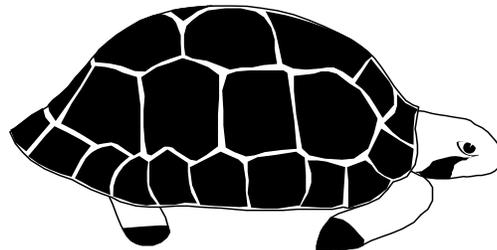


# Upon the Back of a Turtle...

*A Cross Cultural Training Curriculum  
for  
Federal Criminal Justice Personnel*

## Historical Trauma and Present Impact



**Background Information**  
(Trainer's Information)  
for

## Historical Trauma and Present Impact

### Lecture Presentation:

There are historical events that have affected all Native American people. The most critical has been the attempts made to destroy and/or eliminate tribes. The historical trauma and consequent impact are addressed in this section. There were many activities either encouraged or engaged in by the U.S. government that created an unsafe, hostile, destructive environment for Native people. There were other activities not sanctioned that resulted in annihilation of total villages, families, and tribes. The actions to destroy and terminate the original inhabitants of this country affects tribes collectively, and continues to affect individuals and families presently.

Individuals may reason that events that occurred several generations ago, have little or no bearing with current situations and that appreciation for the present is much more critical than rehashing old topics. However, the process of understanding the impact of the past is part of understanding the cultural aspect of Native life and what has held to be consistent with Native people. There is the desire to be who they are and live within Native teachings and traditions. This does not mean the present is not important, it means that the present links the future with the past and that Native people do not isolate themselves from their ancestors or their children. However the traumatic events that have impacted Native people have made it difficult for individuals to care for themselves, their children, and their families.

Trainer is to address each of the topics and elaborate each point so that participants may fully understand the impact of the trauma inflicted on American Indian tribes, families and individuals.

The activity in this section is designed to be conducted in smaller groups and reported back to the large group. This facilitates a better opportunity for participants to share in the discussion. Discussion questions can be used with the large group, or smaller groups can review and discuss the questions and report back to the large group.



## Materials in this section:

The following section provides material for trainers to use in presenting the information, including materials for overheads, handouts and trainer information.

The overheads are indicated with a divider page and can be reproduced on transparencies. Training information is provided for use with each overhead in the background information for trainers. This information also corresponds with handouts.

Handouts are duplicates of the overheads with three overheads on each page of the handout.



# Historical Trauma and Present Impact

## Objectives:

1. Participants will acquire an understanding of the historical trauma from the past and realize the present impact this trauma has had on tribes as a whole as well as individuals and families.
2. Participants will identify and examine specific risk factors and protective factors within the Indian culture.
3. Participants will better understand the treatment of Indian children by the federal and state governments and the impact this has had on Indian families.
4. Participants will be able to identify how, in their current position, past governmental actions impact their current interaction with American Indian people.
5. Participants will increase their awareness regarding the relationship of cultural oppression to multi-generational trauma.

## Activities:

### **Small group activity:**

Break into groups of about 4 - 6. Within the group select a spokesperson to report back to the large group. The small group should re-examine the trauma that was inflicted upon American Indians (i.e., loss of religion, language, land, children, etc.).

Discuss the factors that helped them to survive.

1. What worked for American Indians?
2. What factors within their culture helped to maintain the culture, traditions and the tribe as a whole?

Brainstorm these factors and prepare to report back to the large group why each factor was selected and how/why the group feels this factor was a survival technique.

The importance of this exercise is that we must look toward positive aspects of culture versus negative aspects. In looking at positive aspects, we begin to gain respect for both the people and the culture.

**Master Overheads:** N = 57

**Master Handouts:** N = 20

## Discussion Questions:

1. How have the actions taken by the U.S. government contributed to the potential for child maltreatment and other violent crimes in Indian country?
2. How do past governmental actions impact your ability to provide services in Indian Country?

