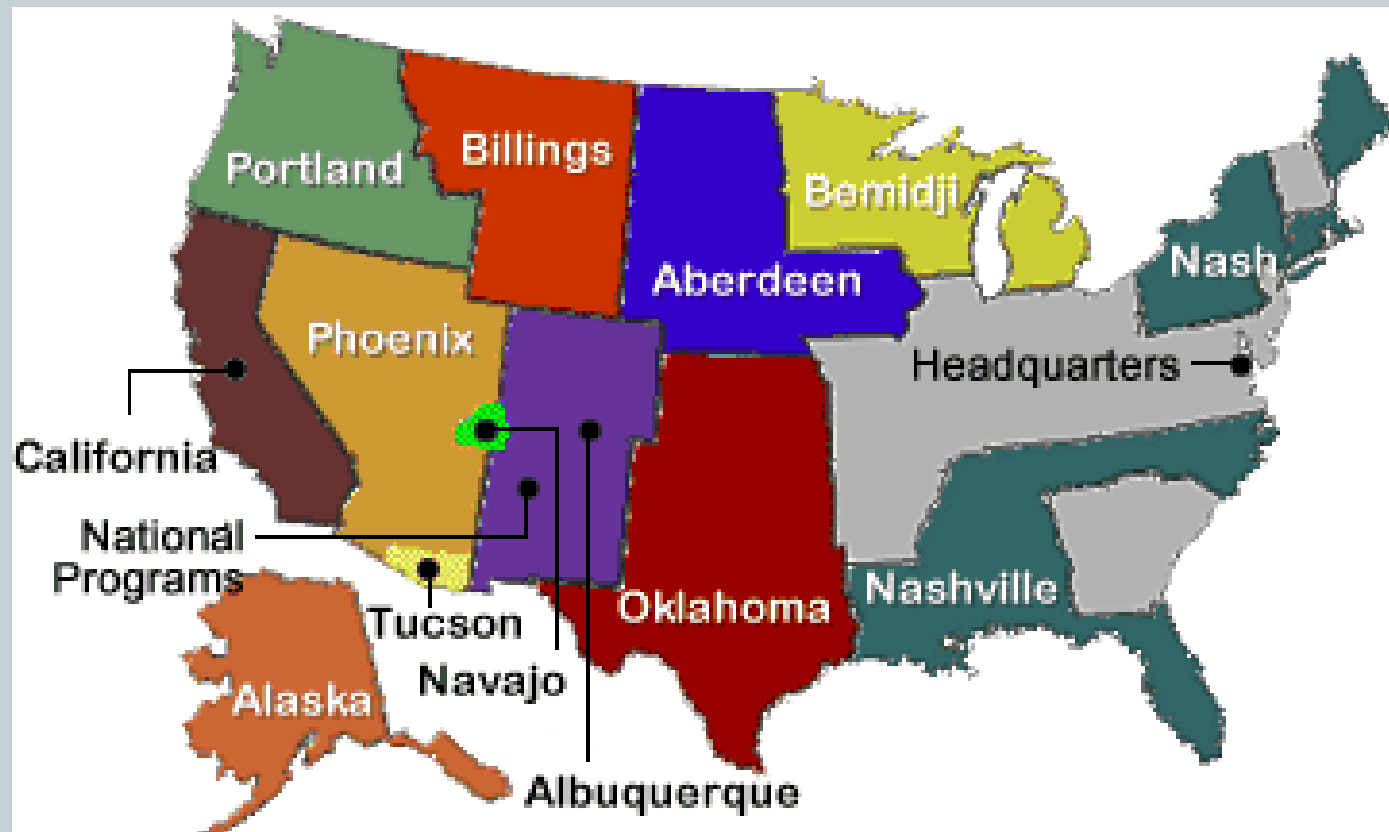


WORKING IN INDIAN COUNTRY



Bonnie Bruerd, DrPH

www.ihs.gov



Where do most AI/AN people live?



