

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT





PREVENTION OF DIABETES BY REVITALIZING CULTURE THROUGH BREASTFEEDING

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DINE'/NAVAJO

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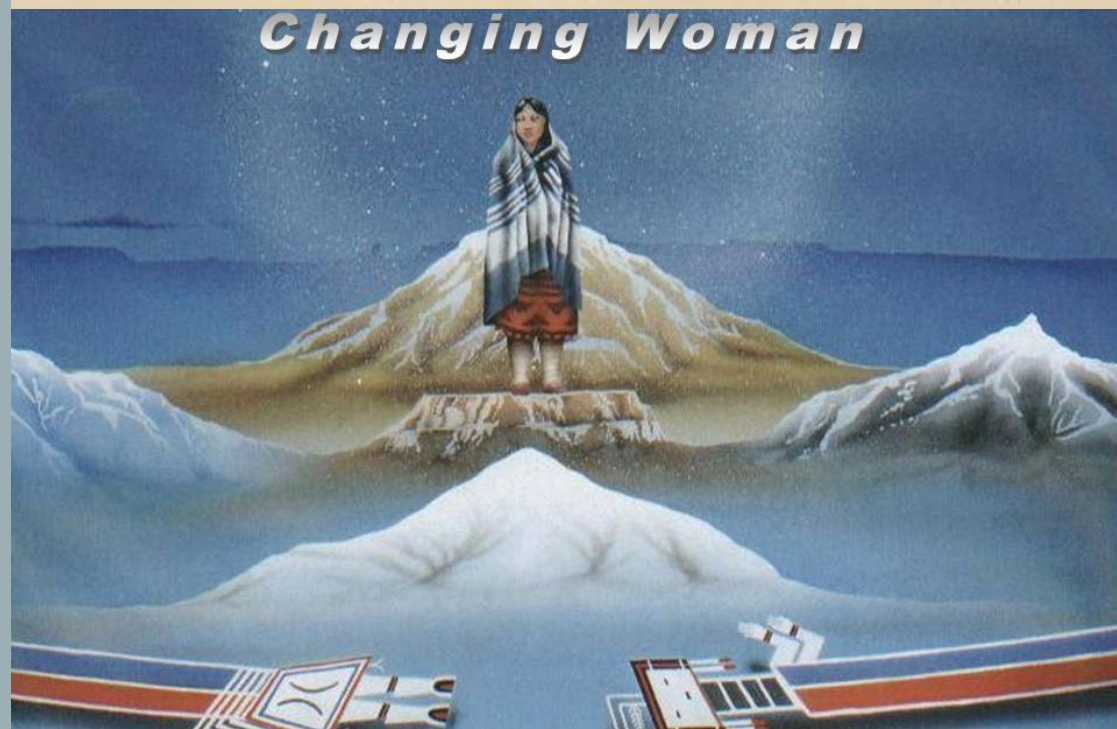
DINE'/NAVAJO

