

Navajo United Way, Eve's Fund Collaborate for injury prevention

WINDOW ROCK — Navajo United Way and Eve's Fund for Native American Health Initiatives are proud to announce a groundbreaking collaboration to address injury prevention in Native communities. This new partnership will combine the resources and expertise of both organizations to expand their reach, reduce injuries, and save lives across the Navajo Nation.

Traumatic Injury is a leading cause of death and disability among at-risk Native children, teens, and young adults. The most frequent causes are vehicle crashes, violence, substance-related injuries, suicide and self-harm, and sports injuries. By focusing on education, advocacy, and culturally relevant safety initiatives, the partner organi-

NATIVE NEWS

zations will tackle this critical but often overlooked public health challenge with innovative and effective solutions.

"This partnership allows us to address one of the most pressing health issues in our communities," said Patrick Martinez, President of Navajo United Way. "Together, we can empower more young people with life-saving knowledge and create a safer future for all Navajo families."

Since 2005, Eve's Fund has been dedicated to promoting health, education, and injury prevention for Native Americans, particularly those residing on the Navajo Nation. Its flagship initiative, the ThinkFirst Navajo, a chapter of ThinkFirst National Injury Prevention Foundation, has reached over

66,000 individuals, equipping them with knowledge and skills to avoid preventable injuries. The program emphasizes "Using your Mind to Protect your Body" because "you only have One Brain....and One Body."

The evidence-and community-based ThinkFirst program integrates traditional Navajo values with current safety education, making it highly effective and culturally relevant. Key features include age-appropriate curricula, comprehensive safety education, and a focus on preventable injuries by reducing high-risk behaviors and making safer choices.

"Our ThinkFirst Navajo program teaches youth the importance of protecting themselves, reducing risky behaviors and advocating for safety in their daily lives," said Barbara Crowell Roy, the co-founder and

president of Eve's Fund. "Our welcomed partnership with Navajo United Way will allow us to bring these life-saving lessons to more school-aged children and their families. It will also create a coalition with a broad network of resources for injury prevention education."

The new partnership will focus on expanding the program's reach by including additional collaborators, building a major public and private injury prevention coalition, and increasing the number of trained health educators.

"We believe in the power of education to save lives," added Patrick Martinez, the board president of Navajo United Way. "We are excited that this new venture will advance our mission of improving the quality of life for those we serve by fostering a culture of safety and ensuring that fewer families ex-

perience the tragedy of preventable injuries and deaths."

Navajo United Way will manage and administer the ThinkFirst Navajo chapter and provide injury prevention presentations at schools and other venues. Eve's Fund will provide consultation, training, educational materials, safety equipment, such as car seats and helmets, and start-up financial support.

The collaboration will offer a free ThinkFirst Train-the-Trainer session on March 1 in Gallup. Health educators, administrators and teachers, coaches, nurses, counselors, traffic and law-enforcement personnel, and other individuals and organizations involved in community-based prevention programs are invited.

Information: Helen Pino, the ThinkFirst Navajo Training coordinator, 505-301-4810.

