

Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board
Tribal Health: Reaching out InVolves Everyone Project

TRIBAL YOUTH WELLBEING ASSESSMENT RESULTS 2022



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About Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board

Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (NPAIHB) is known for its mission, to eliminate health disparities and improve the quality of life of American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN) by supporting Northwest Tribes in their delivery of culturally appropriate, high-quality health care. NPAIHB's mission is to consult with tribal communities to determine their health-related wellness needs and then designs programs and activities to address community identified needs.

THRIVE 2022

Tribal Health: Reaching out InVolves Everyone (THRIVE) is the suicide prevention project at the NPAIHB. The Behavioral Health project at the NPAIHB and THRIVE staff worked with [Allyson Kelley and Associates PLLC \(AKA\)](#) to design and implement a Tribal Youth Mental Wellbeing Assessment in July 2022 with youth attending the THRIVE conference. The purpose of the Wellbeing Assessment was to identify and respond to the mental health needs of Native youth while documenting strengths and resilience.

Youth Wellbeing Assessment Goals

- 1** Identify mental health priority areas for Native youth
- 2** Inform We R Native efforts such as public health messaging and social media outreach
- 3** Create an action plan that addresses priority topics to direct and inform youth-driven mental health and suicide prevention efforts

Our 4-Step Process

- 1** Meet with NPAIHB and determine what the critical questions are that need to be answered
- 2** Design, plan, and finalize the Wellbeing Assessment
- 3** Launch Wellbeing Assessment during the THRIVE Conference
- 4** Review and analyze data, find meaning and validate results, and use data to inform Youth Action Plan

Our Methods

We developed the Wellbeing Assessment based on the 2021 THRIVE assessment and conversations about emerging youth health related needs. After multiple reviews and revisions by our planning team, we finalized the Wellbeing Assessment. Because survey fatigue is real, our goal was to create a simple and quick assessment that would result in quality data. Each day at the THRIVE conference, youth participants completed one section of the assessment comprised of less than five questions.

Construct	Source
Overall mental wellbeing	WEMWBS ¹ and 2021 NPAIHB THRIVE NA ²
Priority health needs	2021 NPAIHB THRIVE NA ²
Self-regulation / focus	New question
Safety	New question
COVID-19 Impacts	2021 NPAIHB THRIVE NA ²
Social justice	2021 NPAIHB THRIVE NA ²
Help-seeking behaviors	2021 NPAIHB THRIVE NA ²
Culture	Native STAND ³
Outreach	2021 NPAIHB THRIVE NA ²
Youth Driven Solutions	2021 NPAIHB THRIVE NA ²

Our team collected data in-person at the THRIVE conference using printed paper copies of assessment questions and online using the Qualtrics survey link. At the end of the THRIVE conference, Jerico Cummings (NPAIHB National Evaluation Specialist) compiled and entered all paper surveys into Qualtrics. Data was exported from Qualtrics, and we analyzed results in Excel. The next section highlights what we learned about youth wellbeing and strengths.

¹ Warkwick Medical School (2022). The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales (WEMWBS). Accessed 7/21/22, <https://warwick.ac.uk/fac/sci/med/research/platform/wemwbs>

² Northwest Portland Area Indian Health Board (2021). THRIVE Need Assessment (NA) and Evaluations. Accessed 7/21/22, <https://www.npaihb.org/thrive/>

³ Kelley, A., McCoy, T., Skye, M., Singer, M., Craig Rushing, S., Perkins, T., Donald, C., Rajani, K., Morgan, B., Milligan, K., Zaback, T., & Lambert, W. (2022). Psychometric evaluation of protective measures in Native STAND: A multi-site cross-sectional study of American Indian Alaska Native high school students. *PloS one*, 17(5), e0268510.

