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5 Years of Strengthening Relationships Among Native American Couples

All My Relations



Mission Statement

“With diverse voices from the Native American community: we bring the strength of a culturally-based, sensitive approach to building healthy relationships within family, community, and society by providing building blocks and lifelong tools to enhance and strengthen these relationships for Native People.”

**Strong Families
Healthy Relationships
Bright Futures**



“The creation of All My Relations Project has been an asset to the community since it’s inception in November of 2002. The excellent, compassionate, above and beyond efforts of the staff, in servicing the couples of the Nations community has helped to revive the true meaning of family and the healing process that takes place.”

- Advisory Committee
Member

About Us.....

All My Relations is a Native American couples program that offered a voluntary 10 hour relationship education course designed to enhance and strengthen communication for Native American Couples. The classes were broken up into two levels, each consisting of 10 hours and occurred in a group setting consisting of 8-12 couples. Completion of each level was followed by a three, six, and nine month data assessment and a fifth month booster. Once the couple completed the first level, they were eligible to enter the second level. Forty-six (46) couples completed both levels of the program, which extended over an 18 month time period. Upon entering the program 14 couples were married and 32 couples were unmarried. Ages of participants ranged from 18 to 58 and the average length of time a couple had been together was 6.65 years.

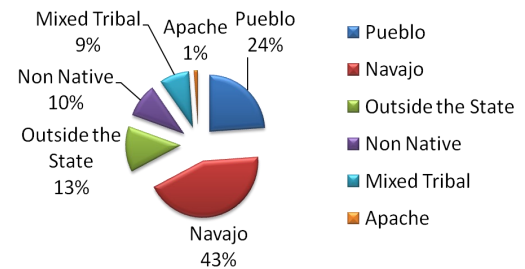
Eligibility:

- 18 years of age or older
- In a heterosexual committed relationship
- At least one individual in the relationship must be Native American
- Married or planning on marriage for your future

Program Highlights:

- No Cost
- Educational Classes
- Child Care Provided
- Meet Other Couples
- Gas Cards
- Door Prizes
- Stipends

Tribal Affiliation of Participants:



Communities Served:

- Albuquerque
- Acoma Pueblo
- Bernalillo
- Laguna Pueblo
- Kewa Pueblo
- Santa Ana Pueblo
- San Felipe Pueblo
- Rio Rancho
- Los Lunas
- Isleta Pueblo
- Tohajiilee
- Belen



What is P.A.I.R.S.?

Practical Application of Intimate Relationship Skills or PAIRS was the curriculum chosen because of its ability to be taught with many different ethnic groups. The core foundation of the PAIRS curriculum revolved around communication.

Participant Comment:

"I didn't think that my partner & I could even start addressing more of the anger issues & communication problems until we learned the tools of the DTR & Emotional Jug. Thank you from the bottom of my heart this was the last 'cry for help' for our relationship."

- AMR Participant

Advisory Committee

The Advisory Committee Members collaborated with the staff of the All My Relations Project to provide culturally appropriate marriage/relationship education/enrichment. The mission of the committee is to work together to ensure services are culturally sensitive and meet the needs of the community.

The committee is made up of community members who met with the All My Relations staff once a month to support and recommend methods to strengthen and sustain the project.

Highlight of PAIRS Tools

The following is a list of PAIRS topics discussed in the couples sessions to enhance the participants self-knowledge and to develop their ability to sustain a pleasurable intimate relationship.

- . Stages of a Relationship
- . Relationship Roadmap
- . Stress Styles of Communication
- . Daily Temperature Reading (DTR)
- . PAIRS Invitation Rule
- . Good Talking and Listening Rules
- . Emptying the Emotional Jug
- . Emotional Stages of Development
- . Social Support Network
- . Parenting/Step-Parenting
- . Family Systems Factory
- . Shared Meaning: Listening to Understand
- . Activities that Interfere with Closeness
- . Dirty Fighting
- . Time Out
- . Genogram
- . Caring Behaviors
- . Life Line
- . Anger in the Family
- . Family Dyad / Triad
- . Sources of Stress
- . Goodwill Umbrella
- . Iron Fist/Velvet Glove

What did participants expect to get out of the program

The following information is a few responses that were collected from questionnaires that participants answered during the intake process prior to being introduced to the curriculum.

Communicate in a positive effective manner to ensure I would be understood.

To be able to communicate to resolve arguments without it leading to yelling and put downs.

