



303 Indigenous Productions

Process Brief

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Project Description

303 Indigenous Productions is the second cohort of the Colorado Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) implementation of the Charting a Course for Economic Mobility and Responsible Parenting Grant, sponsored by the federal Office of Child Support Enforcement (OCSE). The target population for this project cohort was urban Native youth, aged 13 to 19¹, residing in the Denver and Boulder metro areas, interested in strengthening their connection to culture and building relationships with other Native youth. The project began in July 2021 and focused on engaging youth in a transformational learning process through the creation of original social marketing media content and the positive application of new media, aiming to strengthen their sense of cultural connectedness and urban Native identity while producing and disseminating a media message that endorses that action to their peers.

¹ Note the target age group cited in the funding opportunity announcement was 13-25 years.

The implementation team partnered with the Denver Indian Family Resource Center (DIFRC) to recruit youth for the project. The implementation team also partnered with Dr. Nancy Lucero, a consultant, to develop a curriculum that integrates aspects of urban Native identity and culture. Dr. Nancy Lucero (Mississippi Choctaw) is a researcher, professor, and licensed clinical social worker with extensive expertise in designing and implementing trauma-informed programming and research for tribal and urban Indian child welfare services. The curriculum was adapted from the Life. As Told By Youth (formerly



referred to as Trailbuilding) curriculum, developed for Colorado's first cohort of the Economic Mobility and Responsible Parenting grant (September 30, 2020-September 29, 2025). Topics covered in the curriculum include the success sequence, child support, healthy relationships, sexual and reproductive health, Native identity and culture, and professional development skills in filmmaking, social media content production, brand development, and marketing. The implementation team also created videos that served as key components of the curriculum, featuring members of the target population and capturing their perspectives on topics related to grant outcomes. These videos were incorporated into the curriculum to help prompt discussion and foster critical thought among participating youth.

After extensive development and ongoing recruitment, the curriculum was implemented with 12 youth during a 5-day in-person intensive group-level intervention (GLI) workshop series. Over the 5 days, the youth were exposed to content from each module and participated in cognitive exercises to develop a concept, storyline, and characters for their film. On the final day of the GLI, the youth reached consensus on their film concept, marking the start of pre-production. In the weeks following the GLI, the implementation team and participating youth engaged in a host of pre-production activities, including wardrobe and production design, location scouting, character development, and scriptwriting. This work culminated in a two-day film production, and post-production (editing) began immediately after filming. The co-creation and development of branding, social media, and marketing materials with the youth occurred alongside filming and post-production activities.

The youth and implementation team hosted a community premiere event on June 28, 2025. The event showcased the completed film *Concrete Warriors*, a narrative, behind-the-scenes documentary short film, and interviews with youth participants discussing curriculum themes. It also served as an opportunity to raise awareness of DIFRC's mission and work serving and advocating for Native families. Attendees included participating youth and their families, the implementation team, DIFRC staff, representatives from Native community organizations, Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) staff, and community members. The project culminated in a community-level intervention (CLI) designed to impact the attitudes and behaviors of the target audience, urban Native youth. In addition to organic dissemination, the CLI utilized a paid social media marketing campaign to distribute the film and other social marketing products. 303 Indigenous Productions is a project that began on July 1, 2021, and ended on June 30, 2026.

Implementation Team

The 303 Indigenous Productions project was managed through a collaboration between the Colorado Division of Child Support Services (DCSS) and the Colorado Sexual Health Initiative (CoSHI), both divisions within the CDHS. Other collaborators included the Denver Indian Family Resource Center (DIFRC), Connected Health Solutions, Inc. (CHS), Spearca Communications, and the Center for Policy Research (CPR). DCSS provided project management, and CoSHI brought their expertise in positive youth development (PYD) frameworks to the planning and management process. DIFRC recruited youth from the target population and helped ensure that the voice of urban Native youth was incorporated into every aspect of the project, including assistance with the development and implementation of the curriculum. CHS and Dr. Lucero co-created the curriculum, starting with the existing Life. As Told By Youth curriculum structure, heavily adapting core elements, and reimagining the essential core components using Native research and approaches. CHS, CoSHI, and DIFRC staff co-facilitated the curriculum. Spearca Communications provided social media marketing, website development, and branding consultation. CPR evaluated the project.

