

Our Mission

To strengthen vulnerable American Indian and Alaska Native children and families through collaborative and culturally responsive services.

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Denver Indian Family Resource Center

7596 W. Jewell Ave.,
Ste. 305
Lakewood, CO 80232
(720) 500-1020
difrc.org



What's Inside:

- Celebrating Phyllis Bigpond Day
- Our new walk-in hours
- Our end-of-summer photo contest!

DIFRC is a proud member of the following:



NICWA
National Indian Child Welfare Association



Family Resource
Center Association



Colorado
NONPROFIT
Association

Honoring the Legacy of Phyllis Bigpond

Phyllis Bigpond, DIFRC's founding Executive Director, helped create DIFRC as an agency dedicated to meeting the diverse and emerging needs of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) children and families in the Denver metropolitan area. She was known nationally for her 40 years of community service and advocacy of AI/AN families. Phyllis Bigpond made such significant contributions to the community that Governor Hickenlooper proclaimed October 7 as "Phyllis Bigpond Day." He said, "Phyllis has devoted her life to improving the lives of American Indian families and children," noting that DIFRC's services and the overall success of the Indian Child Welfare Act programs in the Denver area were directly related to Bigpond's advocacy and hard work. In her memory we celebrate the long-term outcomes of this work: the preservation and reunification of American Indian and Alaska Native families in our community.

Our agency has received a grant from Enterprise Community Partners to create a "community collaborative action." We have chosen to use this opportunity to celebrate the preservation and reunification of Native families in the Denver area. DIFRC's primary indicator of success is whether AI/AN children remain with their biological parents, other relatives, or culturally-appropriate placements at the time in which services terminate with the agency. In 2016, 89% of families who received intensive case management from DIFRC were preserved, in contrast with a rate of 54% nationwide. DIFRC supports our families during the hardest and most trying times in their lives; we also believe that the resolution of their involvement with the child welfare system deserves a celebration that includes friends, neighbors, and community partners. The collaborative action advances two primary goals: celebrating the preservation and reunification of Native families; and providing families and providers a culturally appropriate event that supports the Native value of building relationships.

Therefore, please join us on **Saturday, October 7th from noon to 3pm at Loretto Heights Park** for an afternoon of food and fun to celebrate the life and legacy of DIFRC's founding Executive Director, Phyllis Bigpond, and to honor strong Native families. Please see the flyer attached to this newsletter and feel free to share with your friends and family. Everyone is invited!

What did your family do this summer?

Can you believe that summer is almost over? Before we start getting excited about the new school year, we want to know how our families have spent this past summer together. What did you do with your kids this summer? Did you go on any special trips, spend a lot of time outside, or just have a really great day together? We want to know about it! Please share your summer memories with us during our **End-of-Summer Photo Contest!** Any self-identified Native parent can enter the contest so please encourage your friends and family around the country to submit a photo.

Until 5 pm on Friday, August 11th, please share your favorite photo that you took this summer. It could be a picture of your whole family, of just one person, of an activity you did—we want to see it all! Please send your photos by:

- **e-mailing** them to mganz@difrc.org
- **messaging** us on Facebook or Twitter
- making a post and **tagging** us (@DenverIndianFamilyResourceCenter on Facebook or @DenverIndianFRC on Twitter)
- posting your photo on Twitter, Facebook or Instagram with the hashtag **#StrongNativeFamilies**

At the end of the week, we'll collect all the photos we got and post them in an album on our Facebook page. Our followers will vote by liking their favorite photos. The photo that gets the most likes by 5 p.m. on Friday, August 18th is the winner! We'll post the winner on Saturday, August 19th. The winner will get a bag of goodies including free water bottles, cards from our April Child Abuse Prevention Month event, and more! See the full rules at difrc.org/summer-photo-contest/

By submitting a photo, you give permission to use the photo on social media as part of the photo contest. We will ask you for permission before using your photos in our other marketing materials. We reserve the right to reject any entries according to our sole and absolute discretion. The entry period begins at noon on August 4th and ends at 5pm on August 11th. The voting period begins at noon on Saturday, August 12th and ends at 5pm on Friday, August 18th. Winners will be announced on Saturday, August 19th. Please submit photos in .JPEG or .png format. Submitted photos should include photos that were taken with the consent of the the photographed persons or the consent of their guardians. Entries must be submitted by adults over 18 years of age.

