

**Adult Tribal Healing
to Wellness Courts
Webinar Series**

January 6-9, 2026

www.WellnessCourts.org
Wellness@TLPI.org

CULTURAL RESTORATION: A DATA-INFORMED APPROACH

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Blackfeet Nation



DISCLAIMER

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► LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Explore community collaboration and strategic planning for a culturally grounded healing model.
- Understand how the Cultural Connectedness Scale (CCS) can measure shifts in identity and cultural knowledge.
- Recognize cultural healing as a key component in fostering healing and behavioral change.
- Explore how traditional knowledge systems and sacred societies are strengthening community justice and healing.
- Acknowledge the value of using culturally relevant data to support cultural programming as an evidence-based practice.



Blackfeet Indian Reservation, Montana



▶ BACK TO OUR ROOTS

- How community voices and elders were engaged:
 - Gathering the community around a common issue
 - Community Advisory Circle (CAC)
 - (2018) Community Readiness Assessment
- Focus: Reducing the impacts of trauma by strengthening cultural identity
- Solution: Cultural Forums with knowledge keepers and elders: Emphasis on traditional practices, language, ceremony



Blackfoot elders gathering
PC: Wendy Bremner



LIVING AS NIITSITAPI

- Forming a pathway to Blackfoot Identity
- 65 + elders and knowledge keepers developed 16 cultural modules
- First set of modules designed with emphasis on traditional practices, language, ceremony and identity.
- Partnership with Blackfoot Eco Knowledge to refine modules into curriculum and helped overcome federal funding restrictions
- Blackfeet Eco Knowledge “Way of Life Project”



2024 Cultural Modules

BUILDING A PARFLECHE

- Coping Skills
- Cultural Skill Building
- Strengthening Values
- Introduction to ceremonies, songs, stories
- Access points
- Connecting to Place
- History



Cicelee Devereaux (2024)
Parfleche Bag Making Class -
Chaniel Grant



2025 Blackfoot Akokaatsin
(Circle Camp) Chaniel Grant



CULTURAL CONNECTEDNESS SCALE

- Cultural Connectedness Scale from Canada (Snowshoe, Crooks, Tremblay, Craig, & Hinson, 2015)
- Can be adapted for use by each Tribal nation using local concepts
- 29 items with three sub-scales
 - Identity, traditions and spirituality
 - Indigenous Qualitative Methodological Framework, community and strengths-based approaches are the core
 - Culture as a determinant of health

Cultural Connectedness Scale (CSS-Revised Urban US Community 2016)

ABOUT MY CULTURE

The following questions asks about being American Indian/Alaska Native and culture. Examples are included on the last page of the survey.

1. I know my cultural/spirit name or Indian name.

☐ No
☐ Yes

2. I can understand some Native American/Indigenous language(s).

☐ No
☐ Yes

3. I believe things like animals, rocks (and all nature) have a spirit like Native American/Indigenous People.

☐ No
☐ Yes

4. I use ceremonial medicines (See Example List #1) for guidance or prayer or other reasons. (See Example List #2)

☐ No
☐ Yes

5. I have participated in a cultural ceremony/activity. (See Example List #3)

☐ No
☐ Yes

Cultural Connectedness Scale
(CCS-Revised Urban US Community 2016)



DATA THAT REFLECTS US

- 2020- adapted the Cultural Connectedness Scale to fit Blackfoot Community defined metrics
- Collect pre and post program data
- Pre scores average “some cultural connection”
- Post scores average “strong cultural connection” after attending only 5 modules
- Desire to learn and involvement in cultural practices subcategory totals increased significantly in most cases
- Challenges: Covid-19 pandemic and funding restrictions

Cultural Connectedness Scale

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P.O. Box 1170
Browning, MT 59417

Please complete the following Cultural Connectedness Scale. Thank you for your time.

Name:	Age:	Tribal Affiliation:
Sex: M or F	Do you live on the Blackfeet Reservation? Yes or No	Date:

ABOUT MY CULTURE: The following questions ask about being American Indian/Alaska Native and your culture. Examples are included on the last page of the survey.

1. I know my Blackfeet name or Indian name.

<input type="checkbox"/> I don't have a Blackfeet or Indian Name	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
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2. I can understand some Blackfeet or Native American/Indigenous language(s).

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
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3. I believe things like animals, plants, (and all nature) have a spirit like me.