The implementation team was composed of:

Jolene Holgate (Diné), **Aurelia Guerue** (Sicangu Lakota & Diné),
and **Terrell Padilla** (Oglala Lakota & Diné), Denver Indian Family Resource Center

Nancy Lucero (Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians), Indian Child Welfare Workforce
and Service Delivery Consultant

Phil Gover (Pawnee/Coctaw), Former CDHS Tribal Liaison

Anna Wendt, **Olivia Cornejo**, and **Sabrina Montoya**, DCSS Program Innovation Unit and
Colorado Sexual Health Initiative (CoSHI)

Kenneth Shults, Connected Health Solutions, Inc.

Maggie Spain, Spearca Communications

Destinee Starcher and **Arely Aguirre**, Center for Policy Research

Throughout the brief, the terms “implementation team” and “program implementors” will be used interchangeably to refer to the team mentioned above.

Overview of the Brief

The purpose of this brief is to describe the implementation process from start to finish. The brief begins by describing the curriculum and the adaptations made to it from the implementation team's perspective. The next section then outlines the recruitment process, including the creation and dissemination of the recruitment flyer, youth compensation, application process, and onboarding meetings. The GLI is then described, including the participants' reaction to the GLI and contributions from the implementation team. The final section describes the CLI, focusing on a paid social media campaign. Each section includes a summary of project successes and recommendations for future implementation improvements.

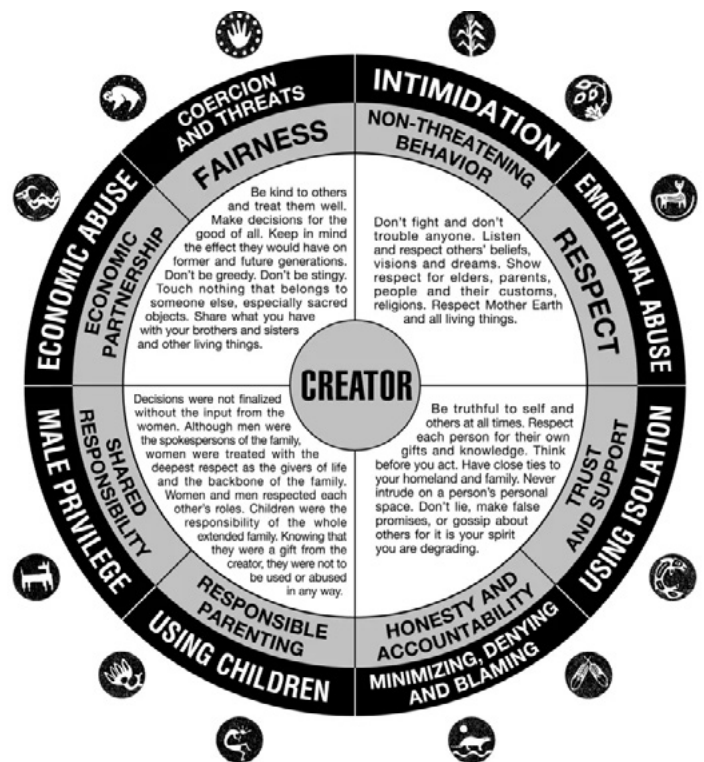
Curriculum

Description

The 303 Indigenous Productions project curriculum centered on the concept of economic flexibility. To increase understanding of the concept of economic flexibility, the curriculum describes the cycle of poverty, a set of cultural patterns that keep economically disenfranchised families trapped in poverty for generations. The curriculum includes 5 modules that have been adapted to meet the needs of Native youth in the Denver Metro area. Specifically, Module 1 describes the evolution of media, its history, and its impact on today's society, including the importance of emotion and storytelling. Module 2 provides participating youth with an overview of social marketing and the theory of behavior change to help them understand how to influence their target audience. Next, Module 3 discusses marketing terms, parenting, family structures, how trauma affects economic mobility and responsible parenting, fathers, child support services, economic mobility versus flexibility, healthy relationships, stereotypes, and stigmas about Native folk. Module 4 focuses on helping the youth to generate potential ideas for their short film. Finally, Module 5 focuses on helping the youth write the script for their short film. At the end of the GLI, the goal is to have a completed draft of the short film script.

