



Yakama Nation Victim Resource Program

18 West 1st Ave
Toppenish, WA 98948
(509)865-2266

Victim Resource Program

The Yakama Nation Victim Resource Program is a self-funded Tribal program, created under the Yakama Nation Behavioral Health Services (YNBHS) umbrella, through the Department of Justice-Office for Victims of Crime CTAS grant in January 2016. VRP has obtained additional grant funding such as Washington State Office on Violence against Women Act (VAWA), Violence of Crime Victim Advocacy (OVOCA) grants, Children's Justice Act Partnership (CJAP), Office of Victims of Crime (OVC). The Victim Resource Program began serving victims of crime in 2016 with only 2 employees and now the program has 10 staff providing services to the Yakama Reservation.

The mission of VRP is to support and identify the needs of victims of crime, and the Yakama Nation community through a comprehensive approach that integrates mental health to address Historical and Interpersonal Trauma. VRP will assist victims of crime through Advocacy, referral services and education to create stability through education, awareness, prevention, intervention and healing. VRP will help all victims of crime focusing on domestic violence, sexual assault/abuse, stalking, dating violence, human trafficking, and Child Advocacy services. Victim-centered activities will focus on culturally competent services that entail referral services for mental health & substance abuse, physical & emotional wellness through educational training, referral services for job training & financial empowerment, crisis management & emergency services, and youth engagement & awareness activities.



Office of Victims of Crime (CTAS #7)- The purpose of the grant is to assist American Indian/ Alaskan Native (AI/AN) communities develop, enhance, and sustain a comprehensive victim assistance program that provides a coordinated collaborative multidisciplinary response to victims of crime, their families, and the

community, and to provide trauma-informed, culturally competent holistic services to all identifiable victims of crime, their families and the community. Yakama Nation wants to develop a Shelter and/or Transitional Housing facility for victims of crime who experienced Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault/Abuse.

OVC-Tribal Victim Services Set Aside Program. The purpose of the grant is to work with partners to develop a plan to assist crime victims in overcoming the adverse effects of victimization and the associated burdens; and depending on the tribe's needs and ability to implement the program. The goals and objective of this project is to provide a safety for women, men, children, and elders who have experienced domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence, who are seeking refuge from their abuser, shelter and/or transitional housing, and other crimes that cause victimization. Yakama Nation Behavioral Health Services and Victim Resource Program will develop a design to become more victim-centered, culturally competent, compressive, and improve coordination with community partners and other Tribal programs.

The amount of this award is \$788,323 in the span of three years.

Law Enforcement-Based Victim Specialist Program. The purpose of the grant is to develop or enhance crime victim specialist programs within law enforcement agencies to better support victims through the criminal justice process by quickly and effectively connecting them with community-based direct victim services programs.



Office of Violence against Women (CTAS #5)- This is a 3 year grant that focuses on the following: Develop a coordinated community response team that will enhance Domestic Violence Revised Yakama Codes (RYC) protocols for domestic violence response.

1. Expand and improve services to support victims, YNBHS will hire a victim advocate to work with victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking and stalking.
2. Work with the community to create education and prevention campaigns informing the Yakama Reservation about domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, sex trafficking, and stalking.
3. Provide legal advice and representation of victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sex trafficking, sexual assault, or stalking who need assistance with legal issues that are caused by and/or suffered abuse.
4. Provide services to youth (ages 11-24) who are victims of domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking and the needs of children and youth who are exposed to these crimes, including support for the non-abusing parent or caretaker of the youth or child.



Office of Crime Victims Advocacy (OVCA) serves as a voice within state government for the needs of crime victims in Washington State. The purpose of this funding is to support individuals who have been hurt or harmed; impacted or affected by crime; suffered physical, financial, or emotional harm as a result of the commission of crime regardless if the event has been reported to law enforcement or when the event occurred.



Children's Justice Act Partnerships for Indian Communities- The purpose of the Project is to develop a Child Advocacy Center The Yakama Nation Behavioral Health will collect to capture the organization infrastructure of the need for a Child Advocacy Center. Measurable indicators are obtained from:

- Conduct a Community Needs Assessment to identify gaps and other issues in the community's current response to incidents of child abuse and neglect as it applies to the need for a Child Advocacy Center.
- Develop a privacy certificate describing how the Yakama Nation Behavioral Health Services will protect the privacy of the individuals who participate in the community needs assessment activities and the confidentiality of the data is collected as a result of assessment activities.
- Develop a strategic plan that establishes long-term priorities, directs resources towards achieving specific goals, and strengthens projects for victims of crime of child abuse and neglect.
- Develop a logic model to evaluate the effectiveness of implementation of strategic planning of activities.

The grant amount is \$450,000 for 3 years



Yakama Nation CASA Program's mission is to reunify families whenever possible. CASA is committed to providing every dependent child, within our jurisdiction, a voice through CASA volunteers who are well-trained and compassionate advocates. Each child to have a safe, caring, culturally responsive and permanent family as quickly as possible.

The primary source of funding for the National CASA Association is the Federal Government through Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP). CASA has been established in 49 states including British Columbia. Many of the programs are court-administered, stand-alone non-profits, established under umbrella agencies, or tribal court affiliated. Of these agencies most of the programs are a member of the National CASA Association. Yakama Nation CASA Program was established in 2005. We as a program are in need of community members (CASA Volunteers) to dedicated time to Yakama children in dependency cases to protect their rights and establish permanency.



REDgalia

VRP started the REDgalia campaign to honor and bring awareness of the MMIW of the Yakama Nation. VRP has had a dozen wingdresses, modern day traditional regalia, made with the theme of red to honor the MMIW of the Yakama Nation. “By wearing red, it acknowledges that those who have gone missing or have suffered a violent death are still in the hearts of people who knew them.” -FSIN Chief Bobby Cameron.

Recently, the Washington Legislature has passed House Bill 2951, addressing violence against Native American women on reservations. House Bill 2951 sponsored by Goldendale Representative Gina McCabe, whose 14th District encompasses the Yakama Reservation and ancestral tribal land in Central Washington and the Columbia Gorge. The measure calls for state, tribal and federal jurisdictions to work together to identify missing Native American women.

In light of the resent women who have gone missing on the Yakama Nation Reservation the VRP team is working to bring awareness and education to promote healing to the surviving families and Yakama community. The intent is to motivate bystanders and Yakima County community to speak up and acknowledge the injustice our Native women have endured.

VRP Staff

The Project Director is Katherine Saluskin (Yakama member). The OVC Project Coordinator II is Ashley Douglas (Yakama member). The LEV Project Director is Lucy Smartlowit (Yakama member). The Set-Aside Program Specialist is Manuela Spencer (Yakama member). The OVW Project Specialist is Crystal Esquivel (Yakama member). OVCA Project Coordinator II is Ruben Calvario (unenrolled). The Advocates is Andrea Batin (Yakama member) Bobbyjoe Ashue (Hoh River member), James Smiscon (Yakama member), Benjamin Quaempts

(Yakama member), Elizabeth Villa (Nez Perce member), Kamien Sanchez (Grand Ronde), and Priscilla Blackwolf Cultural Specialist (Yakama member). The CJAP Project Manager is Monique George (Nez Perce member), and the CASA is Jordan Meninick (Yakama member). The CASA Project Manager is Willow Jim (Yakama member) and CASA Coordinator Carolyn Strong (Yakama member).