

Community Wraparound: Youth Mentorship on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming

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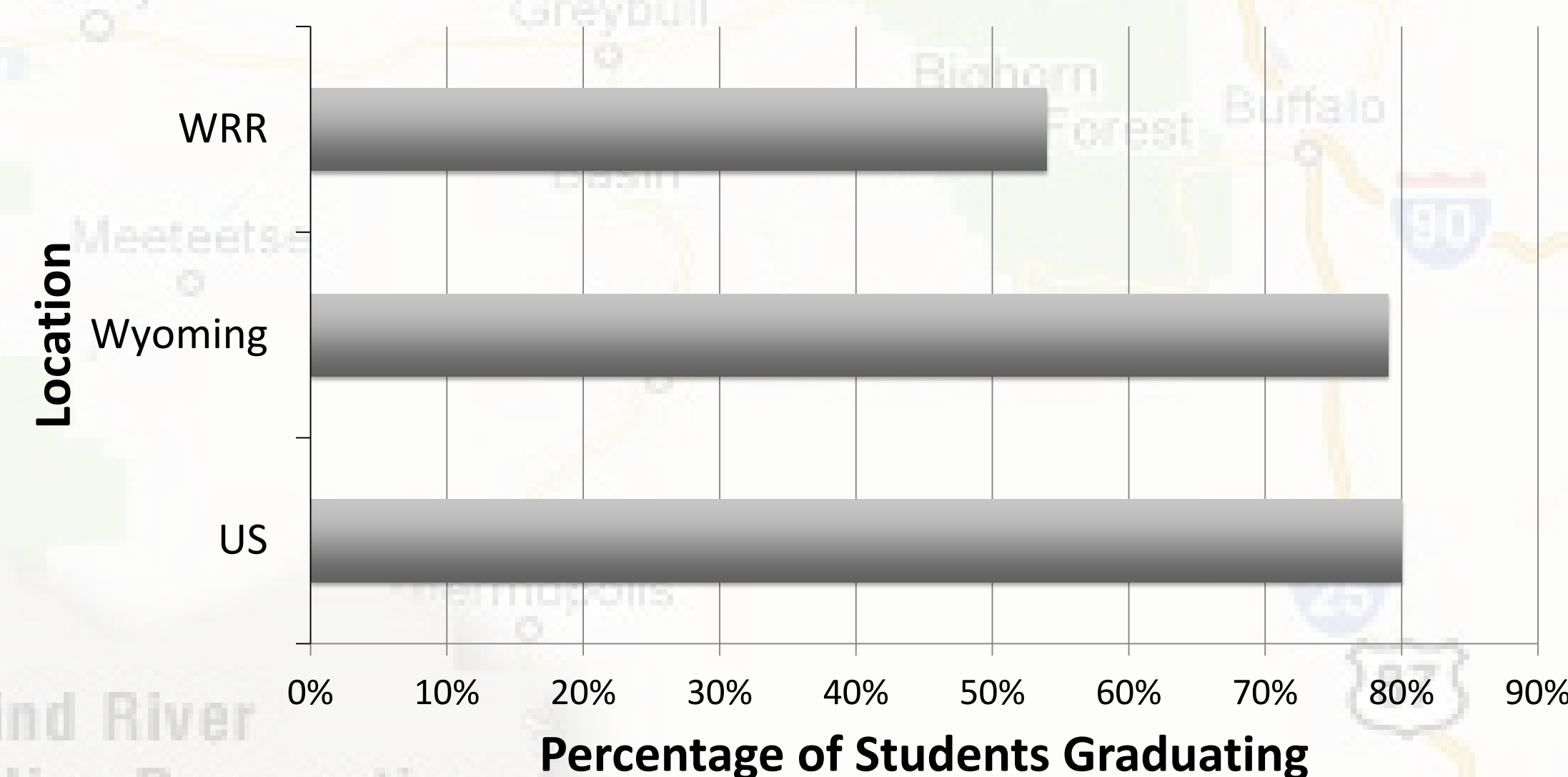
Purpose:

The goal of Community Wraparound is to improve poverty-induced deficits of childhood: health, development, education, and cultural awareness on the Wind River Reservation (WRR) through a mentorship program.



Hike in the Wind River Mountains near WRR

High School Graduation Rates



Methods:

- Observation of patients in the clinics and during home visits
- Recognition that the social situation negatively contributes to the health, education, and success of the WRR youth
- Literature examination notes mentorship programs can alter youth risk-taking activities and help create more self-sufficient adults.
- All of these aspects contributed to the imagination, design, and community discussion of the Community Wraparound Project.

Results:

- Community Wraparound developed as a mentorship program designed for any Native newborn living on the WRR.
- Program participants will be paired with the goal of creating a 18+ year intergenerational relationship.
- Mentors must meet certain requirements and be willing to promote program goals.
- Quarterly gender and age-specific curriculum will be distributed.
- Mentors will renew their pledge annually.
- Community Wraparound focuses on altering social norms that contribute negatively to childhood health, development, and education on the WRR.

Discussion:

Community Wraparound is an extensive and long-term intervention that has the potential to greatly impact the WRR community with the necessary support. When presenting this program, I surprisingly discovered that there had been a former failed mentorship program on the WRR. In order to avoid the same fate, it was suggested that Community Wraparound start with a strong mission statement, stringent participation requirements, and outlined goals. To be successful the program needs a board of directors, a small endowment, and a commitment from IHS Community Public Health Program to facilitate easy integration and correct dissemination of educational material. There was strong feedback that the program was directed by and serving Native stakeholders to direct the fate of the health within their own community.



Pageant Royalty at the 2014 Shoshone Powwow. Courtesy of Greg Nickerson WyoFile.

Background:

The WRR is:

- Shared by members of both the Northern Arapaho and Eastern Shoshone tribes
- 2.2 million rural acres of land
- Populated by 12,500 Natives
 - 1/3 the county's population
- Located in Fremont County, Wyoming, which has equivalent or elevated rates of: adverse birth outcomes, injuries and homicides, adolescent pregnancy and STIs, HIV/AIDS, heart disease, smoking, diabetes, high school dropout when compared to the rest of the state.
- These health demographics are combined with high rates of unemployment and poverty.

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