

American Indian Youth: Exposure to Trauma

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Current Status of American Indian and Alaskan Native Youth

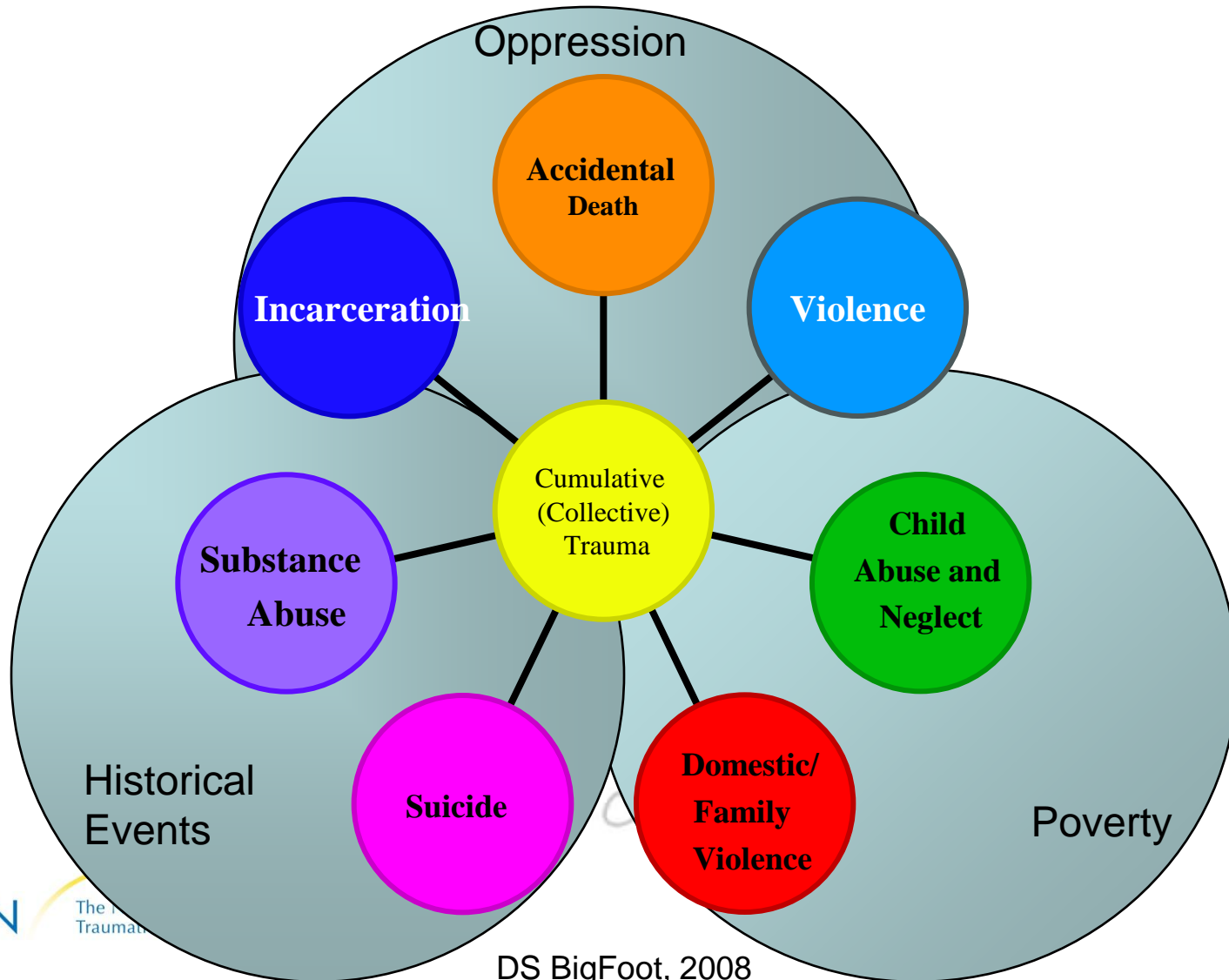
- Today's youth are faced with overwhelming need for basic safety
- Youth became the recipients of poor coping behavior when their parents lack appropriate parenting skills or life skills
- AI/AN youth are at greater risk for preventable injury-related death than other youth in the US

Current Status of Mental Health and Trauma

- AI/AN children and youth have not benefited to the same degree as white children and youth from interventions in areas such as traffic safety
- In states with reservations, an estimated 75% of suicides, 80% of homicides, and 65% of motor-vehicle-related deaths among AI/ANs involved alcohol.
- Young drivers are at risk particularly for dying in a car crash as a result of driver inexperience, nighttime driving, and alcohol use