Native Youth and Tribes Represented

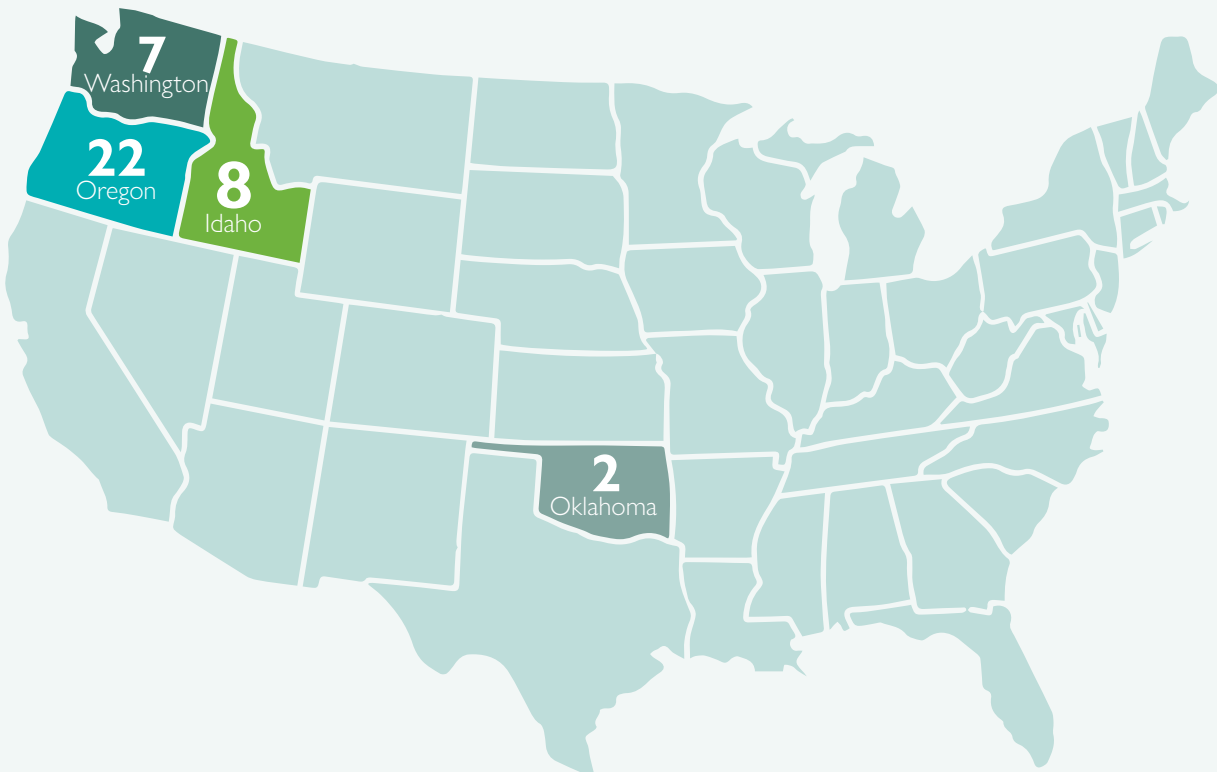
39
Youth

15.3
Average Age
(Range 13-20 years)

16
Tribes

4
States

Klamath	5	Blackfeet	1
Shoshone Paiute	5	Cowlitz	1
Warm Springs	5	Muckleshoot	1
CTCLUSI	4	Kalispel	1
Grand Ronde	3	Burns Paiute	1
PGST	3	Tlingit	1
Unknown	3	Puyallup	1
Muscogee Creek	2	Siletz	1
Coeur d'Alene	2		



Findings on Wellbeing and Strengths

Wellbeing ⁴	Focus ⁵	Safety ⁶
 <p>53% report their overall wellbeing as good or excellent.</p> <p>STRESS = #1 concern that youth have related to their wellbeing followed by anxiety and depression, and physical appearance.</p>	<p>91%</p> <p>have a difficult time focusing on a task through the school day. Some do not know why, others cited being bored, easily distracted, ADHD, stress, anxiety, and a lack of sleep, or not understanding the concepts.</p>	<p>Reasons youth do not feel safe</p> <p>ANXIETY = #1 GUN VIOLENCE = #2</p>  <p>43% always feel safe at school.</p>
COVID-19 ⁷	Mental Health Impacts ⁸	Bullying ⁹
<p>15%</p> <p>report physical illness as the number one impact from COVID-19. The second biggest impact was not being as active and feeling more anxious and depressed.</p>	<p>SOCIAL JUSTICE ISSUES = #1</p> <p>mental health impact(s) reported by youth followed by racism.</p>	 <p>27% have witnessed more bullying in the last year compared to before COVID-19.</p> <p>Emotional and verbal bullying are the most common followed by cyber bullying.</p>

⁴ (n = 32)

⁶ (n = 32)

⁸ (n = 34)

⁵ (n = 32)

⁷ (n = 34)

⁹ (n = 32)

Why Bullying Happens? ¹⁰

Physical bullying happens because...