The curriculum created for the 303 Indigenous Productions project was adapted from the existing Life. As Told By Youth curriculum, developed for DCSS's first implementation of the Charting a Course for Economic Mobility and Responsible Parenting grant. The 303 Indigenous Productions project curriculum was informed by core components of several curricula, including Respecting the Circle of Life, Parenting and Paternity Awareness (p.a.p.a), Street Smart, and Community Peers Reaching Out and Modeling Intervention Strategies (P.R.O.M.I.S.E.).

Creator Wheel for Healthy Relationships



- **Respecting the Circle of Life** is a pregnancy prevention program designed to enhance the sexual and reproductive health knowledge of Native youth. The curriculum integrates Native cultural knowledge and emphasizes individual, family, and community-level responsibility. Components of this curriculum were incorporated to help address the specific needs of the target population for this cohort.
- **P.a.p.a.** is a school-based curriculum that teaches students about responsible parenting, paternity and paternity establishment, and the realities of having a child during adolescence, with the underlying intent of encouraging youth to adhere to the success sequence to increase their economic mobility or flexibility. The success sequence is defined as completing one's education, establishing a career path, and entering a committed relationship before having a child.
- **Street Smart** is an adolescent cognitive-behavioral skills-building HIV/STI prevention program grounded in social learning theory for youth.² The Street Smart approach includes psychoeducational, participatory skills-building activities focused on problem-solving, sexual negotiation, affective awareness, emotional regulation and management, and the development of helpful coping strategies. The curriculum includes games, demonstrations, tokens of appreciation, visual tools like a “feeling thermometer,” and other activities to actively engage youth with the content.
- **Community P.R.O.M.I.S.E.** is a community-level model that utilizes role model stories. Peer mentors share stories in the community along with the distribution of harm reduction supplies to people who are living with HIV or may engage in behaviors that place them at risk for HIV. This approach relied on printed materials (zines, pamphlets, etc.) and was later adapted to use new-media-based strategies.

Development and Adaptation Process

The team focused on revising the curriculum to be more culturally responsive when increasing awareness of the cycle of poverty, healthy relationships, family planning, child support, and positive parenting and co-parenting practices. The specific adaptations made to the curriculum to target these outcomes are further described in the overview brief created for this project.³

The rest of this section describes the process of adapting the curriculum from the perspective of the implementation team. This adaptation process, led by DIFRC, CHS, DCSS, and CoSHI lasted 9 months. The team met virtually on a regular basis to review curriculum materials, refining module learning objectives and activities. As part of the curriculum adaptation process, interviews were conducted in July 2023 with members of the target population to capture their perspectives on the grant's outcomes. The videos served as the foundation of the curriculum, prompting discussion and fostering critical thought among the youth.

To better understand the successes and challenges of adapting curriculum for Native youth, CPR held a focus group with some of the agencies involved in the project. The implementation team was explicitly asked about the challenges they experienced in adapting the curriculum to better align with the needs of urban Native youth and about which aspects of the process worked well. When asked about the challenges of adapting the curriculum, the implementation team reported that the most difficult part of the process at the beginning was finding a Native lived-experience expert

² McLeod, S. (2011). Albert Bandura's social learning theory. *Simply Psychology*. London, 694, 695.

³ Starcher, D. & Aguirre, A. (2025). 303 Indigenous Productions: Overview brief. Center for Policy Research.

with expertise in program or curriculum development to consult on the program. As one focus group participant stated, *“one of the biggest challenges was just identifying the right people to be part of the work.”* Once that consultant was onboarded, another challenge was simply the time it took to build a relationship between the consultant and the other members of the implementation team. The time it took to build these relationships further delayed the project’s progress.

Other barriers included the general receptiveness of the people involved in the project. Youth retention, attendance, and timeliness over the 5 consecutive days of programming, as well as ongoing participation throughout the duration of the project, posed additional challenges.

The team also reported challenges with competing priorities and managing different roles or aspects of the project. One team member noted, *“There were competing priorities of the agency, the state, the clearance process, and who got final say.”* The final deliverables had to go through the DCSS internal clearance process, often requiring materials to be submitted with a 4-6-week turnaround. This required the implementation team to “hurry up and wait” to provide materials for approval but didn’t allow for adequate time for collaboration and revision. These competing priorities created challenges within the implementation team throughout the project. Regarding the challenges of managing different project roles, it was reported that *“it was difficult to manage the project while also managing all the other production aspects, managing the youth, and trying to get their buy-in.”*

