

**Rap about Clap: A Qualitative Study of American Indian Youth and STDs/STIs
[Abstract]**

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This qualitative study explores American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth's knowledge and access to health information about sexually transmitted diseases and sexually transmitted infections (STDs/STIs). Focus groups and community-based participatory research practices contributed to engaging with youth ages fourteen to twenty-one from two Western tribal communities as well as tribal professionals. Results indicate that tribal youth differed by gender on knowledge-holding, misinformation about STDs/STIs, and access to health professionals. Youth demonstrated knowledge about different STDs/STIs, yet were often misinformed on specific symptoms and treatment. Lack of sexual health access for young men and lack of confidentiality in local health clinics were concerns. Interpersonal communication in dyads and small groups is an important medium in tribal communities and, in reservation-based communities, perhaps more so. The ability of AI/AN youth to discuss sexual health openly, honestly, and authentically holds great promise for designing effective youth messages that target sexually transmitted disease prevention efforts.

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