“4 kids at my school got expelled for jumping someone”

“Because of losing someone they loved or that really had a connection”

“Fights”

“Hurt people, hurt people”

“Cuz it’s fun to the aggressor”

Emotional bullying happens because...

“I think bullying is happening because kids are just doing that to other kids to make them feel better about themselves, but I really shouldn’t”

“Because why not”

“Homophobic comments
racist comments other”

“The bully is also hurting”

Cyber bullying happens because...

“Social media”

“Talking bad over the internet”

“Facebook
and
Instagram”

“Online I've seen people of Asian descents being attacked/blamed for covid”

“Because Russia”

“I don't know”

¹⁰ (n = 30)

Access Support ¹¹

72% definitely or probably know where to go to access mental health and wellbeing support and or information.

64% definitely or probably have someone to help them in times of need.

64% definitely or probably would know how to support a friend struggling with mental wellbeing.

31% would like to access mental health and wellbeing information at schools followed by youth groups and social media.

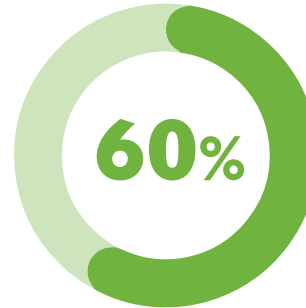


SNAPCHAT = #1
social media platform that youth use
followed by Instagram and TikTok.

Culture ¹²

50%

believe that they have many strengths because they are Native American.



have spent time trying to find out more about the history, traditions, and customs of Native people.

Staying Healthy ¹³

Positive thinking and stress reduction are the top resources that youth need to stay healthy. These were followed by coping resources when overwhelmed, relaxation techniques, and time management skills.

#1 POSITIVE THINKING RESOURCES

#2 STRESS REDUCTION RESOURCES

Advice from youth for someone struggling with their mental health...

You can do this. You've made it so far don't give up now. **Please do not do drugs.** **Take care of yourself before anyone else.** Think positive and have fun. Keep your head up you can get through this. You got this!!! **1 day at a time.** This too will pass. **Just breathe.** I don't know. Don't give up, with help you can get better and have a good life :) I don't really have anything. **Listen to music.** It's going to take time and you are going to have good and bad days, but you just need to find a group of people you feel comfortable and loved around. And they will give you the same love you give out because you have a beautiful soul that deserved to feel appreciated and loved. **Keep going and get as much help as possible.** Things always get better. Talk to someone about what's happening like a friend or trusted adult and to do activities that you love doing. It truly gets better. **It's ok you are and never will be alone.** **Love yourself first so you always have some to pour.** I don't know. To get help and use stress balls.

¹¹ (n = 25)

¹² (n = 24)

¹³ (n = 90)

Comparisons 2021 vs. 2022

THRIVE staff collected information from youth at the THRIVE conference in 2021 using some of the same questions presented above. We compared data collected in 2021 and 2022 to see if there were any observable differences in youth responses.

Youth overall wellbeing improved in 2022

Overall Wellbeing			
2021 vs 2022			
Terrible	3%	3%	
Poor	23%	13%	↓
Average	43%	31%	↓
Good	20%	38%	↑
Excellent	11%	16%	↑

*Note that 2021 response options were slightly different but based on a 5-point Likert-type scale.

Concerns about mental wellbeing were similar in 2021 to 2022. Physical appearance was the number one concern in 2021 but in 2022 stress was the number one concern.

