

Themes for Policies and Practices that Promote Collective Healing

Developed by 'Collective Healing Initiative Rapid City Listening Sessions Workgroup' (CHI Rapid City)

Theme One: Enhanced Dialogue and Incident Reporting

1. Develop a dialogue process mediated by a trusted third party for respectfully considering emerging conflicts between RCPD and community members.
 - a) Understand that culture, leadership and power matter to this process. To be successful, the Native community must be involved in the design of the process and in the selection of facilitators.
 - b) For Native people to feel safe with RCPD they must trust RCPD -- the values of transparency, accountability and integrity improve trust. The legitimacy of this dialogue process depends on these values being rooted in practice.
 - c) Treat this dialogue process as a process for learning, not punishment. We must hold RCPD officers and community members accountable for maintaining the attitudes of learning and the advancement of shared interests, not punishment or retribution.
 - d) Examples of emerging conflicts include, but are not limited to the following:
 1. The development of new and potentially controversial public policies endorsed by RCPD or Native Community leaders.
 2. The development of concerning trends of violence, victimization, or criminal behavior in the Native American community.
 3. Concerns for unprofessional, discourteous, or threatening treatment by RCPD officers.
 4. Concerns for racially hateful treatment by non-Native community members and non-Native law enforcement officers.
2. Build an accessible and responsive procedure for reporting crimes to RCPD.
 - a) Must have a safe and reliable method to report crimes where-in crime reporter does not feel threatened or suspected.
 - b) Consider using technology to facilitate improved reporting. An example is "MyPD" mobile application (<http://mypdapp.com>).

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Theme Two: Support Native Youth

3. Use polite and gentle treatment for Native youth.
 - a) Use personal names -- ask individuals their names and then use them.
 - b) Ask "what happened to you" rather than "what's wrong."
 - c) View Native youth as relatives for transformative interactions.

4. Reduce negative interactions between Native youth and RCPD Officers through trauma informed practices AND increase positive interactions between Native youth and RCPD officers.
 - a) Understand that every instance of physical use-of-force, including the lowest levels of force including physical presence, can be traumatic for Native youth.
 - b) Understand that RCPD officers have the potential to be strong supporters of traumatized and vulnerable Native youth. As ambassadors of city government and official authority, RCPD officers have tremendous potential to frame the thinking and identity of Native youth regarding their place in the broader community.
 - c) This transformation from negative to positive relationships (beyond those instances where individual officers already have positive relationships with Native youth) will require explicit training of all RCPD officers by trauma informed experts from the Native American community who have a specific background in the healing of historically traumatized youth populations (e.g., Ethleen Iron Cloud Two Dogs, Jeremy Fields). This training should be oriented to prepare RCPD officers to use every opportunity they are given to positively reinforce the identity and place of Native youth in the Rapid City community.

5. Stop treating groups of Native youth as "threats" to public safety.
 - a) Treat Native youth as you would like to be treated – the golden rule. Positive energy is felt, as is negative energy, and youth know the difference. They are looking to understand the intent of RCPD officers. They are sensitive to the spirit (intentions) of officers. It is the Lakota way.
 - b) Too often a Native youth's first experience with PD is during/after a threatening interaction. Perhaps nothing will help build trust among the Native community than making a genuine effort to engage the youth positively.
 - c) If there is a motivation for questioning groups of Native kids playing in the community or just walking together, the motivation should be communicated with the Native community as part of the investment in transparent dialogue within the dialogue process recommended in item #1 above. If there is a problem that justifies these negative interactions, the community wants to be informed so they can understand it, rather than experiencing fear or frustration that comes along with not understanding why this happens, which results in

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youth, parents and elders fearing that Native youth are being profiled or singled out for unjust treatment.

6. Provide tours and “friendly” access to police station, squad cars, and special units.
 - a) Go behind the scene with Native youth. Show them the unexpected – what they don’t see but are naturally curious about.
 - b) The tour should be a values-based experience, promoting service and empathy for Native youth – a model of desired adult behavior.

