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How we started



Acorns to Oak Trees was inspired by Season and James's oldest daughter, Harley, who has Autism Spectrum Disorder. Despite Season having a M.S. in Psychology and working as the Director of Social Services for one of the most high profile tribes in California, Season was unaware of federal and state laws and services that were available for children with developmental delays.

After learning about the high number of Native American children who are diagnosed every year with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), and knowing the difficulty she faced in identifying and navigating the system, Season reached out to the California Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Developmental Services, to share Harley's story, and advocated for better outreach efforts to tribal communities. The department then created and implemented a policy that earmarked money in the state's budget every year specifically for outreach to Native American families and tribal communities .

One of the organization's primary goals is to improve the Child Find system by increasing public awareness of intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) amongst tribal communities, universities, and health care providers through Harley's Hope Project and assisting Native families in navigating resources for their loved ones with IDD

Harley's Hope Project



Harley's Hope Project

Storytelling

Sharing Native families journeys navigating their child's diagnosis and accessing resources.

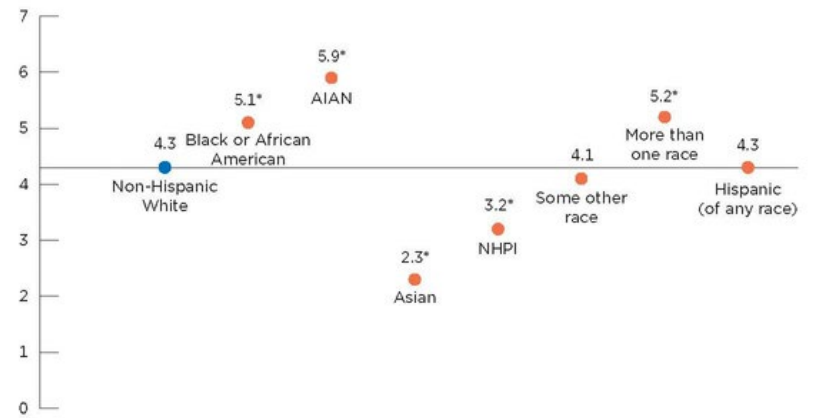
First Native American Community Navigator Program in California

- Providing support to Native families accessing Regional Center services
- Requesting IEP's for their children
- Advocating for increase of services
- Parent and Self-Advocacy trainings
- Parent Support Groups
- Trainings with Indian Health Services to improve early detection/ early intervention
- Trainings and Co-hosting outreach events with Regional Centers build relationships with them and tribal communities

AI/AN Highest Rates of IDD



Figure 5.
Childhood Disability Prevalence by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2019
(In percent)

