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### **SAMHSA and the Ad Council Launch National Campaign to Raise Awareness about Mental Health Problems in American Indian Communities**

July 8, 2010

*1 in 5 American Indian Young Adults Experienced Serious Psychological Distress in the Past Year*

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), in collaboration with The Advertising Council, announced today the launch of a national public service advertising (PSA) campaign to promote recovery from mental health problems within the American Indian community by educating and inspiring young adults to talk openly about issues of mental health. The culturally-targeted PSAs seek to motivate societal change towards social acceptance and decrease negative attitudes that may surround mental illness. These PSAs are part of a larger multicultural public service effort designed to reach American Indian, Hispanic/Latino, Chinese American and African American communities during National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month.

Mental illnesses, including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and schizophrenia, are widespread in the U.S. According to SAMHSA, from 2004 to 2007, an average of 20.7 percent of American Indian 18-25 year olds reported serious psychological distress in the past year. Despite the high prevalence, only one in three (30.6 percent) American Indian adults with serious psychological distress received care within the past 12 months. Overall the rates at which racial and ethnic minority young adults seek treatment are much lower than their Caucasian counterparts.

"Raising awareness that effective treatments for mental illnesses are available and that people recover, can encourage those in need to seek help," said SAMHSA Administrator Pamela S. Hyde, J.D. "This outreach to the American Indian community will help open dialogue about supporting friends or family members with mental health problems in a culturally relevant way."

Created by American Indian advertising agency G&G Advertising through the Ad Council, the new radio, print and Web banner PSAs direct young adults to visit the campaign website, [www.whatadifference.samhsa.gov/Native](http://www.whatadifference.samhsa.gov/Native), where they can learn about mental illnesses, find tools to help support a friend in the recovery process, and seek out additional resources.

"We are proud to continue our work with SAMHSA to broaden our campaign for mental health recovery into the American Indian community," said Peggy Conlon, president & CEO of the Ad Council. "This multicultural advertising effort will help decrease the stereotypes surrounding mental illnesses while providing young adults with the resources they need to support their friends living with mental health problems."

A brochure titled, "What a difference a friend makes," is also a part of the campaign and is designed to provide tools and resources to help young adults support a friend who is living with a mental health problem in the recovery process. An electronic version of the brochure can be downloaded at [www.whatadifference.samhsa.gov/Native](http://www.whatadifference.samhsa.gov/Native).

"We were honored to work on such an important campaign and are very proud of SAMHSA and the Ad Council for including the American Indian target in this campaign." Michael Gray, President/Creative Director, G&G, said. "We are confident that the PSAs will make a difference in American Indian communities and encourage friends to support one another."

The Ad Council and SAMHSA first launched the Campaign for Mental Health Recovery nationwide in December 2006. To view the ads, please visit [www.adcouncil.org](http://www.adcouncil.org). The PSAs will air in advertising time that will be entirely donated by the media.

**SAMHSA** is a public health agency within the Department of Health and Human Services. Its mission is to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness on America's communities. ([www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov))

**The Ad Council** ([www.adcouncil.org](http://www.adcouncil.org)) is a private, non-profit organization that marshals talent from the advertising and communications industries, the facilities of the media, and the resources of the business and non-profit communities to produce, distribute and promote public service campaigns on behalf of non-profit organizations and government agencies. The Ad Council addresses issue areas such as improving the quality of life for children, preventive health, education, community well-being, environmental preservation and strengthening families.

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