

POINT SOURCE YOUTH PRESENTS:

SUPPORTING YOUTH IN RURAL AREAS IN THE TIME OF COVID-19

Speakers:

- Virginia Hedrick, MPH (Yurok), Executive Director, California Consortium for Urban Indian Health
- Riannon Bardsley, Statewide Initiatives Manager, Office of Homeless Youth
- Emily Mosites, Ph.D., M.P.H., COVID-19 At Risk Task Force, Senior Advisor on Health and Homelessness, Lieutenant Commander, USPHS, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

During this time rural communities and service providers not only have to worry about COVID-19 and keeping healthy, but also about keeping people connected and meeting basic needs. As many communities applied social distancing orders it is critical for local officials and providers to choose language and delivery methods that all folks can understand and receive. As we continue through, we must connect with those communities that surround us and bring ALL, including our Indigenous communities, to the table.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

It is important for rural communities to use all methods of communication, including phone calls, texts, mailings, flyers, email, and online platforms, while also keeping the writing at a fourth grade level to ensure support and resources are understood by all.



Q + A

How can folks ensure the most marginalized in rural communities have access to care and resources?

Rural communities are unique and have a way of looking out for one another. When available, hotspots, computers, tablets, phones, and phone minutes should be distributed. As connection depends on the available resources, communities should continue to print materials and utilize mail services to get information out.

What learnings from COVID-19 should we continue to implement into rural youth homelessness strategies after the virus has subsided?

We need to be thinking about what we are doing now and what needs to change for it to become sustainable. Have we been using a more direct or streamlined process and has it helped us be more efficient without hindering participant care? What long term strategies are we adopting? What will next year look like and what protections are we putting in place to protect folks? Lastly, we need to use all of what has happened to shed light on the many disparities that folks are experiencing in rural communities and find ways to address it.



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LIFE AFTER COVID-19

Before returning to work we need to think about four things:

1. What's happening in the local area, what is the number of cases and what is the hospital capacity?
2. Are there mandates that allow business to open?
3. What protections are currently in place?
4. What will be done to protect people when they do reopen?

If you are returning to work, it is critical to talk to your employer about operations and protections that will be in place to ensure your safety. Again, know the local info about COVID-19 and make sure to practice self care.

RESOURCES

- [Stress and coping resources from CDC](#)
- [COVID-19 materials translated into indigenous languages](#).
- [Tribal Colleges and Universities #RealCollege Survey Report](#)
- [Q Chat Space](#)



**IN ORDER TO CREATE BONDS WITH TRIBAL COMMUNITIES YOU MUST FIRST AND FOREMOST RECOGNIZE TRIBAL SOVEREIGNTY AND UNDERSTAND THAT TRIBAL LEADERS ROSE TO THE CHALLENGE AND WERE AMONG THE FIRST GOVERNMENTS IN CALIFORNIA TO CLOSE THEIR BORDERS, DECLARE AN EMERGENCY, AND TO PUT THE HEALTH OF PEOPLE ABOVE ECONOMIC GAINS.
-VIRGINIA HEDRICK, M.P.H. (YUROK)**



ACTIONS TO TAKE NOW

1. Returning to work will likely be stressful, so remember to talk to your employer and ask them about what policies, protection methods, and level of support will be offered.
2. Don't be afraid to say hi to people. Now more than ever people are craving to be seen, to be valued.
3. Make sure your messaging is able to be received by all- consider using all messaging methods (phone call, text, mail, sandwich boards, pole posts, etc.)