*The terms Native American and American Indian are used interchangeably. Both terms are used to describe the Native American, American Indian, Alaska Native and Eskimo population.*



### **In the training video...**

- 1) The sweatlodge holds as much historic religious meaning as any other religious denominations do today. The sweatlodge is an important ceremony for spiritual and physical cleansing. It is used to meditate, to prepare for other ceremonies, or to answer important questions. The ceremony combines the elements of fire, wood, water and stone. The sweatlodge is a dome-like tent made from fresh cut willow branches and covered with hides, tarps and blankets. The sweatlodge ceremony typically consists of prayers, spiritual songs, and drumming. As the participants pray, the leader throws water and herbs on the heated rocks. Sweet grass is burned and pipes are smoked as offerings to the Spirits. Sweatlodge ceremonies are still practiced today by Natives and non-Natives alike.
- 2) The concept of the giveaway dates back to time immemorial and continues today. American Indians had no coin or paper money to bless in the area of giveaways so material things were given as a showing of love and respect. It is often a family affair in which the whole family becomes involved in the preparations. Giving away is done for a variety of reasons. One of the most typical reasons is to honor a relative who has passed on or to honor a relative that you wish well in their new endeavors. Generosity is a highly prized value in Native American society. At the same time, through these public displays of wealth distribution, a person demonstrates his or her love and respect for their family, their culture and their community.
- 3) Indian children were forcibly taken from their homes and families in an effort to educate them in boarding schools. The maltreatment they received at the hands of the authorities still affects the lives of many American Indians. They did not learn to live as a family or tribal member. They were used as slaves and forced to do away with anything pertaining to their culture, i.e., their dress, their actions, their religion, their language, etc. Parents were not allowed to visit their children. If they did attempt to visit, rations and land lease monies due them by the government were withheld and the student's parents were often locked up.
- 4) The removal of tribes from their traditional lands to Indian Territory has had significant impact on tribes and individuals. Many were removed by force and hundreds of individuals, mostly elders, were not strong enough to make the journey. In some cases, the journeys were in freezing temperatures and when they died enroute, they were not allowed to stop to bury the dead. Many tribes and tribal members still grieve their lost homelands. Many tribes declared war on the U.S. and were killed at massacres. The one's who fought back were locked up as P.O.W.'s and often executed by the U.S.



Army. This has led to many American Indians having the feeling of being displaced throughout their lives.

- 5) Storytelling is an oral tradition that has thrived despite hundreds of years of cultural suppression. Stories are usually told by elders and used as learning tools for the young. They tell the history and legends of the tribe, where the tribe came from, about the animals and their relationship to the tribe, families, communities, as well as the earth, moon, and sky. There are literally hundreds of stories from each tribe that are told, and many times they are told over and over again. Therefore, it is the turtle that plays a vital role in the storytelling and teaching of young Indian children in numerous tribes historically and today.