Mental Wellbeing Top 3 Concerns		
2021 vs 2022		
	(N = 35)	(N = 32)
Physical appearance	#1	#2
Stress	#2	#1
Depression/ anxiety	#3	#2

*Note in 2022 physical appearance and depression/anxiety tied (n = 13) followed by #3 family conflict (n = 12).

COVID-19 Differences

The number one impact of COVID-19 in 2022 was physical illness to self or family member. In comparison the number one impact in 2021 was youth reporting that they were not as active.

We observed differences in **where youth want to get mental wellbeing information.**

2022 VS 2021



Schools



Social Media

Snapchat, Instagram, and TikTok are the top three social media platforms that youth use in 2021 and 2022

Support

2021 vs 2022

Know where to go for support or information on mental wellbeing	45%	72% ↑
Have someone to help them in times of need	57%	64% ↑
Youth know how to support a friend struggling with their mental wellbeing	63%	64% ↑

What We Learned

These findings tell us that Native youth completing the Wellbeing Assessment have many strengths and advice for their peers. Youth report good or excellent wellbeing.

91% of youth have difficulty focusing in school, some are bored, stressed out, lack sleep, and do not understand concepts.

Less than half of youth feel safe at school, reasons are anxiety and gun violence.

Social justice issues impact youth, mental health and racism were the top issues youth experienced.

Youth witness emotional and cyber bullying. Youth feel like bullying occurs because of social media, racism, homophobia, unresolved grief and loss, and lack of self-regulation.

Prevention efforts could focus on education, program development, interventions and follow-up for youth, families, organizations, and communities. New and continued efforts are needed to dismantle racism and address its deep roots in American society. The lingering effects of colonization, discrimination, racism, and phobias are common and impact the wellbeing of Native youth. Innovative approaches that prevent and resolve bullying are also necessary. Safety in schools is an ongoing concern that impacts Native youth wellbeing.

Future Work and Action Planning

In the coming months we will develop an action plan based on the Wellbeing Assessment findings. Information will be shared with our tribal constituents and partners. Our hope is that new prevention efforts will integrate youth strengths and address needs identified in this assessment for thriving Native youth.



Appendix A

This section includes all responses to assessment questions.

*Note: The total number of responses vary because questions were asked on different days of the THRIVE conference and not all youth completed assessments each day. A total of 39 youth attended the conference (N = 39).

How would you rate your overall wellbeing?

Answer	%	Count
Terrible	3%	1
Poor	13%	4
Average	31%	10
Good	38%	12
Excellent	16%	5
Total	100%	32

*Note: Totals may exceed 100% due to rounding.

Select your concerns related to wellbeing.

Answer	%	Count
Racism	1%	1
Discrimination	2%	2
Physical capacity/abilities	4%	3
Social justice	4%	3
Personal safety	4%	3
Other (please describe)	4%	3
Suicide	5%	4
Bullying/emotional abuse	6%	5
Substance use	8%	7
Family conflict	12%	10
Physical appearance	14%	12
Depression/anxiety	14%	12
Stress	27%	19
Total	100%	84

*Other – Nothing, don't have any. Hiding my sexuality from my family. I don't like being around so many people that seem dangerous.

How often do you have a difficult time focusing on a task throughout the school day?

Answer	%	Count
Never	9%	3
Sometimes	47%	15
About half the time	16%	5
Most of the time	19%	6
Always	9%	3
Total	100%	32

Do you feel safe at school?

Answer	%	Count
Never	13%	4
Sometimes	10%	3
About half the time	17%	5
Most of the time	17%	5
Always	43%	13
Total	100%	30

Select the reasons you do not feel safe at school.

Answer	%	Count
Tragedies at school in the media	12%	4
Bullying	9%	3
Gun violence	24%	8
Uncomfortable with teachers/adults	12%	4
COVID-19	3%	1
Anxiety	27%	9
Other (please describe)	12%	4
Total	100%	33[^]

*Other – I fight a lot. I don't know how to talk to others. People just being rude to each other. There's students who say violent things about the LGBTQ+ community (which I'm a part of) and it makes me feel very uncomfortable. Plus, there's only a few teachers at my school who care.

