

Program Highlights

Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Reaching American Indian Students through a Teen After-school HIV Prevention and Native Dance Program

The Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) WE INDIANS Program (Wisconsin Education for Indians, New Day In Awareness of Native Studies), implemented in collaboration with the HoChunk Nation of the Milwaukee area and the Forest County Potawatomi Community Foundation, is a unique program designed to build ethnic pride and academic achievement in Milwaukee's American Indian students grades 5–12. For the past three years, the MPS HIV Project Director has provided training and technical assistance on the implementation of Making Proud Choices and Reducing the Risk, both of which have been shown to be effective at reducing sexual risk behaviors among adolescents, to staff of the WE INDIANS Program. During the 2006–2007 school year, the after-school WE INDIANS Program engaged and motivated students by combining the evidence-based HIV prevention curricula and an original HoChunk creation story. With the assistance of a professional dance teacher and a traditional dancer, the students translated what they learned into original dance movements. As a result of these efforts, approximately 70–80 American Indian middle and high school students receive culturally appropriate HIV prevention education in a fun and engaging way each year.