

Honoring Innovations Report

"A Newsletter for System of Care Communities in Indian Country" Issue #3, December 2011

A newsletter published by the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA) describing best practices in American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) systems of care for current and graduated systems of care communities.

A "best practice" in the field of AI/AN children's mental health is a process, method, training, or event that is believed to have a direct link in providing the desired outcome.

NICWA believes that such a designated practice requires attention to seven specific criteria listed below.

- Longevity
- Replicable*
- Harmonious with Indigenous Values and Teachings
- Sustainability
- Community Acceptance
- Input of Stakeholders across Generations
- Culturally Competent Staffing

*When/Where applicable

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Social Marketing and the Use of Photographs

It seems it wasn't that long ago that public health brochures distributed in Indian Country featured White subjects in the illustrations. The use of culturally appropriate or representative images doesn't stop at photo subjects, however, but extends to clip art or design that can suggest a Great Plains region or a Pueblo theme. There are many tools to create your own publications such as fliers and brochures, but the combination of these tools can be critical in creating an accurate, clear, and culturally relevant message or impression.

The subject of designing social marketing materials is quite broad, so this newsletter will provide a few key ideas including helpful tips for the use of graphic images and/or photographs; how you can start to build a visual identity, or "brand," that you can control; and information on how to build a photo inventory and create a photo shoot event, including photographs of minors.

Live well, live Native,

Kristy Alberty

Organizing a Community Photo Shoot

Many clinics and public health initiatives in Indian Country value the use of promotional materials that accurately represent the community served. To that end, photographs are used to catch readers' attention and move beyond the old "clip art" era. You can purchase photographs online for publications. An alternative to buying photos is to create a photograph archive yourself.

You can set up a photo shoot for a specific document, if necessary, depending on the issue or the

anticipated audience for a brochure or flyer. This article will describe a formal photo shoot designed to produce at least a few dozen photographs that can be used in a variety of media.

First, consider the tools you will need. You can obtain quality photos with a digital camera that has automatic focus, or perhaps you can ask around and find a person who does photography as a serious hobby and owns a more complicated camera with a variety of lenses. If your budget permits, you can hire a

Check out information online

Find free templates of media or photo release forms at the following websites:

<http://www.free-legal-document.com/photography-contracts.html>

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/release-form-for-use-of-one-s-image-TC006087055.aspx>

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PHOTO SHOOT

Start planning for your photo shoot at least one month in advance.

Ask a semi-professional photographer to donate some of their time and talent to your organization.

Develop a campaign to get subjects for your photo shoot. Consider the audience that your marketing materials will be directed toward and make sure the people being photographed are culturally relevant and within the right demographic.

Choose a location that has adequate lighting, and be sure to stage the area so that the background of the photos does not distract from the people.

Send reminders to everyone involved the week of the photo shoot.

Make sure that the people being photographed sign media release forms that give your organization the rights to the images.

Remember to give gifts or incentives to the people being photographed as a thank you for their participation.

Archive the photos for future use.

semi-professional photographer who is willing to donate part of his or her time for free. Remember that the less complicated the camera, the more photos you will need to take—maybe even 20-30 photos—to get that one high-quality, usable photograph. A tripod is helpful because digital photos depend mostly on adequate light levels and keeping the camera totally still. Make sure you read the owner's manual before your photo shoot day and are familiar with the settings available.

Next, create a timeline for the photo shoot. When will you need to use the photographs? You should pick a date for the photo shoot at least one month in advance that does not conflict with another event or holiday. Perhaps there is a gathering you can use

where a lot of potential photo subjects will be, as long as you get media release forms signed.

One Month Away:

With your photo shoot one month away, you want to secure where you will hold the photo shoot, confirm the photographer, plan your promotional campaign to get photo subjects, obtain a media release blank form, decide on the incentives or gifts for the photo subjects, and schedule the staffing for the photo shoot.

A few words about photo release forms. Your tribal government may have legal resources that have already covered this area, but if not, you can find media or photo release forms online for you to customize

at <http://www.free-legal-document.com/photography-contracts.html>. Remember to keep the language simple—you want to be honest, but you don't want to scare anyone either. Where you are using the photos might vary: online, a brochure, in a newsletter, so add a line to that effect. Have a designated place for filing completed, signed release forms, making them easy to find later. It is also helpful to note if a family had multiple subjects and their ages, so that you can invite them to a future photo shoot if necessary.

Incentives are important. It is part of our Native traditions to say "thank you" with a small gift, and the photo shoot is no exception. Try to get local businesses to contribute money to buy gifts, or donate small toys and other items. One organization buys school supplies, puts them in backpacks, and gives them to children who attend their early-fall photo shoot. Another photo shoot had frozen salmon fillets to give to elders and families for doing a photo shoot. Use your imagination and your resources to say you appreciate the families for supporting your program. Another incentive is promising one 5 x 7" print per family/child so the family has a quality photo of their children.

Promote the photo shoot via email, phone calls, flyers, mailers—make sure you feel you are over-promoting, and then promote it some more. Identify families that have multiple children, and reach out to them. Decide if you want any children in powwow regalia, and invite families with dancers. Active rather than

continued on last page...

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Branding And We Are Not Referring to Cattle-Raising Either

You have probably heard the term “branding” in the last few years. The term has long been used by marketing executives and has grown beyond that as public personalities speak about their “personal brand” or what their “online brand” will be.

If you think branding has something to do with the image a person or organization has, you are correct. But “brand” goes beyond the packaging that is under your control, and also includes the impression that the public or your constituency has about you. Other people’s impressions are not always under your control and with all the ways people have to access information via the internet or social media, it has become important to know how your audience perceives you or your organization. Information relating to this later in this article may be helpful.

