

# NATIONAL INDIAN ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE TASKFORCE

## PREAMBLE

The National Indian Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force was established under the leadership of the National Congress of American Indians in September 2000 under an agreement established between the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs, the President of the National Congress of American Indians, and membership of the former National Committee on Indian Alcohol and Substance Abuse. The primary purpose for NCAI's leadership involvement was to expand the efforts and membership of the National Committee to include a wider and more diverse geographically representative group of Tribal leaders throughout Indian Country.

At the Tribal Leader's Summit on Prevention of Violence, Alcohol, and Substance Abuse in September 2000, various tribal leaders requested support for the organization of the Task Force from the Federal Government leaders including the Director of the ONDCP, the U.S. Attorney General, the Assistant Secretary of HHS, Deputy Assistant Secretary of HUD, and the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs.

The National Indian Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force requested to conduct a Tribal Leader's Summit on Alcohol and Substance Abuse Prevention in 2001 as a follow up to the 2000 Summit. The National Task Force currently operated under the leadership of the National Congress of American Indians under a Cooperative Agreement funding by the Assistant Secretary of Indian Affairs in the U.S. Department of the Interior.

## VISION

The vision of the National Indian Alcohol and Substance Abuse Task Force (NIASA Task Force) is to assist Tribes, Tribal Leaders, and their youth in prevention of alcohol and substance abuse and their personal healing, recovery, and lifetime wellness, as well as to improve the quality of life among American Indian and Alaska Native families and communities, to enhance cultural preservation, the uphold the dignity and sovereignty of Indian nations, and to support the empowerment of self-determination by focusing their leadership attention to and dealing with the devastating problem of alcohol and substance abuse in Indian Country .

## GOALS

### General:

- To advocate and organize effective Tribal leadership towards meeting the goals of the National Indian Alcohol and Substance Abuse Task Force.

- To develop an administrative infrastructure to assess, develop, and evaluate culturally appropriate data, research, practices, and economic feasibility to advance the goals of the NIASA Task Force.
- To provide financial management controls to account for the funds on a quarterly basis to report to the Task Force, Tribes, and the Federal Government
- To ensure that there is an effective and meaningful Tribal consultation process by the Federal Government on development and establishment of alcohol and substance abuse prevention a treatment policies affecting American Indian and Alaska Native people at the administrative legislative levels per Executive Order 13175.
- To work with Federal Government Agencies in obtaining a consistent and solid funding base including establishing a recurring funding base to support prevention programs in Indian Country.

### **Prevention:**

- To make sure tribes, tribal leaders, elders, adults, and youth recognize the value of preventing alcohol and substance abuse to preserve the overall well being of the community, the culture, and traditions.
- To develop and establish a strong political leverage that will support initiatives for alcohol and substance abuse prevention in Indian Country.
- To improve the incidence of alcohol and substance abuse for any adult and youth.
- To recognize that prevention must take place for all our people, not just youth, and that it is a life-long process.

### **Treatment and After Care:**

- To support the efforts of professionals in our communities to treat persons afflicted by alcohol and substance abuse by being vocal advocates for increased programs and funding from the government.
- To develop a good working relationship with agencies in our communities, including outpatient care, law enforcement, courts, and the DMV to keep people sober after they have undergone treatment

**Overall:**

- By preventing alcohol and substance abuse in our people, treating those who suffer from it, and ensuring that those who have been treated stay sober, our goal is to work so we can return wholeness to our families and our communities.

**OBJECTIVES**

- To advocate that all tribal leaders assume the responsibility of taking leadership through a commitment to an alcohol and drug free lifestyle by becoming alcohol and drug free.
- To provide a forum for educating Tribal leaders on the existing Federal policies on Indian Alcohol and Substance Abuse treatment and prevention.
- To agree upon, support, and advocate the concept that alcohol and substance abuse is preventable and that it must take effective tribal leadership to combat alcoholism and substance abuse in Indian Country.
- To keep Tribal leaders informed about changing policies at the national level.
- To keep Tribal leaders informed and updated on legislative proposals regarding alcohol and substance abuse prevention, intervention, and treatment affecting American Indians and Ala Natives, including reauthorization of Federal statutes.
- To serve as the conduit for Tribal leaders with Federal and State Government agencies on Alcohol and substance abuse funding for Indian populations.
- To develop and establish a strong political leverage that will support initiatives for alcohol and substance abuse prevention in Indian Country.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The membership of the NIASAP Task Force consists of a representation of elected or appointed Tribal leaders or their delegates from thirteen regions following the organization of the National Congress of American Indians, and includes Tribal leaders who served formerly on the National Committee on Alcohol and Substance Abuse. At the 2000 Annual NCAI Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota, *NCAI Resolution # STP-00-027* authorized the Task Force, and provided that there would be a member from each area. The intent of the current National Indian Task Force is to function in an effective advisory capacity to the

Federal government with regard to Federal polices affecting alcohol and substance abuse prevention and treatment in Indian Country.