Lastly, program implementors reported not having enough time and other resources to streamline the final curriculum. As one team member stated, *“I didn’t have time to whittle the 300 slides down to what was relevant.”* The same team member reported that, *“it would have been amazing for us to be able to sit with everyone to go through the whole curriculum, streamline, and let them red mark the whole thing. But there was just never time for that kind of stuff.”*

When asked about what worked well during development and adaptation of the curriculum, the team reported that the final materials were culturally grounded and beneficial for the target population. As stated by one team member, *“I do think that we found ways to connect the goals of the funders and produce materials that were culturally grounded. The stuff that we created, the activities and the rubrics, a lot of work and time went into that. I was able to get enough from folks to structure some cool ways to deliver the content to folks who would otherwise be incredibly resistant to it. I just think we found a nice balance. So, I do feel like overall it was very successful.”*

“If we could restart the process from the beginning, I would suggest identifying, onboarding, or sourcing an outside consultant from the start.”

- IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MEMBER

The team was asked about ways to improve future iterations of the program. As stated by one team member, *“if we could restart the process from the beginning, the changes that I would suggest making are identifying, onboarding, or sourcing an outside consultant from the start.”* Identifying the external consultant early in the process would have helped build relationships between team members and ensured the project progressed at a good pace.

Recruitment

Youth recruitment for the project was led by Jolene Holgate and Aurelia Guerue at DIFRC with support from the implementation team. The first step in the recruitment process was to further identify and refine the target population. After engaging in several conversations, the implementation team decided that the target population for this study was *“Native youth, ages 13 to 19, living in the Denver and Boulder metro areas, interested in strengthening their connection to culture and building relationships with other Native youth.”* The team aimed to recruit up to 15 youth who were interested in participating in the project.

Creation and Distribution of Recruitment Flyer

The implementation team created a flyer that described the project, including the requirements and compensation for participation. As described by the implementation team, the process of creating the initial recruitment flyer was *“pretty easy and straightforward because we used the template from Life. As Told By Youth and then expanded on it to reflect the needs of this participant population.”* The team did run into an issue with a recruitment flyer that was created for the curriculum video shoot back in August of 2023. The young person whose stock photo was used in the flyer got in touch with the implementation team to deny permission for its use. As stated by a team member, this was a lesson learned about using stock photographs: *“I think the lesson learned there and one that we implemented on the 303 Indigenous Productions website is that we tried to not use stock imagery at all, and wherever possible, we used photos from the GLI. We used photos from the shoot where we had permission and where we were capturing images of folks in the community.”* As a result, the GLI recruitment flyer featured photographs taken from the curriculum video shoot rather than use of stock photos.

Physical copies of the flyer were posted in communities across the Denver metro area. The flyer was also shared across DCSS and DIFRC Instagram and Facebook pages in February of 2025. Although the recruitment flyer was shared on social media, DIFRC and other members of the implementation team intentionally focused more on recruiting youth from the community, given the Native community’s tight-knit nature. As a result, most of the youth were recruited from the area through DIFRC’s community connections and word of mouth.



Youth Compensation for Participation

To bolster recruitment, the youth were offered \$500 each to participate in the project. Providing compensation to the youth was suggested in response to retention issues in the first cohort, with payments made upon completion of specific project milestones. The compensation plan was structured to incentivize the youth to participate in the entire project from start to finish. When this compensation process was presented to the youth on the first day of the GLI, the plan to reward youth who participated more fully than others clashed with cultural expectations of fairness. As explained by a team member, *“I think what we didn’t anticipate with the compensation piece is conversations around creating an opportunity for some to receive monetary incentives, that others miss out on. It was a cultural component we didn’t really think through beforehand. That aspect was very quickly checked [by Native members of the implementation team].”*



“I think what we didn’t anticipate with the compensation piece is conversations around creating an opportunity for some to receive monetary incentives, that others miss out on.”

- IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MEMBER

Additionally, some of the youth were caught off guard by the amount of work required to complete the project, especially in the post-production phase. In practice, these issues led to inconsistent and unclear expectations regarding youth compensation. Despite these issues, the implementation team still felt that compensation for participating youth (especially given at certain milestones of project completion) was an effective way to keep youth engaged in the process. However, to improve this process moving forward, the team recommends setting clear guidelines for when and how youth will be compensated at the beginning of the project. The team also recommends spreading out the payments to keep youth engaged throughout the project. Additionally, strong youth program coordination is necessary to ensure all program youth are aware of and commit to the goals and expectations tied to compensation, as this falls outside the bounds of production team members and those overseeing the grant.

