

Domestic Violence in Cherokee, NC



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Cherokee, NC

Cherokee is located at the base of the Smoky Mountains National Park between Swain, Jackson, and Haywood Counties



Culture and Community

- 14,500 members are enrolled in the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians
- Story-telling, basket-weaving, and language are important parts of the Cherokee culture
- Today, a blend of both Cherokee and Southern Cultures can be seen within the Qualla Boundary

Cherokee Indian Hospital (CIH)

- CIH Guiding Principle: -Ni hi tsa tse li "It belongs to you"
- CIH was formed in 2002 and is fully funded by the ECBI and Harrah's Casino –located in Cherokee, NC
- The hospital was consciously designed to integrate aspects of Cherokee culture into the architecture and interior design



Specific Health Concerns in Cherokee

- Type 2 Diabetes - Rate is 2.6 x higher than the state
- Obesity - Approximately 80% of the population is overweight or obese
- Nutrition - 17 of 25 restaurants in Cherokee serve fast food
- Drug Dependence - Analenisgi and Kanvwotiyi
- Hepatitis C
- **Domestic Violence**

The Domestic Violence Problem

- More than **4 in 5** American Indian and Alaska Native women (84.3 percent) **have experienced violence in their lifetime**
 - This includes: sexual violence, physical violence by an intimate partner, stalking, and psychological aggression by an intimate partner
 - 66.5 percent of women and 26.0 percent of men were **concerned for their safety.**
 - 49.0 percent of women and 19.9 percent of men **needed services because of what the perpetrators did**
- Source: Rosay, André B. *VIOLENCE AGAINST AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE WOMEN AND MEN*. 2016, pp. 1–82, *VIOLENCE AGAINST AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE WOMEN AND MEN*.

History of Domestic Violence in Native American Communities

1978 Supreme Court Case "Oliphant vs Suquamish Indian Tribe"

- Stated Indian tribes have no legal jurisdiction to prosecute non-Indians who commit crimes on reservations
- No recourse for perpetrators that were white and not enrolled in the tribe
- This created a safe haven for non-tribal criminals and allowed domestic violence to persist for generations

VAWA Amendment– 2013

- Amendment finally introduced that allows tribal courts to prosecute non-Indians who commit crimes on reservations
- However, limitations remain
 - Civil charges vs criminal charges
 - Lack of tribal court jurisdiction over crimes against children, law enforcement personnel, and sexual assault crimes committed by strangers

Obstacles Facing Victims of DV in Cherokee

- Cultural Stigma
- Connection to the community and one another on the reservation makes reporting difficult
- Little Domestic Violence education on the reservation
- Leaving the reservation may be difficult for some

Project

Issue: CIH lacked a comprehensive Domestic Violence resource. Both patients and providers within the hospital were unaware of most local domestic violence shelters and what services each location provided

Ernestine Walking Stick Domestic Violence Shelter
 Office: 828-554-6830
 Crisis Line: 828-488-9373
 Hours: M-F (7:45 am – 4:30 pm)
 Address: PO Box 455
 Cherokee, NC 28719
 Website: <http://cherokee.org>
<http://www.domesticviolenceinnc.com>

Services Provided:
 -Crisis Intervention
 -Victim Advocacy
 -Emergency Housing (Food, Shelters, Clothing, Toiletries, etc.)
 -Assistance with filing protective orders
 -Assistance with attorneys
 -Assistance with rental or security deposits
 -Emotional support
 -Transportation to and from appointments
 -Assistance with referrals
 -Community outreach events

Swain/Qualla SAFE Domestic Violence Services
 Office: 828-488-9038
 Crisis Line: 828-488-4809
 Address: PO Box 1416
 Bryson City, NC 28713
 Website: <http://www.swainquallanyc.gov/SAFE-services.html>

Services Provided:
 -Emergency Shelter
 -Assistance with filing protective orders
 -Victim advocacy
 -Referral to legal services
 -New Choices program
 -Address confidentiality program
 -Education classes

REACH of Macon and Jackson Counties
 Macon Office/Crisis Line: 828-369-5544
 Jackson Crisis Line: 828-556-8969
 Walk-ins: M, Tu, Th, F (9 am – 5pm) and Wed (9 am – 1 pm)
 Website: <https://www.reachofmaconcounty.org>

Services Provided:
 -Emergency Shelter
 -Victim advocacy
 -Court advocacy
 -Youth advocacy
 -Rape crisis companion
 -Lapine outreach
 -Life skills/wrap-around services

REACH of Haywood County
 Office/Crisis Line: 828-456-7898
 Address: PO Box 206
 Waynesville, NC 28786
 Website: <http://reachofhaywood.org/>

Services Provided:
 -Emergency Shelter
 -Assistance with filing protective orders
 -Address confidentiality coordination
 -Law enforcement assistance
 -Survivor Support
 -Counseling
 -Support groups

REACH of Cherokee County
 Main Office: 828-837-8631
 Crisis Line: 828-837-8604
 Women's Center: 828-837-2097
 Address: PO Box 927
 Murphy, NC 28906
 Website: www.reachofcherokee.org

Services Provided:
 -Emergency Shelter
 -Assistance with filing protective orders
 -Hospital and court accompaniment
 -Assistance with resumes and job applications
 -Classes on budgeting, couponing
 -Assistance with opening checking and savings accounts
 -Confidential support groups

REACH of Clay County
 Office/Crisis Line: 828-389-0797
 Address: PO Box 1485
 Hayesville, NC 28904
 Website: <http://www.reachofclaycounty.org/>

Services Provided:
 -Emergency Shelter
 -Victim advocacy
 -Lapine outreach

Future Directions

- Local shelters plan to engage in outreach events and community education on domestic violence to destigmatize the issue and raise awareness
- Plans to partner with local law enforcement, court system, and police department to better the training on handling of domestic violence cases and create a more efficient court process

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