Theme Three: Develop Trauma-Informed Strategies and Promote Healing

7. Use advanced de-escalation skills when confronting long-term anger and historical trauma within the Native Community.
 - a) Understand why many Native people are “acting up.” Officers should expect the conflicts that result from long-term anger and historic trauma and prepare for de-escalation of community members.
 - b) Take time to show you care – really care – about Native community members. This will go a long way to getting Native community members to treat RCPD officers as they want to be treated. It is a two-way street.
 - c) Officers should understand that intra-community violence is also a result of historical trauma and should view community violence through this lens.
 - d) When officers are not surprised by long-term anger and historical trauma they can work to establish their own level of comfort to support de-escalation leading to officer and community member well-being.
 - e) Officers should seek backup, mentoring, training, and other resources to feel comfortable responding. Officers cannot be expected to de-escalate if they are in an activated mind frame. This is part of Item “b” above – take the time to have interactions go well. Slow down the patrol mind-frame of quick turn interactions.
8. Look deeper into Lakota culture to heal past conflict and teach healing paths forward.
 - a) Seek restoration through guardianship. To pursue desired healing, RCPD officers accepting Akicita role would be transformative. RCPD must invest in further development of Akicita programming within existing officer corps as well as for new/prospective officers.
 - b) Develop incentives for officer transformation to guardianship.
 - c) Develop metrics for officer transformation.
 - d) Develop RCPD recognition ceremonies, institutional incentives, and performance evaluation metrics for RCPD officers who encourage Native youth and serve Native community member interests.

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9. Engage Lakota learning and healing strategies.
 - a) Encourage and incentivize RCPD officers to acquire Lakota language skills.
 1. The word Lakota translates into English as “allies” and so we want it to be the case that RCPD wishes to be an ally. As an institution, RCPD is so important and we want the institution to change and be successful. Learning the language is an essential element of cultural awareness and the Lakota value of generosity.
 2. Culturally, language is embedded in everything we do. It's the baseline for opening doors to relationships and understanding.
 3. There is a language summit this year at OLC in June – every day for a week provided by linguistic experts that understand how to teach the language to beginners and those able to already speak the language. Also, as an example, Ethleen Iron Cloud Two Dogs is able to teach the language in the context of the who, why, and what so it is more than just learning the language. This knowledge can lead to systemic change, going deeper to understand the people and the culture, which is possible when RCPD officers **want to learn** the culture rather than being required and managed. This is why we ask RCPD to encourage and incentivize, rather than require it.
 4. Learn Lakota greetings and a basic understanding of terms, sayings, and their meaning. This has symbolic and practical value. It will show officers/RCPD want to break down barriers, which has great symbolic meaning and spirit. It can also help reduce misunderstandings of what might be innocent exchanges with Lakota speakers.
 - b) Cultural intelligence is learned through motivation, knowledge, strategy and action. Identify what is driving Assistant Chief Don Hedrick (internally and externally) to learn Lakota language and work to develop this motivation within the institution more broadly. At minimum, identify similar motivations to AC Hedrick and incentivize the engagement of this motivation and knowledge to develop a strategy and action. This will require an investment of resources to identify and nurture this motivation to be culturally intelligent. Here, what we are hoping for is the creation of an ethical space to avoid cultural confusion. Sharing the Lakota language, which is a language rich in meaning and value, is a tool to reduce cultural confusion and close gaps between Native community members and RCPD officers, as well as showing a genuine interest in knowing the people RCPD is serving and protecting. This is the transformation we seek and make recommendations for in this document (in the CHI Rapid City program).

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- c) Utilize the good work that already exists among wisdom keepers in the Rapid City Native community. Learn the historical and cultural knowledge of Lakota (allies). This program should include:
 - 1. Cultural knowledge
 - 2. Lakota Mental Health First Aid
 - 3. Star Knowledge
 - 4. Inipi as a form of debriefing after critical incidents (see item 10.b. below)
 - 5. Supporting the healing of RCPD officers who have become jaded by their experience with Native crime and victimization, to bring back their spirit.

- 10. Support efforts for Native community to honor / recognize / celebrate Native and non-Native officers who show courage in facing traumatic incidents while showing respect/caring for Native people.
 - a) Hold an annual ceremony or banquet for recognizing progress and sharing models of success when officers or community members de-escalate. RCPD and Native community must support and celebrate these interactions.
 - b) Provide Lakota healing ceremonies for officers' well-being and trauma recovery when officers experience trauma in their community policing efforts.

