

**It's Not Rocket Science:
Achieving Equitable
Health Outcomes:
An American Indian Perspective**

**Weight of the Nation™ 2012 Conference:
Moving Forward, Reversing the Trend
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Overview

- Health disparities
- "Health equity"
- History of American Indian health
- Cultural considerations

Health Parity, Equality, Equity

- Health parity
 - Reduce disparities vs. promote parity in health status
- Health equality
 - Same health status, access to same health services for all
- State Medicaid plan

Health Parity, Equality, Equity

- Health equity
 - Promote social justice in health status by meeting community needs

**Aboriginal People
of North America**

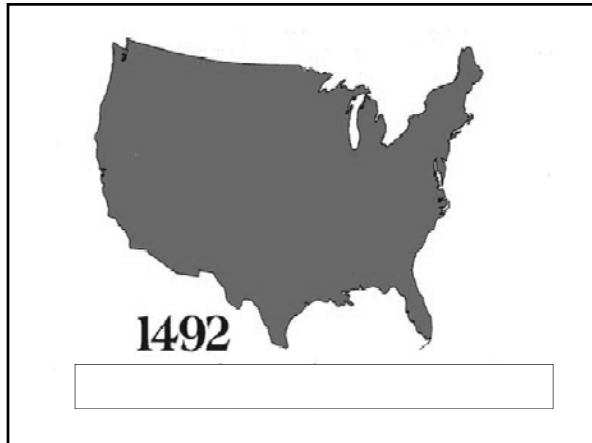
- Descendants of people occupying North American prior to 1492
- Columbus and other European explorers
- Thousands of distinct tribal groups
- Over 560 "Federally Recognized" tribes in U.S.

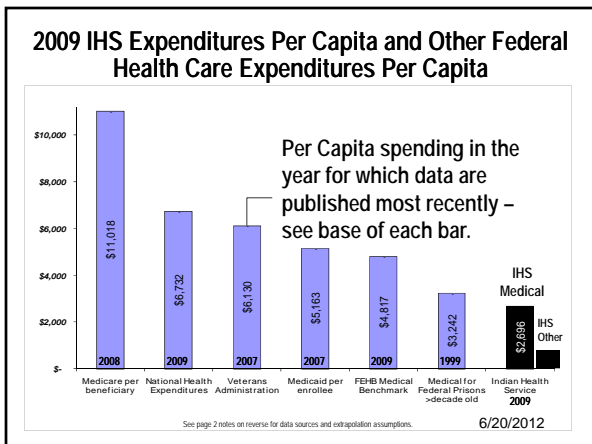
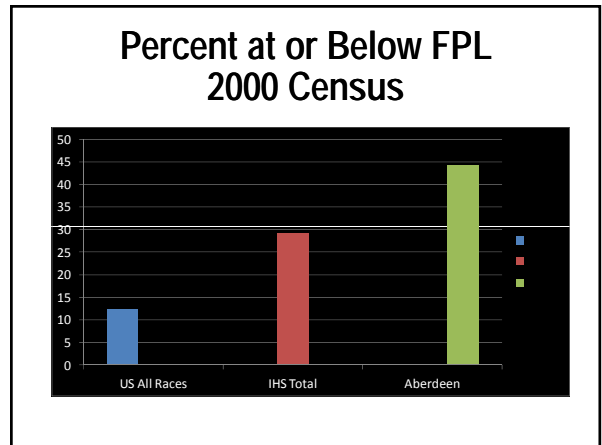
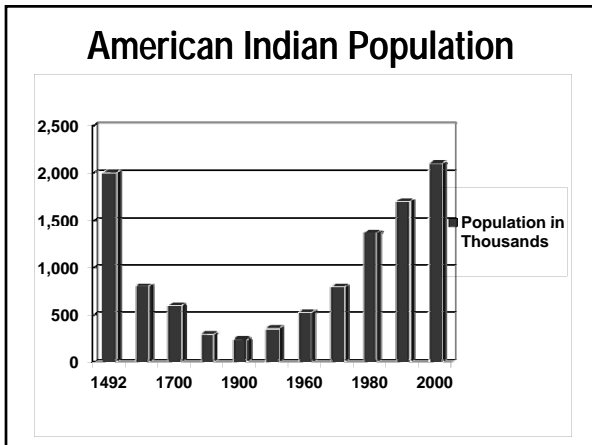
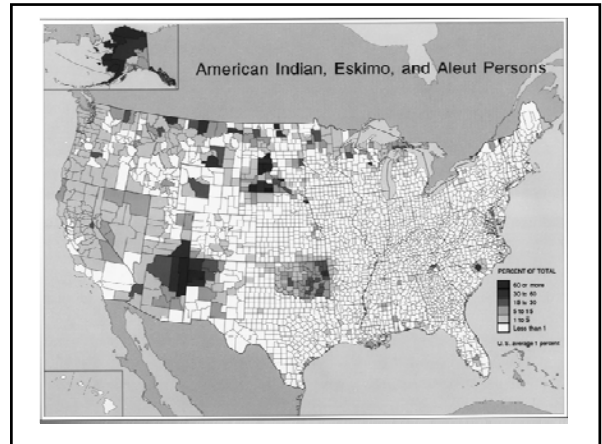
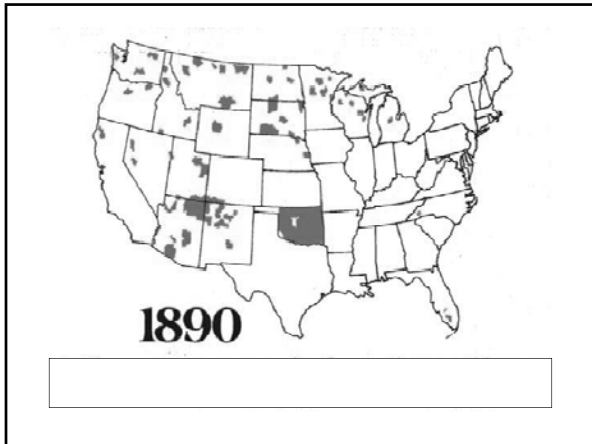
Pre-contact Health Status

