



**G**ATHERING  
**O**F  
NATIVE  
**A**MERICANS

PRESENTED BY: RUBEN GARCIA, FRESNO AMERICAN INDIAN HEALTH PROJECT

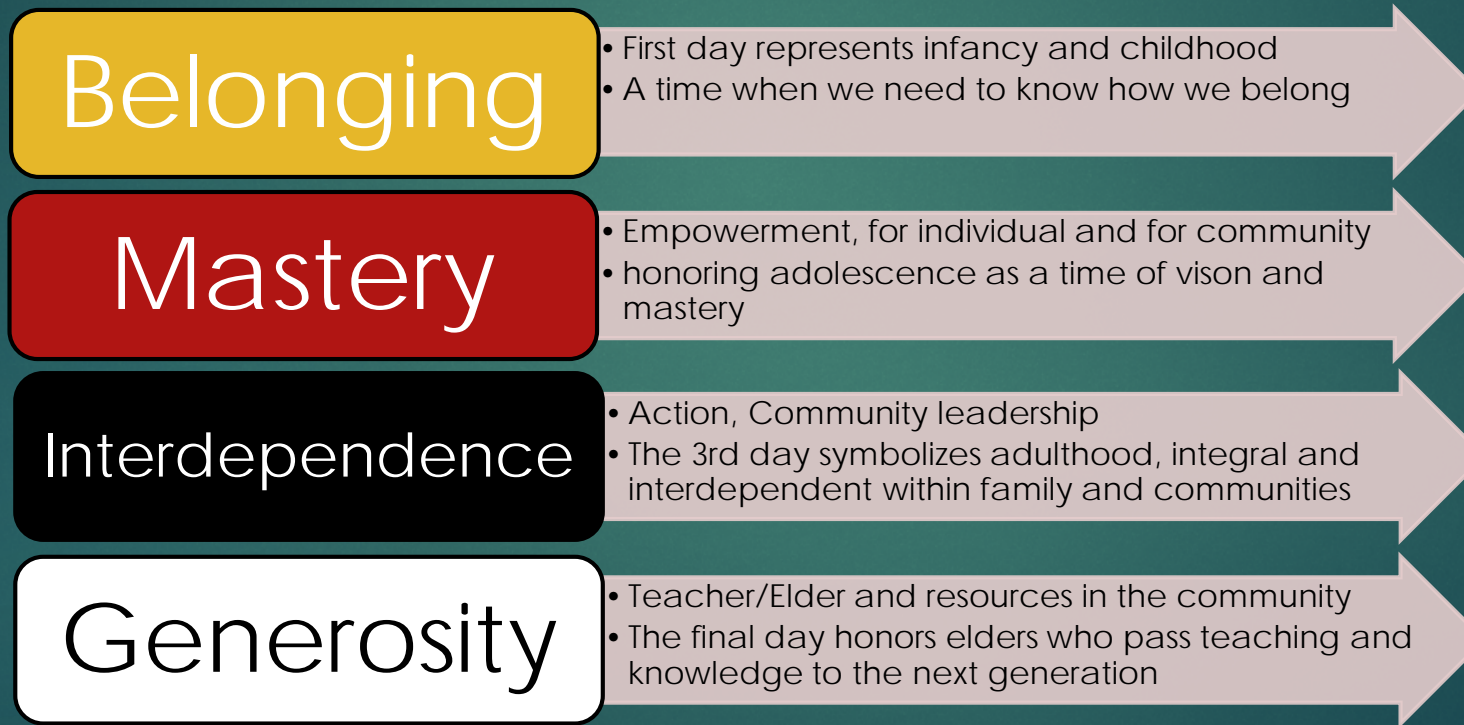
# GONA Curriculum

- ▶ Created by a team of Native American substance misuse trainers and curriculum developers to serve the Native American communities.
- ▶ A needs assessment was conducted which included eight focus groups and one national planning meeting to determine the parameters of the GONA curriculum.
- ▶ Finally, a Core Curriculum Committee of Native American educators and prevention trainers convened to provide Native thought, perspective, and ownership of the curriculum.

GONA has now been implemented throughout Indian Country for over 25 years!!

# GONA Curriculum

- ▶ The GONA incorporates the value of four levels of human growth and responsibility which are found in and grounded in Native culture:



# Clinical Crosswalk: Understanding Therapeutic Value

## Belonging

- Social skills building; team building; communication skills
- Community Connections
- Self-esteem building
- Building a sense of pride; building sense of purpose

## Mastery

- Strength-based; Psychoeducation
- Social Justice; Cultural Competence
- Process Group; Exposure intervention
- Trauma informed; solution focused; positive reinforcement

## Interdependence

- Holistic; cultural competence; integrated care
- Team building skills; self expression
- Problem solving skills
- Community Connection

## Generosity

- Health Promotion; Hope for the future
- Self-care plans; crisis plans and referrals
- Links to health promotion programming
- Goal setting; peer support; mentorship support

# GONA Fidelity Tool

## Gathering of Native Americans (GONA) Fidelity Assessment Scale

- ▶ This GONA fidelity tool (2013) was developed in partnership with three urban Indian health programs through technical support of the National Council of Urban Indian Health and the Native American Center for Excellence.
- ▶ The intent of this scale is to support fidelity to Core GONA curriculum elements and was developed for supporting evaluation across sites. It is expected that the fidelity elements will be adapted to meet the unique cultural needs and context of diverse communities and should be implemented in partnership with GONA Facilitators and the local youth/community members, as experts on their own cultures and communities.

