

# MEASURES OF POSITIVE PARENTING FOR AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE ADOLESCENTS IN URBAN CONTEXTS

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# Funding & Partners

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Arizona Parents Commission



# Presentation Overview

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1. Background of Urban AIAN Parenting
2. Development & Implementation of Culturally Adapted Urban AIAN Parenting Curriculum
3. Parenting & Family Functioning Measures for Urban AIAN Parents
4. Conclusions



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# Background of Urban AIAN Parenting



# Background and Significance

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- Many AIAN communities are disproportionately affected by a variety of health disparities, including substance abuse and risky sexual behavior
- 60% living in urban areas
- Relatively little research has been focused on *urban* AIAN families
  - Focus on measurement of parenting styles as protective factors that help urban AIAN families prevent substance use and other problem behaviors in adolescents.



## Traditional AIAN Parenting Styles

Parenting relies heavily on the extended family taking on specific roles

Teaching using observation, nonverbal communication, patience, role playing, modeling, and storytelling

Learn through observation, experience, and by making their own decisions

Children are viewed as autonomous individuals, competent in making their own decisions and understanding the consequences of those decisions

Permit children to develop in their own time and with minimal rules

## Mainstream Parenting Styles

Parenting relies heavily on biological parents

Teaching using overt and clear directives, lectures, and intrusive questioning

Learn through parents shaping the child, through careful supervision and management

Children are considered the responsibility of their parents

Control the development and behavior of children



# Urban AIAN Parents

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Experience living simultaneously in more than one cultural world

## Challenges

- Navigation of opposing belief systems
- Loss of daily contact and guidance from extended family
- Isolated, both geographically and culturally

- Can be successfully bicultural
- Can create new supportive social connections
- Geographic relocation does not necessarily weaken ties or values



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# Development & Implementation of Culturally Adapted Urban AIAN Parenting Curriculum





# Goals

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- 1) Empower parents to assist their youth to resist substance use and risky sexual behavior;
- 2) Build and strengthen family functioning that can lead to pro-social youth behavior;
- 3) Increase the family's problem solving and communication skills in ways that resonate culturally.



# Adaptation Process

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## Engaged in Community-based Participatory Research

- Feedback from parent participants during pilot implementation
- Observation data collected from each pilot
- Focus groups with parent participants of the pilot curriculum
- Focus groups with elders
- Focus groups with youth
- Focus group with pilot facilitators and observers
- Feedback from external and internal key informants



# What We Learned

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## **INTER-TRIBAL CULTURAL ELEMENTS**

Characteristics that emerged as *Common to All Participants*, regardless of affiliation

1. Ancestry
2. Clans/Bands
3. Spirituality
4. Storytelling
5. Home (“Reservation”)
6. Sacred History
7. Ritual
8. Respect
9. Language
10. Beliefs



# What We Learned

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## URBAN AIAN PARENTING THEMES



# Surface Structure Adaptations

**Matched materials and messages to social and behavioral characteristics**

Changed visuals & aesthetics to represent AIAN culture in the urban area



# Deep Structure Adaptations

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## **Embraced norms, values, beliefs, practices, traditions, and cultural history**

- Redesigned lessons and activities from linear to non-linear holistic learning
- Incorporated fundamental AIAN world view about guiding children.
- Emphasized identification of cultural and family strengths, not deficits.
- Addressed the community and individual family perspective on wellbeing.
- Observational and auditory learning: Increased hands-on activities
- Storytelling: Developed accompanying videos with testimonials from prior participants addressing cultural foundations of effective parenting





# PARENTING in 2 WORLDS

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1. Introduction
  2. Building Parenting Communities
  3. Identifying Family Traditions, Norms, & Values
  4. Knowing Your Child's World
  5. Communicating with Your Child
  6. Receiving and Giving Support
  7. Guiding Your Child's Behavior Effectively, pt. 1
  8. Guiding Your Child's Behavior Effectively, pt. 2
  9. Talking to Teens about Risky Behaviors
  10. Putting it All Together, Celebration





# Implementation of *Parenting in 2 Worlds*

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- Randomized Control Trial
  - 607 Parents of AIAN children (age 10-17)
  - Living in Phoenix, Tucson or Flagstaff metro areas
  - Assigned at random to *P2W* or comparison group
  - AIAN community facilitators, trained by research team
  
