

Press Release

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Contact: Ben Tanzer
312-334-6823 – work
312-622-3536 – cell

OJJDP Awards Grant to Prevent Child Victimization of American Indian Children

CHICAGO – November 5, 2007 – Prevent Child Abuse America (PCA America), National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), and Purdue University Calumet have formed a partnership to improve the understanding of tribal youth victimization and its impact on future juvenile delinquency in order to reduce these experiences in American Indian/Alaska Native communities. It is estimated that 20% of Native children will be at risk for a life of victimization beginning at birth.

The Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) has awarded a \$1.5 million grant over three years for these three organizations to make this research possible.

The full extent of American Indian/Alaska Native youth victimization and its subsequent relationship to pathways of juvenile delinquency, anti-social behaviors, and self-destructive acts is not known. Producing knowledge about the victimization of tribal youth and its relationship to juvenile delinquency could become a cornerstone in achieving parity, safety, and well-being.

“We are pleased that the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention has awarded us this grant,” said PCA America President & CEO Jim Hmurovich. “We look forward to partnering with the National Indian Child Welfare Association and Purdue University Calumet on improving services to Native American children across the country.”

The project will include various approaches for this research, including culturally-appropriate surveys for American Indian/Alaska Native youth, adults, and tribal leaders. The results are intended to assist states and tribes in their strategic planning to reduce Native overrepresentation in youth victimization incidents.



“This project will bring into focus the link between American Indian childhood abuse victims, the subsequent trauma and the lasting negative impact that families, community leaders, and elders experience. We are pleased to be aligned with such an esteemed group of partners dedicated to prevention and promoting understanding these complex issues. We can interrupt the cycle of violence through diligent study, accurate data, and dialogue across the different facets of Indian Country,” said NICWA Executive Director Terry L. Cross, MSW, LCSW and member of the Seneca Nation of Indians.

Tom Pavkov, Director of the Institute for Social and Policy Research at Purdue University Calumet, said “We are excited about collaborating on this project with the leading child welfare advocacy organizations in the country. Given the leadership of both Prevent Child Abuse America and the National Indian Child Welfare Association, the information gathered as part of this study will contribute significantly to the well-being of Native American youth across the United States.”

ABOUT NICWA

NICWA is a national nonprofit and the most comprehensive source of information on American Indian child welfare and works on behalf of Indian children and families. NICWA provides public policy, research, advocacy, information, training, and community development services to a broad national audience, state child welfare agencies, and other organizations, agencies, and professionals interested in the field of Indian child welfare. Their website is www.nicwa.org or call 503/222-4044.

ABOUT PREVENT CHILD ABUSE AMERICA

Prevent Child Abuse America, founded in Chicago in 1972, is the nation’s leading organization working solely to prevent the abuse and neglect of our nation’s children. Through its chapters in 41 states and its voluntary home visitation services provided by Healthy Families America® in more than 400 communities nationwide, Prevent Child Abuse America helps provide healthy, safe and nurturing experiences for more than 100,000 families every year. For more information, please visit www.preventchildabuse.org.

ABOUT PURDUE UNIVERSITY CALUMET

The Institute for Social and Policy Research (ISPR) at Purdue University Calumet conducts applied social science and policy research related to the social, health, and educational challenges confronting the region served by Purdue University Calumet and beyond. The Institute also disseminates knowledge using methods designed to shorten the temporal gap between research and practice. The



Institute's dissemination activities include the publication of scholarly research, programs of training, design of interventions, program development and evidence-based practice education. Their website is <http://webs.calumet.purdue.edu/ispr>.

