

Researcher's Perspective: Indigenous approaches to Participatory Research

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Disclaimer

The opinions expressed are those of the presenters and may not necessarily reflect Montana State University.

"Valley of the Flowers"

*"Valley of the
Chokecherries"*

"The Good Camp"

"Full of Berries"

*"The Big Valley with the
Mountains"*





Researcher: Hi I'm Dr. Smith I'm here to conduct some research in your community

Community Woman: yeah?

Researcher: We're studying diabetes

Community Woman: ummmm

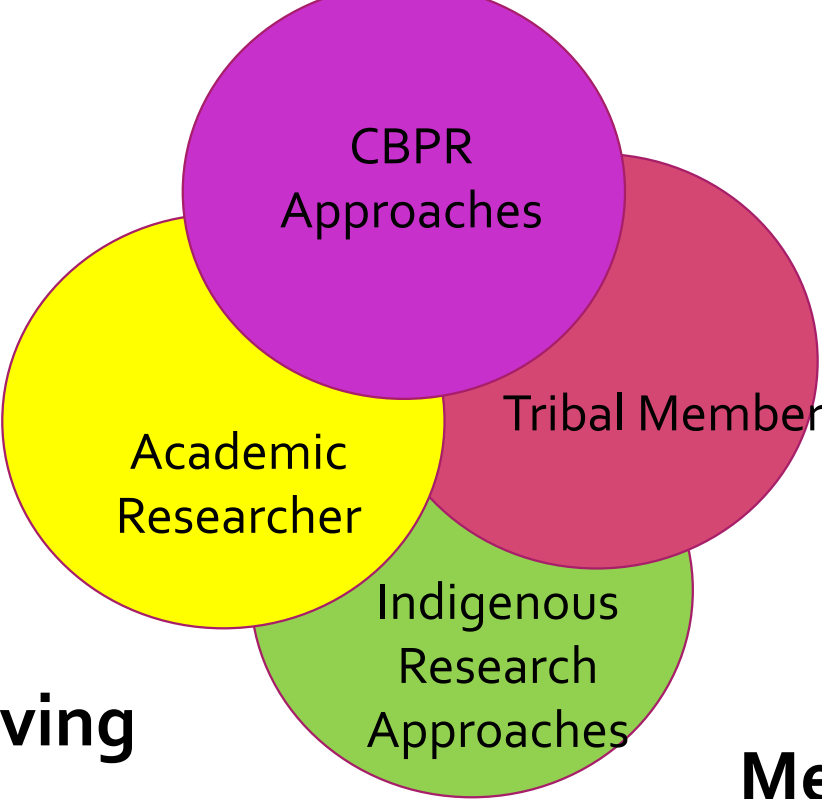
Researcher: We'd like to ask you some questions. We received a grant to learn about diabetes in your community.

Community Woman: What are you going to do with this research?

You are the researcher. What would you say?

You are the researcher. What would you say?

- A. I need to get tenure and publish
- B. I am going to share the information with tribal health, and work with tribal members to develop a diabetes prevention program.
- C. I am interested in your tribe's terrible diabetes epidemic



