



Indigenous Birth Work

Why should we find a way to implement Indigenous Birth Work?

Abstract

Indigenous people have been systematically disadvantaged across all daily living activities since the insertion of the settlers. Culture had been made illegal by the government and strongly discouraged until recent years. Through community, advocacy, and other education opportunities Indigenous people have been able to reconnect to their tribal cultures. Connection to the land, community, and spiritual cultural practices can be medicine. Reconnecting to the food, language, and medicinal aspects of culture can directly affect health markers and aid in the decrease of cortisol. Cultural connection in Indigenous communities can directly influence the future of the generations of children. Indigenous Birth Work should be implemented in the routine care of all pregnancies being served on the reservation for a healthier community. Health care providers using culturally specialized treatments by focusing on the patients with high blood pressure, diabetes, substance use, and stress in rural communities can provide support to the most vulnerable demographics. Finding the most compatible care options for a patient and their family can have a direct influence on the health and success of pregnancies on the reservation and other rural areas.

What is Birth Work?

All care given to birth giver and babe pre and postnatal

Birth work has components of Education, Advocacy, Body Feeding, Non-Medical Care, along with its most basic Physical and Emotional Care aspects. Supports from different areas can be called on for improved quality of life and gestation.

Who are Birth Workers?

- OBGYN's
- Labor/Delievery Nurses
- Midwives
- Pediatricans

- Lactation Consultants
 - Doulas
 - Mothers, Grandmothers., etc
 - Partner/Family
- and so many others who assist in a healthy happy pregnancy

A few numbers to help us understand

Vaginal Deliveries \$13,024
C-section \$22,646

Average Birth Cost after insurance \$11,938

Blackfeet Community Hospital	Category of Comparison	Montana Averages
45%	% of women who received Adequate Prenatal Care	75%
13%	% of births that were Premature	9%
7%	% of babies born with Low Birth Weight	7%

Out of 143 births at IHS...
(during an undisclosed year between 2013 - 2017 where the live births were recorded for study and census)

- 79 of those mothers didn't receive adequate prenatal care
- 45 of those mothers knowingly used alcohol and substances throughout pregnancy
- 22 of those mothers were using both at time of delivery
- 18 births were premature
- 4 of those births weren't compatible with life

Harm Reduction and Preventative Care

Having a non judgmental approach along with practical strategies can encourage more people to commit to prenatal appointments. This allows the preventative care to be performed allowing for any preexisting conditions to be dealt with during pregnancy.

Conclusion

Having resources available that are culturally aligned can improve health markers during pregnancy. Culture is medicine and can be used for healthier moms and babes.

Why do we need different Birth Supports

- Care Options
- Extra Hands
- Specialties
- Delegation
- Community
- Complications
- Educational Options
- Pregnancy is a vulnerable time
- Hospitals can be intimidating
- Family Planning Support/Childcare
- Traditional and Nontraditional Practices

Along with countless other reasons

Finding the Right Care

Talking to your local community health clinic is a great place to start looking for local resources offered near you

- Health Care Providers
- Online Resources
- Outreach Classes
- Doulas
- Community Clinics
- MOMs
- WIC
- Hospitals
- Midwives
- Community Health Nurses
- Traditional Leaders

What contributes to premature birth ?

Premature baby is defined as a live birth before 37 weeks

- Stress
- Smoking
- Alochol Use
- Diabetes
- Lack of Care
- High Blood Pressure

Laura LaTray To everyone who shared with me, you are cherished along with your stories

Blackfeet Community College
Montana State University - INBRE
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References and Citations

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Cork's Local Creative Youth Partnership
Montana Obstetric and Maternal Support