February 2025

Empowering Communities: Indigenous Lactation Training in Minocqua, WI

Family Health Center recently hosted a transformative three-day Indigenous Lactation Training in Minocqua, WI, funded by the HRSA Rural Communities Opioid Response Program - Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (RCORP-NAS) award. Led by Sacred Waters, the training aimed to empower healthcare providers and community members by deepening their understanding of breastfeeding's significance in Indigenous communities.

Welcome Slide from Sacred Waters

Elizabeth talks about the cultural importance of lactation support.

****Day 1: Honoring History and Culture****

The training began with an exploration of the historical and cultural importance of breastfeeding in Indigenous communities, emphasizing how it ties into wellness, identity, and tradition. Participants learned about the intergenerational knowledge disrupted by colonization and modern healthcare systems.

****Day 2: Addressing Substance Use and Trauma****

Kelsey talks about how trauma affects breastfeeding.

Day two focused on how substance use and trauma affect breastfeeding, particularly in Indigenous populations. Trainers discussed the challenges mothers face due to historical trauma and provided strategies to support mothers through compassionate care and resources.

Attendees practicing motivational interviewing

****Day 3: Practical Skills and Hands-On Learning****

The final day focused on applying practical skills like motivational interviewing and creating supportive environments for breastfeeding. Participants practiced these techniques through role-playing, fostering culturally sensitive and empowering interactions with mothers.

****A Commitment to Community Wellness****

This training, a collaboration between Family Health Center and Sacred Waters, marked a significant step in supporting Indigenous mothers. With the knowledge gained, healthcare providers and community members are better equipped to support breastfeeding in their communities, ensuring future generations can benefit from its healing power.

****Positive Feedback and Impactful Learning****

The training received glowing reviews, with 88% of attendees rating both the content and presenters as excellent. Many praised the interactive and engaging atmosphere, with attendees remarking:

- "It was a welcoming and safe environment to learn and grow in."
- "I loved how open and engaging it was. Having open conversations was so helpful."
- "I will leave here changed."

This feedback underscores the training's effectiveness and the lasting impact it had on participants.