Guardians of the Living Water

Messengers for Health



Community-Based Participatory Research

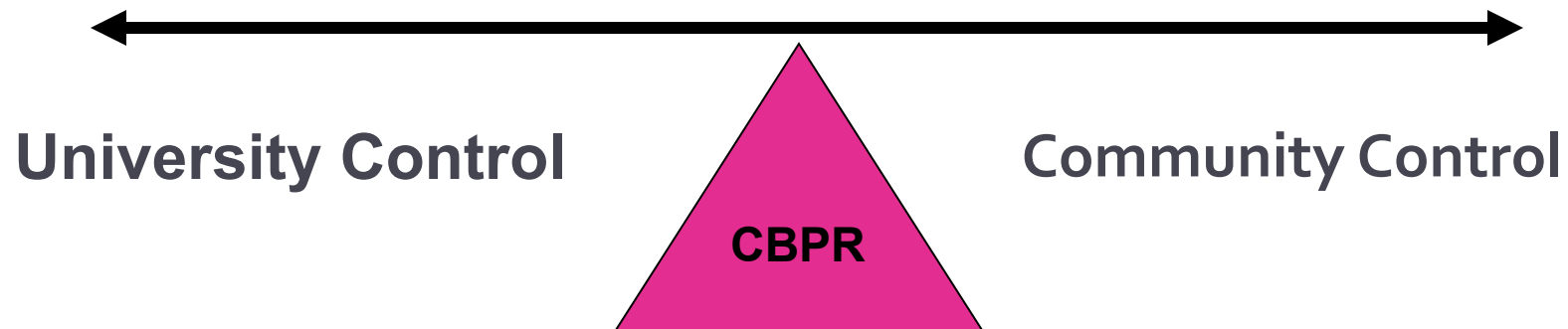
“A collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community and has the aim of combining knowledge with action and achieving social change . . .”

W.K. Kellogg Community Health Scholars Program



Challenge of Research/ Community Relationships

**Shared University/
Community Control**



Indigenous Approaches to Research

Methods for acquiring knowledge are as important as actual knowledge

Principles of Indigenous methodology are incorporated throughout the research process





Reciprocity

Relationships

Respect

Responsibility

Representation

Relevance

Relevance

- Community Partners:
 - Identify health topic
- And work together to:
 - Design intervention approach
 - Plan evaluation
 - Implement program and evaluation
 - Propose dissemination plans