To talk to my partner about what I am feeling and not keep it inside.

To gain trust in my partner.

To strengthen my marriage.

I want to learn new ways to communicate to make my marriage stronger.

To meet other couples like us.

To be a positive example to our kids.

I want the fighting to stop and our family to be happy.

I want this relationship to be long term.

To learn from others and know we are not the only ones.

A better relationship.

Participant Comment:

"I loved this program. It was the best program out there for us Native couples that need help and are looking to make things better in their home and in the family."

- AMR Participant

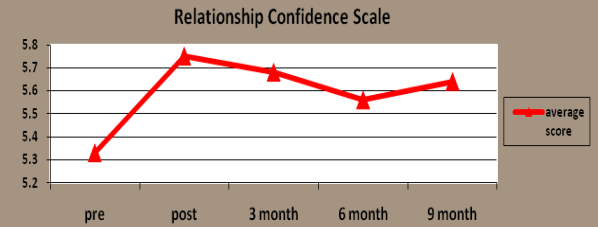
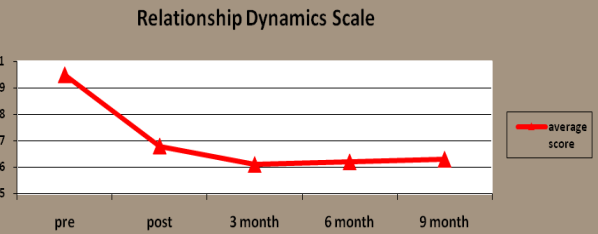
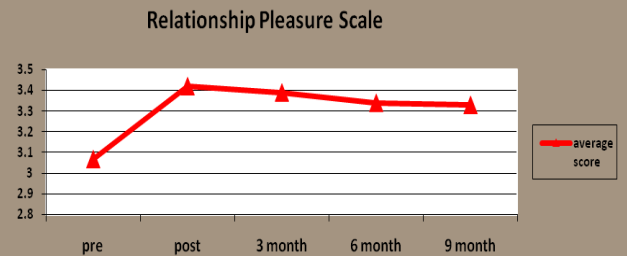


PAIRS I Results

The Relationship Pleasure Scale (developed by the PAIRS Foundation, Inc) is an objective 6-item self-report measure of general satisfaction. Higher scores correspond to greater levels of relationship pleasure and satisfaction.

The Relationship Dynamic Scale (adapted from Markman, H.J., Stanley, S.M., & Blumberg, L.L. (1994) *Fighting for Your Marriage: Positive Steps for a Loving and Lasting Relationship*. San Francisco, Jossey Bass, Inc.) is an 8-item survey scored with a three point Likert scale with higher scores indicating more problems with the relationship.

The Relationship Confidence Scale (developed by Stanley, S.M., Hoyer, L., & Trathen, D.W. (1994) *Unpublished manuscript, University of Denver, Denver CO,*) is a 10-item survey with a Likert scale from 1 to 7. Half the items were reverse coded and a high score indicated a healthier and happier relationship.



Results for all three instruments for PAIRS Level One improved significantly between the pre and the post test times. At each of the following times, the scores were maintained at relatively the same level at the post test time.

