

Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

Celebrating the holidays: Indigenous Style!

Summary:

Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness (WPHW) supports Director of Wabanaki Studies at RSU#29 School District, with celebrations of the Holidays... Indigenous style!

Need/ Issue:

In December 2018 the Surgeon General issued an advisory "officially declaring e-cigarette use among youth an epidemic in the United States" and the World Health Organization (WHO) reiterates for all people that "e-cigarettes are harmful to health and are not safe."

More recently, a CDC article: E-Cigarette Use Among Middle and High School Students – National Youth Tobacco Survey, United States, 2021 states "In 2020 an estimated 3.6 million (13.1%) U.S. middle and high school students reported using e-cigarettes within the past 30 days." With this significant nicotine use increase, prevention efforts are essential. Particularly when educating rural Indigenous youth, who already have high rates of use.



Intervention/ Program Description:

Through a strong, supported relationship, Wabanaki Public Health and Wellness (WPHW); Wetamaweyi (Tobacco) Educator, and other local district partners were able to support the Wabanaki Education Project Director, for RSU# 29 School district with Public Health: Healthy Messaging; around our Winter Solstice Celebration.



"I learned a lot and enjoyed the presentation, it was very informative and I felt very connected!" - Student



Results/ Success:

This Winter Solstice Celebration for Indigenous Youth included middle school to high school students. WPHW was able to provide culturally appropriate activities, food, discussions, and resources that included Commercial and Traditional Tobacco Education.

Sustainability:

A group of Indigenous youth took this opportunity to incorporate their Celebration of the Winter Solstice and shared Traditional and Commercial Tobacco Teachings and resources with others throughout the school. This was done through a Traditional Tobacco Prayer Tie, "One Prayer Pouch" activity, accompanied with our rack card: 'Commercial Tobacco and Ceremonial Tobacco: What is the difference?'. These were then gifted to RSU#29 staff that the youth felt demonstrated these traditional teaching and that they respected deeply! This was a particularly moving portion of the day.

For More Information Contact Us At:

Wabanaki Public Health & Wellness

<http://wabanakipublichealth.org>



Wabanaki Public Health
Cultivating the health of our communities



MAINE PREVENTION SERVICES
Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services