- 11. Use every step in the use-of-force continuum when incidents escalate.
 - a) Teach officers to not jump steps in use-of-force continuum and insure accountability through body worn camera program. As noted above, the realization that community violence is a predictable result of historical trauma and should be treated through a trauma informed lens. Here, we are asking for a stronger match between use of force and trauma informed trainings and police behavior in the community.
 - b) Develop protocols to protect officers so they are not escalated or triggered.
 - c) Develop protocols to protect community members so they are not escalated or triggered.

- 12. Share trauma-informed trainings developed by Quality of Life Unit with Native community.
 - a) Native community needs their own trauma training. There is so much pain in the community and community members need to know more about where it comes from as a step toward healing.
 - b) The effort to help inform Native community of historic trauma is justifiable from a healing perspective and also from the perspective of reducing crime and victimization.

- 13. Engage in careful evaluation of trauma informed programming.
 - a) How is RCPD measuring the success of their trauma informed initiatives?
 - b) Need follow up for accountability AND healing.

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- c) It is important to understand there are two kinds of accountability. One is mainstream evidence-based accountability and the second is cultural practice with different practices to advance understanding, including using the chanupa to keep the word with a clear mind.
 - d) Invite RCPD to join cultural practices instead of Natives always having to act within the majority culture. If officers can listen, trauma will lessen, and trust will grow AND culture will be restored.
 - e) Share stories of Native American struggle to create understanding of what Native community members have been through -- remove isolation and distance. Publish these stories so they can be heard. This sharing will make everyone stronger. The stories are empowering and so is the telling of them.
14. Extend initiatives of RCPD leadership to patrol officers and investigators.
- a) Regardless of the positions and attitudes of RCPD leadership, some officers are not changing their ways.
 - b) Examples of regressive tactics include the aggressive questioning of Native children that occurred at midnight and use of force to intervene in school yard fights among young Native children. We understand RCPD leadership's commitment to 'Radical Compassion' but this is contradicted in cases where patrol officers are not acting in a way that is consistent with this commitment.
15. Become more transparent about unconscious bias (at minimum) and attitudes of White supremacy (at maximum) and the oppressive conditions they create. This is not something RCPD created but it runs deep in American social, political, economic, and historical contexts. With all the research on this nationally, there is no way Rapid City has avoided it. IT IS HERE and it is within RCPD officers.
- a) Once this is acknowledged, rather than treated like an imaginary problem on the part of people of color, increased trust and reliance will occur, allowing community members to be served and seek out assistance.
 - b) Encourage officers to identify their own values of compassion and caring so that interactions are genuine – not an “act” based on how officers think Lakota people (or themselves) should act. Current/past efforts at training officers to be “different” have not worked. We need everyone to be their genuine and best selves to make the differences for all to collectively heal.

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Theme Four: Treat Native American Community Members as Partners in Public Safety and Officer Wellness

16. Integrate the RCPD so that it reflects the community it serves.

- a) Consult with Native American community leaders inside and outside of the law enforcement community to enhance and sustain recruitment of Native American RCPD officers.
- b) Consult with federal partners in Artesia who train BIA and Tribal law enforcement and national associations of law enforcement professionals.
- c) Consult with CRST, OST, RST police chiefs to see what strategies have worked for their recruitment efforts.
- d) Create region-wide task force that engages stakeholders in the recruitment effort.
- e) Change the hair requirement for men. Young men who wish to join the force but walk in a traditional way will not apply without this change. Hair has important cultural meaning. If there was a greater understanding of cultural history and values, it would be abundantly clear why this policy is a severe impediment to Native officer recruitment and, in particular, recruitment of the type of young men we hope and pray will join RCPD.
- f) Add a Native recruiter and retention staff member at RCPD to coach, mentor and support Native officers. A model for this is the work that Bev Warne does for the SDSU Nursing Program in Rapid City.
- g) Perform a program assessment of the Akitica program and share it with the CHI Working Group to consider program enhancements, revisions and/or revitalizations.

17. Engage in relationship building efforts that build capacity, not resentment.

- a) A relationship between RCPD and the Native Community begins with awareness of who we are and building respect for the differences. The police and public often see the destitute of our people; criminal histories and substance abuse. This is not, however, a full picture of the Lakota People. To many non-Natives, our community is invisible. For a positive relationship to emerge we feel the police (and community as a whole) need to see the positive contributions we make to society and to civilization.
 1. A training and video done by Indian people for all police officers would advance this goal. The video should focus on goodwill projects done by Natives volunteering their time to help the community and showing people we are positive influence in the community.

