FAQ: How can districts and schools improve efforts to engage American Indian/Alaska Native families and support the social-emotional wellness of their students during COVID-19 school disruptions?

Resources for districts serving students in grades K-12

REL Central has compiled a list of resources to help school, district, and youth organization staff connect with American Indian (AI)/Alaska Native (AN) families and support students’ social-emotional needs during school closures. The list includes resources specifically designed for AI/AN students and families as well as resources intended for broader audiences.

Engaging AI/AN families and communities

- A family engagement toolkit from REL Pacific addresses the cultural components of effective family and community engagement, including guidance for building cultural bridges, establishing trusting relationships, and engaging in data conversations.

- Education Northwest provides an overview of evidence-based resources for engaging AI/AN families, including concrete strategies for creating more welcoming and culturally responsive school communities for AI/AN families.

- Strategies for engaging AI/AN families in systems of care can be adapted by educators to strengthen engagement efforts.

- The Culture Is Prevention guide for leveraging the cultural assets of AI/AN communities includes resources for partnering with AI/AN families.

Social-emotional learning and trauma-informed practices

- The Urban Indian Health Institute provides a collection of resources to support the physical and social-emotional health of urban AI/AN communities, including a fact sheet and poster for talking about COVID-19 with AI/AN children.

- The Native Wellness Institute has compiled tools and resources related to trauma, resiliency, mentoring, and culture-based programming for AI/AN communities.

- The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration has published a guide on providing culturally responsive, engaging, trauma-informed behavioral health services to AI/AN clients. The guide includes a literature review as well as an executive summary of AI/AN history, historical trauma, and cultural perspectives on topics such as health beliefs and help-seeking behaviors.

- The National Indian Education Association provides digital resources for learning at home, and the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning offers resources related to social-emotional learning.