

Quick Reference Sheet for Native American Indian

-Caution on Stereotyping-

Background:

While generalizations may be possible, each tribe may have diverse beliefs

Cultural variance between tribes include:

- Values
- Customs
- Traditions

1924 - Recognized as U.S. citizens

Currently, many Native American Indian live on reservations or trust land designated by the federal government, as well as in general society

Statistics:

Population as of 2007: about 4.5 million (1.5% of total population)

There are over 500 Federally recognized tribes

Largest Native American Indian populations are in California, Oklahoma, and Arizona

Social Structure:

Extended families are very important

Depending on the tribe, families could include:

- Actual blood relatives
- Clan members
- The community as a whole

Beliefs/Values:

Loyalty and support of extended family are highly valued

Extended family is often involved in decision making

Respect for the aged is expected

Nature, and its preservation, is of utmost important

Rituals and traditional ceremonies may be a part of everyday life

Beliefs

Supreme creator (possibly other spiritual figures)

Humans = body+mind+spirit

Every part of nature (living and non-living) is sacred and has a spirit

Each tribe has specific beliefs for the afterlife

Handshake in greeting is acceptable

Holding direct eye gaze may be seen as disrespectful

Allow for response, as interruptions may be viewed as disrespectful

“Thank you” is often implied instead of being stated

Maintaining composure and not showing emotion may be respected cultural traits

Preferred personal space is at least as much used in Western culture (2 ft.)

Present oriented - may not see a problem in arriving 10-15 minutes late, since they will accomplish everything

The supreme being will control every aspect of the human environment - for example, if faced with a terminal illness, many Native American Indians would not want to prolong life

Please see the following PowerPoints for further details:

Native American Indian – Clinical Provider

http://www.lacrosseconsortium.org/uploads/content_files/Native_American_CL_Proivder_9_12.pdf

Native American Indian – General

http://www.lacrosseconsortium.org/uploads/content_files/Native_American_General_9_12.pdf