



GREAT LAKES BREASTFEEDING WEBINARS

Indigenous Breastfeeding: Trauma and Resilience

Raeanne Madison, MPH

August 20, 2019

- Historical trauma has had long-lasting effects on the parenting practices of Indigenous families.
- Trauma is defined as the transmission of historical oppression and its negative consequences across generations.
- For Indigenous peoples, historical trauma was not that long ago: boarding houses in Michigan were still open in the 1980s, forced sterilization occurred under George H.W. Bush, and the Native American Graves Protection and Reparations Act (NAGPRA) was not established until 1994.
- Due to these separatist governmental policies, Indigenous families have faced barriers to culturally significant parenting practices.
- As a result, breastfeeding may not come automatically for Indigenous parents.
- Breastfeeding, however, can help to heal multiple generations and change the trajectory of the life course for Indigenous families.
- For Indigenous people, resilience can be built through breastfeeding.
- Indigenous culture acts as prevention and healing.
- Families are reclaiming and relearning traditional parenting practices, food sovereignty, community care, and breastfeeding.
- 80 to 100 percent of Indigenous parents initiate breastfeeding.
- People don't breastfeed, cultures do and breastfeeding must be a cultural practice that is passed down from one generation to the next.
- Providers must respect Indigenous culture and recognize the importance of humility, honoring elders, and respecting silence in order for families to feel secure within our care.
- Providers can support through 1) education and awareness; 2) community-based lactation support: the most successful initiatives come from within the community; 3) equity: invest time, money, and resources into people of color.

Interested in viewing this webinar, other past webinars, and much more?

Visit www.mibreastfeeding.org/webinars.