

KEY DRIVERS OF HEALTH INEQUITIES

for American Indians and Alaska Natives (AI/AN)

Colonization introduced foreign structures and systems

- Federalism
- Capitalism
- US Government paternalism
- Structural discrimination



Colonialist aims separated AI/AN from community, identity, and culture

- Genocide
- Taking of lands
- Forced relocation
- Forced assimilation policies

As a direct result, Colonization produced:



- Historical and intergenerational trauma
- Erasure of AI/AN from mainstream American society
- Barriers to Tribal self-governance
- Distrust between Tribes and state/federal governments
- Governance structures that limit meaningful Tribal participation
- Generational poverty
- Tension between majority American culture and Native cultures
- Diminished population size of AI/AN

Leading to self-perpetuating problems for AI/AN

- Disparities in opportunities (education, jobs, healthcare)
- Diminished economic and political power for Tribes, and exclusion from decision-making
- Data practices that exclude AI/AN from representation
- Severely underfunded public sector



AI/AN are then further separated from their communities and culture

- Tribes have limited resources to address these systemic problems.
- AI/AN must leave their homes and communities to access resources, meet needs, and pursue opportunities.



The outcome: Severe health inequities for American Indians and Alaska Natives

Because of these systemic injustices, AI/AN face lower life expectancies and higher rates of preventable disease, disability, and death.