# Historical Trauma and Present Impact

## Events Contributing to the Destruction of Many Tribal Cultures

- **Retaliation for forming alliances** – There are many tragic events during the early expansion of this country. This period produced increased levels of hostilities toward Indian nations. Warfare, disease, and removal resulted in the complete destruction of many tribal cultures.
- **Removal from the traditional homelands (Trail of Tears)** – The ideal of “progress” was invoked to rationalize the forced migrations as inevitable and to obscure the material greed of American expansionism. This period has been described as one of the blackest chapters in American history: “Tens of thousands of helpless Indians, many of whom had white blood, were wholly or partly civilized, and owned homes, livestock, and farms, suffered incredible hardships.... All their efforts to halt or reverse the government’s policy failed, and in the end almost all the members of each of the tribes were removed to different areas in the present State of Oklahoma. Some of them went reluctantly but without defiance; others went in chains. Most of them streamed westward under the watchful eyes of troops who made sure that they kept moving (Josephy, 1968, p.323).” There were many “Trails of Tears” involving tribes from the eastern part of the U.S. to the coast of California.
- **Introduction of new diseases** – The recent immigrants introduced new diseases and practiced unfamiliar medical treatment. Diseases foreign to Native people wiped out over half of the American Indian population and the impact of these diseases is still being felt in Indian Country. Disease killed many leaders and elders, thus cutting off tribal leadership, as well as the sources for knowledge and tradition. Furthermore, the power of the medicine people was undermined, because there were no cures for alien diseases about which they had no knowledge. Memories remain among Native Americans about what non-Indians did through deliberately providing them with infected blankets as “gifts” – an early form of germ warfare (Vogel, 1972).
- **Justification of behavior in support of westward expansion and forced relocation** – Forced relocation was another factor which caused many deaths as well as numerous other problems, many of which were mental health related. Dealing with the reality of being conquered, the shame, the forced dependency upon the U.S. government, and the stripping of traditional roles from men, women, and children has impacted tribes for centuries. Other impacts of forced relocation include dealing with broken treaties, being restricted to reservations (historically an Indian had to have a permit to leave the reservation), poverty conditions, and the consequences of not relocating,



which often meant destruction and death (O'Sullivan & Handal, 1988; Vogel, 1972).

- **Emerging governmental regulations of Indian tribes and families** – As the increments of white settlements moved westward, there was an increase in the restrictions on tribal migrations, hunting, fishing, and gathering activities. There began tolerance and acceptance toward the killing or murdering of tribal members for bounties. The stage was set to justify discarding or destroying the lifestyle of Native people if it conflicted with westward expansion.
- **Disregard for traditional leaders and tribal consensus in decisions** – The newly established democracy retaliated against tribal groups for forming alliances; it negotiated the removal of tribes to areas away from the traditional homelands. The new government disregarded the process of listening to the traditional tribal leadership with the method of consensus in decision making. There began the encouragement and ready accessibility of alcohol to Native people. Alcohol availability increased as the land base for tribal people decreased. The Washington based government was highly influenced by increasing numbers of settlements being established within tribal boundaries and the increased potential for conflict.
- **Confinement to limited locations with limited resources** – It was not uncommon for Native Americans to need a pass or a permit to leave the reservation. In 1876, Standing Bear, a Ponca Indian Chief sued the U.S. government when he was arrested and detained for leaving the reservation. Standing Bear petitioned the court by a writ of Habeas Corpus. The Judge had to rule on whether an Indian had the rights of freedom guaranteed by the Constitution. The government tried to prove that an Indian was neither a person nor a citizen so couldn't bring suit against the government. On April 30, 1879 the Judge stated that an Indian is a person within the law and that Indians could not be detained illegally.
- **Removal of children from their homes to boarding schools** – Forced education through boarding schools caused considerable damage to the structure and function of tribal societies as well as to the mental health of Natives. Historically, Native American children were taken from their tribal homes to attend boarding schools, sometimes hundreds of miles away from their homes and families. They were forbidden to speak their tribal language, given “christian” names, they were usually forced to wear a uniform, their hair was shorn, and they were taught the ways of the non-Indian society. The early charters for Native American education were the same: to remove the child from the influence of his or her “savage” parents.



- **The losses of culture, language, children, land and spiritual beliefs caused Native people grief and depression** – The horrible effects of boarding schools on tribes extend to the undermining of tribal ways of parenting, traditional child-rearing, use of language (many a story about a child finally returning home and being unable to speak to his or her parents), the negative messages about Natives, and the forced assimilation of non-Indian ways have had devastating consequences.

## Contributing Factors to Child Victimization in Indian Country

### **Different Native communities experienced different degrees of factors contributing to child victimization which include:**

- stress
- unemployment
- limited resources (personal, family, community)
- harsh punishment
- alcohol/drug abuse
- no role models
- anger
- shame/grief/pain
- no sanctions against abuse
- limited tribal/native jurisdiction for non-tribal/native members
- children not valued
- helplessness/hopelessness
- lack of teachings and limited reward for teachings
- lack of sufficient housing
- isolation
- denial and/or acceptance

Historically Native families used the extended network of family members to rear children. The survival of the family depended on the interdependent relationships among its members.

