveness of Tai Chi for Fall Prevention classes, measured by improvements in strength among class participants and by reduction in fall incidents; and 2) an assessment of existing services the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate offers (and opportunities for additional services) to assist in the prevention of elder falls. Based on data collected (through questionnaires and interviews) and analyzed, and a literature review of evidence-based practices for fall prevention, the project will include recommendation for enhancing existing Tai Chi for Arthritis for Fall Prevention classes, and recommendations for considering opportunities to address gaps/overlap for fall evidence-based fall prevention programs for the Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate elder population.

26. “Relapse Factors and Prevention on the Lake Traverse Reservation”

Project PI: Alana Little Bird, AA

Permit Expiration date: 7/14/21

Based on information that is available from the treatment entities that exist in our community, there is no current way to identify the leading causes of relapse. Our organization intends to use the research data to establish better strategies for people that are freshly discharged from treatment facilities. To accomplish this goal, we will use qualitative research methods, more specifically semi-structured interviews, which will provide a deeper perspective on which factors of relapse have the most impact on individuals. By seeking out individuals who have relapsed and who are willing to participate in the study, we may be able to obtain valuable information that will form the basis of an effective aftercare program.

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27. **“Implementation of a De-Prescribing Tool in High-Risk Patients at a Rural Health Clinic”**

Project PI: Leah Weiss, Phar.D.

Permit Expiration date: 8/03/21

Prescription drug use increases with age, but on average at least twenty percent of the American population is on at least five prescription medications. Polypharmacy is associated with a decreased medication adherence, and an increased risk of adverse drug reactions, serious drug-drug interactions, healthcare costs, and the potential for physical and/or cognitive impairment. The goal of this public health surveillance project is to identify patients taking at least five prescription medications and perform a medication reconciliation to reduce polypharmacy and improve patient safety. The medication reconciliation will be performed following the VIONE method, which was developed by the Associate Chief of Staff for Geriatric and Extended Care Services at Central Arkansas Veterans Healthcare System. When using the VIONE method the provider will classify medications into four categories: vital, important to improve the patient's quality of life, optional, not indicated. After completion of the first four steps of the VIONE process the provider will ensure every medication has a specific indication or diagnosis. Currently, Woodrow Wilson Keeble Memorial Health Care Center has a medication reconciliation policy, which requires medication reconciliations to be performed at all relevant encounters and any transitions of care, but does not specifically employ the VIONE method to complete this task.

28. **“Adapting Double Check for Teachers of Native American Students”**

Project PI: Lora Henderson, Ph.D, M.Ed

Permit Expiration date: 10/26/2021

Through educator, parent, student, and community input via interviews and surveys, the Double Check professional development program will be adapted to increase the culturally responsive practices of teachers of Native American students. Stakeholder input and expertise will be used to adapt the intervention to include culturally relevant behavior management and pedagogical strategies for meeting the needs of Native American students. The adaptation will be an iterative process in which feedback from study participants will be used to constantly improve Double Check. Once all interview and survey data has been analyzed and used to inform the adaptation, it will be reviewed with educators for further feedback before piloting it. All teachers at Enemy Swim will have the opportunity to participate in professional development modules while a small subset will receive coaching as well. Teacher and student perceptions of culturally responsive practices and school climate will be used to assess the effectiveness of the intervention.

29. **“Strengthening and Encouraging Families (SEF)/Great Plains Tribal Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Rigorous Program Evaluation Plan”**

Project PI: Christy Hacker, MPH

Permit Expiration date: 03/23/2022

The evaluation will explore the feasibility of a moderation model examining whether receiving home visiting services (as measured by the number of home visits received, connection to community resources, number of Family Spirit Lessons, social support, and recruitment and engagement efforts) helps buffer the relationship between parenting stress and parent self-efficacy. While this evaluation uses a non-experimental design, we can begin exploring this model using mixed methods to examine how exposure to home visiting supports families in addressing parenting stress and improving parenting self-efficacy. The qualitative component of our design will help further explore the processes by which home visiting can help to address parenting stress and self-efficacy. We will also examine whether previous findings from the literature suggesting there is a direct relationship between parenting stress and self-efficacy can be generalized to our tribal home visiting population.

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30. **“Parallel-group Design Study Comparing Vaccine Hesitancy and Barriers for the Annual Influenza Vaccine in Individuals that Received the COVID-19 Vaccine”**

Project PI: Leah Weiss, Phar.D.

Permit Expiration date: 04/26/2022

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stated in 2019-2020, the influenza vaccination prevented an estimated 7.5 million influenza illnesses and 6,300 influenza-associated deaths in the United States. The inactivated influenza vaccine has been available since 1945 and is proven to help prevent adverse health outcomes directly related to the influenza virus yet, many individuals currently decline the vaccination every year. The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) vaccinations are newly developed and have only been approved through the Emergency Use Authorization (BUA) from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) since 2020. The COVID-19 vaccine was created during a coronavirus pandemic, which as of March 22, 2021 has resulted in over 29.8 million cases and 539,000 deaths in the United States. The American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) population had a higher COVID-19 incidence compared with non-Hispanic Whites. In the 2009 influenza A (H1N1) pandemic the AI/AN population experienced a disproportionately higher mortality. The primary objective of this public health surveillance project is to examine the reasons that influenced individuals to receive or decline the influenza vaccine for the 2020-2021 season and the factors that led the same set of patients to receive a COVID-19 vaccine during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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