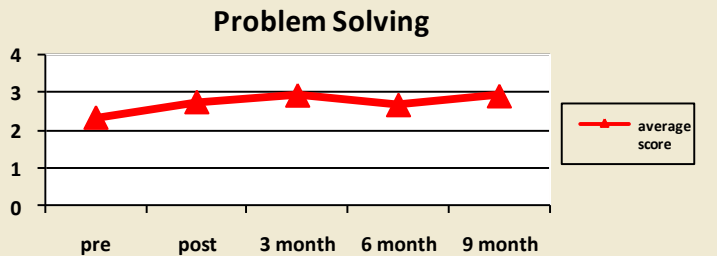
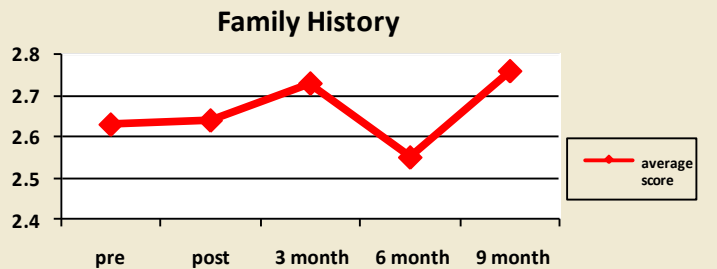
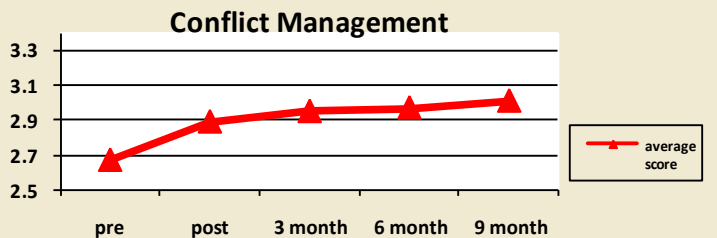
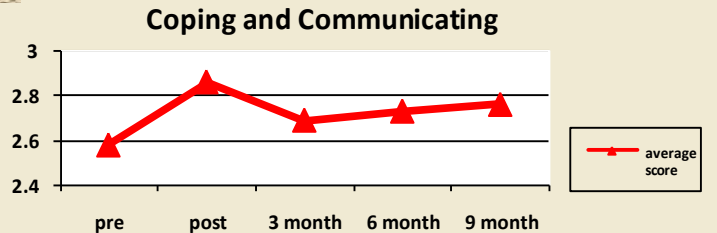
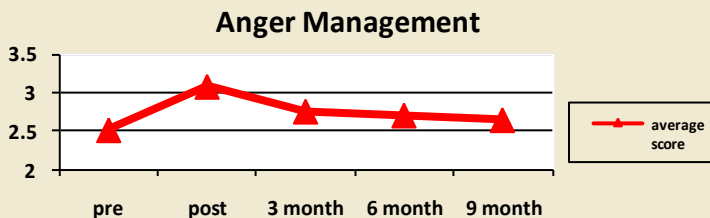


PAIRS II Results

The PAIRS Level Two Survey was developed (February 2009) on the PAIRS II Curriculum by the Program Coordinator and Evaluator with input from case managers. The 26-item survey with a Likert scale from 0 to 4 surveyed the following relationship areas: Coping and Communication; Anger Management; Problem Solving; Conflict Management; and Family History.

For the purpose of comparing pre and post scores, 0 or don't know responses were eliminated. Since so few respondents used this option, it was eliminated from the analysis and only the strongly disagree = 1 to strongly agree = 4 responses were used to construct the means for comparison before and after the program.

Results for PAIRS Level Two from the pre to post for the 92 participants who completed at this point in time was statistically significant for all five areas measured.



Program Evaluator Questions

The following are questions and responses of the 11 couples interviewed by the program evaluator after they had completed both levels of the PAIRS Curriculum.



Q: What was your favorite part of the program?

A: It gave us time to focus on each other without worrying about other distractions

- Connecting with each other
- Spending time with the other couples
- Eating meals together
- The DTR
- Silly group stuff
- Sharing as a group
- Childcare
- Native Staff
- Role Playing/Scenarios



Q: What do you use the most from the Couple's Relationship training in your daily life and interactions with your partner?

A: We use the emptying the Jug

- Not using Dirty Fighting
- The DTR
- Wishes
- Appreciations
- Time Outs
- Communication
- Self evaluation



Success Story:

This couple joined the program one year into their relationship. They joined the program not only because they were in a committed relationship and wanted to improve their communication techniques, but they also joined the program as a direct result of witnessing the positive impact that the program/curriculum can have on a couple. The woman's parents had gone through the program, and she took notice of positive changes in her parents' communication and behavior. As she put it "the yelling and arguments has decreased." This was one reason that encouraged the couple to join the program. They also joined as a form of premarital classes, as the couple was engaged.

During the sessions, the couple shared their experiences and voiced many times, how the program has not only made a difference in their relationship, but in their parent's relationship as well. This couple completed both levels of the program, just like her parents. When the couple completed their second level three month data assessment, they updated the staff that they recently got married. Overall, this family is making the positive changes needed in an effort to ensure that the next generation of relationships will be healthier not only with their intimate partner, but with other day to day interactions.



Q: What are two or three of the most useful methods you learned about from the program?

A: It taught me how to communicate better

- Emptying the Emotional Jug
- Daily Temperature Reading
- Dirty Fighting
- Time Outs
- Self Evaluation
- Self Control
- Communication
- Showing appreciation

Acknowledgements:

- 4 couples married after completing the program
- 1 couple is engaged to be married
- 13 babies were born



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