### **Methods the U.S. government employed to provide for Indian children:**

- **Education** - the purpose of boarding schools and missions was to “provide the U.S. government with a method to educate and civilize Indian children away from the influences of their savage lifestyle and unchristian ways.” This was the first method.
- **Child Safety and Protection** - purpose of protecting children was to offer children an “opportunity out of poverty.” Eventually as child protection became a social issue, Indian children became a target.



## What Children Experienced in Boarding School

- **Children were chained, whipped and beaten** - The outcome of children being removed from their tribes was the immediate elimination of culture and teachings to the next generation. Children fought back the best they could but they were punished for running away; they were whipped for speaking their own language; they were denied food and substance as punishment for minor infractions; or they ended up in "isolation" if they dared to be "defiant" and show disrespect toward school authorities. It is not surprising that they developed defenses to guard against becoming emotionally attached and increased those behaviors that were destructive.
- **Denied medical care** - Children became exposed to diseases and unsanitary conditions that increased the likelihood of illness and death.
- **Denied contact with their family** - Families knew only that children went away from them and many of them never returned. Children were taken for several years at a time. Those taken at young and vulnerable ages forgot who they were and how to live in the villages as Native adults.
- **Abandonment, abuse and victimization** - Children felt abandoned because they were not allowed to see their families for years at a time. The additional cruelty was that they were subject to physical and sexual abuse by school personnel who had the power to control their lives. Most boarding schools created the climate for emotional, physical and sexual abuse of Indian children resulting in generations of children learning about victimization. They were five or six years old when they arrived and were almost twenty when they left. They learned early that it was not desirable to be Indian or to be children.
- **Poor preparation for adulthood** - Children were used as servants to boarding school personnel. They learned only how to obey for fear of punishment, and did not learn how to become a contributing member of tribal society.
- **Lack of adequate food, clothing and shelter** - Upon entering boarding school, children were made to cut their hair, wear clothing that they were not familiar with, live in structures that were foreign to them and fed food that was not adequate nor could they physically tolerate what they were given. Often, food was withheld as punishment for minor infractions.
- **High death rate (burials without notification to parents)** - School grounds contained cemeteries with unmarked graves of children whom died without parents ever being told of their child's condition or death.



- **Punished for speaking their language** - Children would speak their tribal language to each other to make them feel less homesick and to converse about their life in the boarding school. Boarding school personnel did not want them speaking to each other and would punish them harshly for not speaking English.
- **No parental role models** - Several generations of children were raised in boarding schools and never had the opportunity to participate in a family environment. They were not taught their roles within the family and within their society. This has been called the boarding school legacy.

**Indian people were conditioned not to fight back, each time they fought back something was taken away. Such things as:**

- **Children** – children were moved to boarding schools without parents having any idea of where they were going or when they would be back.
- **Food** – with the movement of tribes out of traditional lands, they no longer knew the lands and were denied the opportunity to hunt and fish. The government provided rations of food. The quality and quantity of the rations were inadequate for the villages and communities.
- **Shelter** – their homes were destroyed and tribes were forced to move into prison like camps. They no longer had the natural shelter of the trees, rivers and open lands.
- **Land** – forced removal was devastating to Indian people. They lost sacred grounds that had been theirs from the beginning of time.
- **Warmth** – they no longer had the warmth of fires or each other. Many tribes were separated when forced to move, as some tribal members chose not to go, hiding wherever they could find.
- **Religion/Spirituality** – tribes were forbidden to practice their religions as they had always done. Many of their religious practices were outlawed and were only made legal with the Religious Freedom Act in 1978.
- **Language** – much of the language was lost during the boarding school era which lasted until the early 1970's. Children were punished harshly when caught speaking tribal languages. Head Start, introduced approximately 25 years ago, has been one program instrumental in encouraging Native languages. However, the parents of Head Start children are increasing unlikely to have access to family who taught them in their own tongue.