- Data for this presentation come from baseline surveys





# Demographic Profile of Parents (N=607)

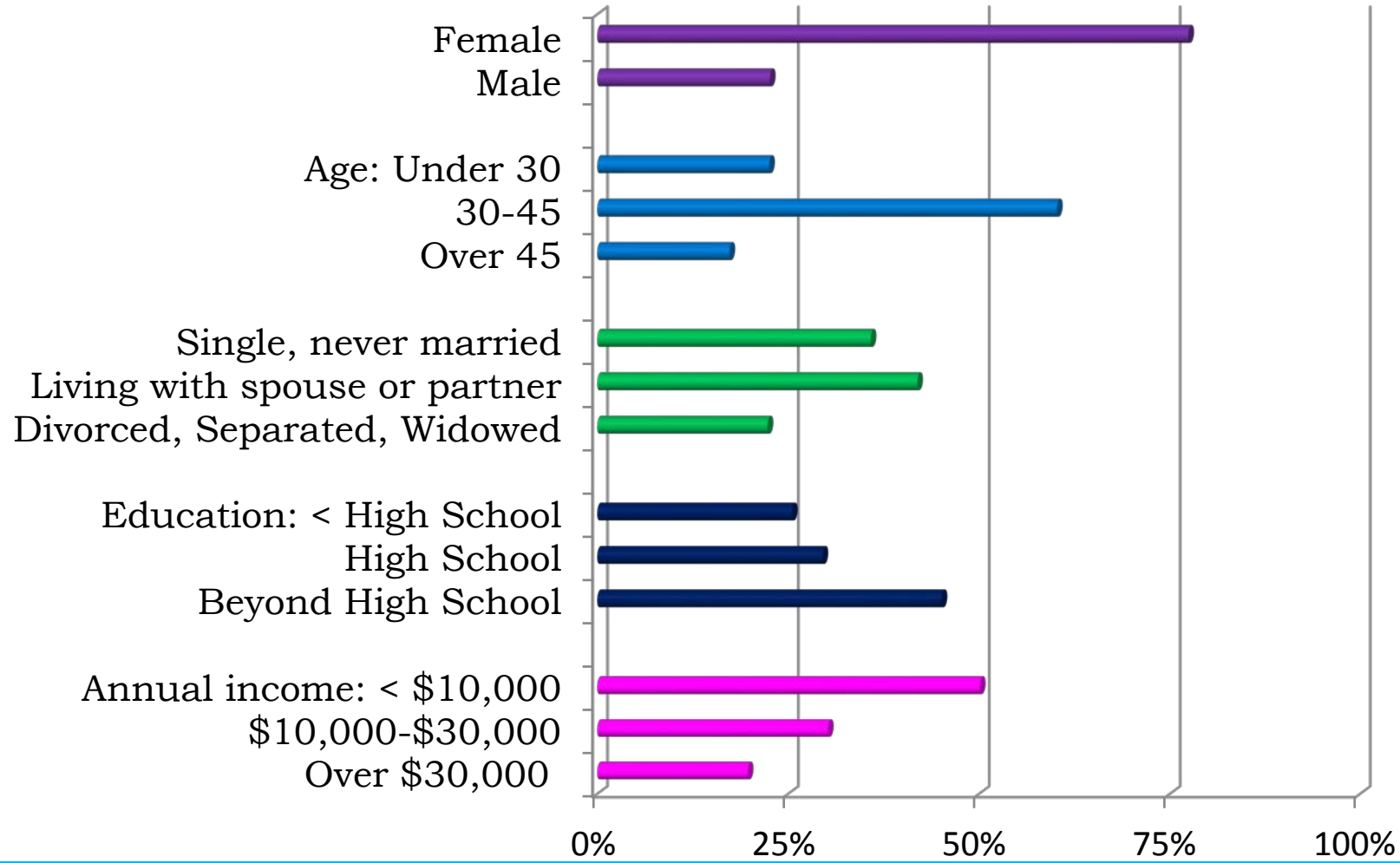
**31**  
Tribal backgrounds represented

**85%**  
Only AIAN heritage

**54%**  
Spent most of childhood on reservation

**92%**  
Have family on reservation

**17 years**  
Average time living in urban area



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# Parenting & Family Functioning Measures for Urban AIAN Parents



# Parenting & Family Functioning Measures

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- Urban AIAN families are often “living in two worlds,” having to operate both in the AIAN world as well as the mainstream world.
- The adaptation process indicated that mainstream parenting and family functioning concepts may not adequately capture the experience of urban AIAN families.
  - Does that extend to validated parenting measures?



