



Family Voices Inc.

Understanding Indian Culture to Enhance the Delivery of Services to Indian Families with Children and Youth with Special Health Care Needs

As we continue to work with many diverse families of children and youth with special health care needs, it is important to explore our own family cultures and become familiar with the cultures of others in order to better serve all families. We hope that the information, resources and tips we share will ultimately help families receive comprehensive, coordinated, culturally and linguistically competent, family-centered, community-based health care in their home communities. For the next few months, we will present a series of articles on understanding Indian culture.

Background

The first “American Indian Day” was declared by the State of New York in 1916. National recognition of Native Americans, however, was not achieved until August 3, 1990 when President George Bush declared the first National American Indian Heritage month, based on legislation presented by Senator Daniel K. Inouye and congressional delegate Eni Faleomavaega from American Samoa. The term “Native American,” which came into use in the 1960’s, has been used to denote American Indians and Alaskan Natives. It is important to know that a vast majority of traditional “American Indians” consider anyone born in the United States a “Native American” and would prefer being identified by their tribal affiliation. For example, Trish Thomas, Family Voices staff member, states, “I am from the Laguna Pueblo Indian Tribe and identify myself as a Laguna Tribal member.”

There are more than 554 Indian tribes and Alaska native groups each with their own culture and history. There are more than 250 languages spoken in Indian country. The purpose of a National American Indian Heritage designation was and continues to be to honor and recognize the original peoples of this land. Throughout our history, American Indians and Alaskan Natives have been an integral part of the American character. Against all odds, America’s first populations have endured, and they remain a vital cultural, political, social, and moral presence. American Indians have taught our great nation certain values and ideals that have become ingrained in the American spirit—knowledge that humans can thrive and prosper without destroying the natural environment; the understanding that people from very different backgrounds, cultures, religions, and traditions can come together to build one great country; and the awareness that diversity can be a source of strength rather than a division.

Website

National Native American Families Together (NNAFT) Parent Center is an outreach program to increase partnerships between Native American families who have children with disabilities and the professionals who serve their children. The NNAFT Parent Center provides information and assistance to families who have children with special needs. For more information, please visit <http://www.nativefamilynetwork.com/>

Partnering with the PTA

Recently, information adapted from Bright Futures for Families “Health Care Visit Checklist for All Children, including Children with Special Health Care Needs” was featured in the January 31, 2006 edition of the PTA Parent, National PTA’s bi-weekly newsletter. We’re excited about this new connection with National PTA, and appreciate the opportunity to share information and resources with more families. To sign up for PTA Parent, visit www.pta.org.

Announcement

The **Bright Futures for Families Pocket Guide** is now available in Spanish. For more information, go to www.brightfuturesforfamilies.org.



ReCap of FV Talk

This information is a summary collected from Family Voices Talk listserv

Resources, News, & Stories

- <http://www.healthday.com/view.cfm?id=530725>
A press release detailing new gene variant risks in African-American infants.
- <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/main.jhtml?xml=/news/2006/01/30/naut30.xml&sSheet=/news/2006/01/30/ixhome.html>
An article highlighting a new perspective on Autism: Parents' marriage choice may lead to autism.
- <http://go.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=domesticNews&storyID=11024161>
Looking at the crisis in Primary care treatment and advocating possible solutions tenable to physicians.
- <http://best.ssa.gov/>
A new tool for your usage to help you determine someone's eligibility for SSI.
- <http://www.thestate.com/mld/thestate/13779958.htm>
Health care changes loom As the South Carolina Governor's plan may affect older and low-income residents on Medicaid.

Spotlight on the Network Well Child Care

On January 22nd, Family Voices participated in a meeting at the Commonwealth Fund to discuss the idea of tiered or risk stratified well care for Children with Special Health Care Needs, the idea that the content of well child care might be provided according to the unique needs and circumstances of each child and family. The Commonwealth Fund engaged national experts to debate how it could best use its resources to explore and promote this approach to preventive care. It was agreed that tiered well child care for CSHCN currently exists on an individualized basis in most pediatric offices but without reimbursement for the additional time spent with the family.

After a day of examining the issues, the suggested outcomes included: 1) to further study the topic by engaging a group of family experts/leaders to learn how they perceive the current well child care system of care and to learn their proposals for change; 2) that tools exist currently to evaluate the proposed system but are not used in a systematic way; and 3) that Family Voices and the Commonwealth Fund should consider recognizing individual doctors to honor their work on behalf of well child care/care coordination for CSHCN.

The greatest discovery of my generation is that human beings can alter their lives by altering their attitudes of mind.

--William James

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2340 Alamo SE, Ste. 102 Albuquerque, NM 87106
Phone: 505-872-4774 Fax: 505-872-4780
Toll-Free: 1-888-835-5669
Email: kidshealth@familyvoices.org