- **Homes** – not only homes but traditional and sacred lands were lost when tribes were forced to move to Indian Territory. Building material was inaccessible.
- **Elders** – many elders died during the forced removal period. They were not strong enough to make the move to the new lands.
- **Teachings** – much of the traditional teachings were lost due to many of the children being forced into boarding schools and not able to learn traditional tribal practices.

### Types of personalities attracted to Indian reservations

#### **Missionaries/religious individuals**

- sincere desire
- seeking to help
- no understanding of Indian lifestyle or religion/spirituality
- no understanding of the impact of the removal of their children
- possessed the mentality of the era
- zealous in effort to “christianize” Indians
- rigid and punitive
- escaping from consequences of illegal behavior

#### **Social “rejects and misfits”**

- alienated from dominant American culture
- high level of idiosyncratic traits and characteristics
- high level of aberrant behavior
- behavior less tolerated in dominant culture
- behavior more tolerated in isolated areas
- less likelihood of confrontation with peers
- rigid and punitive

For the most part, agents, missionaries, and school authorities were not accountable for how they disciplined or managed their areas. They did not necessarily have to account for children who died or were beaten. In all honesty, concerned citizens did raise the issues of treatment of children in schools and the treatment of tribes at different points in time. Little effort was exerted by those in authority to change the conditions surrounding the education of Native children or their treatment (Merriam Report, 1928).



### **Ex-Military/Authoritarian**

- placement for former military leaders and soldiers
- appeal of isolated locations
- valued independence
- valued freedom to interpret law/justice
- justice was self-serving
- income generating
- rigid and punitive

It was very common for the military to assign ex-military men as agents at the Indian schools. Many such individuals were very authoritarian in nature while not wanting to be constantly accountable for their behavior. The remote sites provided the distance whereby they could govern without direct interference from authorities. Most frontier individuals valued independence and interpreted the interdependency of tribal clans and bands as being of lesser value. As independent thinkers and doers, most were accustomed to utilizing vicious and brutal solutions when conflict arose. Others were fearful and retaliated before any physical harm could befall their own persons. Many individuals interpreted justice as meeting their own needs by taking advantage of those who were helpless or measured as unworthy opponents. The measure for justice was self-serving. Typically, these individuals became the interpreters, married into the tribes and became the go-between. They then began to control the economy.

### **Indian parents today can be described as:**

- a higher likelihood of a history of substance abuse and usage within the family
- a higher likelihood of first pregnancy as an adolescent
- an increased likelihood of having children longer and later in life
- a long period of child bearing years
- a higher likelihood of having a high diploma or GED
- a higher likelihood of three generations living within the same household
- a collective and individual history of oppression, generational grief, depression, anxiety and shame
- if male, a suicide rate seven time higher than non-white males
- if male, most likely to have a history of incarceration or probation
- higher likelihood of living below the poverty level, living in substandard housing, and living in isolated or rural areas
- an age of less than 21
- if an elder, the likelihood of living on a reservation
- if young adult or child, the likelihood of living in an urban area
- the likelihood of dying before their non-Indian peers



## Traditional Practices of Parenting

- **Children were disciplined to increase compliance with cultural expectations** – children and youth were provided lengthy explanations of the reasons for family and tribal guidelines and for preferred behaviors. Children were encouraged to see and follow the examples set by others. Positive self concept was taught by letting a child practice and succeed at a task appropriate for that age level (Primeaux, 1977).
- **Children were not punished out of anger** – children are accorded the same degree of respect as an adult. Children are considered important units of the family and are central to the family. They are considered more important than material possessions. Talking loudly and reprimanding children is considered ill mannered.
- **Punishment was determined by behavior of the child** – depending on the infraction, punishment could be swift and unforgiving. For example, a child that disrespected fire would be allowed to test the fire and may actually be burned in order to learn to respect fire. A child that cried out with loud wailing may jeopardize the tribe and alert enemies to their location. That child would be left out in the bush to cry until the child learned not to cry. Natural consequences were believed to be a great teacher. The discipline was to teach a child that everyone depended on the group for survival.

