

National Indian Youth Leadership Project
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Project Venture NREPP History-the Journey

- 1990-1995. Funding from OSAP/SAMHSA, High Risk Youth Demonstration Grant supported the full development and testing of Project Venture model in four Native American communities in New Mexico (Zuni, Laguna, Acoma and Ramah Navajo)
- 1996-1999. Three-year replication grant from CSAP/SAMHSA in two new communities in New Mexico (Tohatchi and Gallup)
 - Selected for SAMHSA National High Risk Youth Study
 - Data collection for National High Risk Youth Study
- 1999. Broader adoption of Project Venture throughout the US began.
- 2000. Nominated by State of New Mexico for CADCA national Exemplary Program Award.
- 2002. Promising Program Award from CSAP
- 2003. Effective Program Award from CSAP
- 2005. Model Program Recognition, CSAP/NREPP
- 2007. Renewed CSAP NREPP Status with two additional studies.
- 2007. Milestone Program recognition, W.K. Kellogg Foundation

- 2008. Recognition from First Nations Behavioral Health Association, Exemplary Program for Children of Color
- 2009, Recognition from First Nations Behavioral Health Association, Best Practice for American Indian, Alaska Native and Pacific Island Indigenous Youth.
- 1999-2012. Implementations in AI and other communities in 25 states, 11 First Nations communities in Canada, and in Roma community in Hungary.

Unique to Project Venture

Unique series of favorable circumstances, being in the “right place at the right time”: (5 Year grant to develop the model, participation in the National High Risk Youth Study).

High Risk Youth Grant gave us sufficient time and resources to develop, refine, evaluate and “tweak” the model.

National High Risk Youth Study put Project Venture “on the map” with NREPP and brought invaluable research resources to the project.

Dr. Fred Springer, Director of the High Risk Youth Study, wrote several articles on his analysis of the study. The study identified eight characteristics of the most effective substance abuse prevention programs. Project Venture had all eight characteristics. This helped us become more analytical and strategic about further program development and dissemination. Project Venture was considered most effective program for American Indian Youth in the study.

One “unfavorable” circumstance was that NREPP didn’t exist when first Project Venture research began. Today, we know how to design an NREPP worthy study at the outset, but that was not the case originally.

Lessons Learned from the NREPP Process

- Evaluation must be supported as a priority .
- Design studies up front, starting with program design and proposal writing.
- High quality, meaningful research requires investment in time, resources and expertise.
- Know when to ask for help, how to identify research expertise outside of your agency.
- We need to promote large well funded demonstration and research studies such as the High Risk Youth Study in our various fields.
- With NREPP recognition comes “famebut no fortune”. Prepare for dissemination. Consider entrepreneurial strategies to support your outreach work. NIYLP was not prepared at first for the NREPP process and subsequent “replication” effort.
- NIYLP was “stretched” in many ways from outreach and dissemination demands. A good business plan is important.
- There are challenges in disseminating an “outside the box” model, with many components, high dosage, staffing requirements.
- Persistence and consistency pays.

Benefits of NREPP Process

- Recognition from NREPP has opened a lot of doors for NIYLP and Project Venture and provided us with opportunities to teach as well as to learn from others as we disseminate.
- Credibility on national/international level has been important in securing funds and other support for sustainability.
- NIYLP recently funded by Edna McConnell Clark Foundation for a three-year grant to further develop the evidence base for our new program, TANAY (Therapeutic Adventure for Native American Youth) based in large part of current NREPP status for Project Venture.
- NREPP status and evidence has attracted researchers at universities and national agencies to design research with us.