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
-----------------------------	------------------------------

4. I use ceremonial medicines (See Example List #1) for guidance or prayer or other reasons. (See Example List #2)

<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes
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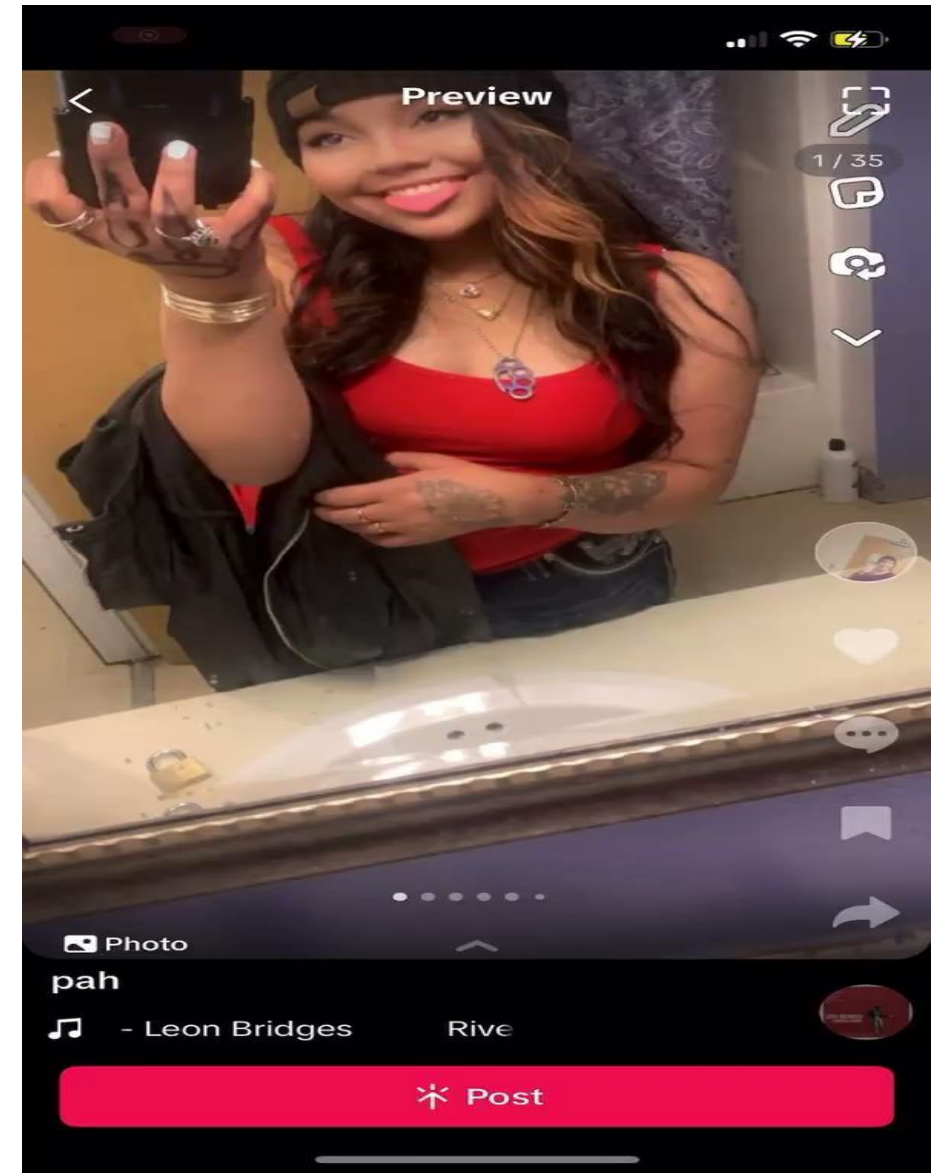


▶ SINOPAH(FOX WOMAN) DIGITAL STORYTELLING

- All participants develop their own digital story before graduation

“The cultural modules were my favorite part of the program. I learned to make moccasins, learned parts of the scarface story, and got my indian name...” -Adult Graduate 2023

(With permission to share from Sinopah)



▶ CELEBRATING OUR RESILIENCE

Blackfoot Living Principles:

Isspomotsissinnii

Giving support, sharing of self

Mokaak'sinni

Coming to know and capture
understanding

Sao-ohkoomaimohsinni

Achievement



All photographs courtesy of Healing to Wellness Court

▶ LESSONS FROM OUR COMMUNITY TO YOURS

- Planning programs WITH the community, not FOR.
- Centering culture as the foundation for programming.
- Work with local elders, cultural leaders, and youth to adapt the language and indicators.
- Ensure the tool reflects the values, teachings, and social structures of the target community.





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THANK YOU!