Application Process

After reviewing the recruitment materials, interested youth were asked to complete an application via Google Forms or on paper. Information collected in the application included contact information, demographics, why they were interested in participating in the project, how they learned about the project, what they considered to be the most critical issues facing Native youth today, which production role appealed to them, and whether they had reliable transportation. Of the 14 youth who applied, 12 were selected to participate in the project. Selection criteria included being part of

the target population and the desire to be part of the project long-term. Youth were notified of their acceptance to the project in early March of 2025.

Similar to the milestone-based incentives, the application process was used to increase youth investment. As stated by one team member, *“applying to the program increases investment in participation, and it ensures that it feels like a rewarding thing to be accepted. So, it changes the relationship. It does really work, and it works for pretty much all the projects that I do, and I think it worked in this case too.”*

APPLICATION PROCESS SUCCESS

Given the success of the application process, the team would recommend implementing it in future project iterations.

Recruitment and Project Meetings

Youth were invited to attend 2 meetings before the GLI to encourage long-term participation in the project. These meetings were hosted by DIFRC staff with support from the rest of the implementation team. As part of these meetings, the youth learned more about the project, asked follow-up questions, and provided input on the GLI dates. Finally, to help solidify youth involvement, the implementation team designed and held a hybrid project orientation event the weekend before the GLI. At this event, the implementation team provided details on GLI logistics and addressed questions from the youth and their families.



Group-Level Intervention (GLI)

In March of 2025, 12 Native youth ages 12 to 19⁴ attended a 5-day GLI held in Denver, resulting in the creation of a social marketing short film. As part of the GLI, the youth engaged in the curriculum activities and then began the filmmaking “pre-production” process. The youth producers wrote, produced, and acted in the film. The short film, titled *Concrete Warriors*, was filmed over two days in May of 2025 and was created in collaboration with DIFRC. Branding and marketing workshops were held during the

production period in May by Spearca Communications, resulting in the creation of the 303 Indigenous Productions logo and brand name, as well as subsequent website development. The film and accompanying materials were showcased in a community premiere on June 28, 2025, in Denver.



Participant Description

All the youth ($n = 12$) who participated in the GLI identified as American Indian or Native, as well as other races or ethnicities. These youth identified with various nation/tribe/clan(s), including Dine (Navajo), Ziwia, Jemez, Cochiti Pueblo, Tap Pilam, Apache, Comanche, Chippewa Cree, and Standing Rock Lakota/Dakota. Seven youths self-identified as female, and five identified as male. These youth ranged in age from 12 to 19, with an average age of 16.33 ($SD = 2.61$) years. Ten of these youth identified as straight, and two identified as asexual/aromantic.

Participating Youth Reactions

The implementation team interviewed 8 of the youth who participated in the GLI on the last day of the workshop. As part of this interview, the youth were asked about their experience participating in the project. Some of the youth revealed that, while they were initially hesitant to participate in the project, their opinions changed as it progressed.

“When I joined this program, and we started learning, I was like this was not what I expected at all. I was expecting to go out with a group of kids, film places, and take videos. Then when we started learning the hard parts of the Native history... it was worth coming every morning, it was worth sitting there from nine to five and learning all these things.”

- YOUTH PARTICIPANT

⁴ Although the target population was youth aged 13-19, one 12-year-old did participate in the GLI.

When describing which aspects of the project they enjoyed most, many of the youth reported that the opportunity to connect with other Native youth of similar backgrounds was the most rewarding part of their experience. As said by one youth, *“I think the most meaningful part of the whole workshop was just being in a space where there are other indigenous youth who have the same experience as me, and they often don’t really share too much of their feelings when I’m around them every day. But when we’re in a space where we talk about things that are really deep trauma and culture and traditions on a deeper level, that’s beautiful to see.”*

“The most meaningful part of the whole workshop was just being in a space where there are other indigenous youth who have the same experience as me.”

- YOUTH PARTICIPANT

In describing their experiences working with the implementation team, the youth reported feeling appreciated and supported by the team. As stated by one participant, *“Just getting the intellectual feedback from all the mentors was very helpful. And I feel like the mentors really helped us figure out how to break it down [creating the film] in our minds.”*

Implementation Team Reactions

Overall, the GLI was successful in helping the youth learn more about the curriculum’s core areas of focus. Curriculum facilitators reported that youth were highly engaged in programming on parenting, family structures, and economic mobility. The youth also greatly enjoyed participating in nuanced discussions about Native culture, identity, and connection. They were also very excited about creating, editing, and producing their film related to the ideas they learned that week.

