



NOV 12 2010



Dear Tribal Leader:

We are sincerely concerned by the ongoing tragedy of suicide in Indian country. We know that the consequences of suicide are devastating for our families and tribal communities. We have heard the pleas of tribal leaders for a coordinated effort, both for prevention and intervention strategies, as well as effective community responses when these events occur, particularly among our youth. This is why we all joined together on September 10, as Secretaries Sebelius and Gates announced the creation of the National Action Alliance for Suicide Prevention with tribal youth as a priority population for focused attention.

To help us all address these challenges together, we are now preparing for a national Suicide Awareness Conference. We anticipate the conference will occur early next year and presents an opportunity for the Department of the Interior, Department of Health and Human Services and tribal leaders to develop strategies and best practices for Indian country. In order to best prepare for the conference, we will be holding a series of Listening Sessions throughout Indian country in order to gather information on the needs, concerns, programs, and practices from those of you working in American Indian and Alaska Native communities on this critical issue. Your input will shape the agenda and goals for this national conference. Our most precious resource is our people, and their safety and support is an urgent need, particularly with suicide prevention.

Please plan to join us in this effort. Representatives from the IHS, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, and the BIA will be present at the Listening Sessions to hear your needs and concerns. The scheduled Listening Sessions are enclosed. We are committed to a vigorous, proactive federal response. This step of gathering your input and counsel about how we can best support the goals and programs of tribes for preventing suicide in our communities will be a significant one from which ongoing programs and services will continue to be developed.

Sincerely,

/Larry Echo Hawk/
Larry Echo Hawk
Assistant Secretary – Indian Affairs

/Yvette Roubideaux/
Yvette Roubideaux, M.D., M.P.H.
Director
Indian Health Service

/Pamela S. Hyde/
Pamela S. Hyde, J.D.
Administrator
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Suicide Prevent Summit – Listening Sessions
Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) Contacts

Navajo Region

Date: November 15, 2010

BIA Contact: Vivian Yazza
(505) 863-8215
Vivian.Yazza@bia.gov

Southern Plains/Eastern Oklahoma Regions

Date: December 13, 2010

BIA Contact: Karinda Eden
(405) 247-1530
Karinda.Eden@bia.gov

Midwest Region

Date: November 19, 2010

BIA Contacts: Valarie Vasquez
(612) 725-4572
Valarie.Vasquez@bia.gov
Todd Kennedy
(612) 713-4400 ext. 1173
Todd.Kennedy@bia.gov

Pacific Region

Date: December 21, 2010

BIA Contact: Loretta Goodwin
(916) 978-6000
Loretta.Goodwin@bia.gov
Kevin Sanders
(916) 978-6048
Kevin.Sanders@bia.gov

Rocky Mountain Region

Date: November 23, 2010

BIA Contact: Louise Reyes
(406) 247-7989
Louise.Reyes@bia.gov

Southwest Region

Date: January 10, 2011

BIA Contact: Sandra McCook
(505) 563-3520
Sandra.McCook@bia.gov

Alaska Region

Date: November 30, 2010

BIA Contact: Gloria Gorman
(907) 586-7611
Gloria.Gorman@bia.gov

Northwest Region

Date: January 12, 2011

BIA Contact: Marie Howerton
(503) 231-6796
Marie.Howerton@bia.gov
Stella Charles
(503) 736-4473
Stella.Charles@bia.gov

Great Plains Region

Date: December 2, 2010

BIA Contact: Denise Hart
(605) 226-7351
Denise.Hart@bia.gov

Eastern Region

Date: February 10, 2011

BIA Contact: Eric Wilcox
(615) 564-6712
Eric.Wilcox@bia.gov

Suicide Prevent Summit – Listening Sessions

All Local Time: 1:00 – 5:00 pm

Navajo Region

Date: November 15, 2010

Location: Navajo Nation Museum
Highway 264 and Loop Road
Window Rock, AZ 86515

Southern Plains/Eastern Oklahoma Regions

Date: December 13, 2010

Location: Embassy Suites – Meridian
1815 South Meridian
Oklahoma City, OK 73108

Midwest Region

Date: November 19, 2010

Location: Mystic Lake Casino Hotel
Wabasha Meeting Room
2400 Mystic Lake Blvd.
Prior Lake, MN 55372

Pacific Region

Date: December 21, 2010

Location: Federal Building – Cottage
Conference Room
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825

Rocky Mountain Region

Date: November 23, 2010

Location: Hampton Inn and Suites
3550 Ember Lane
Billings, MT 59102

Southwest Region

Date: January 10, 2011

Location: National Indian Programs
Training Center (NIPTC)
1011 Indian School Road, NW
Albuquerque, NM 87104

Alaska Region

Date: November 30, 2010

Location: Egan Convention Center
555 West 5th Avenue
Anchorage, AK 99501

Northwest Region

Date: January 12, 2011

Location: Bureau of Indian Affairs
911 Federal Building – Auditorium
911 NE 11th Avenue
Portland, OR 97232

Great Plains Region

Date: December 2, 2010

Location: Best Western Ramkota Hotel
& Convention Center
2111 N. LaCrosse Street
Rapid City, SD 57701

Eastern Region

Date: February 10, 2011

Location: USET Conference
Marriott Crystal Gateway
1700 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202