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2. This should be done as a counterbalance to the historical trauma training currently provided to all officers that seeks to rehumanize Natives in Rapid City.
 3. This training should build a picture of Lakota people as full humans and should be combined with posting of mottos or images inside the halls of the public safety building (RCPD offices) for RCPD officers to carry with them every day and every shift.
 4. We need to share the knowledge of the invisible Native people who are happy and healthy community members simply living their everyday lives -- they are nursing instructors, they're radiology technicians, they are arts educators, community leaders.
- b) Provide a practical training that promotes understanding of how recidivism occurs, how drug abuse occurs, that can challenge the dominant narrative of established views of Native Americans that create terrible barriers to the relationships we are trying to build – to collective healing.
 1. An example is the work of Jeremy Fields who offers a very practical training that guides transformational views on Native Americans.
 - c) Promote a collaboration on goodwill projects where Native American community members and RCPD officers volunteer their time to help the community and share stories of how we all are a positive influence in community.
 1. These stories should be shared through our people visiting organizations, companies, etc., within the city to do presentations highlighting the positive contributions of Native people in Rapid City that can also boost the reputation of RCPD as allies/partners.
 - d) To achieve the goal of peace within the community it's going to have to be a change on both sides; within the Native Community and also within RCPD. We know non-Native people do not have anything to fear from us. The Creator has made us different. Different language, different living styles, different dress, different beliefs, yet we are all one people. The Creator made us all humans related to each other and other things. Mitakuye Oyasin.
18. Create a Native Community Street Team.
- a) Internal interventions that are independent from law enforcement are needed within the Native community to build comfort with the interventions, but also to take ownership of the solutions.
 - b) A street team should work as a strong and positive partner with RCPD, but also as a means to transition from the reliance the Native Community currently has on RCPD to address internal conflicts and struggles.

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19. Facilitate interventions with crime victims by appropriately oriented community members.
 - a) Victims need comfort and safety free from fear and intimidation.
 - b) Match age to age, gender to gender, race to race, etc.
 - c) A major need for the acceptance of assistance is the presentation of RCPD officers as warriors not guardians.
 - d) Community members who assist in the service to crime victims deserve to be paid for their time. They should be considered regular staff not unpaid volunteers or community members whenever possible or so desired.

20. Remove barriers, enhance services, and collective healing through supporting and enhancing existing Native American leadership already active in the city.
 - a) Cultural competency requires RCPD to understand and partner with existing leadership in a culturally appropriate form.
 - b) As a model for this approach, when the Federal Government consults with Native communities they maintain a contacts list updated from the Native community. This is an essential function and provides social capital and the continuation of the work of existing leaders.
 - c) Ideas to advance this effort is to meet with the RCCC Council of Elders regularly and to utilize the dialogue procedures identified in Theme One.

21. Collaboratively develop and implement grant programs that create “pass through” opportunities to Native programs.
 - a) Negotiate MOUs and invest in Native-led programming.
 - b) Use RCPD resources and networking to facilitate the development and capacity building of Native-led nonprofit organizations to partner with RCPD to advance shared public safety interests.

22. Facilitate police and community interactions out of law enforcement context
 - a) No uniforms, no business, just getting to know each other.
 - b) Expand PAL model and use it for arts and culture activities involving RCPD officers and Native youth.
 - c) Create wellness-based groups to grow understanding and trust “so we are not all scared to death” of each other. Ask these groups to sponsor/mentor individuals who struggle with recidivism and repeated substance abuse. Helping these individuals as part of a joint effort between volunteer RCPD officers and community members will be an extremely impactful engagement, building trust while helping community members overcome what they have not been able to overcome on their own or within the existing criminal justice system.

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- d) To really get to know people you need to get out of your comfort zone to be with those people. This goes both ways – for Natives and for non-Natives. Spend time with people who don't look like you, pray like you, eat like you... Be with them as human beings, something we all share.
- e) Participate in more mural projects with Native artists and youth.
 1. Encourage youth through supporting their work.
 2. Build mutual respect and trust for Native youth and RCPD officers.
 3. RCPD officers can have some ownership of the murals.