<http://kff.org/report-section/health-coverage-and-care-for-american-indians-and-alaska-natives-issue-brief/>

Health Disparities

- Leading causes of death are heart disease and cancer
- More than twice the rate of diabetes of US all populations
- Three times chronic liver disease
- Death from unintentional injuries and motor vehicle crashes almost double



Disparities Specific to Children

- Infant Mortality
- SIDs
- Injuries and death from accidents
- Youth Suicide
- Overweight

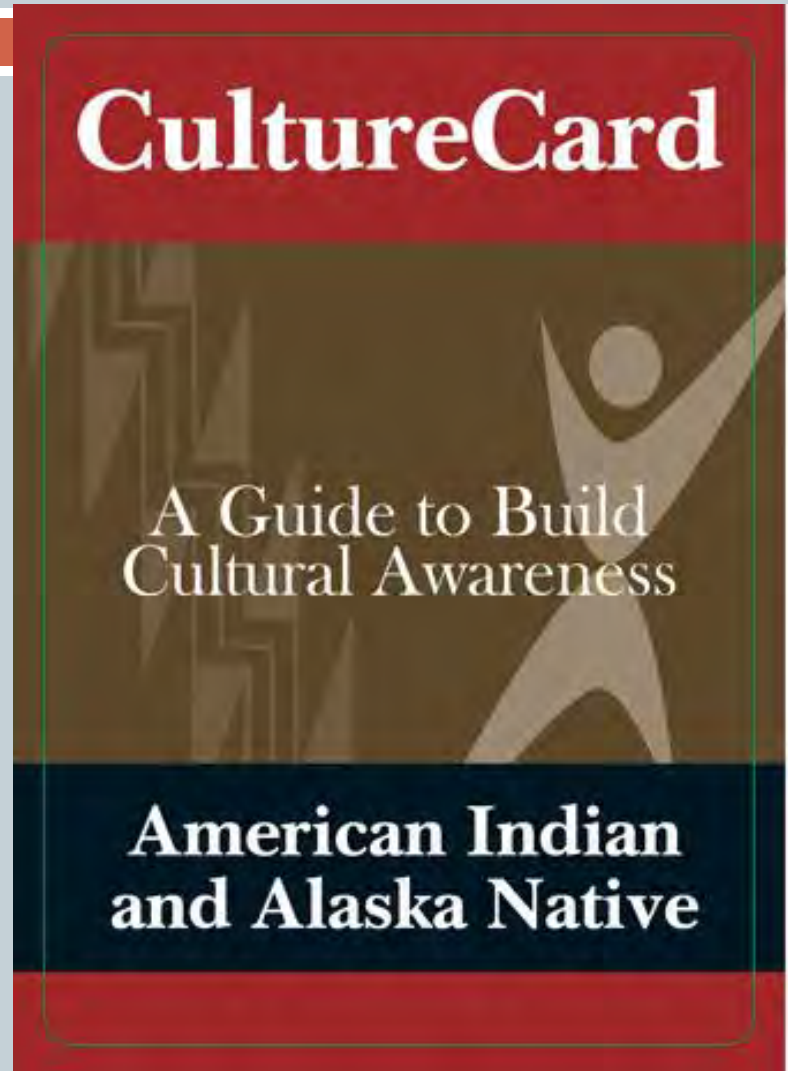


The Cross-Cultural Dance



The Culture Card

<http://store.samhsa.gov/product/American-Indian-and-Alaska-Native-Culture-Card/SMA08-4354>



The Culture Card: Some Highlights

- Handhugs instead of handshakes
- Humor (laugh at yourself)
- Respect for elders and veterans
- Strong kinship and extended family systems
- Shared sense of collective community responsibility vs. individual competition



The Cross Cultural Dance...

- Retention and reclamation of traditional language/culture
- Following” instead of directing children. Letting children learn through experience and observation
- Value of Storytelling
- Relationships are everything! Trust is built slowly

To Learn More: Ask Open-Ended Questions

- Tell me about your family's involvement in your tribal culture and traditions.
- Tell me about any cultural or health beliefs or past experiences that will help us work with your family.
- Can you describe the role you play in your child's health (or "your own health")?

Resources



- www.ihs.gov
- Dental Support Centers, located in 8 of 12 IHS Areas
- You can google individual tribes and most have great websites talking about their culture, listing their health programs and usually the name/number for the Health Director and often the full healthcare staff.

Local Community Involvement



- Ask for a copy of the Organizational Chart for the tribe you serve. Meet some leaders.
- Read any tribal newsletters and listen to local radio stations.
- Attend cultural events.
- Try some local foods and maybe even learn how to join in on some circle dances 😊

**“People don’t
care what you
know until they
know that you
care.”**

