#### Guidelines for Successful Partnerships with Native American Communities

Deb LaVeaux Montana State University Health and Human Development APHA National Conference November 5, 2007 Washington, D.C.

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# Messengers for Health on the Apsáalooke Reservation

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# Community-based participatory research CBPR

"Collaborative approach to research that equitably involves all partners in the research process and recognizes the unique strengths that each brings. CBPR begins with a research topic of importance to the community with the aim of combining knowledge and action for social change to improve community health and eliminate health disparities."

-W.K. Kellogg Scholars 2001

#### **Rationale for CBPR**

- Complex health and social problems ill-suited to "outside expert" research
- Increasing interest in health disparities
- Increasing community demands for collaborative efforts
- Increasing funder interest in communitydriven versus community-placed research

Nina Wallerstein, University of New Mexico

# Why a CBPR approach is appropriate in Native communities



- History
- Community members don't want to be guinea pigs
- Promised study benefits rarely reach communities
- Study results/data not given to community
- Researchers disrespectful of cultural practices
- Studies have harmed communities

**Development of guidelines for research among Native American communities** 



No one has compared CBPR principles and recommended practices of research among Native American communities

#### **Methods**



**Conducted literature search** 



Began with articles our research team used in our current project

**%** 

Expanded search using referenced articles

#### Methods

Compiled list of general recommendations for using the CBPR approach

Compiled list of recommended practices and common challenges in conducting research among AI/AN/NH groups

Compared similarities and differences in recommendations

#### Results

Many principles are common between the CBPR approach and Native research guidelines



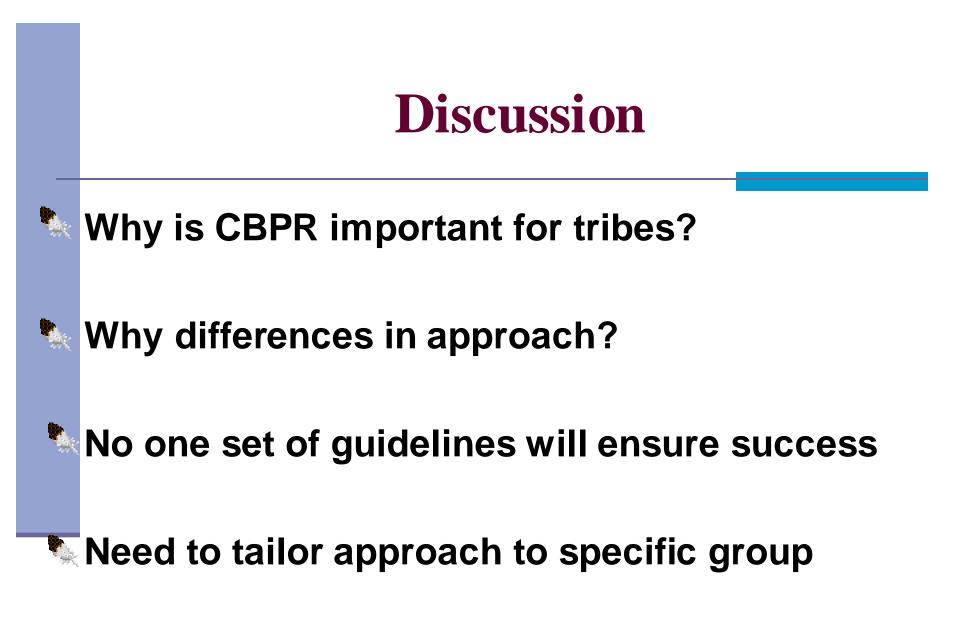
Most differences deal with unique tribal issues of history, sovereignty, and tribal diversity

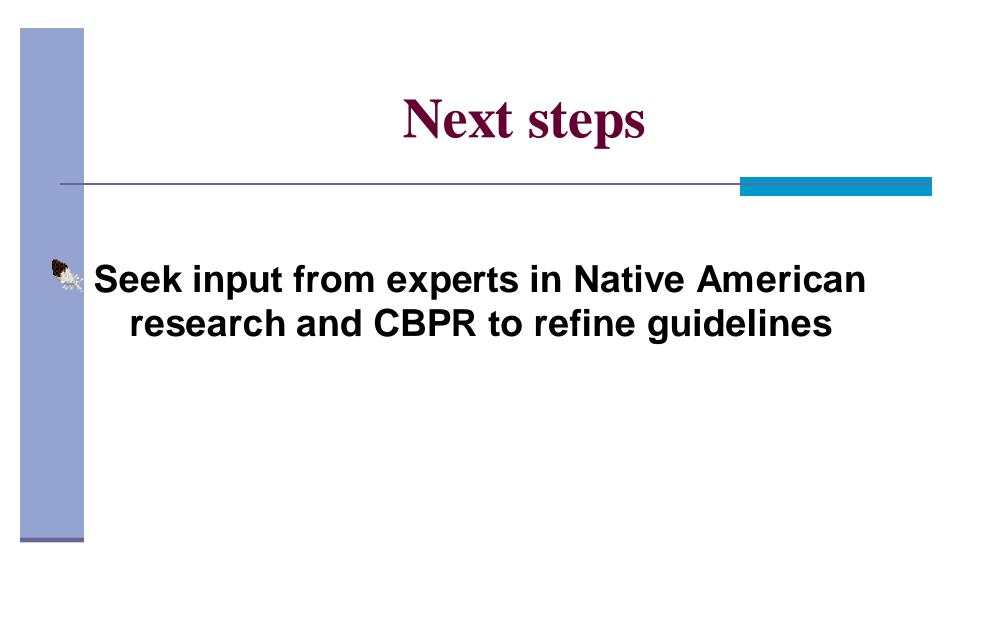
# **Similarities**

- 1. Collaboration and participation at all phases
- 2. Seek balance between research and action
- 3. Enlist assistance of key community members
- 4. Show up, be who you are
- 5. Embrace co-learning
- 6. Negotiate research principles and use of data
- 7. Recognize continual need for trust building
- 8. Address socio-ecological issues
- 9. Disseminate results to all
- **10.** Make research beneficial and appropriate for community
- **11.** Build on community strengths/skills
- **12. Empower community**

# Differences

- **1.** Gaining access to communities
- 2. Defining who represents community
- 3. Learning about and being immersed in culture
- 4. Overcoming negative images of researchers (Trust)
- 5. Planning for extended timelines
- 6. Ensuring methodologies are culturally appropriate
- 7. Understanding tribal diversity and implications
- 8. Being prepared for leadership turnover
- 9. Interpreting data within cultural context
- **10.** Relinquishing some control---tribe has major veto power
- **11.** May need to work with I.H.S





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