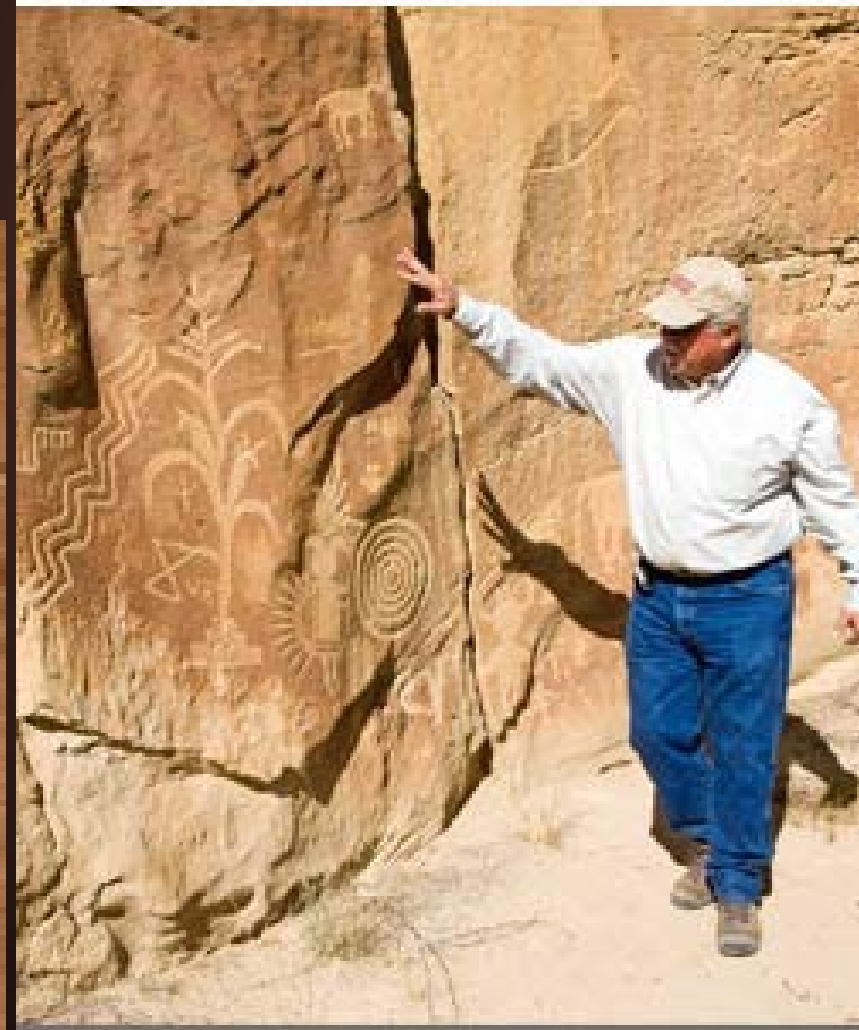
- Storytellers
- Historians
- Collector of wisdom



CHANGING WOMAN ASDZÁÁN NÁDLEEHE

Naayéé'neizghání (Slayer of Monsters) and Tóbájíshchíní (Born for Water) are the Navajo Hero Twins.





Larry Baker shows petroglyph containing a mysterious set of concentric circles.



SPIIDER WOMAN





WAYAJO BLANKET WEAVER & PAPOOSE
1918
Muller by Photo



COSMOS



ANCESTRAL TEACHINGS

The mother/parent is a living garden
The baby is born with her mother's
light



BREASTMILK IS MEDICINE

The First Food is Food Sovereignty



BREASTFEEDING IS ALL LIVING THINGS

- Bless yourself for all living things are celebrating a new life
- WE are all connected.





BREASTFEEDING IS CONNECTING TO THE STARS

BREASTFEEDING IS STRENGTH

- Protection
- Beauty
- Strength
- Provider
- Balance for happiness





BREASTFEEDING IS THE EARTH

- Spiritual food is connecting to the surrounding world

MILK SHARING





- Connected to culture
- Connected to family
- Connected to environment
- Connected to a safe space

CLANSHIP

- Hozho'
- Natural Law
- Defines our rights and obligations
- Understanding our roles and relationships
- Understanding how to relate to each other in society.



MATRILINEAL

Women were the heads and owners of their own homes

Skills in hunting, farming, and gathering/preparing food

The ability to sustain the camps, maintain our Kinship systems

Provided input on warfare and conflict

To give, nurture, and sustain life



DINE' PEOPLE

First contact approx. 1500s

Population 400,000 members

Largest tribal land mass in the U.S.

Athabaskan speakers



LOCATION







CONTRIBUTING HISTORICAL EVENTS IMPACTING LACTATION AMONG THE NAVAJO PEOPLE

- Forced relocation from traditional homelands. i.e. 1864 The Long Walk
- Manifest Destiny/Forced Religion
- Residential/Boarding schools, forced removal of Indigenous children from their families/homes.
- Forced adoption of Indigenous children.