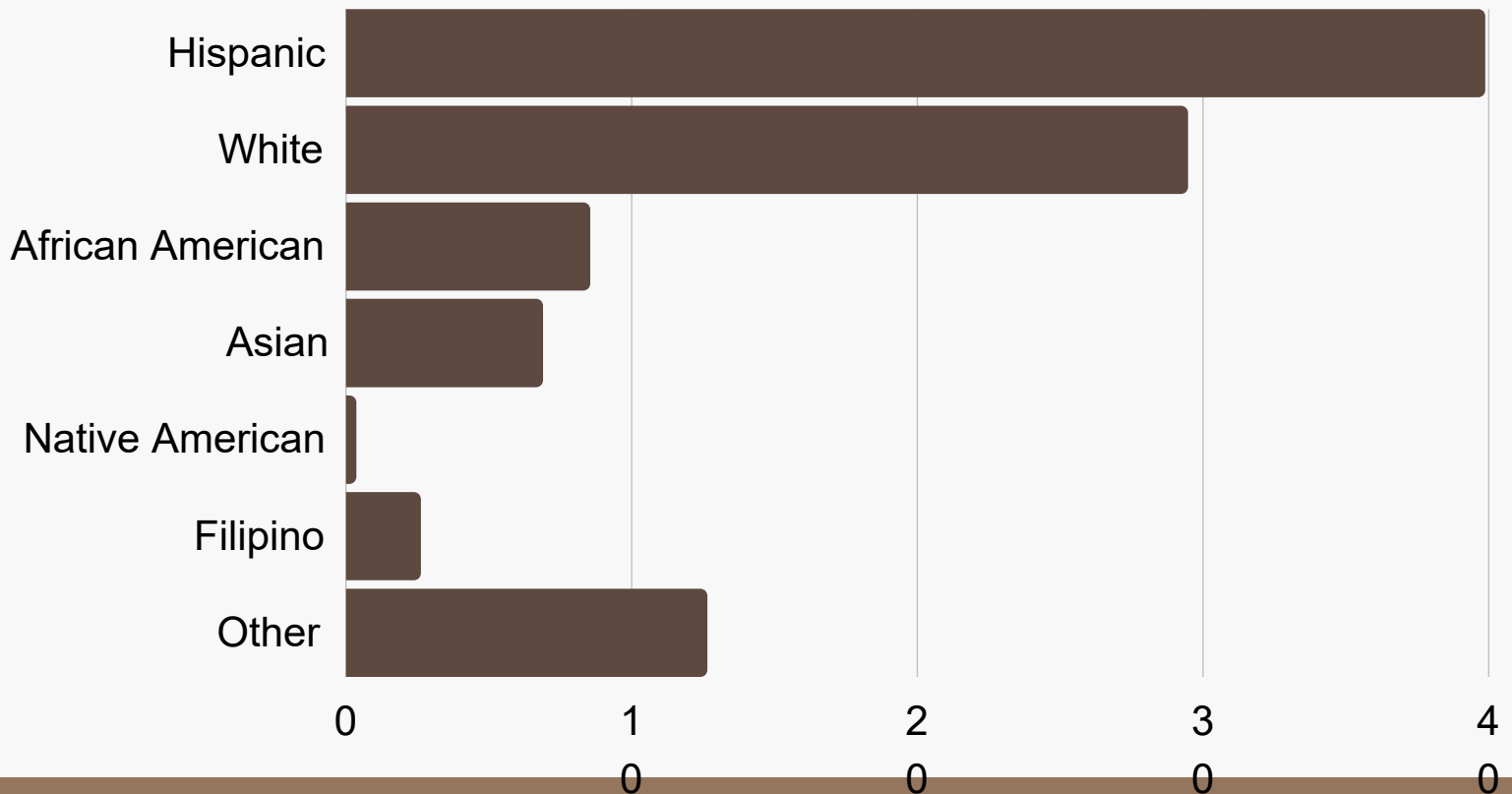


* Statistically different from the Non-Hispanic White estimate at the 90 percent confidence level.

Note: The acronym "AIAN" is used for the American Indian and Alaska Native group, and the acronym "NHPI" is used for the Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander group. Data based on sample. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see <www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/technical-documentation/code-lists.html>. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey, 1-year estimates.

CA Statewide Services by Ethnicity

The chart below presents the data and percentages of children receiving services categorized by ethnicity. The Native American population is the lowest amongst the ethnicities at .34% compared to the Hispanic population at 39.85% and the White population at 29.45% that receive services in the state of California. These statistics demonstrate the gap between the number of children and families who need services and how many are actually receiving them.





The Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is a federal mandate which dictates that every child with a disability will receive a meaningful public education at no cost to the parent. IDEA serves eligible infants, toddlers, and youth.



Part C & Part B of IDEA

“Part C” of IDEA is a federal grant program that assists states in operating a comprehensive statewide system of early intervention services for infants and toddlers ages birth –2.5 with developmental delays —or at state discretion, at - risk for —disabilities.

“Part B” of IDEA is a federal grant program intended to help states ensure that all preschool - aged children ages 3 –5 with disabilities receive free appropriate special education and related services in their least restrictive environment (FAPE) for children with disabilities.