# Parenting & Family Functioning Measures

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- Applicability of using five previously validated and widely-used parenting and family functioning measures with urban AIAN parents.
  - Extensively studied
  - > 2,500 times cited
  - Validated in other urban racial/ethnic minorities
    - African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, and Asian/Asian Americans
- Used both exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses in Mplus



# Parenting Measures

Scale	Underlying Construct	Example Question	Citation
<b>Family Cohesion</b>	The degree to which family members are separated from or connected to their family	My family members are supportive of each other during difficult times	Olson, Portner, & Lavee, 1985
<b>Parental Supervision</b>	Parental supervision and knowledge of child's whereabouts	Do you know who your child's friends are when he/she is not at home?	Loeber et al., 1998
<b>Positive Parenting Practices</b>	The frequency of encouragement and rewards for good behavior	When your youth did something that you liked, how often did you hug, pat on the back, or kiss him/her for it?	Gorman-Smith et al., 1996
<b>Parent-Adolescent Conflict</b>	Assess positive and negative interactions in the parent-adolescent relationship.	We almost never seem to agree.	Robin & Foster, 1989
<b>Parental Self-Agency</b>	How confident a parent feel in his/her ability to parent successfully	I feel sure of myself as a mother/father.	Dumka et al., 1996

FAMILY COHESION		
Family members share interests	.70	
Family does things together	.72	
Family spends free time together	.79	
Family feels very close to each other	.82	
Family consults on personal decisions	.62	
Family know each other's friends	.56	
Family goes along with decisions	.72	
Family gathers in same room together	.70	
Family approves of each other's friends	.47	
Family is supportive in difficult times	.59	
Family is closer to outside people‡		.56
Family has difficulty doing things‡		.49
Family pairs up rather than together‡		.39
Family members go own way‡		.67
Family discusses problems to outsiders‡		.39
Family avoids each other at home‡		.79

$X^2 = 190.04 (99), p = .023$   
 RMSEA = .034  
 CFI = .97  
 $X^2$  diff test from H0: 44.90(1),  $p < .001$

<b>FAMILY COHESION</b>		
Family members share interests	.70	
Family does things together	.72	
Family spends free time together	.79	
Family feels very close to each other	.82	
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Family avoids each other at home‡		.79

**Taps two separate aspects of family cohesion**

**Internal family cohesion**

**External family supports**

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Family members share interests	.70	
Family does things together	.72	
Family spends free time together	.79	
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**Separated into positively and negatively worded realms**

**Positively worded**

**Negatively worded**



## PARENTAL SUPERVISION

Set time home on school nights	0.94	
Set time home on weekends	0.86	
Know if time set was missed		0.73
Know what time to be home		0.83
When home, know what child is doing		0.57
Know who friends are		0.65
Child knows how to get in touch		0.57

$X^2 = 12.91 (12), p = .37$

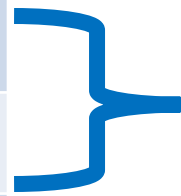
RMSEA = .016

CFI = .99

$X^2$  diff test from H0: 56.31(1),  $p < .001$

**Taps two separate aspects  
of family cohesion**

<b>PARENTAL SUPERVISION</b>		
Set time home on school nights	0.94	
Set time home on weekends	0.86	
Know if time set was missed		0.73
Know what time to be home		0.83
When home, know what child is doing		0.57
Know who friends are		0.65
Child knows how to get in touch		0.57



**Act of supervision**



**Knowledge of supervision**

POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES		
Give a reward	0.85	
Give a special privilege	0.83	
Do something special together	0.83	
Give a wink or smile		0.78
Give praise or approval		0.80
Give hug, pat on back, or kiss		0.84

$X^2 = 11.71(8), p = .16$   
 RMSEA = .04  
 CFI = .99  
 $X^2$  diff test from H0: 101.8(1),  $p < .001$