The implementation team spent considerable time implementing lessons learned from cohort one to improve this iteration of the GLI. As stated by a member of the implementation team, *“given the lessons learned in cohort one, we really tried to work on some of those things, meaning check-ins before we did a level setting with parents. We did an information session. I feel like we really did a lot of the things that we missed in the first go around.”*

Despite the successes of the GLI, the curriculum facilitation team identified several implementation challenges. The biggest issue with implementing the curriculum during the GLI was timing. There was a lot of curriculum content to cover during a short period of time. Additionally, it was difficult to balance competing priorities, such as meeting the grant requirements and delivering the entire curriculum, with the needs of the youth. There are also challenges with both the youth and the youth program coordinator coming and going at various points in time throughout the GLI, which also impacted timing.

Native members of the implementation team also noted that federal grants are not always aligned with Native values regarding expected timelines and project deliverables. In future program cohorts, it will be essential to ensure clear communication and to outline expectations among team members, youth, and other stakeholders so that everyone understands the project’s expectations and how to tailor them to the agency’s and participants’ needs and cultural values. Another recommendation to improve the timing of future GLIs is to adjust the GLI’s cadence. For example, agencies can stagger the GLI intervention, work around school schedules, and find other ways to make it as accessible as possible to youth and program implementers.

Community-Level Intervention

For the CLI, youth were invited to view *Concrete Warriors* and related materials through an organic and paid social media campaign. The paid campaign ran for 7 weeks, from October 15 to December 7, 2025.⁵ Native youth targeted for this social media campaign were those aged 18-30 with annual household incomes less than \$65,000 and residing in the Denver, Colorado Springs, or Grand Junction media markets. Targeted ads directing youth to the [303 Indigenous Productions website](#) and film were shown across Snapchat, Instagram, and YouTube. Specifically, 6 videos or ads were shown on Snapchat, 9 videos and static ads, including reels, were shown on Instagram, and 6 videos were shown on YouTube.



AUDIENCE TARGETING

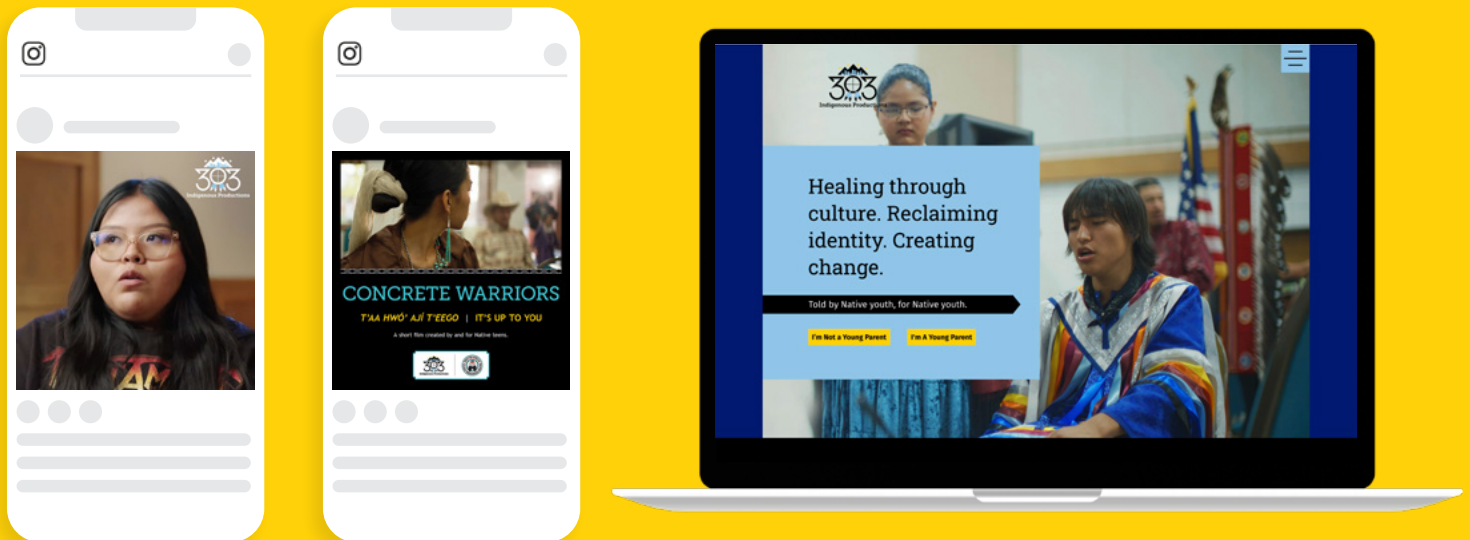
Deep Sync, a data analytics platform, was used to ensure social media ads were precisely targeted to reach Native youth.