## Mental Health Issues Affecting American Indians

### Risk Markers in Indian Families:

- historical context of abuse
- historical shame and grief
- historical trauma
- generational impact
- cultural oppression
- boarding school legacy
- generational use of alcohol
- alcohol related injuries and deaths
- fetal alcohol syndrome
- fetal alcohol effects
- illegal behavior
- incarceration and probation
- cultural displacement
- cultural confusion
- cultural assimilation
- cultural conformity
- identity conflict



- tribal vs. Indianness
- out of home placements
- suicide risks
- cluster suicides
- school drop out rates

### Risk Markers for American Indian Adolescents

#### **Developmental:**

- learning disabilities
- psycho-social dysfunctional behavior
- FAS/FAE
- criminal behavior
- poor academic performance
- gang violence
- alcoholism
- inhalant abuse
- depression
- suicide
- poor self esteem
- alienation
- poverty
- domestic violence
- family disruption
- injuries and accidents
- out of home placement
- school drop out
- sexual and/or physical abuse victim
- neglect
- emotional abuse

### Mental Health Issues of American Indian Children

#### **Prenatal**

- teenage pregnancies (30 times more likely to give birth)
- little or no prenatal care
- premature births

#### **Chemical Exposure/Abuse**

- prenatal exposure to alcohol, cocaine, inhalants, and other drugs
- prenatal exposure to tobacco



### **Developmental Disorders**

- mental retardation
- FAS/FAE
- Otitis Media (middle ear infection) 75%
- language and speech - 1st in speech impairments; hearing disorders
- lack of immunizations
- lack of preventative care - dental
- behavioral and emotional problems (non-compliance, acting out, severely emotionally disturbed, out of home placements)

### **School Age Children and Cross-Over Effect**

- increase in behavioral problems
- increase in out-patient treatment
- decrease in academic achievement
- runaways - go earlier, stay longer, become lost

### **Human Development Potential: A Native Traditional Perspective**

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Native American Traditional Philosophies have in common a unique view of humankind in relationship *with* the world. One of the greatest gifts from our Ancestor Nations is an *interdependent/respectful/powerful* and unlimited “*World View*.” When we come to understand and begin to live from the value that “all life is indeed Sacred” and that we are part of that “web of sacredness,” our potential becomes unlimited. Our Ancestor’s taught us that humility, power and responsibility go hand in hand. They taught that all perceptions of the World are unique and valid. Our perceptions and our values create a *different reality* for each individual, each tribe, each culture, and each nation; yet all were to be respected and valued. Participants will identify, define and process the historical factors which altered both our “Native World View” and our perceptions about ourselves. Participants will reach beyond the cultural oppression and resultant historical trauma; to focus their *unlimited* potential for Human Spiritual Development and the reclaiming of our Heritage and Destiny.

The following presents information regarding the American Indian World View, perceptions and values, as well as the impact of historical trauma. You may utilize this as the basis for lectures, discussions, and/or small group activities.



## OPPRESSION

*Author: Avis Archambault, MA*

**Oppression** - a burdensome, unjust manner of governing that weighs heavily upon the spirit and the senses.

**Internalized Oppression** - "having subjectively adopted unnatural, oppressive racial attitudes/behaviors as a reality in one's life."

*Examples of manifestation among dominant-culture members - a fear or hatred of: Native Americans, Blacks, Mexicans, Jews, Asians, Women, or other so labeled 'minorities.'*

**Racism** - "a belief in the superiority of one race over another and the resultant discriminatory treatment."

**Institutionalized Racism** - "the widespread, systematic exploitation and the exercise of power for control and/or maltreatment of any particular race (or individual) by the institutions (or members) of the dominant culture infrastructure."