- Nutrition, growth, and development
 - Variation in size due to genetics and environment
 - Nutrition, physical activity
 - Pre-contact Plains children similar to modern Anglo standard
 - Pueblo children were smaller

Pre-contact Health Status

- Hunter-gatherer groups had larger stature than agricultural groups





American Indian Socioeconomic Status

- A link between poverty, low educational attainment and poorer health outcomes is well established
- Heart disease, diabetes, obesity, poor blood sugar control, and low birth weight are more prevalent among individuals with low income and educational attainment

American Indian Socioeconomic Status

- American Indian population with lowest per capita income and lowest educational attainment in U.S.

American Indian Health: History and Evolution

- Post-Columbian health status
 - 1930's
 - Antibiotics developed
 - Rivers dammed

American Indian Health: History and Evolution

- Post-contact health status
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American Indian Health: History and Evolution

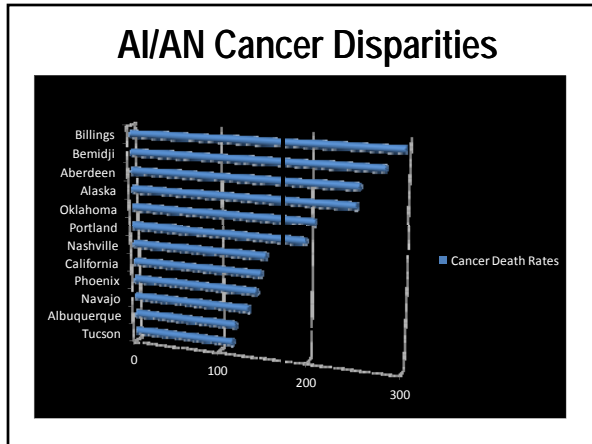
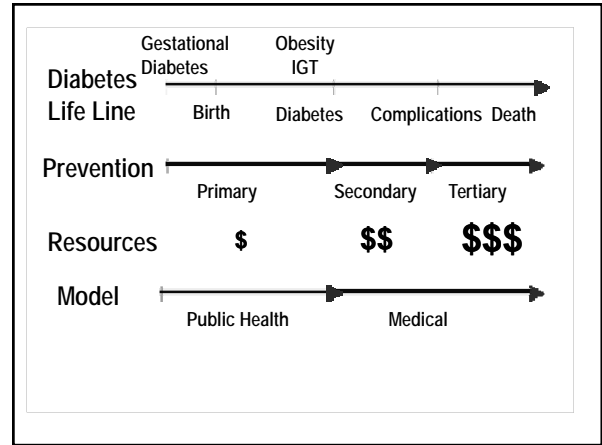
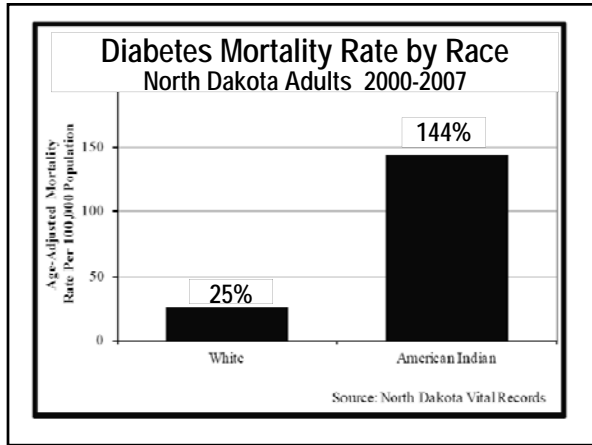
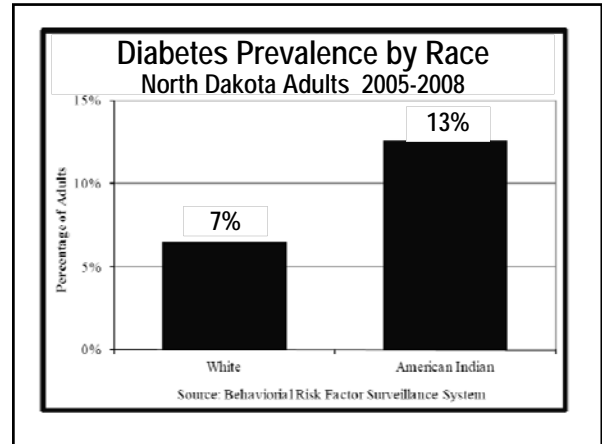
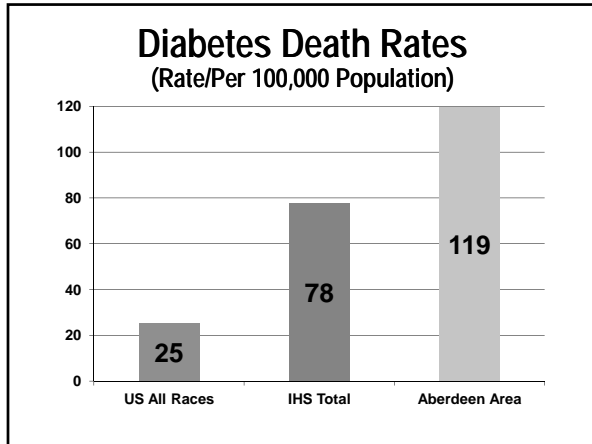
- 1940's
 - World War II
 - Commodity Foods Programs

American Indian Health: History and Evolution

- 1970's
 - Small pox eradicated
 - Increasing rates of chronic disease
 - Diabetes

American Indian Health: History and Evolution

- 2000's
 - Highest rates of preventable disease in the U.S.



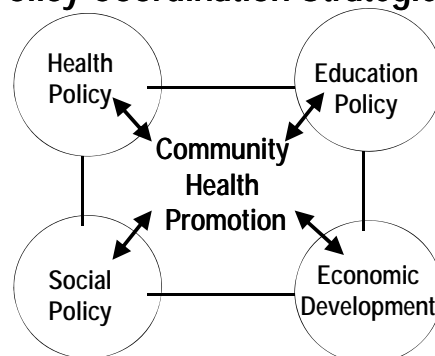
Policies, Programs, Potential Solutions

- Poverty is killing us
 - Economic development is a public health intervention
 - Impact of WIC on BF rates

Policies, Programs, Potential Solutions

- Impoverished schools
 - Food and PE
- Improvements in commodity food program

Policy Coordination Strategies



Tribal Policies

- Is obesity prevention a stated priority?
- Promote breast feeding?
- School lunch and breakfast program?
- Workplace and school physical activity?
- Fry bread policy?

Contact Information

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