# Project Evaluation

- ▶ GONA is being evaluated using the Bay Area adapted Cultural Connectedness Scale-California (CCS-CA). Adapted from Dr. Angela Snowshoe's original CCS.
- ▶ The Herth Hope Index (HHI) measure hope for the future, in addition we have questions called "life changers" developed by Dr. Jami Bartgis to measure family and community connectedness at baseline.
- ▶ Surveys are administered Pre-Post and a 6-month follow up to measure any long lasting impacts of the GONA intervention.
- ▶ Evaluation is rigorous as it is longitudinal tracking outcomes overtime.

# Outcomes

- ▶ Surveys collected from 241 youth participants in the 2012-14 Oakland and Fresno GONAs show that youth's hope for the future (as measured by the modified Herth Hope Index) and self-perceived connection to community (indicating resiliency) significantly increased after the GONA intervention.
- ▶ Furthermore, it has been found that cultural connection as measured through the CCS-CA 3 has a positive correlation with hope for the future.
- ▶ As cultural identity, traditions, and spirituality increase so does hope for the future, which is key for prevention of suicide, substance abuse, and other mental health related challenges.

# Outcomes

- ▶ GONA participants have helped create culturally informed “strength-based” tools that evaluate health and wellness. For example, the Fresno American Indian Health Project (FAIHP) Youth Council developed and published the Personal Balance tool, a strength-based, holistic, and youth-friendly self-assessment tool that helps youth “learn how to balance” their health in all areas (i.e., mental, physical, emotional, spiritual), and helps them consider where they need to improve their own “whole” balance.
- ▶ Youth participants make commitments to stay in contact with one another and report that they stay in contact via social media, calls and texting, and arranged social outings (unpublished responses from 6-month follow up assessments). All the GONA collaborative communities have created youth and/or community councils or workgroups to increase the number of youth and family voices in GONA planning, evaluation, interpretation, and dissemination of GONA findings. (unpublished process evaluation data).



# Outcomes

- ▶ GONA has resulted in significant capacity building in leadership and local workforce to support GONA and mental health and wellness more broadly. In 2020 alone, Youth Peacekeepers across the state have received CITI Evaluation training, becoming certified to assist with future GONA evaluations, 34 mental health and related professionals across the state of California from 6 urban Indian communities 5 have been trained to be GONA facilitators, and behavioral and mental health clinicians have been trained in the GONA curriculum, ensuring that they are able participate and offer their expertise at youth GONAs.
- ▶ Local elders have made personal commitments to supporting GONA for life, increasing youth access to spiritual and cultural teachings. For example, the Friendship House of American Indians partnered with a traditional storyteller and Choctaw Native language speaker and the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley partnered with a traditional healer to lead workshops on traditional medicine, Lakota language, roles within the community and culture as a healing mechanism at future GONAs.

# DATA SOURCES

- ▶ Kraus, Carolyn; Bartgis, Jami, Lahiff, Maureen, Auerswald, Colette. (2017). The Gathering of Native Americans Intervention: Cultivating Hope and Meaningful Relationships for Urban American Indian Adolescents in California. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, Volume 60, Issue 2, Supplement 1, Page S1. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2016.10.024>
- ▶ King, Janet; Masotti, Paul; Dennem, John; Patel, Chirag; Hadani, Shir; Linton, Janice; Lockhart, Bonnie. (2018). The Culture is Prevention Project: Development of the Cultural Connectedness Scale – California for use in multi-tribal urban communities. APHA San Diego.
- ▶ Barraza, Rachelle; Bartgis, Jami; Fresno Native Youth Council. (2016). Indigenous Youth-Developed Self-Assessment: The Personal Balance Tool. *American Indian and Alaska Native Mental Health Research*, Volume 23, Issue 3, Pages 1-23.
- ▶ Our participating urban Indian communities include Fresno American Indian Health Project (FAIHP), the Friendship House Association of American Indians of San Francisco (FHAAI), the Indian Health Center of Santa Clara Valley (IHCSVCV), Native American Health Center (NAHC), the San Diego American Indian Health Center (SDAIHC), and the Sacramento Native American Health Center (SNAHC).
- ▶ Unpublished NAHC IPP-Excel-Report (last edited 5-22-2020).
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