MISSING
CHAPTER

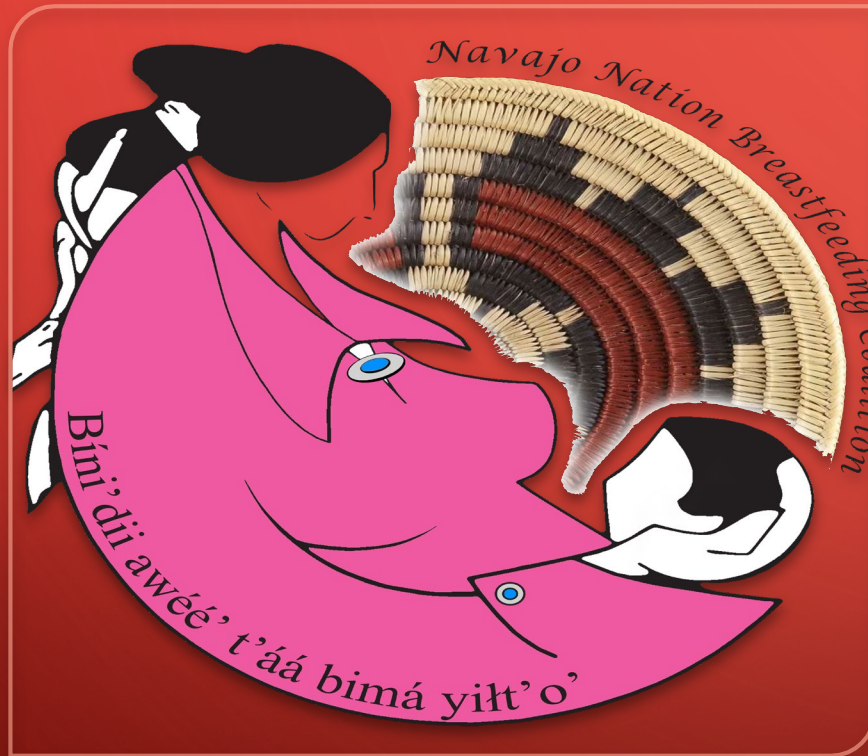
HISTORICAL TRAUMA CAUSED BY THE EVENTS

- Breakdown of family values, traditional parenting
- Loss of cultural and spiritual practices surrounding pregnancy, birth, and lactation.
- Loss of traditional foods & medicines.
- Traditional knowledge replaced by western medical views.
- Historical trauma is a contributor to substance use, alcohol use. Both of which can lead to morbidities like Diabetes.
- Multi-generational trauma and mistrust of those in position of power.

HEALING FROM GENERATIONAL TRAUMA

- Mental and Physical Healing through traditional healing ceremonies such as sweat lodge, Enemy Way, and proper education on the process of healing.
- Most Medicine people encourage communities to have their children identify with their tribe. This will allow young mind to know who they are and where they come from.
- The opportunity to use ceremony as a way of life to retain balance not just in emergencies.
- Teaching the community to garden and grow their own food.
- Lactating employees/parents needs lactation support in community settings, hospitals, businesses etc.
- Understanding that the role of cultural teachings and cultural healing practices can help navigate overall health and wellness.

WHO WE ARE~



Navajo Breastfeeding Coalition~

- Founded in 2008
- The mission of the NNBC is to improve the health of Navajo families by providing compassionate unbiased, and accessible care to improving all birthing families, and infant health through holistic traditional practices and to promote healing.
- Navajo Nation- overlaps 3 states, 25k square miles, enrolled Dine 400.000.
- Breastfeeding advocates and indigenous birth workers from the community, WIC and hospitals

NAVAJO BREASTFEEDING COALITION OBJECTIVES

- Build and strengthen relationships between community members, community agencies, professional associations and governmental entities supporting birth work.
- To promote and increase public acceptance of the benefits of human milk, and traditional birth work and to promote behavioral change that results in increased rates of breastfeeding/chestfeeding initiation/duration and reduced maternal and infant mortality rates.
- To promote and increase acceptance for lactation support in schools and work sites.
- To educate health care providers about human milk and birthwork on its benefits towards decreasing maternal and infant mortality rates.
- To educate Indigenous birthing families about informed choices/consent.
- To promote health equity by bringing awareness to the effects of Historical Trauma on the health of Navajo (Dine) families.
- To promote healing.



OUR WORK

- Normalize human milk as a First Sacred Food.
- Navajo Birth support (Douglas).
- Culture revitalization and preservation.
- Community outreach and education.
- Partnering with communities, professional & politicians.
- To promote and increase public policies that support cultural birth work.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

The healing medicine of the First Sacred Food now known as human milk, is one of the reasons the Navajo (Dine) survived the Long Walk and other acts of genocide designed by the U.S. Government to eradicate us. 2,000+ of our ancestors made it home after the treaties were signed. Countless Navajo children and infants either went missing or died due to forced adoption and residential schools. The power of our ancestor's milk medicine is why the Navajo are now 400,000 strong.