The Nurturing Parenting Program starts again this month

Our next session of NPP starts this month! Instead of doing intakes at the first class, we'll be doing a separate intake session on Thursday, August 17th. If you would like to participate in the first class on Thursday, August 24th, please plan to attend the intake session on the 17th. Other intake sessions will take place on September 14th and October 12th.

Please pre-register with our Resource and Referral Specialist, Ceriss Blackwood, at (720) 500-1010 or cblackwood@difrc.org.

The Nurturing Parenting Program is a free 12-week class that will help you strengthen your family. It includes culturally-adapted group discussions and nurturing time activities for American Indian/Alaska Native families. Classes are intended for both parents and children (6-17), so please bring your kids! Families will enjoy a nutritious meal together. Child care (5 and under) and RTD bus tickets are available.

Classes run every Thursday at our office from 5 pm to 7:30 pm. Graduation is on October 26th.

Introducing office walk-in hours!

We know that sometimes it can be hard to make and keep appointments, especially for busy parents. Our staff can be pretty busy people too, and sometimes we have to be out of the office. Our staff work to be as available as possible, so that our clients can get the help they need when they need it.

Beginning September 1, 2017, DIFRC will be holding open walk-in hours every Monday and Tuesday from 10:30 am to 4:00 pm.

If you come to our office during those hours, you won't have to call or e-mail us ahead of time, or worry that the staff you came to see aren't in the office. Just show up! There will be someone in the office with their schedule cleared, ready to talk to you. No appointments necessary means ready access to resources and referrals from our knowledgeable and helpful staff! Just make a trip to our office whenever it is convenient for you during those hours and we would be happy to meet with you.

If you need to meet with us outside those hours, or if you prefer to have a scheduled appointment, please feel free to contact our office to schedule something. Please make an appointment if you are seeking energy assistance.



July's Culture Night activity—
loom beadwork

Too many mailings? Not enough?

New address? Let us know at:

difrc.org/sign-up

Upcoming Events

Learn more details at difrc.org/calendar!



Social Connections

First and third Monday of the month 5:30 - 7:00 p.m.

Cancelled on Labor Day (Sep. 4)



Nurturing Parenting Program

Thursdays 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.; pre-registration required

Intake begins on August 17th



Culture Night—activity to be announced

August 28 - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.



Culture Night—activity to be announced

September 25 - 5:30 - 7:30 p.m.



Phyllis Bigpond Day

October 7 - 12:00 - 3:00 p.m. at Lorretto Heights Park



Honoring the tradition of strong Indian Families.

7596 W. Jewell Ave. Suite 305

Lakewood, CO 80232

Phone: 720-500-1020

Our Vision

Generations of healthy, strong
American Indian and Alaska
Native children and families.

DREAMCATCHER

NEWS ✦ UPDATES ✦ COMMUNITY AWARENESS

Our Staff

- ✦ Kathryn Redhorse (Lakota/Navajo), Acting Assistant Director
- ✦ Verla Howell (Pawnee/Flandreau Santee Sioux), Family Engagement Specialist
- ✦ Wilma Yellow Cloud (Oglala Lakota), Family Engagement Specialist
- ✦ Ceriss Blackwood (Navajo/Taos Pueblo), Resource and Referral Specialist
- ✦ Rachel Bryan-Auker, Resource and Referral Assistant (Kaigani Haida & Tlingit)
- ✦ Katie Brown, Community Program Coordinator
- ✦ McKenna Ganz, Development Manager
- ✦ A.J. Myers, AmeriCorps VISTA

Our Board

- ✦ Deborah Esquibel Hunt (Cherokee Tribe of Northeast Alabama), Chair
- ✦ Jack Soto (Diné /Cocopah), Vice Chair
- ✦ Veronica Lane (Navajo), Treasurer
- ✦ Michael Johnson (Arikara/Hidatsa/Ojibwe), Secretary
- ✦ Del Nutter (Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma)
- ✦ David Weiden (Sicangu Lakota)
- ✦ Emily Petoskey (Odawa)
- ✦ Teresa Bernie (Ihankthunwan Nakota)

DIFRC was sad to say goodbye this month to our wonderful Executive Director, Dennis Swain. Keep an eye out for the announcement of our new Executive Director in the future!