Literacy
Skills

Resources

Risk of
Exposure

Water
Security



Protecting Our Water Sources



Relationships

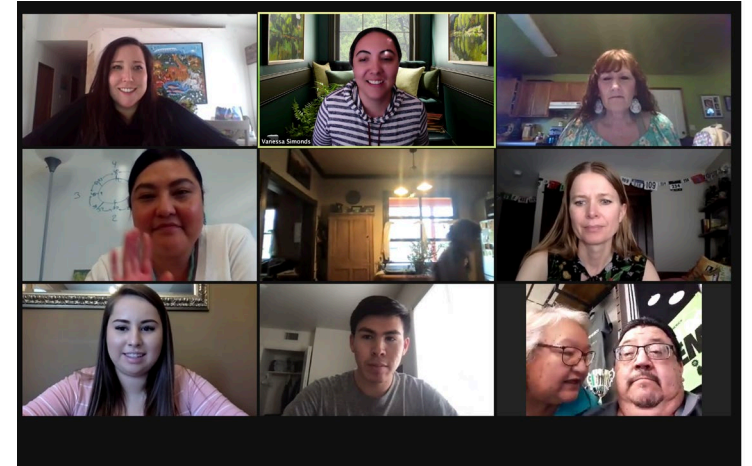
Advisory Boards/ Steering Committees

Include Include key community leaders

Provide Provide direction and advice for all areas of program

Have Have a variety of experiences

Benefit Benefit from shared Expertise



Crow
Environmental Health



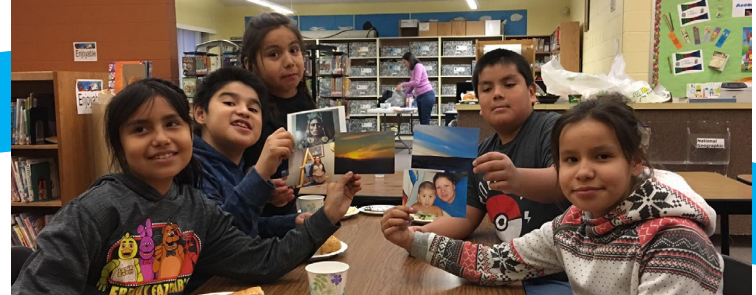
Steering Committee



2015 First Camp



2016 Photovoice

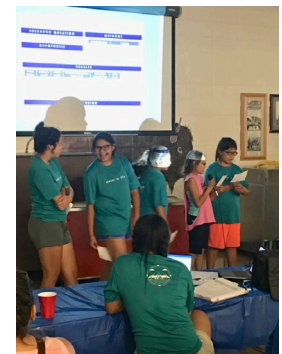


Crow Agency
Public School

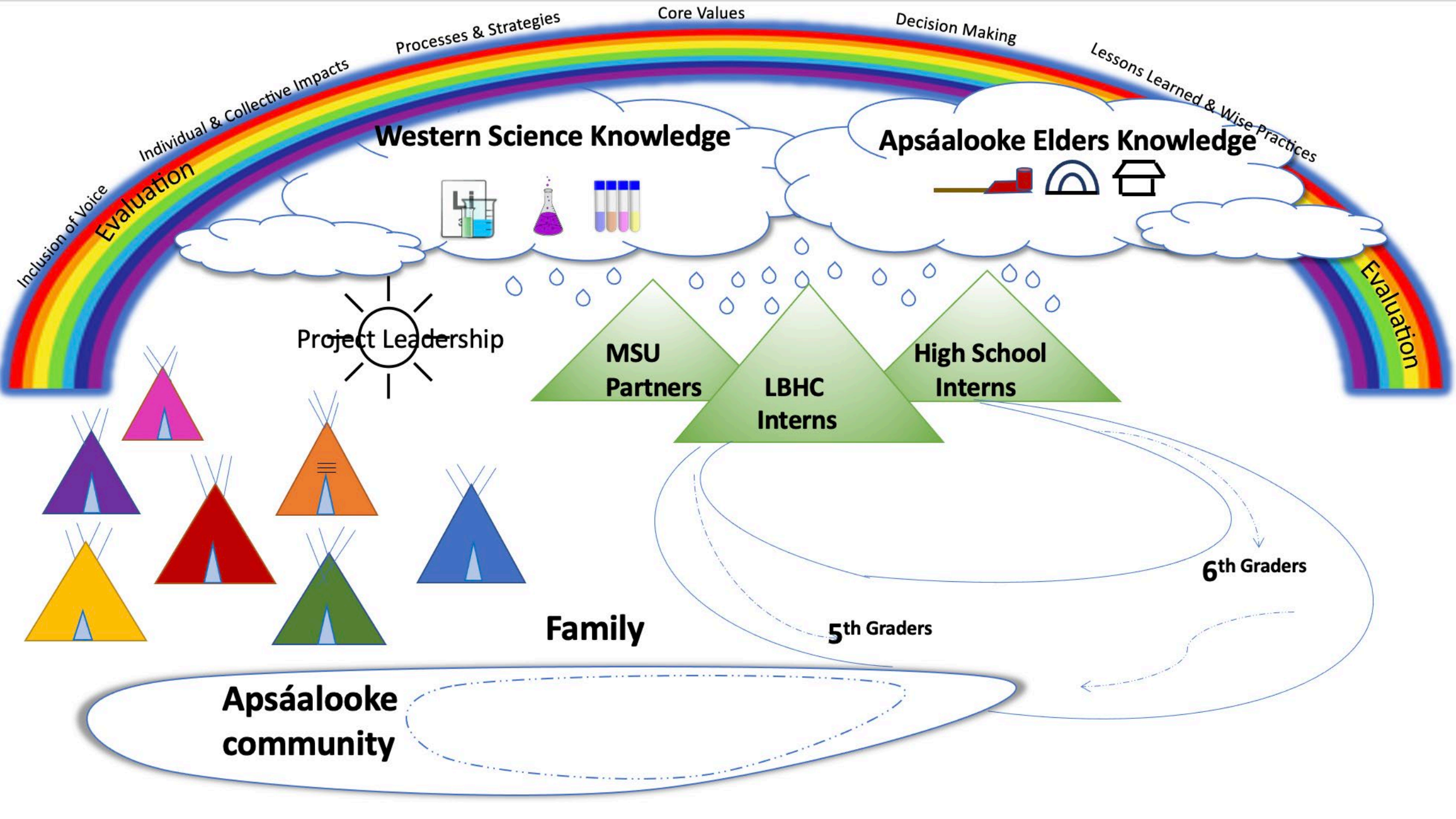


Project Partners

Guardians of the Living
Water
River of Life



2017-Present
Co-Researchers



Near Peer Mentors





Engaging Youth

Challenge and Encourage

Interact with the Community

Integrate Indigenous knowledge
and Culture

Maintaining Engagement

Trust is integral to the success of the partnership.

