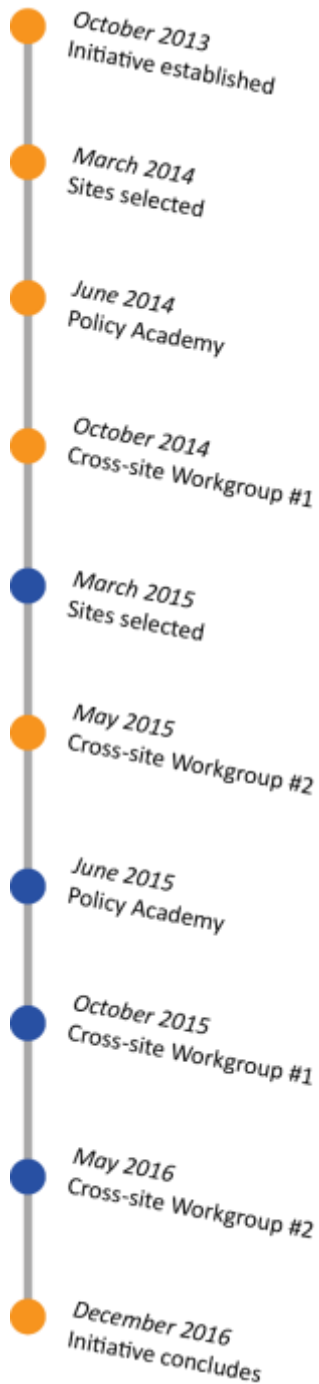


JUVENILE JUSTICE DIVERSION FOR TRIBAL YOUTH

Initiative Timeline



The juvenile crime rate continues to grow in Indian country, in large part because of risk factors for delinquency for the nearly 2 million American Indians who live on or near tribal lands. These include high rates of poverty, exposure to violence and loss, and a disproportionate burden of mental and substance use disorders. American Indian communities often lack sufficient law enforcement services, have underfunded justice systems, are not able to offer prevention and diversion services, and behavioral health services are too often inadequate or inaccessible.

Given the documented inadequacies of care for American Indian youth within the state, federal, and many tribal juvenile justice systems, there is a growing consensus that American Indian youth with behavioral health needs should remain in their communities. To improve juvenile diversion policies and programs, it is necessary to:

- improve tribal-state-federal policies and programs
- increase coordination of service provision for youth with behavioral health disorders
- recognize the roles of evidence-based practice, treatment, and trauma-informed services
- develop sustainable policies and programs

The *Juvenile Justice Diversion for Tribal Youth* initiative aims to address these issues and support development and implementation of effective front-end diversion programs for youth with behavioral health disorders in Indian Country. Four tribes were competitively selected to participate in this effort in **2014** with an additional four tribes selected in **2015**:

- Cheyenne River Sioux
- Lower Brule Sioux
- Red Lake Band of Chippewa
- Ute Mountain Ute
- Colorado River Indian Tribes
- Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux
- San Carlos Apache Tribe
- Shoshone-Bannock Tribe

Teams of community leaders from each tribe are working together, under the direction of the **National Center for Mental Health and Juvenile Justice** and with guidance from national experts, to identify and implement innovative approaches to improving policies and programs for American Indian youth with behavioral health disorders.

In addition, tribes are engaging in targeted, cross-site discussions around common issues and barriers related to the diversion of American Indian youth with behavioral health disorders. These discussions will help support the development of strategies that can be used across tribal jurisdictions to address issues that may arise during the course of implementing policies and programs for diverting American Indian youth with behavioral health disorders out of the juvenile justice system.

For more information, please contact the NCMHJJ at 862-962-6455 or ncmhjj@prainc.com

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