[^]Note: Respondents were only allowed to select one reason using the online survey instead of multiple responses. We entered data by selecting the first response recorded in the survey. This is a limitation of these data.

How has COVID-19 impacted you?

Answer	%	Count
Physical illness (myself or a family member contacting COVID-19)	15%	14
Death in the family due to COVID-19	9%	8
Economic impact on my family	10%	9
I am not as active	14%	13
I have not been able to participate in cultural activities and ceremonies	10%	9
I am more anxious/depressed	14%	13
I am not able to access the resources that I need to stay healthy	4%	4
I don't have anyone that I can talk to about how I'm feeling	4%	4
I don't feel positive about the future	10%	9
I am engaging in unhealthy behaviors	8%	7
Other (please specify)	4%	4
Total	100%	94

*Other – No thanks. I don't know I am not sure. Not seeing friends as often. I don't know.

In the last year, have you experience any of the following that impacted your mental health?

Answer	%	Count
Discrimination	13%	5
Homophobia	16%	6
Transphobia	8%	3
Racism	16%	6
Social justice issues	18%	7
Other	29%	11
Total	100%	33

*Other – None. Drugs and gang violence. Uncertainty. Nothing. Sadness increases. Got bullied for being on antidepressants and when I stopped taking them my ex best friend said I was crazy. I don't know. Depressed and anxious.

Have you witnessed or experienced more bullying in the last year compared to before COVID-19?

Answer	%	Count
No	49%	16
Maybe	24%	8
Yes	27%	9
Total	100%	33

What types of bullying have you witnessed and why do you think it is happening?

Answer	%	Count
Physical bullying	30%	14
Emotional/verbal bullying	37%	8
Cyber bullying	33%	9
Total	100%	94

Do you know where to go to access mental health/wellbeing support and/or information?

Answer	%	Count
Definitely not	4%	1
Probably not	12%	3
Might or might not	12%	3
Probably yes	32%	8
Definitely yes	40%	10
Total	100%	25

Do you have someone to help you in times of need?

Answer	%	Count
Definitely not	12%	3
Probably not	4%	1
Might or might not	20%	5
Probably yes	20%	5
Definitely yes	44%	11
Total	100%	25

If a friend were struggling with mental wellbeing would you know how to support them?

Answer	%	Count
Definitely not	4%	1
Probably not	8%	2
Might or might not	24%	6
Probably yes	32%	8
Definitely yes	32%	8
Total	100%	25

I believe that I have many strengths because I am Native American.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	8%	2
Somewhat disagree	4%	1
Neither agree nor disagree	38%	9
Somewhat agree	25%	6
Strongly agree	25%	6
Total	100%	24

I have spent time trying to find out more about the history, traditions, and customs of Native people.

Answer	%	Count
Strongly disagree	12%	3
Somewhat disagree	8%	2
Neither agree nor disagree	20%	5
Somewhat agree	36%	9
Strongly agree	24%	6
Total	100%	25

Where would you like to receive mental wellbeing information?

Answer	%	Count
Schools	31%	11
Social media	20%	7
Youth groups	25%	9
Video counseling	3%	1
Group counseling	14%	5
Phone call center	6%	2
Other (please describe)	3%	1
Total	100%	36

*Other – If I want online.

What social media platforms do you use?

Answer	%	Count
Snapchat	26%	20
Discord	7%	5
Facebook	13%	10
Twitter	7%	5
Instagram	25%	19
TikTok	23%	18
Other (please describe)	0%	0
Total	100%	77

What are some resources you need to stay healthy?

Answer	%	Count
Access to cultural activities	11%	10
Positive thinking	20%	18
Stress reduction	20%	18
Time management	14%	13
Relaxation techniques	13%	12
Coping when overwhelmed	17%	15
Navigating conflicts	4%	4
Other (please describe)	0%	0
Total	100%	90

Learn More

Here are some ways to support Indigenous youth wellbeing:

1. Follow NPAIHB and share our work
2. Volunteer with Native youth-focused organizations and activities
3. Support Indigenous communities taking action for mental health and wellbeing
4. For more information about NPAIHB, connect with us at:



www.npaihb.org

www.npaihb.org/thrive



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