Trust is built between project partners and expanded throughout the community.

Recruitment and retention require a variety of communication strategies.

Children and Families often have multiple obligations.





Respect

Social and Political Contexts

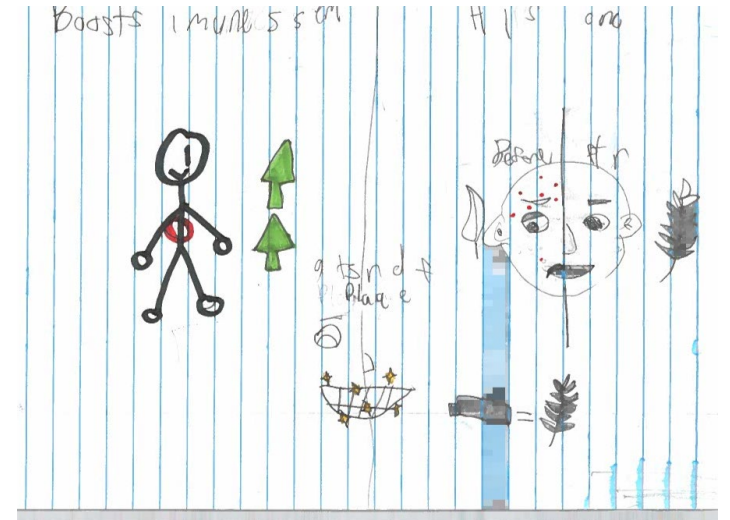
- Appreciate Tribal sovereignty
- Acknowledge history of colonization
- Address stereotypes
- Recognize complex jurisdictional issues



Responsibility

- Make sure program is valuable to the community.
- Make sure that program is conducted in culturally centered manner.
- Make sure program is sustainable.



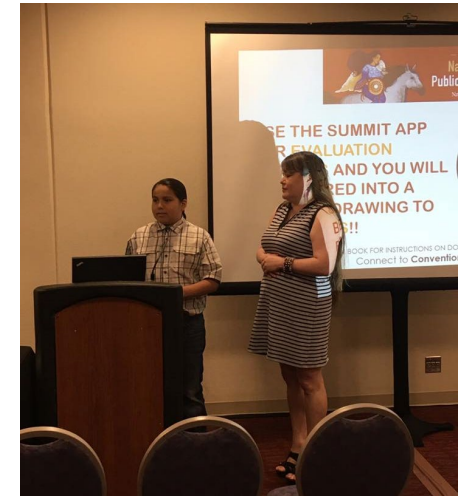


Representation

Reciprocity

Share back with the community.

Make sure the research benefits the community.



Centering Crow Cultural Values

- Integrate Western and Indigenous Ways of Knowing
- Respect storytellers and stories
- Develop new methods for analyzing data





Values

Gratitude

Only take what you need

Reciprocity: “Take care of the land and the land takes care of us” & “Giving back to community”

“Crow country is the most beautiful place on earth”

Generational Learning & Clan System

Resiliency

Crow Knowledge

Water is sacred element of creation story.

Water is powerful and takes care of us.

Observation: Knowing what the weather would be like depending on how plump the berry bushes were.