### **Results of Internalized Oppression/Racism upon the Oppressed:**

- pain
- trauma
- disconnectedness
- anger
- fear
- loneliness
- isolation
- powerlessness
- sadness
- generational grief
- embarrassment
- shame
- apathy
- self-hate
- family disintegration
- numbness
- self destructiveness
- violence



**Results of Internalized Oppression upon Dominant Culture Members:**

- racism
- fear
- hatred
- denial of the psychosocial historical meaningfulness of the oppressed
- deep seated guilt and shame
- violence
- denial of all of the above



## Discussion Questions for **Historical Trauma and Present Impact**

### **FEDERAL VICTIM/WITNESS COORDINATORS:**

- While you work with victims and are not involved in the prosecution of cases, you are housed in the same office with the U.S. Attorney and her/his staff. People may think there is a connection even where a connection does not exist. How does this perception impact your work?
- Does your understanding of historical trauma change how you view American Indian victims and witnesses?
- What about your understanding of those who abuse substances?
- How does an understanding of historical trauma impact your approach to dealing with American Indian victims and witnesses?

### **FBI/LES:**

Various law enforcement agencies have been the instruments of carrying out government policies which created the events now described as leading to historical trauma.

- When you interact with crime victims today, how might historical trauma be influencing your interactions?

### **U.S. ATTORNEY'S OFFICE (PROSECUTORS):**

Court action has often been used to limit the rights of American Indian people. The case of Standing Bear, presented in this lesson, is a stark example. As federal prosecutors, the same type of professionals who 120 years ago argued that Indians are not people.

- How do you overcome the potential lingering mistrust based on these types of realities?
- What do you know about the legal history (including all treaties) of U.S. government/tribal relations in general, and particularly with the tribes in your jurisdiction?

### **IHS:**

Historically, health providers have not provided adequate care for American Indian people. The governmental use of biological warfare (e.g., the purposeful introduction of smallpox) and prevention of access to traditional healers has added to potential mistrust. Today, many American Indian people receive their primary health care from IHS but may believe that the care they receive is not of the highest quality. Historical trauma represents an on-going level of stress which may impact behavior and physical health.

- Given what you have learned today, how will you change your approach to thinking about and interacting with your patients?



- Discuss how the issue of historical trauma could impact how your patients react to you as a health care provider.

**BIA:**

The BIA is the agency most involved with the historical maltreatment of American Indians. In particular, the legacy of the boarding school experience has had a devastating impact on American Indian families and culture.

- How does the historical trauma experienced by American Indian people impact how you, as a representative of the BIA, interact with tribal people?
- Many BIA employees are themselves American Indians are also subject to historical trauma. For those of you who are tribal members, what are some of your concerns when you represent an agency which has been responsible for causing such trauma?
- How do you deal with any conflicting feelings you experience?
- How do you feel when people make fun of the BIA or make negative comments about the agency?



# Worksheet for Historical Trauma and Present Impact

## Small group activity

Break into groups of approximately 4 - 6. Within the group select a spokesperson to report back to the large group.

### Re-examine the survival techniques of American Indian tribes and tribal members

1. How have the actions taken by the U.S. government contributed to the potential for child maltreatment and other violent crimes in Indian country?
2. Discuss the trauma that was inflicted upon American Indians (i.e., loss of religion, language, land, children, etc.).
3. Discuss the factors that helped them to survive.
  - a. What worked for American Indians?
  - b. What cultural factors helped to maintain the Indian culture, traditions and the tribe as a whole?

## Reporting back to the large group

1. Why each survival factor was selected.
2. Why does the small group feel these factors were survival techniques?
3. How do past governmental actions impact your ability to provide services in Indian country?