It is also important that your brand is understood by your “ambassadors,” or anyone who shares information about your organization like staff, volunteers, or the board of directors. Your brand needs to be represented in the same way, regardless of who is doing the talking. Remember the childhood game where you whispered a phrase to someone in line, and they passed it on from person-to-person? Often what was whispered to the last person was quite different from what was whispered to the first. The only way to get a message passed was for it to be clear and simple. The same goes for branding, clear and simple.

Suggestions for developing a visual brand

When it comes to images, you should be clear and deliberate about the images you use, how they represent you, and what they say. “A picture is worth a thousand words” is an old, but true saying. In branding, the use of consistent visuals should reinforce your message. What kind of artwork or images are you using? Microsoft Office clip art may be free, but it is very dated and not typically representative of local Native communities. Photographs create the idea that your program impacts real people and tells people in a second who you serve and what you are about. They also get people’s attention, especially if the photo subject looks like them. Would a teenager be interested in a program that features images of 40-somethings at a community event? Probably not. See the main article about how to organize

a photo shoot and develop a photo archive for marketing efforts.

Review the printed materials or online materials you have created for consistency and clarity. Is there universal font use? A color scheme? When you create new materials in your organization, does all the staff acknowledge there is a standard style of presentation that should be followed? Or does every brochure look entirely different from the next? Do all of your different materials give the strong impression that they represent the same organization? Do you have a logo that represents who you are and that the public sees and recognizes? Write down what you see, and perhaps create a discussion among key staff about similarities and differences in visual materials. Think of things like the golden arches, the “swoosh,” or your favorite car brand. Those are examples of a logo that communicates a company’s identity in a quick and recognizable way.

Create a style guide for employees and volunteers to understand your guidelines to protect the consistency of your brand. Never assume that people understand these concepts and how important they are for your promotion and your image within the community. A simple guide listing the standards your organization has adopted for visual materials is best. Recognize that this document may grow with your organization and may need updating every few years.

Look online for more information about developing your brand at <http://www.entrepreneurship.org/en/resource-center/creating-a-brand.aspx>. You will see that branding goes beyond visuals and impacts how you might interact with people at an information booth, how you answer the phone, how you use your logo, and key phrases (i.e., soundbites) you feel represent your organization well during media interviews.

These are the kinds of strategies that tend to get put on the back burner, but they are very important to create a cohesive message. Survey how your audience perceives your materials and your organization—is it time to develop a new brand?

Long ago, businesses and corporations presented a fixed image and message to consumers, an “external

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Organizing a Community Photo Shoot continued...

passive promotion is best, as is getting confirmations to make sure your photo shoot will be well attended.

One Week Away:

Confirm the photographer and the venue, purchase the last of the incentives if you can, and monitor the weather report. Photo shoots are best done outside with natural light, which puts a time limit on the shoot if you schedule it after school and after parents get home from work. If you're feeding people, confirm those arrangements, whether it's pizza or a staff-supported potluck. Send out reminders to your confirmation list.

When you send out this confirmation, remember to explain what you want people to wear. Bright colors are best, avoiding stark white or black shirts. No corporate or product t-shirts, t-shirts or pants with writing, or patterns that are too busy or dizzying. Ask people to dress comfortably, but represent your community well.

The Day of the Photo Shoot:

Arrive early to set up the check-in process. Have multiple clipboards ready with photo release forms and have your staff oriented to explain why the release forms are necessary.

Have the incentives there but hidden to encourage people to stay as long as possible. Make sure your camera batteries are charged and you have extra memory cards with you.

Staging the area is important. Before anyone shows up, walk the area that's being photographed and throw away anything distracting. Pop cans, garbage, papers, water bottles—get them out of the area to simplify the background. This is also necessary if you're doing a photo shoot in a home or school. Remove anything with a label or advertisement on it. The goal is to reduce the visual "noise" in the setting and simplify the space. Email a reminder that morning about the photo shoot.

Create a check list with your photographer about the kinds of photos you want to get (e.g., parents with children, teen kids, babies and grandparents, fathers and sons). Discuss where you are setting up, whether it is in the kitchen pretending to help with homework, playing ball outside, climbing on a jungle gym, or reading a book in a rocking chair.

Have plenty of staffing to maintain the registration, help set up different

photo subjects together, and assist wherever possible. At the appointed time, serve the meal or distribute the incentives and thank everyone for their time.

Archive the Photographs:

It's helpful to create a folder for photographs that have valid release forms available and to separate the photos you have by date or by subject matter (e.g., babies, young parents, teens, home setting, etc.). It will make it easier to find what you want later.

Now you can mail a thank you card, together with a print of each child, to the families at your photo shoot. By keeping this a positive experience that is fun for everyone, you can create future photo shoots that will be well-attended as word spreads to others. Good luck!



This image is from NICWA's photo archive.

Branding continued...

brand image" entirely under the corporation's control. Mainly through advertising and packaging, it centered on name repetition, a unique claim or quality over the competition, and the product price.

In the last 30 years, that has changed significantly. A brand now means an experience, feeling, or internal value that the corporation puts forth to the customer—often having very little to do with the product itself! The customer feels they "know" the company and thus the product. Customers therefore seek to know a

corporation's values, labor practices, and "attitudes" that are considered hand-in-hand with the product. Today, what a customer learns about a company is not completely under the corporation's control. Customers look beyond the product and ask, "What do they stand for? Who are they?"

It is true that it is a time-consuming task to ask these difficult questions. But, the benefits to a clinic or program's marketing strategies far outweigh the price.