Practices

Feeding the River

Prayer

Sun Dance

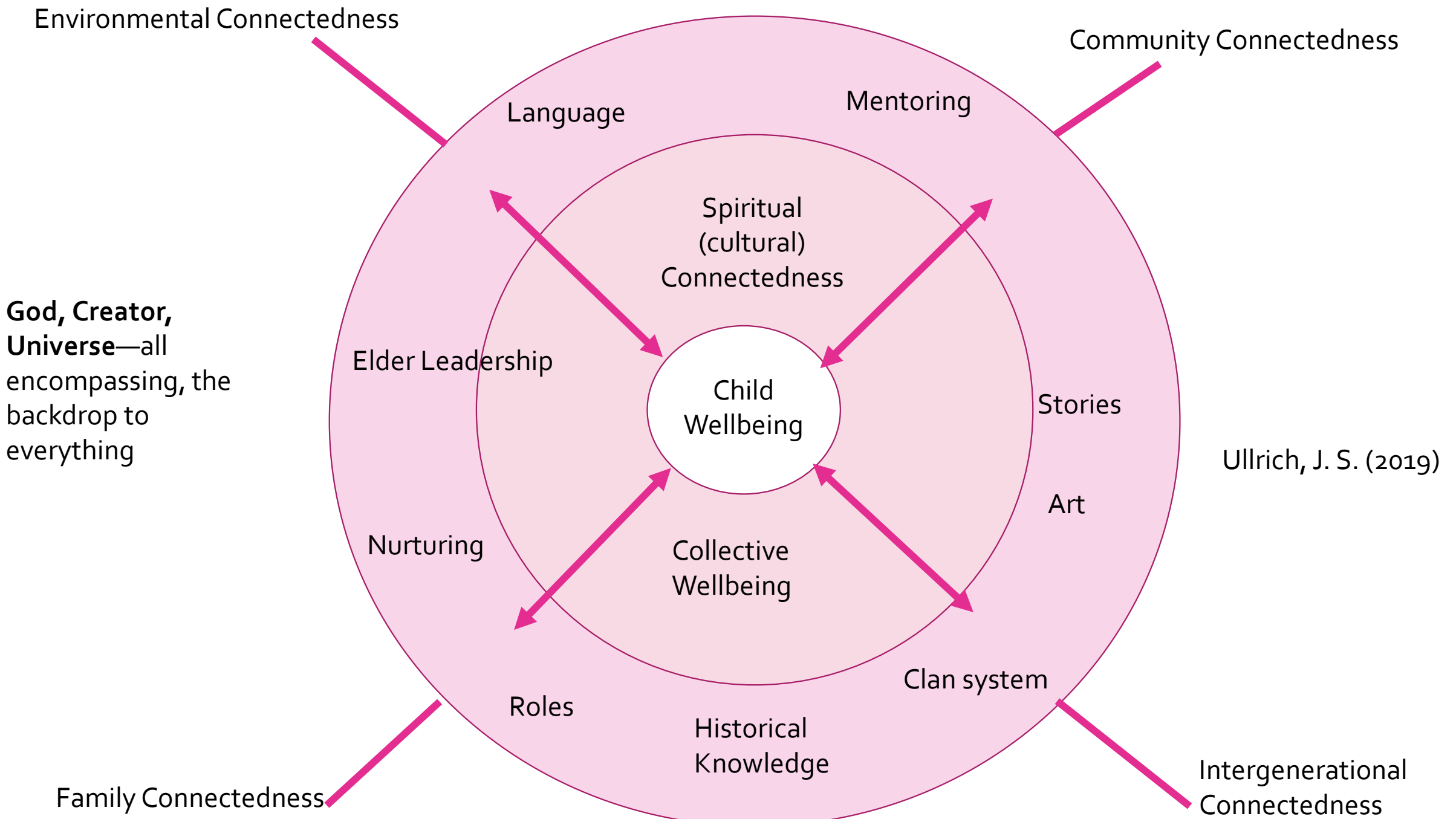
Sweat Lodge



Balance

A row of five illuminated teepees at night, each a different color: blue, tan, blue, green, and red. The teepees are set against a dark background, and their lights create a vibrant display. The blue teepee on the left is the largest and most prominent, with its structure clearly visible. The other teepees are smaller and arranged in a line to the right.

- “Every story has an Indigenous perspective, an Apsáalooke side of story that is equally important.”
- Mentors bring who they are into their research.