The implementation team used lessons learned from the first cohort to improve the social media campaign. As stated by one team member, *“in terms of improving from the first cohort, I would say one of the things that we did for this campaign, which we’re very intentional in doing, is that we used a data collection technology called Deep Sync. The technology allows us to very specifically target Native youth in Instagram and Snapchat versus a lot of times when you’re on Meta, you can say, oh, I’m interested in such and such. So, some people can be like me a white girl living in Denver and say I’m interested in Native American culture, but clearly, I am not Native. And so, by using this type of technology, we got around that and we’re able to reach Native youth. And I’m really pleased with that, and I consider that a big success and win for the CLI.”*

Although this CLI was successful, it was not without some challenges. One big challenge was gaining access to the DIFRC’s Instagram account, which was needed for the paid social campaign. The organization’s Meta Business Account was linked to a former board member who no longer lived in Colorado, and it took an additional 6 weeks for the implementation team to locate the login information and access the account. As a result, the social media campaign was initially launched on a brand-new 303 Indigenous Productions Instagram account, and we did not tap into DIFRC’s account until halfway through the campaign, when we ran it through both channels.

⁵ The social media campaign lasted seven weeks and four days. However, for ease of reference, this period is referred to as seven weeks throughout the brief.

Another challenge related to the social media campaign was creating the website. As stated by a team member, *“the creation of the website was a challenge, significant because [some team members] were not engaged and not helpful in the way that I envisioned them being from the start.”* It was difficult for non-Native members of the implementation team to gather specific, local-level Native resources needed for the website. The lack of communication between agency staff and members of the implementation team caused delays to the rollout of the social media campaign.



303 Indigenous Productions Social and Website screenshots

Additionally, the team faced challenges with the timing of the film premiere. The film premiere event took place on June 28, 2025. However, the social media campaign did not officially launch until October 2025. By that point, many of the youth had lost their connection to the project, as it was no longer on their radars. To help correct this issue in the future, a team member recommended, *“If we had any dollars left to compensate them [the youth], I would have recommended that we give them some money to promote the social campaign and to promote Concrete Warriors more on their own social channels. But we didn’t have that money. So that’s a challenge and a potential recommendation for the future.”* Key to this challenge, as well as previously mentioned challenges, communication and timely responses to the implementation team members’ outreach were fraught. Many factors influenced this, such as the agency’s lack of access to key institutional information (e.g., Instagram account information), staff turnover, and the resulting onboarding curves of new staff, time and project management of agency staff whose workloads, management of other events and programs, and conference travel schedules reduced bandwidth. Overall, despite the challenges of the CLI, the implementation team largely considered it a success. As one team member stated, *“youth were able to create something so beautiful and powerful, and to get it out to the community in that way is a huge win.”*

“I would have recommended that we give [the youth] some money to promote the social campaign and to promote Concrete Warriors more on their own social channels.”

- IMPLEMENTATION TEAM MEMBER



To evaluate the impact of the social media campaign, data were collected from 3 separate sources: (1) Google Analytics linked to the 303 Indigenous Productions website, (2) performance metrics from the three social media platforms used in the paid social media campaign, and (3) a survey created by evaluators which was given to youth after they watched the *Concrete Warriors* film. An initial review of these data sources showed that the social media campaign was effective in encouraging 5,757 people to view the website and encouraging approximately 3,500 people to watch the *Concrete Warriors* film. Additional results from Google Analytics and performance metrics from the three social media platforms will be shared further in the upcoming outcomes brief.

