

## 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

*A Publication From Regional Educational Laboratory Central at IES*

To access the RELs' evidence-based COVID-19 response resources, visit <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/projects/covid-19>.

**Primary Audience:** School Leaders    **Secondary Audiences:** Superintendents, Assistant Superintendents, and Teachers



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](#).

The U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences funds a network of 10 Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs). Each REL serves a designated region of the country and works in partnership with educators and policymakers with a mission of supporting a more evidence-based education system to improve outcomes for students. In response to the impact of COVID-19 on education systems, the RELs collaborated to produce evidence-based resources and guidance.

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