God, Creator, Universe—all encompassing, the backdrop to everything

Ullrich, J. S. (2019)



Environmental Connectedness





Intergenerational Connectedness



Big Crane(Two Leggings) had an older brother named wolf chaser, his mothers name was strikes at different camps and his dad went to the otherside of the camp.

My brother had given me a bow and some small arrows and on this trip taught me to shoot grouse, rabbit, and prairie dogs. With his full sized bow he killed a buffalo and showed me how to boil a kettle.

Digging a hole he placed a green hide over it and staked it down allowing enough slack so that the hide would touch the bottom sides when filled. After pouring water into the hide sack he built a fire in which he heated stones which were red hot. Carrying them with a forked stick he dropped them in. He kept replacing the cooled stones with new hot ones." (Nabokov 1967)

History:

They wanted to know what we were called but they said it was hard to explain.

The Souix called us "raven people" and then the Cheyenne called us "children of the large big bird". Then the Cree called us "child of the big bird" The rest of the groups referred to us by the same name as everyone else. So they sat and were naming all types of birds but the group said "no not that" "no" and finally they said "are you crow" after a lot of frustration they thought about it and just said "yea" so that's where we got the name

"crow". The river crow was never called river crow they were called Binnesappele (a) (river crow)

Two Leggings would walk along the river, find a spot to sit and reconnect with nature to humble himself.

He and his wife walked to the celebration he was invited to by the city of hardin. Two Leggings dressed in his best regalia an

we are sorry you can come in but not dressed like that civilian thing he got embarrassed and left. Two leggings put a curse on Hardin when they celebrate bighorn days. Next time you celebrate its gonna rain before he left he

took a banner him and his wife left home when he got home he made a medicine bundle



If you stand at the front door of Two Leggings house then face towards Hardin and walk 20 steps that is where Two Leggings is buried.

Before chief No Vitals received his vision instructing us to find the Sacred Tobacco plant. My people were a part of a larger group. When we separated.

We became the Apsaalooke and the Hidatsa. After my people traveled hundreds of miles down and around the plains. They came across the Tobacco plant on Cloud Peak in the Bighorn mountains

Coliscan Petri Dish Coliform results

Name	Status	Number of Red, Pink and purple colonies	Total number of colonies 10 x number of colonies counted
Amerah	<1	0	10 x 0 = 0
Lahna	0-5	9	10 x 9 = 90
Xada	>100	30	10 x 30 = 300

Coliscan Petri Dish E.coli results

Name	Status	Number of purple colonies counted	Total number of colonies 10 x number of colonies counted
Amerah	<1	2	10 x 2 = 20
Lahna	1-10	1	10 x 1 = 10
Xada	>10	5	10 x 5 = 50

Total Count Petri Dish results

Name	Status	Total number of colonies counted	Total number of colonies 10 x number of colonies counted
Amerah	<1	0	10 x 0 = 0
Lahna	<1	0	10 x 0 = 0
Xada	>1	0	10 x 0 = 0

Stream Assessment

Stream Habitat	Status	Notes
Stream Bed	2B	Stones,Gravel
Alge	Excellent	Little to none
Pool/Hill/Run	Excellent	Present
Stream Shading	2B	Some shade
Bank Stability	2B	Some Erosion
Human impacts	None	
Water Temperature	Excellent	11.4
Water clarity	NA	
invertebrates	NA	Ph-7.42



Parent Perspective:

“If the children can convince their families and their friends, and then they’ll convince the community and you know we all need to take initiative to help clean our water.

Family Connectedness

Newsletter

Guardians of Living Water Newsletter

Wednesday June 22, 2022



News Bulletin

- We learned about bacteria and how to test water for bacteria
- We talked about filtering and testing water for different contaminants.
- We learned about well water. If you need to get your well tested you can call John Doyle at 638-3155.
- Ask about today's stream assessment.

What does it mean to be a Guardian?

We observe our water sources and can tell if the river is healthy or not. We can think about reasons that our stream may not be that healthy and find ways to make them healthier.