Part C Lead Agencies by State/Territory

Alabama	Rehabilitation Services
Alaska	Health and Social Services
American Samoa	Health
Arizona	Economic Security
Arkansas	Human Services/Developmental Disabilities
California	Developmental Services
Colorado	Human Services
Connecticut	Developmental Services
Delaware	Health and Social Services
District of Columbia	Education
Florida	Health
Georgia	Public Health
Guam	Education
Hawaii	Health
Idaho	Health and Welfare
Illinois	Human Services
Indiana	Family and Social Services
Iowa	Education
Kansas	Health and Environment
Kentucky	Health and Family Services/Public Health
Louisiana	Health
Maine	Education
Maryland	Education
Massachusetts	Public Health
Michigan	Education
Minnesota	Education
Mississippi	Health

Missouri	Elementary and Secondary Education
Montana	Public Health and Human Services
Nebraska	Education and Health and Human Services (Co-Lead)
Nevada	Health and Human Services
New Hampshire	Health and Human Services
New Jersey	Health
New Mexico	Health/Developmental Disabilities Support Division
New York	Health
North Carolina	Health and Human Services
North Dakota	Human Services
Northern Mariana Islands	Education
Ohio	Department of Developmental Disabilities
Oklahoma	Education
Oregon	Education
Pennsylvania	Education and Human Services (Co-Lead)
Puerto Rico	Health
Rhode Island	Health and Human Services
South Carolina	Department of Health and Human Services
South Dakota	Education
Tennessee	Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities
Texas	Health and Human Services
Utah	Health
Vermont	Education and Human Services (Co-Lead)
Virgin Islands	Health
Virginia	Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
Washington	Children, Youth and Families
West Virginia	Health and Human Resources
Wisconsin	Health Services
Wyoming	Health

CHILD FIND

Child Find is a component of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) 2004 that requires States and Local Education Agencies (school districts and charter schools) to identify, locate, and evaluate all children with disabilities residing in the State, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who are in need of Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) or Special Education and related services (34 CFR§ 300.111 & 303.301).





CHILD FIND & TRIBES

The lead agency, as part of the child find system, must ensure that—

(1) All infants and toddlers with disabilities in the State who are eligible for early intervention services under this part are identified, located, and evaluated, including—

(i) Indian infants and toddlers with disabilities residing on a reservation geographically located in the State (including coordination, as necessary, with tribes, tribal organizations, and consortia to identify infants and toddlers with disabilities in the State based, in part, on the information provided by them to the lead agency under §303.731(e)(1)); and (ii) Infants and toddlers with disabilities who are homeless, in foster care, and wards of the State...

Did you know that YOU are part of CHILD FIND?

Primary referral sources:

- Hospitals
- Prenatal and postnatal care facilities,
- Physicians
- Parents
- Child care programs
- Early learning programs
- Local education agencies and schools
- Public health facilities
- Social service agencies
- Clinic and health care providers
- Public agencies
- Tribal agencies
- Staff in the child welfare system, including child protective services and foster care, homeless family shelters and domestic violence shelters and agencies.



WAYS TO IMPROVE THE CHILD FIND SYSTEM TO REACH NATIVE AMERICAN FAMILIES

INCREASE CULTURAL COMPETENCY OF STAFF

- PROVIDE STAFF REGULAR TRAININGS TO INCREASE CULTURAL SENSITIVITY & UNDERSTANDING OF HISTORICAL TRAUMA
- STAFF SHOULD KNOW THE TRIBES IN THEIR SERVICE AREAS

IMPROVING EDUCATION & OUTREACH EFFORTS

- DEVELOP AN ANNUAL OUTREACH CAMPAIGN
- EDUCATE STAFF ON ONDEA & THEIR ROLE
- PROVIDE TRIBAL COMMUNITIES & ORGANIZATIONS WITH INFORMATION ABOUT IDD & EDUCATE THEM ON THEIR RIGHTS & CONNECT THEM WITH LOCAL RESOURCES

WORK TO BUILD TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS WITH TRIBAL COMMUNITIES

- ATTEND PUBLIC EVENTS THAT YOUR LOCAL TRIBES OFFER
- FOLLOW THROUGH DO WHAT YOU SAY YOU'RE GOING TO DO

References

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Thank You

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