

Lake Chelan, homeland of the šč̓əl̓ămxəxʷ (Chelan). Courtesy of DOH Tribal Photo Library.

Washington State Department of HEALTH

November 2026
DOH 910-932

Tribal School-Based Behavioral Health Services: SPIRIT Grants

Project at a Glance

- The Adolescent & Young Adult Health (AYAH) Unit at the Washington State Department of Health (DOH) has partnered with Seven Directions to expand access to school-based behavioral health services.
- The funding opportunity is called the School-based Program for Indigenous Resilience, Integration, and Thriving (SPIRIT).
- Washington Tribes, Tribal schools, and Tribal clinics were invited to apply for this opportunity in April 2026, and 4 Tribes were notified of their awards in May 2026. The award grants of $100,000 each will be active through June 2027.
- Learn more about the School-Based Health Center Program at DOH and the origins and early stages of this work in the May 2026 one-pager.

About the SPIRIT Grant

WA DOH aims to improve American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) youth access to school-based behavioral health services and prevention programs. DOH has partnered with Seven Directions, an Indigenous public health institute at the University of Washington, to provide culturally tailored contract management, evaluation, and technical assistance to Tribal partners. Seven Directions designed SPIRIT and held a Request for Applications process in Spring 2026. The award grants of $100,000 will help Tribes address their communities' unique needs in ways that center culture, resilience, and connection.

The Suquamish Tribe, Nooksack Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, and Spokane Tribe all received the grant. Tribal partners will all participate in the following program activities as they plan and implement programs in their individual communities:

- Establish a program team and partners
- Attend monthly meetings with Seven Directions
- Participate in in-person community visits
- Establish program design and implementation plans
- Pilot test programs and services
- Complete a program evaluation
- Submit a final report

Project Overviews: Community-led programming for Native youth

Suquamish Tribe, Chief Kitsap Academy

The Suquamish Tribe's Chief Kitsap Academy will create a school environment where Indigenous students thrive by centering cultural identity, intergenerational relationships, and student leadership. Program activities include a student-led Coastal Gathering, monthly Elder service and engagement groups, culturally relevant training for school staff, and a culturally-grounded Indigenous Student Spring or Winter Break Camp. These activities are intended to foster cultural pride, land-based learning, and Indigenous mentorship.

Nooksack Indian Tribe, Youth Wellness & Behavioral Health Integration Initiative

The Nooksack Tribe will strengthen collaboration between the Behavioral Health and Education Departments to provide on-site counseling, crisis support, and early intervention. Their programs are designed to strengthen cultural identity, increase youth participation, and educate families about trauma, healing, and disabilities so Nooksack youth can develop a strong sense of belonging and acceptance.

Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, Early Childhood Education Program

Colville's Early Childhood Education/Head Start Program will provide highly accessible mental health supports to teachers serving families within the boundaries of the Colville Reservation and surrounding areas. The team will recruit and onboard a Mental Health Consultant to conduct family engagement events and provide mental health classroom observations across all grade levels. These steps are designed to support teachers and provide individual assessments and training within and outside the classroom setting.

Spokane Tribe of Indians, Wellpinit School District

Wellpinit School District will expand access to culturally grounded, school-based behavioral health services. Activities include strengthening partnerships with Spokane Tribe behavioral health providers and recruiting an additional behavioral health staff member to support students and teachers and make referrals to behavioral health or social services. The Wellpinit School District will also provide foundational training in trauma-informed care and Indigenous-centered practices and expand family and community engagement.

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Adolescent & Young Adult Health

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Learn more: SBHC Program