



Family **Intervention** of **Youth** AOD in **Indian** **Communities**

Overview: The Community Shadow Project is examining the benefits of engaging American Indian families and their children in a family-based intervention (EcoFIT). This study is based on a recently completed NIAAA-funded pilot project in which 60 American Indian (AI) adolescents in residential treatment for alcohol and other drug (AOD) problems received additional family-centered support. The current research is developing and testing community-based intervention services that are appropriate for the culture and developing resources to address the AOD needs of three AI communities in the Pacific Northwest. This team has worked with a treatment facility to develop clinical experience, a database of the needs of AI adolescents and families with a history of AOD use, and culturally sensitive measurement and research protocols to examine the effectiveness of adapting research to practice.

Design/Methods: The project uses a multiple baseline design that allows the research team to specifically tailor a menu of family interventions to the strengths and uniqueness of each of the three AI communities and to collaborate with community members to develop a family-centered intervention infrastructure, the Family Resource Center. The team works with tribal consultants and focus groups drawn from each tribe to ensure cultural appropriateness of the intervention strategies and methods, as well as respect for tribal traditions, values, and attitudes.

Results/Outcomes: The Community Shadow Project team completed the first wave of assessments and a year-long family intervention at Site 1 and is conducting data analyses. The information gained at Site 1 is being used to shape an engagement strategy for Tribal Site 2. The Community Shadow Project team is in the startup phase with Tribal Site 3, and tribal-specific, culturally sensitive family engagement strategies are being developed and implemented with the help of focus groups consisting of parents and tribal service providers. Assessments and analyses will continue at Sites 1 and 2 to further evaluate the benefit of family-centered intervention in AI communities.

Significance: Family Resource Centers are being set up with the support of the community. The problems sometimes experienced when attempting to conduct randomized clinical trials among ethnic minority populations have been circumvented through a quasi-experimental design that makes tribal communities the unit of analysis. The multiple baseline design enables us to incorporate findings from earlier focus groups to further tailor the intervention to the needs and values of the AI communities. The long-term study results are expected to generate methods for adapting general interventions to specific cultural groups, especially Native Americans.

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