Reminders for Tomorrow

- Remember to do the take-home activity on the next page!
- Tomorrow, we will be traveling to Two Leggings. Remember to wear closed-toe shoes and prepare to be outside. Reminder to parents: You are welcome to join us on this field trip if you would like.

Back Yard Adventure



Today, we spent time outside along the Little Bighorn River looking at the health of the river and taking water samples.



Guardians of Living Water Newsletter

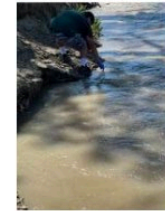
Wednesday June 22, 2022



Take Home Activity

Below is a picture of the Little Bighorn River, where we visited today. Tell your family about the assessment we did there. What would you look for when completing a stream assessment? Was there pollution?

Write your answers in the space below. We will talk about them tomorrow.

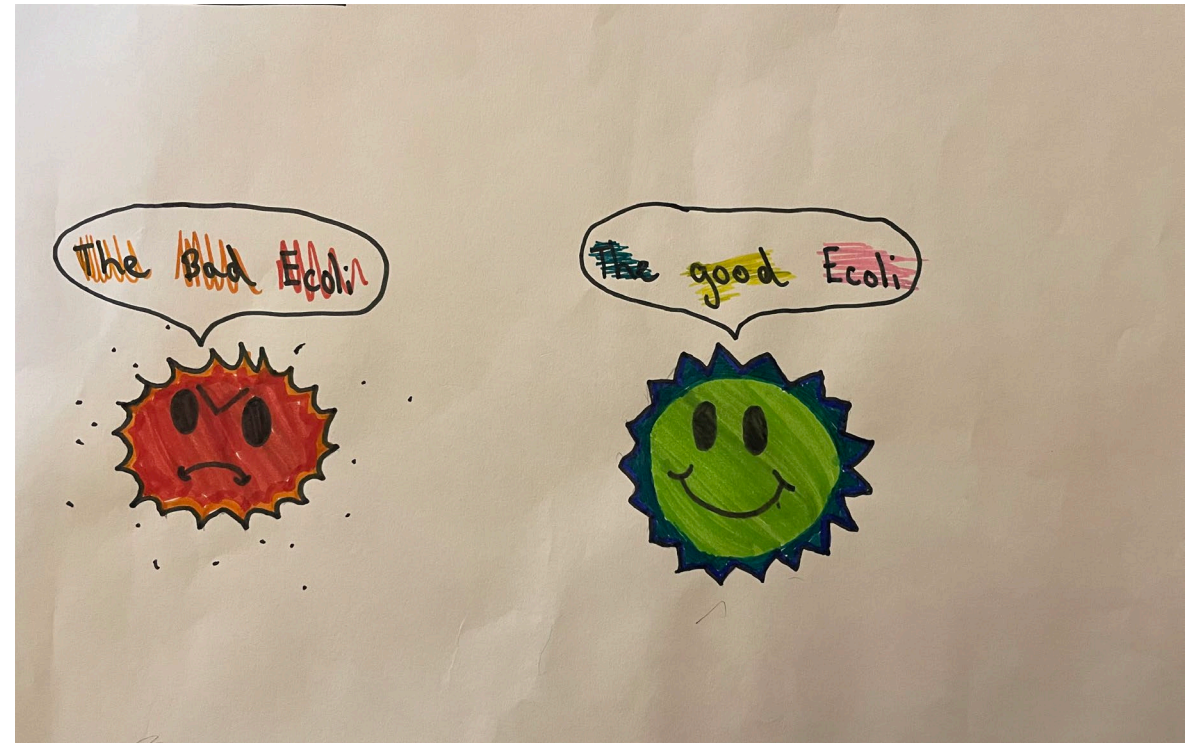
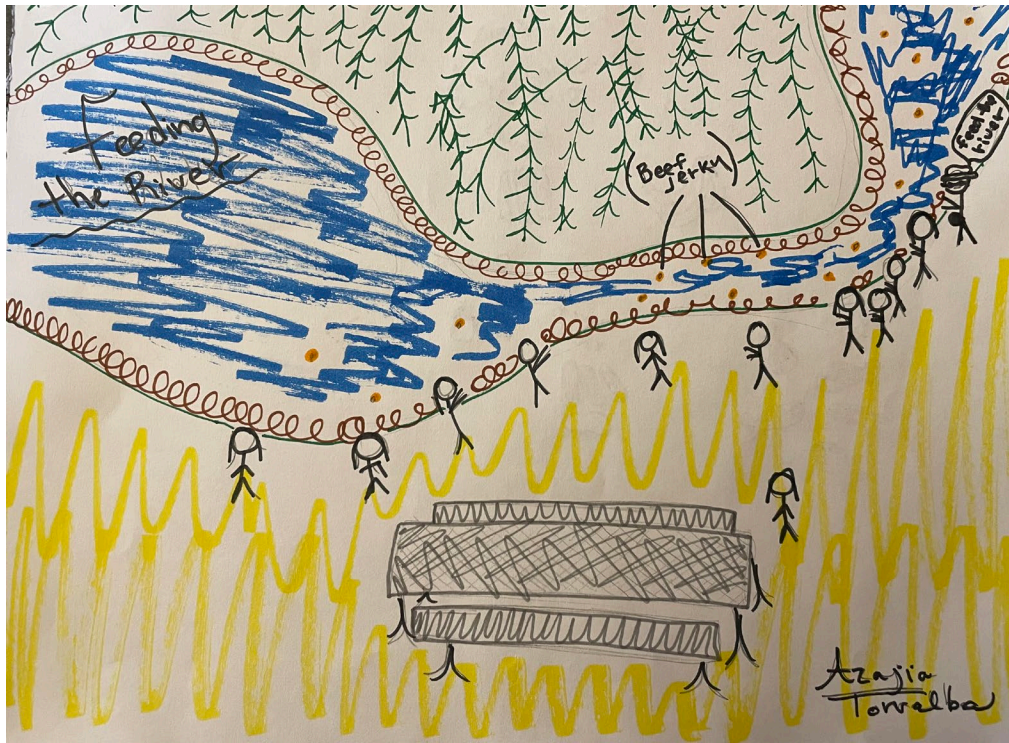


