

# INDIGENOUS PEOPLES' DAY

is celebrated on the same day as Columbus Day, but it's all about honoring the cultures, contributions, and history of Native American, Indigenous, and First Nations Peoples. It's a chance to recognize their rich heritage and reflect on the challenges they've faced.



OCTOBER 14

## LET'S TALK ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH IN INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES

### A NEW WAY TO CELEBRATE:

Indigenous Peoples' Day brings awareness to the lasting effects of colonization. These events from the past still affect the mental health of Indigenous communities today, making it important to reflect on and address.

### A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS:

Did you know that Native Americans have some of the highest mental health needs in the country? Their life expectancy is around 65 years, compared to 75 years for the general U.S. population (source: CDC, 2020). Many Native communities face issues like depression, PTSD, and substance abuse.

### NEW YORK STATE RESOURCES:

#### NYS Office of Mental Health:

[https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/cultural\\_competence/spotlight-on-indigenous-communities.pdf](https://omh.ny.gov/omhweb/cultural_competence/spotlight-on-indigenous-communities.pdf)

#### Department of Health: American Indian Health Program in New York State:

[https://www.health.ny.gov/community/american\\_indian\\_nation/](https://www.health.ny.gov/community/american_indian_nation/)

#### NYS Office of Children and Family Services (OCFS) - Native American Services Unit:

York State, visit Native American Services. <https://ocfs.ny.gov/programs/nas/>

### GENERATIONAL TRAUMA:

The forced removal of Indigenous children from their families in the U.S., Canada, and Australia has left a lasting impact. This history has increased rates of substance use, anxiety, and mental health challenges in these communities (source: SAMHSA, 2018).

### HEALING THROUGH TRADITION:

Indigenous communities have their own powerful methods of healing, deeply rooted in their traditions. These traditional ways remind us that there's a lot we can learn from Indigenous cultures.

### WORKING TOGETHER FOR CHANGE:

By collaborating across cultures, we can improve both mental health and environmental issues. Together, we can support each other and recognize the unique strengths that each community brings to the table.

**Families  
Together**  
in New York State