Trauma in Indian Country



Trauma

- Cultural trauma:
 - is an attack on the fabric of a society, affecting the essence of the community and its members
- Historical trauma:
 - cumulative exposure of traumatic events that affect an individual and continues to affect subsequent generations
- Intergenerational trauma:
 - occurs when trauma is not resolved, subsequently internalized, and passed from one generation to the next
- Present trauma:
 - What vulnerability youth are experiencing on a daily basis

Current Status of Mental Health and Trauma

- AI/ANs more likely have exposure to trauma than members of more economically advantages groups
- Impact of high suicide rate on siblings, peers, family members, community
- Violent deaths (unintentional injuries, homicide, and suicide) account for 75% of all mortality in the second decade of life for AI/ANs
(Resnick et al., 1997)

Current Status of Mental Health and Trauma

- Youth with a history of any type of maltreatment were 3 x more likely to become depressed or suicidal than those with no maltreatment history.
- AI/AN population is especially susceptible to mental health difficulties

Violence and Trauma

- Violent crime rate among AI/AN 12 years and older is 2.5 times the national rate
- AI/ANs experience approximately one violent crime for every eight (residents age 12 or older) compared to one violent victimization for every 16 black residents, one for every 20 white residents, or one for every 34 Asian residents

Mental Health Disorders and Trauma

- Higher rates of exposure to traumatic events coupled with the over-arching cultural, historical, and intergenerational traumas make this population more vulnerable to PTSD
- Rates of substance abuse disorders and other mental health disorders, particularly depression, are also elevated (e.g., Beals, et al, 2001).

Child Maltreatment and Trauma

- Native American families had the highest re-referral rates for sexual abuse, physical abuse, and neglect relative to other ethnic categories (Stevens et al., 2005)
- AI/AN children make up less than 1% of the total child populations, but represent 2% of the children in foster care
- One substantiated report of child abuse or neglect occurs for every 30 AI/AN children

Access and Mental Health Services

- Need for mental health care is significant, the services are lacking, and access can be difficult and costly
- Report lists problems in service utilization patterns that include AI/AN children as being more likely to:
 - 1) receive treatment through the juvenile justice system and in-patient facilities than non-Indian children;
 - 2) encounter a system understaffed by specialized children's mental health professionals, and
 - 3) encounter systems with a consistent lack of attention to established standards of care for the population

Gangs in Indian Country

AI/AN experience a crime rate of 656 incidents per 100,000 residents as compared to the crime rate of 506 incidents per 100,000 for the general population.

AI/AN Juvenile Delinquency Rates

- North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Wyoming, and Minnesota have significant rates of incarceration of AI/AN youth.
- Iowa has a ratio of 1,025 per 100,000 drawing from bordering states with a high number of Indian reservations (ND=1,240; WY=1,285; SD=1,575; MN=1,712; NB=1,682)
- Minnesota and Nebraska having the highest rate of incarceration of AI/AN than for any other group

Incarcerated American Indian Youth

- AI Youth comprise 1.1% of the national youth population (US Census Bureau, 2006)
- More than 60% of incarcerated young offenders under federal jurisdiction were American Indian (OJJDP, 2006)
- Due to different jurisdictions, federal and tribal criminal laws may apply to same offense
 - An individual can be tried for the same offense in tribal and state or federal court; it not be considered double jeopardy
- Number of suicides while incarcerated major concern

Developmental Disabilities and Academic Achievement

- Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders among AI/AN population indicate some of the highest rates (1.5 to 2.5 per 1,000 live births)
- Highest dropout rate of any racial or ethnic group (36%) as well as the lowest high school completion and college attendance rates of any minority group (Clark & Witko, 2006)

Suicide in Indian Country

- AI/AN between ages 15-24 have highest rates than other age range or ethnic group
- Males age 15-24 account for 64% of all AI/AN suicides (CDC, 2004)
- American Indian youth, 12 and over have higher risk of committing suicide than being murdered (US DHHS, 1999)
- 50-60% of those suicides used a firearm

Suicide in Indian Country

- Death by suicide takes more than 30,000 American lives per year; in 2002, Native Americans made up nearly 11% of the total US suicide numbers.
- Between 1979-1992, suicide rates of Native Americans were 1.5 times the national rates.
- AI/AN males are 4 times more likely to commit suicide than women or other racial groups, but AI/AN females are 3 times more likely to attempt suicide than males or any other racial group (CDC, 2004)

Trauma in Indian Country

- Need for Safety
- Need for Supervision
- Need for Protection
- Need for Guidance
- Need for Monitoring
- Need for Teachings
- Need to know they are Sacred
- Need to know they are Honored

Honor Based Society