Write down your stream assessment notes here:





Community Connectedness



Impact of Programs

Recommendations

Incorporating culture vs. Being culturally centered

Involving partners in all phases vs. community-driven

Adding community empowerment as intervention objective



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**How
Indigenized
CBPR is like
traditional
research &
how is it
different?**

Goal of Research

Source of Research

Role of Researcher

Role of Community

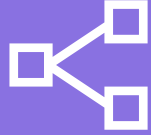
Relationship of researcher to Participants

Value of Research

Ownership of Data

Means of Dissemination

Building Trust— Managing Expectations



Requires attention to expectations and needs of each partner



Benefits from long-term partnerships



Respectful approaches can help overcome conflicting priorities

“You have the strength of the clan system of the Crows’ powerful culture that’s here, very powerful. You know it’s the love of our people as Apsáalooke, of Crow people....It’s so strong there are no words to describe how strong it is,”



Indigenous & Rural Health PhD Program



Creating a Culture of Wellness



Seek

Seek advice from respected community members

Build

Build Supportive Relationships

Support

Support Distance Learners



2022 First IRH Cohort



2023 Second IRH Cohort

Project Partner Acknowledgements

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- **Montana State University:** Cierra Tredway, Marilla Harris-Vincent, Deborah LaVeaux, Ruth Robinson, Emma Stihler, Yuhuan Xie, Lexie Kyro, Catalina Rosales and many others
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- **Consultants and Advisors:** Suzanne Held, Rima Rudd, Shelly Valdez & Jill Stein

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The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the National Institutes of Health.



Artwork by Susan Stewart (Apsáalooke)

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Artwork by Susan Stewart (Apsáalooke)