

January 8, 2025  
South Dakota Department of Social Services  
Division of Behavioral Health  
700 Governors Dr.  
Pierre, SD 57501

Dear Review Committee,

We are writing to express our full support for Friends of the Children-He Sapa's proposal to the Opioid Settlement Fund Community Grant Program and its mission to advance opioid and substance misuse prevention strategies within our community. As the Oglala Lakota County Commission, we have witnessed firsthand the profound challenges faced by youth and families affected by this crisis.

The proposed initiatives outlined in the grant application demonstrate a comprehensive and strategic approach to tackling the multifaceted issues surrounding opioid misuse. Their evidence-informed program is an opioid and other drug misuse prevention strategy using Lakota traditions and values to build protective factors shown to decrease risk factors. The overall impact of this approach improves prevention outcomes associated with other co-occurring conditions that contribute to the uptake and use of opioids.

Moreover, we commend the collaborative efforts involved in the development of this grant application, which bring together key stakeholders from various sectors to work towards a common goal. By leveraging our collective expertise and resources, we can maximize the impact of this grant and create meaningful change in our community.

We are particularly encouraged by the emphasis on evidence-based practices and data-driven strategies to guide decision-making and ensure cultural competence in working with Indigenous youth and families. This commitment is essential for optimizing the use of grant funds and achieving measurable outcomes.

In conclusion, we wholeheartedly endorse Friends of the Children-He Sapa's proposal to the Opioid Settlement Fund Community Grant Program and urge you to give it your utmost consideration. By investing in these initiatives, we have an opportunity to make a significant difference in the lives of those affected by opioid addiction and substance abuse and to build a healthier, more resilient community for generations to come.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information or assistance.

Sincerely,

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Allyssa Comer, Chairwoman  
Oglala Lakota County Commission

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Pierre, SD 57501

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The proposed items outlined in the grant application demonstrate a comprehensive and strategic approach to tackling the issues surrounding opioid misuse.

Moreover, we commend the collaborative efforts involved in the development of this grant application. By leveraging our collective resources, we can maximize the impact of this grant and create meaningful change in our community.

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Allyssa Comer, Chairwoman

Oglala Lakota County Commission