



Indian Health Service Press Release

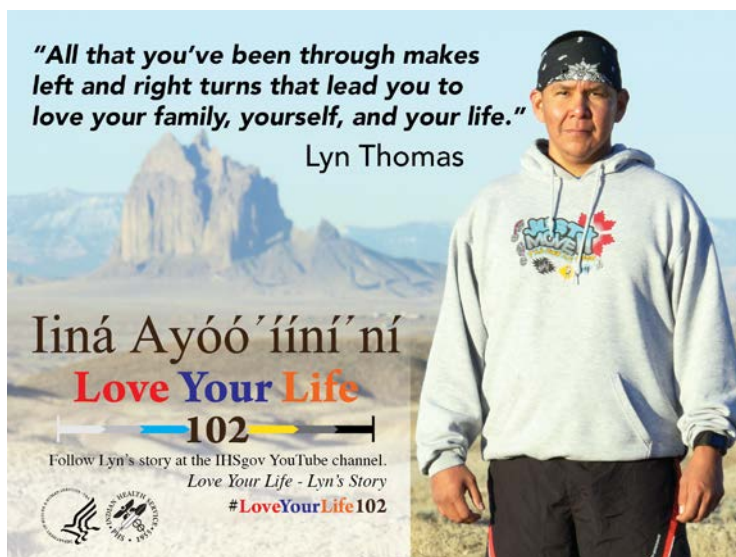
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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IHS Navajo Area Launches Navajo- and English-Language Suicide Prevention Multimedia Campaign

Campaign called Iiná Ayóó'ííní'ní, or Love Your Life, uses modern media to promote traditional values honoring life for Navajo youth, young adults

The Indian Health Service launches a new suicide prevention campaign in partnership with the Navajo Nation, local community members and organizations to prevent suicide related behaviors and connect young people to behavioral health care on the Navajo Nation. The bilingual Navajo- and English-language campaign, Iiná Ayóó'ííní'ní, which translates as *Love Your Life*, uses modern media to share traditional Navajo teachings of honoring life and aspiring to live a healthy and full life of 102 years. The campaign features Navajo young people telling their stories through online videos, billboards and posters that share resources for support and help.

“As part of the ongoing IHS commitment to strengthening behavioral health, this campaign spreads the message to all Native Americans served by the IHS that their life is valuable, both in terms of the traditions of the Navajo people and in what they can contribute to today’s and tomorrow’s society,” said IHS Navajo Area Acting Director Dr. Douglas Peter. “This campaign will reach Navajo teens and young adults and is an important step forward in preventing suicides. The Navajo Area IHS urges everyone to learn more about suicide prevention, how to talk about suicide – sharing these videos is one way to start a conversation and share messages of support, so that every young person knows where to get help to live full and healthy lives.”



Lyn Thomas, a veteran who served in Afghanistan and Iraq suffered post-traumatic stress disorder but was able to heal and recover.

To hear inspiring stories from Navajo young people, view campaign videos at:

- Love Your Life - Shaneyka's Story at <https://youtu.be/NEw8z2fAKAk>
- Love Your Life - Lyn's Story at https://youtu.be/IFFrV7g_JEc

According to Diné origin stories about aging, the full journey for a good, long healthy life is 102 winters. To learn more about the Diné traditional story of 102 years as a good, long healthy life, visit <https://youtu.be/FWE6wmjSY-4>. On social media, use the hashtag #LoveYourLife102.

A system-wide approach is being implemented to ensure that individuals seeking care in IHS facilities receive evidence-based suicide care and appropriate follow up. IHS implemented a Zero Suicide Academy together with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The Zero Suicide Initiative reaches beyond clinical care. It relies on a system-wide approach to improve outcomes and close gaps plus engage the broader community, especially suicide attempt survivors, family members, policymakers and researchers. For additional resources: <https://www.ihs.gov/suicideprevention/>.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the suicide rate is 1.5 times greater than the national average among American Indian and Alaska Native young adults age 15-34. In addition, among American Indians and Alaska Natives aged 10 to 34 years, suicide is the second leading cause of death. Additional data on American Indian and Alaska Native health indicators is available from IHS's Trends in Indian Health report: <https://www.ihs.gov/dps/index.cfm/publications/trends2014>.

President Obama's proposed budget for the Indian Health Service for fiscal year 2017 includes \$363 million to expand successful substance abuse, behavioral health and domestic violence programs. Read more: <https://www.ihs.gov/newsroom/pressreleases/2016pressreleases/president-s-proposed-fiscal-year-2017-budget-supports-improved-quality-of-care-at-the-indian-health-service>.

The Navajo Area Indian Health Service provides and funds the provision of comprehensive health care to American Indians and Alaska Natives on the Navajo Nation, the largest Indian reservation in the country. For more information about IHS's Navajo Area services, visit <https://www.ihs.gov/navajo/>.

The IHS, an agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides a comprehensive health service delivery system for approximately 2.2 million American Indians and Alaska Natives.

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