

# Flying with Eagles

The Coalition for the Prevention of  
Native American Youth Suicide



# ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Coalition for the Prevention of Native American Youth Suicide offers *Flying With Eagles*, a two-part program copyrighted and owned by Flying With Eagles, Inc.

Initially the program consisted of adults providing workshops to a wide spectrum of Native American youth. But when the youth program participants approached *Flying With Eagles* leadership and told us that young people will listen to other young people, not adults, we took their advice to heart. As a result, *Flying With Eagles* uses a train-the-trainer approach to influencing young people, not lecturing them, but by helping their peers to recognize potential problems and offer dialogue, options and resources.

In the **Peer Leadership Training Program**, Native American youth are trained as "*peer counselors*." In this role they become "certified" to participate as presenters in leading *Flying With Eagles* workshops. After they achieve their credentials, they return to their communities equipped to recognize signs of suicide risk, substance abuse, and, physical and sexual abuse among their peers. They share information and discuss alternatives with their "at risk" colleagues, and talk with them about the benefits of following the Red Road.

Subsequent training workshops, led by these youth "counselors", can be held for all youth in their community (with oversight by *Flying With Eagles* counselors). In these settings they will equip their peers with the knowledge and skills to deal with their daily challenges. The program uses modern counseling/psychology tools and traditional spiritual insights and storytelling to connect participants to their traditions.

The *Flying With Eagles* program is unique in a number of ways.

1. We are 100% Native American with an Indian staff and all Indian counselors
2. The program develops youth as peer leaders and "counselors"
3. When "we" leave, we leave youth in leadership roles to continue working with the youth community
4. The program integrates traditions into the workshops
5. We offer a 24/7 youth crisis hotline available for the youth peer leaders for support from other youth peer leaders or Native American adult counselors and educators
6. We assist in locating program funding from outside resources

## HOW IT WORKS

The first part of the *Flying With Eagles* program, known as the **Peer Leadership Training Program**, is an intensive five-day process. Initially, participating tribes or communities identify youth that have continually shown leadership qualities and that would be good role models for their peers. (*Flying With Eagles* will provide a “resume” template to be completed by or for each youth.) The qualifications for the youth that have been recommended are reviewed by credentialed counselors and educators. The counselors and educators will contact each prospective youth peer leader and conduct a telephone interview to assure that each youth prospect has the leadership abilities and the desire to improve life for their peers.

*Flying With Eagles* arranges for a facility where the training will occur as well as transportation, meals and lodging for the youth and adult trainers. Using the copyrighted leader workbooks and videos, these youth learn how to engage with at-risk peers in their communities on an ongoing basis, helping them in finding the Red Road. Based on informal follow-up with past participants, we’ve learned that at-risk young people will take advantage of resources in their communities when their peers tell them about their options, but not when adults lecture them. These youth also become skilled in delivering larger workshops for at-risk Native American youth. As these peer leaders conduct the workshops, credentialed *Flying With Eagles* counselors and educators facilitate and oversee the process.

Part two of the *Flying With Eagles* program is an optional four-day workshop (three full days and two half days) led by the youth peer leaders for youth in their community and is an extension of the initial phase. This program, known as the **Natural Helpers Training Program**, is designed for youth ages 12 to 20. It is not designed to teach them how to be peer leaders; rather, it instructs them on how to become natural helpers and to deal with the various challenges they face on a daily basis. And because the program is presented by the “certified” youth peer leaders, the direct relationship to everyday events is not only believable - it is real.

Typically, the Natural Helpers Training Program is led by two to four youth that have been “certified” through their participation in and successful graduation from the Peer Leadership Training Program. The Natural Helpers program can accommodate 40 to 100 youth with ease. As indicated previously, credentialed *Flying With Eagles* counselors and educators are present throughout the program to ensure its success.

# THE CURRICULUM

The following is a portion of the program content:

## Session I: Recognizing the Challenge

- Witnesses to the Challenge
- Getting to Know Each Other
- Talking Circle
- Accepting the Challenge
- Knowing Yourself Through Your Traditions
- Recovering Your Traditions

## Session II: Preparing to Be Natural Helpers

- Developing Natural Helpers
- Qualifications of a Natural Helper
- Trust (Fall, Walk, Lift)
- Confidentiality

## Session III: Communication

- Communication Skills
- Non-verbal Communication
- Comfort Zones
- Facilitative Listening
- Roadblocks to Communication

## Session IV: Decision-Making and Problem-Solving

- Knowing Your Limits
- Overloading
- Overemphasizing
- Solving the Problem Yourself
- How to Say “No”
- Decision-Making and Problem-Solving Strategies
- Decision-Making Process

## Session V: Suicide and Substance Abuse Emergencies

- Coping with Suicide Emergencies
- Columbia University’s – Suicide Severity Rating Analysis (Modified for Native youth and used with permission)
- Alcohol and Drug Abuse
  - What to Do
  - How to Get Help

## Session VI: What Can You Do in Your Community?

# PROGRAM SPONSORSHIP

The *Flying With Eagles* “Summer 2017” program is a package that covers the initial screening and qualification of youth recommended to become peer leaders. It also includes the actual on-site training of up to three youth per tribe or community as peer leaders. The optional workshop program can accommodate up to 100 youth workshop participants in a second follow-up session.

In addition to the credentialed counselors and educators that train the youth peer leaders and who are also present during the full workshop, the administrative and operational support necessary to offer this intense program is provided by *Flying With Eagles*.

The staff of The Coalition for the Prevention of Native American Youth Suicide can assist tribes or communities in obtaining funding for this program in a variety of ways. The Coalition is a member of *Native Americans in Philanthropy* and has a number of corporate and individual foundations that have pledged support of the program. In addition Supplemental Youth Services funds from the Department of Labor is a potential source. Another is the SAMHSA “State/Tribal Youth Suicide Prevention Agreements” program. Other various federal, state and local programs may be available as well as regional foundation grants.

The total investment for the August 20-26, 2017 program including ground and air transportation, meals, lodging, workbooks, and all materials is \$3,050.00 per youth. The August 2017 training will be held at Camp Innabah in Spring City, Pennsylvania. To allow time sufficient for *Flying With Eagles* counselors to assess the youth applicant qualifications applications and deposits must be received not later than April 28, 2017.

For further information, please contact us at:

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Or

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