However, survey data from the social media campaign cannot be analyzed. Despite offering increasing incentives for participation and including the survey link across multiple social media platforms, only three eligible surveys were completed. Participants were deemed eligible to complete the survey only if they were identified as Native youth and fell within the targeted age group of 13-19 years. One suggestion for increasing the response rate in future projects is to fund Native youth to share viewer surveys on their own social media rather than posting them on impersonal, non-Native platforms. This will help build trust and make it easier to engage a population that is extremely difficult to reach for research.

Despite the disappointing response rate, the evaluators improved the administration and distribution of this survey compared to the first cohort. In the first cohort, the social media campaign survey was subjected to a bot attack, resulting in an influx of 4,139 surveys over 2 weeks. Activating bot-detection tools such as reCAPTCHA on the Qualtrics survey platform helped prevent a bot attack during the 303 Indigenous Productions social media campaign.

Conclusions

The 303 Indigenous Productions project was overall a challenge to conceptualize and implement. Establishing relationships and building trust between the implementation team and the agency partner took place over a period of years. Building relationships and trust was the single biggest challenge underlying the project from its conception, contributing to repeated delays in meeting project objectives and timelines. Contributing to the issues with building relationships and trust within the implementation team was the fact that many key partners, staff, and bridge-building community members left the team, often abruptly, at various points throughout the project.



CHALLENGING INTERPERSONAL AND INTERCULTURAL DYNAMICS

The project benefited greatly from the presence of several Native supporters, who helped create bridges and translate [others'] intent in ways that reduced friction.

Finally, the effects of historical and generational trauma on Native willingness to build trust cannot be understated. Genuine efforts, good intentions, and earnest investment on the part of non-Native implementors will not always result in relations that align with their goals, expectations, and hopes. The project benefited greatly from the presence of several such Native supporters, who helped create bridges and translate intent in ways that reduced friction. The long-standing lack of trust between Native communities and “outsiders” must be considered at every step and stage of collaboration. This requires that non-Native collaborators consistently consider the context that informs interactions with their Native counterparts. Responding to challenging interpersonal and intercultural dynamics must be done judiciously, avoiding exacerbation of existing challenges. Naturally, there will always be instances wherein the responses, reactions, and behaviors of non-Native partners do not comport with these ideals. Because of the interconnected nature of Native communities and communication systems, such instances can result in a cascade effect that inflames and broadens tensions, thereby impeding momentum.

Despite the challenges that contributed to delays, the team was able to implement the GLI, assist participating youth in producing their film, and carry out the CLI. The following section provides some tangible recommendations to improve the implementation of future projects.

Recommendations to Improve Future Projects

For similar projects focused on Native youth, future program implementers should identify a Native consultant to develop and adapt the curriculum for the GLI. Identifying the external consultant early in the process will help build relationships and help ensure the project progresses at a good pace. When creating a recruitment flyer, avoid using stock photos and, if feasible, use photos from programming in all materials. Future projects should also plan for Native organizations to lead recruitment efforts.

Physical copies of the recruitment flyers should be posted across the community (at events, through organizations, etc.), rather than relying solely on social media to recruit Native youth.

Regarding youth compensation for participation and the application process, the implementation team recommends offering youth compensation for completing specific project milestones to keep them engaged. However, to improve this process, guidelines should be established for when and how youth will receive this compensation at the beginning of the project, and these guidelines should be supported by the implementing agency. Additionally, these payments should be spaced out to keep youth engaged throughout the project. The team also recommends implementing an application process for youth to increase their investment in the project.

Recommendations for improving the GLI include ensuring strong communication and outlining expectations for team members, youth, and other stakeholders so everyone knows what to expect regarding project timelines. Additionally, given issues with the timing of the GLI, future projects should explore other options for the cadence of the GLI. Rather than having 4 to 5 intensive in-person days, an agency can stagger the GLI intervention, making it more accessible to youth and program implementors.

Finally, to improve the CLI, future iterations should focus on improving communication between team members when coordinating the launch of social media platforms. Other recommendations include using funds to compensate youth for promoting the social media campaign. Regarding the social media campaign survey, evaluators should use bot-detection tools to help prevent bot attacks and recruit participating youth to share the survey on their social media channels to increase the response rate.

This brief is the second of three describing 303 Indigenous Productions and the evaluation of the process of implementing the project and assessing its outcomes. The Center for Policy Research developed the content for this and other evaluation briefs. For more information, contact dstarcher@centerforpolicyresearch.org.

303 Indigenous Productions is a project of:



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