**Taps two separate aspects of positive parenting practices**

**POSITIVE PARENTING PRACTICES**

Give a reward	0.85	
Give a special privilege	0.83	
Do something special together	0.83	
Give a wink or smile		0.78
Give praise or approval		0.80
Give hug, pat on back, or kiss		0.84

**Tangibly rewarding positive actions**

**Expressive gestures to demonstrate approval**

# PARENT-ADOLESCENT CONFLICT

We never seem to agree	.43	
My child doesn't do what I ask	.54	
The talks we have are frustrating	.71	
My child often seems angry at me	.71	
My child acts impatient when I talk	.67	
I don't think we get along very well	.57	
My child never understands my side	.69	
We have big arguments over little things	.79	
My child is defensive when I talk	.77	
We argue a lot about the rules	.74	
My child tells me I'm unfair	.64	
My child is easy to get along with‡		.67
My child responds well when corrected‡		.79
My child is well-behaved during talks‡		.76
My child likes to talk to me‡		.64
My child usually listens to what I say‡		.70
My child and I compromise during fights‡		dropped

$X^2 = 171.54(118), p < .001$

RMSEA = .04

CFI = .96

$X^2$  diff test from H0: 163.9(1),  $p < .001$

# PARENT-ADOLESCENT CONFLICT

We never seem to agree	.43	
My child doesn't do what I ask	.54	
The talks we have are frustrating	.71	
My child often seems angry at me	.71	
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My child likes to talk to me‡		.64
My child usually listens to what I say‡		.70
My child and I compromise during fights‡		dropped

**Taps two separate aspects of family cohesion**

**Parent-centered conflict**

**Aspects of the child's temperament**

# PARENTAL SELF-AGENCY

Sure as parent	0.76		
Good job as parent	0.83		
Useless as parent†	0.67		
Know things helpful to other parents	0.49		
Child gets own way‡	0.87		
Usually give in to child‡	0.78		
Solve most problems		0.84	
Keep trying until things change		0.59	
Child does not do what I want‡			0.64
Little I can do‡			0.77

$X^2 = 61.59 (27), p = .002$

RMSEA = .07

CFI = .95

$X^2$  diff test from H0: 193.36(3),  $p < .001$

# PARENTAL SELF-AGENCY

Taps four separate aspects of parental self-agency

Sure as parent	0.76		
Good job as parent	0.83		
Useless as parent†	0.67		
Know things helpful to other parents	0.49		
Child gets own way‡	0.87		
Usually give in to child‡	0.78		
Solve most problems		0.84	
Keep trying until things change		0.59	
Child does not do what I want‡			0.64
Little I can do‡			0.77

**Overall sense of confidence**

**Permissiveness**

**Success and persistence in problem solving**

**Sense of failure**



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# Conclusions



# Conclusions

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- Urban AIAN parents integrate both traditional tribal parenting practices with mainstream societal parenting styles
- Measures designed to combine positively and negatively valenced questions do not always represent a single underlying construct.
- Understanding how urban AIANs parent their children moves science forward by beginning to take into account how AIAN conceptualize parenting, and provides a foundation for further research on how urban AIAN parents can strengthen their families and protect their children from engaging in risky behaviors.



# Conclusions

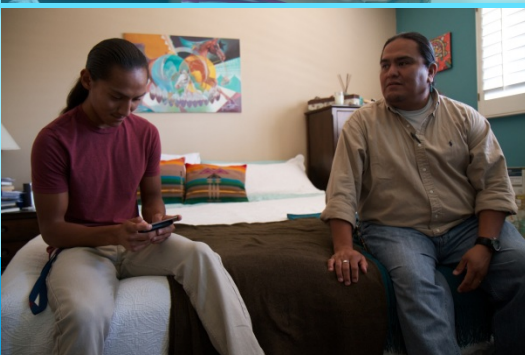
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- Creating brand new measures for AIAN families may not be feasible
  - Time, project team skill sets, money, grant objectives
- Alternative options:
  - Use measures that have been used widely in other racial/ethnic minority groups
  - Use statistics to understand how previously validated measures can work with AIAN families





# Research Team



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**PARENTING**  
in **2** **WORLDS**

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